

# How children learn TUTOR RESOURCE PACK

Written by Sheila Riddall-Leech

Consultant Editor Linda Pound

## Contents

How to use the pack	<b>3-5</b>	Burrhus Skinner	<b>116-129</b>
Friedrich Froebel	<b>6-20</b>	John Bowlby	<b>130-144</b>
Sigmund Freud	<b>21-31</b>	Jerome Bruner	<b>145-156</b>
Margaret McMillan	<b>32-45</b>	Loris Magaluzzi	<b>157-166</b>
Rudolf Steiner	<b>46-56</b>	Margaret Donaldson	<b>167-178</b>
Maria Montessori	<b>57-76</b>	Howard Gardner	<b>179-190</b>
Susan Isaacs	<b>77-85</b>	Te Whariki	<b>191-201</b>
Jean Piaget	<b>86-105</b>	Glossary	<b>202-203</b>
Lev Vygotsky	<b>106-115</b>	Notes	<b>204-208</b>

Published by Practical Pre-School Books, A Division of MA Education, St Jude's Church, Dulwich Road, Herne Hill, London, SE24 0PB

Tel: 020 7738 5454

[www.practicalpreschoolbooks.com](http://www.practicalpreschoolbooks.com)

All photos and video footage © MA Education Ltd 2010

© MA Education Ltd 2010

How Children Learn Tutor Resource Pack ISBN: 978-1-907241-14-7

# How to use the pack

There are numerous theories on how children learn and develop and many students can find understanding some of these theories challenging, especially when one theory seems to contradict another. Many theories have developed and evolved as a result of extensive research and experimentation; some are philosophical and some are academic and conjectural, which can make them appear even more difficult to understand for some! However, theories of how children learn and develop are important as they can shape our practice and work with children, help us to understand how children acquire and use skills, language, concepts and emotions. Theories of how children learn will also help us to understand aspects of a child's behaviour and their social interactions. Having a good understanding of theory will help to make practitioners sensitive and responsive to the needs of children and therefore develop best practice. Theories should be regarded as complementary rather than 'stand alone' ideas, as all aspects of a child's development and learning are inter-related and as childcare and education practitioners we should have a holistic approach.

## About this pack

This resource pack is designed to provide flexible, adaptable and versatile teaching support to tutors and their students studying theories appropriate to early years education. The principal aim of the pack is to try to help students gain greater understanding of each theory and encourage them to extend their knowledge and understanding through personal research and reading. The theorists chosen are some of the key figures that have influenced early years education and are presented in chronological order, as set out in the accompanying student book, *How Children Learn*, written by Linda Pound (Pound L (2005) *How Children Learn*, Practical Pre-School Books).

The DVD included in this pack contains:

- A photobank and video clips to highlight the link between theory and practice and illustrate key points. Children have been filmed in a variety of settings and in as natural contexts as possible.
- PowerPoint presentations which can be used to clarify and expand on key theoretical points or the activities in the worksheets.

## The structure of each chapter

Each chapter focuses on one theory or theoretical perspective and all chapters have the same structure and format to help the tutor

find their way around the pack. Each begins with a contents section followed by key points and overview of the theory or approach, making reference to the student book, *How Children Learn*, where appropriate. Key criticisms and comments on each theory are important and are designed to make students be reflective and hopefully be encouraged to find out more for themselves. This section will also help students understand how theories have developed or evolved over time and how attitudes and approaches to practice may have changed. There are aims and learning outcomes for each theorist, followed by a suggested order for delivering the resources, worksheets and activities, PowerPoint presentations, tutor guidance, a bank of photographs and video clips on the DVD and finally suggested sources for further reading and research.

In each chapter the worksheets, information sheets and PowerPoint presentations are designed to stimulate discussion, develop knowledge and understanding, and promote common core skills of effective communication and engagement, sharing information and knowledge of child and young person development. The various activities are supported with suggestions and guidance for teaching and ideas to extend and develop understanding and knowledge of some of the educational theories and approaches. These activities are planned to give the tutor flexibility dependent on the learning needs of the student group. Each activity can be used as a stand-alone activity, as separate parts of a teaching session, or in order over several teaching sessions. All of the resources can be used to support learning at different levels, for example at Award, Certificate or Diploma and at Level 2, 3 or in some cases Level 4.

## Aims and learning outcomes

The aims and learning outcomes for each chapter are clearly stated as in the tutor guidance and notes and are reinforced and met through the PowerPoint presentations and the various worksheets and activities. Links are also made to the Common Core Skills such as Effective Communication and Engagement and Sharing Information. There is a common theme to the aims and learning outcomes in every chapter to develop understanding, reflective practice and evaluation skills.

## Suggested order for teaching and delivering the resources

In each chapter there is a suggested order for teaching and delivering the resources, but as mentioned earlier the resources

# How to use the pack

can be used separately. This order will provide a complete 'package' on one theorist which may cover several teaching sessions. However, it is acknowledged that there may not be sufficient teaching time to complete the suggested order, which is why the resources can be used effectively separately.

