

Montessori Principles Revisited

Yet again there have been articles noting wonderful new trends in education that are what Montessori has been doing for 100 years, and Hilltop Montessori School for more than 40 years!

["Chores" Should Start Young](#)

This article calls them "chores" and notes that children should start helping around the house at ages 3 or 4 years, when they naturally want to. In Montessori, we call this Practical Life and Dr. Montessori noted that the work of the adult (such as cleaning and putting away groceries) is the "play" of the child. Doing "chores" helps children feel they are responsible, confident, and proud contributing members of the community.

For a list of age appropriate chores, [click here](#).

[Being Good with Failure is a Benefit](#)

We teach that mistakes are opportunities from which to learn and grow, not red marks to be terrified by. This is an important approach in life.

[History starts with the Big Bang!](#)

Traditional history classes teach facts and information to memorize. There is a new movement to provide history in an interdisciplinary context that starts with the Big Bang and moves to the evolution of the planet, then the evolution of life, and then humans. These are the Great Lessons of the Montessori Elementary curriculum - the big stories told with timelines, words, and pictures showing students the vast history of the world and getting to their place in it. Nothing new to us!

For Lesson Descriptions [click here](#).

[Interdisciplinary Teaching](#)

Schools in Finland will no longer teach 'subjects'. They note that there is a benefit to "teaching by topic" instead of "teaching by subject". This is exactly what a good Montessori program does. For example the Middle School's recent "study of place" combined geology, literature, sciences, history, economics, architecture, photography, biography, filmmaking, etc. with topics of interest to students, not subjects divided into 45 minute classes.

Then there is a favorite of mine, the ["Growth Mindset" versus the "Fixed Mindset."](#) We always emphasize the process over the product, and the effort over innate skill.

Please stop by or send me an [email](#) if you would like to talk more about how any of these "trends" have always been incorporated to our programs at Hilltop.

January 15, 2016