

Transformation of the Classroom with Management Systems

Making Classroom Management Your Friend

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Welcome!

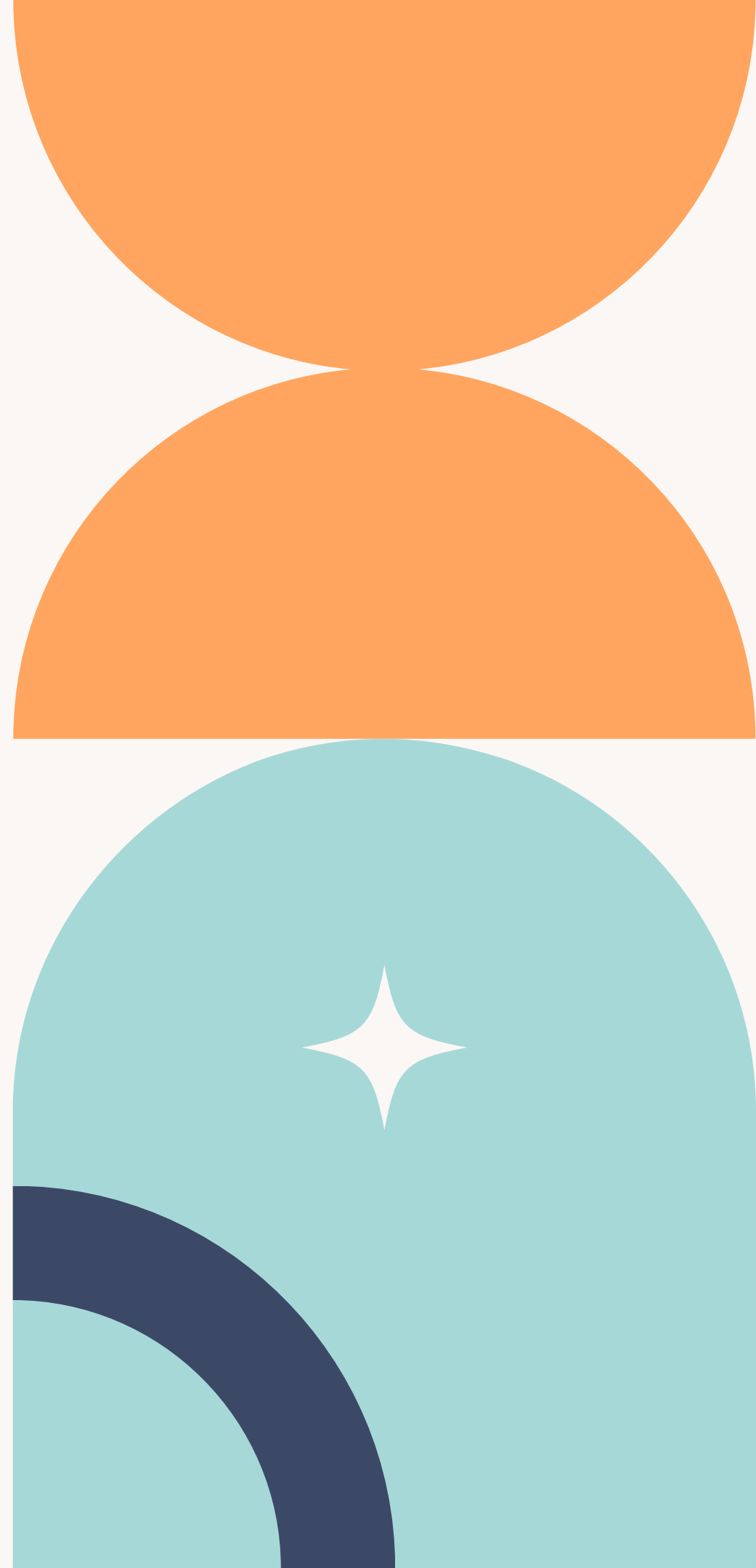
My name is Justine Megee.

- AMI Trained Elementary Guide
- AMI Primary Diploma
- Ten years teaching experience
- Masters of Arts in Education
- Current Head of School



What We're Covering

- WHAT IS A SYSTEM? WHY ARE THEY HELPFUL?
- NORMALIZATION
- INDEPENDENCE IN THE SECOND PLANE
- WHAT SYSTEMS DO WE USE?
- SECOND PLANE CHARACTERISTICS
- THE THREE TIERS
- HOW TO CREATE A SYSTEM





What exactly is a system?

