History of Early Childhood Education

In Ancient Times

- First education in schools was in ancient Greek and Roman times.
  - Socrates (469-399 BC)
  - Plato (428-347 BC)
  - Aristotle (384-322 BC)
  - Polybius (204-122 BC)
  - Cicero (106-43 BC)
- Small group tutoring, teaching wealthy boys thinking skills, governing, military strategies and managing commerce

Why History?

- Inspirational
- Helps develop professional expression
- Overview of how past generations viewed children
- To learn how philosophies of teaching have developed and changed through the years
- To understand major changes in education
- Helps us to see how the needs of society affect education
- To avoid the mistakes of the past
- To use our “perceptive minds” to develop new educational materials and activities and our own personal philosophies of education.

Socrates (469-399 BC)

- Taught Plato
- Spoke of educating children under six.
- Believed that the “unexamined life was not worth living”.
- Ignorance was the root of all evil.
- Socratic Method – a question/answer, or inquiry, approach to teaching. This is still a popular method of teaching today. He pretended he knew nothing of the subject and he would question student until his companion exposed his ignorance & the fallacies in his thinking. Then, using further questioning, he would help the student develop a more consistent and adequate set of concepts.
- Purpose of the Teacher – was to stimulate, promote, and guide the student’s thinking, rather than to only impart knowledge.

Plato (428-347 BC)

- He was the first person to show that a system of education was integral to the welfare of the state.
- Thomas Jefferson’s ideas for American education clearly came from Plato.
- Role of Education: “The drawing and leading of children to the rule which has been pronounced right by the voice of the law, and approved as truly right by the concordant experiences of the best and oldest men.”
Plato (428-347 BC)
- The republic would have a well-designed system of public education:
  - no compulsory attendance
  - curriculum that progressed from the simple to the more complex, from concrete to the abstract.
  - Remain in school as long as found the lessons understandable and relevant to own interests and abilities.
  - if bored would leave school and enter into the various arts and crafts necessary to sustain public life.
  - a second group who remained longer would fill military and administrative positions.
  - a select few would persevere, enter the military for a period of service, and then become leaders of the republic (after they became the best and oldest men). To make sure they never placed personal gain above the interests of the republic could never own property and identifiable parenthood.

Aristotle (384-322 BC)
- Believed that the “human being was a political animal”.
- Supported the idea of a good monarchy or a good aristocracy that would promote the highest degree of welfare for the state.
- Developed the concept of the “golden mean”.
- to each virtue there are two vices: the vice of excess and the vice of defect. (Courage: foolhardiness, cowardiness).
- virtue is the mean between the two extremes.

Aristotle (384-322 BC)
- Education was the development of the well-rounded individual divorced from the mechanical, practical areas of vocational or professional training.
- Highest form of virtue was speculation, contemplation, and the exercise of intellect.
- Advocated different education for different purposes:
  - general education for the citizenry
  - additional education for warriors
  - higher education for leaders
- Believed in educating the young and recognized individual differences.
- Many aspects of the educational practices in American public schools today can be traced to the classical tradition, advocated by Aristotle and Plato.

Polybius (204-122 BC)
- Polybius is one of the first historians to attempt to present history as a sequence of causes and effects, based upon a careful examination of tradition and conducted with keen criticism.
- He was clearly aware of the dangers of accepting fables as history: he sought the truth rather than idle and unprofitable tales.

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC)
- “A mind without instruction can no more bear fruit than can a field, however fertile, without cultivation.”
- His life coincided with the decline and fall of the Roman Republic
- Probably the most notable example of his influence is St. Augustine's claim that it was Cicero's Hortensius (an exhortation to philosophy, the text of which is unfortunately lost) that turned him away from his sinful life and towards philosophy and ultimately to God.
- Augustine later adopted Cicero's definition of a commonwealth and used it in his argument that Christianity was not responsible for the destruction of Rome by the barbarians.

Roman Empire (400-1200 AD)
- Childhood barely lasted past infancy
- Children used as a labor force
- Before the 15th Century there was no educational system
- Church controlled education in the medieval period
- Projected a view of children as basically evil in their natural state.
- Value of education was in preparation for an afterlife.
European Renaissance and Reformation (1400-1600)

- The first humanist educators began to advocate for basic education include for the poor and girls.
- Printing press (Gutenberg, 1439) made books more available to commoners.
- Martin Luther (1482-1546) urged parents to educate their children by teaching them morals and catechisms.
- By the 1500s schools in Europe taught subjects such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and bookkeeping.

