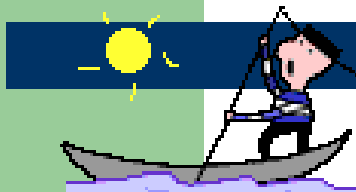


# European Influence on Early American Education

## Foundations – Chapter 4



# **John Amos Comenius (1592-1670)**

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- **Czech theologian & philosopher**
- **Thought education could improve society**
- **Advocated universal textbooks & language**
- **Believed children would enjoy learning more if they were methodically taught in early years**
- **Thought instruction should move from general to specific, from easy to difficult**

# Comenius's Education Program

## 4 Distinct Grades

- Nursery School – birth to 6 years of age
- Elementary (National) – ages 6 to 12
- Latin School (Gymnasium) – ages 13 -18
- Academy - gifted ages 19-24

# Comenius's Teacher Requirements

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- **Present lessons at a reasonable pace**
- **Use age-appropriate instruction**
- **Keep materials constantly before a child's eyes**
- **Use a single method of instruction at all times**

# John Locke (1632 – 1704)

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- English philosopher
- Believed the human mind was a blank slate at birth (**Tabula Rasa**)
- Thought people were inherently good
- Thought children should interact with their environment using the five senses

# Locke's Teacher Requirements

- **Encourage curiosity**
- **Treat children as “rational creatures”**
- **Teach by example and suggestion, not coercion, because children learn through imitation**
- **Tailor instruction to individual children's talents and interests**

# **Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)**

- **Swiss philosopher**
- **Ideas similar to Locke**
- **Criticized methods he believed were contrary to the way children thought, saw & felt**
- **Believed schools imposed books and abstract ideas on children before their minds were ready**

# Rousseau's Teacher Requirements

- **Provide experiences that match students' development**
- **Use senses to explore environment**
- **Learn through trial and error**
- **Allow for abstract thinking in adolescence (who are they, where they belong, etc.)**
- **Learn practical skills (vocation)**



# **Johann Pestalozzi (1746-1827)**

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- **Swiss Educator**
- **Worried about education that stifled playfulness and natural curiosity**
- **Advocated “object lessons” (to aid the learning of abstract concepts)**

# **Pestalozzi's Teacher Requirements**

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- **Should be kind**
- **Provide experiences that appealed to all senses**
- **Not rely on verbal instructions**
- **Not require memorization or repetition for learning**

## **Johann Herbart (1776-1841)**

- **German philosopher, psychologist, & educational theorist**
- **Developed steps of instruction to help children concentrate, retain ideas, and participate in learning**
- **Many teacher education programs encouraged his steps for prospective teachers**

# **Herbart's "Steps of Instruction"**

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- 1. Clearness (understanding of content)**
- 2. Association (connecting new ideas with previously learned content)**
- 3. System (the analysis of new ideas and their relation to the purpose of the lesson)**
- 4. Method (ability to apply new knowledge to future problems)**

# **Friedrich Froebel (1782 – 1852)**

- **German philosopher**
- **Founded first kindergarten**
- **Thought play was an important part of learning**
- **Believed gardening would help children see a connection between the growth of plants and their own development**

# Froebel's Educational Views

- **Learning occurred best when the senses, emotions and reason were involved**
- **Children were not like lumps of clay to be molded, they were like plants and animals (develop naturally over time)**
- **Early childhood education should focus on play, music, and art**

# Kindergarten in America

- **One of the first was started in 1855 in Wisconsin by Margareta Schurtz, a German immigrant, and former Froebel student**
- **Used to help preserve the German heritage and language**
- **In 1860, Elizabeth Peabody, founded the first English speaking kindergarten**