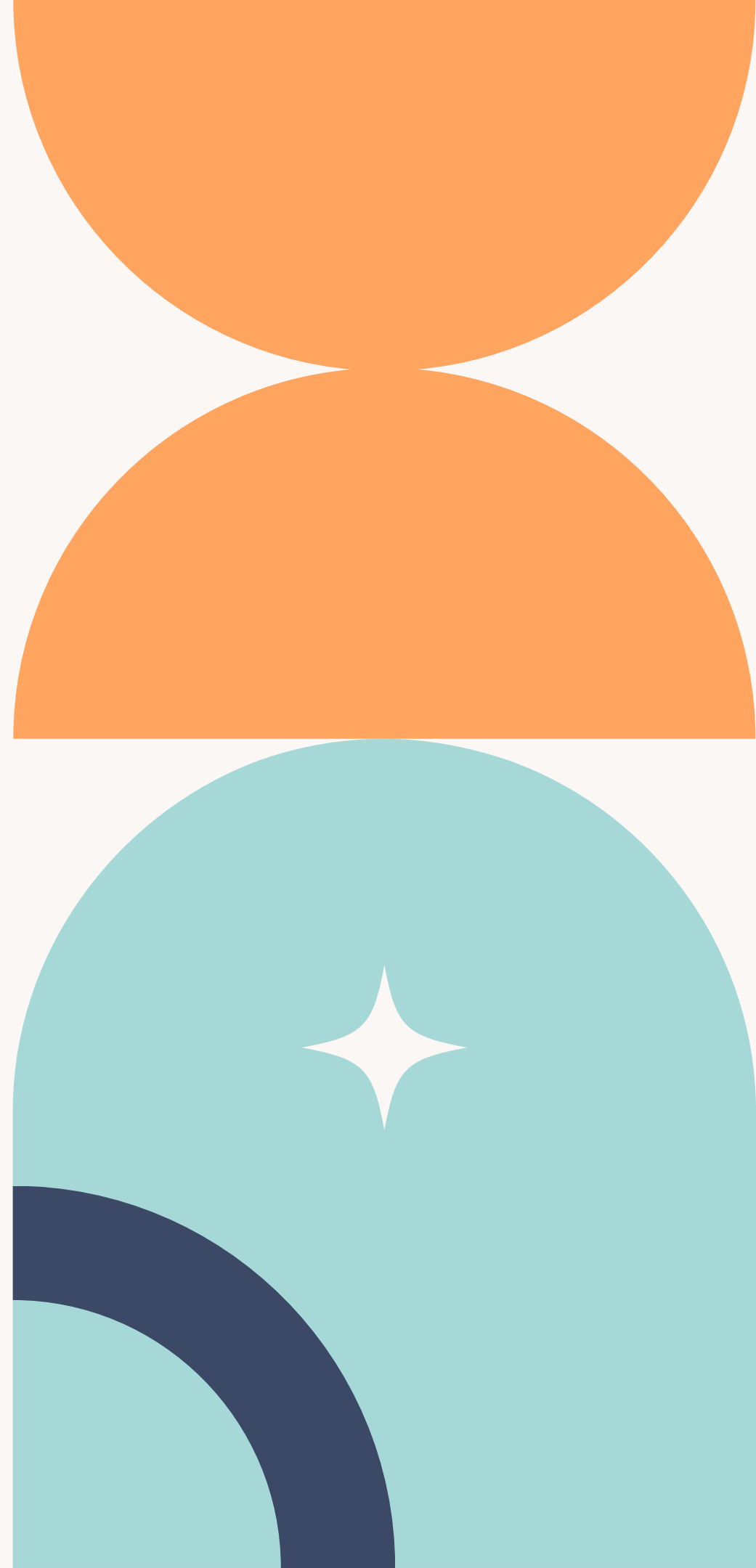
A system is an intentional process guided by observation to aid in the normalized functioning of a Montessori classroom.

Otherwise known as Classroom Management.

