

1. Encouraging Voices

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Conference 2003

3. Policy on childhood

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child(1989)
- Primary Curriculum (1999)
- National Children's Strategy (2000)
- Absence of voice of the child

5. Children want

Equal opportunities and access to quality education that is free and compulsory,

School environments in which children feel happy about learning,

Education for life that goes beyond the academic and includes lessons in understanding, human rights, peace, acceptance and active citizenship.

7. Expressing Views

- Sometimes it feels like a bit like being a robot...as if the teacher is in the middle of the room with a great big remote control and you have to do everything she says or you will get into trouble
- Sometimes you can ask her a question but you never know when she is going to jump on you...like you are just talking to her and she could jump on you and give out to you no matter what you say...especially if she has a bad day...she takes it out on us
- I think the teacher has eyes in the back of her head, cos when she's out of the room she knows stuff that happened and even when she's at her desk she is looking at the side of her eye to see who is even whispering
- I feel good about myself in school knowing the someone cares enough to teacher you stuff and give you a good education

2. Understanding Childhood

- Innocents
- Immature/irresponsible
- Social construct
- Psychological development

4. What the children say

- We are the world's children.
We are the victims of exploitation and abuse.
We are street children.
We are the children of war.
We are the victims and orphans of HIV/AIDS.
We are denied good-quality education and health care.
We are victims of political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental discrimination.
We are children whose voices are not being heard:
it is time we are taken into account.

6. Expressing Views

- Unequal power relationships
- Sensitivity to mood
- Adult surveillance
- Teacher praise
- (Devine, 2003)

8. Access

- Physical/Social
- Curricular
- Barriers

9. Physical/Access

- It was different, you know it was nice like, it was nice being with the normal crowd. Like to see what everybody else was doing.
- I was going to go to the carry-on from primary [second level school], but the headmistress wouldn't allow me to do home economics because I might spill something on someone, or biology because it was on the top floor. So I instantly removed myself from that school and went to another that would allow me to do the subjects I wanted.
- The first year or so took me a while to settle in — there was one other person I think with a disability in the school so it was kind of difficult just to basically get around. And asking for help — I found that difficult, I didn't like asking the same person all the time and you know it was difficult finding somebody different every day or you know some people would make a fuss over me and other people wouldn't think. It was a mixture of reactions.

11. Curricular Access

• Actor to Audience

- In science, using things on the bench, I just sat down and watched.
- We'd pair up and my partner used to do all the physical work. I just couldn't do it; I couldn't hold a glass of water.
- I think most of us were excluded especially in sports — the school wasn't equipped to cope. They tried, but the majority of times you had to stay out.
- I wasn't excluded from any sports. Actually they pushed me into things more than taking me out — 'you are going into this, no questions asked!'

13. Way Forward

- Empowerment
- Inclusion
- Active participation
- Democratic listening culture

15. Inclusion

- Well, I'd actually feel very uncomfortable going there, as in a special school, you work much more slowly, and learning in a special school would take much more time, while in a school like this, you're expected to move with the rest of the class. It's more of a challenge.
- Definitely, if you don't want to go to a school where it's all people with hearing disabilities, then at least a school that has come this far [i.e. special classes, facilities] I think is the way to go, instead of just going into a school that knows nothing about it and think 'Ah sure, you're just another student, or whatever.'
- They're very helpful; if I don't understand what they are talking about, they'll stay behind with me after class and they'll explain it to me rather than rushing through it myself afterwards. And sometimes, I come into school early the following day, around 8.30 a.m. and explain it in more detail.

10. Physical/Social Access

- If I had a class upstairs I'd wait at the end of the stairs. They'd physically lift me, my friends. My friends were excellent.
- When I first went to primary school people were in awe of me, but after - I wouldn't say I fitted in like a jigsaw piece, people got used to me. Young kids didn't know how to go up to me. I'd say 'don't be afraid to come over to me' or something. In secondary school people were older so they kind of knew how. I just ignored the whispers. Now if anybody says over my head 'oh God is he ok?' I might say smartly 'oh yea he's fine', or just look back at them.
- If I wanted to go to the toilet, the cubicles were very small; I had to go to the teachers' room. They knew and I had someone outside the door just in case they'd come. It wasn't too bad.

