

INTRODUCTION TO MONTESSORI EDUCATION (SEMINAR)



Introduction to Montessori education

This introductory seminar explains the theoretical basis for understanding the basic ideas behind Montessori education.

These ideas will be explained through a theoretical presentation illustrated by practical examples of activities from the various curricular areas. Montessori education is a child-centred approach based on observations of children's real and spontaneous nature.

Observation should therefore be the basis of all the work in the classroom and a constant guide to our behavior.

The goal of education should not be the mere acquisition of knowledge but for children to fully develop their physical, emotional and intellectual potentialities so they can finally achieve full and healthy adult independence.

“Establishing lasting peace is the work
of education; all politics can do is
keep us out of war”

Maria Montessori



The prepared environment

Preschool (0-6) - Children's House



Elementary (6-12) – Openness to the world



High School (12-18) – Find a place in the world



Elements in the prepared environment

- The child and his/her:
 - Four phases of development
 - Own learning rhythms
 - Absorbent mind (0-6 years)
 - Sensitive periods for the various types of learning (language, movement, socialization ...)
 - Human tendencies characteristic of every human being (like exploring, ability to explore ...); potentialities
 - Capacity and tendency to Standardization
- The **teacher and his/her** theoretical, practical and emotional training.
- **Materials:** manipulative, sensory, aiding abstraction and holistic development. The role of the adult is to connect the child with the material and the proposed activities.
- **Social relationships:** constant, rich, varied and in development (with the adult as a model).
- **Observation** as a basis for adult decision making and as a starting point for modifications to the prepared environment.

Childcare 0-3 year olds

Deep respect for the child's nature from the physical to the emotional

- Freedom and autonomy from birth
- Confidence in the children's potentialities as a basis for healthy self-esteem
- A prepared environment respectful of all his/her senses
- Connections between Montessori and Pikler



“All that we ourselves are has been made by the child, by the child
we were in the first two years of our lives”

Dr. Maria Montessori

Practical Life

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- A bridge from home to the school environment
- Union of mind and body, the physical and emotions
- Orientation and adaptation to a culture
- Motor coordination
- The development of autonomy
- Improving self-esteem
- The best support for the absorbent mind, sensitive periods and human tendencies, among other aspects.
- Must meet certain characteristics and be accurately presented



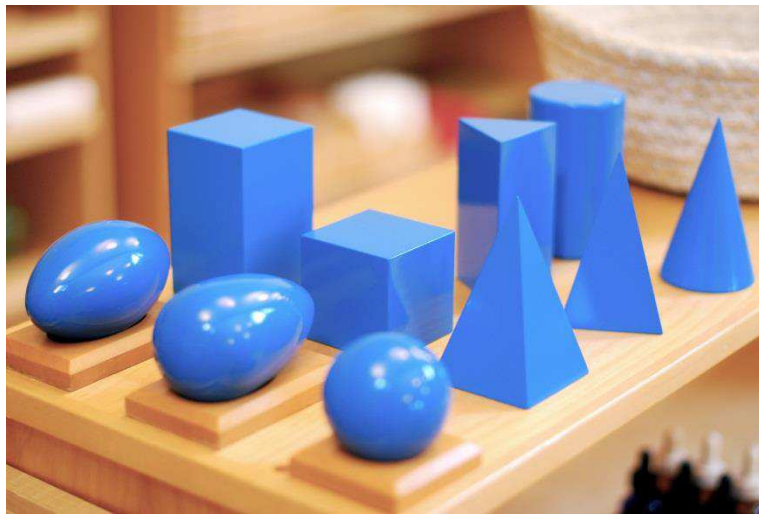
“The first thing to understand about Practical Life exercises is that their goal is not practical. The emphasis should not be placed on the term "practical" but "life". Its objective (like that of all other activities that are presented to the child in the prepared environment) is to help development.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

Material Sensorial

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- Sensorial materials: "keys of the universe"
- The senses as a power supply for the absorbent mind
- We adapt the development of the senses to the sensitive periods of the children
- Sensorial materials have special characteristics that make them a development aid
- Direct and indirect objectives of the sensorial materials; the importance of detailed knowledge
- Types of possible activities with sensorial materials

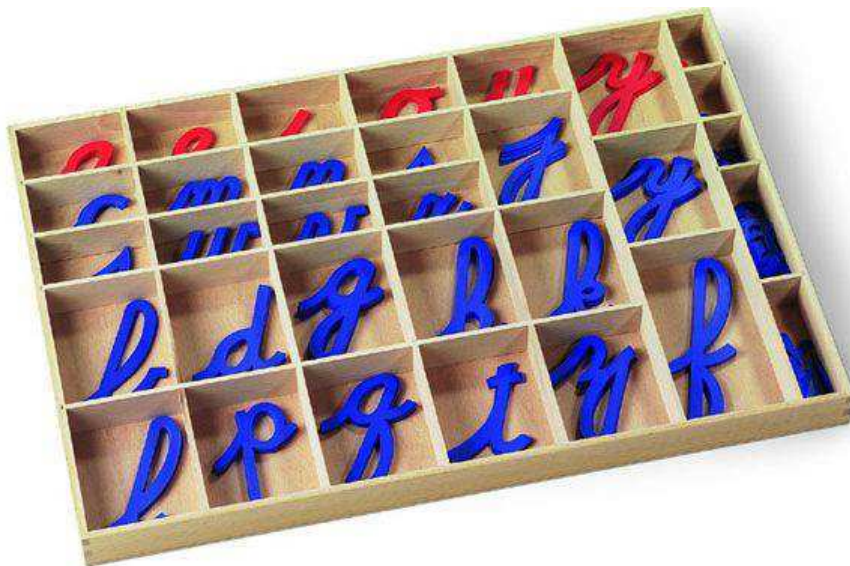


“There is nothing in the mind that was not first in the senses”