Normalization

“A natural developmental process exhibited by a love of work or activity, concentration, self-discipline, and joy in accomplishment. Dr. Montessori observed that children in Montessori programs exhibit normalization through repeated periods of uninterrupted work during which time they work freely and at their own pace on their own chosen activities. A normalized child is a happy, well-adjusted child who exhibits positive social skills in the Montessori classroom.”

AMS Definition



NUMBER ONE TOOL:

Observation

Systems cannot be created unless the needs of the classroom have been observed.

Keys to a helpful observation:

Be as objective as possible. Write observations without any opinion or judgment about how things are going.

Start with writing the concern at the top of your paper and keep that as your main focus.

Observe at different times of the day, different days of the week, and different areas of the classroom.

Observe to see if the concern impacts a certain group of people or the whole class.



“A system is an intentional process guided by observation to aid in the normalized functioning of a Montessori classroom.”

Eduardo Cuevas

2nd Plane Characteristics



YANIS PETROS

- > Reasoning Mind
- > Hyper Imagination
- > Scattered
- > Fact Gathering
- > Hero Worship
- > Strong Sense of Justice
- > Great Need for Big Work
- > Social Beings
- > Group Work

Independence in the Second Plane

The child must have the opportunity to do big work.

Going Out must be present to increase the children's level of independence.

The child is becoming free to do things for themselves as long as the group approves of it.

The child must be part of the running and creating of the environment.



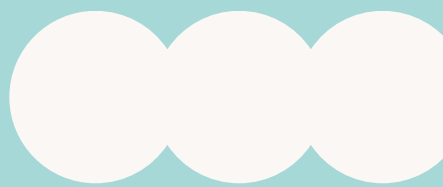
What are some systems you have set in your class?

What are some systems you need to create for your class?

How do you feel about creating and implementing classroom systems?



Discuss



Some Common Systems

- Starting the day
- Coming to a lesson
- Choosing work
- Transition to Lunch
- Lunch processes
- Transition to and from outdoor playtime
- Cleaning up for the day
- Classroom Jobs



THREE TIER SYSTEM

Check ourselves

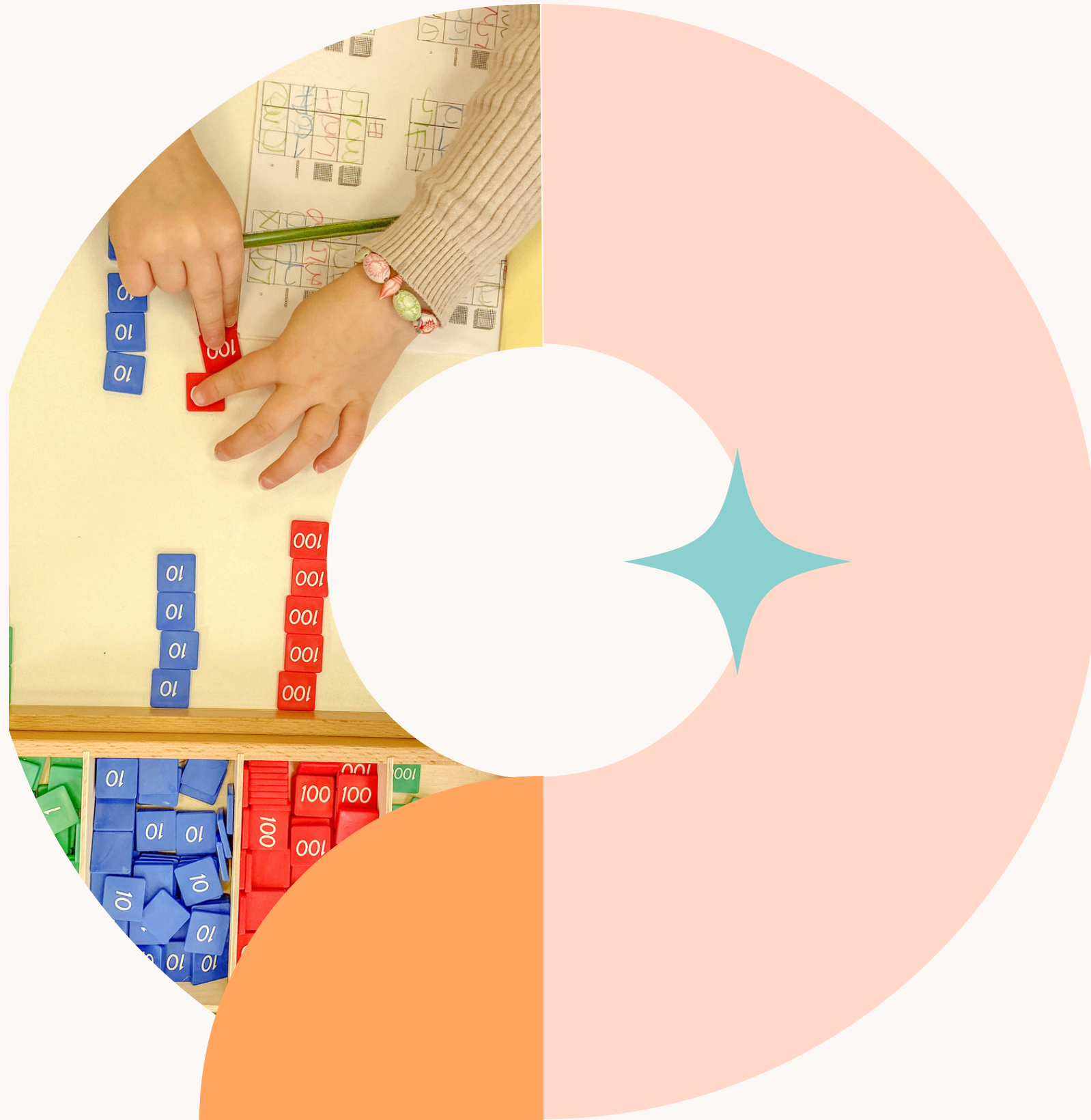
What is our energy like? How did we show up today? How could I be contributing to the difficulty?