12. Barriers to Access

- No one knows I'm a Traveller and that's the way I want it. It can be tricky! Say, if someone says 'can I come round your house?' I have to say something like 'I'm going round my nan's tonight'. I do wish I could invite friends round to play. I am always having to make things up and it's very hard for me. It would be much easier if I could tell my friends the truth and I have thought about it but when I ask them 'would you still be my friend if I was a Traveller?' they say 'Ooh no, I hate Travellers!'
- When you get talking to people and they ask where you live, sometimes I tell them and they are OK, sometimes they go off you when they know and sometimes I don't bother telling them about who I really am ... 'cos it's better not to.

14. Ambition

- I've been thinking that I would like to go to college and learn how to do woodwork and that properly. I'd like to do that I think and then I could help me dad build the wagons. There's money in that!
- If you don't go to secondary — you ain't going to have no exams — when you get a job. You'll be stuck in some field all your life. There's no future in that! You need at least two GCSEs to get into college.
- One teacher kept driving me the whole way. Kind of 'put it in a context, fair enough you have a disability but - throw it away from you and continue on' like. From that day on I've never looked back. It was the best thing ever that, to stand up for ourselves.

16. Encouraging responses

- My teachers want the best for me and they encourage me. I have a special Learning Support Assistant (LSA) who helps me a lot. She's very patient; I like her. When I had difficulty joining in with others in Year 7, she worked with me and taught me how to do it. She taught me how to understand the ways in which my Asperger's will affect me in my school life. We made a personal profile on "PowerPoint" then she used it to train the teachers and it helped them to understand me. This has made things a lot better. We're going to do this every year so that I can reflect back on how I've changed.
- Before I knew I had Asperger's my junior schoolteachers thought I was a bad boy. The other children teased and bullied me and it was a horrible time. Now I am more confident because more people understand me. It's definitely getting better because more people take me as I am. That's because they have learned about me and know what to do for the best and probably most important I am in a good

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19. Conclusions

- It appears to me to be an immeasurable arrogance for a society to consign individuals to categories based on perceived differences from the 'normal'. This creates a tiered system indicating that some people are more valuable than others. Who are the 'disabled?' Who decides? What are the criteria and who measures them? The act of labelling is an act of power by one group to the detriment of another. This is an inadequate and seriously deficient concept. It is incumbent on us all to reach beyond fixed limits and labels into embracing the diversity of all people with pride and not apologies.
- (O'Leary, 2003).

18. Conclusions

- If our sense of our identity is to be seen purely in terms of a narrow perception of production and consumption then those we perceive to impede that definition will be perceived as a threat to that notion of identity. The Traveller the Refugee those seeking asylum those whose skin colour is different the single parent the Older person Gays Lesbians those who share different belief systems and disabled people, all represent a threat to this narrow economic notion of self that is promoted by an influential elite. (Toolan, 2003)

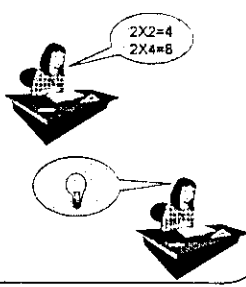
Independent Learning: The Best Way to Learn

Nicky O'Leary

Learning

Two traditional meanings:

- To learn as in memorising & learning "off by heart"
- To change: knowledge or behaviour

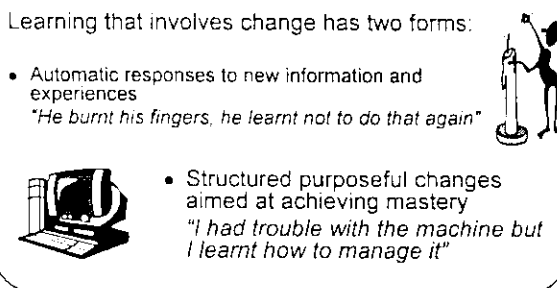


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Learning as Change

Learning that involves change has two forms:

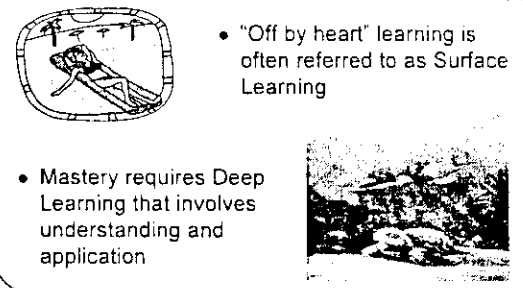
- Automatic responses to new information and experiences
"He burnt his fingers, he learnt not to do that again"
- Structured purposeful changes aimed at achieving mastery
"I had trouble with the machine but I learnt how to manage it"



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Levels of Learning

- "Off by heart" learning is often referred to as Surface Learning
- Mastery requires Deep Learning that involves understanding and application



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Mary Catherine Bateson claims


We are not what we know but what we are willing to learn.

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Terminology

- Autonomous Learner
- Self-directed learner
- Adult learner
- Home schooling
- Active learner
- Reflective Learner
- Experiential Learner
- Cooperating Learner
- Open Learner (IT)
- Discovery Learning

Information technology has lead to the Independent Learner gaining new meaning and popularity.



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Independent Learning

Independent Learning occurs when a person can utilise all types of learning to focus on a goal and achieve mastery.

It involves the ability to move from surface to deep learning.

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Independent Learning

- I = Independent
- N = Needs analysis
- D = Develop a joy of learning
- E = Engaging and active
- P = Personal
- E = Emotional stability & self understanding
- N = Need to learn how to learn
- D = Do it voluntary
- E = Excited about learning
- N = Needs to be responsible for your own learning
- T = Take risks

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Domains or Areas of Learning (Gagné, 1972)

- 1 Motor Skills which require practice
- 2 Verbal Skills: facts & information
- 3 Intellectual skills: using the facts & information
- 4 Cognitive Strategies: the way an individual learns, remembers, thinks and solves problems
- 5 Attitudes



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Montessori Schools

The Children's Tree: A Montessori Learning Place
Located in Westbrook, CT, USA

Key aims are:

- Develop a positive attitude toward himself/herself and the school and life.
- Become a self-confident, independent learner

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Montessori Approach

Bagby (2002) has demonstrated that the Montessori model of learning :

- provides a framework in the natural setting of a classroom that facilitates problem solving and the transference of learning

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Montessori Approach

Vaughn, (2002) identified 3 specific areas in which empowerment or independent learning was observed in the Montessori Method:

- the nature of the environment
- the management of discipline
- the social construction of learning

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Characteristics of an Independent Learner

8 Characteristics of the Successful Independent Learner
(Guglielmino, 1977):

- Love of learning
- Self-concept as an effective independent learner
- Tolerance of risk, ambiguity and complexity of learning
- Creativity
- View of learning as life long, beneficial process
- Initiative in learning
- Self-understanding
- Acceptance of responsibility for one's own learning.

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Becoming an Independent Learner

Ask Yourself the following questions:-

What do I want out of this? (**MOTIVE**)

Where do I want to get to? (**AIM**)

What will it look like when I get there? (**GOAL**)

What do I need to do to get there? (**TASK NEEDS**)

What can I use? (**RESOURCES**)

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Becoming an Independent Learner

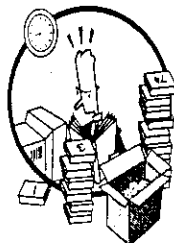
What limits are there? (**CONTEXT**)

What am I able to do? (**ABILITY**)

What should I do in this situation?
(**STRATEGY**)

What will I do? (**PLANS**)

Where does this all fit in? (**THE BIG PICTURE**)



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Department of Education & Science

Mission Statement

To provide high quality education that will enable individuals to achieve their full potential as members of society

And contribute to Ireland's social, cultural and economic development

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Why is Independent Learning Important?

- Achieves the mission of educators
- Supports learning as life long (Minister Michael Woods in DES Strategy Statement 2001-2004)
- Provides quality education (Fenwick, 1992)

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Disadvantages of Independent Learning



- Education tends to focused on course work and courses which may be an inefficient use of the independent learner's time as the course may be inappropriate and contain more or less information than is needed (Whale, 1987).
- Potential to confuse the learner if no initial framework is available.
- It requires a lot of work on the part of the student.

