FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MONTESSORI AND TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

MONTESSORI METHOD	TRADITIONAL EDUCATION
The method is based on a profound respect for the individual	Emphasis on conforming to the group
A specially prepared environment designed to meet the developmental needs of the child; physical, cognitive, and psychological	The classroom environment is generally set up in a lecture format. Emphasis is often on grades and sometimes motivated by punishments and rewards
The learning environment is student-centered and fosters self-motivations	Students are grouped chronologically for teachers pre-planned class lessons
Multi-age grouping allows students to learn from one another	Lessons are teacher-centered
Inviting hands-on learning materials are are used to guide the child to make his/her own abstractions	Passive learning confines students to focus on teachers lessons for long periods of time and risk the possibility of students "tuning out"
Learning differences are accommodated since students work cooperatively in small groups	Subjects are taught in lecture form and do not allow for self-paced learning or individual differences

MONTESSORI METHOD	TRADITIONAL EDUCATION
Uninterrupted work cycles	Block time, period lessons
Child spots own errors through feedback from materials	Errors in child's work high-lighted by teacher
Classroom allows for movement and gives the child the opportunity to learn how to handle appropriate independence with responsibility	Students sit at desks and work at the class pace with little opportunity for developing independent judgment
The goal of assessment in the Montessori environment is to attain the joy of achievement that comes from independent learning and self-correction	Scheduled testing does not take into consideration the preparation of each individual student. It assumes that all children learn at the same rate. tests are not generally used as self-correcting, teaching tools.
Integrated learning and inter-disciplinary teaching foster a unique academic experience which Montessori calls "cosmic education"	Learning takes place primarily through memorization of abstract concepts often presented as disjointed and separate subjects