## Tutor guidance for teaching and delivery of the resources

There are teaching notes for each of the PowerPoint presentations, student activities and worksheets. These guidance notes are designed to help tutors plan their teaching sessions, but at the same time give flexibility so that the needs of the groups can be met. The tutor guidance follows the suggested order for teaching and delivering the resources. Where appropriate suggestions are made for the tutor to reinforce or highlight specific aspects of a theory, or ask explicit questions to lead a discussion. Where a worksheet requires correct answers to be given these are also included in the tutor guidance.

## PowerPoint presentations

All of the PowerPoint presentations can be accessed through the DVD included in the pack. Copies of each of the presentations are reproduced in the relevant chapter, so that tutors can easily see the content of each presentation. Each of the presentations highlight key points of the theory and in some cases are designed to encourage discussion and further research as well as providing factual information.

Included in some of the presentations are photographs to reinforce and contextualise specific points or ideas and to help with discussions, for example in the chapter on Froebel there are two photographs in the PowerPoint presentation; these are annotated so that the link between the photograph, the relevant slide and the theorist are clearly made.

## The worksheets and activities

The worksheets provide suggested activities for whole, small group and individual work covering a range of teaching and learning styles. All are numbered, following the same format – the number of the chapter followed by the number of the worksheet, for example worksheet 3.2 is the second

worksheet in Chapter 3. Worksheet 12.1 is the first worksheet in Chapter 12. Some of the worksheets relate to the PowerPoint Presentations and should be used in conjunction with the presentation. This is clearly indicated in the tutor guidance, for example in Chapter 7 on Piaget, the suggested order for delivery indicates at which point worksheets 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 should be used during the PowerPoint. Many of the suggested activities relate to practice and the learner will be encouraged to undertake personal research, further reading and reflect on their own practice. The worksheets are all A4 size and are photocopiable.

Some of the worksheets are for individual work, for example Worksheet 2.2 in the Chapter on Freud. Some worksheets are designed for small group work, for example Worksheets 11.3a, 11.3b and 11.3c in the chapter on Bruner ask students to work in small groups to undertake research and then present their findings to the rest of the class. In most cases students are asked to compare and contrast theory with their own practice and setting. This is a fundamental aspect of being a reflective practitioner.

## The photobank

On the DVD is a bank of photographs to support knowledge and understanding of each theorist. The photographs have many purposes and are designed to be used to:

- stimulate
- discussion
- clarify points
- develop knowledge and understanding
- to compare with the students' own work settings
- develop reflective practice

## Links to other theorists and further reading and research

At the end of each chapter there is a short section of links to other theorists and perspectives which relate to the particular theorist. It is hoped that this will encourage personal research and encourage the students to expand their knowledge and understanding.

# How to use the pack

Every effort has been made to check the details of the books and websites, but this list is merely suggestions and a starting point. Some of the books maybe out of print but can be accessed through a library or learning centre. Care should be taken when using a search engine to engage in research, many websites can be invaluable sources of information, others can be the complete opposite.

## Further reading and research

The following list contain suggested tutor research and further reading, which it is hoped will assist in the delivery of sessions on theory and aspects of how children learn and develop.

Bruce T (2003) *Early Childhood Education (third edition)*. Hodder and Stoughton

Daly M et al (2006) *Understanding Early Years Theory in Practice*. Heinemann

Doherty J, Hughes M (2009) *Child Development: Theory and Practice 0-11*. Pearson

Garhart-Mooney C (2002) *Theories of Childhood - An Introduction to Dewey, Montessori, Erikson, Piaget and Vygotsky*. Redleaf Press

Johnston J, Williams LN (2009) *Early Childhood Studies*. Pearson

Lindon J (2010) *Understanding Child Development: Linking Theory to Practice (Second Edition)*. Hodder Arnold

Palaiologou J (Ed) (2010) *The Early Years Foundation Stage Theory and Practice*. Sage

See P, Shuter R (2003) *Child Development - Thinking about Theories*. Hodder Arnold

Smith P, Cowie H, Blades M (1991) *Understanding Children's Development (Fourth Edition)*. Blackwell Publishing

Wood D E (1998) *How Children Think and Learn (Second Edition)*. Blackwell Publishing

Wyse D (2004) *Childhood Studies - An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing

[www.child-development-guide.com](http://www.child-development-guide.com)

[www.infed.org/thinkers](http://www.infed.org/thinkers)

## How to use the DVD

The DVD disc will work in a stand-alone DVD player (TV), as well as on both PC and Macs.

The DVD should auto-run when inserted into your DVD drive. If it doesn't auto-run then open your DVD playing software and select your DVD Drive.