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Criticisms of Independent Learning

- An emphasis on independent learning has adult characteristic
- Current studies conducted mostly with middle class participants
- Research concerning the quality of independent learning projects needs more attention
- May be treated as disconnected from wider social and political forces

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Advantages of Independent Learning

- Supports active engagement of the learner in the learning process
- Fosters curiosity
- Enables the development of life long learning skills
- Personalises the learning experience
- Highly motivating as it allows individuals the opportunity to experiment and discover something for themselves
- Builds on learner's prior knowledge and understanding
- Creates a joy for learning

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Supporting Independent Learning

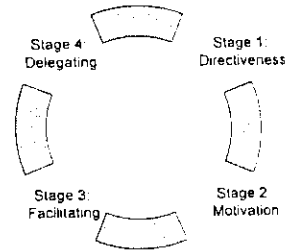
- One contribution educational institutions can make to independent learners is to teach them the process of gaining access to and make judgments about information (Whale, 1987).
- Focuses on the process by which a person takes control of their own learning.
- Encourage a person to sets their own learning goals, locate appropriate resources, decide on which learning methods to use and evaluate their progress.



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Teaching Style to Support Independent Learning

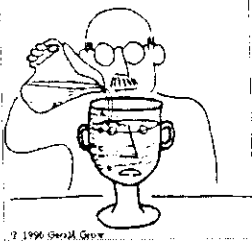


(Adapted from Grow, 1996)

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The Stage 1 Teacher Directs



Teaching style involves:
tell, impart, transmit,
give, propound,
convey, expound,
transfer, direct, fill,
inform, & drill.

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The Stage 2 Teacher Motivates



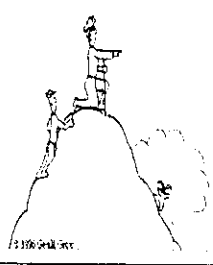
Teaching style involves:
develop, mould,
produce, instruct,
reinforce, prepare,
demonstrate, push,
motivate, inspire,
shape, drive,
persuade, & sell.

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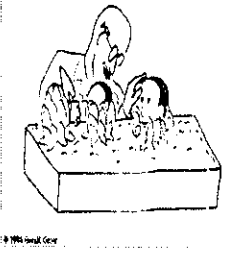
The Stage 3 Teacher Facilitates



Teaching style involves:
lead, guide, initiate,
help, show, point the
way, explore,
discuss, share,
participate, offer,
suggest, negotiate, &
collaborate.

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The Stage 4 Teacher Delegates



Teaching style involves:
cultivate, encourage,
nurture, develop,
foster, enable, bring
out, mentor, plant,
challenge & advise.

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**Michael Yacobian, Internationally
Renowned Trainer**

**"People love to learn
but hate to be taught"**

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Mein Vortrag in Irland, October 18, 2003

Um das volle Potential des Kindes zu realisieren, folge Maria Montessori's Grundsätzen

1) Inhaltliche Vorschau

Maria Montessori hat ihre Pädagogik auf Beobachtungen von Kindern begründet und auf die daraus entwickelten Erkenntnisse:

