

WHAT IS MONTESSORI EDUCATION

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BY DR KHALID ANWER



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# About the Author

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*Dr. Khalid Anwer is a distinguished and respected authority in education. With a rich academic background and a deep passion for pedagogy, Dr. Anwer has dedicated his career to understanding and improving educational methodologies. As an accomplished author, Dr. Anwer has contributed significantly to the discourse on education. His work is characterized by its insightful perspectives and rigorous research, making him a trusted source of knowledge in the academic world. Dr. Anwer's latest book, "What is Montessori Education," is a testament to his expertise in the field. In this book, he delves into the Montessori approach to education, unraveling its intricacies and providing readers with a comprehensive understanding of this innovative pedagogical method. Through his writing, Dr. Anwer invites readers to explore the world of Montessori education and gain valuable insights into its principles, practices, and impact on the development of young minds. His commitment to advancing education is evident in the depth and clarity of his work, making "What is Montessori Education" an essential read for educators, parents, and anyone interested in the transformative power of education.*

*Dr. Khalid Anwer,*



# Education for LIFE

Centered on self-directed activity,  
experiential learning, and group play



BY DR. KHALID ANWER

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Australian Accredited Trainer/Assessor  
Educationist

# Contents

Introduction 05

The Montessori Approach 06

Planes of Development 07

Prepared Environment 08

Features of Environment 12

Elements of Environment 15

The Montessori Material 18

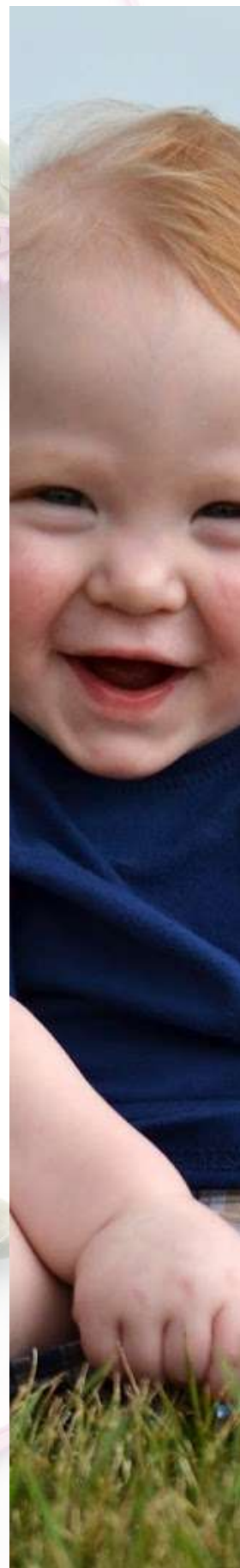
Principles of Montessori Education 21

Teaching and Learning Practices 22

Assessment and Evaluation 24

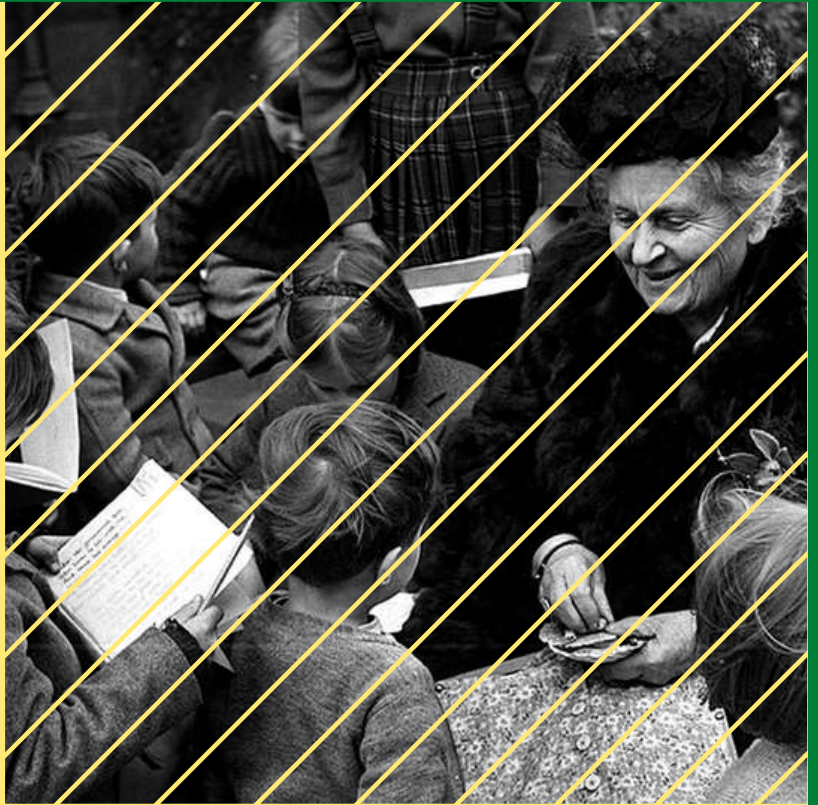
Maria Montessori Vision 26

What is Montessori Education



# Introduction

*By Khalid Anwer*



The child-centered educational methodology created by Italian physician Dr. Maria Montessori has revolutionized schools worldwide for over a century because of its salient elements. Montessori's learning environment enabled the children to reach their full potential happily. It resulted from years of research and innovation in health, psychology, and anthropology. You can feel something unusual going on the moment you walk into a classroom which can be recognized immediately. You'll observe kids deeply involved in their work, respectful of themselves and their surroundings, working alone and in groups, and frequently using specially created learning tools. Children who use the Montessori method experience rigorous and self-driven growth in all facets of their development, such as cognitive, emotional, social, and physical. The Montessori curriculum begins with an overview of the pedagogical principles that guide practice in Montessori schools and concepts that arose from Dr. Maria Montessori's pioneering research and discoveries. In 1907, Maria Montessori opened a classroom in Rome for children who were left alone while their parents worked as day laborers.

