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# The Montessori Method of Education



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## **1. What is the Luminous Academy (TLA), What is the Purpose and goals of TLA?**

**The Luminous Academy** is a Preschool and Child Care Centre which provides the child centric education with Montessori approach that makes learning Fun & Exploring. We strongly believe that the most important period of life is not the age of college or university studies, but the first plane, the period from birth to the age of six is significant which lays foundation for overall child development. So, our purpose of education to a child is not only aim at preparing them for academics, but for life.

**TLA believes** that we are the Sowers and our children are those who reap. We labor so that future of kids will be better and nobler than we are.

**TLA's aim** is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force them to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse them to their innermost core. So, our goal is to activate the child's own natural desire for lifelong learning.

We do not tell the kids how to do things but we show them how to do it. If we tell them, they will watch lips move but if we show them, they will want to do it themselves.

We urge our parent community, Let the children be free; encourage them; let them run outside when it is raining; let them remove their shoes when they find a puddle of water; and when the grass of the meadows is wet with dew, let them run on it and trample it with their bare feet; let them rest peacefully when a tree invites them to sleep beneath its shade; let them shout and laugh when the sun wakes them in the morning.

Together, let us assist a child by providing them with a Montessori environment which will enable them to develop freely.

## **2. What is Montessori Philosophy and Method?**

Montessori is an approach to the education of children, a way of looking at, and understanding children. It is a view of how children develop and learn which has been translated into a systematic method of education based upon careful scientific study.

The Montessori educational system is unique in that it has successfully undergone continued development for over seventy years and has been used effectively with mentally retarded, physically handicapped, normal, and gifted children in different countries around the world. Perhaps the most significant reason for its success is that it is a comprehensive method of education resulting from an integration of research on development, learning, curriculum, and teaching.

**The Montessori method:**

- It is a child centered alternative educational system developed by Dr Maria Montessori.
- The Montessori method is based on the fact that children learn directly from their environment & relatively little from listening to a teacher talking to the class.
- The Montessori method provides a stimulating child-oriented environment in which children can explore, touch and learn with freedom.

**Key components:**

- Respect each child
- Make children the center of learning.
- Encourage children to learn by providing freedom
- Observe children
- Prepare the learning environment
- Introduce multi-sensory learning materials
- Auto education –main goal of this method.

**Characteristics of Montessori method:**

- Montessori method is self-activated.
- It is based on profound respect for the child's personality as an individual.
- It is based on the child's imperious need to learn by doing.
- The learning environment is positive, non-threatening and noncompetitive
- Children learn through activities that involve exploration, manipulation, order, repetition, abstraction and communication

**Principles of Montessori Education:**

- The philosophy of Montessori method emphasizes the individual child's initiative & independence allowing him or her to progress through an orderly series of structured learning activities at his own pace. It is based on the following principles;
  - Principle of instinctive learning
  - Principle of development from within
  - Principle of independence & freedom
  - Principle of intrinsic rewarding & non punishing.
  - Principle of individual development
  - Principle of auto education Principle of sense training

- Principle of motor training
  - It helps to unfold his individuality - Personality Development
  - To develop individuality in natural - spontaneous manner
  - No interference with teacher - Self education
  - Proper physical training to become self-dependent - Muscular training
  - Sensory organs are ‘gateway of knowledge - Sensory training

### **3. What is the idea behind the Montessori approach?**

Montessori is an approach to education based upon the principle that schooling should work with the nature of the child instead of against it. Therefore, education should be based upon scientific study of the child and a resulting understanding of the processes of development and learning.

#### **The Montessori understanding of the nature of the child:**

Dr. Montessori felt that her greatest discovery was that children like to work as well as play. In fact, children have a natural drive to work in order to develop. The child’s great task is to create an adult. As a result, children are not content unless that have an opportunity to develop and learn.

### **4. How the Luminous Academy, A Montessori Pre-School look like?**

#### **Montessori Pre School:**

Children love The Luminous Academy of Montessori education. They like the opportunity to be with other children of their own age and they like having so many interesting things to do. The room is attractive, with many carefully designed materials and activities from which the children can choose.

