



**MARIA
MONTESSORI**

August 31, 1870 – May 6, 1952

The life and times of....

- Born in Italy, Maria's father was a soldier and her mother was well educated.
- She was Stubborn and Precocious. She excelled in school and was often the leader of groups and games.
- At 13, she entered a technical school. Rare for women of that time.
- She eventually applied to school at the University of Rome. She was denied because she was a woman and she wanted to be a Doctor.
- She re-applied and entered the University studying physical science instead of Medicine. Her high marks eventually opened the door for her to earn her degree in Medicine.
- SHE BECAME ITALY'S FIRST FEMALE DOCTOR.
- While being a surgical assistant, she became pregnant, but gave the child up for adoption. They had an open adoption, and he eventually came to work with her as her most valued assistant.

Her work...

- She worked at insane asylums, and homes for mentally handicapped children.
- She was a Professor at the University of Rome teaching anthropology. 1904-1906
- She eventually left the University to pursue her passion of helping “rehabilitate society's discarded children: the mentally retarded, children with behavior problems, orphans, and the desperately poor.”¹
- She soon had a following of parents who wanted her help and teachers who wanted to learn from her.
- She founded the first school for mentally handicapped children in Italy.

INTERESTING FACTS

Alexander Graham Bell opened the first Montessori School in DC.

During WWII, the Nazi's wanted Montessori to train soldiers at her school. When she refused, her and her son were detained in jail.

She eventually fled Mussolini and found sanctuary in the India, where she continued to study children.

There she founded the Education for Peace program.

She earned 2 Nobel Peace Prizes!



Her belief...

“Children could only learn through instruction -- or more specifically, from being lectured by an adult.”

- Maria believed the direct OPPOSITE of the above caption.
- Set-free in a ‘hands-on’ environment.



- She found that if children were put into groups with other children with a small range in ages (such as 3-6, 6-9, 9-11, etc.), they would not only work together but also help teach each other.
- Older children learned nurturing, and the younger children learned from the older children.

Theory continued...

- Montessori believed that children THRIVED when given the opportunity to learn real world skills.
- Young children enjoy setting the table and sitting with adults to learn manners.
- Teenagers enjoy applicable skills because they are so confused hormonally that they need something stabilizing.
- Teenagers want to learn to build a piece of furniture, cook a meal, run a business, something they can use besides for abstract ideas.
- **Maria said “The Teacher must pay rapt attention to the student. NOT the other way around.”
- Student driven curriculum.

Application

- Parents today can utilize Montessori's method by watching their children and fostering the interests that he or she may have.
- Parents need to listen to their children and not force their own ideas on them.

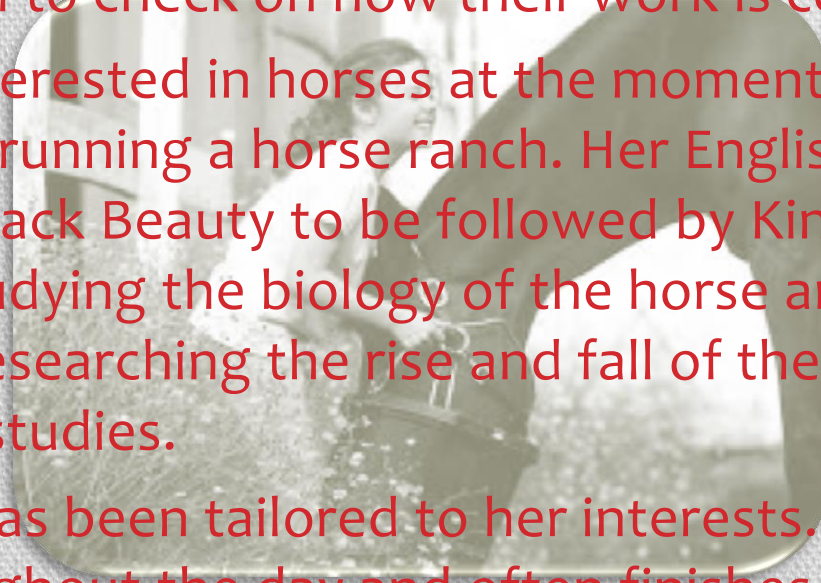
Example 1

- Johnny's dad has signed him up to play baseball. But Johnny is in the left field because he is not good at catching balls. He also has never hit the ball at a game. During the week, Johnny and his dad go to the park and practice, but Johnny never seems excited about the games. After his last game, Johnny came home and had doodled all over his 'play sheet.' The fridge at home is covered with his drawings. Johnny's mom talks to his dad about changing him to art classes after baseball season is over. Because he may like that better.



Example 2

- At a Montessori school, you will most likely see children all over the place doing different things. The teacher will be moving from person to person to check on how their work is coming.
- Little Susie is interested in horses at the moment. Her Math often revolves around running a horse ranch. Her English is currently a book study on *Black Beauty* to be followed by *King of the Wind*. In science she is studying the biology of the horse and other large mammals. She is researching the rise and fall of the horse merchant world for social studies.
- Her curriculum has been tailored to her interests. She stays interested throughout the day and often finishes her work early and looks for more to do.



References

- <http://www.nndb.com/people/189/000108862/>
- <https://www.amshq.org/Montessori-Education/History-of-Montessori-Education/Biography-of-Maria-Montessori.aspx>
- <http://www.biography.com/people/maria-montessori-9412528>