



The Montessori OBSERVER

Lay out Randomly

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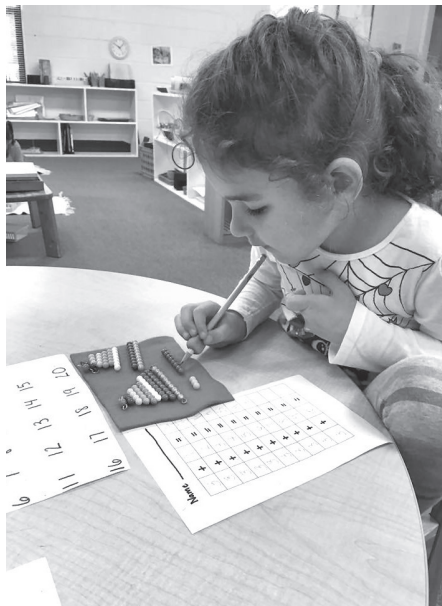
IMS Outreach to the World

In this modern IT age, IMS is now able to reach educators around the world to bring awareness to the "new education" like never before. For example, the IMS facebook discussion page, "Montessori Tools and Tips" now reaches over 6,000 members, and its digital e-news makes contact with upwards of 30,000 at each publication.

The IT revolution has also allowed IMS to initiate contact with individuals who want to help IMS in this effort, by making calls to inform local educators and schools about IMS issues. This calling project provides interested individuals with specific instruction and guidance to contact local school directors to inform about IMS and the "new education." Its impact is significant because it is much more personal than an ordinary email since local volunteers will be speaking in their country's own native language.

With local volunteers, IMS is able to identify and train those individuals most able to provide leadership to others to advance IMS concerns, such as IMS school membership, organizing local IMS training workshops, and developing the unique IMS "Character Teaching" (CT) project. In some countries, such as Pakistan, India, and Nigeria, this project has brought a whole team of volunteers together in this effort.

If you would like to make calls in your country, state or local area for IMS and the new education, contact IMS for specific instructions, support, and guidance: havis@imsmontessori.org, Tel. 301-589-1127.



Child working with math materials at the Lexington Montessori School in Lexington, Kentucky

Lexington Montessori School in Kentucky

The Lexington Montessori School was founded in 1980 through the efforts of Susan and Ben Magedanz. Organized on a non-profit, non-denominational basis in Lexington, Kentucky, Ben and Susan started the school with a single morning primary program for 18 children, which in 1984 was expanded to include a second primary classroom. Then, in 1988, the school opened a lower elementary program and in 1991, an upper elementary program as well.

Today, LMS has two primary classrooms and one elementary classroom serving a total enrollment of 70 children from primary to elementary grades first through sixth. The school program also includes art, music and Spanish language instruction within its overall Montessori teaching environment.

Randi Lynn Tucker, the current school director says that, "LMS runs like a family so that relationships are important to us. We strive to help our families feel that LMS is an extension of their own. We encourage parents to become involved on our various school committees, offer opportunities for parents to volunteer in the classroom and host several social events throughout the year to encourage strong relationships between school and home."

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IMS vs. Conventional Montessori Teaching

by Sally Korte (IMS '15)
Augusta, Kansas

I am a certified graduate of IMS Montessori teacher education. For me, what is different in this IMS training from other Montessori ideologies is not just the idea, "Control the environment, not the child", but also how we can do that. First of all we need to know what "environment" means in the Montessori classroom, which is formed by the physical objects, other children and the adult personality.

The greatest skill that I obtained from my training with IMS is how to control my own personality when working with small children, so the true child can come about. The technology set of protocols and safe words has been a tremendous gift in my practice. When I went through my training, I experienced a purging of the obstacles in my personality that were influencing the child's behavior.

Today, when I enter my classroom every morning I become very conscious of this technology that makes it so easy to observe the true child at work. Many people who come to observe me using this technology are very impressed by what they see. They say, "You are amazing", but it is not me, but the technology that helps me to control my personality. "Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me". The IMS technology brings the peace in me.

Book Review Montessori is Life

By Irini Divaris
Published 2017, Middleton, Delaware
\$8.95 paperback, 34 pages, Illustrated

by Lee Havis

Congratulations to Irini Divaris for writing and publishing such a simple, yet powerful "children's book" about the activity of a young child in a typical Montessori classroom. To young children, the simple words and images of this book convey very effectively what goes on in the classroom at a level and in a way that will readily draw their attention and interest. And to an un-informed adult, it communicates this idea quite effectively as well.

