

Renewal

SPRING/SUMMER 2003 - VOLUME 12, NUMBER 1



Experimentation and Innovation in
Waldorf Education

The Endangered Art of Handwriting

Living Mathematics

A JOURNAL FOR WALDORF EDUCATION

Two Poems by
Christy MacKaye Barnes
(1909-2002)

Chorus

All of Us

May calm warmth work in us,
deep light shine through us,
the water's power sound in us
and the ground's strength live in us.

We are all journeying,
we are all singing,
we are all weeping,
We know each other
as deeply
as we can see.
If I do not know you,
I am blind or you are bound.
Let my warmth thaw your bonds.
Create my eyes with your light.

Silently and together
We are all journeying:
like the rivers underground,
like trains through the tunnels,
like stars through the evening.
Let us look at each other
And know it.

Mountain Mood

The Sierras

What thought was there so mighty
That it up-reared these mountains—
Shattered them with an earthquake,
Carved their arms with landslide,
And shimmered them with sunshine and with mist,
Shouldered them with cloud,
And molded them with music
Of this great earth planet?

What thought still echoes here
And still unworded
Now lays its weight upon the human heart
That gazes, gazes, gazes
On this grandeur.

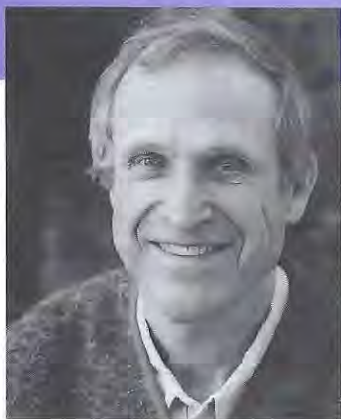
What speech is this that speaks
So thundrous that the hearing does not heed it,
So vast the small soul cannot hold it,
Yet ceaselessly speaks on, impressing with its power
Into men's very bones
The majesty once spoken—
And here within these rocks' own bones still sounding,
Utters its wonder-cry to man,
Its primal hymn:
Creation-chorus of the Cherubim.

A W S N A

CREDITS:

The cover painting, "The Creation of Birds from Water and Sunlight," is by Kara Schmidt, grade twelve, class of 2002, of High Mowing School, Wilton, New Hampshire. Special thanks to Pam Fenner of Michaelmas Press. *Renewal* also thanks "The Little Red Riding Hood Project," edited by Michael N. Salda at The de Grummond Children's Literature Research Collection, University of Southern Mississippi, for the image on page 5; Anne Riegel-Koetzsch for her illustration on page 6; Lionel Delevigne and the Rudolf Steiner School, New York, for the photos on pages 8 and 9; Lionel Delevigne and the Waldorf School of Garden City for the photos on page 10; Eric Utne for the photos for his article; Larry Canner and the Waldorf School of Baltimore for the photos on pages 16, 18, and 19; *Erziehungskunst* for the photo on page 20; Van James for the images on pages 22-24; AWSNA Publications for images on pages 24, 25, 27, 28, and 32; Benjamin Olmsted, Live Oak Waldorf School, for the image on page 26; Laura Arns, Live Oak Waldorf School, for the image on page 29; Kara Schmidt for the image on page 34; Uhlandshöhe Waldorf School, Germany, for use of photos from their publication *Waldorf Education World-Wide* on pages 38-41; Friends of Waldorf Education for the photos on pages 43-45; Joan Dufault for the photo on page 46; and David Adams for the images accompanying his article.

Christy MacKaye Barnes, poet, speech artist, and Waldorf class and high school teacher, died recently at the age of ninety-three. These two poems are taken from her book *A Wound Awoke Me* (Hillsdale, N.Y.: Adonis Press, 1994; adonis@taconic.net). Please see page 46 for a memorial tribute.



From the Editor

BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH, PH.D.

Sometimes the special genius of Waldorf Education seems to lie in advocating lost causes or, at least, causes that seem far removed from the mainstream of modern education and culture.

In an age of video and computer games, we tell children fairy tales, legends, and stories.

In an age of CDs and MP3, we teach children to sing and to play a musical instrument.

In an age of testing and grading, we trust in the love of learning for its own sake.

In an age of ubiquitous youth soccer, we teach children eurythmy, and we stress noncompetitive physical education activities.

And finally—though there are many other apparently lost causes we champion—in an age of the word processor, we teach children to write beautifully by hand.

In a time when the world seems ready to explode or implode at any moment, these causes can seem at best to be cozy conceits. Their relationship, if any, to the challenges of our time and to the human suffering in our world is hardly apparent.

There is, though, a Chinese proverb that says, roughly, "If there is peace within each person, then the family will live in peace. If there is peace within each family, then the village will live in peace. If there is peace within each village, then the nation will live in peace. And if there is peace within each nation, then the world will live in peace."

Waldorf Education seeks, by developing the highest and most positive human capacities, to educate persons who have peace within them and who, through their lives, can infuse the world with peace. The word *peace* can perhaps be understood as "being comprised of truth, goodness, and beauty."

Thus, any activity that engenders within the soul of the child or the adult a love and a capacity for truthfulness and/or moral goodness and/or a sense of beauty is making a contribution to world peace.

In this issue of *Renewal*, Michael Preston writes, for example, of the importance of teaching children to write by hand in a beautiful manner. He points out that training in penmanship results not only in sheets of paper covered with attractive handwriting but also in a change in the writer. The harmony, balance, order, and beauty that the child learns to express on a piece of paper with a pen or pencil is internalized into the child's soul life. Those positive qualities then influence all that that child thinks, speaks, feels, and does in his life. This is true even in the very short term. Michael Preston describes how simple penmanship exercises that stress form and balance can greatly improve the mood, behavior, and mental clarity of children and of adults.

For the sake of our inner peace and for the sake of peace in the world, all of us, adults as well as children, can cultivate this sense for truth, goodness, and beauty. Practicing the art of writing beautifully, as well as participating in any other art, can be part of the conscious development of our inner lives and thus of our higher selves—something urgently needed in these times.

EDITOR

RONALD E. KOETZSCH, PH.D.

GRAPHIC DESIGNER & PRODUCTION MANAGER

HALLIE JEAN WOOTAN

ARTISTIC CONSULTANT

ANNE RIEGEL-KOETZSCH

CIRCULATION & ADVERTISING MANAGER

HALLIE JEAN WOOTAN

E-MAIL: hwootan@awsna.org

COPY EDITOR

ANNE RIEGEL-KOETZSCH

PROOFREADER

CHARLES H. BLATCHFORD, PH.D.

