

AMI Assistants Course (3-6)

- **Vidhya Ramalingam & Mehak Hemnani**

The summer holidays brought a perfect opportunity for teachers, parents, professionals as well as AMI alumni to gather together and deepen their interest in the child in two cities, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

Hyderabad

The AMI Assistants Course in Hyderabad took place at Lumbini Montessori House of Children, under the auspices of the Montessori Training and Research Trust (MTRT). The course was conducted by AMI Primary Trainer, Teenaz Reporter, from April 24 to May 5, 2017.



Safia Khatoon Shah shares her experience of doing the course

I believe all of us here would agree with Agatha Christie, who once said, "One of the luckiest things that can happen to you in life is, to have a happy childhood". It is crucial for us to understand this complex little human, and give them the right nurturing, education and love to adjust and adapt to this ever-changing world. In such a short span of just 2 weeks, Montessori has given us a new direction. I truly believe that everything we have learnt here will give us a solid reason to look at children from a different viewpoint, henceforth. Teenaz has been an amazing mentor to all of us. Her guidance, patience, lectures and methods have helped each individual enhance their ideas and find solutions to most of the problems, when dealing with a child.



Mumbai

A ten-day Assistants Course was conducted at the Ratan Tata Institute (RTI) Montessori Training Centre in Mumbai between May 19 and 30, 2017 by AMI Primary Trainer, Suneeta Madnani, supported by Trainer in training, Geeta Savla and by the RTI staff.

Jineesha Choksi shares her experience of doing the course

The participants came from far flown parts of Mumbai. As the days went by, a feeling wonder and hope grew. The group sessions created a sense of bonding and there was joy and camaraderie. As the participants put it, it allowed them to share, collaborate and work together. The philosophy gave a new vision to one and all. It stoked their need to know more. With a new idea of what education can be, some developed an interest in working with children and some in switching careers to open schools! They left with a sense of satisfaction and happiness and with hope in their hearts to be able to implement all the knowledge they gained from this course in the real world of children around them. Many claimed that would be the real challenge for them!

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Books are real and magical, simple and transcendent, right here and beyond, and an essential part of children's lives! We bring you a series of reviews of books suitable for children of different age groups. Watch this space in every issue for a different book!

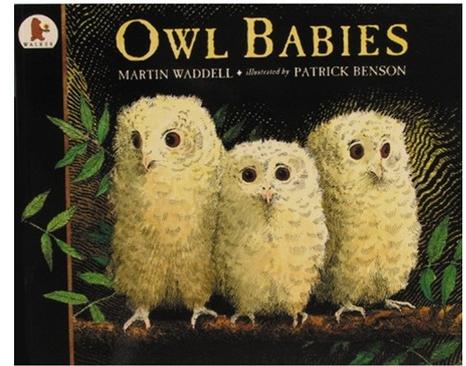


Book Corner

- Tarunya Gouthaman

OWL BABIES

Author - Martin Waddell
Illustration - Patrick Benson
Publisher - Walker Books, London, 1992
ISBN No. - 0-7445-3167-5



Martin Waddell is an Irish writer of children's books.

The author loves writing about animals and is well known for his series 'Little Bear'. He has received many awards in recognition for his contribution to children's literature.

The theme of this book revolves around three baby owls and their mother. It gives children an idea of the nature of owls and how maternal bond is universally the same. The author has expressed the emotions of baby owls in simple language that young children can relate to. The text is in large font with only few sentences in a page and is accompanied by beautiful pictures. There are a few repetitive phrases that bring familiarity and appeal to beginners in reading. The illustrations are detailed with intricate penwork which is very impressive. This book is suitable for children in the age group 2-6 years. The book is available on Amazon in paperback, hard cover and board.

Graduation Day!

