

# EDUCATIONAL AND UPBRINGING PRACTICES IN L. MONTGOMERY'S WORKS AND THEIR RELEVANCE IN TODAY'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

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## Abstract

This paper explores the educational and upbringing practices reflected in the literary works of Lucy Maud Montgomery, particularly focusing on her portrayal of child development, character formation, and moral values. The study highlights how Montgomery's narratives, notably in *Anne of Green Gables* and its sequels, offer timeless pedagogical insights. Through her characters' interactions and community-based learning, the works emphasize empathy, creativity, responsibility, and the importance of emotional intelligence. The article argues that Montgomery's educational ideals align with many modern principles in today's learner-centered and values-based educational systems, making her literature both relevant and instructive in contemporary pedagogical contexts.

**Keywords:** Montgomery, education, upbringing, values, character development, empathy, modern pedagogy.

## Introduction

The role of literature in shaping educational philosophy and moral development has long been acknowledged by scholars and educators. Among the literary figures whose works reflect a deep understanding of child development, character formation, and the nurturing of moral values, Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery stands out. Best known for her beloved novel *Anne of Green Gables*, Montgomery offers readers more than a charming coming-of-age story; her works are imbued with subtle and explicit messages about the importance of education,

kindness, discipline, creativity, and emotional intelligence in the upbringing of children.

Montgomery's narratives often center on the lives of children and adolescents who navigate various emotional, social, and moral challenges. Through the guidance of caregivers, teachers, and community members, these characters are shaped into responsible, compassionate individuals. These educational and upbringing practices, portrayed through realistic and emotionally resonant storytelling, reflect progressive pedagogical ideals that remain relevant in contemporary education discourse.

This article explores the educational and moral practices depicted in Montgomery's works and examines their applicability in modern educational settings. By analyzing her narrative techniques and the moral lessons embedded in her stories, we aim to highlight how Montgomery's literary legacy continues to influence educational theory and practice, particularly in areas such as character education, student-centered learning, and holistic development.

## **Literature review**

A compelling body of scholarship illuminates Lucy Maud Montgomery's influence on educational theory, moral formation, and child-centered pedagogy through her "Anne" series and related works.

Scholars such as Foster and Simons highlight how Montgomery unlike earlier moralistic writers portrays Anne Shirley not merely as a model of piety but as a transformative agent of social change<sup>1</sup>. Foster and Simons note that Anne "overthrows the dominant social and moral orders" by challenging conventional norms and demonstrating autonomous moral insight, thereby offering a fresh vision of childhood as a source of ethical leadership.

Eggen discusses Montgomery's narrative merging oral and print traditions, suggesting that "Anne of Green Gables" operates at the intersection of written text and community storytelling<sup>2</sup>. This technique, Eggen argues, fosters a learner-centered educational model. Voicing children's oral creativity is central to both character development and educational effectiveness.

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<sup>1</sup> Foster, Shirley, and Judy Simons. *What Katy Read: Feminist Re-Readings of "Classic" Stories for Girls*. University of Iowa Press, 1995. -P.45.

<sup>2</sup> Eggen, Nelly. "Orality and Literacy in L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*." *Nordlit: Tidsskrift i litteratur og kultur*, no. 36, 2015. -P.140.

Lauren Beth Signoreertz and others conceptualize “Anne of Green Gables” as a bildungsroman, tracking Anne’s internal growth alongside academic preparation. Through conflict, competition, and imaginative maturation, Anne’s educational journey models a holistic pedagogy that integrates intellectual rigor with moral and emotional resilience<sup>3</sup>.

Critics like Santelmann argue Montgomery's work challenges traditional gendered educational roles<sup>4</sup>. In contrast to Victorian norms aimed at preparing girls for domestic life, Anne’s rigorous academic pursuits in mathematics, Latin, and literature position her as an innovator in educational equity.