STAFF WRITER

THOMAS POPLAWSKI

PRINTER

SIERRA PRINTING, RANCHO CORDOVA, CA

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

VIVIAN JONES-SCHMIDT

PATRICIA LIVINGSTON

SHYLA NELSON

JOHN WULSIN

MANAGEMENT GROUP

AGAF DANCY

PATRICIA LIVINGSTON

DAVID MITCHELL

JAMES PEWATHERER

Renewal: A Journal for Waldorf Education is published twice a year by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA).

Opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily those of AWSNA.

AWSNA does not endorse the products and services that appear in the advertising section of *Renewal*.

Each author holds the copyright to the articles he or she has written. Permission to reprint an article must be obtained directly from the author. AWSNA will provide contact information.

Subscriptions are \$12 for one year and \$24 for two years and can be purchased by contacting the AWSNA office. Foreign subscriptions are \$20.

Selected articles from past issues of *Renewal* appear on the AWSNA Web site: www.awsna.org

For information about Waldorf Education in North America, including a booklet listing all schools and initiatives, please contact:

ASSOCIATION OF WALDORF SCHOOLS
OF NORTH AMERICA

3911 Bannister Road · Fair Oaks, CA 95628-6805

PHONE: (916) 961-0927 · FAX: (916) 961-0715

WEB SITE: www.awsna.org · E-MAIL: awsna@awsna.org

Renewal

DEPARTMENTS

1 From the Editor

RONALD E. KOETZSCH, PH.D.

4 From the Chairman of AWSNA

DONALD BUFANO

Book Reviews

30 Teaching Children Handwriting

BY AUDREY McALLEN

42 The Dynamic Heart and Circulation

EDITED BY CRAIG HOLDREGE

46 In Memoriam Christy MacKaye Barnes (1909-2002)

47 Books in Brief Star and Planet Almanac 2003: Monthly Guide to the Sky at Night

BY LIESBETH BISTERBOSCH



49 Contacts Information Opportunities

val

A JOURNAL FOR
WALDORF EDUCATION

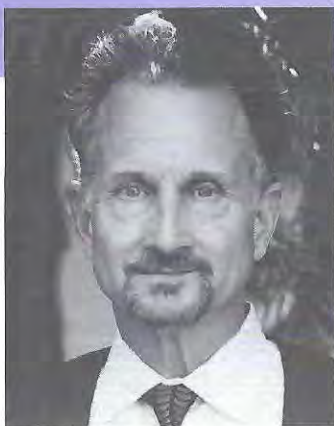
SPRING/SUMMER 2003 - VOLUME 12, NUMBER 1

ARTICLES

- 5 Honoring the Imagination of the Child
Teaching a Waldorf First Grade
BY WILLIAM TOOLE
- 8 Five Frequently Asked Questions about Waldorf Education
BY COLIN PRICE
- 12 Two Years in the Trenches
A Waldorf Parent Goes Back to School as a Waldorf Teacher
BY ERIC UTNE
- 16 Experimentation and Innovation in Waldorf Education
Meeting the Needs of Today's Children
BY THOMAS POPLAWSKI
- 22 Art
Lifeblood of the Soul
BY VAN JAMES
- 25 Living Mathematics
BY BARBARA SOKOLOV
- 31 Paper, Pen, and Child
Teaching the Endangered Art of Handwriting
BY MICHAEL PRESTON
- 37 How to Hold a Pencil
BY VIVIAN JONES-SCHMIDT
- 38 In Dialogue with the Worldly Powers
Waldorf Education in the European Union
BY CHRISTOPHER CLOUDER
- 43 A Helping Hand around the World
Friends of Rudolf Steiner's Art of Education
BY HOLGER NIEDERHAUSEN AND JAN LEHEL
- 48 Practical Beauty Illustrated
Waldorf School Design
BY DAVID ADAMS

CORRECTION:

The Fall/Winter 2002 issue of Renewal included an article entitled "A Junior Circus Club." Three photos accompanied the article and were captioned as showing children at the Santa Cruz Waldorf School doing the junior circus exercises. In fact, the children, students at the Baltimore Waldorf School, were doing eurythmy under the direction of Noris Friedman. Our apologies.



From the Chairman of AWSNA

BY DONALD BUFANO

Renewal is a journal for Waldorf Education published by AWSNA. But just what is AWSNA? Let's look at our full name to see what it means. What, who, and where is the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, and what does it do?

An **Association** is a purposeful gathering of people around a unified idea and mission. In our case, the mission is to serve schools—institutions working in the cultural life of education, art, and ideas. The word *association* has "social" at its heart. There is also a sense of unity contained within it. Rudolf Steiner notes the social benefit of like-minded people working in free association with each other. Waldorf schools, as institutions, and as groups of people working together, freely gather as the Association of Waldorf Schools to serve and further Waldorf Education.

Waldorf schools embody Waldorf Education in diverse ways. The unifying thread is a commitment to the educational and social innovation underlying the first Waldorf school founded by Rudolf Steiner in Stuttgart eighty-four years ago. That school was for the children of the employees of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette company, hence the name. Waldorf schools are dedicated to addressing the artist, artisan, and academic

in every child. Waldorf teachers acknowledge the spiritual uniqueness of every child and base their lessons and interactions on this point of view. The Association

maintains, for the schools' protection, the Waldorf and Steiner trademarked names. To build and sustain curriculum quality and institutional integrity, we guide schools through the membership and accreditation processes.

Schools goes with Waldorf. There is a healthy human drive to associate and create active institutions. But whether an institution becomes a living community depends on its will and vision. We as teachers, administrators, and parents have a unique opportunity to redefine the very concepts and practices of school and community. Waldorf schools are those that have decided to align themselves, through the Association, with all the other independent, spiritually oriented Waldorf schools throughout the world.

North America gets us thinking beyond our borders. Besides the many well-established and developing schools in the United States

and Canada, there is a pioneering enthusiasm in Mexico for Waldorf Education. Thus, morning verse and lessons

*AWSNA Serving Waldorf Schools
Speaking for Waldorf Education*

Current Activities

Cooperation with other educational associations in promoting

- freedom in education
- a recognition of the spiritual in education
- independent school accountability
- art in education
- awareness of child development issues

Leadership and Governance Conference

- August 2-6, 2003 - Chicago

New Publications

- *Space and Counterspace*, Louis Locher-Ernst; and *From Abdera to Copenhagen: Studies in the Evolution of Atomic Science with Anthroposophical Undertones*, Keith Francis.
- In the works: *The Spirit in Evolution*, Martyn Rawson; *Painting in the Elementary Grades*, Dick Bruin; and *Educating the Will*, Michael Howard.

