

THE MONTESSORI POTENTIAL
How to Foster Independence, Respect, and Joy in Every Child,
by Paula Lillard Preschlack

SUGGESTED BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR GRANDPARENTS

Introduction

1. When you were growing up, what was your experience of school?

2. What do you think are the most important things for young people to learn from school?

3. What challenges do you see getting in the way of children's development today?

4. Do you think raising children is more, or less, difficult for your own children today, and why?

Chapter One

5. What do you think of Maria Montessori's description of the four planes of development? Do you see the characteristics she talks about in your own grandchildren at their certain ages?

6. Did the anecdotes in this chapter give you a good feel for what happens in Montessori classrooms?

7. Do you have a question after reading any of it?

8. What were your favorite parts of the stories? Why?

Chapter Two

5. On page 48, Paula explains Montessori's paradigm: "The Child Forms Himself". Do you agree that this is not an easy perspective for many adults to adopt? Why do you think this is?

6. Do you find it hard to treat your grandchildren according to this paradigm? Where do you find it easy to do so, and where is it more challenging?

7. Paula talks about the importance of preparing the physical classroom from pages 50 to 56 (and again in Chapter Six on pages 195-198). Did this make you think of ways you might prepare your own home for your grandchildren to accompany you in tasks and be more independent and comfortable? What ideas came to mind?

Chapter Three

8. What story from the school featured in this chapter did you like most?

9. What aspect of the school mentioned here do you think is the most important for communities today?

10. Have you ever been invited to your grandchildren's school? What was the main takeaway for you?

Chapter Four

11. Do your children "defend" their choice of Montessori (for your grandchildren) to you? If so, what do you hear them say?
12. Has this book given you any ways of describing or understanding Montessori that you find helpful?

13. What do you think about the variety of perspectives on Montessori that the author describes?
14. Is the issue Paula describes of Montessori having no definition for the public and no regulation one that you can compare to something else? Do you see this lack of clarity for the public as a problem?
15. Did you learn something new in this chapter? What was it?

Chapter Five

21. What do you think of Montessori being offered in public schools? What gives you this perspective?
22. What do you see as the most important qualities or life lessons that children can get from Montessori in their public schools?
23. Do you think Montessori can work in public school districts? Why or why not?

Chapter Six

24. Paula writes on page 189, "Raising children in a Montessori-inspired fashion can be as simple as removing some temptations while providing others." Does this resonate for you? Can you share how you raised your own children by removing temptations/obstacles or providing certain things for their positive growth?
25. Have you seen your children do this with your grandchildren in their own homes? If so, what outcomes do you notice?
26. What do you think is the most important thing a parent can do for their child at home? Is

it easy—or hard— to encourage your own children to do these things with the grandchildren?

27. What section (or point) of this chapter do you think is *currently* the most urgent for parents raising children today?

Conclusion

28. There is a lot of talk these days about “reinventing” or “recreating” education in the United States. Do you believe that Montessori fits into this conversation? Do you see Montessori providing some answers for the problems in education today? What are they, in your opinion?

29. What did you enjoy most about this book?

Grandparents, thank you for reading and for sharing your thoughts! You have a very important role in your grandchildren's lives- I hope that reading this book encouraged and inspired you!