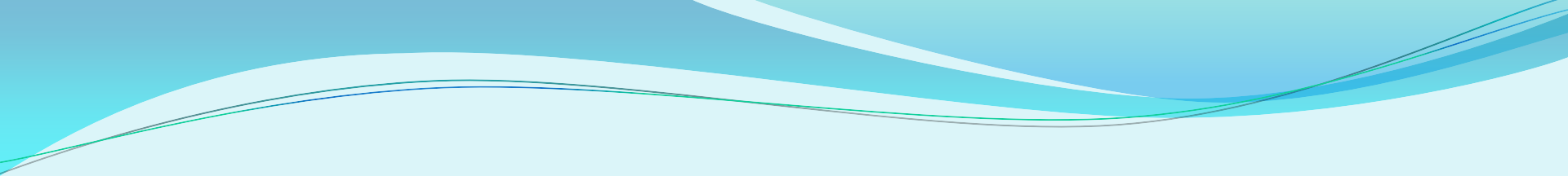




Education For Life

Pedagogy of Maria Montessori

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Polish Montessori Association
Montessori Europe

- 
- Montessori about the development of the child
 - Organisation of the system of education
 - Education as an aid to life
 - The role of learning prepared environment

Traditional system of education

“The world of education is like an island where people cut off from the world are prepared for life by exclusion from it” [Montessori M., 1992, p, 10].



Education...

“It is the protection of life. Help given to life in accordance with the laws of its development” [Montessori M., 1989, p. 3].



Education as an aid to life

- A child is not a being who should be taught something,
- his life does not start when he crosses the threshold of a kindergarten / school.



Education as an aid to life

- “The greatness of the human personality begins at the hour of birth” [Montessori M., 1992, p. 4],



The CHILD is a wonderful MYSTERY



- The child can become anyone/no matter who because he has the hidden, invisible potential, the beginning of an individualised personality

Free the child's potential,
and you will transform
him into the world.

Maria Montessori

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Developmental potential



Man is *condemned to development*

(Kazimierz Dąbrowski)

- The child has not been provided with specific properties, but with the potential to build them.
- The child is prepared, „qualified” for development

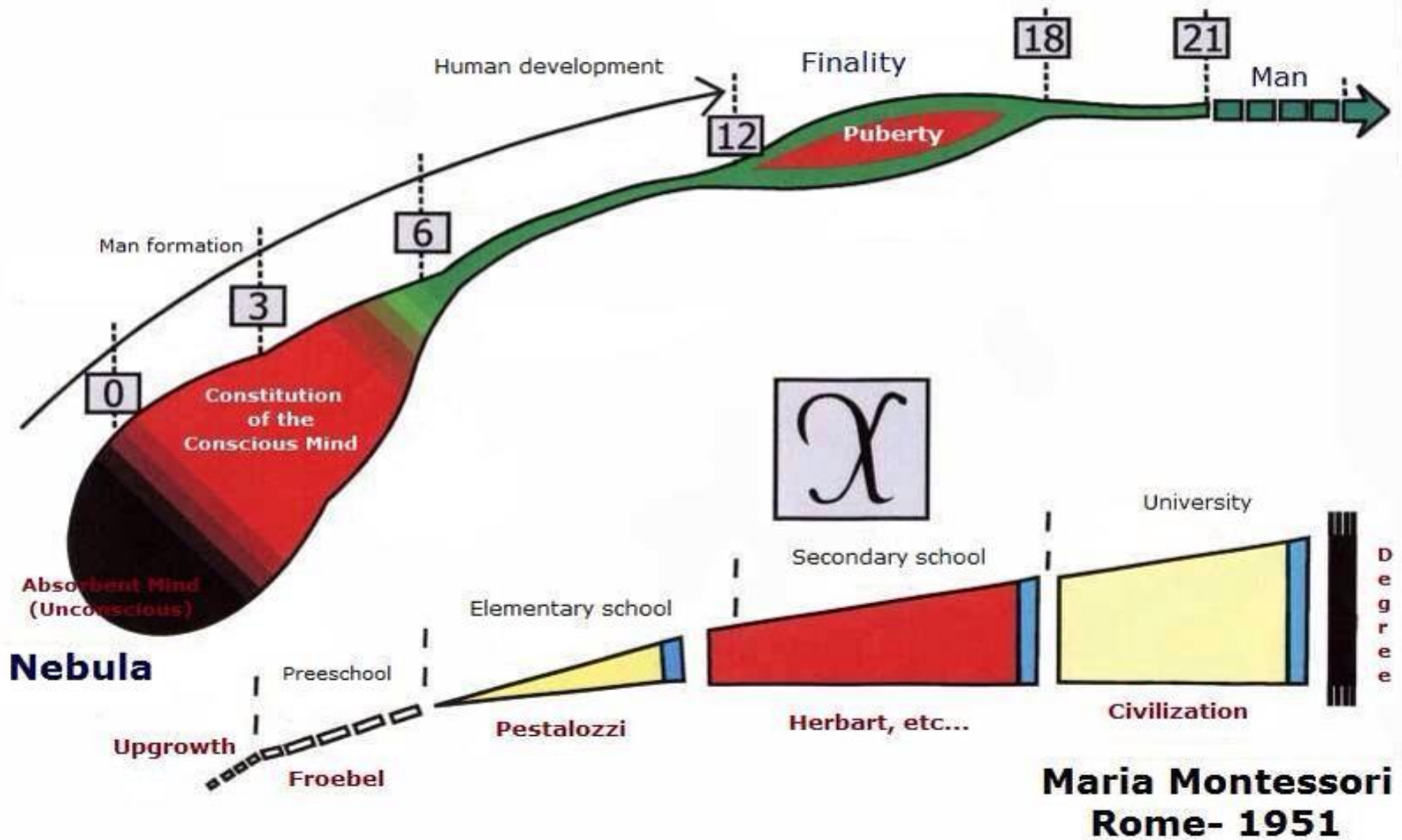
Education as an aid to life

What can WE do “for life” – for children?

