



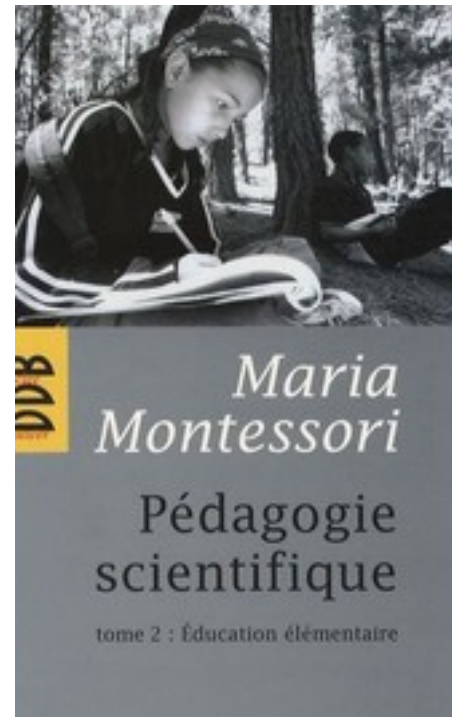
# Pedagogy corner

## Maria Montessori and Santa Claus

With Christmas coming, I would like to share with you the recent discovery of a parent's letter answering to his daughter, published on the En Terre d'enfance website, devoted among other things to the work of Maria Montessori.

This text is inspired by the Italian's pedagogue thesis, that wonders whether Santa Claus' story develops credulity rather than imagination. Children trust their parents. These latter, according to Maria Montessori, should be trustful, refusing to make them believe in things they don't believe in themselves.

The debate is open !



*"Dear Lucie,*

*Thank you very much for your letter. You asked a good question.*

*« Are you Santa Claus ? »*

*I know that you've been waiting my answer for a long time, but I needed time to find the right words.*

*The answer is no. I am not Santa Claus. There is no Santa Claus.*

*I am the one that puts the gifts under the christmas tree. I pick them, I wrap them and I put them under the tree like my mom did for me and her mom for her. And daddy helps too.*

*I guess you will have children one day. I know you will enjoy watching them go down the stairs on Christmas morning.*

*You will enjoy watching them sit under the tree, their faces lit by the candlelights.*

*But that doesn't make me Santa Claus.*

*Santa Claus is bigger than anyone and his work exists since the beginning of time. What he does is simple, yet very impressive. He enables the children to believe in something they can't see nor touch. It is a very big work, and an important one. All your life you will need the capacity to believe in something: yourself, your friends, your talents, your family...*

*You will also have to believe in things you cannot measure nor touch with your hands. I am talking about love. This big power that will make your life sparkle even in its darkest moments.*

*Santa Claus is a teacher and I was one of his pupils. Now you too know the secret and how he can go through all these chimneys of the world at Christmas: he is helped by all of those he once filled the heart with joy.*

*That's how men and women like your father and myself help Santa Claus accomplish his mission that would be impossible otherwise.*

*So no, I am not Santa Claus. Santa Claus is love, magic, hope and joy. I am in his team, and now, so are you.*

*I love you from all my heart,*

*Mom"*



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