

A REPORT ON "EDUCATION BEYOND WORKSHEETS"

"Every student has something to offer, and every student deserves a nurturing learning environment"

-Iihaan Omar

Dear madam

With your kind support , I got an opportunity to attend an online session which was organized by DPS Society - HRDC on the topic ' Education beyond books' on February 10,2022.

Ms. Rukmani Ramachandran(Indian Montessori Foundation) and Ms. Ruby Lau(Indian Montessori Foundation) were the resource persons and approximately 203 primary teachers were invited to attend the Zoom session.

As per the resource persons' perspective, human child is a powerful creature and needs to be nurtured in such kind of environment where he/she can learn through experiences. Children are keen observers and notice everything in their surroundings. They have a great tendency to imbibe the knowledge but the suitable ambience is of the utmost importance.

Resource persons also quoted the example of a cook, who organizes and arranges the material in his kitchen according to his convenience . Similarly, the role of a teacher is to create children friendly environment because a teacher only knows what kind of environment is needed as per the needs of his learners and children should not be restricted to gain knowledge from worksheets only, Maria Montessori also outlined some principles, with regards to her students' perceptions, while defining the prepared environment .

SIX PRINCIPLES OF THE PREPARED ENVIRONMENT

Maria Montessori outlined the following principles, with regards to her students' perceptions, while defining the prepared environment:

Freedom

Educators should provide guided freedom to children instead of treating them as empty vessels to be filled with the bookish knowledge. The prepared environment

allows for freedom of movement; freedom of choice during independent work blocks; and freedom to either interact socially, or take time to yourself.. This freedom helps students develop positive relationships with "work," which leads to motivated, independent learners.

Structure and Order

It may seem strange to follow "Freedom" with "Structure and Order," but in practice, they complement each other perfectly. This structure is very important to the development of a confident, reasonable learner.

Beauty

Beauty creates a sense of harmony, order, and comfort for students and teachers.. Warm lighting, pastel colors, and soft materials are often seen in Montessori classrooms, creating a feeling of being at home, or at least, being in a comforting environment.

Nature and Reality

Students are encouraged to interact with the natural environment outside of the classroom, to experience and interpret natural phenomena. Both natural and real materials are used so that students can learn the relationships between these objects, and have confidence using them independently as they grow.

Social Environment

Beyond the physical environment and materials within the classroom, the classroom space also acts as a social environment for the students. Students have the ability and freedom to interact with each other through work, rest, and play; the social and emotional frameworks of a Montessori education encourage students to approach each other with empathy, and to work constructively through disagreements or differences.

Intellectual Environment

The intellectual environment is the culmination of the six principles of the prepared environment; by creating a space in which the Montessori curriculum can flourish, students will develop their intellect as well as their personalities.

To conclude, children should not be bombarded with worksheets all the time, they should be given opportunities to learn through activities from their surroundings for the better teaching and learning process.