The Montessori classroom became recognized worldwide because the children who appeared grew socially, academically, and quickly, not via adult compulsion but through their activity, curiosity, and effort. Based on the success of the first classroom, Montessori educators all over the world have devoted themselves to watching, researching, and creating educational materials in environments that have been carefully tailored to meet the changing interests and needs of children. In the world of education, the breadth and depth of collected knowledge given by Montessori educators across time and geography are likely unparalleled. Many of Dr. Montessori's observations have been validated by research in the disciplines of psychology and neuroscience in recent years (Elliot 2006). Human development, according to Montessori, is fueled by the desire to be self-sufficient. Montessori education seeks to establish learning environments that foster the development of social, intellectual, and ethical independence in children and young people from birth to adulthood. As a result, Montessori education is frequently referred to as "education for life."

## The Montessori Approach

The Montessori approach is based on the premise that children learn best when engaging in activities they choose for themselves. According to evidence gathered in Montessori, children who have the opportunity to learn in this way become self-assured, self-reliant, and self-disciplined, with a lifelong love of learning and the desire to contribute to the well-being of their social group schools around the world over the last century. Children also improve their ability to move with accuracy, coordination, and capacity to focus and accomplish activities independently with tenacity and ingenuity. Learning sciences at Montessori schools are geared toward comprehending the planet and its role in the Universe and respect for the natural environment, which would be referred to as education for sustainability. in today's language.



Dr. Maria's recommendations regarding training children for peace inspired the Montessori approach to the humanities, which welcomes the diversity of human experience throughout historical times and geographical areas. Three main elements, human tendencies, planes of development, and the prepared environment, are central to Montessori education and determine the Montessori curriculum. Let's discuss all of them.



## Human Tendencies

According to Montessori, all humans have a set of natural characteristics which guide them towards growth and conduct throughout their lives. These attributes include the universal need to explore and analyze the world and the requirements for people to orient themselves systematically to the environment.

Humans used to interact throughout history and measured quantities in all corners of the world. Humans require physical activity and also seek the ability to work. Repetition is expected in this work, which leads to accuracy and self-perfection. Humans also tend to imagine things that are not immediately noticeable to the senses. Humans create a mental inventory of structured thoughts abstracted from their surroundings to feed their imagination since human reasoning and judgment are based on abstract notions.

Dr. Montessori labeled these inclinations 'human tendencies' since they are present in all human beings, regardless of their age, place, or time of life. Montessori educators consider these tendencies when designing a learning environment for each plane of development to enhance learning and growth.

*It includes the tendencies shared by all humans, the planes of development, and the prepared environment.*

## What Are the Four Planes of **Development?**

- The First Plane
- The Second Plane
- The Third Plane
- The Fourth Plane



### Planes of Development

From birth to adulthood, Dr. Montessori identified four planes, or phases, of development, each of which lasted around six years. Children and young individuals have intellectual abilities, social orientations, and creative possibilities that are unique to each stage of development. Each plane is distinguished by how the students in that plane learn, building on the previous plane's accomplishments and preparing for the next. The type and timing of the change between realms vary from person to person.

As discussed earlier, there is a Montessori learning environment for each plane of development. For each plane, the Montessori environment maintains vital features such as freedom of choice and movement, besides the focus on independent discovery and self-directed learning. Simultaneously, each set is designed to meet unique requirements, interests, and potential. There are times in each plane of development when children and young individuals show a strong interest in a specific activity or environmental feature.

1

The first plane of development lasts from birth until about six. Children are sensory explorers at this age and learn to operate independently in their surrounding environment and community. At this age, children build their intelligence by absorbing every part of their surroundings, including language and culture.

2

The second plane of development occurs between the ages of six and twelve. This period's developmental focus is intellectual independence, which goes hand in hand with the growth of ethics and social responsibility. Children become conceptual explorers at this age. They investigate and improve their understanding of the world via logic, abstract thought, and imagination.