- Das Kind baut seinen Geist selber auf (d.h. er wächst nicht wie die Zähne, noch wird er eingefüllt durch Information). Das geschieht auf inneren Antrieb hin und nach innerer Steuerung. Das bedeutet,
 - keine** externen Antriebe (Belohnung, Strafe, Wettbewerb, Noten etc),
 - keine** externe Steuerung (Curriculum, Tests, (Haus-)Aufgaben, etc.).
- Gesunde Kinder arbeiten gern und ausdauernd, wenn sie eine dazu vorbereitete Umgebung vorfinden.
- Mentaler Selbst-Aufbau vollzieht sich nicht durch Hören auf verbale Information, sondern durch Eigenarbeit mit Händen, Sinnen und Verstand. Das bedingt entsprechend sinnvoll gestaltetes "Material", um z.B. Lesen und Schreiben mit 4-5 Jahren oder Quadratwurzeln mit ca. 9 Jahren zu erarbeiten. Nur Arbeitsblätter zu bearbeiten kann das nicht leisten.
- Kinder, die an solchem Selbstaufbau gehindert sind, entwickeln "Abwegigkeiten", z.B. Aggressionen, Zappeligkeit, Konzentrationsmangel, Desinteresse, Faulheit, Streitsucht, Besitztrieb, etc.
- Kinder, die eine Umgebung vorfinden, wo sie nach innerem Antrieb arbeiten können, legen Abwegigkeiten ab, werden umgänglich, fleißig, konzentrationsfähig (über lange Dauer), voll von Lebensfreude, friedliebend, interessiert, freigiebig etc.
- Kinder entwickeln sich in Stufen. Das Kinderhaus für die erste Stufe wird eine anders vorbereitete Umgebung und eine anders ausgebildete Lehrkraft brauchen als die Schule für die 6-12-Jährigen.
- Die Lehrkraft ist Teil der vorbereiteten Umgebung. Sie muß alle Materialien genau kennen und sie dem Kind präzise darbieten, sodass das Kind jeden Handgriff und jedes abstrakte Detail absorbiert. Die Ausbildung der Lehrkraft muß das gewährleisten, dazu gründliches Verstehen der zugrundeliegenden Theorie sowie der richtigen Gestaltung der Montessori-Klasse. Das dauert wenigstens 2 Semester Vollzeit-Studium für jede Altersstufe, für die Stufen 3-12 Jahre zusammen wenigstens 4 Semester.

Der Vortrag wird diese Grundsätze mit vielen Einzelheiten entwickeln sowie das Modell einer Montessori-Klasse skizzieren, die auf diesen Grundsätzen entwickelt ist und daher erfolgreich sein wird das Potential jedes Kindes voll zu realisieren.

2) Persönliche Angaben zu Peter Gebhardt-Seele

Dr. Peter Gebhardt-Seele ist Kursleiter des Montessori-Lehrerkurses im Montessori Internationalen Ausbildungszentrum e.V. München, dem heute einzigen von der Association Montessori Internationale, Amsterdam (AMI), anerkannten deutschsprachigen Kurs für die Pädagogik der 6-12-Jährigen.

Ein Viertel-Jahrhundert arbeitete er in USA als Kurs-Teilnehmer, Montessori-Lehrer und AMI-Lehrer-Ausbilder am Washington Montessori Institute. Dabei hatte er reiche Gelegenheit, während der Besuche seiner Studenten im Lehrpraktikum, viele Montessori-Klassen bei der Arbeit von innen zu beobachten.

Gebhardt-Seele ist ein spätberufener Montessorianer. Seine Grundstudien schloss er ab als Diplomingenieur und Diplom-Wirtschaftsingenieur, mit viel Seitenblicken in die Vorlesungen und Seminare der Philosophen. Bis er sich dem Lehrberuf zuwandte, die Laufbahn eines bayerischen Realschullehrers abschloss und 12 Jahre die Realschule des Katholischen Familienwerkes in München/Pullach leitete. Die Umschau nach einer besseren Pädagogik führte ihn zu Montessori, zuerst zum Kurs für Montessori-Sonderpädagogik in München, dann nach USA.

In gewisser Weise ist Gebhardt-Seele als ein "Erdrkind" aufgewachsen (Montessori's Bezeichnung für die Adoleszenten, die am besten auf dem Bauernhof groß werden), nachdem seine Eltern, Kunstmaler F.S.Gebhardt-Westerbuchberg und Bildhauerin K.Gebhardt, geb. Seele, einen Bauernhof am Chiemsee erworben hatten und die Lebensweise als Bauern in den Kriegsjahren echt eingefordert wurde. In Großhesselohe bei München gründete er mit Heidi, geborene Lissau, eine Familie aus der es 5 erwachsene Kinder und bis heute 4 Enkelkinder gibt.

Gebhardt-Seele ist heute im deutschsprachigen Raum tätig, um mitzuhelfen dass die der Montessori-Pädagogik inhärenten bedeutenden Erfolgs-Chancen voll realisiert werden können, durch AMI-Kurse, Schul-Konsultationen, Vorträge und Videos.

