

Monte Tavor Preschool Curriculum Guide

Ages 3–5 | Fall Season 2025-2026

Nature-Based • Spanish Immersion • Relationship-Centered • Play-Focused

At Monte Tavor, our preschool curriculum is designed to nurture the whole child—mind, body, and spirit—through hands-on exploration, seasonal learning, and meaningful relationships. In the fall, children engage with the changing natural world while deepening their skills in language, science, art, and social-emotional development.

Core Philosophy

Preschoolers are natural scientists, storytellers, and collaborators. Our curriculum supports:

- **Relationship-centered learning** through trust, empathy, and community rituals
- **Play-based exploration** that fosters creativity, autonomy, and problem-solving
- **Nature-based experiences** that connect children to seasonal rhythms and the earth
- **Spanish immersion** to build bilingual language skills and cultural awareness

Developmental Areas

Domain	How We Support It
Social-Emotional	Circle time, peer play, conflict resolution, and emotional literacy tools
Language & Literacy	Bilingual storytelling, journaling, representational drawing, and song
Cognitive & Scientific Thinking	Inquiry-based experiments, sorting, measuring, and cause-effect play
Physical Development	Climbing, balancing, fine motor art, and outdoor movement stations
Creative Expression	Open-ended art, music, dance, and dramatic play

Fall Activities Overview

Our fall curriculum is rich in seasonal experiences that reflect the natural world and support developmental growth.

Nature & Art

- **Leaf Printing & Sorting:** Exploring texture, color, and size
- **Corn Cob & Pinecone Painting:** Creating patterns with natural tools
- **Feather Painting & Spray Silhouettes:** Using unconventional materials for expressive art
- **Nature Brush Painting:** Crafting brushes from twigs, leaves, and berries
- **Outdoor Mural Making:** Collaborative art using fall colors and natural objects

Outdoor Learning

- **Forest Walks & Journaling:** Observing seasonal changes and recording discoveries
- **Mini Hay Bale Climbing:** Building strength and confidence
- **Pretend Harvest Play:** Using baskets, scales, and produce for imaginative market play
- **Leaf Size Sorting & Categorization:** Early math through nature
- **Sensory Trays with Logs, Pinecones, and Magnifiers:** Hands-on exploration and observation

Science-Based Exploration

Inspired by our Science Fair Kick-Off and “My First Science Kits,” our fall science curriculum includes:

Experiments & Inquiry

- **Erupting Volcanoes:** Baking soda and vinegar reactions with seasonal colors
- **Magnet Play:** Exploring attraction and repulsion with magnetic sand and objects
- **Sink & Float Stations:** Testing natural materials in water
- **Goopy & Slime Labs:** Mixing textures and observing changes
- **Measurement & Mixing:** Using scoops, scales, and timers in sensory bins
- **Water Fireworks:** Oil, water, and food coloring reactions
- **Walking Water:** Capillary action with colored water and paper towels
- **Doctor Juniper Science Kits:** Guided experiments with tools and prompts

Scientific Thinking

- **Asking questions (“What do you think will happen?”)**
- **Making predictions and testing ideas**
- **Observing and documenting results**
- **Using tools like droppers, magnifiers, and measuring cups**
- **Connecting science to nature and everyday life**

Science & Sensory Integration

Hands-On • Nature-Based • Inquiry-Driven

At Monte Tavor, science is not a separate subject—it's woven into the fabric of daily exploration. Our preschoolers engage in **sensory-rich, seasonal investigations** that spark curiosity and deepen their understanding of the natural world.

How It's Integrated

Science is embedded in:

- **Outdoor walks** where children collect leaves, seeds, bark, and acorns
- **Art projects** using natural materials and homemade paints
- **Storytelling and journaling** that document discoveries and experiments
- **Group discussions** that encourage prediction, observation, and reflection
- **Seasonal rituals** like crushing acorns to make paint or listening for bird calls

Educators guide children through open-ended questions, modeling scientific thinking and vocabulary in both Spanish and English.