- **ensure conditions for carrying out their “own internal development project...”**
- **... in an individual way while following their own rhythm”** [Trabalzini, 2009, p. 167]



Four stages of development The Bulb



Montessori observed children

- To establish the inner plan
- To establish educational conditions

Number _____ Date _____
Name and Surname _____ Age _____
Name of Parents _____ Mother's Age _____ Father's Age _____
Professions _____
Details of Hereditary Antecedents _____
Personal Antecedents _____

ANTHROPOLOGICAL NOTES

Standing Stature	Weight	Chest Meas.	Bipedal Stature	Index of Stature ¹	Footed Index ¹	HEAD			
						Cir.	Dis. Front to Back	Dis. Across	Co- stic Index

Physical Constitution _____
Condition of Muscles _____
Colour of Skin _____
Colour of Hair _____

NOTES

Observe the Child

- How: Set aside time to observe a child.
- How does the child interact with the environment? With peers?
 - What activities engage the child?
 - What can the child do independently?
 - What changes could be made in the environment to foster independence? To provide more challenge?

circle
Montessori
practical-life work
absorbent-mind
prepared-environment
control-of-error
cycle
normalization
grace
sensorial
lessons rug
courtesy

Education as an aid to life

Maria Montessori used a method that consisted of

- **observing** the childrens behaviour in their learning and life environment
- **verification of the collected data,**
- **programming** of the structure of learning environment, **according to the child`s needs.**

- Extraordinary woman 21.40-25.20



DEVELOPMENTAL PLAN

What guides the child in the work of fulfilling the inner plan?

Sensitive periods

the **inner sensitivity** which makes him able to choose what is suitable for his growth.

Sensitive Periods identified by Maria Montessori



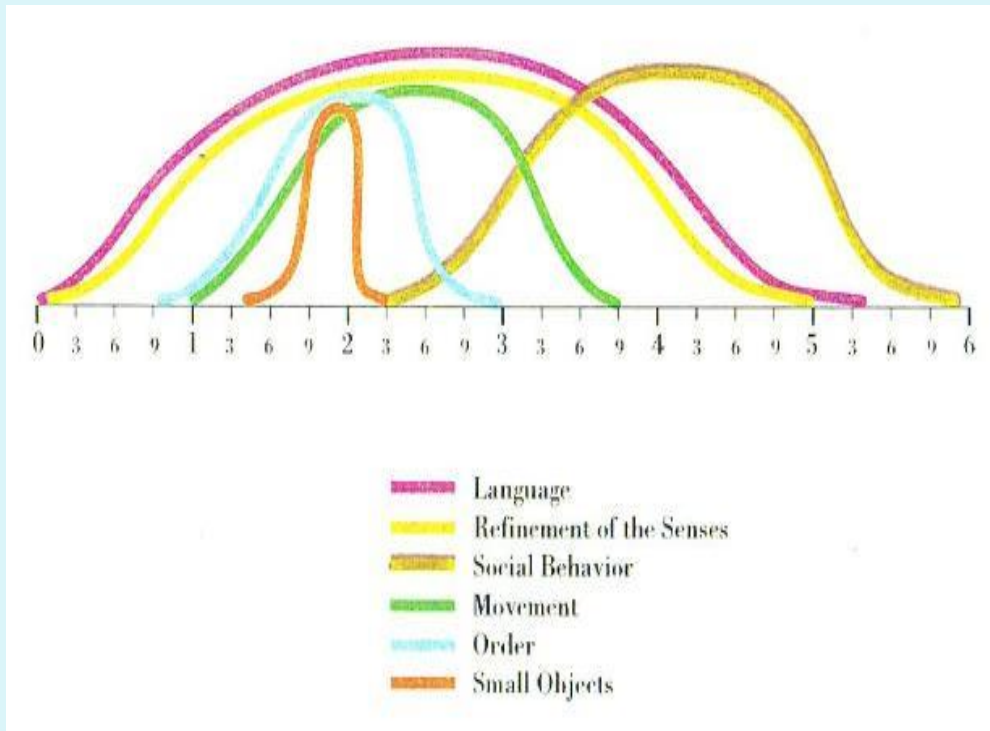
montessorienca.wordpress.com



At such a time everything is easy;