Check the environment

We can't control the children (nor should we want to) but we can control the environment. Are there any obstacles in the environment that are contributing to the difficulty.

Check the children

Only after thoroughly investigating the first two tiers do you arrive here. There is never anything wrong with the child, they just need support in a different way. How can we do that?



Tier One Check Yourself

This is the most important tier and should always be your first consideration.

What is my energy like today? How has it been all week?

Is there something outside of school that I'm not able to let go?

How am I feeling physically? Mentally?

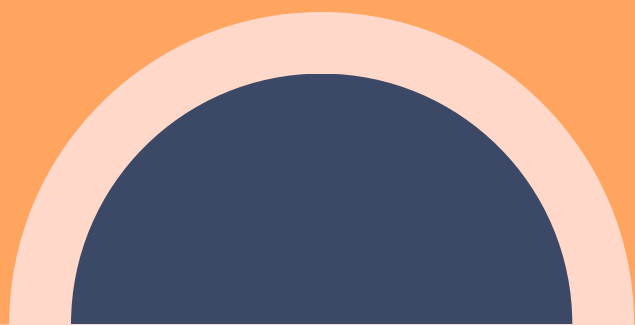
What exactly is making me feel bonkers?

Does that thing deserve this much energy from me?

Do I even have any kind of control over it?

Is it something that I can reframe?

90% of the time,
your answer lies here.



Tier Two

Check the Environment

We can't control the children, but we can control the environment.

Is there something within the environment that can be altered/added/moved/taken away?

Are the items needed to carry out the system present, in working order, and beautifully arranged?

Is there an observable flow to the space, or is it choppy?

Is there a space that needs to be designated for certain tasks or times?

Is the environment serving the child's plain specific development needs and human tendencies?