Effective Practices Research Project

- organizational information and resources (available online soon)

Help with accreditation and accountability

- quality self-assessment procedures for school communities
- *Developing School Self-Study Guide*
- 12 AWSNA accredited schools, 16 in process

Pedagogical mentoring colloquia

- ongoing research and training
- support for teacher development and classroom excellence

Call the AWSNA office at (916) 961-0927 for more information.



Honoring the Imagination of the Child

Teaching a Waldorf First Grade

BY WILLIAM TOOLE

On the day that I began a second cycle of class teaching, I grasped, once and for all, that a first grader is different from an eighth grader. This is obvious, of course, and for a Waldorf teacher whose approach to teaching is based on the developmental stages of the child, it is a fundamental guiding concept. Yet only one short summer lay between my dealing with adolescents and my now facing a class of seven-year-olds. The children, stern tutors that they are, though, delivered their lesson in the mundane details of their behavior, in the way they walked into the classroom, navigated from door to cubby, from cubby to desk, and stood to recite a verse together.

By the time we were to go to the welcoming assembly, I was well aware that I could not just walk out the door and ask the students to follow, calling back, "Last one out close the door." No, I must tell them in what order they will line up and

provide a clear, simple strategy for forming the line and for moving it along in an orderly manner to our destination. Then I must actually get them into the line.

One of the requirements for a child to enter the first grade in a Waldorf school is that he has begun to lose his baby teeth. This event, in which the hardest part of the human body begins to appear in its final form, indicates that a phase of life is now over. The way the child learns has begun to change, and the approach to teaching him must likewise change. Energies once occupied with the growth and formation of the physical body are now free for other purposes. New forces of memory become available, and the formal learning process begins to develop these forces. In the young child, memories are triggered by a sensory experience. A sight, a sound, causes something to be recalled. Once the change of teeth begins, a child's memory is not tied to sensory stimuli, and he can use his memory in the process of learning. Thus, a teacher will ask Waldorf first graders to help retell a story or to recall elements from yesterday's lesson.

There is a danger at this point that learning will become merely a matter of memorizing the material given and of regurgitating it when asked. In the mainstream model of education, the child who does this better and faster is considered a successful student.

However, the child has not only an enormous capacity for memory but also the ability to form rich, inner imaginations and the longing to do so. The seven-year-old wants pictures—not photographs or illustrations or motion pictures—but inner pictures she can create upon hearing a story. Such inner pictures, full of warmth and life, are food for the soul of a child in the period between early childhood and adolescence.

While memory looks to the past, imagination looks to the future. Its cultivation is central to the development of the child and deserves an important place in the curriculum. In traditional cultures, children are told stories—the myths, legends, fairy tales, and fables that transmit societal values, mores, and wisdom. This was true in our culture until fairly recently. Listening to a story—one that is not depicted on a television or movie screen or in a picture book—the child creates the landscape, characters, and events through inner pictures in her imagination. This is an utterly absorbing and also individual inner task. Each child individualizes the story told by the teacher with her own unique inner pictures.

Imagination is the ability to envision the invisible. It must be trained and developed. The child who listens to a story and creates inner pictures of settings and

characters he cannot physically see is developing just this capacity. He is cultivating a special inner vision and laying the foundation for the ability to reach beyond the given and to discover new solutions to old problems.

Strengthening the imagination is as important as developing the intellect and the memory. For this reason, the telling of stories is an important part of Waldorf Education, and in the first grade the telling or retelling of a fairy tale or other story is a daily event.

The stories are chosen to nourish the children at their particular stage of growth. Each year has a story theme that speaks to the soul nature of the child at that time. The normal six- or seven-year-old first grader possesses a strong sense of wonder at the world. She will pluck some pebbles from the sandbox and rush to show the teacher this handful of precious "jewels." And, in a sense, they truly are jewels, transformed by the child's fantasy.

Although children today seem to be losing this sense of wonder and showing signs of adult cynicism at a younger and younger age, for first graders this magical sense is usually intact. It opens them to life and learning. The fairy tales told in the Waldorf first grade speak to and deepen this sense of wonder while conveying profound truths about human nature, human life, and the world.

The entire Waldorf first-grade curriculum is presented in a way that appeals to the child's sense of wonder and his developing capacity to create inner imaginations. In a sense, the learning that the children do recapitulates stages of human history and evolution. In the language arts, for example, the children begin by listening to and retelling stories, thus living through the period of oral tradition. They move then from drawing to drawing/writing to writing. The first graders hear a fairy tale about two mountain peaks, and the next day they are asked to draw two mountains. From these, the abstraction we call the letter *M* emerges magically. When all the letters have been experienced in this way, the children begin to read.

In work with numbers and arithmetic also, the children go through an evolution. They begin by learning to count, doing so in a rhythmic way that is akin to chanting and that—by involving pacing and clapping—engages them physically. Later in the year, they will practice the addition, subtraction, and the times tables through this same chanting. Arithmetic is also taught through an appeal to fantasy. The four operations of addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication are presented as four imaginary characters who embody and illustrate the activity of each operation.

The children also learn and recite poems and verses. In this speaking together, language is elevated to art, and rhythm and imagination are brought together in a way that brings joy to the child. Once, as I was leading my first-grade class on a nature walk along a nearby river, the chatter of twenty children coalesced into a single, strong voice, and the children gleefully recited one verse after another from their lessons. They went through more than a dozen verses, visibly excited each time they recalled another one. Their sheer delight and abandon was obvious. Eventually the one voice became again the cheerful chatter of many.

The Waldorf first-grade curriculum includes a wide range of subjects and activities. In addition to working with fairy tales, poems, and verses and with arithmetic, the children

- are introduced through observation and through stories to the wonders of nature;
- draw with block crayons and paint simple water-color exercises;
- learn to knit and make a scarf, hat, or other useful item;
- sing and learn to play the recorder or pentatonic flute;
- model fairy-tale characters from colored beeswax;
- start to learn in a purely aural-oral way at least one foreign language (German, Spanish, French, Russian, and Japanese being among those offered in Waldorf schools);
- do eurythmy and play a variety of circle and singing games.

Together these activities comprise a curriculum of great inner richness. Each calls on a different human faculty and seeks to bring harmony and balance to the whole.