Veröffentlichungen:

"Rechenmodelle für Wirtschaftliches Lagern und Einkaufen", Oldenbourg-Verlag, München 1959,

"The Computer and the Child, a Montessori Approach", Computer Science Press, Rockville 1984,

"Grundlagen der Montessori-Pädagogik und ihre Verwirklichung in der Schule", (Video),

Lili's Park, München, 2003

sowie zahlreiche Artikel in "AMI-Communications", Amsterdam, "NAMTA-Journal" (=North-

American Montessori Teachers Association), Cleveland, Ohio, "Montessori, Zeitschrift für

Montessori-Pädagogik", Aachen, "Das Kind", Deutsche Montessori-Gesellschaft,

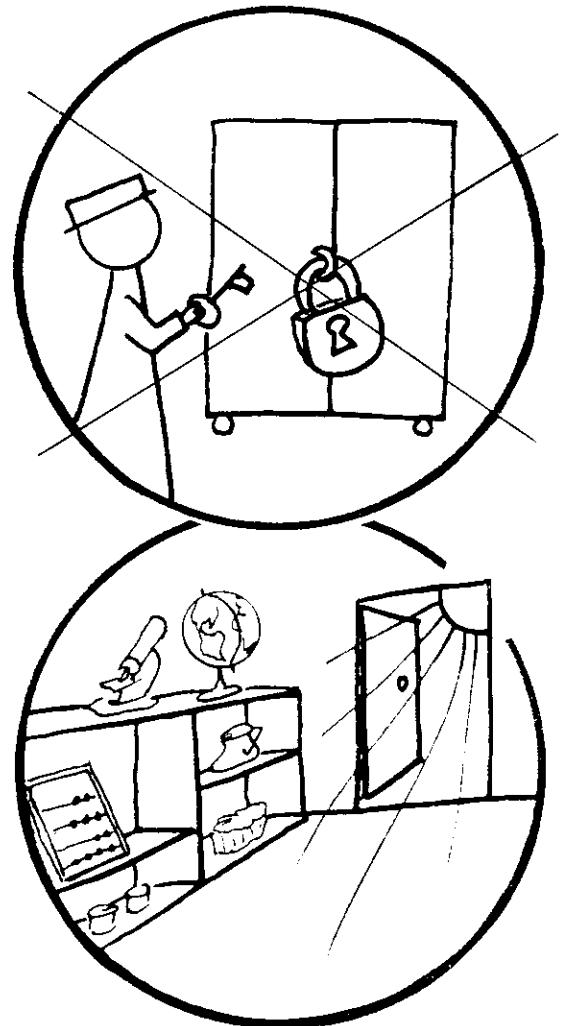
Berlin/Wiesbaden und andere.

Realization in the Class

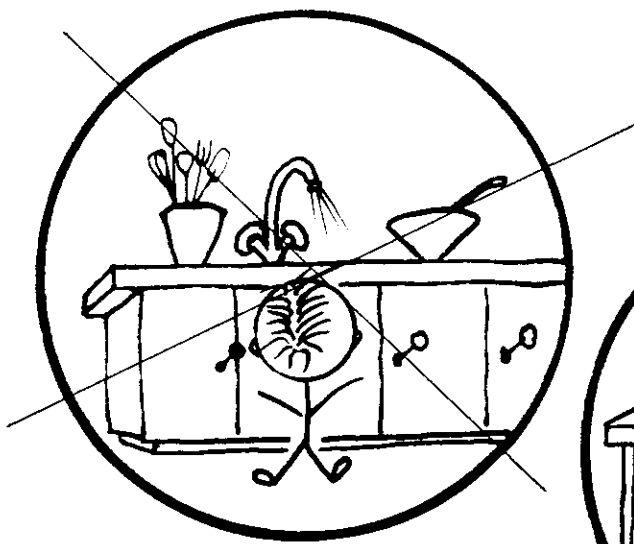
- **Enable the Work of the Home**

- Freedom:
free choice of work,
of the Partner,
of the time for uninterrupted work
- Prepared Environment:
original Montessori Materials

on open shelves.