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IMS Workshop in Malaysia Save the Date

November 17-18, 2018
(tentative)

Kuala Lumpur
Local Sponsor

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Outside Malaysia, contact IMS
havis@imsmontessori.org



Lay Out Randomly

by Lee Havis

"...grading objects...consists in placing a series of similar objects that have been mixed together at random into a graded order."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child* p.113

In the Montessori environment, ordering objects is an important part of the young child's path to normalization and return to true natural being. By ordering objects, the young child develops mental order through his senses by means of his uniquely absorbent mind.

Presenting this ordering work involves a number of steps, such as removing the material from the shelf and then arranging it in a random, disorderly way on the workspace so it will be ready to show the specific ordering activity itself. The IMS technology provides the protocol *lay out randomly* to assure that you obtain the initial disorder that focuses the child's attention on the key point of order you aim to bring out in this work.

Order

"...the little child's need for order is one of the most powerful incentives to dominate his early life."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind*, p.190

The young child has an instinctive, natural need and interest to order objects in the physical environment. Through his senses, he absorbs this order into his whole sense of reality for life. Montessori teaching therefore must present didactic material that brings out this basic purpose of developing order that will ultimately return the young child to his state of true natural development.

Didactic Material

"The didactic material, in fact, does not offer to the child the 'content' of the mind, but the order for that 'content'."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Dr. Montessori's Own Hand* p.136-37

While the Montessori didactic material does provide valuable knowledge in such subjects as math and written language, its primary purpose is to relate objects and concepts with each other to reveal the perfect order of nature. The Montessori sensorial materials, such as pink tower, broad stairs, and red rods especially aim to convey this basic order, primarily through the sense of touch.

Touch

"...the child shows an irresistible urge to touch everything...His intelligence needs a world of things which provide him with motives for his activity."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Spontaneous Act. In Ed.*, p.188

Dr. Montessori observed that the young child instinctively touches and moves objects to internalize their order into his whole mind and being. The Montessori sensorial apparatus is specifically designed to do this by motivating the child to touch and move objects into and out of various sequences and sorting situations, according to size, shape, and color. Through this activity, an inner order emerges that is vital for developing intelligence that leads to success in all later learning and academic activity.

Developing Intelligence

"Creation finds its expansion in order...to help the development of the intelligence is to help put the images of the consciousness in order."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Spont. Act. In Ed.*, p.202

The young child's physical handling of objects ultimately becomes the basic foundation for all later learning in such abstract areas as math and written language. While Montessori materials do offer practice and learning in these abstract concepts, their direct aim is actually more fundamental, to bring about experiences that lead to deep concentration and the child's ideal normalized state of being. Once normalized, the child then shows such outward qualities as precocious intelligence which is in sharp contrast with ordinary children of the same age in society.

In applying the *lay out randomly* protocol, therefore, you must focus the child's attention on the key ordering activity of the work, so he can clearly see and duplicate the movements that are necessary to gain the maximum benefit for him in this ordering activity.

Movement

"...the child uses his movements to extend his understanding. Movement helps the development of mind, and finds renewed expression in further movement and activity."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind*, p.142

Montessori teaching involves close observation of the spontaneous movements of each child, noticing what he looks at, and how he moves about and touches the various objects in the environment. Notice especially any evidence of the child's concentration on work, as opposed to idle fantasy or abusive behavior that you must interrupt in some way. And, in presenting materials, notice your own movements as well, to make them precise, clear, brief, and simple, so as to eliminate any distracting factors as much as possible.

Distracting Factors

"The perfection of the exercise consists in removing as far as possible any distracting factors."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child*, p.102

The protocols least amount of adult involvement, emphasize the main point(s), same routines all the time, and simplify complexity, all teach you to remove any distracting movements while you are handling or presenting objects with children. This is necessary since you want the child watching to focus his total attention on the object of the lesson you are showing at the time.

Applying the *lay out randomly* protocol, for example, emphasize the randomness of your layout of objects you are presenting before

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Look for the
September, 2018
Observer
 featuring
*Confirm Accuracy,
 Clarify/Expand*

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Lee Havis, Executive Director

The Montessori Observer is mailed four times each year, in March, May, September and November, to IMS members throughout the world. The purpose is to provide news and information about the IMS work in Montessori education, and to extend awareness of Montessori teaching that brings about the child's true nature throughout the world.

INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY

The International Montessori Society is sponsored by Educational Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized in Maryland, USA. The IMS purpose is to support the scientific approach to true natural being throughout the world.

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IMS ON THE INTERNET

An on-line IMS discussion group, "Montessori Tools and Tips" is available for anyone to join at no charge. To join this group discussion, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/montessoritoolstips/>

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Moment of Peril

by Lee Haviv

Monster Talk

In this “moment of peril”, 4 year old Andrew shows fear when several children use “monster talk” around him in a loud, noisy manner. (See *Observer*, March 2018). The teacher wants to “help” Andrew, but doesn’t know exactly what to do.