### Minimum technical requirements

#### Low resolution

- Intel Pentium 4 or equivalent 2.33GHz or faster processor
- 1GB of RAM and 128MB of VRAM
- DVD Playback Software

#### High resolution

- Intel Core Duo or equivalent 3GHz or faster processor
- 2GB of RAM and 256MB of VRAM

To run the DVD in high resolution browse to your DVD Drive by clicking on the folder 'HCL Tutor Pack' and run:

- HCL\_Tutor\_pack.exe on Windows
- HCL\_Tutor\_pack.app on a Mac

The PowerPoint presentations and photos can be accessed separately to the menuing screen by clicking on the HCL Tutor Pack icon, followed by FS Command folder. The photos are stored as jpegs in the Photos folder and the presentations are stored as PowerPoint presentations in the Presentations folder.

Please see the copyright notice on page 2 of this pack for information on the legal use of this DVD.

If you have any issues in running this DVD please contact Practical Pre-School Books' customer services team 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday on 01722 716 935 or email [orders@practicalpreschoolbooks.com](mailto:orders@practicalpreschoolbooks.com).

## An overview and criticisms of Maria Montessori's theories

As a result of her work with young children from the slum areas of Rome, Maria Montessori set up the first Casa dei Bambini (Children's House). It was the experiences of the children in this establishment that shaped what has become known as the Montessori Method.

The legacy of Maria Montessori's work can be seen in Montessori schools throughout the world today, as well as in some mainstream classrooms. The philosophy and teaching methods of Maria Montessori put the child at the centre of the curriculum, where they are offered a unique and personally tailored educational experience. The learning environment is structured with special materials and resources and exists within a community of children, parents and adults. Furniture is child-sized, children are free to move around the room as they wish, and interact with the materials around them. Adults facilitate learning through three identified stages, only moving on when the adult was certain the child is ready.

Montessori claimed that observations of children formed her philosophy, and through these observations it was possible to identify particularly sensitive times in a child's life when they are more receptive to learning. Adults were instructed that they should respond only to observed responses of the children, otherwise they would limit the freedom of the child. Detailed observations of each child helped Montessori develop a deeper understanding of the child and work out how a child's understanding of the world around them is acquired. Montessori believed that children could be taught to read and write and understand numbers at an early age and she developed specific resources and materials to support this view. However, sensitive observation of the children was used to ascertain their readiness for such activities and would only be offered if the child showed interest and was deemed to be ready to learn. Sensory experiences were paramount and many materials were designed to stimulate all of the senses.

The curriculum offered in Montessori settings today is based on the theory and philosophy of Maria Montessori. Observations are fundamental to the learning process and children are free to move around the setting individually selecting materials to work with. The curriculum supports all aspects of personal and social development and those working in Montessori settings often assert that children are confident, independent, decision makers.

Montessori education is sometimes criticised as being overly rigid. This is perhaps not surprising when the starting point for

## CONTENTS

This chapter on Maria Montessori includes:

- A summary and overview of Montessori's theory
- Aims and learning outcomes
- Suggested order for teaching and delivering the resources
- Teaching and guidance notes
- 7 worksheets
- 1 PowerPoint: The Montessori Method on DVD
- 1 Video and images in photobank on Montessori equipment on DVD
- Information Sheet
- Links to other theorists
- Further reading and research

TIP: It would be advantageous to the learning experience if a visit could be arranged to a Montessori setting.

# Maria Montessori

*Refers to How Children Learn pages 29 to 31*

Montessori's work is remembered. The children and families with whom Montessori worked were living in dreadful and chaotic circumstances of poverty and squalor and it was her aim to bring order, security and predictability to these children's lives. What is interesting to consider is why McMillan, working with very similar communities, took another view of how to provide the security the children needed. It is also interesting to think about why, although it began as one of the working class strands of early childhood provision, Montessori education has become a mainstay of provision for upper and middle class families. Princess Diana, for example, chose a Montessori nursery for Prince William. One answer may be that some families like the apparent rigidity and certainty of practice, as they feel that this meets their children's needs.

An aspect of Montessori provision which many early years practitioners find difficult to understand is her apparent rejection of play and imagination. This undoubtedly stems in part from what she perceived as the needs of the communities with whom she worked. For Montessori the most important thing was that children should focus on meaningful day-to-day tasks (or work) and should not be distracted by fantasy. Current Montessori practitioners (see for example Bradley et al in press) suggest that the apparent conflict of ideas arises from historical interpretations. Today, they suggest, "freedom of choice, the exercise of will and deep engagement, which leads to concentration" (Montessori St Nicholas, 2008, 21) are seen as common to both work and play and that therefore the two are not so firmly divided.

In the past Montessori education has been criticised, in contrast to Steiner Waldorf education, for introducing phonics too early. This is interesting since currently an early introduction to phonics is in line with government policy (QCA, *Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage*, 2007). It should however be remembered that Montessori was working in Italian – a language in which the written form is entirely phonetic. The case for English is much more complex.