Aristotle

Language

- The importance of the presence of oral language in the prepared environment
- Our obligation to lead a path to the alphabet
- Language is interconnected with all other curricular áreas
- The direct relationship between language proficiency and healthy self-esteem

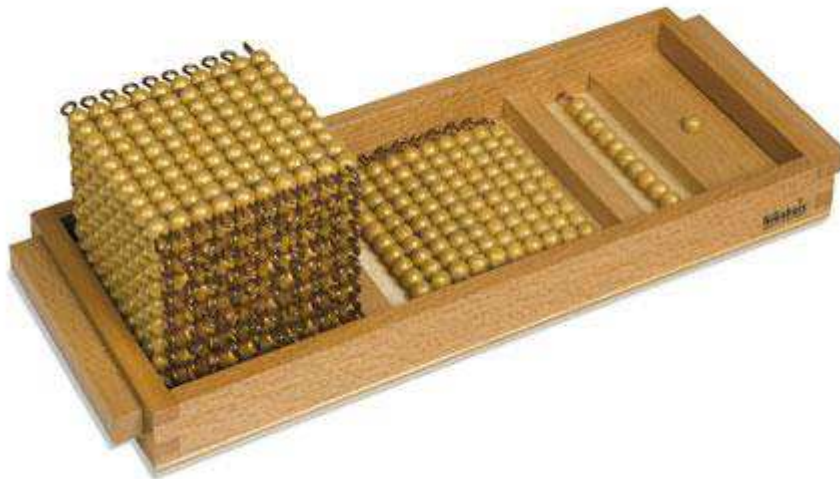


“ The only language that humans speak with absolute perfection is that learned in early childhood, when no one can teach them anything!”

Dr. Maria Montessori

Mathematics

- Mathematical mind in humans
- Experience mathematics in everyday life
- Sensorial materials and indirect preparation for mathematics
- The transition from the specific to the abstract as a natural human tendency



“(...) we have given a name to this part of the mind which is built up with exactitude, and we call it 'the mathematical mind'. I take this term from Pascal, the French philosopher, physicist and mathematician, who said that man's mind was mathematical by nature, and that knowledge and progress came from accurate observation.”

Dra. Maria Montessori

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Cultural education – Cosmic education

- Cosmic Education: offer the children the entire universe
- History, biology and geography: an interrelated whole
- Planting seeds to deliver the keys of the universe
- The ultimate goal of cosmic education: understand and feel solidarity with humanity and create an appreciation for nature.
- Cosmic education aims to help the child to develop a deep respect for the whole of humanity and nature that surrounds him/her.



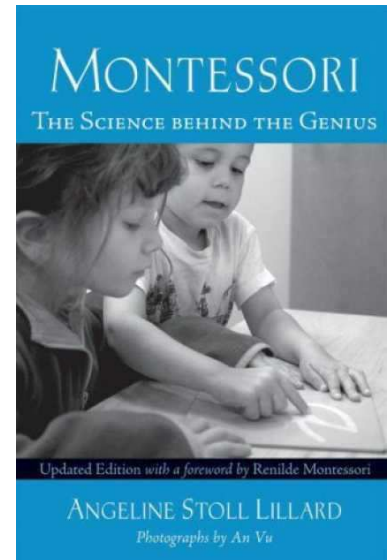
“We are now concerned not so much with science as with the interests of the human race and culture, which has only one nation - the world”

Dra. Maria Montessori

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La Science and Montessori

- The importance of the work of Dr. Angeline Stoll Lillard
 - The impact of movement on learning
 - Choice and perceived control
 - Prizes and extrinsic motivation
 - Learning from other children
 - Significant learning contexts
 - Adult interaction styles and child outcomes
 - Order in the environment and in the mind
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- Neuroscience and Montessori complement each other: use of the hands, significant experiences and interacting with the environment, elimination of stress for good learning, self-correction, isolating difficulties, completion of tasks ...
- The importance of the development of executive functions: judging, planning, imagining, anticipating, organising, developing self-awareness, self-correction, choosing strategies, monitoring one's own progress ...

Montessori called it "Standardization" because she believed it would be the norm if we did not interfere in the child's natural development. "Montessori education in general and Practical Life activities in particular, offer a unique "laboratory" for children to explore and build their most essential cognitive skills".

Dr. Steve Hughes, neuropsychologist

Academic structure

- **Face-to-face**
 - **Saturday**

Schedule

9:00 am – 2.00 pm (30 min break during the morning)

15:30 am – 19.30 pm (30 min break during the afternoon)
 - **Sunday**

Schedule

9:30 am – 2.00 pm (30 min break during the morning)
- **Certification**
 - All students who attend the seminar will be given a certificate confirming completion of the seminar.

General bibliography

- Original texts by Dr. Dra. Maria Montessori
- *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius* de Angeline Stoll Lillard.
- New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. 404 p. ISBN 0-19-516868-2
- Video “*Good at doing things*” by Dr. Steve Hughes <http://vimeo.com/3845446>
- Julia Volkman – Several videos about Neuroscience and Montessori from the Internet

“Any unnecessary aid is an obstacle to development.”

Dr. Maria Montessori