The various activities that appeal to the child's fantasy and stimulate the imagination are distributed

rhythmically through the week and are contained within the "vessel" of a firm lesson structure. This is fashioned and held together by the authority of the teacher. In a Waldorf first-grade classroom, the teacher is clearly the authority, who maintains order and an atmosphere conducive to learning. Rightly held and exercised, this authority works on another, deeper level. Children need a structure that they can push against and test. They

also need a person to look up to, respect, and love. Teachers establish this kind of authority most effectively by bringing the gifts of human culture and history and the wonders of nature to the children and by developing their own creative capacities. They also establish it through wise guidance of the children's behavior and work. Rudolf Steiner said that the child who had felt the warmth of inner creative activity radiating from an adult whom he held in high esteem would, in his own adult life, be able to bestow many blessings upon others. When Rudolf Steiner visited a class in the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart, his first question of the children was often, "Do you love your teacher?"

The first grader's day is full and can be tiring. Hence, a first-grade class will either have a shorter school day or have a period of rest in the afternoon. Sometimes it is

the teacher, having worked with the lively forces of the young child through the day, who most needs a rest!



The Waldorf first-grade curriculum includes learning to knit and to make a scarf or other useful item. This is one of the many activities that seek to balance the whole child.

WILLIAM TOOLE has been a class teacher at the Austin Waldorf School since 1982. He took two classes from first through eighth grade and, after a short break, met his current class as fourth graders in 1999. They are now in the seventh grade. He lives in Dripping Springs, Texas, with his wife, Carol, a former Austin Waldorf School kindergarten teacher, who has worked with children of all ages at the school. His two children currently attend the high school in Austin, though one will soon be off to college.

Five Frequently Asked Questions about Waldorf Education

BY COLIN PRICE

Colin Price has been a Waldorf teacher for the past thirty-five years and has been a class teacher in schools in England, Canada, and the United States of America. He wishes to preface this article with the following caveat:

The The opinions expressed here are my personal opinions. I alone am responsible for the content of this article, which, although brief, will I hope raise further questions in the mind of the reader. Waldorf Education can be approached and characterized in many different ways, and no one description can ever do it justice. Nevertheless, this approach to educating children does hold out great hope for a better world than what we human beings have managed to create so far.

I. Does Waldorf Education prepare children for the "real" world; and, if so, how does it do it?

It is easy to fall into the error of believing that education must make our children fit into society. Although we are certainly influenced by what the world brings us, the fact is that the world is shaped by people, not people by the world. However, that shaping of the world is possible in a healthy way only if the shapers are themselves in possession of their full nature as human beings.



Education in our materialistic, Western society focuses on the intellectual aspect of the human being and has chosen largely to ignore the several other parts that are essential to our well-being. These include our life of feeling (emotions, aesthetics, and social sensitivity), our willpower (the ability to get things done), and our moral nature (being clear about right and wrong). Without having these developed, we are incomplete—a fact that may become obvious in our later years, when a feeling of emptiness begins to set in. That is why in a Waldorf school, the practical and artistic subjects play as important a role as the full spectrum of traditional academic subjects that the school offers. The practical and artistic are essential in achieving a preparation for life in the “real” world.

Waldorf Education recognizes and honors the full range of human potentialities. It addresses the whole child by striving to awaken and ennoble all the latent capacities. The children learn to read, write, and do math; they study history, geography, and the sciences. In addition, all children learn to sing, play a musical instrument, draw, paint, model clay, carve and work with wood, speak clearly and act in a play, think independently, and work harmoniously and respectfully with others. The development of these various capacities is interrelated. For example, both boys and girls learn to knit in grade one. Acquiring this basic and enjoyable human skill helps them develop a manual dexterity, which after puberty will be transformed into an ability to think clearly and to “knit” their thoughts into a coherent whole.

Preparation for life includes the development of the well-rounded person. Waldorf Education has as its ideal a person who is knowledgeable about the world and human history and culture, who has many varied practical and artistic abilities, who feels a deep reverence for and communion with the natural world, and who can act with initiative and in freedom in the face of economic and political pressures.

There are many Waldorf graduates of all ages who embody this ideal and who are perhaps the best proof of the efficacy of the education.

2. Children entering the first grade in most public schools are expected to be able to read. In a Waldorf school, children start to learn to read in the first grade and are allowed to develop this skill relatively slowly. Why is this?

There is evidence that normal, healthy children who learn to read relatively late are not disadvantaged by this, but rather are able quickly to catch up with, and may overtake, children who

have learned to read early. Additionally, they are much less likely to develop the “tiredness toward reading” that many children taught to read at a very early age experience later on. Instead there is lively interest in reading and learning that continues into adulthood. Some children will, out of themselves, want to learn to read at an early age. This interest can and should be met, as long as it comes in fact from the child. Early imposed formal instruction in reading can be a handicap in later years, when enthusiasm toward reading and learning may begin to falter.

If reading is not pushed, a healthy child will pick it up quite quickly and easily. Some Waldorf parents become anxious if their child is slow to learn to read. Eventually these same parents are overjoyed at seeing their child pick up a book and not put it down and become from that moment a voracious reader. Each child has his or her own optimal time for “taking off.” Feelings of anxiety and inferiority may develop in a child who is not reading as well as her peers. Often this anxiety is picked up from parents concerned about the child’s progress. It is important that parents should deal with their own and their child’s apprehensions.

Human growth and development do not occur in a linear fashion, nor can they be measured. What lives, grows, and has its being in human life can only be grasped with that same human faculty that can grasp the invisible metamorphic laws of living nature.

3. Would a child be at a disadvantage if he were transferred from a public school into a Waldorf school, or out of a Waldorf school into a public school?

Children who transfer to a Waldorf school in the first four grades usually are up to grade in reading, math, and basic academic skills. However, they usually have much to learn in bodily coordination skills, posture, artistic and social activities, cursive handwriting, and



If reading is not pushed, a healthy child will pick it up quite quickly and easily.

listening skills. Listening well is particularly important since most of the curricular content is presented orally in the classroom by the teacher. The human relationship between the child and the teacher is the basis for healthy learning, for the acquiring of understanding and knowledge rather than just information. Children who are used to learning from computers and other electronic media will have to adjust.

