



Reading With Your Child

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Many research articles indicate that children who are read to early on have a higher achievement and success rate than children who are not. Reading increases a child's understanding of the world, and provides a variety of experiences. Children also increase their vocabulary by reading a variety of books. Following are some suggestions to follow as you read to or with your child.

When your child is very young, read to your child as much as possible. You are not limited to reading board books (or simple books) to a baby. You can read aloud anything you are reading. If you are reading the newspaper, read it aloud. Your baby will hear the rhythm and cadence of the language. You are also exposing your child to vocabulary and different writing styles and genres (informational, fiction, non-fiction...).

As your child develops, start questioning your child before, during, and after reading a story. Questioning does not need to be done with every book as it is perfectly acceptable to read a book simply for the pleasure of reading.

Pre-reading:

- Go on a picture walk through the book. Flip through the pages of the book as you look at the pictures and find out a little about the story from the pictures.
- Encourage your child to tell you what the story may be about.
- Is the book fiction or non-fiction?

During reading:

- As you read, stop to make predictions about what may come next. Initially, you may have to model the question and answer technique for your child. Or you can give your child some appropriate choices as to what may happen next.
- Note the main characters, what is happening in the story, when the story takes place, where the story happens, whether the story takes place in the present day, past or future. You can tell your child this information or ask them to tell you.

Post reading:

- Ask your child to identify the beginning/middle/end of the story.
- Ask your child to identify the problem in the story and how it was solved.
- What part of the story did your child enjoy the most? What was the funniest part of the story?
- Where there any surprises in the story?

As your child gains confidence in their own reading skills, don't give up reading to them. You can read aloud (or with your child) a higher level book than he could read on his own. By reading with him you can discuss and explain unfamiliar vocabulary or phrases.

Enjoy reading with your child. What a wonderful way to discover and share new worlds and adventures with your child!



Comparison of Montessori and Traditional Styles of Education:

Montessori	Traditional
1. Student choice of material of where to work	1. No choice or limited choice
2. Curriculum builds from level to level	2. Curriculum spirals to ensure material isn't missed
3. Child sets pace	3. Teacher sets pace
4. Concrete	4. Abstract
5. 3 year span	5. 1 year span
6. Un graded	6. Graded
7. Self correcting materials	7. Teacher corrects errors
8. Variety of learning (individual, materials, group)	8. primarily whole group learning
9. Directress prepares environment	9. Teacher is focal point
10. Cycles of activity determined by child	10. Cycle of activity determined by rigid schedule
11. Freedom to move and work within classroom	11. Assigned seats
12. Encouraged to help one another	12. Seeks help of teacher
13. Child centered	13. Teacher centered
14. Self control through internal measures	14. Self control through reward/punishment
15. Recognition of sensitive periods (what is developmentally appropriate)	15. Children treated similarly



Comparison of Montessori and Traditional Styles of Education:
Montessori

- Student choice
Students are able to choose what to work on at what time of day and where.
- Curriculum builds from level to level
The materials are designed and implemented so a child learns something at one level and that is expanded on at the next level.
- Child sets pace
The child can move slowly or quickly through work.
- Concrete
Materials are concrete – they can be seen, touched and moved.
- 3 year span/Multi-aged
The child stays with the same Directress and class for 3 years. The child and the family get to know the Directress as she does them
- Un graded
Mastery learning usurps grades. A child works on a skill until it is mastered, regardless of the rest of the class.
- Self correcting materials
Material is color coded or coded in some way so a child is able to check the work for himself.
- Variety of learning (individual, materials, group)
Lessons are given in a multitude of ways – individually (child with Directress, small group and large group). Lectures are given as well as utilizing materials.
- Directress prepares environment
The environment is specially prepared to reflect the development of the children.
- Cycles of activity determined by child
How long a child spends on a particular activity is determined by the child. A child can choose to work and then put the work away.
- Freedom to move and work within classroom
The child can choose to work at a table or at a rug. Sometimes dependent on the work itself (too big for a table or too messy for a rug). The Montessori Directress tells the child if the work needs to be done in a specific location.
- Encouraged to help one another
Multi-aged classes help promote children seeking assistance from other children.
- Child centered
Furniture and materials designed specifically for children is now the norm, although not true 100 years ago when Dr. Montessori developed the program.
- Self control through internal measures
Children are encouraged to reflect upon their actions and to make choices based on the result to themselves and to others.





Q & A

Any Montessori/education related questions can be directed to the editor at:

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child may have a conversation with the knob-less cylinders. The Directress would not intervene in the child's activity.

Q: Is there room for imagination, creativity and spontaneity in a Montessori classroom?

A: The material in a Montessori classroom is designed to be used in a specific way (or in multiple specific ways). Once a child is introduced to the lesson, he can practice the material to gain understanding and confidence. It is through the repetition and practice of the material that the child develops their thought processes. A child can use the materials in an exploratory fashion. For example, a child may be shown the red rods by the Directress. The red rods are a sensorial lesson for demonstrating varying lengths and the base 10 system. The child receives the lesson and then has the opportunity to use the material. A child can use the material in a creative and/or imaginative way. Most Montessori Directresses will intervene if the child is disrupting classmates or using the work in a harmful way (banging two wood rods or using one as a weapon). If the child expresses interest or desire to create something with the work he is not stopped. A child may use the knob-less cylinders as people. The

A Montessori environment can be spontaneous. The Directress prepares the environment and then observes the children to see who is ready to move on to a new lesson or new material. During a work period many spontaneous things happen.

A Montessori Director sets up the materials and environment of her classroom with Montessori principles so as to encourage natural and spontaneous activity by each child. For the Montessori Directress and the child, spontaneous activity and results are expected and rewarding. The Directress does not pre-determine what activity a child will perform nor what activity a child will perform at what time nor with whom. So, a Montessori environment encourages natural and spontaneous activity.