Sensory & Seasonal Play

Children explore fall through all five senses:

- **Touch:** Bark textures, pinecones, gooey mixtures, and magnetic sand
- **Sight:** Leaf colors, water fireworks, and erupting volcanoes
- **Sound:** Bird calls, rustling leaves, and pouring water
- **Smell:** Crushed herbs, spice jars, and natural paints
- **Taste:** (When appropriate) seasonal fruits like apples and roasted squash

These experiences build neural connections, emotional regulation, and language development.

Nature-Based Science Activities

Inspired by the Science Fair Kick-Off and seasonal kits:

- **Crushing Acorns to Make Paint:** Exploring pigment, texture, and transformation
- **Erupting Volcanoes:** Baking soda + vinegar reactions with fall colors
- **Magnet Exploration:** Testing attraction with natural and synthetic objects
- **Sink & Float Stations:** Predicting and testing leaves, seeds, and bark
- **Water Fireworks:** Oil, water, and food coloring reactions
- **Walking Water:** Capillary action with paper towels and colored water
- **Doctor Juniper Kits:** Guided experiments with droppers, color mixing, and observation
- **Seed Sorting & Identification:** Using conkers, acorns, and mystery seeds to compare shape, size, and texture
- **Bird Call Listening & Matching:** Using audio clips and puppets to identify local species

Child-Safe Lab Tools & Recognition

We introduce tools that support autonomy and safety:

Tool	Purpose	Child-Friendly Feature
Droppers & Pipettes	Mixing liquids, transferring water	Soft grip, slow release control
Magnifying Glasses	Observing bark, bugs, and seeds	Lightweight, shatter-resistant
Measuring Cups & Spoons	Volume comparisons, mixing	Color-coded, easy-pour design
Plastic Test Tubes & Beakers	Containing reactions	Rounded edges, BPA-free
Scales & Timers	Exploring weight and time	Visual dials, hands-on buttons
Safety Goggles	For messy or fizzy experiments	Adjustable straps, soft frames

Children learn to name and use each tool respectfully, building confidence and scientific identity.

Daily Rhythm

Preschoolers thrive on structure with flexibility. Our daily flow includes:

- **Morning greetings and bilingual song circles**
- **Indoor and outdoor play rotations**
- **Science and art invitations**
- **Meals and rest**
- **Storytime and closing rituals**

Print, Drawing & Storytelling

Representational drawing and storytelling are central to our literacy-rich environment.

Activities Include:

- **Nature Journals:** Drawing what we see, hear, and feel outdoors
- **Storytelling Circles:** Children narrate seasonal tales with props and puppets
- **Drawing Prompts:** “What did you see on our walk?” or “Draw your volcano experiment”
- **Labeling & Dictation:** Educators write children’s words next to their drawings
- **Group Books:** Collaborative stories with illustrations by the class
- **Spanish & English Vocabulary Building:** Through songs, books, and conversation

Emergent Writing & Print Concepts

From Marks to Meaning • Fine Motor to Literacy

Writing begins with movement, intention, and representation. At Monte Tavor, we guide preschoolers through a joyful progression from scribbles to sentences, honoring each stage of development.

Developmental Progression

- **Age 3–3.5:**
 - Drawing **straight and curved lines, circles, and zigzags**
 - **Tracing and connecting dots** to form shapes and letters
 - Scribbling with intention (“This is my tree!”)
 - Using crayons, pencils, chalk, and oil pastels on varied paper textures
- **Age 3.5–5:**
 - **Printing uppercase letters** with guided prompts
 - **Copying names, labels, and simple words**
 - **Writing short words** from memory or dictation
 - **Representational drawing** paired with storytelling
 - **Copying and composing simple sentences** with educator support

Materials & Invitations

- Dot-to-dot alphabet sheets
- Nature journals with drawing and labeling prompts
- Seasonal vocabulary cards in Spanish and English
- Group books with child-authored pages
- Chalkboards, easels, and outdoor writing stations

Educators model writing, celebrate effort, and support grip development through playful repetition and choice.

Early Math & Seasonal Literacy

Counting • Comparing • Reading the World

Preschoolers build math and literacy skills through hands-on, seasonal experiences that connect abstract concepts to real-world exploration.

