



## Q & A

### How do the Pink Tower, the Sound Cylinders and Metal Insets prepare our children for written language?

The Sensorial Materials build further on the sense of order established in the child through the Practical Life exercises. These materials help a child develop his perceptual abilities, including the ability to compare and classify, which is necessary for the development of written language. By building the Pink Tower, for example, a child is learning the concepts of “larger” and “smaller”. The Sound Cylinders classify sounds as “louder” and “softer.” The small knobs on the Metal Insets and other materials such as the Puzzle Maps involve the pincer movement of the thumb and index fingers. The tracing of forms (for example, the Metal Insets) develops fine motor skills in preparation for writing. And you thought the Metal Inset pictures were just abstract art!



As with many, if not all, of the Montessori Materials, several layers of learning occur with use of Sensorial Materials. While a young child may experience great satisfaction in successfully building the Pink Tower, he is also learning what a cube is. While the purpose of the Metal Insets is primarily to develop the muscular control needed to use a pencil, the child is learning shapes, including a pentagon, trapezoid and quatrefoil, concepts most of us didn't encounter until much later in elementary school! It is through the education and refinement of the senses that our children develop their intelligence. When they have mastered the materials in this area, they are ready to move on from a concrete sensorial level into increasingly abstract realms.