The children are free to engage themselves in activities that interest them. They can work by themselves, or with a friend, or a group of friends. They can spend as much time as needed in any activity.

They have opportunities to do things they see their parents do at home. They can prepare food such as grating carrots, peeling potatoes, cutting bananas, cracking nuts, or squeezing oranges. They can do carpentry such as hammering, nailing, and sawing. They can learn to tie shoes, work a zipper, use snaps and buttons.

They can listen to music, sing, dance, and learn to play an instrument. They can paint, draw, work with clay, learn to sew, make masks or puppets. They can learn to count or

make words. They can look at books about all the wondrous things in the world around them.

They can look at a globe and look at pictures taken of different parts of the world. And, they can run, climb, play games, and have fun with their friends. They can sit on a knee and hug a teacher.

### **Montessori Classroom:**

A Montessori classroom is an exciting place to be. There are many interesting and beautiful resources with which children can work. There are many interesting books on a wide assortment of topics, such as insects, plants, animals, different countries, history, etc. However, textbooks, workbooks, and ditto sheets are not used. Instead, children work with many different concrete materials that help them to learn through an active process. In using these materials, the children may make their own books, draw their own maps or time lines, and develop their own projects. As a result, the classroom is a busy, happy place to be. Since

the classroom is well organized, with the intention of making all the materials visible and accessible for the children, the children can find what they want and work without having to wait for the teacher.

Some children may be reading while others are doing math. Some people may be studying about ants while others are listening to classical music on headphones. The children are all engaged in a purposeful activity that leads and develops the intelligence. The materials set out in the room have been carefully designed with an education purpose in mind. Because of this, the children are free to move from activity to activity. They don't need to wait for assignments from the teacher. Meanwhile, the teacher is free to help individuals or small groups. The teacher is not tied to a routine of having to present a series of large group lessons to the whole class.

The classroom is activity centered rather than teacher centered. The teacher's job is to prepare the classroom, put out the materials, and then observe the children and determine how to help. The teacher does not need to test the children because it is easy to see how the children are doing by observing their activities.

In this way the teacher can have immediate, up-to-date information about any child without time being taken away from learning and without threat of failure being imposed upon the child. Without the threat of failure, and with so many intriguing things to do, discipline problems disappear and a friendly, cooperative social community forms.

Cooperation rather than competition becomes the tone of the room and adversary relationships fade away, becoming friendships.



### **5. How is a Montessori program different from other programs?**

A Montessori program is different from other educational programs in a number of ways.

- a. **Teaches to individuals instead of to groups:** In many classrooms, lessons are presented to the whole class and sometimes to small groups. In Montessori schools the general rule is reversed. Most of the time the teacher presents lessons to individuals. Other children can watch if they are interested. In this way, the teacher can address the specific needs of a child and can respond to the individual child's interest and level of understanding. The child does not have to sit through something that he or she is not ready for. This individual attention also helps the teacher be much more familiar with the child. Thus, the teacher understands the child more fully, and better provides for that child.



- b. **Children learn through practicing tasks rather than through listening and having to remember:** In many non-Montessori classrooms children are expected to learn by listening to the teacher. Work is usually with paper and pencil. In a Montessori classroom, on the other hand, children learn by practicing with apparatus that embodies the concept to be mastered. For example, when learning about shapes such as triangles, squares, circles, etc., instead of listening to a teacher talk about the shapes and watching her draw them on the chalkboard the children trace real figures and make designs. They fit different shapes together to make patterns. They make fine discriminations by fitting shapes into the correct corresponding holes.
- c. **The Montessori curriculum is much broader than many other programs:** The Montessori teaches more than just the basics. First of all, it has exercises to develop the child's basic capacities- his or her ability to control movement (**motor development**), to use senses (**perceptual development**), to think (**cognitive development**), to intend (**volitional development**), and to feel and have emotions (**affective or emotional development**). In this way, the program helps the child become a competent learner. This develops a strong foundation in language and math, and an in-depth study of physical and cultural geography, zoology, botany, physical science, history and art. Children further learn practical skills for everyday life such as cooking, carpentry, and sewing. But more than this, they learn how to be contributing members of a social community.
- d. **Self-discipline developed through helping a child learn how to appropriately meet needs rather than disciplining through the use of rewards and punishments.**
- e. **In a Montessori classroom the organization of the room allows children easy access to a variety of learning experiences.** The room is specifically organized to appear attractive and orderly. Materials are displayed on shelves.
- f. **The materials in a Montessori classroom are carefully designed and thoroughly researched to fit the developmental needs and characteristics of children.**
- g. **Montessori teachers are trained to teach respect and positive values through their modeling as well as through the way they teach.**



