The Culture - Zoology and Botany presentations was conducted at the Lodi Garden on the 30th of November 2010 for Montessori and Nursery Foundation Course, Batch 2010-11.

Dr. Maria Montessori said, “The land is where our roots are. The children must be taught to feel and live in harmony with the earth.” The venue so planned provided a fresh and different environment that was closer to nature and gave the students an enlightening experience altogether.

Conducting the module involved a massive work cycle. Duties were assigned to the students for carrying the material to the garden. The material for presentations was systematically organized by the faculty and carried in pretty briefcase like files.

At the venue the material was laid on chowkis – on one side was the material for Zoology presentations arranged in order of presenting it. On the other side was the material for Botany presentations again arranged in order of presenting them.

The module started with Zoology presentations.

Zoology can be defined as the study of animals.

The presentations in this category are listed below,

- Living and non-living things.
- Introducing model animals
- Large pictures of animals
- Identifying animals (loosely grouped)
- Identifying animals (specifically grouped)
- Presentation of puzzles-animal fish
- Classified cards (identifying parts of an animal)
- Animal-life cycle
The material for Zoology included picture cards, puzzles and name cards. Two sets of cards are present for most of the activities to make intellectual activities of sorting/pairing possible. The material makes the Zoology area come alive and give a thrilling and informative experience to children. With the Zoology material children learn the **distinctive or special characteristics of animals** (warm or cold blooded, carnivorous or herbivorous animals), their habitats, color, eating habits etc.

The material for identifying animals (loosely grouped) is **color-coded**. The beauty of the material is that the difference between each category of animals becomes distinct and the child learns to classify animals into various groups (for example birds, reptiles, fish etc)

In **Classified cards**, every card highlights one part of the animal and the child thus learns the names of the various parts of the body of an animal.

Most of the Zoology presentations have Control Cards with names – since the Absorbent Mind is also absorbing Language by the Look and Say learning method.

The second part of the module included the **Botany** presentations

**Botany can be defined as the study of plants.**

The presentations in this category are listed below.

- Presenting model fruits
- Large pictures of plants/fruits/vegetables
- Identifying plants (loosely grouped)
- Presentation of puzzle (flower/tree)
- Classified cards (identifying parts of a plant)
- Botany cabinet
- Activity with Botany cards
- Importance of sun
- Life cycle of a plant

The Botany presentations begin with the presentation of model fruits. Fresh and real fruits can be introduced - the child learns the names of the fruits and their special characteristics. The directress may talk about the nutritive value of fruits to older children.
The material for Botany presentations includes presentation of charts/cards (presentation of puzzle, classified cards) which detail the basic needs of the plant, their parts and the functions of these parts.

Children study roots, stems, leaves, fruits and flowers.

Presentation of puzzle can be done in group where the directress involves all children making the session interesting and interactive.

In presentations like Identifying plants – loosely grouped and Classified cards the child is asked to pair the second set of similar cards which is again an intellectual activity for the child.

Pictures of plants, fruits, vegetables are presented after presenting the model fruits which again follows the Montessori way of moving from concrete to abstract.

In the presentation of Importance of sun, children love to color the strips that form the rays of the sun, the Directress talks about the importance of sun; the child indirectly understands the concepts of interdependence and ecological balance in our environment.

Through the presentation of the Botany cabinet the child becomes more perceptive towards nature. He learns the different shapes and names of leaves that exist in the environment.

Thus the Botany material also provides an array of extensions to the directress to introduce scientific concepts of part of plants in our eco system, pollination, photosynthesis etc.

All of us (the students) helped in the winding up which was done in a calm and tranquil manner.

The experience at Lodi garden is one to remember. It was rich in learning and we thoroughly enjoyed every bit of it.

Our special thanks to Rajashree and Shivani ma’am for making it such a wonderful afternoon.