



Discovery of the Child

Maria Montessori

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Maria Montessori went beyond the conventions of the day to seek a new way of knowing and loving a child. In **THE DISCOVERY OF THE CHILD**, she describes the nature of the child and her method of working more fully with the child's urge to learn. With 16 pages of photographs.

Discovery of the Child Details

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Author : Maria Montessori

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From Reader Review Discovery of the Child for online ebook

Maisaa Salma says

It is indeed a very great book and it explains a lot of useful games and learning material for kids but I thought it can be organized in a simpler way and according to age.

Erik Akre says

A book about education for ages 3 to 6, this has a quality and a quantity of excellent material, philosophical and practical, for the Children's House guide. As is typical for Montessori when she writes most honestly, the prose is strong, convincing, and often inspirational. The book is an excellent one for teachers starting on the path of early childhood Montessori, or for seasoned guides looking for refreshment. Parents will also find what they need to understand their children's experience in this educational environment, this "gymnasium of the soul."

Discovery explains at length the duties and characteristics of the guide. The guide uses not words, but virtues. She has a "moral alertness" and is a "guardian angel" for the children. She is (perhaps above all) a scientist! As Montessori writes, "The object of a science of education should be not only to 'observe' but also to 'transform' children. Education should do things that positively change its subjects, in a profound way, for the better."

There is quite a bit of philosophy, especially around the fostering of independence (e.g. don't do for me what I can do for myself), but there are practical lessons as well. Montessori goes into the sensorial materials at length, discussing their use and their aims. I found this section especially valuable.

I enjoyed this book as much or more than any of her others on the topic of early childhood, and I would recommend it foremost among them.

Polarka says

Skuto?ne podrobný vh?ad do pedagogiky Marie Montessori. Nájdete tu nielen základ a históriu jej práce, ale hlavne ve?a podrobných a kontrétnych tipov.

Svojim rozsahom vhodné skôr pre u?ite?ov. Pre m?a, bežného rodi?a, ktorý nechce ís? výlu?ne montessori smerom, to bolo až príliš popisné.

Rob says

Great insight into an outstanding mind and leader in the understanding and importance of educating the whole child.

Deanne says

Fabulous insights into early childhood development

Sara says

A good book, but this would not be my first recommendation of a Montessori to others. The approach is more scientific here, and I would guess, of more benefit to those who have had Montessori teacher-training (unlike myself). It is full of interesting information and stories, but I did not find this work as fascinating as *The Secret of Childhood*, and in fact at times returned to it with little enthusiasm. The best of it I found to be in the last 40 or so pages! The chapter on religious education is a MUST-read for anyone with any inkling of interest in the subject!

One of my favorite quotes:

"No one can be free if he is not independent, therefore, in order to attain this independence, the active manifestations of personal liberty must be guided from earliest infancy."

An excerpt from the chapter on religious education:

"A priest gave the children instructions in religion and celebrated Mass in the chapel. Just as soon as it had been completed and opened up to the children, we witnessed something that had not been anticipated. We discovered in many respects that the church is a kind of goal to which our method is orientated. Some of the exercises which did not seem to have any definite external goal in the school found their practical application within the church. The silence which had prepared a child to recollect himself now became that inner recollection to be observed in the house of God, in these half-dark surroundings, broken only by the flickering of candles. Walking silently, keeping still, moving chairs without creating a disturbance, standing up and sitting down and passing between benches and people without making a sound, carrying fragile objects without damaging them in the process, as for example, vases filled with flowers to be put at the foot of the altar, and lighting candles without spilling wax on hands and clothes were little more than repetitions and practical applications of what a child had already learned to do within the walls of the classroom."

"They must therefore appear to these tender minds as the goal of their patiently endured efforts. And they are a source of sentiments of gratitude, joy, and a new sense of dignity. The children carried out these [practical life] exercises at first in response to an inner impulse, but without a definite external goal. They later performed them out of respect for God's service and experienced what was almost a revelation of the difference between the two modes and places. It was like the difference between sowing and reaping. The very act of distinguishing between similar activities that have varied meanings and uses is in itself another important source of intellectual growth. A child of four does not fail to notice the difference between the holy-water font in which he dips his slender little finger to bless himself and the basins in a neighboring room where he washes himself. Such intuitions as these in recognizing differences in things that are alike afford a real exercise for the intellect. A small child, who is thought to be almost incapable of rising to concepts that transcend the senses, begins to make such distinctions when he begins to realize that he is a son of God lovingly invited into the house of his Heavenly Father."

[One woman said to her, do you know why my grandson likes to come to school in time for mass? Because he enjoys extinguishing candles in the basin of water, that is all. Why not use this exercise to teach counting as the candles are extinguished? Maria said this woman knew little of children- her exercise would have lasted about a week- as long as it takes children to learn to count to ten.] "But children, as they grow in age and general knowledge, whether of a secular or religious character, will continue to light candles for years which will burn themselves out before the tabernacle. And they will understand that this is no childish game

but a truly religious act because it is carried out in a sacred place preserved for the worship of the Lord."

Maria says

The book consists of 26 topics. It explains Montessori education briefly. Frankly, I find it short and sweet.

Rajiv Gupta says

Where do I find the book ?

Lizzie Drexler says

Danny from The Shining, is that you? Just stopping by to say WHY would anyone choose this as the book cover photo? Please give this child a moment of your attention and reflect with me. Why is your tongue out Danny? This book is required reading for a class I'm taking, but I can barely touch this book without feeling disturbed; have to remove it from my bedroom at night so that Montessori Danny doesn't haunt my dreams.

Adela Caramet says

Nice written book! A lot of practical examples, but more suitable for a teacher than a parent. The focus is on inside class activities than at home. But still the book contains many examples which can be adapted! I recommend it!

Emmy Soliman says

She is a visionary person. Reading this book was fruitful; it gave me the chance to understand the Montessori educational system in discovering the kids' potentials and developing them. I can now believe in no reward/no punishment, and many other issues in the M. System.

Tina says

Maria Montessori was an innovator of her time. She transformed education in Europe and around the world. Her teaching style is different but would I see how it could transform a child into learning and not just regurgitating facts a teacher speaks at him/her about.

Daniella says

Rather dry, but this has a lot to do with the older, scientific style of her writing. As it applies to the education of children, it is very interesting. It reinforced my conviction that the Montessori method is the best way for my son to be educated!

Oktawian Chojnacki says

One of the most shocking parts of this book are references to God. This is awful. This woman is so wise, empathetic and passionate and when it comes to faith she's blind and just stupid. But... I agree with everything except faith and religious parts.