Montessori's contemporary, Susan Isaacs (see page 77 of this pack), was highly critical of Montessori's work (see Smith 1985). Isaacs (cited by Smith, 1985, page 255) suggested that:

It is the paucity of other games in the Montessori schools which makes the children take to this new occupation (that is reading). In the Froebel kindergartens, with their incomparably greater variety of occupations to exercise the child's powers of intuition and imagination, his interest and independence, as a general rule, scarcely any instances of liking for reading and writing exercise are to be observed.

Both Isaacs and McMillan used many of Montessori's resources but both rejected important aspects of the way in which her theory or philosophy were translated into practice. Both favoured a more open-ended approach than that of Montessori. This perhaps highlights an additional criticism of Montessori's work: she was a trained doctor and took her ideas for her education system from her work in Paris with Eduard Séguin who worked with children then labelled as 'mentally deficient'. Montessori decided that mainstream schools were achieving much less impressive results with apparently 'normal' children than she was achieving in her work with much less able children. She therefore began to establish schools for all based on her methods. Critics however argue that it is inappropriate to build an approach to education for all based on the needs of mentally challenged children.

## References

Bradley M, Isaacs B, Livingston L et al (in press) *Maria Montessori in the United Kingdom*. In Miller L, Pound L (Eds) *Theories and Approaches to Learning in the Early Years*. Sage

Montessori St Nicholas (2008) *Guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage in Montessori Settings*. Montessori St Nicholas

Smith L (1985) *To Understand and to Help: The Life and Work of Susan Isaacs (1885 – 1948)*. Associated University Presses

## Recommendations for further reading

Bradley M, Isaacs B, Livingston L et al (in press) *Maria Montessori in the United Kingdom*. In Miller L, Pound L (Eds) *Theories and Approaches to Learning in the Early Years*. Sage

Isaacs B (2007) *Bringing the Montessori Approach to Your Early Years Practice*. David Fulton

Pound L (in press) *Theories and Thinking About Early Childhood Care and Education*. Open University Press (see chapter 5)

# Maria Montessori: Teaching notes and guidance

## Aims

- To develop an understanding of the Montessori Method
- To link theory to current practice
- To develop a greater understanding of the curriculum of a Montessori setting
- To develop reflective practice

## Learning outcomes

- The student will develop a greater understanding of the theory of Maria Montessori
- The student will develop a greater awareness of group work as they undertake research and plan presentations
- The student will develop individual skills of reflective practice as they compare current early years practice in their settings with the Montessori method
- The student will develop a greater understanding of how Montessori settings are arranged
- The student will be able to link theory to practice
- The student will be able to evaluate the theory of Maria Montessori

## Suggested order for teaching and delivering the resources

1. Worksheet 5.1
2. Worksheets 5.2a, 5.2b, 5.2c and 5.2d
3. PowerPoint: The Montessori Method – slides 1, 2 and 3
4. Worksheet 5.3
5. PowerPoint: The Montessori Method – slide 4
6. Worksheet 5.4

7. PowerPoint: The Montessori Method – slide 5
8. Worksheet 5.5
9. PowerPoint: The Montessori Method – slide 6
10. Information sheet 1
11. Worksheet 5.6
12. Worksheet 5.7 and Montessori videos 1 and 2

## Worksheet 5.1

### Individual research

This activity introduces the student to the structured approach of the Montessori Method, whilst at the same time linking to current trends in the nutritional health of young children.

The activity encourages the student to be reflective regarding practice in their setting.

Each member of the class requires copy of the worksheet.

Question 1 can be answered on the front of the sheet.

Questions 2, 3 and 4 can be answered on the reverse of the sheet or on a separate sheet.

## Worksheets 5.2a, 5.2b, 5.2c, 5.2d

### Group research

Maria Montessori was influenced by the work and writings of:

- Eduard Séguin – focussed on children with mental health issues (see [www.infed.org/thinkers/et-mont.htm](http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-mont.htm))
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau – childhood should be respected and education should be for the good of the individual, according to nature (see *How Children Learn* pages 6-7)
- Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi – links to Rousseau through their shared belief that education should be based on nature and love. Work and social interaction are the foundations of development (see *How Children Learn* pages 8-10)

# Maria Montessori: Teaching notes and guidance

- Friedrich Froebel – first-hand sensory experiences through play (see *How Children Learn* pages 14-16)

Divide the class into four groups, each group will require the relevant worksheet for the theorist.

- Worksheet 5.2a: Séguin
- Worksheet 5.2b: Rousseau
- Worksheet 5.2c: Pestalozzi
- Worksheet 5.2d: Froebel

Ask each group to research the key points of each of the above theorists. The students should focus on the ideas and methods that are common between each theorist and Montessori.

Each group should produce a brief presentation to feed back to the rest of the class on how these philosophies influenced Maria Montessori.

## PowerPoint: The Montessori Method and Worksheets 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5

The PowerPoint illustrates the basic concepts of the Montessori Method.

Each of the individual points on slide 3, 4, 5, and 6 appear at the click of the mouse.