Tier Three

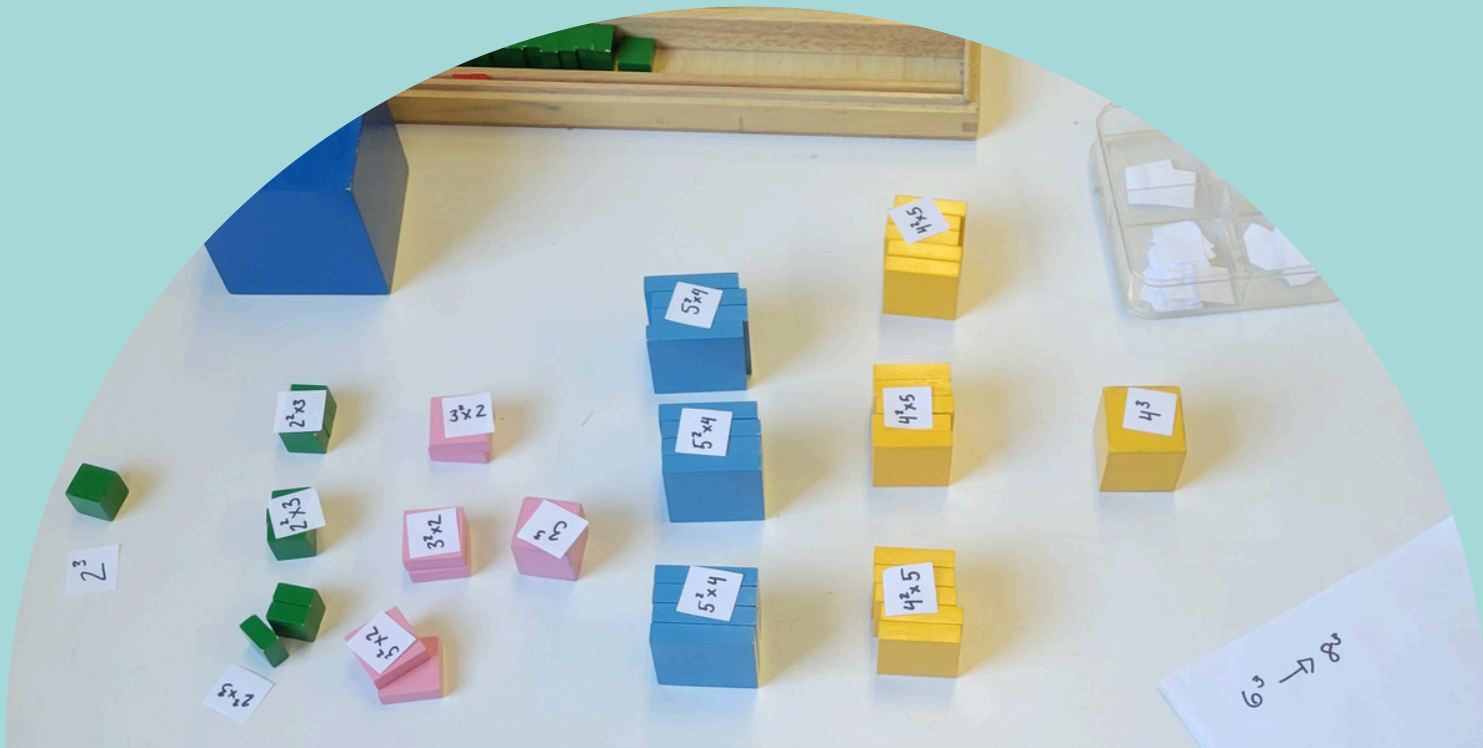
Check the Child

This should only be considered after the first two tiers have been investigated.

This tier starts with several objective observations listing measurable data points.

Come up with an action plan that has clear interventions that can be observed and outcomes recorded.

This isn't about something being wrong but about finding the best way to support the children in your care.



An example:

TIER ONE: THE ADULT, THE ISLAND

The side by side hide behind work groups.

