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### Box 06, Folder 37 - "Reading is a Synthesis" (E.M.S - ED-437 folder)

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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READING IS A SYNTHESIS

In this case the secret is not known : it is an "X" - an unknown quantity .

The different elements must be first known separately -- then they must be fused together by an effort of the mind -- till a sudden flash of illumination lights up the hidden mystery ... and hey presto the secret is out

THAT IS WHY THE CHILD ) WHO HAS FORGOTTEN THE WORD HE COMPOSED CANNOT READ IT HIMSELF --CANNOT REDISCOVER IT BY HIMSELF AFTERWARDS .

SO --- SO FAR - these three activities -- but not one of them is Writing - still less "reading" ..

THE EXPLOSION INTO WRITING

But a great Preparation is going on .

psychic energy is being stored  
skills are being learned .....

Manipulating the pencil

Sandpaper letters

Composition of words .

NOT AN INTELLECTUAL STUDY .

AT FIRST THE CHILDREN ARE NOT REALLY CONCERNED

with expressing their own thoughts and ideas. This is important . "What we see happening at this epoch is "a very simple almost ~~mechanical~~ mechanical fact , a sensorial one , which consists in making a correspondence

between written characters and the single sounds composing the words , and in the possibility of projecting the single sounds into the letters of the alphabet , They are interested in being able to find something which corres -



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esponds to the sounds themselves , and being able to  
manipulate the characters and place them together in such a  
ways as to form a word .

The important thing to realise is that this is not  
writing nor yet is it composition in the higher and intellect  
ual sense of the word a: it is a phenomenon which supervenes o  
on a sensorial fact , and corresponds to that sensitive period  
in which the child is fixing his mind and auditory con-  
struction of words , but not on the construction of language  
as such , that is as a vehicle for the expression of  
thoughts .

#### A PSYCHIC FUSION

By means of these three separated occupations, the child  
is as it were storing up mental energy in three separate  
dynamos . Inevitable there comes a time when these  
three currents of energy run together - and fuse into one  
activity --- and then often quite suddenly - writing is  
born .

#### THE FIRST EXPLOSION INTO WRITING

Read Maria Montessori pp 28-29-30

#### Not an ISOLATED ONCE - FOR ALL INCIDENT

It happens continually in some form or other - sometimes  
with vehemence - at others more calmly ...

To show that it is not an isolated phenomenon I will quote  
from a letter I received from a Montessori Directress in  
a school in the Austrian Tyrol .

You will be interested to hear that Johan  
has had a Montessori explosion . He is just four and a  
half , and a short time ago he was introduced to the  
sand-paper-letters which he traced with his fingers re-  
peating the sounds they represent . A few days ago - while  
he was busily filling in a design with a coloured pencil he



he suddenly looked up and exclaimed "I know exactly what a "G" looks like  $\frac{1}{2}$  I said "Oh, do show me" whereupon he wrote it very large; and then said "I can also make it small; and this he did at once.

I asked him if he could write "A" also " and after a moment's pause he wrote it. Then, his little face flushed and joyous with excitement, he dashed across the room for the sand paper letters, spread them out on two tables, and picking out one here and there one there he ran to the black board and copied. then .....

When we went out for a walk in the afternoon he could do nothing but trace the letters in the snow with a twig. ...

The following morning he rushed up to me and said "Last night I dreamt I could write and then I found it was only a dream" ("Es war ein Traum") I said "Yes, Johnny, but it was a very beautiful dream, and it's coming true". Looking at me very earnestly he answered "I know! I know! and then he added very wonderingly but with great conviction "Aber niemand hat ES MIR GEZEIGT" "But no one has showed me how. 'No one.'"

This morning he brought out the box with the mobile alphabet and composed the following words  
- Mami, Gabi, Papi, Mario entirely without any help.



WRITING OTHER WAYS OF HELPING

It does not always go like this - with a dated explosion  
and for various reasons ....

May be not learned technique of touching -or-  
started it too late

was not disciplined - normalised . etc

Other ways are useful to help

1) Writing a line of letters -

m m m m m m m m m ✓

and ticking off the good ones , putting a cross  
to the bad ones . the child helps to control the error .

2) Ditto for the Ciphers

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

3) Make cards with letters on them - fair size  
and fasten on tracing paper with clips  
( an interesting thing in itself )  
for a change do it in different colours .

4) The Pe Philipand Tacey sheets - show one  
again in different colours .

5) Pictures - 26 - and initial letters to go  
with them ( not on the back )

Put the right letters ( initial ) to each picture  
( Only say six letters at a time --perche ? )

6) Later Make up command cards for others RUN JUMP

7) Letter to Mummy or Uncle

ANYTHING WHICH SETS GOING THE MOTOR-EGO