

MARIA MONTESSORI'S FIVE GREAT LESSONS

The original story which she dramatically told in story form is called "God With No Hands." Maria Montessori had deep respect for all religions and philosophies. The Great Stories or Great Lessons support no one religion. There is no one right way to tell the Great Stories. Consider the religions and cultures of all the children involved and adapt the lessons appropriately. With younger children keep it simple. Elementary children are ready for more detailed stories. See Sources for Materials at the back of this book for more information on the Great Lessons.

The Purpose of the Great Lessons:

To give the child the big picture of the universe and world they live in.

To plant seeds of interest for a variety of topics such as our universe, earth, all living things, needs.

To instill in the child a sense of wonder.

To discover the diversity of life on earth that also shares basic similarities and needs.

To develop a connection with life and realize the interconnectedness of all living things.

To give the child a view of the whole universe and work toward discovering the parts of the whole.

To introduce cycles of life such as the water cycle, plant & animal life cycles, seasons, year, etc

To build in the child a respect for all living things.

To give the child an awareness of history and the human journey.

To expand awareness.

To stimulate inner discovery of a higher power that oversees everything, whatever name we use.

A Guide for the Montessori Classroom centers on Maria Montessori's "cosmic education" and Great Lessons. The above topics and concepts are integrated into the set of four guides without formal use of the stories. For ages 5 or 6 and up the following lessons may be introduced as shown on the next few pages, depending on the age(s) and readiness of the child(ren). It is important the stories are told in dramatic oral story form in the adult's own words.

The Five Great Lessons are:

- 1) The Story of the Universe
- 2) The Story of the Coming of Life
- 3) The Story of Humans
- 4) The Story of Writing
- 5) The Story of Numerals

The Great Lessons introduce children to our universe, our earth, and all living things on this earth. This brings the study of human needs and all the cultures, continents, and biomes of the world. The Great Lessons introduce the child to various time lines and life cycles. The Story of writing introduces the language lessons. The story of numerals introduces math lessons.