- Kavneet Chadha, Mehak Hemnani, Aditi Ganesh & Vidhya Ramalingam

Celebration was in the air when students received their AMI Primary Diplomas after slogging it out for months and were all geared up to start working with children. Hilla Patell presided over as Chief Guest in all the four cities! Students from the different cities share their experience of doing the course and their graduation. On behalf of the Touch Board Team we wish them the very best in all their future endeavors!

[Indrakshi Dcosta from Bangalore](#)

March 18, 2017 – Batch 2

The Graduation Ceremony was attended by Hilla Patell, Rukmini Ramachandaran, Ruby Lao, Suneeta Madnani, Anahita Gandhi and the team from Head Start Montessori House of Children.



If I had to compare our accomplishment today to that of a worker building a beautiful house, the blueprint would be our own varied and unique life experiences that brought us to sign up for this course, the foundation would be the Montessori philosophy and course itself and our trainers who helped us carry each stone carefully and mindfully to stand back every now and then and survey what we were building. Our families and friends were the pillars supporting us in laying this foundation, for without their time and help, none of us would have got this far. The schools that opened their doors to us, for us to observe and apply all that we learnt, were like layers that formed each floor in resembling the design we imagined. And thus days turned into months and months turned into two years...to culminate on this day, where we look back in wonder and amazement at the task that has finally been accomplished. And yet the beauty of this architecture would be completely lost if it isn't to provide a shelter and reach out to the reason behind it all - the child. The journey is a long one and arduous in every way. But we step out empowered to do whatever is possible so that we can bring a difference in the lives of children - one child at a time.

Fiona Poojara from Mumbai**March 28, 2017 – Batch 20**

The ceremony at Ratan Tata Institute (RTI) began by welcoming Hilla Patell, Zarin Malva, the examiners, faculty, administrators, family and friends.

It was an emotional day as we all gathered at RTI to receive our diplomas! The same hall where we excitedly lined up, had been our second home for the entire 9 months! Hours of practice with the materials, eagerness to learn all about the Montessori philosophy, starting off as strangers and parting ways as family - the AMI family. Awaiting to begin our journeys and take on our new roles with great responsibility and enthusiasm. Our batchmate, Jeoreon Walleyne gave an enriching speech about Dr Montessori's work with the UN and UNESCO in supporting child rights and education. He ended emotionally by reminding us how we had just made 'a small step for a better world, a world of peace'.

**Ahana M. Rao from Chennai****April 7, 2017 - Batch 13**

It was a much-awaited day of celebration for the students at Navadisha Montessori Foundation, along with their near and dear ones who were their constant pillar of support through the course of a nine-month journey. Hilla Patel, Rukmini Ramachandrandran, Ruby

Lau, examiners and guests from schools across came together to wish the graduating batch.

It was truly a journey filled with laughter, hard work and love. Nine months together made us well-oiled machines and everyone did what they had to on their own. It was a true Montessori experience. It was a joyous occasion, the celebration of work, effort and time. We were also feeling relieved by the

fact that it wasn't going to be a good bye forever and that we were stepping into a journey filled with great hope in nurturing the future young minds.

**Shobha Goyal Gupta from Hyderabad****April 15, 2017 - Batch 16**

The graduation ceremony of The Montessori Training and Research Trust (MTRT) was held in Pebble Creek Life School in the presence of Hilla Patel, Teenaz Reporter and Dr Usha Naik.

Hilla Patel gave us a beautiful message, 'Education, from Maria Montessori's standpoint is simply a matter of assisting human life as it unfolds from the very earliest days. So we have the possibility of doing our work in an Infant Community or a Children's House, with older children or with adolescents. But beyond that, we can also apply our knowledge and skills, in situations wherever there are children in the community at large and whenever an opportunity arises.'

We have become individuals who now understand the nuances of bringing up a child in the most enriching way by creating an environment most conducive for the aforesaid purpose. Methods that would help the child grow while understanding his role towards making the society a



better place to live in. Methods that would teach a child to grow and let others grow, to respect the freedom of choice, to live with empathy and finally to uphold the ethos of mankind. And with a deep sense of achievement that fills my heart today, I can proudly vouch for the fact on behalf of everyone of us here that "yes we have conquered it".