Analysis: Andrew is the hub child here, and the “monster talking” other children are the primary detrimental influence. As always, the ‘adult personality’ is also detrimental, but only secondary in this scenario. The problem then is how to control the detrimental influence of “other children” without controlling Andrew, the hub “child” in this scenario.

Practical Advice: Before controlling “other children”, you must first check any urge to directly “help” Andrew, such as by offering specific words to deal with the other children talking about monsters. Any such “help” is not suitable because you don’t have eye contact with him and he is not inviting your involvement with him in any other outward tangible way. So, controlling your “adult personality”, practice the technique *patient waiting* while observing the situation from a distance to see if there may arise any need to interrupt physical violence.

Controlling “other children” however, may require your active presence since loud, noisy, and scary language might soon lead to violence. So, here, applying the technique *proximity*, take a few steps in direction of the Andrew scenario. But, as you approach, watch for some child to look up at you for eye contact. When that occurs, following the protocol *least amount of adult involvement*, stop your movement, and stand still to observe in a passive, neutral manner, using the technique *patient waiting*.

If at any time, Andrew does approach you to complain or ask for help, you may then give some slight interaction, such as by using the techniques *reflective language* or *questioning*. For example, ask Andrew, “What’s wrong?” or repeat back to him what he is saying to you (*reflective language*). However, don’t offer any specific words to say to the other children.

Using these light, indirect means to control the environment around Andrew, the children themselves will ultimately find a successful solution to this “Monster Talk” conflict on their own.

Teaching Right from Wrong

The teacher sees a number of the children acting rudely and using bad words among themselves. So, she wonders what rules or boundaries she should convey to curtail this behavior and guide the children so they are not abandoned in this situation. What to do? Answer in *Observer*, September, 2018.

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you begin to demonstrate the ordering activity itself. With a 10-block set of blocks, for example, place the largest block on one extreme side of the workspace mat, and the next largest one on the other extreme side of the mat. Then, place the third block between the first two to emphasize the contrasting order of size.

Contrasting Stimuli

“One should begin the process with a very few contrasting stimuli so that the child can later pass on to a large number of similar objects but with always finer and less perceptible differences.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child*, p.112

While laying out the objects, emphasize the contracting stimuli, such as by placing different size, shape, or color objects as close together as possible. In addition to emphasizing the randomness of size, tilt the objects in different directions so they don’t align in any discernable pattern. In this way, using only the first three objects, you can effectively show the random nature of the layout in a quick and easy manner. Ordinarily, this brief demonstration will be enough to start the child to laying out the other objects of the set in the same way you began.

Resolving Childhood Trauma

In Montessori teaching, controlling the “adult personality” around children primarily involves inner preparation to resolve childhood trauma which comes out in the present moment misbehavior of children. Here is how one Montessori teacher described the problem:

I think I have been abandoned, hurt and bullied in high school. When I get overwhelmed now I either push children away or get angry at them.. How do I change?

Childhood trauma has the effect on present-moment behavior with children to urge you to project either “abandonment” (push children away, neglect, avoid conflict) or “negativity” (get angry, abusive, negative). The first step in resolving this detrimental influence of your personality is to recognize you can definitely bring it under your conscious control.

“Trauma” from childhood, coming from being “bullied” or “diminished” in the past, emerges in present time when that old fear and pain is reactivated now. For example, in a social conflict situation, your reactive urge is to take sides with the “victim” child, blaming the “bully” child in a harsh, negative manner.

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Give a Start

“The instruction of the teacher consists then merely in a hint, a touch – enough to give a start to the child. The rest develops of itself.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Dr. Montessori’s Own Hand*, p.58-59

Following the *least amount* protocol, show no more in your moving and touching of objects than is necessary to get the child started on his own. So, after showing the first three objects, you can successfully turn the activity over to the child to continue, such as by asking, “Would you like to do the next one?” At that point, the child will normally proceed by imitating the exact random layout routine you began.

Imitating the Adult

“A child is an eager observer and is particularly attracted by the adults and wants to imitate them.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood* p.93

Since the young child has a keen interest to imitate exactly what he sees the adult do, showing the random layout with the first few objects is enough for the child to successfully continue on his own when you invite him to “do the next one”. For added emphasis, however, you can say, “Watch” if necessary to be sure he is seeing the specific action.

Done well, the objects will soon all be in a random arrangement at the workspace, and ready for you to demonstrate the ordering activity without further handling of the objects. At that point, you can therefore show the ordering of the first three objects, and then turn the activity over to the child to complete the activity in his own time and manner.