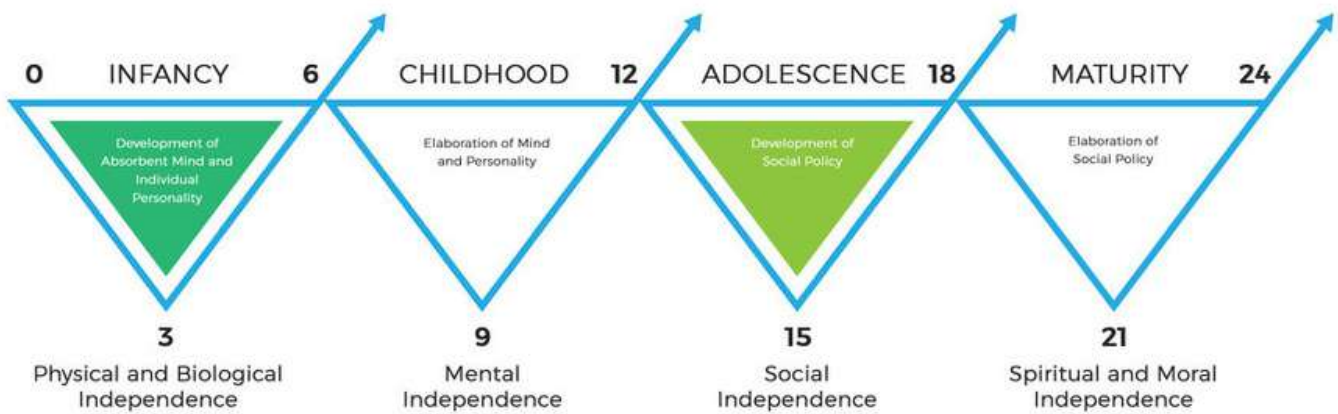
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In the third plane of development, young individuals between the ages of twelve and eighteen become humanistic explorers striving to learn and contribute to society. Individuals have a large capacity for creativity, and their learning style shifts to one that is more practical, allowing them to dig deeper into previously given topics in real-world settings.

4

In the fourth plane, the young individuals aged eighteen to twenty-four gain specific knowledge and skills, equipping them to take their place worldwide and achieve social and economic independence.

## THE **FOUR PLANES** OF DEVELOPMENT



Dr. Montessori referred to these planes as "sensitive moments for learning," particularly in the setting of early development. For example, throughout the first plane of development, from birth to six years, the sensitive phase for language is active.

This critical phase gives a window of opportunity for youngsters to acquire language quickly and pleasantly. If a child does not learn to talk during this phase; in that case, the sensitive period is lost, and language development becomes much more difficult. In the Montessori environment, the materials and activities created for that stage of development reflect the specific learning and needs of children at each stage.

### **The Prepared Environment**

The Montessori learning environment encourages infants, toddlers, and teenagers to learn by doing. Hence, feasible freedom and independence are granted because a certain degree of liberty is commensurate with their capacity to self-regulate and discipline. The children are also given information and activities that grab their attention and start cycles of focused activity that require judgment and concentration.

According to the Montessori philosophy, infants, children, and young people's growth are fostered by activity and engagement with their surroundings. As a result, what is provided in the environment will significantly impact how children develop intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. Educational research in recent decades has enhanced what Montessori educators have given to the role of the environment in human development, building on theories of place established by cultural geographers (Ellis 2005).

The following are the ***fundamental elements*** of a Montessori learning environment:



**Infants, children, or Young people**



**Trained Teachers**



**The Physical Environment**



**Educational Material**

Montessori learning environments support children's natural desire to work and interest in learning. They allow youngsters to participate in spontaneous and intentional activities supervised by a trained teacher.

A Montessori learning environment is designed in four dimensions. The Montessori teacher's first responsibility is to prepare the learning environment, and they are required not to interfere with the child's patterns and pace of learning too. However, Montessori teachers should set the stage, supply proper tools, and then take a step back to offer students time and space to experiment Mooney (2000). Montessori's legacy includes open-ended scheduling with vast blocks of time for free work and play.



### Opportunities in the Prepared Environment

A Montessori-prepared environment includes **movement**, **work**, **concentration**, and **freedom** to give various developmental opportunities.

- The dynamic environment is set up so children feel safe, secure, and confident in following their passions and concentrating intensely.
- Furniture and apparatuses tailored to the children's size and strength, as well as unique instructional materials that are developed to precise specifications and linked to developmental stage, define the physical environment.
- The temporal environment is set up to allow youngsters to develop at their own pace. The school day consists of continuous three-hour work periods whenever feasible so that children can pursue their interests and attain their learning goals without interruption.
- As needed, a multi-age peer group, a qualified instructor, and trained teaching assistants make up the social environment. This environment aspect is created so infants, children, or young people may grow as individuals and social creatures. The environment includes activities that connect kids to their family, community, and culture in meaningful ways, also the activities that help them acquire a sense of their place in the world and the larger Universe.



### Movement

The Montessori environment is established to reflect the belief that movement is essential for learning since children attempt to develop and enhance **two types of movement** from the moment they are born:

- Gross motor balance and whole-body movement
- Fine motor hand-eye coordination and hand movement refinement

The objective for young children is to put both forms of movement under mental control progressively. Bringing movement under mental control is a foundation of the independence that children and young adults gain during their early years.

