

Montessori vs. Traditional

Montessori Education

View the child holistically, valuing cognitive, psychological, social, and spiritual development

Child is an active participant in learning – allowed to move about and respectfully explore the classroom environment

Teacher is an instructional facilitator and guide

A carefully prepared learning environment and method encourages development of internal self-discipline and intrinsic motivation

Instruction, both individual and group, adapts to students' learning styles and development levels

Three-year span of age grouping

Grace, courtesy, and conflict resolution is integral part of daily Montessori peace curriculum

Values concentration and depth of experience; supplies uninterrupted time for focused work cycle to develop

Child's learning pace is internally determined

Child allowed to spot own errors through feedback from the materials; errors are viewed as part of learning process

Learning is reinforced internally through the child's own repetition of an activity and internal feelings of success

Traditional Education

Views the child in terms of competence, skill level, and achievement with and emphasis on core curricula standards and social development

Child is a more passive participant in learning

Teacher has a more dominant, central role in classroom activity

Teacher acts as a primary enforcer of external discipline promoting extrinsic motivation

Instruction, both individual and group, adapts to core curricula benchmarks

Same-age and/or skill level grouping

Conflict resolution is usually taught separately from daily classroom activity

Values completion of assignments; time is tightly scheduled

Instructional pace usually set by core-curricula standard expectations, group norm, or teacher

Work is usually corrected by the teacher; errors are viewed as mistakes

Learning is reinforced externally by test scores and rewards, competition and grades

Care of self and environment are emphasized as integral to the learning experience

Child can work where he/she is comfortable and the child often has choices between working alone or with a group

Multi-disciplinary, interwoven curriculum

Progress is reported through multiple formats: conferences, narrative reports, checklists and portfolio of student's work

Children are encouraged to teach, collaborate, and help each other

Child is provided opportunities to choose own work from interest and abilities, concepts taught within context of interest

Goal is to foster a love of learning

Less emphasis on self-care, spatial awareness, and care of environment

Child is usually assigned a specific work space; talking among peers discouraged

Curriculum areas usually taught as objectives separate topics

Progress is usually reported through conferences, report cards/grades, and test scores

Most teaching is done by the teacher and collaboration is an alternative teaching strategy

Curricula organized and structured for child based on core curricula standards

Goal is to master curricula