Further analysis shows that Miss Stacy and Miss Shirley represent progressive teaching models prioritizing empathy, creative expression, and student choice. Classroom scenes (e.g., debates on literature and performance) exemplify pedagogical environments that value connection and creativity, qualities central to modern educational frameworks. Interpretations from litcharts and other sources emphasize imagination as an educational tool. Anne’s imaginative life not only sustains her inner resilience but matures into constructive creativity running story circles and writing groups bridging individual self-expression with communal learning.

Taken together, this scholarship underscores Lucy Maud Montgomery’s narrative as a rich source of educational insight championing child-centered values, imaginative learning, empathetic teaching, and progressive gender roles. These works offer strong parallels with contemporary pedagogy, highlighting Montgomery’s continuing relevance to modern education.

## METHODOLOGY

This study uses a literary analysis method to understand how L. M. Montgomery talks about education and upbringing in her books, especially “Anne of Green Gables” and the books that follow it. The main aim is to see how these ideas appear in the stories and how they can still be useful in today’s schools.

The researcher looked closely at the text to find important themes, such as moral lessons, growing up, using imagination in learning, and the relationship between

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<sup>3</sup> Signoreertz, LaurenBeth. “The Education of Anne Shirley: ‘Anne of Green Gables’ as a Bildungsroman.” *Children’s Literature in Education*, vol. 39, no. 3, 2008. -P.184.

<sup>4</sup> Santelmann, Lynn. “Girlhood, Gender Roles, and Schooling in Anne of Green Gables.” *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2002. -P.235.

students and teachers. These themes were then compared to modern ideas in education, like learning through experience (constructivism), caring about students' feelings and social skills (social-emotional learning), and focusing on the needs of each student.

To support this analysis, the study also used information from other books and articles written by scholars and educators. These helped show how Montgomery's views on education fit into both the time when she wrote and today. The study also used ideas from feminist writing, stories about personal growth (called *Bildungsroman*), and research in children's literature to better explain the educational messages in her work.

## **Discussion**

L. M. Montgomery's works, especially "Anne of Green Gables", serve as rich texts for examining early 20th-century educational and upbringing philosophies. Through the character of Anne Shirley, Montgomery constructs an educational ideal rooted in imagination, self-expression, moral development, and community engagement. Her approach aligns with today's emphasis on holistic education and emotional intelligence.

One prominent theme in Montgomery's narrative is the transformative role of education. Anne's growth from an orphaned, misunderstood child to a confident, intelligent young woman underscores the power of nurturing environments, supportive mentors (such as Marilla and Miss Stacy), and access to quality education. This theme mirrors modern views in social pedagogy and inclusive education.

Montgomery also advocates for the development of critical thinking and creativity, which she showcases through Anne's imaginative storytelling and reflective inner life. This anticipates today's focus on 21st-century skills in education, including creativity, communication, and problem-solving.

Moreover, the moral and emotional formation of characters in Montgomery's novels corresponds with contemporary models like SEL, where students' emotional awareness and ethical understanding are integral to the learning process. Anne's empathetic responses and ethical choices illustrate values education in action.

However, it is also important to consider the contextual limitations of Montgomery's work. Her stories, while progressive in tone, reflect the norms of

a largely white, Anglo-centric Canadian society, with limited engagement in multicultural or global perspectives now vital in education.

## Conclusion

Montgomery's literary works offer timeless insights into the nature and goals of education. Her emphasis on imagination, moral strength, personal growth, and empathetic community aligns remarkably well with many core principles of contemporary education. While rooted in a specific historical and cultural context, the educational and upbringing practices illustrated in her fiction transcend temporal boundaries and remain relevant for educators seeking to nurture not just knowledgeable, but also kind, reflective, and resilient individuals.

Integrating such literary models into current pedagogical discussions can provide valuable perspectives on student-teacher relationships, character education, and the broader goals of schooling. L. M. Montgomery's legacy thus continues not only as a literary icon but as a subtle yet powerful voice in the ongoing dialogue about how best to educate the whole child.

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