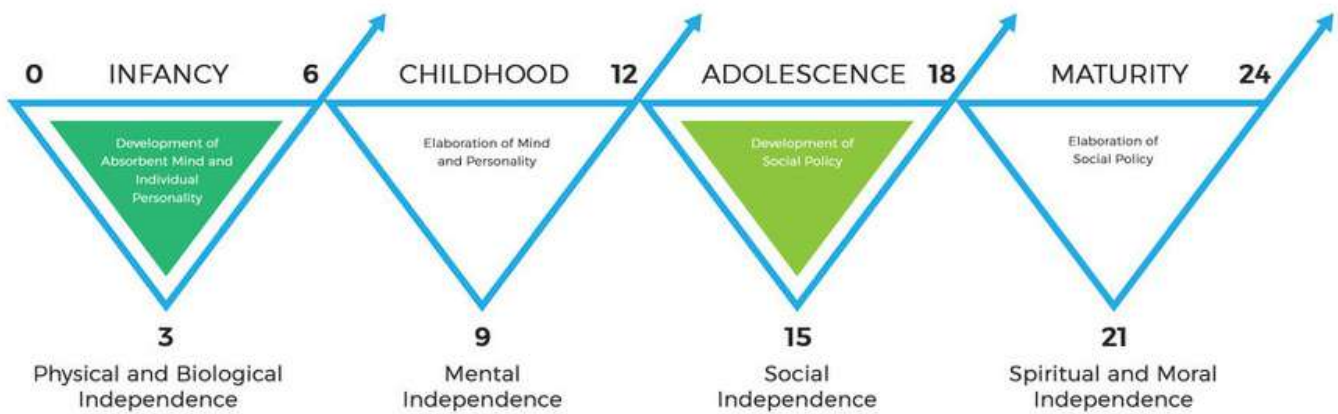
### Work

A Montessori-prepared environment includes Infants, children, and young adults usually engage in impulsive activity, which Montessori educators call work. Children focus on their activity when chosen independently, intended to repeat and improve what they are doing. They enhance their focus and judgment as they work. Others are required not to direct this form of work; instead, it emerges from a child's curiosity, typically tied to a sensitive era.



Dr. Montessori coined the term "work" to describe this type of activity in recognition of the sense of purpose that infants, children, and young adults display while engaged in it and also to give dignity to the enormous task of creative self-construction that they are involved in while working. **Montessori learning spaces influence engagement** and support development through significant activity.

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-  **Educational Material**

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## Concentration



### Concentration

When children focus, all aspects of their personality, like movement, attention, and judgment, are integrated. They also boost their self-esteem and ability to affect change in the world. According to the Montessori philosophy, concentration is a natural condition of infancy that all children may achieve. Learning early in life, the capacity to focus becomes a vital asset that substantially benefits older children and teenagers' educational experiences. Deep focus is more likely to happen at all ages and stages when the activity chosen reflects a developmental requirement.

### Freedom

Children are fascinated by everything around them from the moment they are born. They are compelled to investigate their surroundings to further their growth. If children respond to this desire, they must have the opportunity to freely explore and learn about their surroundings. Children must focus their full attention on what interests them with the least amount of interruption.

In Montessori educational environments, the children can think for themselves, make decisions, and handle the repercussions of their choices. They have the freedom to increase their independence and take on responsibilities proportionate to their level of autonomy.

### *Infants, children, and young adults in Montessori contexts are free to:*

- ▶ *Choose activities from among those previously introduced*
- ▶ *Work with activities for as long as their interest dictates and until an internal satisfaction is achieved*
- ▶ *Choose their place of work and the people they work with*
- ▶ *Communicate with others*
- ▶ *Work without interruption*
- ▶ *Develop their work pattern*

In Montessori environments, infants, children, and young people are not allowed to disrupt or damage others, which leads to the safety and harmonious functioning of the learning environment.



## Freedom



There are **two main characteristics** of Montessori-prepared surroundings. They are lovely, well-organized, and made for mixed-age groups.

### **Beauty and Order**

Montessori surroundings are designed to be both attractive and well-organized. A Montessori environment's beauty is the result of a confluence of factors. The space should be light-filled, roomy, and clutter-free so that youngsters may walk around freely. The outdoor area is just as appealing as the interior section and is always open to the kids. The furniture is lovely and basic in design, and it is light enough for youngsters to walk around and arrange on their own if they want. The use of color, fabric, decoration, and music is straightforward and artistic to reflect the aesthetic principles of the children's cultural origins rather than the mass-produced childhood culture supported by the media and corporate interests. An artistically beautiful environment, according to Montessori, inspires and uplifts children while assisting them in concentrating. Children's sense of well-being is also dependent on order and stability.

Children rely heavily on external order in the environment to support the development of an emerging internal mental order in early childhood. As a result, children in early childhood require an orderly, predictable environment in which they can derive meaning and develop knowledge and understanding of the world and its order. An ordered environment in early childhood helps children construct a stable, internal order.

### ***Children become particularly interested in expanding the order they have previously internalized beyond the age of six by:***

- Classifying the world using knowledge systems derived from the educational disciplines
- Understanding time and change
- Building a sense of moral order
- Learning to think in abstractions

On the other hand, adolescents are eager to put their knowledge and understanding into practice in ways representing community occupations.



## Multi-age Groupings

The Montessori environment is designed to accommodate children of all ages. These groups function similarly to families, offering meaningful learning and development opportunities in two ways.

**First**, for starters, mixed-age groups inspire children to aspire to their older friends' accomplishments. New students are welcomed into a mature, well-established atmosphere with solid work and social interaction models.

**Second**, multi-age groups allow older children to learn to treat younger ones with care and respect while allowing them to use 'peer teaching' to reinforce their learning and comprehension. Children in multi-age groups can work through the curriculum at their speed rather than being restricted to one year of instruction.