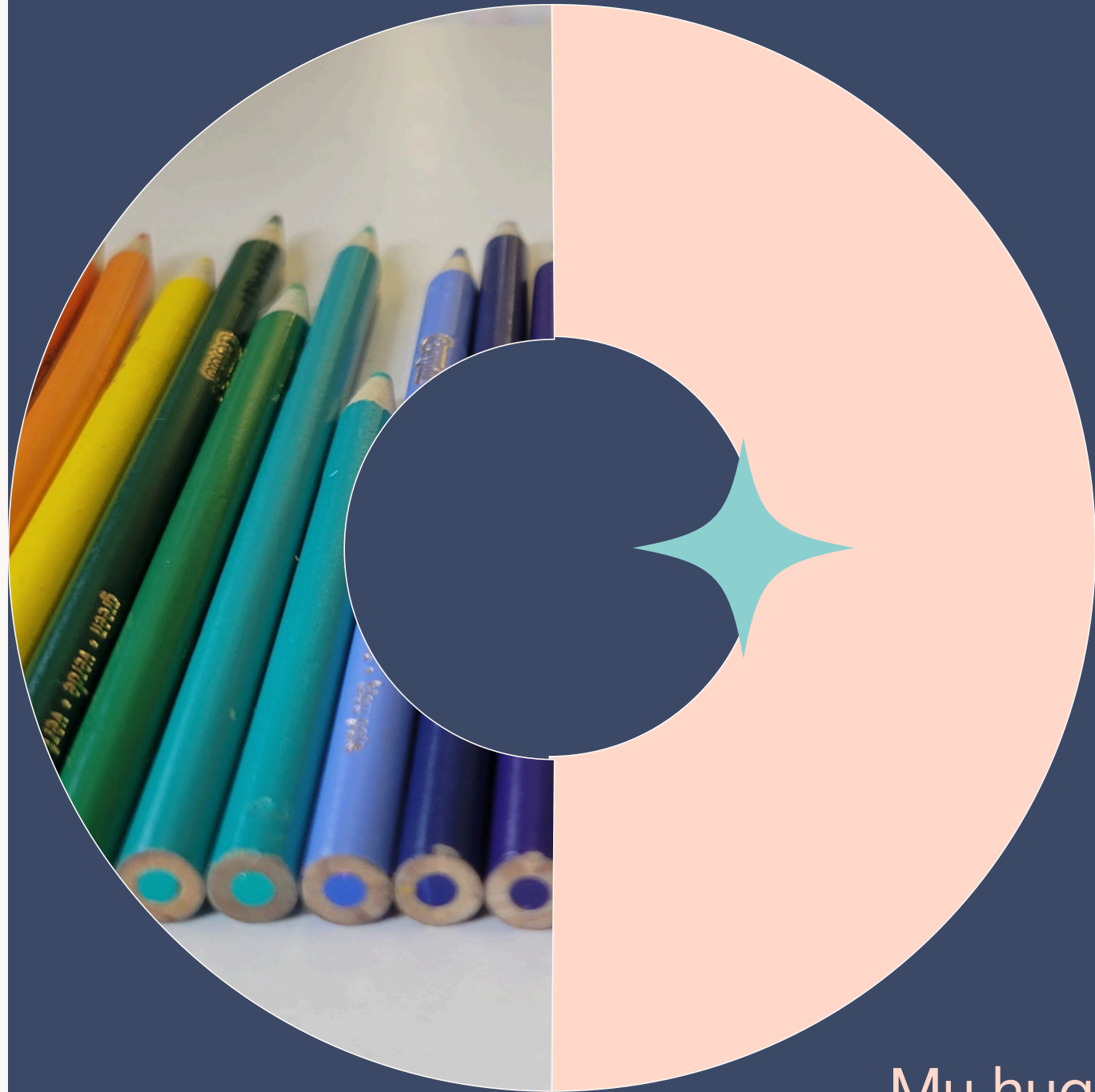
6-8 Children sitting at a table, shootin' the breeze with individual work in front of them.

No real engaging work happening. Very passive and mundane follow-up work.

My huge focus on product work to send home to placate caregivers.

Not offering inspiration for a variety of follow-up work.

Not offering inspiration for group work as follow-up work.



An example:

TIER TWO: THE ENVIRONMENT, THE RUNWAY

Constant running across the room.

Children and work being bumped into and harmed.

Created a lack of bodily and situational awareness.

Was creating a lack of empathy and self responsibility.

Needed more balance between space for timelines and movement.

Needed to create an environment that the children had more buy-in for a sense of ownership.

Needed to include them in the problem solving and design of the classroom.



An example:

TIER THREE: THE CHILD, THE RITUAL

Separation anxiety - 45 minute episode each day at drop off

If caregiver stayed too long or left too early, things escalated and had a detrimental impact on the child's day.

Would impact other children the child was working with because they would reclude or just stay with me.

Worked with caregivers to address any underlying issues contributing to the child's high level of anxiety.

Encouraged caregivers and child to develop a departure routine that was arrived at by the caregivers and the child.

Helped caregivers understand that when they aren't consistent with a plan we all create, they are signaling a distrust that the child will be ok and happy at the school.



So what the heck do actually you do?

Teacher Support Systems



GATHERING DATA

Define the concern in clear terms.

What would you like it to look like?

Objective Observation

CREATING A PLAN

What did your observations tell you?

