



Fundamental Differences Between Montessori & Traditional Education

Traditional

Emphasis on conforming to the group

Emphasis on grades, punishments or rewards as motivating factors

Students grouped chronologically to suit teachers' pre-planned class lessons

Subjects are taught in lecture form and students must change classes and attend lessons all at the same time

Students must practice on their own and be graded on "busy work" or homework that is often done without close monitoring

Students work at desks and passively sit to listen to lectures for long periods. The work period must be interrupted frequently

Knowledge often consists of memorization of irrelevant information from abstract concepts unrelated to the child's daily experience

Scheduled testing does not take into consideration the preparation of each individual

Students are intimidated and taught that passing is more important than knowing the material.

Montessori

Respect for individual differences

Self-motivation and a child centered learning process

Multi-age grouping whereby students learn "horizontally" from observation of other people's work, directly or indirectly

Students learn at their own pace, free to complete a project or pursue a subject as deeply as they wish and according to personal enthusiasm

Students learn by practicing their subject matters while in school with the supervision and assistance of the teachers as needed

The classroom is used as a library or resource room for projects and studies: the children are free to move and tire less

Knowledge is acquired through the use of concrete materials, scientifically designed to enhance conceptual thinking and lead to abstraction

Testing is built into the method as the third period of the "3-Period Lesson" and is applied routinely when the individual is ready.

Testing aims at self-correction, repetition and competence. Application of skills learned is the ultimate goal of learning.