### *Forms of multi-age groups*

#### ***The Nido***

Early childhood setting for children from birth to children who are walking independently, approximately 15-18 months

#### ***The Infant Community***

Early childhood setting for children who are walking independently, i.e., From 15-18 months to 3 years

#### ***The Children's House***

Preschool or extended day setting for children from 3 to 6 years

#### ***The Primary School***

A classroom for children aged from 6 to 9 years and a classroom for children aged 9 to 12 years, or one classroom for children aged from 6 to 12 years

#### ***The Secondary School***

A learning environment for students aged from 12 to 15 and a learning environment for students aged from 15 to 18 years



### Multi-Age Groupings' Advantages

The opportunity to experience three roles, i.e., being the youngest, in the middle, the oldest, and the time to develop appropriate behaviors for all three roles;

- Experiences that stimulate a sense of caring and responsibility for others and the continuation from year to year of the culture of the class as a caring community
- Experience of social cohesion and a sense of place gained from being in the same environment for three years
- Exposure to a diversity of talents, aptitudes, and interests, and a comprehensive curriculum beyond a single year
- Experience of appropriate behavior and teaching and learning modeled from a broad age range of their peers
- Development of self-esteem and a greater understanding of community responsibility from roles as leaders in the group

- Groupings of similar interests and learning needs from across the age groups work together at their own pace
- Work in the environment prepared for a broad age range so that students can see the whole progression of the curriculum for their group, progress independently in areas of strength, and also revisit areas of knowledge comfortably as required
- Experience of stability and social cohesion with the same teacher within a stable community for three years
- New students join a community that is already formed, and the teacher builds a solid relationship with each one
- Individual learning is more effectively supported because there is more opportunity for teachers to know the students well
- Intimate knowledge by the teacher of approximately two-thirds of the children in the class at the beginning of each new school year provides ample opportunity to build strong relationships with the new third who arrive each year
- Younger children observe materials and procedures used by older children, so they already have some familiarity with the materials, procedures, and knowledge before the teacher gives them the lesson directly

Children will move between academic levels for different courses as needed at the future school, based on multi-age classrooms within a vertical curriculum system. Individual children's learning requirements are best handled by having them participate in a suitable curriculum for their stage of learning readiness because brain development is controlled by life experiences rather than chronological age per se.



The Montessori-prepared environment has three main elements:

1. The Children
2. Montessori Teachers
3. Material

### The Children

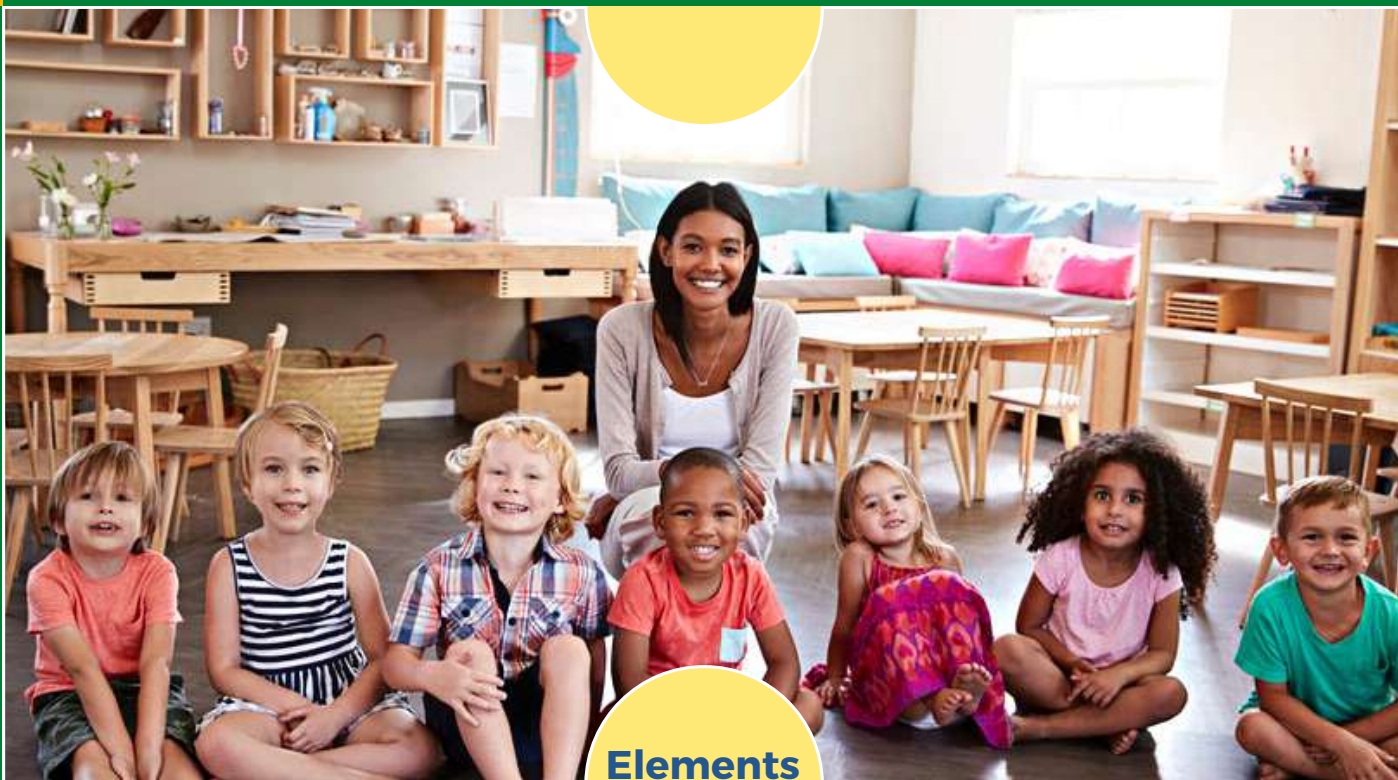
Observing the activities of communities of children in a prepared environment gave rise to the Montessori approach's ideas and practice. The preparation of the environment, the design of the items, and the activities supplied to the children are governed by the children's physical, emotional, psychological, social, and intellectual needs at each stage of development.

