

What is the Montessori way of learning?

The Montessori learning method is named after its founder Maria Montessori (1870-1952). She was the first female physician in Italy. Although she was a doctor this did not limit her interest in education. She worked with poverty stricken children, who lacked the proper learning environment. In 1907 she opened a pre-school, Casa di Bambini. The school consisted of 50 children aged two to five years of age.

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The children stayed at the school all day while their parents were at work. They were fed two times a day, bathed, and received medical attention. Her schools were designed around the needs of the children. She observed that children like to work in their own space at their own level. Her observations led to furniture being made specifically for the children, child sized furniture.

{quotes}The Montessori way of learning is in the philosophy of child development and guiding the growth of the child, believing that education begins at birth and the early years of childhood.{/quotes} Maria Montessori developed a curriculum which focused on the child's senses. Her particular teaching methods attended to the four senses; sight, sound, smell, and touch. The classroom consists of a number of learning aids; they range from practical life, conversational manners, table manners, and interaction with others.

Practical life focuses on the child's concentration, movement, repetition in regards to his daily routines, environment around him, grace and courtesy. Many have renowned her math approach as excellent. Her curriculum has all the regular core subjects that you will find in a public school. Her materials are graded in difficulty and emphasize her interest in self help skills. She became recognized for her successful methods of encouraging children to learn without boundaries.

The role of the teacher is that of an observer and facilitator. Teachers are there to demonstrate the proper use of materials and communicate as needed, allowing the children to become independent learners. A teacher becomes familiar with the children and then matches the children to the appropriate material.

Many homeschoolers are fond of the Montessori curriculum. Parents choose this method because it revolves around the children, without having any set boundaries. The child is free to explore and learn at their own pace without outside influences.

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