Those children who enter a Waldorf school in the middle grades often bring much information about the world. This contribution should be recognized and received with interest by the class. However,



The human relationship between the child and the teacher is the basis for healthy learning.

these children often have to unlearn some social habits, such as the tendency to experience learning as a competitive activity. They have to learn to approach the arts in a more objective way, not simply as a means for personal expression. In contrast, in their study of nature, history, and the world, they need to relate what they learn to their own life and being. The popular ideal of "objectivity" in learning is misguided when applied to elementary school children. At their stage of development, the subjective element is essential for healthy learning. Involvement in what is learned about the world makes the world truly meaningful to them.

Children who transfer out of a Waldorf school into a public school during the earlier grades probably have to upgrade their reading ability and to approach the science lessons differently. Science in a Waldorf school emphasizes the observation of natural phenomena rather than the formulation of abstract concepts and laws. On the

other hand, the Waldorf transferees are usually well prepared for social studies, practical and artistic activities, and mathematics.

Children moving during the middle grades should experience no problems. In fact, in most cases, transferring students of this age-group find themselves ahead of their classmates. The departing Waldorf student is likely to take along into the new school a distinguishing individual strength, personal confidence, and love of learning.

4. A Waldorf class teacher ideally stays with a group of children through the eight elementary school years. What if my child does not get along with the teacher?

This question often arises because of a parent's experience of public school education. In most public schools, a teacher works with a class for one, maybe two years. It is difficult for teacher and child to develop the deep human relationship that is the basis for healthy learning if change is frequent.

If a teacher has a class for several years, the teacher and the children come to know and understand each other in a deep way. The children, feeling secure in a long-term relationship, are better able to learn.

The interaction of teacher and parents also can become more deep and meaningful over time, and they can cooperate in helping the child.

Serious problems between teachers and children, and between teachers and parents, do arise. When this happens, the college of teachers studies the situation, involves the teacher and parents—and, if appropriate, the child—and tries to resolve the conflict. If the differences are irreconcilable, the parents might be asked to withdraw the child, or the teacher might be replaced.



In reality, these measures very rarely need to be taken. A Waldorf class is something like a family. If a mother in a family does not get along with her son during a certain time, she does not consider resigning or replacing him with another child. Rather, she looks at the situation and sees what can be done to improve the relationship.

In other words, the adult assumes responsibility and tries to change. This same approach is expected of the Waldorf teacher in a difficult situation. In almost every case she must ask herself: "How can I change so that the relationship becomes more positive?" One cannot expect this of the child. My experience is that with the goodwill and active support of the parents, the teacher concerned can make the necessary changes and restore the relationship to a healthy and productive state.

5. How can a Waldorf class teacher teach all the subjects through the eight years of elementary schooling?

The class teacher is not the only teacher the children experience. Each day, specialty subject teachers teach the children eurythmy, handcrafts, a foreign language, instrumental music, and so on.

The class teacher is, however, responsible for the two-hour "main lesson" every morning and usually also for one or two lessons later in the day. In the main lesson, she brings all the main academic subjects to the children, including language arts, the sciences, history, and mathematics, as well as painting, music, clay modeling, and so on. The teacher does in fact deal with a wide range of subjects, and thus the question is a valid one.

A common misconception in our time is that education is merely the transfer of information. From the Waldorf point of view, true education also involves the awakening of capacities—the ability to think clearly and critically, to empathetically experience and understand phenomena in the world, to distinguish what is beautiful, good, and true. The class teacher walks a path of discovery with the children and guides them into an understanding of the world of meaning, rather than the world of cause and effect.

Waldorf class teachers work very hard to master the content of the various subjects that they teach. But the teacher's ultimate success lies in her ability to work with those inner faculties that are still "in the bud," so that they can grow, develop, and open up in a beautiful, balanced, and wholesome way.

Through this approach to teaching, the children will be truly prepared for the real world. They are provided then with the tools to productively shape that world out of a free human spirit.

COLIN PRICE *currently teaches at the Merriconeag Waldorf School in Freeport, Maine.*

From the Chairman

continued

in English, French, and Spanish are heard in a variety of neighborhoods throughout the continent. Another step away from our own neighborhoods brings us to the Waldorf movement worldwide. Over 850 Waldorf schools sprouted and now flourish in different cultural and political soils and in the different seasons of history and world conditions. They produce many different colored flowers from the same plant. The Association connects its member schools with these schools, and the fruits of the diverse experiences are widely shared.

Thus, we have the **Association of Waldorf Schools of North America**. The name explained, let's look at the activity. The Association speaks in support of all the schools by giving voice to the principles and practices of Waldorf Education. We make visible and available for the public and among our professional peers the fruits of over eighty years of sound educational practices and research. We speak about the activity and growth occurring daily in the classrooms. In turn, we provide practical support services for teachers and schools to aid that good work. In addition to *Renewal*, the Association offers publications, information and research on curriculum and organizational matters, as well as conferences and teacher education support.

Teachers prepare well, but only the lesson that also addresses the students' immediate needs in the present time will succeed. Waldorf Education has a long history with much written and spoken research. Yet it is able to—indeed must—be living and open in the present to survive into the future. Likewise, the Association holds the development and history of Waldorf Education and brings its vision forward into the future on behalf of the schools.

The North American Waldorf schools associate for the care and nurturing of the gift to humanity and the Earth they have the privilege to share. That gift is a human-centered, spiritually inspired, and socially responsible education. Through the **Association of Waldorf Schools of North America**, teachers and parents enjoy resources and advocacy. Like your faculties, our small staff provides service well beyond its size. We can do this only because we are partners with you, the teachers, parents, and friends of Waldorf Education.



Eric Utne, his class, and former Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura in front of the Minnesota state capitol.

Two Years in the Trenches

A Waldorf Parent Goes Back to School as a Waldorf Teacher

BY ERIC UTNE

Eric Utne, founder of two national magazines—New Age Journal (1974) and Utne Reader (1984)—has helped enlighten and elevate public opinion in North America for over three decades. After many years as a Waldorf parent, Eric became, in September 2000, the class teacher of the seventh grade in the City of Lakes Waldorf School in Minneapolis. Here he writes about his two years on the front lines of Waldorf Education.

R.E.K.

I never intended to teach, but I literally got the “call” in June 2000. I went to a high school graduation party for a friend, and as I came around the house into the backyard, two teachers from the Waldorf school my children attend saw me and cried out, “Eric! You should teach!” They had just been discussing the imminent departure of a colleague and wondering who should succeed him. Not knowing whether they were serious or not, I laughingly brushed them off. “No way!”