In the opinion of Dr. Montessori, **"freedom to act in a prepared environment where the child may be cognitively active"** is an **"essential condition"** for child development.

Each stage of development provides a new chance for children to create themselves. In the Montessori view, if children can achieve the promise and potential of their present stage of development, their chance of fulfilling future potential becomes far more assured.

In a Montessori environment, children's self-selected activity is the spark for learning; in other words, learning is a result of children's active choices driven by curiosity. Montessori environments are designed to accommodate large groups of youngsters.





## Elements

In other words, environments are prepared to encourage children to be responsible and caring citizens; who are part of a community of peers to become active and contributing members of the wider community. In an era of declining birth rates and single-parent homes, the community of children can also supply 'pseudo siblings.' Montessori classrooms are easily adaptable to accommodate the requirements of children from a wide range of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds and children with special needs and abilities.

Montessori educators feel that an inclusive approach benefits all children in the community. The curriculum is child-centered and personalized, so each child's learning path is unique. Individual children's knowledge and abilities are always the beginning point for learning. The Montessori tools and exercises help students break down learning into simple, progressive steps. Individual pupils are given as much repetition, consolidation, application, and extension as they require in each curriculum area.

**Children become more confident learners due to this approach**, eager to take on intellectual challenges, solve issues, and continue until they have mastered curriculum aspects.

### The Montessori Teacher

The Montessori teacher's role is to link the children to the Montessori-prepared environment. The teacher's function is broadly defined as follows:

- ▶ Preparing the learning environment
- ▶ Linking the children to appropriate and challenging activities
- ▶ Preparing the learning environment
- ▶ Leaving children free to engage in activity until their interest is satisfied, only assisting where required
- ▶ Coordinating the dynamic balance between freedom and discipline
- ▶ Recording child's progress and achievement

**Montessori teachers cultivate** social and supportive connections with their students based on respect for their skills and developmental needs. Although children in a Montessori classroom do not have complete independence, they do have the option of selecting their tasks. The teacher respects individual work choices and ensures that group activities do not precede. Montessori instructors are taught to pay close attention to the interests and activities of the children.

The way Montessori educators examine children's activities can be likened to a **'fluid rather than static'** approach to observation for teachers working in early childhood settings. A Montessori teacher's most crucial skills throughout a rigorous training program are how to watch constructively and when and how much, or how little, to interfere.

Montessori teachers utilize evidence from close observation to judge how to promote children's interests and satisfy their learning requirements. Compliance is often used to track the progress of youngsters. Montessori instructors give appropriate challenges by showing children how to engage with Montessori materials that are adapted to their present needs and interests based on their observations.



As a result, Montessori **instructors must thoroughly understand the sequencing, scope, and application** of Montessori materials to successfully choose and present lessons as needed. The Montessori curriculum includes a wide range of activities and exercises at each stage of development. Montessori instructors use this repertory to ensure that each child receives the appropriate lesson or activity at the proper time.

Snow et al. (2007) argue that "the same combination of instructional materials and procedures" does not "work for each kid" in literacy education. Their findings claim that "successful instructors can build a unique blend of educational components for each kid they interact with" from a "common menu of resources, tactics, and surroundings."

Montessori educators employ this technique in all subject areas for children and young people at all development stages and consult with parents regularly throughout each three-year stage. Montessori educators collaborate with other specialists, such as speech pathologists, occupational therapists, and specialty curriculum consultants.



### **Montessori teachers hold certifications**

for one or more developmental stages (birth to three, three to six, and six to twelve) and teaching credentials recognized by state educational authorities. Each Montessori teacher-training course includes a full academic year of study of the Montessori method and Montessori professional experience through the practicum.

### **The Montessori Materials**

The Montessori materials are collections of items, each created to stringent standards. The Montessori environment is meticulously prepared, including the developmental items appropriate for that context. The contents are primarily intended to:

- ▶ Capture interest
- ▶ Extend concentration
- ▶ Encourage precise use
- ▶ Invite interaction and manipulation
- ▶ Challenge the intellect act as an indirect preparation for future experiences

Children are taught how to utilize the resources through presentations, which are short yet detailed instructions. Children can work with activities and exercises matched with those materials as frequently and for as long as they desire after receiving a presentation and learning how to utilize them. Many items feature built-in mistake control, allowing youngsters to learn independently with minimal adult assistance.



As a result, children in **Montessori environments develop confidence** in their talents and learn to take charge of their learning early. While many Montessori presentations show children how to use materials, others demonstrate how to develop skills and knowledge without using items, such as lessons in movement, social interactions, or singing.

