

MONTESSORI CHILDREN'S HOUSE

Language Information For Parents

Single Sounds

The child should learn to hear these sounds before he is taught to recognize them visually. You can help him acquire sound awareness abilities by playing the following games:

1. "I SPY." "I spy with my little eye, something on the table beginning with the sound "b". Start with just one object on the table and gradually increase the number. Eventually, enlarge the area in which the objects are located; "I spy something in that corner which begins with the sound "t". You can also have the child find words with a particular sound at the end, in the middle, or more simply, just in the word.
2. Ask the child to think of words which begin with a particular sound. On a walk or drive, ask the child to watch for things which start with "g" or have a "g" in them.
3. Have the child gather objects around the house which begin with a particular sound.

In the Montessori classroom we teach the single sound as follows:

a as in apple	j as in joy	s as in slip
b as in bat	k as in keep	t as in tip
c as in cat	l as in lamp	u as in up
d as in dog	m as in map	v as in vat
e as in exit	n as in nap	w as in wait
f as in fat	o as in otter	x as in exit
g as in girl	p as in pig	y as in you
h as in hot	q as in quilt	z as in zip
i as in it	r as in red	

When teaching the consonants, try not to blend them with a vowel. Say "b" not "bu" or "m" as in "mmmm good" rather than "mu". Children have difficulty with the vowels so give these extra attention. Distinguish "e" from "i".

When your child has become aware of the sounds, he should begin to recognize them visually. Please teach the lower case letters, not capitals. This goes for both writing and reading. A child naturally focuses on the capitals, but it is far more important that he learns the small letters. After that, the capital letters will come naturally for him. Urge your child to write the small letters---particularly with his name.

When the child has mastered 10 or more of the letters in the alphabet, he can begin to read simple words. Begin with 3 or 2 letter words which use the sounds he knows. Never give the child words which are beyond his ability unless he chooses them himself and in that case, help him if necessary.



Some Comparisons of Montessori Education with Traditional Education

A Montessori program is based on self-direction, non-competitive and cooperative activities that help a child develop a strong self-image, high levels of academic and social competence, and the confidence to face challenges with optimism. Encouraged to make decisions from an early age, Montessori educated children are problem-solvers who can make appropriate choices, manage their time, and work well with others. They exchange ideas and discuss work freely. These positive communication skills build the foundation for negotiating new settings.

Montessori	Traditional
Views the child holistically, valuing cognitive, psychological, social, and spiritual development	Views the child in terms of competence, skill level, and achievement with an emphasis on core curricula standards and social development
Child is an active participant in learning; allowed to move about and respectfully explore the classroom environment; teacher is an instructional facilitator and guide	Child is a more passive participant in learning; teacher has a more dominant, central role in classroom activity
A carefully prepared learning environment and method encourages development of internal self-discipline and intrinsic motivation	Teacher acts as a primary enforcer of external discipline promoting extrinsic motivation
Instruction, both individual and group, adapts to students' learning styles and developmental levels	Instruction, both individual and group, adapts to core curricula benchmarks
Three-year span of age grouping, three-year cycles allow teacher, students, and parents to develop supportive, collaborative and trusting relationships	Same-age and/or skill level grouping; one-year cycles can limit development of strong teacher, student, and parent collaboration
Grace, courtesy, and conflict resolution are integral parts of daily Montessori peace curriculum	Conflict resolution is usually taught separately from daily classroom activity
Values concentration and depth of experience; supplies uninterrupted time for focused work cycle to develop	Values completion of assignments; time is tightly scheduled
Child's learning pace is internally determined	Instructional pace usually set by core-curricula standard expectations, group norm, or teacher
Child allowed to spot own errors through feedback from the materials; errors are viewed as part of the learning process	Work is usually corrected by the teacher; errors are viewed as mistakes
Learning is reinforced internally through the child's own repetition of an activity and internal feelings of success	Learning is reinforced externally by test scores and rewards, competition and grades
Care of self and environment are emphasized as integral to the learning experience	Less emphasis on self-care, spatial awareness, and care of the environment
Child can work where he/she is comfortable and the child often has choices between working alone or with a group that is highly collaborative among older students	Child is usually assigned a specific work space; talking among peers discouraged
Multi-disciplinary, interwoven curriculum	Curriculum areas usually taught as separate topics
Child learns to share leadership; egalitarian interaction is encouraged	Hierarchical classroom structure is more prominent
Progress is reported through multiple formats: conferences, narrative reports, checklists and portfolio of student's work	Progress is usually reported through conferences, report cards/grades, and test scores
Children are encouraged to teach, collaborate, and help each other	Most teaching is done by the teacher and collaboration is an alternative teaching strategy
Child is provided opportunities to choose own work from interest and abilities, concepts taught within context of interest	Curricula organized and structured for child based on core curricula standards
Goal is to foster a love of learning	Goal is to master core curricula objectives