



New School Montessori 6th graders visit Washington, D.C

Description

This spring, twelve New School Montessori 6th graders took a tour of Washington, D.C. with their classroom teacher and the school's director.

As Montessorians, we understand "the environment" (whether that's in the classroom, in a museum or walking among commuters on a busy city street) as being the invisible teacher. And in many ways, it can teach lessons that can not come from direct instruction. During the students' time on their 4-day trip, there were glimpses of the invisible teacher of D.C. weaving its way into their everyday moments. Whether learning in museums, deciding what to order for dinner within their meal budget and how to account for the tip, or silently watching the discipline and precision of the Honor Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, these students were taking it all in and letting it become a part of them.

Their chaperones noticed when a student walked away from the group to quietly thank a member of the military for his service. They were touched when 3 students began singing, beautifully and sincerely, the "Star-Spangled Banner" when looking at the war-torn flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the song. They were delighted by the look of rapture on one student's face as he stood in the exact spot where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood when he delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech, looking out toward the Washington Monument.

All of these moments added together is what makes an extended trip with students so valuable. Seeing their lives play out among friends, teachers and strangers in the sublime expanse of Washington, D.C. is an important part of their education and growth as people and citizens in this complicated, admirable, and courageous country.



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