Be honest with yourself. Embrace your true self, and learn to be ok with it.

Do your research. What options are available to you? What do other people do?

Write down one large goal and work backwards to break it up into smaller goals.

EVALUATE

Define the amount of time the class would like to try the solution.

Don't be afraid to throw it all out and try again.

Agree on tweaks.

Rinse and repeat.

So what the heck do actually you do?

Environment Systems



GATHERING DATA

Define the concern in clear terms.

What would you like it to look like?

Objective Observation

CREATING A PLAN

What did your observations tell you?

Speak with the children about your observation and define the concern.

Have a discussion about their ideas to remedy the issue.

Ask the children to observe over the next few days to gain insight into how things are going.

EVALUATE

Define the amount of time the class would like to try the solution.

Meet again to discuss the progress. What are their observations? Anything need to be tweaked?

Agree on tweaks as a group.

Rinse and repeat.



So what the heck do actually you do?

Child Support Systems

GATHERING DATA

What are you trying to help the child achieve?

Objective Observation: Time of day? What day of the week? Is anything happening in their outside-of-school schedule?

How does this child learn and what is their communication style?

CREATING A PLAN

Taking data into account, set a realistic goal for the child. This should allow for a little struggle and a lot of success.

Don't necessarily get bogged down by academics. Concentration and work can be found in many places and forms.

Speak with the child about what you see and ask them what they think and feel about it.

Come up with a goal together.

EVALUATE

Intentionally observe and record data.

Check in with the child. How do they feel it is going?

Tweak if needed.

Be open to trying new ideas, even if you are thinking it won't work.

SYSTEM plan

Tier 1 2 3

Date: 10/05/24

Brief definition of concern.

Clean up and transition to lunch

What do you want it to look like? Why is it important?

Class is able to put away their work and materials, floor clear of supplies, have their journal checked, and set their space to eat.

Goal 1 (Specific)

All materials put away,
journals checked,

Goal 2 (Measurable)

Children will move
from step to step
without reminders of
the process.

Goal 3 (Time Bound)

Process complete
in 15 minutes

Objective Observation. 10/05/2024 Start time 11:00 am

- JN rings bell at 11:00, asks the class to clean up for lunch and journal check
- Children begin to gather materials and put them away.
- Multiple children on floor in front of the board updating their journals.
- 11:06 TM and JR continue to work on Racks and Tubes.
- GF and TG pick up grammar symbols that have fallen on the floor.
- Many children in front of cubbies attempting to put things away
- 4 children are lined up as Ms. Alex to get journals checked.
- 11:12 TM and JR working on racks and tubes.
- JT and SH rolling on reading corner floor with lunch boxes.
- AO tells TM and JR it's time to clean up for lunch. They tell her they are almost done with the problem.
- Children who have had their journal checked crowded in lunch supply area.
- 11:18 Ms. Alex has 6 children in line to have journals checked.

(see attached for further observations)

One thing that stuck out to you the most during observation

There seem to be some areas in the classroom that get backed up with activity.

Reflection on Observation

- Journal check seems overwhelming even when Ms. Alex and I do it together. Ties us up so we aren't able to move the clean up process along.
- Children get rowdy in journal check line.
- Not all children are owning up to their mess.
- Children are hesitant to put works with large setups and layouts away.
- Cubbies were crowded.
- Children who are ready for lunch but can't set up because tables are not picked up and chairs not returned. They need something to do while they wait.
- Multiple instances of untidy areas not claimed by children.

Brain Dump Solutions (Adults and children input)

- Waiting for journal checks at workspaces instead of by adults.
- Possible space to put large setup work
- Cubbies separated into two ears of room
- Children can stay at their cleaned up work spaces to get it checked for cleanliness then get journal checked.
- Once space and journal checked, other children can help with checking.