- h. **The Montessori method of helping a child is through a process of showing a child what to do in a positive manner.** Montessori teacher attempts to avoid “put-downs” or sarcastic comments, and try not to humiliate or embarrass the child.
- i. **The Montessori program is systematic and carefully sequenced according to principles of child development.** Every activity is carefully thought out to build upon previous preparation and to lead the intelligence on to a higher activity.
- j. **The Montessori program is designed to develop independence and responsibility.** The organization of the classroom, the method of teaching, and the practical life lessons are oriented toward helping the child become a self-sufficient and disciplined individual.
- k. **The routine of the Montessori program is based upon the principle of freedom of choice rather than on set times for prescribed activities.** Since everything in the Montessori environment is something planned that is worthwhile and educational, the child can be free to choose.
- l. **In Montessori programs children are viewed as positive beings whose primary aim is the work of constructing an adult.** Rewards and punishments, therefore, can only get in the way. Development and learning by themselves are adequate motivators. Likewise, children do not need to be appealed to through fantasy, bright colors, or gimmicks, as these things come between the child and real learning. Therefore, joy is discovered and experienced in the real world through the study of nature, science, math, music, reading, history, and geography rather than in a world of comics, cartoons, and fantasy.

## **6. Why should a parent consider a Montessori education for their child?**

The educational advantages a child receives in life are very important. The child’s personality, outlook, and intelligence are in the process of being formed. In order for the child to fully actualize his or her potential, it is critical that the child be provided the resources and assistance necessary for learning and development to occur. This help can only be provided if it is based upon an adequate understanding of the child and the processes of growth and development. This information and the necessary tools for helping development are given to Montessori teachers in Montessori training programs.

## **7. How does a Montessori education benefit the child?**

Experience and research both indicate that children attending Montessori schools tend to be competent, self-disciplines, socially well adjusted, and happy.

**Competence:** Children in Montessori schools are often several years above grade level in their basic skills. Also, since the Montessori education is comprehensive, children are often exceptionally knowledgeable in a number of other areas as well.

**Self-Discipline:** Montessori schools are well known for children's development of self-discipline. Children choose to work long and hard. They treat materials and other with respect. They display patience and resistance to temptation and the ability to attend for long periods.

**Social Adjustment:** Montessori school children usually strike a visitor as friendly, empathetic, and cooperative. The classroom is a cheerful social community where children happily help each other. It is not uncommon to see a child offer to help another child. Also, learning social grace and courtesy are a part of the Montessori curriculum.

**Happiness:** Most parents of children in a Montessori school comment on how much their children love school. Montessori gives children free choice and thus a high degree of self-determination, which has been shown in other research to render happiness and a strong sense of one's own competence, and which allows one to find and engage in activities that give one a sense of purpose.

## **8. Up to what age is the Montessori program designed?**

There are Montessori materials that are designed for use of children up to around 12 years of age. Currently, TLA have primary Montessori environment unto the child age of 6 whereas most Montessori preschools build the elementary environment that work with children through the sixth grade. There are a few Montessori junior and senior high school programs. Dr. Montessori did discuss the education of children up to the college level. However, she specifically designed materials only through the elementary school years. This was because she felt specially designed materials were only needed for the younger children since the older children would have the competence to learn with materials commonly available.

## **9. What is taught in a Montessori program?**

In a Montessori program, children have the opportunity to learn the same subjects they would learn in any other program. At the preschool level children develop social,

emotional, motor, and perceptual skills, and begin to learn how to read and do math. They then become more involved with history, geography, and science. They learn some handwork as well as practical life skills. In elementary school, the curriculum is comprehensive.