### Slide 1: Title slide

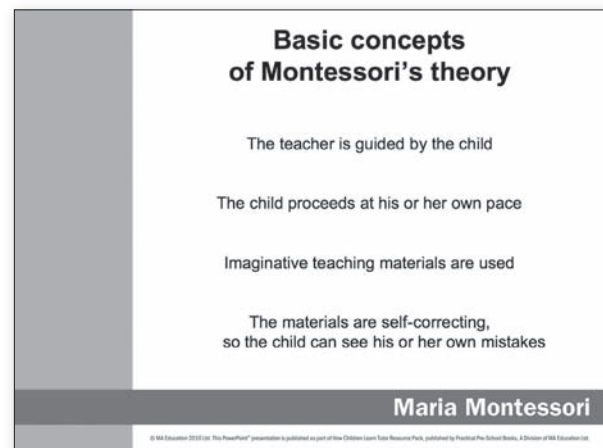
### Slide 2: Introduce the four basic concepts of the Montessori Method

Each concept is developed in the next four slides.

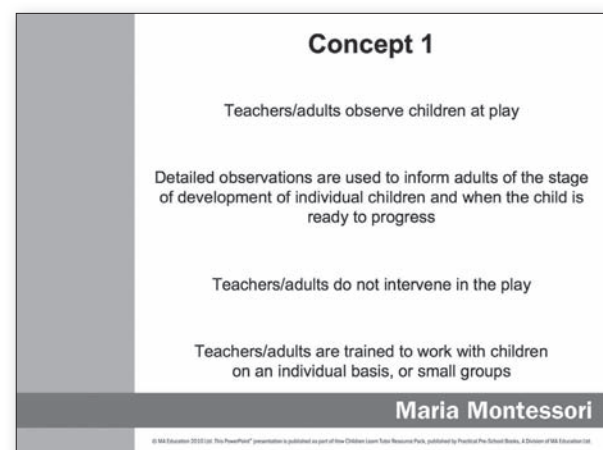
### Slide 3: The teacher is guided by the child, the role of a Montessori teacher

Go through each point on the PowerPoint and discuss, using the notes below to clarify and expand knowledge.

- Ideally adults are highly trained through a specific course that reflects the philosophy of Montessori.
- The purpose of the adult is to assist and direct to stimulate the child's enthusiasm for learning.



Maria Montessori: The Montessori Method Slide 2



Maria Montessori: The Montessori Method Slide 3

- Adults are often called 'directresses'.
- Observations are detailed and carefully recorded to show:
  - The level of concentration
  - How a child responds to the materials
  - Mastery of the materials
  - Social development
  - Physical health
- Adults remain calm with the children and move around the room in an unhurried and discreet way.
- Adults must be responsive to the needs of individual children.



# Maria Montessori: Teaching notes and guidance

- Adults must respect, value and listen to the child's remarks and observations.

Students will need worksheet 5.3 at the end of the discussions.

## Worksheet 5.3: The stages of learning

### Individual work in a student's own setting

Each student will need a copy of the worksheet.

It is expected that students have an understanding of how to observe children.

Students should observe a child for about 10 minutes if possible using any suitable and relevant method to record their findings and observations.

The student should hand in a report which comments on the effectiveness of the three stages of learning on the Montessori method.

This activity is to be completed in the student's own time whilst in their setting.

### Slide 4: Children work at their own pace

Go through each point below and discuss.

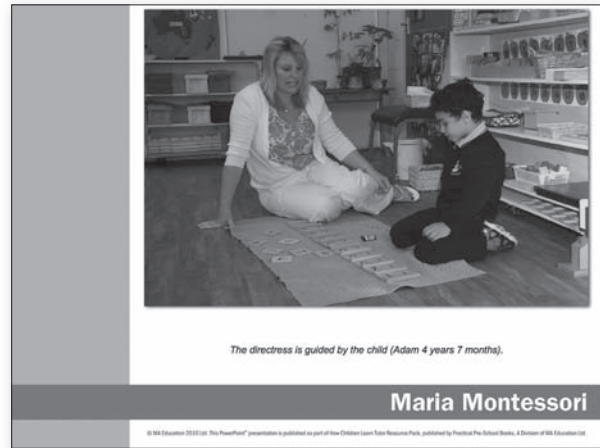
- Montessori believed that education began from birth, and that children experience periods of special sensitivity during which they are keen and eager to learn.
- The classroom should ideally contain a mixed age range of children who are free to move around the room with no time constraints.
- The environment is designed to meet children's needs when they are most motivated and interested, and give them independence and autonomy over their learning experiences.