But a seed was planted, and over the next few days I couldn’t shake the thought of teaching at my children’s school. After all, I had taken a one-year sabbatical from *Utne Reader* to “find, feel, and follow my heart,” and the sabbatical

had stretched to three years already. I realized that something inside me was ready for this and had leaped forward in response to their challenge, declaring, "Yes! I should teach! I want to teach! If it's right, I will teach!"

Five days after the party I found myself being interviewed by the school's teacher search committee. I told them that though I had never even considered teaching before, I wanted to teach because I wanted to learn more about the ideas of Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf Education. Besides, I wanted to be of service, and if the committee determined that I was the right person for the class, I would be delighted to serve.

Then I suggested we meditate on the question together. We lit a candle, closed our eyes, and sat in silence. I asked my heart whether it was right for the class (and me) and for the "greater good" that I be their teacher. I looked inside for any green lights and listened for any warning bells. I experienced a kind of golden inner glow, which I took to be a resounding "Yea!" The search committee and I agreed that it "felt right" that I would be the coming fall's seventh-grade class teacher.

In Waldorf schools the teacher moves with the class, ideally from first through eighth grade. My task would be to teach the class for their final two years of middle school, getting them through the challenging transition from late childhood to early adolescence.

The usual education of a Waldorf teacher involves full-time training over two years or part-time training over a longer period. It includes the intensive study of Anthroposophy and its core ideas, such as the evolution of human consciousness, the reality of the spiritual world and its relationship to the sense world, the

importance today of a meditative path, and so on. It also includes study of Rudolf Steiner's view of the development of the child, of the appropriate ways in education to nurture the child's unfolding capacities at each stage, and of the curriculum of the eight elementary school years. Students in a Waldorf teacher education program also work intensively in the arts, studying music, drawing, painting, sculpture, eurythmy, speech, and drama. The Waldorf class teacher needs to bring the content of the curriculum to the children in an artistic manner, so the trainees must develop their own artistic skills and sensitivities. They go through in effect a process of personal transformation.

My situation—I would be standing in front of my class in less than two months—didn't permit the luxury of a full training. Fortunately, there are opportunities to do intensive Waldorf teacher training during the summer. So, soon I was in Santa Cruz, California, at a weeklong intensive workshop in the arts that was part of the teacher training program run by Rudolf Steiner College in the Bay Area. Along with about fifteen other current and future Waldorf teachers, eight hours a day for nearly a week I learned eurythmy, discussed assigned readings, painted with watercolors, drew form drawings, sculpted in clay, practiced speech exercises, and sang. Eager for more instruction, I was soon at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California, for a weeklong intensive on how and what to teach Waldorf seventh and eighth graders. Two weeks after that, I attended a similar course at Sunbridge College in Spring Valley, New York.

The seventh-grade curriculum includes the Renaissance and the Ages of Exploration and Discovery, perspective drawing, the geography of Africa and Europe,

The Waldorf class teacher needs to bring the content of the curriculum to the children in an artistic manner.

The author stands in front of his blackboard drawing of Michelangelo's Vatican fresco of the Delphic Sibyl.



meteorology, topics in chemistry, physics, and physiology, geometry, pre-algebra, creative writing, and more, and we delved into all of it in my trainings. I spent the balance of the summer preparing on my own. When the school year started, I felt simultaneously prepared and terrified. My colleagues assured me one doesn't have to be an expert on every subject, that enthusiasm, love of learning, and a desire to help the children are key elements in a Waldorf classroom.

In my two years of teaching, I worked harder than perhaps I ever had before. My hope of learning more about Rudolf Steiner's ideas by studying his writings with my colleagues proved illusory. I had almost no time to read anything but what was needed to prepare for the next day's lesson. The same appeared to be true for the other teachers. If I was an hour ahead of the students, I felt lucky. Steiner's indications for the seventh- and eighth-grade curricula are rather sketchy, which gives Waldorf teachers a great deal of freedom to invent and create but also to flounder. I purchased printed materials for Waldorf teachers by the ton. Fortunately, I had fine mentors in my colleagues and in my own children's past teachers, who generously shared with me their lesson plans and advice. Still, I was scrambling to prepare every waking minute, often until 2:00 A.M., then up again at 7:00.

I think the most interesting and for me instructive anecdote I can extract from two years of teaching occurred during eighth grade. The theme for the Waldorf eighth grade is "revolution," and we had one from the beginning. On the first day of school, one of the boys spat in a female classmate's face. The next day, a girl who had been in the class since kindergarten told

me she was no longer willing to put up with the mean treatment she was getting from other female classmates and was therefore leaving for another school. The class was in chaos. We had a revolution on our hands already.

I had been contemplating the meaning of revolution during the summer break and was considering introducing a form of group conversation to the class called "council." Council encourages participants to "listen from the heart and speak from the heart." Often a "talking piece" is passed around a circle. When the holder of the talking piece speaks, everyone else listens. Among the goals are learning how to listen silently and attentively and learning to speak sincerely and without premeditation. Rudolf Steiner taught a similar form of active listening known as Goethean conversation, in which each person tries to enter into the feelings and thoughts of the other, to develop true empathy and compassion.

After the above-mentioned incidents, I decided the time to introduce the council process had come. That night I made preparations, collecting a candle, cloth, and some objects from nature to make a centerpiece for our conversation circle. As I was driving to school the next morning, I switched on National Public Radio. To my horror, the earthshaking events of 9/11 were unfolding. When I got to school and the children arrived, I told them what was going on and led them immediately into council. We sat in a circle with the lights turned off and a candle burning in the center. In a flux of fear and confusion, none of us knew what to make of the events going on halfway across the country. For all of us the news wasn't real yet. The students' comments had

The theme for
the Waldorf
eighth grade is
"revolution," and
we had one from
the beginning.

*The 2002 eighth-grade class
of the City of Lakes Waldorf
School in costume for their
presentation of Shakespeare's
The Tempest.*



more to do with their thoughts and feelings about what was going on in class than about world events. But instead of turning to the media, as most Americans did that day and so often in the days to come, at this critical moment council allowed us to turn to each other. I was very grateful to have this form at the ready in that moment. It was as though guardian angels had intervened with just the right tool to help us navigate our own and each others' turbulent emotions.

I found council, which I brought from my own life experience, a very effective form of group work. It—or a similar practice—should be a part of the curriculum of every school, public or private. In full-time Waldorf teacher training programs, future teachers are schooled in Goethean conversation. They also receive training in group dynamics and group facilitation. In time, the great majority of teachers use aspects of these in working with their classes.