John Comenius (1592-1670)

- A Czech educator.
- Believed that the ultimate purpose of human life was to become united with God and to obtain eternal bliss in life after death, with life here on earth being the preparation for life after death.
- For that purpose, everyone should:
  - know all things
  - become a person who can control things oneself
  - become like the image of God.

http://www.newfoundations.com/GALLERY/Luther.html

- Purposed universal, compulsory education.
- State should be responsible for the education of all Christian boys.
- Primary purpose of education was teaching religion.
- Insisted that music and physical education should be integral to a school curriculum.
- The family was the most important unit in educating young children.

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- John Comenius (1592-1670)

  - "The desire to know and to learn should be excited … in every possible manner."
  - He believed that education should follow children’s natural development.
  - He advocated the necessity of three kinds of education:
    - intellectual education,
    - moral education, and
    - religious education.

John Comenius (1592-1670)

- To teach "all things to all men" was the theme of Comenius' theory of education, which was called pansaphea.
- Comenius considered that the talent to realize the goals of education is naturally inherent in people, and it is the role of education to bring out this natural gift, that is, "nature."
- According to Comenius, the image of the ideal person was that of a "pansophist," or a person who has learned all knowledge concerning God, nature, and human beings.

John Comenius (1592-1670)

- All children should attend school.
- Educate the poor as well as the rich.
- Schools should encourage children to be happy and feel good about themselves.
- He suggested age groupings for schools which almost exactly match the typical organizational patterns in most U.S. schools.
- Encouraged the integration of curriculum.
- Children should be allowed to learn at their own pace.
- Learning ought to be active, children should learn to write by writing, to speak by speaking, to reason by reasoning.
- Influenced Dewey, Montessori, and Piaget’s thinking.
John Comenius (1592-1670)

- Wrote the first children’s picture book in 1659—“Orbis Sensualium Picus”
  - was more like a picture dictionary

John Comenius said that, fundamentally, parents are responsible for education, but should they become unable to do it, schools would become necessary to replace them.

“Children ought to be dearer to parents than gold and silver, than pearls and gems, may be discovered from a comparison between both gifts of God; for...Gold and silver are fleeting and transitory; children an immortal inheritance.”

John Locke (1632-1704)

- English philosopher
- Considered to be the founder of modern educational philosophy.
- Formulated a theory of formal discipline for education.
- Based his theory of education on the scientific method and the study of the mind and learning.
- Introduced a new element into educational thought: his concept of the nature of the learner—Tabula rasa doctrine, which held that the mind, at birth, was like a smooth tablet upon which nothing yet had been written.
  
  [link](http://www.newfoundations.com/GALLERY/Locke.html)

John Locke brought forth the idea that children were not inherently evil, but naturally good.

- Believed education had great power to make people good.
- Placed emphasis on educational methods that would develop all the sense of the child (sight, taste, smell, touch, hearing).
- Stressed the importance on the physical development of the body.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

- Wrote Emile in 1762—seen as the basis for modern elementary education.
- Children have within them the power to be the agents of their own learning.
- Children learn from firsthand information.
- He insisted on using concrete teaching materials, leaving the abstract and symbolism for later years.
- There are distinct phases of development of a child’s mind and these should coincide with the various stages of education.
- Teachers must be aware of these phases and coordinate their instruction appropriately.
- Pestalozzi, Froebel and Montessori, Piaget and Gesell were greatly influenced by Rousseau.
  
  [link](http://www.newfoundations.com/GALLERY/Rousseau.html)

Johann Pestalozzi (1746-1827)

- Swiss educator
- Concerned about rote learning and cruel punishments, and the exclusion of poor children from school.
- Books, How Gertrude Teaches Her Children and Leonard and Gertrude were written to express his ideas.
- Advocated child-centered schooling, where school experiences were based on child’s interest.
- Advocated grouping children by different ages so older students could help younger ones.
- Experiences should be real and meaningful.
- Good education develops the senses; integrated curriculum; develop the whole child; education of the hand, the head and the heart; teaching children in groups; book for mothers to use at home with their children.
Robert Owen (1771-1858)

- A British utopian socialist who is generally considered to have been the father of the Co-operative movement.
  - http://www.newlanark.org/
- Founded Britain’s first nursery-infant school in 1816.
  - 21 years before Froebel opened his 1st kindergarten.
  - 44 years before Peabody established her own kindergarten in America.

Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852)

- Credited with founding the kindergarten.
  - Known as the “Father of the Kindergarten”
- Everything in universe functioned in relationship to God.
- Each person had a specific purpose to fulfill in this life.
- Stressed the importance of the individual and that each person deserved respect, and stressed the development of the whole child.
- Saw the kindergarten as a bridge between home and school.

Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852)

- Believed play was the foundation for children’s learning.
- Believed play helped the child to think about the interactions between... “life and self-activity, through action, representation and cognition, and ability and understanding”.
- Believed should use the forms found in nature would help in the child gaining understanding (spheres, cubes, cylinders, squares, triangles, circles, and lines.)

Elizabeth Peabody (1804-1894)

- Opened first English speaking kindergarten in Boston in 1860, due to influence of Schurz.
- Through her own kindergarten, and as editor of the Kindergarten Messenger (1873-77), Peabody helped establish kindergarten as an accepted institution in U.S. education.
- Embraced the premise that children's play has intrinsic developmental and educational value.
Elizabeth Peabody (1804-1894)

- In both her writings and her reform efforts, Peabody was motivated by a comprehensive transcendental vision of the origin of all matter and spirit and all human activity in God, by a sense of the oneness of God, man, and nature.
- Perceiving God as benevolent and humanity as morally and intellectually perfectible, she believed that her efforts could help to transform individuals and society.

- Embraced the notion that each child should receive training appropriate to his or her innate capabilities.
- Education was a matter of drawing out, not imposing, knowledge
- The curriculum followed by Peabody to accomplish this end consisted of language, literature, theology, philosophy, and history.
- Elizabeth Peabody was the sister-in-law of author Nathaniel Hawthorne, who married her sister Sophia in 1842, and educational reformer Horace Mann, who married her sister Mary in 1843.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

- Father of Personality Theory
- A person is influenced by his early life in fundamental and dramatic ways.
- Early experiences shape the way people live and behave as adults.
- Freud’s work set into motion one of the three major strands of psychological theory that influenced the developmental and learning theories of early childhood education.

- Is connected with the progressive education movement
- Established laboratory school at the University of Chicago to implement his educational theories.
- Curriculum should be based on the children’s interests, they should be actively involved.
- Curriculum should be integrated.
- Child should be engaged in real and meaningful activities, to foster thinking and reflection.

Margaret and Rachel McMillan (1859/60-1917/1931)

- http://www.aim25.ac.uk/cgi-bin/search2?coll_id=6071&inst_id=61
- Christian Socialists active in British politics and in campaigning for better education and health for poor children.
- Started open-air nursery school in Great Britain.
- Children could benefit from appropriate intellectual stimulation
- Believed health was the handmaiden of education
- Encouraged parents to attend to dental and health
- Believed nursery school teachers should be well-trained.

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)

- German educator
- Emphasized the children’s spiritual development, imagination and creative gifts
- He was the founder of, Waldorf education, and the new artistic form of Eurythmy.
- Childhood is a phase of life important in its own right, with three periods:
  - the “will” (0-7 years)
  - the “heart”/feelings (7-14 years)
  - the “head” or a fusion of the spirit and the body (14 years and up).

- http://www.rudolfsteinerweb.com/
Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)
- Create environment to protect and nurture the child.
- Emphasis on the whole child/different types of development and learning connected into a unity.
- Teacher: mother-figure – allow child’s innate self-motivation to predominate.
- Understand the temperament of each child
- Emphasized play

Patty Smith Hill (1868-1946)
- Key founder of the National Association Nursery Education (NANE) which now exists as the National Association For the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- Was committed in individualized curriculum.
- Curriculum should grow out of children’s needs, thus important for teacher to be observant of children. Believed in using creative approaches in teaching art and music. Introduced the use of triangles, bells, other instruments. Co-wrote the song “Happy Birthday to You”.
- Developed the Patty Hill blocks that were large blocks with which children could create giant constructions.
- Placed emphasis on the home and the learning that took place there. Advocated that teachers pay attention to the child’s home and use the information gained.