Math in Nature

- **Counting leaves, acorns, pinecones** during walks and collections
- **Sorting by size, color, and texture** (e.g., “big leaf, small leaf”)
- **Simple addition and subtraction** using natural materials:
 - “Two leaves minus one leaf equals one leaf”
 - “Three acorns plus two acorns equals five acorns”
- **Graphing taste tests** (e.g., sweet vs. tart apples)
- **Measuring and pouring** in sensory bins and science stations

Seasonal Literacy

- **Reading books about autumn** in Spanish and English, such as:
 - *Leaf Man* by Lois Ehlert
 - *Estamos en otoño / We're in Fall*
 - *Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf* by Lois Ehlert
 - *Pumpkin Soup* by Helen Cooper
- **Storytelling with props and puppets**
- **Nature journaling** with drawings and dictated stories
- **Labeling seasonal objects** in both languages
- **Group poems and chants** about fall changes

These experiences build vocabulary, sequencing, and symbolic thinking while deepening children’s connection to the season.

Dramatic Play

Imagination • Identity • Collaboration

At Monte Tavor, dramatic play is a cornerstone of preschool learning. It allows children to explore roles, express emotions, and make sense of the world around them. Through pretend scenarios, storytelling, and symbolic play, preschoolers build empathy, language, and problem-solving skills—all while having fun.

Nature-Inspired Dramatic Play

- **Forest Market:** Children use baskets, scales, and natural materials (leaves, pinecones, acorns) to create pretend shops and trade goods
- **Animal Habitats:** Using puppets, masks, and found objects to act out life cycles, migrations, and seasonal changes
- **Harvest Celebrations:** Pretend cooking with gourds, herbs, and felt produce; setting up outdoor “feasts” with friends
- **Weather Station:** Role-playing meteorologists using thermometers, wind socks, and cloud charts

Developmental Benefits

- Builds **language and storytelling skills** through dialogue and narration
- Supports **emotional regulation** by acting out feelings and scenarios
- Encourages **collaboration and negotiation** in group play
- Strengthens **symbolic thinking** and early literacy (e.g., writing menus, signs, labels)
- Fosters **cultural awareness** through bilingual role-play and seasonal traditions

Materials & Invitations

- Dress-up clothes and nature-themed costumes
- Puppets, masks, and felt story pieces
- Clipboards, menus, and recipe cards in Spanish and English
- Loose parts (fabric, baskets, stones, sticks) for open-ended scene building
- Seasonal props: pumpkins, leaves, spice jars, and mini hay bales
- Role-play kits: doctor, gardener, chef, explorer, scientist

Literacy Connection

Dramatic play is often paired with books and storytelling:

- *Pumpkin Soup* → Pretend cooking and recipe writing
- *Leaf Man* → Puppet play and nature storytelling
- *Estamos en otoño* → Seasonal vocabulary and role-play scenes
- *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt* → Acting out the story with props and movement



What's Included

Monte Tavor preschool tuition includes everything your child needs to thrive in a nature-based, bilingual, and developmentally rich environment:

- **All materials and supplies** for art, science, sensory play, and nature exploration
- **All toys, outdoor equipment and play spaces** for indoor and outdoor use
- **Two meals and two-three snacks daily**, prepared with seasonal ingredients
- **Spanish immersion curriculum**, integrated into songs, storytelling, and daily routines
- **Seasonal curriculum guides** tailored to developmental stages and nature's rhythms
- **Family newsletters and activity calendars** to stay connected to classroom life
- **Parent-teacher conferences** with developmental updates and goal setting
- **Nature journals and representational drawing materials** for storytelling and observation
- **Child-safe lab tools** for science experiments and inquiry-based learning
- **Outdoor learning stations** including climbing structures, garden tools, and sensory bins
- **Books and bilingual literacy materials** focused on seasonal changes and cultural stories
- **Documentation of learning** through photos, quotes, and educator reflections
- **Group projects and collaborative art experiences** that foster community and creativity
- **Emotional literacy tools** such as feeling charts, puppets, and social stories
- **Access to seasonal celebrations and community events** that honor family traditions and milestones
- **And Much More**



Family Partnership

We value collaboration and transparency. Families are invited to:

- **Participate in seasonal events and celebrations**
- **Attend conferences to reflect on growth and goals**
- **Share cultural traditions and seasonal stories**
- **Receive regular updates through newsletters and documentation**