The Functions of Words
Part One of a Two Part Series

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That “awful” grammar. That horrible bugaboo...

Advanced Montessori Method, page 7
Why Teach Grammar?

There are five big reasons or aims

1. To understand words and their functions
2. To improve and expand oral communication through proper grammatical usage
3. To improve and expand writing through appropriate grammatical usage
4. To act as one medium for analysis and evaluation of written works
5. To aid in the development of reasoning, analytic skills, and creativity.
also...

It can be fun!
Key Elements of Literacy

- Oral language
- Listening
- Vocabulary development
- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics Instruction
- Writing
- Fluency
- Comprehension skills

Every one of these is influenced and affected by grammar
What is meant by the Functions of Words?

The initial set of presentations and work introducing the parts of speech.

In English, Montessorians consider nine functions of words:

- Noun
- Article
- Adjective
- Conjunction
- Preposition
- Verb
- Adverb
- Pronoun
- Interjection
Integration

Work with Grammar and Functions of Words is integrative in that it applies to the entire curriculum. It has applications in:

- Classified Nomenclatures of:
  - Botany
  - Geography
  - Geometry
  - Zoology
- History of the English language
- Composition
- Literature
- Others
What’s unique about the Montessori Approach to Word Grammar?

- The use of symbols
- Distinctive colors
- The phased in approach, beginning in the Children’s House
- The involvement of stories.
- The age levels.
Functions of Words

- Noun
- Article
- Adjective
- Conjunction
- Preposition
- Verb
- Adverb
- Pronoun
- Interjection
The Grammar Boxes were developed first, see *Advanced Montessori Method, Volume II, Part 1*.

The eight Grammar Boxes use a different color scheme and a different sequence:

- **Nouns** - Black
- **Articles** - Tan
- **Adjectives** - Brown
- **Verbs** - Red
- **Prepositions** - Purple
- **Adverbs** - Pink
- **Pronouns** - Green
- **Conjunctions** - Yellow
- **Interjections** - Blue

The Grammar Symbols were developed during Montessori’s time in India. They did not exist in the 1930’s.

The different colors in the symbols result from availability of materials during the war, not because of purpose. The grammar symbols have changed a bit over time.
The Sequence

- Noun
- Article
- Adjective
- Conjunction
- Preposition
- Verb
- Adverb
- Pronoun
- Interjection
More on Sequence

- Functions of Words are parallel to Word Study and Punctuation
- They may be presented orally first
- They precede the Grammar Boxes
The General Plan

- Start with an Imaginative Story (for Elementary)
- Present the Function
- Present the Solid Symbol
- Position and Transposition
- Exercises or Games
- Transition to the flat symbol
- Relation to other Functions
- Conclusion
The Children’s House

Usually, only six or seven functions are offered at this level.
Children’s House Nomenclature

- naming word
- introducing word
- describing word
- joining word
- relationship word
- action word

Names like these are usually used in the Children’s House. Then more formal names are introduced in elementary school.
The Noun

- The Story of the Multitude
- The First Presentation of the Noun
- Concrete and Abstract nouns
- Noun activities
  - Your name
  - Surnames
  - Feelings
  - Ideas
  - Some Kinds of Nouns: Collective, Common, Proper, Material, etc.
  - A Little Environment
  - Gender
  - Number
  - Etc
Where to Put the Symbol

Symbols are placed above the words

Michael  Minnesota  table  love  kindness
Story of the First Word

from The Deep Well of Time: The Transformative Power of Storytelling in the Classroom
The Article

- It introduces the Noun
- There are only three in English
- Its history
- Definite and indefinite
- Before a vowel sound
- Singular and plural
The Adjective.

- Introduce the Adjective
- Use describing adjectives
- Use the symbol
- Use the article
- The Little Environment

A red barn
The Noun Family

Family Portrait
The Noun Family

The Landscape of Ancient Times
The Noun Family

The Formal Grouping
The Adjective Picnic
The Six Roles of the Adjective

- Describe
- Count
- Point
- Distribute
- Show Ownership
- Question

- red, large, rough
- three, first, last
- this, that, those
- each, every
- his, her, my
- what, which

- Descriptive
- Numerical
- Demonstrative
- Distributive
- Possessive
- Interrogative
More on Adjectives

• Position and Transposition

• The Paper Game (attributes)

• The Detective Game of Triangles (attributes)

• Qualities of the Little Environment

• Which Quality or Qualities are Suitable? (sometimes called Logical Agreement)

• In Search of All Possible Qualities of One Object
Summarize the noun Family

- Make many phrases
- Use two or more adjectives
- Look at which adjectives are friends with an article and which are not.
- Try plurals
- Examine other activities
The Conjunction

The Functions
The flowers and the pink ribbon
The Symbol
Etymology
Transposition
The Little Environment
The Preposition

Story

Function and Etymology

Second Presentation: include transposition

The Little Environment
The Study of the Verb

This will introduce:

The Verb Family

Tenses

Conjugation

And many activities and stories
Functions of Words

- Noun
- Article
- Adjective
- Conjunction
- Preposition
- Verb
- Adverb
- Pronoun
- Interjection
This Ends Part One

See You Next Week for More Functions of Words
Thanks for joining me!

Any questions?
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Let’s Keep in Touch!

Thank You!

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