Parents are usually impressed with both the depth and breadth of the curriculum. Children master the basics early and can therefore spend more time developing skills and learning other subject areas.

### **10. How are children disciplined in a Montessori program?**

Most visitors to a Montessori program are amazed at how peaceful, pleasant, and well behaved the children are. Montessori programs are noted for the self-discipline of their children. The particularly interesting thing about this is that the method does not involve techniques of coercion or manipulation. The children do not think of their teachers as being strict or mean. Techniques of force or power are not used.

Basically, what happens is that the children find their needs are being met. They like the teacher and the classroom. They sense the teacher cares about them and is a source of help. The teacher realizes that children want to be liked: they want to be accepted members of the group; no one wants to be a problem. Therefore, a child having difficulty needs help. The child simply needs to be shown in a positive way how to meet his or her needs. Through this process, non-appropriate behavior lessens and finally disappears. This makes the classroom a very pleasant place for both the children and the teacher. The keys to this process are:

- a. An environment prepared to meet the children's needs.
- b. A teacher trained in positive, constructive methods of helping children.

### **11. How do children from a Montessori program are positioned?**

Children from a Montessori program are often several years ahead of grade level. They like school and are usually interested in everything. Typically, they are friendly, generous, cooperative, and respectful of both property and others.

### **12. What happens to children when they leave a Montessori program?**

Children from a Montessori program usually fit in well wherever they go after attending a Montessori program. Because they are respectful, cooperative, self-disciplined, and

independent learners, they are well prepared to get along successfully in any program. Competence is a firm foundation for success.

### **13. Are Montessori programs recognized?**

The Montessori method of education is well known. There are thousands of Montessori schools throughout the world. There is an increasing number of public-school teachers and administrators becoming interested in the Montessori method of education. And, many new textbooks in the field of child development and education are referring to the important contributions of Dr. Montessori to the field of children's education.

### **14. How are Montessori teachers trained?**

Montessori teachers are trained through demonstration and the provision of opportunity to practice. The Montessori curriculum is organized around specific teaching materials that are developmentally sequenced. Each curriculum area is taught to teacher trainees by careful demonstration of the presentation and use of each curriculum material in sequence. Students then practice the techniques they have seen demonstrated until they have mastered the material well enough to use it with the children. The students absorb an understanding of child development and education through observation and explanation of the practice they see demonstrated. Further in-depth study of theory is provided through a tutorial program of guided reading, lessons, and assignments.

In this way, teachers learn the use of specific materials and techniques for helping children learn and develop. At the same time, they develop a theory of learning, development, curriculum, and teaching which supports and is consistent with the practice they are learning.

### **15. What are Montessori teachers taught?**

Montessori teachers are specifically shown how to teach children to read, write, and do math. In addition, they are taught how to help children become independent, responsible, self-disciplined and cooperative.

The teachers are shown how to teach children practical skills such as carpentry and sewing. And, they are taught specifically how to teach children the various subject areas; sciences such as botany, zoology, and astronomy; the social sciences of history and geography; and such arts as music, dance and different forms of handwork.

The teachers are also taught techniques and materials for helping development of such basic capacities as the control over movement and the development of the senses of sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell.

### **16. Why is the Montessori method of education different from other methods?**

The Montessori method of education is based upon careful research that is passed on to teachers through training. It is a dynamic system of education in which each generation of teachers has the opportunity to pass on the knowledge gained through training and experience to future generations. It is a system of education where the best is kept and improvements are added and passed on. It has been used in different cultures and countries around the world.

But beyond this, the Montessori method of education is more than just a set of nicely designed materials, and is more than a few useful techniques. It is instead a comprehensive approach to working with children based upon useful techniques. It is instead a comprehensive approach to working with children based upon research and careful training.

### **17. Is the Montessori method being used in public schools?**

The Montessori method is now being used in many public as well as private schools. An increasing number of public-school teachers are discovering the Montessori method of education. Many teachers find that Montessori provides support for what they have intuitively been attempting or wanting to do. These teachers are excited about Montessori because it gives them specific materials and techniques which make it easier to work with children in the way they want.