Council is both a preventive and a curative for the kind of alienation that breeds acts of violence and terrorism. It's one of the most effective tools I know to help students learn empathy, i.e., how to "experience the suffering of another human being as their own suffering." This is the principle task of our time, according to Rudolf Steiner.

The students loved council. As we used this ancient social form, I watched genuine mutual trust and respect develop in the group. I saw the students' social and emotional intelligence grow. I witnessed their capacities of heart blossom. I watched them become more human. What a privilege and a blessing this was!

I was busier as a Waldorf teacher than when I was editor and publisher of *Utne Reader*. Ideally a Waldorf school is administered largely by the teachers, working in a nonhierarchical manner with no principal or headmaster. Decisions are made by a consensus process, which requires that all agree to abide by any decision made. Hence teachers (and administrators and parents) spend much time in many long committee meetings, making decisions about the capital campaign, the holiday fair, the curative/remedial curriculum, and the like.

The first year my colleagues protected me, not letting me get involved in committee work, but during eighth grade I was on the college of teachers and the board of trustees, plus the long-range planning committee. On top of all this, we had a highly charged and litigious intramural drama involving the personal lives of several staff members. This affair absorbed enormous amounts

of my colleagues' time and energy, making my dream of studying Steiner's ideas with them unrealistic.

Only toward the end of my two-year stint did I understand Steiner's motivation for recommending that Waldorf schools be self-administered—to maximize the opportunities for human interaction and, thus, for human relationship. Steiner taught that we all have lived many previous lives and that we have karmic connections from the past with almost everyone we encounter. A nonhierarchical, self-administered, volunteer-dependent organization creates opportunities for people to interact in an intense, sometimes confrontational way, to create and experience social friction. This in turn brings opportunities for forming relationships that resolve past karma.

I realized that even though we teachers weren't reading Steiner's books together, we were doing the real work that every human being signs on to do, with our students and their parents as well as each other. We were learning how to live with and love each other.

Looking back over these past two years, I can say without reservation that the task was more challenging than any other work I've done in my life. I didn't have a clue what teachers go through, and my respect and appreciation and gratitude for them has grown tremendously. Teaching is very hard work. But it's also the most rewarding work I've ever done. In two years, I learned more about the world, and myself, than in any similar stretch of time in my life.

And teaching the Waldorf curriculum was an incredible privilege. It is the very definition of age-appropriate. It introduces just the right subject at just the right time for the children, whatever stage they're in. Kindergartners live in a dreamy, protected world of myth and fairy tales, while middle school students become academically rigorous scientist/artist/citizen/scholars. It's the education I always wanted but never got—until I taught, that is.

ERIC UTNE is the father of four Waldorf-educated sons. He was a class teacher at City of Lakes Waldorf School in Minneapolis until June 2002. You can contact him at utne@utne.com

RESOURCE FOR COUNCIL

Zimmerman, Jack, and Virginia Coyle. *The Way of Council*. Las Vegas, Nev.: Bramble Books, 1996. Available from School of Lost Borders (503) 305-4414; Web site: schooloflostborders.com. Also available from The Ojai Foundation, 9739 Ojai-Santa Paula Road, Ojai, CA 93023.

Experimentation and Innovation in Waldorf Education

Meeting the Needs of Today's Children



BY THOMAS POPLAWSKI

Children are different today from what they were even a few years ago. That is the view of long-time teachers both in the Waldorf schools and in mainstream education. On the positive side, children seem brighter and more awake, but they come to school with problems that make them increasingly difficult to educate. The children cannot sit for very long. They have a hard time keeping their attention on the lesson and have difficulty listening when in a group. There are problems with civility and with their treatment of one another. Many children find it difficult to master reading and basic arithmetic. More children than ever are labeled "learning disabled" or "ADD/ADHD." Finally, despite our being materially better-off than ever before, very many children seem less healthy and

less connected to their bodies. Some teachers with long experience complain that there are very few healthy and wholesome children coming through the door these days.

Psychologists have also taken note of these changes in children. Ulrich Neisser, a prominent researcher at Cornell University, has commented that while IQ scores of children have been steadily rising and children seem quicker, they do not seem wiser. He feels that popular culture and the media provide so much visual stimulation that visual analysis and reasoning are improving. However, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores continue to fall because young people's vocabulary and general knowledge are decreasing.

These changes in children—and these are not children raised in poverty—have been attributed to many causes: the more frantic pace of life we now lead, overstimulation by the electronic media, the amount of time children spend in automobiles being driven from place to place, too little exercise, too much junk food, and so on. Some observers and educators see the phenomenon as a sign of degeneration. Others view it in a positive light. They see it as a sign of a coming step in human evolution and feel that we must recognize and meet the special needs of these “Indigo” or “Star” children. Whether the child of today is a new kind of child or simply a child under new forms of stress, teachers today may need a different approach from that which worked in the past.

In the past fifteen years or so, Waldorf educators in Europe have tried to understand and address these new challenges for education. Pioneers and innovators have made modifications in the traditional Waldorf approach, especially in the early grades. These include Pär Ahlbom, a Swedish musician and exponent of new music and new instruments; Werner Kuhfus, a German specialist in working with autistic children, who changed his focus to the teaching of “normal” preschoolers; and Georg Kühlewind, a retired Hungarian chemistry professor and teacher of meditation.

“Alternative” Waldorf schools in Järna, Sweden, in Bochum and Langenberg, Germany, and in Graz, Austria, have experimented with radical innovation in the Waldorf approach. Aspects of

their programs are being incorporated into Waldorf classrooms throughout Europe. They are exploring means to meet the needs of the Waldorf child of the twenty-first century.

One observation shared by these Waldorf educators is that in today's sensorily overcharged environment, children find it hard to fully “incarnate.” They are very awake intellectually but are less connected to their physical bodies and to their emotional life. The result is a mind-body split. The Waldorf innovators felt that something was needed to support children in finding strong roots, in developing the four “lower senses” in a healthy way. These four senses include balance, awareness of one's own movement (proprioception), a “life sense” through which one is aware whether one is healthy or not (impaired or absent in cases of trauma or when a child is both very overstimulated and raised without any regular, daily rhythm in his life), and the sense of touch. These senses help the child begin to know his own inner being. Their healthy development in the first six to eight years provides a firm foundation for later emotional and educational development. These lower senses are essential not only for self-confidence but, more basically, for the child to have a physical and emotional foundation to stand on in this world.