Time frame: 3 clock hours
uninterrupted free work



2

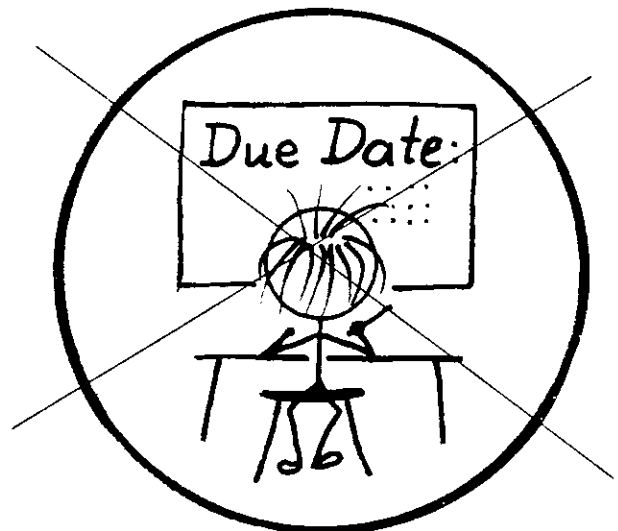


- Size of furniture adapted to the size of the child
Or provide a step stool

- Enrollment
3-6 years
6-12 years (6-9; 9-12)
12-15 (-18) years

- Number of children in a class:
MM: the best: **40** children in one class,
under 25 there will be problems (MM:
Course lecture in Madras, India, 1942)

- No curriculum for the child
(but for the teacher)



Work in Class:

- Relaxed beginning (no punctuality stress)
- Each child chooses the own work, each child (each group) works something else
- The teacher presents the materials to 1-5 children (no whole-class teaching)
- ca. 10 presentations/day
- presentations are chosen according to the child's interest
- while a few children receive a presentation, the others work independently and peacefully
- once in a while there is a class meeting:
Discussing projects,
news,
class problems
- Independence: Children take responsibility for cleaning, order

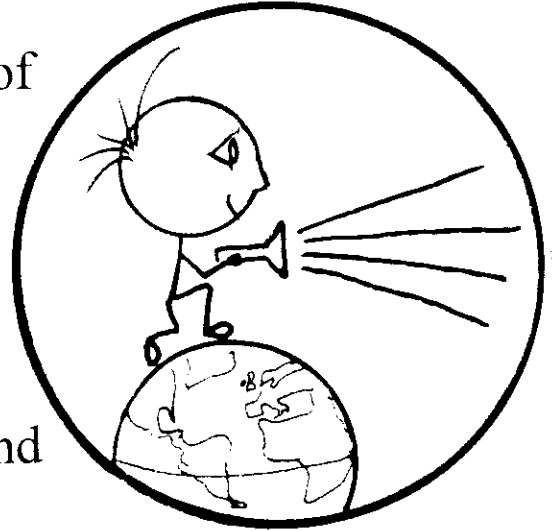
- Each material is represented only once
- Only original materials, that are carefully developed
- No “toys”
- Moveable tables and chairs, plenty of free floor space

- Discipline:
 - The children walk and talk as is necessary for their work
 - Limits of behaviour: The needs of the others
 - Self-discipline must be built (no Laissez-Faire-Style!)
 - Children unable to self-discipline have less freedom
 - No vague commands to work, but raising of interest

All this applies to children's house
and the elementary school.

To the 6-12 year olds applies the following:

- Task: Exploring the inner workings of things (why is it so)
- Of interest is the whole cosmos:
“Cosmic Education.”
- How? with help of the reasoning mind and the imagination:
> charts, time lines, stories, experiments
- The absorbent mind disappears, now is the reasoning mind at work >
mathematics, grammar, laws of nature



- Development of social awareness:
Opportunity to group work, tables for
4 – 6 children,
space for great work on the floor
- Range of life: Family, school, town
(all you can reach with a bike):
Two-fold environment: School and
“Going-out”
- External order is no more interesting, but
mental order is.
- Growing independence > no assistant