### **18. Who was Dr. Maria Montessori and her educational method?**

Dr. Maria Montessori, internationally renowned child educator, was originally a medical doctor who brought the scientific methods of observation, experimentation, and research to the study of children, their development and education. As a doctor, Montessori came to believe that many of the problems of the children she was working with were educational rather than medical. In examining education, she felt that children were not achieving their potential because education was not based upon science. Her first step, then, was to attempt to abandon preconceived ideas about education and to begin to study children, their development and the process of learning through scientific methods

of observation and experimentation. In doing so, she made what she considered to be a number of startling discoveries. Through her research, she discovered that children possessed different and higher qualities than those we usually attribute to them. Among these qualities are:

- a. **Amazing Mental Concentration:** Previously it was believed that children had short attention spans. Dr. Montessori was amazed to observe the length of time that very young children would choose to attend to tasks that interested them.
- b. **Love of Repetition:** On their own, children would choose to practice things they were trying to master over and over again. For example, once a child decides to learn how to tie their shoes, the child may tie and untie shoes many times, continuing the repetition until the task is mastered.
- c. **Love of Order:** Whereas we normally think of children as messy, Dr. Montessori found that children have a natural inclination for organization and orderliness. This natural inclination can be helped and developed if provision is made to foster it.
- d. **Freedom of Choice:** Children like to choose things they do. If materials are set out for children so that they have easy access to them, children will choose, take, and replace them without the need of assistance from an adult.
- e. **Children Prefer Work to Play:** One of the greatest surprises for Dr. Montessori was the discovery that children preferred work to play. Sometimes adults tend to think children only want to play and not to work. However, Dr. Montessori found that play was a substitute for what the children really wanted to do, but couldn't. For example, children like to play "house." They may pretend to cook, to bake pies, to clean house, etc. However, if given a choice, the children prefer to be in the real kitchen with their mother (or father) learning how to prepare "real" food.
- f. **No Need for Rewards and Punishment:** Montessori discovered that children are intrinsically motivated to work. Children want to succeed. So, they do not need external rewards and punishments. What they do need is help. The adult can help the child by showing the child how to do what he or she is trying to accomplish. Accomplishment, competence, and being a contributing member of a society are rewarding in themselves. And, it is reward enough.
- g. **The Children Refuse Sweets:** Children often show an indifference to the allurements of sweets when placed in conflict with the interests of the mind.
- h. **Lovers of Silence:** Whereas it is easy to think of children as noisy, Montessori discovered that children enjoy finding out how quiet they can be. The children like

to listen to silence and to softsounds. It is like a game to see if they can move a chair without making a sound.

- i. **Sense of Personal Dignity:** Children have a deep sense of personal dignity just as adults do. They want to be capable and held in high regard. They want to be able to do things for themselves. They can get embarrassed and can feel ashamed. A child would rather tie his own shoes than have them tied for him.
- j. **Desire to Read and Write:** In the beginning, Dr. Montessori didn't believe that young children of four and five years of age should be involved in reading and writing. However, the children showed such interest that she provided some beginning materials. She was astonished by how the children seemed to "burst spontaneously" into writing and then reading if provided with the right materials.

#### **History of the Montessori Education:**

- Dr Maria Montessori founded the first Casa dei Bambini, or 'Children's House' on January 6, 1907 for normal children.
- Dr. Maria Montessori's first class consisted of 50-60 children, ages 3-6, and most of them suffered from malnutrition and were shy and fearful since they lived in the slums of Florence, Italy.
- Montessori found that the children needed very little persuading to do everyday tasks, puzzles or other interesting activities which allowed them to not direct their energy toward destructive behaviors.
- She described the ages from three to six as a particularly sensitive time during which young children are especially attuned to acquiring knowledge from and about their environment.
- To enrich their experience, Dr. Maria Montessori developed a "prepared environment", of child sized furniture and material, to adapt to the surroundings to the child's natural size and behavior.
- This helped the children to feel relaxed and comfortable which created a will to learn.
- Through this interaction and experience, the children developed an extraordinarily high level of intellectual and social ability at young ages.

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