DEVELOPMENTAL PLAN

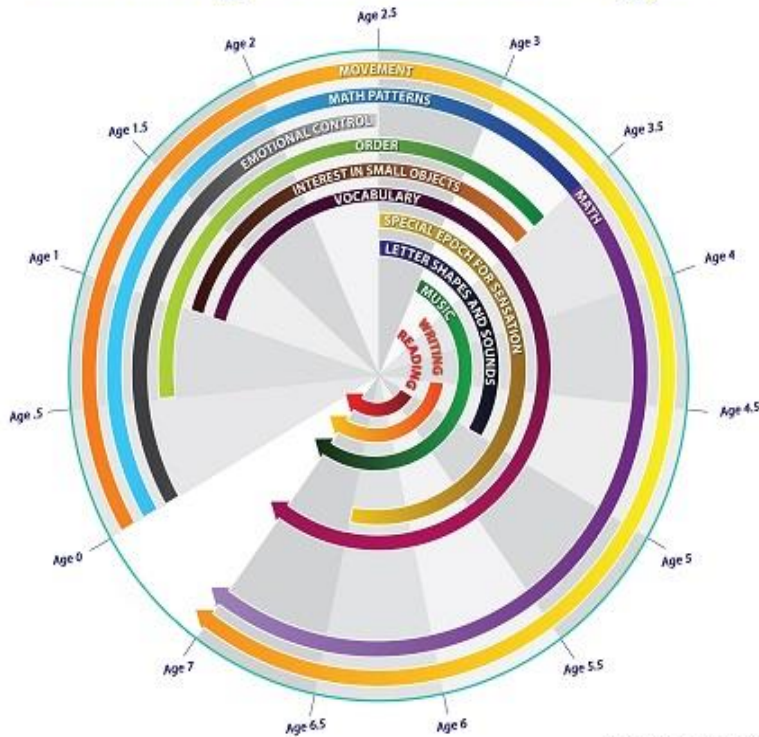
Sensitive Period



- a block of time during which the child is more able to **learn specific experiences** within an environment better/more easily than ever before or after the time has passed
- “a given type of stimulation has a stronger, more significant influence on development at certain period in life, not earlier and not later” [see Brzezińska 2004, p. 133]

Maria Montessori recognized and categorized 11 basic sensitive periods of development:

Stages of Development for Early Learning from Birth to Age 7



- Movement
- Math patterns
- Emotional control
- Order
- Interest in small objects
- Vocabulary
- Sensations
- Letter shapes and sounds
- Music
- Writing
- Reading

<http://ageofmontessori.org/the-ten-secrets-of-montessori-4-sensitive-periods/> 6.40-8.20

Movement: Children are born with limited control of movement, but gain rapidly in areas of both gross and fine motor control. As they learn to use their bodies, children are also developing cognitive abilities.

DEVELOPMENTAL PLAN

What guides the child in the work of fulfilling the inner plan?



- ABSORBENT MIND - The child can absorb impressions, which construct his mind.

He does this work easily and naturally, without thought or choice.

With the ABSORBENT MIND, the child grips experiences, which are then recorded, transforming the mind, form the basic predispositions, such as thinking, memory, attention, and will

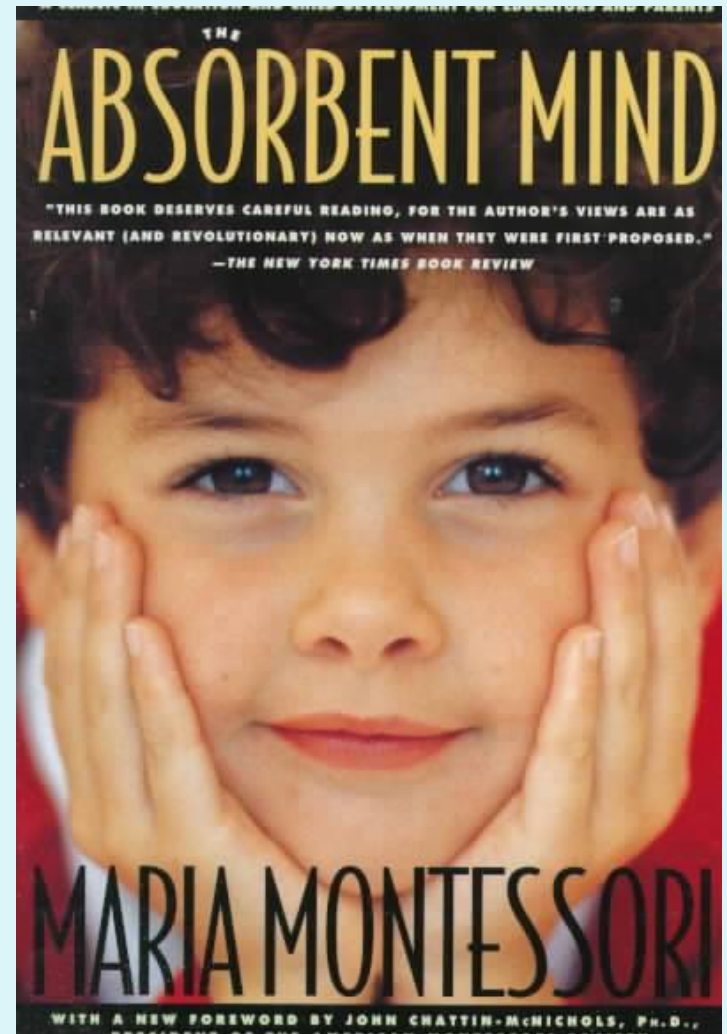
DEVELOPMENTAL PLAN

What guides the child in the work of building himself?

ABSORBENT MIND

- The child creates his own “mental muscles”, using for this what he finds in the world around him”

[Montessori M., 1992, p. 24]



ABSORBENT MIND – INTENSE MENTAL ACTIVITY

"The child has a mind able to absorb knowledge. He has the power to teach himself."