Montessori materials engage children in language and literacy, mathematics, visual and performing arts, music, science, biology, geography, and history, among other aspects of human experience and educational learning. The items represent abstract educational ideas, which children may learn through manipulation, exploration, and problem-solving. As a result, there is better knowledge and memory of what has been known.

*Feez (2010) describes this process in the context of Montessori early childhood education in the following way:*

Montessori pedagogy is based on a collection of items that 'materialize' educational ideas in a tangible manner that children can control. Children are taught how to utilize the objects and are given particular terminology when discussing the concepts that the things represent. Then after the lesson, the children can work with the objects at their leisure.



## Montessori Material

Children can do so independently when they choose to interact with the items. For prolonged periods, the objects 'remember' the concepts in a form that children can physically 'grasp.' Children learn to grab and manipulate items with their hands while also learning how to grasp and manipulate concepts in their heads.

On open shelves, the Montessori items are always on exhibit. Each topic area's resources are represented in the order in which they are offered to the pupils. As a result, a thoroughly prepared environment may exemplify the Montessori curriculum's scope and sequencing at that stage.

The youngsters can take any items they know how to utilize from the shelf at any moment. When children are taught how to use things, they are also taught how to manage them gently and return them to their proper position after completing their tasks.

Many, but not all, of the materials are designed for individual use. It is common to see a group of children working with great concentration on individual activities they have chosen if their space and engagement get respected by others.

As children become older and enter primary school, they become more collaborative in their learning activities, research projects, whole-class projects, and community initiatives. ***Adolescents participate in jobs that represent societal life.***





## Montessori Pedagogy

The ideas underpinning Montessori pedagogy have evolved through more than a century of observing children's activities and evaluating teaching practice in Montessori learning environments worldwide. Put another way, the theory is the result of decades of practice. A rising amount of research has begun to describe the concepts of Montessori teaching in ways familiar to today's educators in recent decades.

Comparisons of Montessori principles with modern discoveries into child development and teaching qualities, as well as comparisons of Montessori educational results with national and international benchmarks of educational attainment, are included in this research.

Many educational aims, concerns, and understandings becoming increasingly significant in the twenty-first century are being proven to have been predicted by Montessori principles and their outcomes.

*An examination of the literature suggests that designers of tactile technologies and digital manipulatives are interested in Montessori materials Leone (2004).*





## Principles - Montessori

All have been established in a study published by Lillard (2005), explain the principles that support the learning objectives, teaching and learning activities, assessment, and evaluation found in Montessori learning environments:

- ▶ Movement and cognition are closely entwined, and movement can enhance thinking and learning
- ▶ Learning and well-being are improved when people have a sense of control over their lives
- ▶ People learn better when they are interested in what they are learning
- ▶ Tying extrinsic rewards to an activity, like money for reading or high grades for tests, negatively impacts motivation to engage in that activity when the reward is withdrawn
- ▶ Collaborative arrangements can be very conducive to learning
- ▶ Order in the environment is beneficial to children

- ▶ Learning situated in meaningful contexts is often more profound and affluent than learning in abstract contexts
- ▶ Particular forms of adult interaction are associated with more optimal child outcomes

### Teaching and Learning Practices

Montessori teachers recognize phases of physical, psychological, intellectual, and social development and design learning settings and curriculum content appropriate for each stage, based on more than a century of experience and experimentation. Montessori teachers may develop lessons that fit the requirements of individual children in the Montessori setting at any given time by combining this information with observations and record-keeping. Rather than expecting children to adapt to the curriculum, the Montessori curriculum is tailored to the readiness and interests of individual children. The resulting teaching and learning methods are unique.



## Teaching & Learning Practices

- ▶ The children learn how to use the Montessori materials by observing the teacher explain how to utilize them in a precise and orderly manner. When children utilize the materials to demonstrate that they understand how to continue, they can uncover the concepts contained in the materials via their work. The youngsters create their knowledge and understanding in this way.
- ▶ Children above the age of six frequently repeat the exercise with many variations. Adding to it might lead to a 'great work' that gives youngsters this age a sense of success and fulfillment. Adolescents appreciate participating in socially beneficial initiatives where they may work as apprentices with professionals of all ages from the community.
- ▶ The activities showed or supplied by the adult in all Montessori contexts are open-ended for all ages and stages. The children are then allowed to repeat any activity until they are satisfied internally. Children under the age of six typically repeat an activity in the same way until they achieve a degree of perfection that brings them inner happiness.
- ▶ Most courses are offered to individuals at the **Infant Community** and the **Children's House** levels. Children ready for the same topic after six are placed together, and most classes are taught in small groups. In a multi-age environment, this implies that younger children have many opportunities to witness older children's classes and the follow-up work they complete afterward. The materials and activities are already familiar to the younger children by the time they are ready for these classes.