Maria Montessori (1870-1952)
- Placed great emphasis on the environment
  the prepared environment
- First female physician in Italy
- Worked with mentally retarded children
- Concepts is both a philosophy of child development and a plan for guiding growth
- Sensitive periods
- First to design school furniture around the size of the children
- Any task could be reduced to a series of small steps
- Developed materials that are self-correcting; role of the teachers is one of observer and facilitator
- Goal of education-formation of the child and development of character

Lucy Sprague Mitchell (1878-1967)
- Bank Street was first established as the Bureau of Educational Experiments by the visionary educator Lucy Sprague Mitchell
- http://www.bankstreet.edu/
- focus was the study of children and play and development of curriculum.
- Development of whole child (physical, social, intellectual, emotional).
- Promoted: individualized education, welcome creativity of child, promote learning through play, avoid teacher-given external rewards.
- Leader in educational research.
- Developed hands-on curriculum.

Arnold Gesell (1880-1961)
- He was a pioneer in the field of child development.
- Established the Clinic of Child Development at Yale University.
- Collected data, which became the basis of the norms of development we continue to use today.
- Viewed maturation as an innate and powerful force in development.
  - maturational theory
  http://www.gesellinstitute.org/

Arnold Gesell (1880-1961)
“...The child’s personality is a product of slow gradual growth. His nervous system matures by stages and natural sequences. He sits before he stands; he babbles before he talks; he fabricates before he tells the truth; he draws a circle before he draws a square; he is selfish before he is altruistic; he is dependent on others before he achieves dependence on self. All of his abilities, including his morals, are subject to laws of growth. The task of child care is not to force him into a predetermined pattern but to guide his growth.”
A.S. Neill (1883-1973)

- A Scottish progressive educator, author and founder of Summerhill school, which remains open and continues to follow his educational philosophy to this day.
- He is best known as an advocate of personal freedom for children.
- “I believe that a child is innately wise and realistic. If left to himself without adult suggestion of any kind, he will develop as far as he is capable of developing.”

Susan S. Isaacs (1885-1948)

- A disciple of Sigmund Freud and John Dewey, she ran an experimental progressive school, Malting House, in Cambridge from 1924 to 1927.
  - The school emphasized direct instruction and had no established curriculum.
- Interpreted Freudian ideas for teachers and gave guidance about applying his ideas.
- Published the Nursery School Years in 1929
  - Emphasized behavioral point of view.
- Advocated free, unhindered imaginative play (play is the child’s work), to be a good but regulating parent, to give children opportunities to work out aggressions, loving environment.
- She was one of the first critics of Jean Piaget’s stages of child development.

Abigail Eliot (1892-1992)

- Pioneered the nursery school movement.
- Integrated Froebel’s gifts, Montessori’s equipment, McMillan’s fresh air, as well as her own ideas.
- Children in her nursery schools were active, alive, choosing.

Jean Piaget (1896-1980)

- Well known for his work studying children, his theory of cognitive development and for his epistemologic view called "genetic epistemology".
- He created in 1955 the International Centre for Genetic Epistemology in Geneva and directed it until 1980.
- The great pioneer of the constructivist theory of knowing.
- http://www.newfoundations.com/GALLERY/Piaget.html

Benjamin Spock (1903-1998)

- Gave practical application to the theories of Dewey and Freud.
- Spock was the first pediatrician to study psychoanalysis to try to understand children’s needs and family dynamics.
- His ideas about childcare influenced several generations of parents to be more flexible and affectionate with their children, and to treat them as individuals.
- Dr. Spock’s Last Interview

T. Berry Brazelton (1918-)

- One of Dr. Brazelton’s foremost achievements in pediatrics and child development is the development of the Brazelton Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale (NBAS).
- This evaluation tool assesses not only the physical and neurological responses of newborns, but also their emotional well being and individual differences.
  - http://www.brazelton.org/main.html
**T. Berry Brazelton (1918-)**

- **Touchpoints**
  - [http://www.touchpoints.org/](http://www.touchpoints.org/)
- Touchpoints is a practical approach for enhancing the competence of parents and building strong family-child relationships from before birth through the earliest years, laying the vital foundation for children's healthy development.

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**Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994)**

- “Learning and teaching should not stand on opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead, they should embark together on a journey down the water. Through an active, reciprocal exchange, teaching can strengthen learning how to learn.”
- Malaguzzi worked with early childhood education in Italy.
- **The Reggio Emilio Approach**
- Philosophy: create an amiable school that welcomes families and the community and invites relationships among teachers, children, and parents to intensify and deepen to strengthen a child’s sense of identity.

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**Summary**

- Identify and describe three to five key people who influenced the field of early childhood education.
- With whom would you like to have studied or worked with?
  - Explain why.