*"The Absorbent Mind"
Maria Montessori*

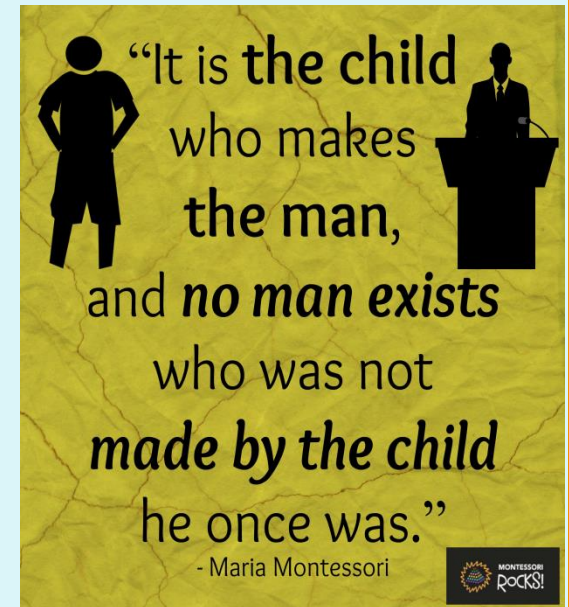
- "Just by living, without engaging conscious effort, **the human being absorbs from the environment even the most complex cultural achievements**, for instance language" (Montessori, 1975, p. 89).

Mentioned ***INNER FORCES/TEACHERS*** manifest themselves as:

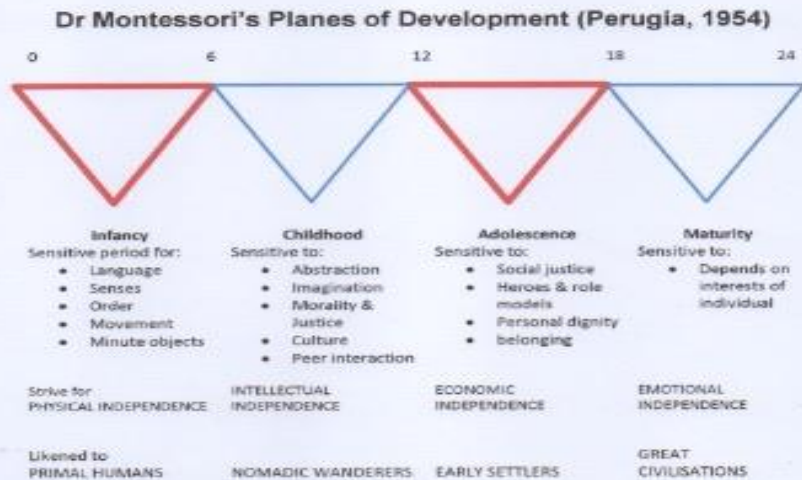
- searching,
- longing for discoveries,
- self-creativity,
- striving for independence.

They describe the child as creator:

- **THA CHILD CREATES HIS MIND STEP BY STEP .**
- **THE CHILD IS A CREATOR OF HIMSELF, A FATHER OF HUMANITY.**



Montessori describes four stages of development



- From birth to 6 y.o.
- The period of building character and intelligence.
- From the age of 6 to 12.
- The period of entering into the culture.
- From the age of 12 to 18 .
- The period of gaining independence
- After the eighteenth birthday human development has no end”(M. Montessori 1989c, pp. 16-17).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OlqPnfAmU-o>
do 1.28

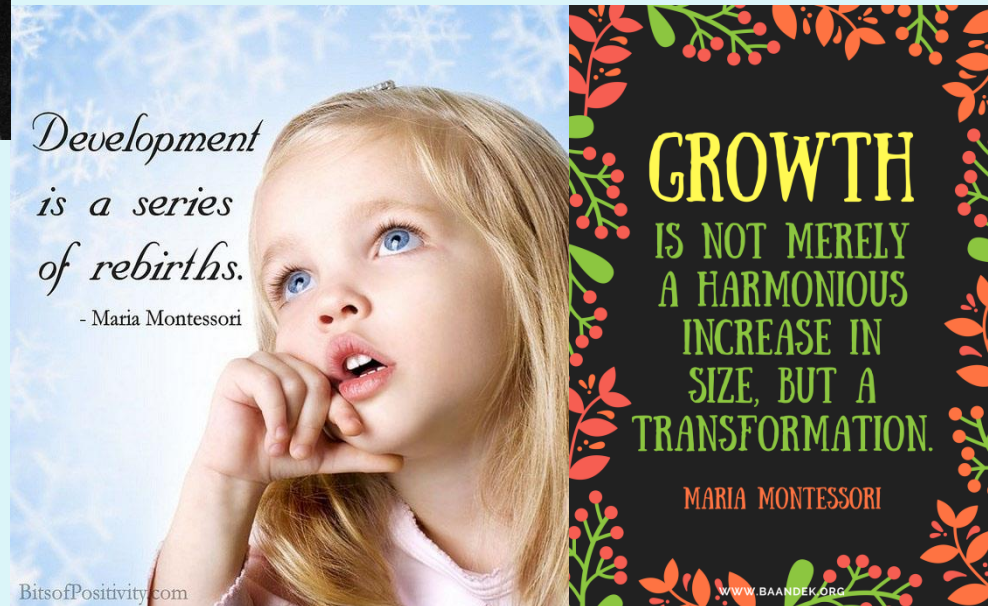


Montessori describes four stages of development



She was the first to describe developmental psychology

- „there are **different types of psyche and mind** in the different periods of life»



Educational system organisation

mix age groups

the three year learning cycle

1st level–preschool – children from 3 to 6 years of age,

2nd level–elementary school – from the age of 6 to 9.