## Teaching & Learning Practices

- ▶ Children tend to work alone at the **Children's House** as they form their own identities. When they begin to prefer cooperating with other children, it indicates that they are developing the qualities of children ready for a six- to nine-year-old school. Children between the ages of six and nine spend much time collaborating with others. It is a period when they learn to work as a team and as part of a group.
- ▶ Children in Montessori classes begin having frequent individual conferences with the teacher when they are six years old. The teacher assists the students in developing their abilities to evaluate their work during these sessions. 'Is there a lesson you would want to have that we have not discussed?' is typically the last question posed at the end of each conference. This approach encourages children to take charge of their education. Adolescents are also taught to take responsibility for their educational growth.
- ▶ Adolescents' progress through the curriculum is evaluated using criteria that the students are aware of from the program's start. Students utilize these criteria to track their progress throughout the program of study. The focus is on the individual's improvement rather than comparisons to other people's success. Because there is no competition, teenagers believe the assessment procedure is fair.





## ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

From one stage of learning to the next, the Montessori curriculum is organized in a developmental sequence. On the other hand, individual students can effectively complete aspects of the curriculum in a unique series. As a result, inter-student comparisons may be meaningless.

Because there are comparably few children of the same age and stage in a multi-age classroom, the validity of norm-referenced evaluation and student ranking is further decreased in the Montessori environment. As a result, rather than norm-referenced evaluation, assessment in Montessori classrooms focuses on each student's mastery of skills and knowledge at any stage in the sequence.

Children demonstrate their development and success in various ways, including spoken and written language, social interaction, creative arts such as theatre, visual arts, and model-making, and, most significantly, by putting what they have learned into practice.

### FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Montessori instructors keep meticulous records to ensure students receive the correct teachings at the right time. Teachers can arrange the classes that students will require next by observing them daily and maintaining accurate records. A Montessori teacher keeps records of:

- Lessons given
- Student progress and achievement
- The follow-up work completed by each student
- Difficulties encountered by individual
- Students and how those difficulties were resolved

**Formative assessment** is made easier using Montessori teaching and learning techniques for example teachers get to know each kid in their class for three years, which is impossible to do when children go to a new class with a new teacher every school year.

Then after three years of intensive observation, Montessori teachers become acutely aware of their pupils' learning styles, strengths, and areas for future development. The instructor may readily monitor and record levels of knowledge and competence in individuals because most sessions are offered to individuals or small groups. During the class, all students are allowed to demonstrate that they understand how to utilize the resources. When the lesson is delivered to the next set of students ready for the task, any student who requires further instruction can review it.

Because the resources are self-correcting, when students complete the exercises using the materials, both the instructor and the students know that they have acquired the knowledge, skills, and understanding. The materials' design also ensures that youngsters can figure out when anything is wrong with themselves. They understand they can request another lesson or redo the exercise until they know it.

Making errors becomes a 'friend' to youngsters in this sense because a mistake is a chance for more significant learning and comprehension. When kids pick their projects, they disclose much about their interests and talents at any given moment, which instructors may watch and document. Students beyond the age of six become co-assessors of their work with the instructor during frequent individual sessions with the teacher. Students monitor their development using defined criteria by the time they reach the teenage level.

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

***Observation, portfolio compilation, and thorough records of progress are used to track student accomplishments in Montessori classes.***

Achievement benchmarks or standards-based criteria can also assess progress. The progress can be given in words that are important to the student, as well as to instructors, parents, and the broader community. While formal testing can be utilized in a Montessori environment, it should be done sparingly. With enough context, so all children understand why the evaluation is necessary. Montessori education is tailored to each child's unique needs and interests.

Children like demonstrating their knowledge and frequently ask for tests, such as spelling words; rather than needing to comply with a curriculum requirement, the testing is motivated by their satisfaction in accomplishment and a sense of striving for more significant objectives. ***One critical condition is for children to feel appreciated*** and contribute to the culture in which they live.

Aspects of the Montessori curriculum that are not covered by the Montessori curriculum are included in the teaching and learning. It is most efficiently accomplished when the new elements are presented in the traditional Montessori curriculum presentation.





## MARIA MONTESSORI VISION

It may seem strange to parents and caregivers who attended conventional schools how Maria Montessori teaches. The Montessori method's goal is to teach children principles that they will carry with them throughout their education, careers, and lives. We included a few essential quotes from Maria Montessori that condense her ideas about the motivations behind her educational philosophy in order to illustrate the vision.

We must assist the youngster in acting independently, deciding independently, and thinking independently; this is the art of those who seek to serve the spirit.

An education capable of preserving humanity is no little task; it entails the spiritual development of individual, the strengthening of his value as a unique human being, and the educating of young people to comprehend the conditions in which they reside."

Then, we are witnesses to the evolution of the human soul and the appearance of the New Man, who will no longer be a victim of circumstance but, instead, will be able to shape and lead the course of humankind's future due to his unclouded vision.



*"It is not true," says Dr. Montessori, "that I invented what is called the Montessori Method. I have studied the child, I have taken what the child has given me and expressed it, and that is what is called the Montessori Method."*

I wasn't anticipating liking this book as much as I did, but once I started reading, I could not stop and wrapped it up in a single day! This book provides a comprehensive overview of the educational standards due to Dr. Maria Montessori's groundbreaking research and experiences. Additionally, it focuses on the early childhood educational approach, including the children, teacher, material, environment, formative, and summative assessment. I recommend educators, parents, caregivers, and anyone who aspires a deep understanding of the child and their developmental needs.

*Dr. S. Jabeen*



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*Australian Accredited Trainer & Assessor*



( 5/5 )