Food is comfort,
security, art, connects
to us on many levels –
emotionally,
philosophically,
spiritually and most
importantly food is
love! In this series we
bring to you simple
recipes with tips on
involving the children
of different age
groups in the art of
food preparation.

AMI Membership

Membership to Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) is open to everyone! Become a part of a worldwide community dedicated to the recognition of the unique nature of childhood, natural human development and the rights of the child. Discounted rates to events, AMI eBulletins and Journals are some of the benefits a member receives. AMI membership is an individual membership and is not available to schools, universities, and other educational organisations.

Membership fees begin at 40 euros.

To join, please visit www.montessori-ami.org

Little Chef

- Kavneet Chadha

CUPCAKES

METHOD

- Preheat the oven at 180 degrees centigrade.
- Line the bun tin with 12 paper cases.
- Sieve the baking powder and flour into a bowl.
- Place butter and sugar in a bowl. Mix well with a wooden spoon until pale in colour.
- Add the eggs one by one. Stir well.
- Add the flour and baking powder into the above mix and stir.
- Pour the milk and stir, in order to get a smooth mixture.
- Add the vanilla essence and mix well.
- Divide the mix in the paper cases.
- Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until golden and just firm.

PLEASE NOTE

* The bun tin can be replaced by an 8 inch square/round cake tin. The child can thereby bake a cake. Please line and grease the tin before the child uses it.



* Children below 3 years of age will need the ingredients to be measured and prepared beforehand.

* Older children can measure out the ingredients; first by collaboration and then independently.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- ½ cup unsalted butter OR ½ cup oil
- 2/3rd cup sugar OR 1/4 cup powdered jaggery
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1 cup warm milk
- 10 to 12 paper cases
- 12-hole bun tin

Montessori Education Method

- Payal Patel

An exhibition titled Montessori Education Method was held at the Montessori School Internationale, Mumbai on March 25, 2017, to create awareness about the Montessori philosophy and the materials used to aid children in their development. The exhibition had an attendance of over 50 people from various walks of life. The participants were delighted to see the demonstrations of how the materials were being used and the variety of activities that can be done with a single piece of material.

Two aspects were highlighted during the exhibition:

- the similarities between the Indian philosophy and the Montessori philosophy, specially, in terms of meeting a child's spiritual needs
- the materials are meticulously designed with precision that helps children to develop their reasoning and creative skill

Some of the attendees shared their feedback with us:

"The passion you all have over the Montessori approach is infectious."- Nigel Austin (Engineer)

"I find this Montessori approach very exciting. I will be recommending it to my son for my grandchild."- Manfred Spies (CEO)

Our team was really charged up and enthusiastic as we had a wonderful audience who was very keen and intrigued in knowing about the Montessori education – Payal Patel (Founder, Montessori School Internationale)



Good Reels

In this segment we are bringing out reviews and related articles on films and music for children.

Little Eyes Watching!

Movie experience of an adult....

- Roopa Sundar

I went for a movie,

An adult movie at that.

Oh! The violence and bloodshed

My hands a veil and eyelids half bat.

But the disturbing part, more so

Not the goriness, though aplenty

The many many toddle eyes seeing with me,

What sense were they making of this savagery?

The hands that want to embrace

The hearts that want to love in grace

The joy that a whole makes

And the work that awaits.

What are they watching!

Tell me, don't we all have something to think about?

When asked about so many children at the hall the reply received was that, as children below three do not have to purchase tickets, technically they cannot be stopped from entering. The same hall into which below 18 are not allowed. Almost as if these children are invisible! But are they?

In Chennai, Sathyam Cinemas provides exclusive day care facilities at 'Magic Hat' which includes a play area, library, mini theatre and slumber corner. Guests can leave their children with experienced staff when they need to be away for a few hours.

Flora - Here, There, Everywhere!