3rd level – primary school – children from the age 9 to 12

The three year learning cycle

The First Year

child is adapting to the prepared environment. Lessons will be given to develop skills in concentration, sequencing, attention span, memory skills, auditory and visual discrimination, co-ordination, language and socialization.

1

The first year lays a strong foundation for all academic skills to be presented in the following two years.

The Second Year

child begins to do more in-depth work with letters, numbers and the writing process. The passageway to abstraction begins to unfold.

2

The child continues to explore activities that provide a creative learning experience.

The Third Year

brings fruition from the 1st and 2nd year. Increase in the development of reading and writing skills. The child becomes more confident and conscious of his knowledge and is ready to move on to primary school.

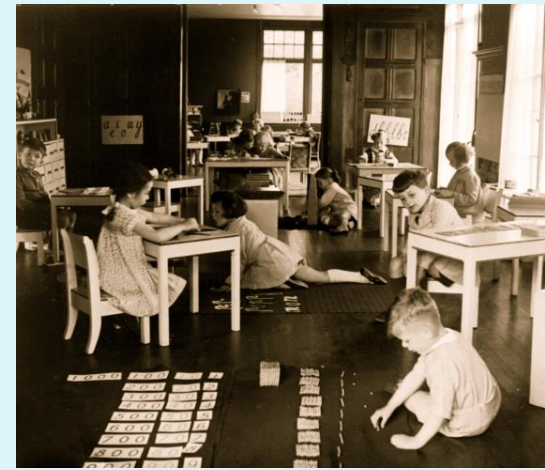
3

This is the year he/she knows and is ready to move on to the next level in a primary (elementary) school.

Educational system organisation

Learning environment

- Around the child there is the prepared environment:
- a “place of nourishment” for the child and as such



- must be organized on the basis of specific characteristics related to its stage of development,
- to allow the child to work independently.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozRQogUGGMQ>

Developmental properties and organisation of the education system

A problem of education is to find an answer to the question:

How to ensure development conditions and facilities proper for the child's growth at each stage?

Organisation of education for life.

Prepared work environment



Dr Maria Montessori first discovered that children learn from their environment and are self-motivated to do it SO.....



Prepared work environment

“The school should become the place where the child may live in freedom, and this freedom must not be solely the intimate, spiritual liberty of internal growth. The entire organism of the child, from his physiological, vegetative part to his motor activity, ought to find in school “the best conditions for development” (Montessori, 1917/1991, p. film freedom



- “A *prepared environment* would be less a school than an ecosystem supporting the evolution of the psychological individual, an the setting to which the self could *attach*, sustained by optimal conditions of support, until it was ready to let go and be born into the next stage of development” (Hains, 2000, p 1).



Preschool Classroom Schedule

7:30 am-9:00 am: Daycare time/ Children arriving

9:00 am: Morning circle, songs and stories

9:10 am-11:00 am: Montessori work cycle

*snack served

11:00 am-11:45 am: Outdoor playtime

*indoor large motor activities if it's raining or under 20 degrees

11:45 am-12:00 pm: Wash and prepare for lunch

12:00 pm: Lunch

12:30 pm-12:45 pm: Clean up from lunch, bathroom,

12:45 pm-1:30 pm: Rest time

1:30 pm-3:00 pm: Montessori work cycle

*snack served

3:00 pm-5:30 pm: Daycare time/ Children departing

During Montessori work cycles there are engaging activities that are divided into five main areas. These five areas include:

- **Practical Life works:** Exercises that help the child learn to function in his or her own environment, and are preliminary to more advanced learning.
- **Sensorial works:** Activities are designed to isolate and sharpen each of the five senses.
- **Language:** The children are introduced to letter sounds first and then they continue to learn letter names and shapes. They then progress naturally to reading skills.
- **Mathematics:** Concepts are presented through extensive use of concrete materials, this allows children to understand mathematical concepts abstractly before introducing the concrete form of mathematics.
- **Cultural:** Geography, history, botany, biology, music and grammar are introduced through the use of concrete materials.

- A school in the terms of the Italian doctor becomes:
- „a *prepared environment* in which a child free from an constant teacher's intervention can live his own life according to the laws of his development”