Students will need individual copies of worksheet 5.4 after discussions

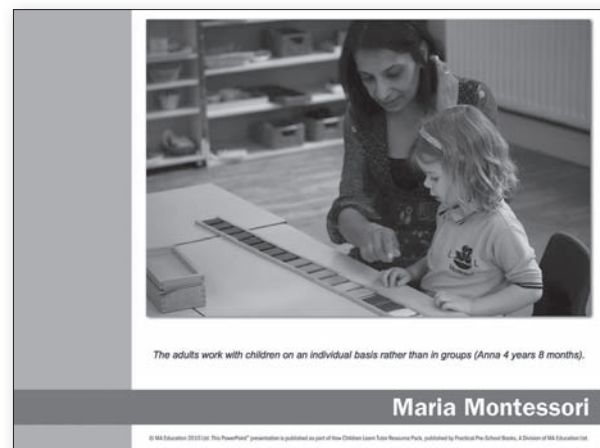
## Worksheet 5.4: Learning at your own pace

### Small group activity, whole group feedback

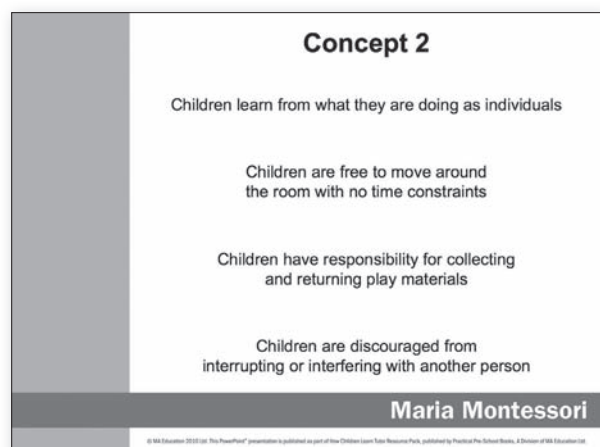
Divide the class into small groups of three or four. Each group will need a copy of the worksheet.



Maria Montessori: The Montessori Method Slide 4



Maria Montessori: The Montessori Method Slide 5



Maria Montessori: The Montessori Method Slide 6

# Maria Montessori: Teaching notes and guidance

Allow 30 minutes for discussion.

Allow five minutes per group to feedback and discuss findings.

## Slide 5: Imaginative teaching materials were used

Montessori believed that children learn through their senses and movement especially of the hands.

The following activity aims to help students gain greater understanding of this belief.

## Worksheet 5.5: Making and using a Montessori resource

Making sandpaper letters and numbers.

Each student will need:

- Access to a computer
- Several sheets of sandpaper
- Glue
- Scissors

Student can make the resources either in class or their own time.

Resources made should be used in the setting.

After using the resources student should be encouraged to feed back to the rest of the group on the effectiveness of the resource and the responses of the children. This leads on to slide 6.

## Slide 6: Materials are self-correcting

This slide can be used to encourage students to discuss their experiences with the sensory resources.

Montessori materials were designed that the child could learn through trial and error, in that if they made a mistake they could try again, put it right independently, and succeed.

For example, one Montessori resource is a small jug of water, a spoon, an empty jug and a small natural sponge or cloth. The child transfers water with the spoon from the full jug to the empty one, if water spills they can wipe it up independently and so 'self-correct' their mistake.

Questions for discussion:

- Was your resource self-correcting? Explain how and why.
- How effective was your resource in allowing independent learning? Explain how.
- How effective was your resource in aiding learning through the senses? Explain how.
- What modifications would you make to your resource and why?

## Information sheet 1

Information sheet 1 gives an overview of the curriculum in a Montessori setting, as well as how Montessori saw her philosophy developing for older children. It also offers a criticism of the theory.

## Worksheet 5.6

### Individual work, followed by group discussion

Aim: to develop a greater understanding of a Montessori curriculum

The worksheet has a table of 3 columns; the student will complete columns 2 and 3.

Column 1 – names a specific area of the Montessori Curriculum.

Column 2 – the student will complete by matching the area of the Montessori Curriculum to children's' development and learning. For example daily living skills (practical life) encourages the development of self help skills, independence, decision making .

Column 3 – the student will complete with examples of materials such as making a snack or setting a table.

Following completion of the worksheet, students should be encouraged to discuss both the advantages and disadvantages of a Montessori curriculum and compare this to their own settings.

# Maria Montessori: Teaching notes and guidance

## Worksheet 5.7 and Montessori videos 1 and 2

The students need individual copies of the worksheet and should watch the video first.

The video focuses on the Montessori area of the curriculum, exploration of the wider world.

Try to discourage the students from discussing the merits and disadvantages of setting worksheets, but focus on the child's learning experience.

After the discussion watch Montessori Video 2.

Discuss how the child's learning is extended.

# Worksheet 5.1

Montessori published her first book *The Montessori Method* in 1909. This book described every detail of a child's life at a Casa dei Bambini; from what a child should eat for lunch to how teachers would dress and the room and activities laid out.

Using the internet, learning centre and any other appropriate resources answer the following questions:

1. Write out the menu for lunch at your current setting in the box below; compare this to the lunch provided for children at the Casa dei Bambini.

Lunch at my setting	Lunch at Casa dei Bambini

2. What are the significant differences between the two meals?
3. What are the significant similarities between the two meals?
4. How would a meal at the Casa dei Bambini rate with the views of the Advisory Panel on Food and Nutrition in Early Years?

