



Inspiring a Healthy Spirit, a Strong Character, and a Clear Intellect



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Reprint

MIR Journey & Discovery: One Parent's Journey

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I took a journey last month. This journey allowed me to place myself in my son's shoes (not literally, his feet are still quite small) and enter the world he sees every day while my husband and I are at work. Through these trials and travels, I came to a better understanding of how the world manifests itself through a young lens.

The Journey & Discovery program at MIR has always been on my radar; an opportunity to see the world through Campbell's eyes. The first part of our day took us on a silent "Journey" through each stage of education as an MIR child. At first I was apprehensive of the quiet environment; but as I moved through the stages, the tranquility allowed for a time of reflection and appreciation for the beauty of the surroundings that we, as parents, don't normally achieve in the hurried environs of our existence. We were giants in the miniature world of the toddlers, observers and visitors in a land of Primary and Elementary, peers at the Grove Farm and high schools.

After splitting into two groups (Toddler-Elementary or Elementary-high school), we began the "Discovery" portion of the day, where we were encouraged to have the mindset of a child in each stage.

In the Toddler room, we were presented with work that, to a parent, may seem simple (although I still don't know which dinosaur had a fish in its mouth), but to a toddler is challenging, exciting, and preparatory for the next stage.

Once we graduated into Primary, I surveyed the work set out for us before settling in front of my project. It seemed simple—pull

cylinders out of a wood "brick" with your dominant hand and then replace, one by one. Peter Davidson must have seen the look of bewilderment on my face—wasn't this similar to items in the Toddler room? He explained that by using your dominant hand to pull the cylinders out of the wood, a child is strengthening his/her pincher grasp to prepare the hand for writing. Ah-ha moment number one. He also explained that though the three pieces of wood looked to have the same exact cylinders, each was different. A fact that was evident *after* I had pulled them all out. Ah-ha moment number two.



In Elementary, I confronted math work. What is 235^2 ? If you're like me, you go straight to the calculator on your computer dashboard to plug in the numbers. Or, if you want to do it the "old school" way, you write it out 235×235 , multiplying down three levels until you get to the answer.

If you are a Montessori student, you work on the peg board to create a beautiful piece of art with red, blue, and green pegs, each symbolizing numbers. It isn't about memorizing numbers and when to carry. It's about understanding a concrete concept that is placed directly in front of you and seeing an end result that bears no resemblance to scribbles and cross outs on a piece of paper. It is the form, the frame, and the shape of the outcome.

I took a fantastic journey this past month. This journey—this discovery—into the lives of MIR children reaffirmed our commitment to this great educational setting. I encourage all parents to take this journey and discover for yourself what your child(ren) discover each and every day here at MIR.