Progressive Approaches in Early Childhood Education

- What is Progressive Education, and how does it differ from traditional approaches?
- The most prominently used approaches: Reggio Emilia, Montessori, and Waldorf
- Implementing Progressive Approaches in your classroom or home environment.

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Jacki Visman
Early Childhood Education Specialist

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Certification

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Video

Please review the professional development training video; you will need approximately 60 minutes to complete the training.

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Certification

Please take a moment to complete the learning review provided. Upon submission, your certification will be sent to you immediately.

Start

Topics of Discussion

- What is Progressive Education?
- Some history and founders of Progressive Education
- Most Prominently Used Approaches..
  - The Reggio Emilia Approach
  - Maria Montessori's Method
  - Waldorf
- Some Modern Day Shout Outs

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What is Progressive Education?

- The term "progressive education" was coined in the late 19th century
- The term "progressive" came out of years of social "progressivism"

Some Key Aspects:

-
  Problem solving and critical thinking
- Collaborative learning
- Experiential learning
- Child-centered learning
- Learning environment

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Founders, forward thinkers, theorists and practitioners contributing to Progressive Approaches in Early Childhood Education

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

Johann Pestalozzi (1746-1827)

Friedrich Fröbel (1782-1852)

John Dewey (1859-1952)

Paulo Freire (1921 – 1997)

Caroline Pratt (1867 – 1954)
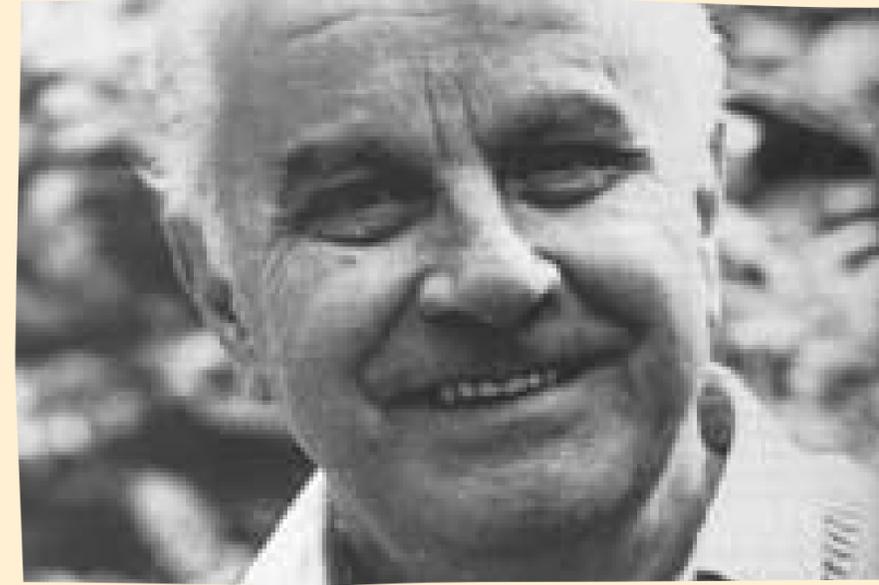
Vivian Paley (1929-2019)

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The Reggio Emilia Approach

- Developed in the 1940's, post-WW2, in Reggio Emilia, Italy
- The approach was born from the town, and cultivated by Loris Malaguzzi
- Took off throughout the rest of the world in decades to follow

Key Aspects of the Reggio Emilia Approach

- Child at the Center of Learning
- Open Ended Materials - *Loose Parts*
- Project Based Learning
- Emergent Curriculum
- The Learning Environment
- Documentation
- Embracing Community
- Teacher as a Learner

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The Child at the Center of Learning

"Stand aside for a while and leave room for learning, observe carefully what children do, and then, if you have understood well, perhaps teaching will be different from before."
- Loris Malaguzzi

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The Image of the Child
All children have the right to quality education + equal opportunities
(with no obstacles to their development)

Children are...
- competent + capable
- citizens + participants
- naturally curious
- social beings

Hundred Languages
A metaphor for all the different ways that children express themselves, both verbally and nonverbally, and the ways in which they navigate the world and learn.

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Loose Parts, Project-Based Learning, and the Emergent Curriculum

- **What are loose parts?** Natural materials, up-cycled pieces (tin, wood, plastic), blocks, legos, pieces of fabric...
- **Why use loose parts?**
  - Child-led, open-ended, and unstructured play unveils the hundred languages, and allows us to observe the development and learning that is taking place.
  - Benefit to emotional-wellbeing and all domains of development
- **A provocation:** an arrangement of materials that are meant to provoke curiosity engagement, and discovery.
- **Project-Based Learning:** Long-term, collaborative investigations. Follows the children's interest and learning needs. Allows for deeper understanding of concepts + more **skills** acquired
- **Emergent Curriculum:** A curriculum that is responsive to the unfolding development, learning, and interests of the children.

