

The Montessori School Method

■ Read the passage and answer the questions below.

Founded by paediatrician and psychiatrist Maria Montessori in 1907, Montessori School Programmes **emphasize** the importance and connection of all living things, and the need for each person to find **meaningful** work and his or her own place in the world. The Montessori curriculum focuses on five areas:

- 1) *Practical life*: children learn how **to tie** their shoes and put on their coats, prepare their own snacks and drinks, go to the bathroom without help, and clean up after themselves if they **spill** something.
- 2) *Sensory **awareness** education*: exercises make sure that children use all five senses to learn.
- 3) *Language arts*: children are encouraged to express themselves verbally and are taught to recognize letters as a precursor to learning reading, spelling, grammar, and **handwriting** skills.
- 4) *Mathematics and Geometry*: children learn about numbers through **hands-on** techniques using concrete materials, such as the golden **beads** that represent the **hierarchy** of the decimal system.
- 5) *Cultural subjects*: children learn about other countries (Geography), animals (Zoology), time (History), Music, movement (**PE**), Science and Art.

All the disciplines are tied together in complementary ways. Toys and other developmentally appropriate learning materials are **laid out** in the classroom so a child can see what his/her choices are and then **pick** a **task** according to his/her interests.

The length of the day depends on the school and the age of the students. A typical Montessori preschool program **runs** from 9.00 am to 12.00 or 12:30 pm. Most offer afternoon / early evening care, too.



A Montessori pre-school class.

1. What do Montessori School Programmes emphasize?
2. Which five areas does the curriculum cover?
3. What practical tasks encourage children to be autonomous?
4. How are Mathematics and Geometry taught?
5. What do classrooms look like?
6. What does the length of schooldays depend on?

awareness: coscienza
bead: sfera
to emphasize: enfatizzare
hands-on: manuale
handwriting: scrittura a mano
hierarchy: gerarchia
to lay out: disporre
meaningful: significativo
PE (Physical Education): Educazione Fisica
to pick: scegliere
to run: (qui) durare
to spill: versare
task: attività
to tie: allacciare