

QUOTATION

MONTAIGNE ON THE KELLER METHOD

[The tutor] should make his pupil taste things, select them, and distinguish them by his own powers of perception. Sometimes he should prepare the way for him, sometimes let him do so for himself. I would not have him start everything and do all the talking, but give his pupil a turn and listen to him. Socrates, and after him Arcesilaus, made his pupils speak first and then spoke to them. "The authority of those who teach is very often a hindrance to those who wish to learn." [quotation from Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, I, V]

It is well for a tutor to make his charge trot in front of him, so that he may judge his pace and decide to what extent he should himself hold back to keep in step with him. If this adjustment is not made we spoil everything. But to strike the right proportion and duly to conform with it is one of the hardest tasks that I know. It takes a lofty and very powerful mind to conform with a child's gait and to guide it. I walk with a steadier and firmer step uphill than down. When, according to our common practice, a teacher undertakes to school several minds of very different structure and capacity with the same lessons and the same measure of guidance, it is no wonder that, among a whole multitude of children, he scarcely finds two or three who derive any proper profit from their teaching.

From: Montaigne, M. (1958). *Essays* (J. M. Cohen, Trans.). Baltimore: Penguin. Original work published 1580.

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