# Worksheet 5.1a

In your group research the key features of the theories and philosophy of **Eduard Séguin**.

His writings focussed on children with mental health problems and influenced Maria Montessori.

Find out:

- How Séguin believed children with mental illnesses should be treated.
  
- How Séguin's beliefs influenced Montessori?
  
- How Montessori adapted the beliefs of Séguin in order to support her own philosophy?

Prepare a short presentation of about 5 minutes for your peers, which highlights the ideas and methods that are common between Montessori and Séguin.

# Worksheet 5.1b

In your group research the key features of the theories and philosophy of **Jean-Jacques Rousseau**.

Rousseau believed that childhood should be respected by adults and education should be for the good of the individual, rather than to benefit society. Rousseau advocated observing children in natural situations.

Find out:

- How Rousseau's beliefs on observing children influenced Montessori.
- How did Montessori adapt the beliefs of Rousseau in order to support her own philosophy?
- Rousseau influenced the beliefs of Pestalozzi, who also influenced Montessori, what are the common themes between all three theorists?

Prepare a short presentation of about five minutes in length for your peers which highlights the ideas and methods that are common between both Montessori and Rousseau.

# Worksheet 5.2c

In your group research the key features of the theories and philosophy of **Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi**.

Pestalozzi was influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's ideas that education should be based on principles of nature and love, and that work and social interaction were the foundations of development.

Find out:

- Pestalozzi established a world famous school, how did this differ from Montessori's Casa dei Bambini?
  
- How did Pestalozzi believe children should be taught and what are the similarities to Montessori's method?
  
- How did Montessori adapt the beliefs of Pestalozzi in order to support her own philosophy?

Prepare a short presentation of about five minutes length for your peers, which highlights the ideas and methods that are common between both Montessori and Pestalozzi.

# Worksheet 5.2d

In your group research the key features of the theories and philosophy of **Friedrich Froebel**.

Froebel is highly influential in the development of early education; however focus your research on:

- The influence of Pestalozzi on Froebel.
  
- How Montessori adapted Froebel's belief in the outdoor environment through the Casa dei Bambini.
  
- How Montessori adapted Froebel's belief in first-hand sensory experiences.

Prepare a short presentation of about five minutes for your peers, which highlights the ideas and methods that are common between both Montessori and Froebel.



# Worksheet 5.3: The stages of learning



1. The adult introduces Anna (4 years 8 months) to the resources or materials and teaches her how to use each item correctly. (Montessori Image 6)



2. Anna mentally processes the information received and develops an understanding of the concept through play and repeating the activity. (Montessori Image 7)



3. Anna shows knowledge with ease through her play and activities, and so is capable to teach Sofia (2 years 6 months). (Montessori Image 9)

# Worksheet 5.3: The stages of learning

The Montessori Method involves three stages of learning:

In your setting choose a child to work alongside.

- a) Choose an activity such as sand or water play where another dimension has been added, such as pouring water or sand through a range of tubes. This activity should be new to the child and there should not be any time constraints.

Follow the three stages of learning as described on the previous page.

During stage two observe the child and record your findings. Make notes on:

- The child's levels of concentration
  
  - How the child responds to the equipment
  
  - Their social development
  
  - Their physical health at the time of the activity
- b) Using the evidence of your observations, write a short report and comment on the effectiveness of the three stages of learning of the Montessori method.

# Worksheet 5.4: Learning at your own pace

In small groups of three or four talk about your own learning experiences either at home, school, college or another setting.

Discuss:

- How you were taught and by whom
- How you learnt (for example repetition, demonstration [including DVD or video], worksheet or written instruction, textbooks)
- How effective your experience of teaching and learning was
- When you were most receptive to the learning experience
- How it could have been improved

Choose one person in your group to feed back a summary of your discussions to the rest of the class.

Think about:

- The differences in the ways that people learn
- The benefits of learning at your own pace
- How this understanding could help improve and develop your own practice.

# Worksheet 5.5: Making and using a Montessori teaching resource

Choose from:

- Letters of the alphabet
- Numbers
- 2D shapes

Use WordArt on a computer to print out the 26 letters of the alphabet or the numbers 0-1 in a large lower case font.

Use a drawing program on a computer to print out large 2D shapes of different sizes such as squares, triangles, rectangles, circles, hexagons, oval ellipses etc.

Carefully cut out each letter, number or shape. Stick onto sandpaper and carefully cut out.

Use this resource in your setting with a small group of children who already:

- have some phonic understanding of using letters
- have some understanding of number symbols and number names if using numbers
- have some understanding of shapes

Show the children the materials.

Encourage them to touch and feel each piece of sandpaper, moving their fingers over the complete letter, number or shape in order to engage their senses.

Following the Montessori method, do not lead the children in their explorations or intervene. Be led by the children and observe.

Observe the children as they explore the materials.

Make a note of:

- their reactions and responses to the sensory materials
- their levels of concentration

Use this information to evaluate the effectiveness of your resource.

