

The Original Focus: The Elementary Level and its Thematic Approach

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“... when I look up in the universe, I know I'm small but I'm also big. I'm big because I'm connected to the universe, and the universe is connected to me.”
 Neil deGrasse Tyson

I. *Review paradoxical dualism or dichotomy, “I’m small but I’m also big.”*

II. *Review the Cosmic Plan.*

- A. All life has value
- B. All things are connected – Holistic vision.
- C. Humanity can be a collaborator with nature.
- D. Universal Altruism – unconscious work for all.
- E. Cosmic selfishness
- F. Uniqueness of humanity.
- G. Sense of Awe, Wonder, Humility and Gratitude.

III. *What is Cosmic Education?*

Since it has been...necessary to give so much to the child, let us give him a vision of the whole universe. The universe is an imposing reality, and an answer to all questions.... All things are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity. The idea helps the mind of the child to become focused, to stop wandering in an aimless quest for knowledge. He is satisfied having found the universal center of himself with all things.

Maria Montessori
To Educate the Human Potential.

A. Look at This Quote

- 1. A vision of the whole universe
- 2. All things are part of the universe
- 3. All things are connected with each other
- 4. They form one whole unity

5. The mind of the child becomes focused
6. Stop an aimless quest for knowledge
7. Finding the universal center of himself with all things

- B. Cosmic Education is the approach that is taken to offer children the Cosmic Plan and Cosmic Task.
- C. The focus upon paradoxical dualism.
- D. Emphasizes the discovery of a unifying global and universal view of the past, present, and future, and his or her place in it.
- E. Always keep in mind the macro focus and the micro focus.

IV. *Purposes or Aims of Cosmic Education*

- A. Development of the whole integrated human being.
- B. To incite interest and motivation.
- C. To find one's place in the present, in one's own time and culture.
- D. To help children form positive attitudes and relationships to humanity and to the all the world around them.
- E. Realization of the responsibility of human beings in the harmony of all.
- F. Development of gratitude and appreciation.
- G. Personal responsibility and dignity.
- H. Becoming a collaborator with nature and the ongoing work of evolution.
- I. The sense of participation in a Cosmic Task.
- J. Scientific and academic knowledge and vocabulary

V. *Thematic Education in Elementary Montessori Programs*

- A. There are five overarching themes
 1. The History of the Universe
 2. Life and Living Things
 3. Humanity—its History and Accomplishments
 4. Human Communication
 5. The World of Mathematics
- B. Each Theme is initiated with a holistic story-based lesson.

VI. *Elements of Cosmic Education in Elementary School*

- A. The Great Lessons.
- B. Holistic approach
- C. Integrated Curriculum, especially in the cultural areas

1. Study of History, Timelines and Geological Evolution.
 - a. Horizontal
 - b. Vertical
 2. Origins
 - a. Etymologies.
 - b. Origin Stories
 - c. Histories of everyday things
 - d. Creation Stories
 - e. Beginnings of all things.
 3. Study of Biology.
 - a. Kinds (macro)
 - b. Parts (micro)
 - c.
 4. Mathematics
 - a. Arithmetic
 - b. Geometry
 - i. Kinds (macro)
 - ii. Parts (micro)
 - c. History
 - d. Cultural Implications
 - e. In Nature
- D. Development of gratitude and appreciation
1. To those who have gone before (history)
 2. To all life and the universe (sciences, biology)
 3. To those alive at this time (kinship, mathematics, cultural studies)
 4. To God, a supreme being or gods (if in a non-public school setting)
- E. Development of an unassuming humble nature. (Timelines)
- F. Inspiring Biographies.
- G. The Place of the Earth and Humanity in the Cosmos.
- H. Development of an attitude of caring and consideration.
- I. Peace Education

VII. *Making it happen*

- A. You (the guide) give the Great Lessons every fall to everyone
- B. Offer inspiring stories
- C. Mindfulness
 - 1. Avoid follow up work in all great lessons and almost all stories
 - 2. Practice silence
- D. Relate as many lessons as possible to the Five Themes.
- E. Emphasize the relationships between things.
- F. Be thankful and grateful.
 - 1. Show appreciation for the dignity and potential of every living thing in all stages of development. (biology, life cycles, vital functions)
 - 2. Express gratitude on Nature Walks
- G. Do not focus on academic achievement, but on human development.