- Roopa Sundar

Donna Bryant Goertz initially started the Austin Montessori School at Texas in a house in 1967. It has grown over the years and now holds multiple Toddler, Primary and Elementary environments and Middle school in different campuses.

The school is surrounded by lots of trees and nature. Children have access to a beautiful outdoor area with flower and vegetable beds. They seasonally grow vegetables and fruits, and harvest them for consumption in the classroom. Some of these include kale, swiss chard, strawberries, snap peas and various lettuce.



Outdoor Environment



Red Bud Tree

There are benches to sit outside along with playscape, climbing dome, gazebo, and a small fenced-in bird garden. The area is partly grass covered and partly covered with pea gravel. Some of the outdoor plants include redbud trees, chinaberry tree, coneflower, dianthus, turk's cap, larkspur, lime, sage, rosemary, mint, and dill.

In the environment, there are aloe barbadensis, croton, devil's ivy, swiss cheese plant, mother-in-law's tongue, peace lily and arrowhead vine having different shapes of lamina. Children care for the plants in various ways and have sets for watering, dusting the leaves, flower arranging, making potpourri with the spent flowers, harvesting from the garden and also weeding.



Peace Lily



Indoor Environment

There are various books rotated through the year about trees, leaves, Texas plants, how plants grow, on flowers, etc. There are also sets of cards on the parts of a leaf, tree and flower available to the children.

In this issue we are doing a special feature on plants as part of an environment and how love for the same can be imbibed in children. We thank

Priya Salem
from
Austin
Montessori School
for sharing this
information with
us.

Bird Watch

Standing at a window have you seen a bird and wondered what it is called? Bird life flourishes even in our crowded cities. Read our special series on some common birds found in India. You may become a 'birder' by the end of our series!

- Roopa Sundar & Tarunya Gouthaman

Asian Koel

Eudynamys scolopacea

PHYSICAL FEATURES

The Asian Koel is a large, long-tailed, cuckoo measuring 39–46 cm and weighing 190–327 g. The male bird is glossy bluish-black, with a pale grey bill, the iris is crimson, and it has grey legs and feet. The female bird is brownish on the crown and has rufous streaks on the head. The back, rump and wing coverts are dark brown with white and buff spots. The underparts are whitish, but is heavily striped.

CHARACTERISTICS

A nest parasite that lays its egg in the nest of other birds, primarily crows. Koels prefer host nests at low heights and nearer to fruit trees. The male has a familiar shrieking crescendo call *ku-oo, ku-oo...* repeated over and over in breeding season. The female makes a shrill *kik-kik-kik...* call.

HABITAT

All across the Indian subcontinent, in lightly wooded areas, city parks and cultivation.

FUN FACTS

- I am the state bird of Puducherry
- I am a member of the cuckoo order of birds, the Cuculiformes
- I feed mainly on fruits



Female Koel feeding on a berry



Male and Female Koel

Anyone can become a subscriber!

The Indian Montessori Foundation brings out two publications, a monthly newsletter, The Touch Board (6 copies a year) and an annual journal, Montessori Matters.

Subscriptions:

One year: Rs. 1200
Two years: Rs. 2000

Print out the subscription form from our website (www.montessori-india.org), fill in all the details required and send it along with your payment to the Indian Montessori Foundation.

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Do send in articles or news to thetouchboard@gmail.com



Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

July 15, 2017

Workshop: 'First Aid: First to Aid' by Mr. Suryanaryanan
 Venue: Abacus Montessori School, Chennai
 Time: 9am to 12 noon
 Fee: Rs 500 (For AMI Members and IMF Subscribers—Rs 400)

January 12 & 13, 2018

Fourth National Montessori Congress
 Venue: Music Academy, Chennai
 Theme: Svayam—Independence in action and thought

"My vision of the future is no longer of people taking exams and proceeding from secondary school to University but of passing from one stage of independence to a higher, by means of their own activity and effort of will."

(From Childhood to Adolescence, opening)

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