Completion

“A child must carry out his work by himself and he must bring it to completion.”

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p.197

Once the child takes over the ordering work, you can then move away and observe the situation from a distance. Typically, the child will then engage in various ordering and disordering activity with the work, such as by repeating the same sequencing many times, or creating an entirely new arrangement to suit his own particular tastes and interests. Following the protocol *don’t correct child*, let him proceed freely with the work as long as he is not abusing or mishandling the objects in the process.

When the child finishes his work, he normally completes the cycle of activity by returning the materials to the shelf, placing them all in order just as they were before. Applying the *lay out randomly* protocol in your presentation is therefore an important part of presenting all ordering work to help the child return to his true normal state of being in harmony with his own perfect inner guidance of nature.

Messages to IMS

April, 2018
Petaluma, CA

To IMS:

[responding to article in **Observer**, *March, 2018* "Montessori Certificate"] I cannot agree with you more about the bad implications that I see forthcoming if Montessori certification enters the political realm. Did not Maria Montessori put forth cosmic education leading toward peace through "liberty"? Freedom is cut off anytime we try to legislate it and control it with rules and regulations.

As far as spreading the word about the "New Education", I focus on this through my classroom and church parents; more and more people see the results and want to know more. I am able to guide parents with their children so they follow our science in their homes. I always seem to have a waiting list although I have no website, no advertisement—only word of mouth. I may not be a very large entity, but I am successful.

Thank you,
Donna Curtis (IMS '02)

Lahore, Pakistan
May 13, 2018

Greeting from Pakistan,

Following our conversation on FB and Email I would like to share with you that I read your project "Character Teaching" with detail and found it very useful and effective for my region/area where I am resident, I have a burden to do something for poor children specially in the field of education. I think "character teaching" can help the out of school children to bring them a mainstream schooling. ... I hope that together we can contribute to bring change in the history of education in Pakistan. ... Thank you so much for all your love and concern in the field of education all over the world and thanks for all your support and cooperation. I am so confident that under your guidance and support we assuredly can contribute for the betterment of education in our region. Thank you again for all your support and guidance.

Regards,
Shabana Javed

Resolving Childhood Trauma

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 2

Resolving the effects of this past trauma today, you must shift from acting it out on children, and follow instead the practice of IMS technology. For example, instead of blaming the bully child, apply the objective, impartial techniques of *reflective language* and *questioning*.

While you will not at first "feel" calm and relaxed in following the new path of IMS technology, you can nonetheless act that way by pretending you are a skillful Montessori teacher. Now, in this new role, use the IMS technology in a logical, scientific manner, disregarding any negative feelings, doubts, or fears you have in the process. Here, you can use the technique *imagination-previsioning* (IP).

The IP technique has you enter into a quiet, relaxed state of mind by yourself, to imagine how you have been dramatizing "old wounds" on children in the present-moment situation. Then, prevision yourself (pretend) shifting from this old reactive drama to a new state of being calm, and acting in an objective, scientific manner. Now, when you feel triggered to act out some insult or negative judgment of the past, shift your thinking to the role of model Montessori teacher. And, using IMS technology, go ahead and make the best judgements you can to correct your mistakes from one moment to the next.

In time, you will see that this type of "inner self-examination" and outward pretending will bring positive changes in your outward behavior. And, you will then soon see similar positive changes in the children as well as they return to their normal state of true natural being.

Book Review

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 3

The images on each page effectively highlight children using some of the most common Montessori materials, with a text that makes it seem very friendly and personal from the young child's perspective. I was especially impressed that Irini used large cursive script, instead of ordinary print, in her written text presentation. Although one image shows children using food items in a somewhat fantasy manner, the overall tone and presentation is quite authentic to the spirit of Dr. Montessori's basic purpose of observing to bring about and support the child's true natural development.

In balance, *Montessori is Life*, is one of the most attractive and infomative "children's books" on the subject of Montessori education that I have ever seen. I highly recommend it as a resource for all parents and educators, especially those who are engaged in the operation of a Montessori school.

Lexington Montessori School

Cont'd from Page 1, Col. 2

Randi especially emphasized the family nature of the school, pointing out that many Alumni send their own children to the school to continue family enrollment from one generation to the next. She also said that "Helping each child reach his/her full potential not only academically but also as part of the community, is our main purpose every day."

For further information, contact: Randi Lynn Tucker, Director, Lexington Montessori School, 319 South Broadway Park Lexington, KY 40504 Tel. 859-254-7034 Website: <http://lexkymontessori.org> email: ims@lexkymontessori.org