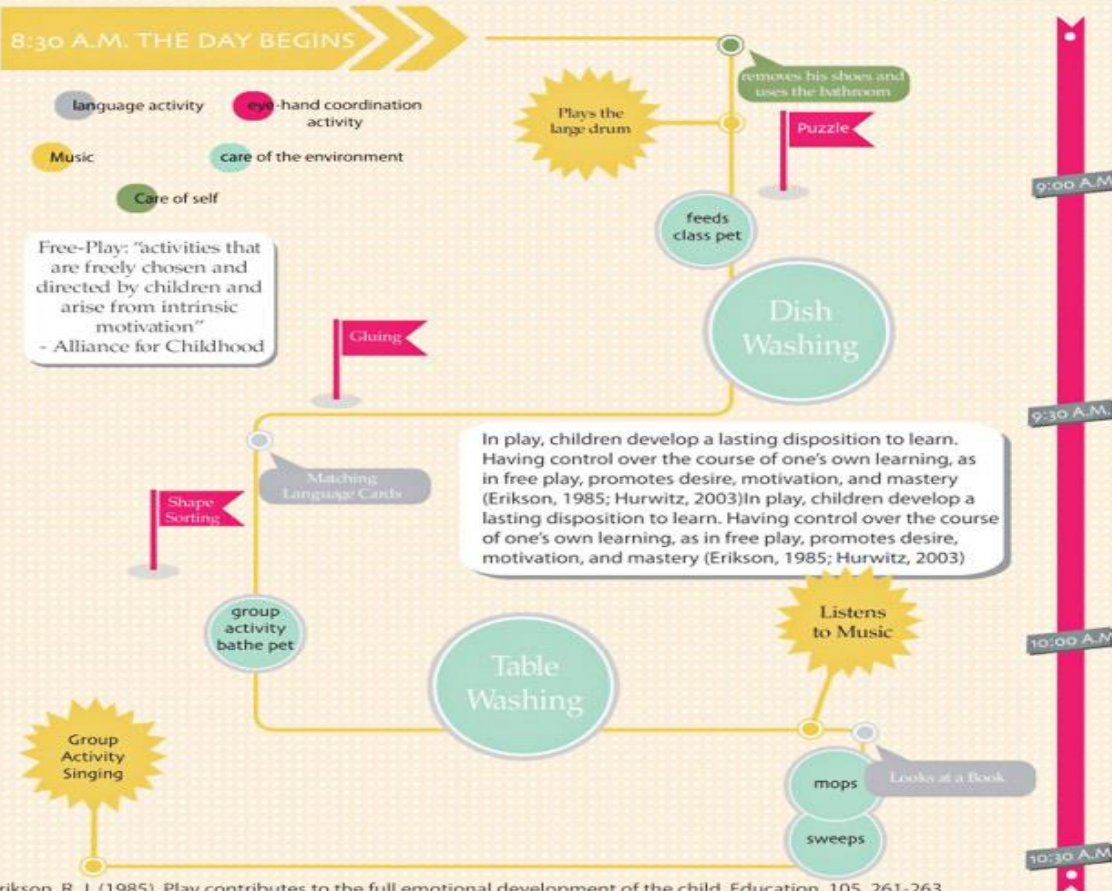
TWO-HOUR WORK CYCLE!

A TWO-YEAR OLD'S DAILY ACTIVITY

In a Montessori Young Children's Community, the child is in charge of his day. He can use his two hours as he needs. He moves from one activity to the next. His concentration is uninterrupted and he is free to follow his internal drive to learn.

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"The child can only develop fully by means of experience in his environment. We call such experience 'work'."
- Maria Montessori



Erikson, R. J. (1985). Play contributes to the full emotional development of the child. *Education*, 105, 261-263.

Hurwitz, S. C. (2003). To be successful: Let them play! *Child Education*, 79, 101-110

Montessori, M (1949). *The Absorbent Mind*. 7, 88

Organisation of education for life.

Prepared work environment



Physical environment

- responds to different needs of developing individuals



Organisation of education for life.

Prepared work environment



- Psychological structure
creating the “positive
atmosphere of
constructive
development”.

[Loeffler M.H., 1992, p. 111],

Organisation of education for life.

Prepared work environment

I OFFER YOU PEACE
i offer you love
I OFFER YOU FRIENDSHIP
I HEAR YOUR CRY
I SEE YOUR BEAUTY
i feel your pain
MY WISDOM FLOWS FROM
MY SPIRIT WITHIN
I SALUTE THAT
SPIRIT IN YOU
LET US WORK TOGETHER FOR PEACE

The principle
of **RESPECT** for the **CHILD**
as a **COMPETENT PERSON**
WHOSE ACTIONS CAN BE
TRUSTED is fundamental
there.

The Essence of the Montessori Method

All children have absorbent minds
All children pass through sensitive periods
All children want to learn
All children learn through work or play
All children pass through several stages of development
All children want to be independent

The Absorbent Mind

The Conscious Mind

The Sensitive Periods

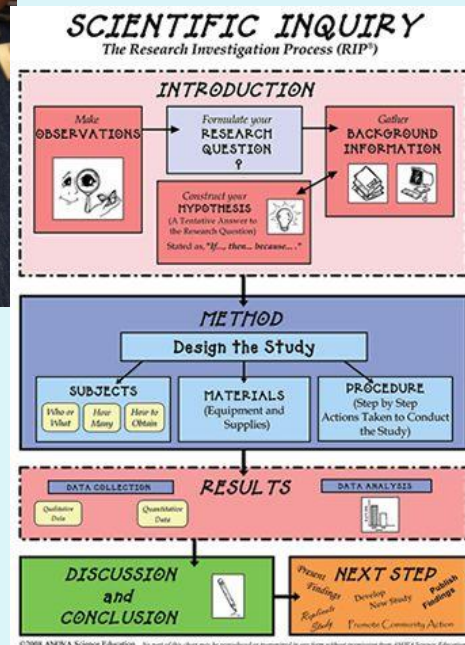
Montessori classroom – **UNIVERSITY RESEARCH LABORATORY**

Students working on their projects are like scientists who conduct research in laboratories.

**EXPLORERS, RESEARCHERS,
EXPERIMENTERS**



Montessori classroom – UNIVERSITY RESEARCH LABORATORY



- He isolates the research material in order to distinguish, mark, classify, arrange in series, grade, conclude from the situation; imagine what to do with the material, or just apply new discoveries in new situations.

The child

realises the internal
development potential, builds
a person

discovers methods of
organising materials, data or
information inherent in
didactic materials

The aim of Montessori method has a two-layer characteristic: the biological and the sociological



- From the biological– to support of the child’s development.
- From the social perspective, to prepare the child for living in the environment.