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The Learning Environment

The Environment
- Prioritizes well-being
  - Neutral, warm, reduced sensory overload
- Reflects the learners
  - Designed to fit the children's needs
  - Art work hanging; areas crafted and decorating designed by the children
- Reflects the community
  - Family wall; Reflections of the greater community in the environment.

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Documentation

- Teachers take observational notes, use findings to guide practice
- Reflect the learning back; Celebrate the learning!
  - Display recorded dialogue and images of the children at work, as well as their pieces of art and projects. The documentation highlights authentic experiences, while informing the children, parents, and community.

The Hundred Languages of Children Exhibition, Reggio Emilia, Italy, 1987

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The Montessori Method

- Cultivated by Dr. Maria Montessori; Rome, Italy early 1900's
- Maria's early medical practice focused on psychiatry, and she worked with children with developmental disabilities

Some Key Aspects of Montessori

- Structured but flexible, with child-directed activities, using *specific materials.*
- **Focus Areas include:** Practical life skills, sensorial activities, language, mathematics, and cultural subjects.
- Teacher guided, but child led; **presentations**.
- Individual, self-paced, learning
- Mixed-Age Classrooms
- Respect for the child

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Montessori Materials

Montessori materials are specially designed to be self-correcting and to
teach specific concepts. Examples include the Pink Tower,
Moveable Alphabet, and
Number Rods.

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Focus Areas

Practical life skills
Sensorial activities
Language
Mathematics
Cultural subjects

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Teacher Presentations and Child Work

The Montessori Environment

Waldorf

- Founded in Germany in the early 20th century by Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian philosopher, social reformer,

Some Key Aspects of Waldorf

- Follows Developmental Stages (every 7 years)
- Artistic Expression
- Rhythm and Routine
- Nature and Sustainability
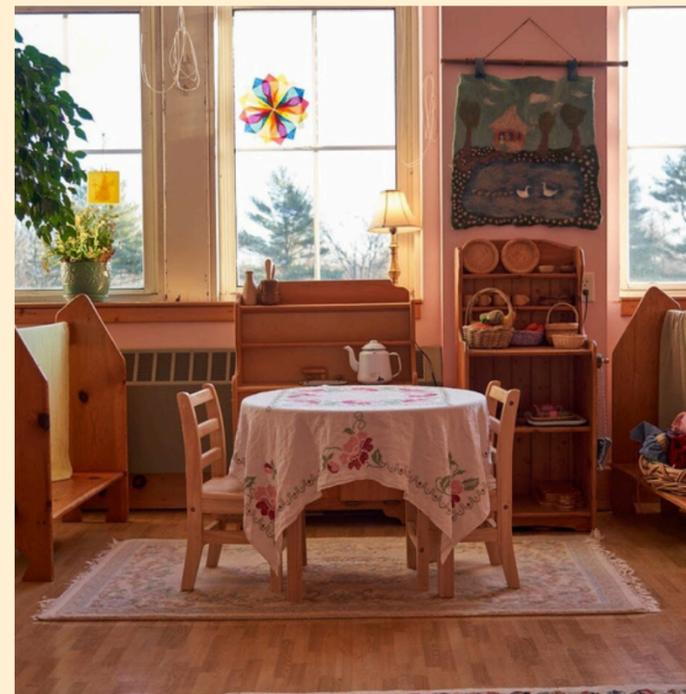- Mixed-Age groups and consistent class + teacher

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Connecting with Nature

- Outdoor time
- Natural materials
- Nature tables + Seasonal Decoration and Activities
- Nature stories
- Festivals and traditions
- Parents Encouraged also to embraced the outdoors

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Waldrof Classroom Environment

- Natural Materials
- Neutral, Earthy, Home-like
- Seasonal Decorations
- Play areas include simple, open-ended toys that encourage imaginative play and creativity.

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Shout Outs: Progressive Approaches of the 21st Century

Vivian Paley (1929-2019)

Place-Based and Outdoor Schools

Anji Play - Zhejiang Province, China

Te Whāriki - New Zealand

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Questions?
Let's Hear Them!

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Reggio Emilia Webinar Series
on our Platform or Store

More Materials on Progressive
Approaches on our Platform

1X1 Consultations to discuss
more!

NEXT WEBINAR!

Wednesday, November 20th,
12pm EST

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