TIP: Make sure when you stick the letters or numbers on the sandpaper that you do not reverse the letter.

# Information sheet 1

Montessori believed that the environment in which a young child should be regarded as a house and be as much like a home as possible. However she recognised that not all homes were safe and loving environments. Montessori's vision was for her Children's Houses (Casa dei Bambini) to have a family environment, where although children are treated as individuals and their individuality is allowed to flourish, they feel connected to one another and concerned about each other's welfare and wellbeing. Montessori wanted the Children's Houses to form children for life in the wider world; but she recognised that the world would have to be very different from the one that she currently inhabited (remember this was just before the First World War).

The curriculum offered in The Children's Houses was designed to support all aspects of the child's personal and social development. The main curriculum areas are:

- Practical life (sometimes called daily living skills)
- Sensorial experiences
- Language development
- Mathematical development
- Cultural activities to include science and exploration of the wider world.

These areas of the curriculum are still offered in Montessori settings today. There are very clear and structured ways in which materials should be used to develop each area of the curriculum. Textbooks are rarely used, with the children learning directly from their environment or each other rather than the teacher, (or 'Directress' which was a Montessori term).

Although often associated with young children, Montessori's ideas were also applied to teenagers. She proposed that adolescents live together in the countryside, away from their private homes, and run a modern farm, country store and what she called 'The Rural Children's Hotel', all of which would be directed by a married couple who would exercise a moral and protective influence over the young people.

One of the biggest criticisms of Montessori is that she did not allow for role play, creativity and imaginative play in her curriculum. Montessori saw these areas as important aspects of a child's development and integrated art, dance, music and drama into the curriculum, but these were still delivered in structured ways. In other curricula children may be left to interpret music and dance in their own individual way showing elements of imagination, creativity and fantasy. Montessori

believed that art, music, dance and drama should be part of cultural area of the curriculum and would be developed through activities which extended a child's understanding of geography, biology and history.

However, Montessori has been praised for creating a highly structured environment which gives clear guidance to practitioners and is still popular across the world. Through the Montessori Method children are encouraged to be independent learners and learn from each other.

# Worksheet 5.6

Through personal research, observation of children and reading, complete columns 2 and 3 of the chart.

For example, the sandpaper letters you made would encourage the development of letter sounds (language development), the numbers and shapes encouraged the development of an understanding of number and shape concepts.

Compare your findings with others in your group.

Area of the Montessori Curriculum	Encourages development of	Example materials
Daily living skills (Practical life)		
Sensory development		
Language development		
Number concepts		
Science and exploration of the wider world (including cultural)		

# Worksheet 5.7: Exploring the wider world

## Watch the video Montessori 1

Kush (3 years 7 months) is looking at a small world globe with the adult, he also has a worksheet with an outline of the world. The aim of the activity is for the child to identify a country or continent on the globe and then colour in the corresponding area on the worksheet. The adult and Kush discuss the next area to be coloured in and once the adult is sure the child is capable she leaves him and he continues to colour in the worksheet independently. During the discussions Anna (4 years 8 months) listens in, she is not actively involved in the activity but stays and so is able to make use of this learning opportunity as well.

Think about:

- Montessori teachers or directresses are trained to work with children on an individual basis; how does this approach benefit the learning experience?
- On the wall of the classroom is a large poster of a map of the world, the globe and the worksheet replicate this poster. How else could this learning activity be reinforced?

## Now watch Montessori Video 2

Kush is with another adult looking at items from an orange box. He was colouring in orange earlier and the contents of the box are linked to that country or continent. In this way his learning is extended as he explores and questions the material.

# Maria Montessori

## Links to other theorists

Montessori was not only influenced by other educational thinkers and theorists, such as Froebel, she also provided inspiration for other theorists, notably Susan Isaacs. The key points of these theorists are listed below.

### **Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)**

(see *How Children Learn* pages 6-7)

- Children learnt through social interaction
- Children should be allowed to develop naturally
- Believed in fostering self-reliance

### **Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827)**

(see *How Children Learn* pages 8-10)

- Set up 'schools' where children were free to explore their own interests and ideas
- Reinforced the view of a family unit to support social development

### **Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel (1782-1852)**

(see *How Children Learn* pages 14-16)

- Children should engage in their own independent learning
- Free flow play is central to all learning
- Play enabled children to develop an understanding of the world
- Children are likened to flowers that need to grow in a garden, hence the term 'kindergarten', meaning children's garden

### **Susan Isaacs (1885-1948)**

(see *How Children learn* pages 32-35)

- Influenced by Froebel
- Children are active learners
- Play is self-directed with minimum interference from adults

## Further reading and research

Isaacs B (2010) *Bringing the Montessori Approach to Your Early Years Practice*. David Fulton

Montessori M and Hunt J (1912) *The Montessori Method*. Heinemann

[www.montessori.org.uk](http://www.montessori.org.uk)

[www.montessorieducationuk.org](http://www.montessorieducationuk.org)