(M. Montessori, [in:] E.G. Hainstock 1978, page 79).

Aims are achieved through child's activities

- The activity is stimulated by **didactic materials** (developmental aids).



Didactic materials

- lead the pupil to achieve essential life skills, information and attitudes in a special order:
- **self-service skills**, such as the control of one's own body, ability to dress, fastening buttons, tying shoelaces
- **elementary – school skills**, such as reading, writing, calculating, space orientation, etc.
- **universal skills** of planning, organising and evaluation of one's work
- **“From manipulating to understanding”**

- Caring for the classroom
- Taking care of myself
- Caring for my friends
- Large Motor coordination
- Taking care of the garden
- Preparing food

Practical Life

- Writing
- Phonetics
- Reading
- Phonograms
- Parts of Speech

Language

- Sound & Music
- Shapes
- Widths
- Colors
- Sizes
- Heights

Sensorial

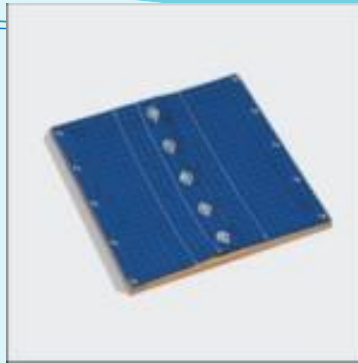
5 Areas

- Land & water
- Oceans Continents
- North America
- South America
- Europe
- Culture
- Names of Countries
- Africa

Geography

- Thousands
- Addition
- Subtraction
- Multiplication
- Division
- Math facts
- Number 1 to 9
- Concept of 0
- Decimal System
- Units Tens
- Hundreds

Mathematics



- **The core of the educational programme are practical life exercises and sensorial materials**



Practical life exercises:



- Help to practice and control muscles, small movements
- Make the child become aware of planning and organising activities in space and time
- To teach how to share the responsibility for the environment (the care of).

Sensorial materials



- Aid to shape the senses.
- Help to discover basic ways of ordering: classification, seriation, strategies to solve problems, planning in bits of time.



Academic materials are designed for individual discoveries, and research allows the student to acquire the products of their own culture (to possess knowledge).

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBEpV558AKw>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKsgmeYaBTA>

What does the child do?



Life tasks of the child, **CONSTRUCTION OF MAN**

- “(...), **the greatest work** ever accomplished during any lifetime is that which **takes** the human being from the helpless state of the newborn baby to **the child who not only manifests the characteristics of his species, and is also his own individual self**” [Grazzini C., 2001, p. 5].



Education as an aid to life.....

... creation of the future world

... help for Man of Tomorrow



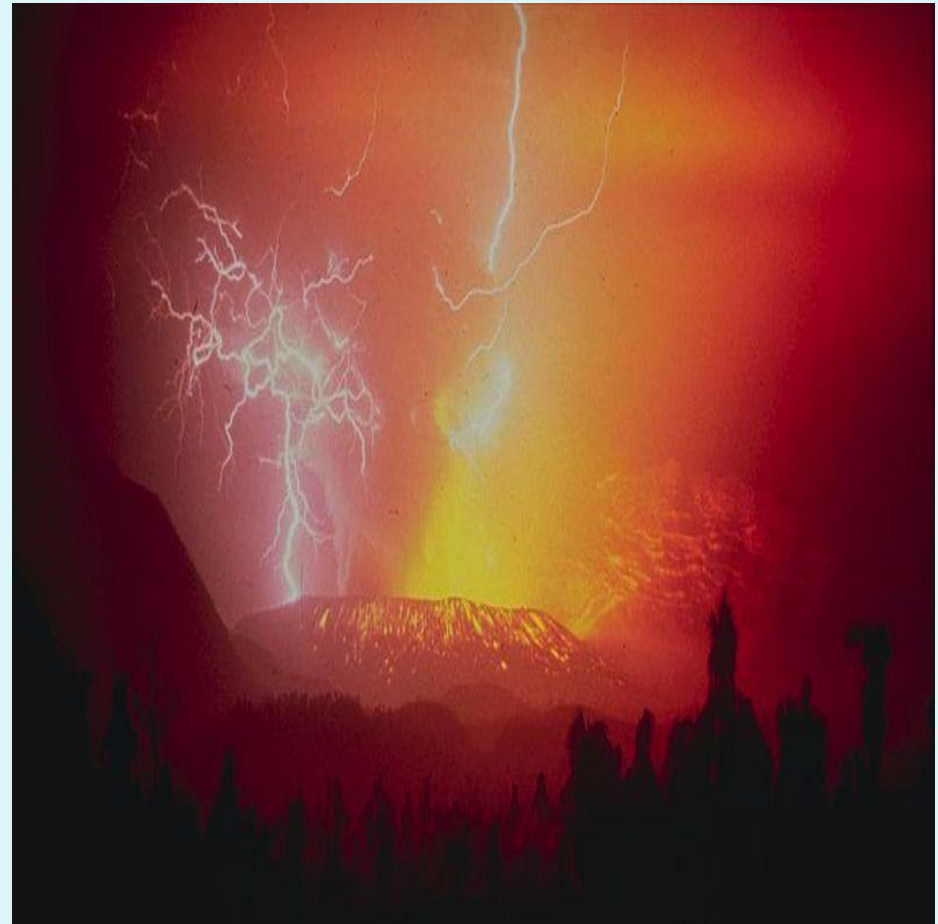
"The child is both a hope and a promise for mankind."

