

I am a child

By Marita Villafuerte



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Child sense

A child's sense is different from an adult's. Most adults think that a child is not capable of reason or logic at a very young age. Well, most of us do have this propensity. I found out for myself, after teaching for 10 years now, that when you feed the child with truth and teach things that make sense, the child will develop a healthy dose of logic. In fact, a child's sense tends to have a very appealing, endearing and witty sense of logic. Of course, some children are naturally witty.

Listening to witty children sense can surely make your day. They generate warm laughter. So, have you heard of any child sense lately? Let me make your day as you read some of my sensible, witty and young pals.

- At the tender age of 4, Miguel who is Spanish by birth and lives in Catalan, Spain, was being trained by his mother, along with his siblings, the Montessori way to develop responsibility and do things competently and independently. His task was to clean the bathroom. The first time he was given this task, he told his mom that he would love to do it and obey her but there was one serious reason why he could not do as he was told. His mother asked why. His reply was, (translated in English) "Well mother, I cannot clean the bathroom because this cleaner has a warning to keep away from children and I am just a child." His mother's quick answer was, "That is true in most homes but not in this home. You are a Montessori child." (His mother had to control herself from laughing for she did not realize this). And so, after a demonstration from his mother, Miguel cleaned the bathroom regularly as he was told and he never had a problem. He was precocious

for his age because he was trained to be one very early in his life.

- When Timmy was 3 years old, his father's very pregnant colleague proudly announced as she gently rubbed her protruding stomach, "Hey Timmy! I have a baby in my tummy." "What?! You ate the baby!" exclaimed Timmy. (How in the world can the expectant mother assume that preschool-aged Timmy knows how babies are made? He made sense).

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• Six-year-old Elijah went to a hotel in Manila with his family to go swimming. He learned how to read in our school when he was only 3 years old. Not only did he learn how to read but he developed comprehension and critical thinking as well. He is what I call functionally literate. So, when his father accidentally hit his head when he was swimming, Elijah took it upon himself to read the signs. He told his parents that he should have read the signs first because there was a warning displayed that adults are not supposed to swim in some areas so they do not get hurt. The water was too shallow for big adults to swim. And so a child leads them....

• My cousin who used to be a travel agent was excited to see me for a brief reunion in California. While at an airport, en route to California from Milwaukee, she considered taking an earlier flight. She asked the opinion of Lance, her 8-year-old son who had not been traveling as frequently as his mother. His advice was to maintain their original flight because even if they arrived earlier, they would still need to wait for their luggage, which would come on a later flight. He was not aware of the usual procedure that airlines may try with no guarantee to move a passenger's luggage to an earlier flight if there is a two-hour lead time. His natural reasoning was perfect.

• Still with Lance... when he was 4, he decided to hold the hand of his mom after she commented—while driving—that she was lost. With sincerity and sheer concern, he said, "Mom, I'm only 4 years old and I do not know where to go. But I will hold your hand while you are lost and looking for directions." By the age of 7, he learned to read the GPS (Global Positioning System) so he could help her navigate.

• While I was a guest at a friend's home, I started playing with her three adorable nieces. I offered my lap for a ride and each

girl took turns, or so I thought. I was not aware that Josette, the youngest, was being deprived of her turn because her two other sisters, Cesca (7) and Keiko (6), were stronger and more aggressive than she was. I was oblivious when she walked away. She came back after a few minutes and gently tapped my arm to get attention. I paused as she gave me a piece of paper. I asked her what it was. With all the maturity she could muster at the tender age of 3, she told me that she was giving me a ticket so she can have her ride. I looked at the tiny piece of paper and lo and behold, it was a unique ticket she made. I ceremoniously allowed her to sit on my lap for her ride. Her sisters were momentarily dumbfounded until a great idea struck them. Ting! They ran towards another room and came back after a few minutes with their own crafty little tickets. And so, the simple lap ride elevated into a ticket and timed lap ride. The rule was set by the youngest in the brood.

• Three-year-old Jam was deep in thought as he chewed his carrots one lunch time in our school. I asked what he was pondering on. "Teacher Marita, if Godzilla eats vegetables like me, will he grow tall enough to reach the sky?" He connected all the lessons he learned to attempt to answer this confounding wonderment. "Is Godzilla real?" I asked. "No. He is from the movies....oh, so he will never grow tall," was his self-realization.

• Two-year-old Lianne was fed up with her one-week-old floral floppies. She could not figure out why these were not "following" her as she walked. So, with dramatic exasperation, she walked back to retrace her steps where her floppies parked since the pair was not fast enough to walk with her tiny yet hyper feet. She picked up her floppies and dumped them in the waste bin. "Useless!" she complained and walked away barefoot. How many of us have the same emotional detachment when we let go of useless things?

• Six-year-old Joe was listening to the Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes for the very first time while he was eating his snacks. I had been giving him a lot of truths instead of tales, and his physicist of a father was also telling him real stories daily. I asked him to tell me what he thought of the songs. He expressed his dissatisfaction, "Why are most of the songs and poems violent? These are not for kids. It is not safe. Everyone is falling! The baby fell on Rock-a-bye-Baby, Humpty Dumpty fell and Jack and Jill fell on a hill. They can end up in a hospital! Do kids really sing this?"

It is amazing to hear Joseph make clear realizations that took me years to see. I blindly accepted what was given me without thought or without exercising critical thinking. If you train your children at an early age how to think, and give them the thinking tools that they will need, they will surely gain not only knowledge but also wisdom and wit in every day life.

Do you have a Child Sense story for me? I would love to hear about it. Cheers! 🍷