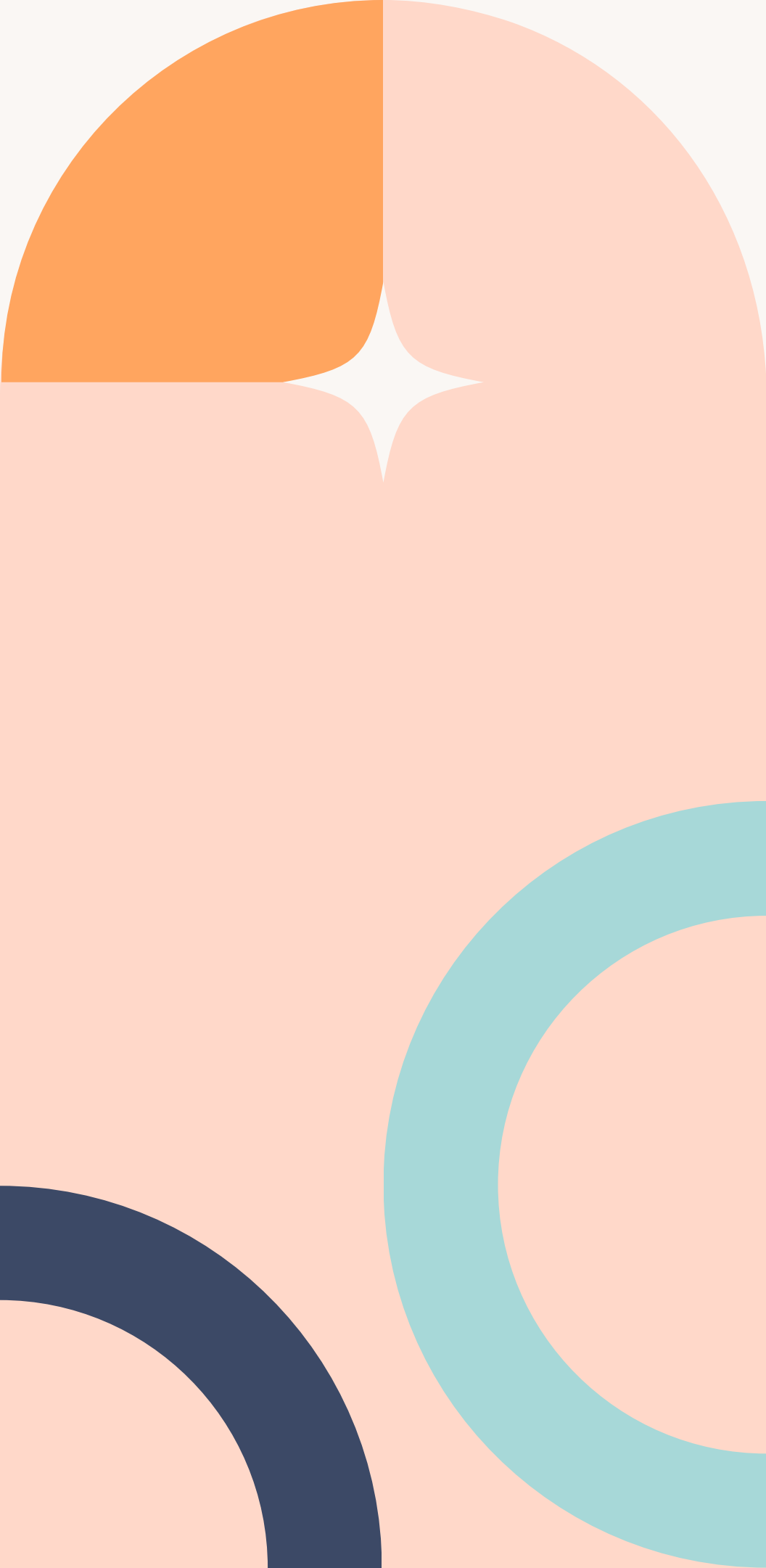


System Plan

- Bell rings at 11:10
- Children begin to clean up work.
- Workspace and all materials must be cleaned up before doing any updating of journals.
- Large setup work may go on a rug on the floor for later completion
- Once space cleaned up and journal updated, children raise their hands to indicate they are ready to be checked.
- Adults start out checking and as journals are checked, those children may begin to help others clean up and/or check their journals.
- Once space and journals are checked, children choose a book to read on their own or together.
- Once all is cleaned up and tables cleared, children are dismissed a few at a time to get lunch boxes and set up a place to eat.
- If there are a few children who still need to update their journals before journal checked, they can do that on the floor by the board and, when done, get checked by adults.



Any Questions?



Remember to be kind to yourself, be open to trying new things, and be open to making mistakes and learning from them

Thank You!

Don't hesitate to reach out!

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