Maria Montessori

Education as an aid to life as a **REVOLUTIONARY PROJECT**

.... “Therefore, education
as an aid to life is a
revolutionary project”.

[Mazzetti L., 2001, p. 2].



Education as an aid to life as a revolutionary project

If we intend to build a culture of peace, we need a **revolt/revolution in thinking, in culture, in the school system, a revolution that will cover and touch our innermost and deeply rooted vision of the world”** [Mazzetti L., 2001, p. 2].

Utopia?

- “As everyone knows, utopias are characterised by the fact that they **postulate** changing the world for the better, **without indicating the mechanisms** through which changes can be made” [Piątek Z., 2005, p. 20].

Didactic dimension of education for life?

Beyond declarations

In Maria Montessori's pedagogy, we find **verifiable, real guidelines or principles** through which the described changes can be made.

Montessori

respect for the child

multi-aged

independence

freedom of movement

didactic materials

choice

prepared environment

the absorbent mind

We love what we do.

MontessoriMischief.com

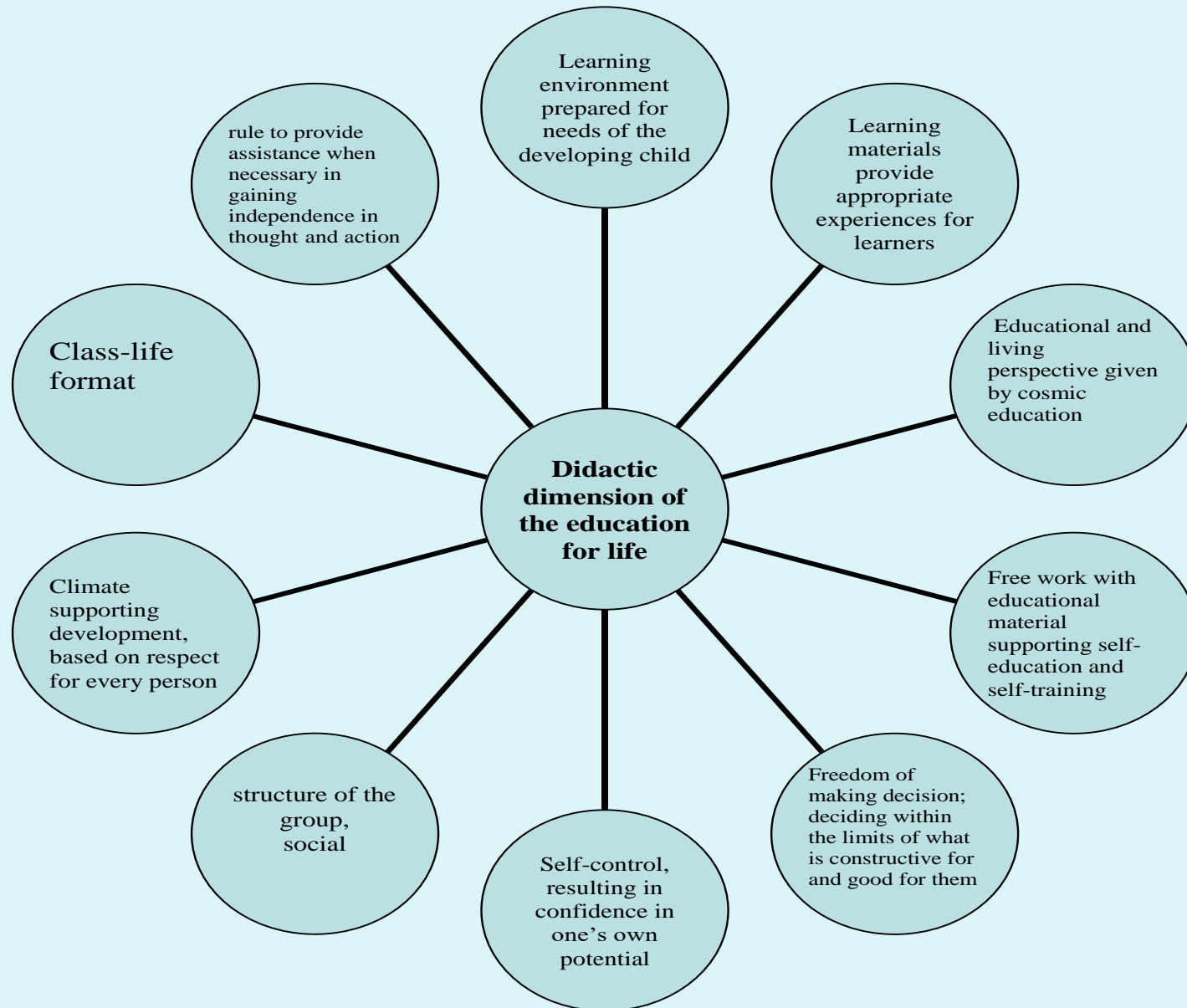
Choose
Montessori

We
are
scientific,
multi-aged,
and reality based.
Our concrete materials
gently move the child into
abstraction. We respect individuality.
We nurture a love of learning and help guide
children toward self discipline. All children
can learn to care for themselves
and
their
environment.

You'll fall in love.

MontessoriMischief.com

Didactic dimension of education as an aid to life



Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words, but by experiences in the environment.



“The world of education is like an island where people cut off from the world are prepared for life by exclusion from it”

[Montessori M., 1992, p, 10].