Body-oriented therapists, movement specialists, and occupational therapists specializing in the burgeoning field of sensory integration have had to develop specific interventions for the children most impaired in this respect. However, Pär Ahlbom, Werner Kuhfus, Georg Kühlewind and others, realizing that most normal children today have difficulties in this regard, saw the need to adapt the standard curriculum for all children. This sensory enrichment has been done through listening and music, indoor movement and games, outdoor work, nature observation, and activities that develop social sensitivity and maturation.

A New Approach to Music

Most Waldorf schools begin musical instruction in the first grade with the children learning to play melodies on the recorder or pentatonic flute, or occasionally on the lyre. The Waldorf innovators felt that music could be even more useful in cultivating the child's ability to really listen—particularly to listen to what comes from others, as well as to strengthen healthy breathing, and to encourage improvisation and freedom in play.



Music can cultivate the child's ability to really listen—particularly to listen to what comes from others.

A variety of newly developed musical instruments—bronze gongs, cymbals, lyres, chimes, harps, psalters, and others—are used. They are supplemented by the “singing stones” and “laughing sticks” collected by the children in their nature play and used to make musical sounds.

The musical work usually is done daily in the first period and includes exercises of listening in silence as well as improvisational work in which the children play or communicate with each other singly, in tandem, or in groups. This musical “conversing” evolves through the year, inspired both by

the seasons and by what other classes are doing. It finds its way into the life of the school, being used in school plays and festivals. Some Waldorf teachers in North America, Jan Baudendistel at the Hartsbrook School in Massachusetts, for example, have been working enthusiastically with this approach for years, but generally it has been little known in this country. With the workshops now being offered by Pär Ahlbom in North America, this situation seems likely to change.

Sensory Integration Games

Few children today walk or bicycle to school or to anywhere else. Instead they spend hours each week strapped into cars and many more hours pulled out of their bodies by excessive, artificial stimulation from television, computer games, and so on. Activities that develop their senses of balance, movement, life, and touch are lacking. In the standard Waldorf curriculum, Morning Circle work as well as eurythmy and Spacial Dynamics™ address this need. In addition, innovators have developed many movement games for class teachers to use in the early grades. Some games help the child to develop balance, while others try to stimulate the senses of touch and of movement by having the children press against each other. Still others focus on stimulating the awareness of the sense of life or inner well-being.

One popular sense-exercise is called therapeutic wrestling. In this rigorous but not violent activity, groups of three to six children crawl onto a small carpet. They then wrestle to push each other off their “raft” into the water! Another game involves squeezing one's body through a narrow tunnel formed by adults standing in a line with their legs apart. Both the tactile stimulation and the strenuous effort make for a wonderful exercise for both the boys and girls. Like the musical activities, these are popular parts of the school day, both with children and teachers. They awaken and invigorate the children and help burn off physical energy. Afterwards, the children relax and can focus on the more cerebral tasks of the day.

Creating the space in a typical classroom for such movement activities usually requires a lot of moving of tables and desks. To obviate this inconvenience, a new kind of classroom space,

the “mobile classroom,” was developed. Young children have a hard time sitting and working comfortably in chairs at tables anyway, so these were eliminated. The mobile classroom is furnished rather with pillows (filled with non-allergenic soft wood granules) and benches. When the children need to write or draw, two share a bench while sitting on the cushions. At snack time the benches are all pushed together to form a meal table. At other times the benches are either pushed to the side to make room for movement games or used for those games. They can be arranged into long tunnels or into a support for a balance beam, and so on. This Waldorf innovation so impressed educational researchers at the University of Essen in Germany that they have written articles about it and are promoting the practice in state-run schools.

Outdoor Work and Exploration

Children today spend most of their time indoors. The attraction of television and computer games, parental concerns about safety outdoors, the limitations of urban environments as a place for play, and other factors combine to deprive them of time outdoors and in nature. In Waldorf schools all over Europe, there has been a movement to include more outdoor activity in the school day. In some kindergartens, the children spend almost the entire day outside, regardless of the weather even in winter—and this is in northern Europe, not California.

Teachers at the Windrather Valley Waldorf School in Velbert/Langenberg, Germany, were especially interested in outdoor activity for the children in the elementary grades. They hoped through outdoor play and observation of the changing seasons in the natural world to encourage exercise and sensory integration. They were also asked by parents whether they could work on fostering one quality that the families were finding difficult to nurture at home—a healthy attitude toward work.

At Windrather each class is divided into two groups, one led by the teacher and one by an assistant. After a short gathering in the school or in the barn for group singing and taking attendance, the children and teacher spend the first hour of the school day hiking in the nearby

woods or working on the grounds of the school. The children pull wagons filled with brooms, shovels, and other tools. They sweep sidewalks and curbsides, trim hedges, rake leaves, shovel snow, weed, pick up rocks, clean up trash, and do whatever else is necessary at the time. The adult leads and models the activity but does not tell the children they must do this or that. The youngsters usually begin to imitate what the adult is doing. The class may collect snails from a much traveled area and move them to a place where they will not be trampled. Or they may carefully transplant a seedling to a more sunny spot. Or they visit a nearby farm and help care for the animals. The children experience being caretakers and stewards of nature and its creatures.

As the children get older, there is more hiking and also building of structures. They construct forts and tree houses with swinging ropes and use these for their play. In an innovative school in Sweden, the children formed and baked bricks that were later used to build a classroom building!

Each day when the children come inside, they talk as a class about their experiences outdoors. All children have an opportunity to speak. This helps them to learn to express themselves in a clear and beautiful way. Sometimes the children tell their stories using little puppets or other props. Each group shares its own experience

Eurythmy and other movement activities help to develop the child's senses of balance, movement, life, and touch.



and listens to that of the other; in fact, they are generally very excited to know what the other group was up to. They tell what they have seen and done but also talk about the disagreements that came up and how they were resolved. The reporting period is not just about work and involvement with nature; it is also about learning social skills and getting along with each other.



In Waldorf schools all over Europe, there has been a movement to include more outdoor activity in the school day.

At the Windrath Valley school, this early morning outdoor activity continues through fifth grade. It provides many learning opportunities for the children. It also warms and wakens them for the indoor studies and activities that follow.

Rhythms of the Day

In a typical Waldorf school in Europe (and in North America), children in the early grades attend school from 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 or 12:30, then go home or, increasingly, to child care. They usually begin the day with a main lesson that lasts about 90 minutes. In these innovative Waldorf schools, the main lesson comes later in the morning after a morning snack. It lasts only between 45

minutes and an hour. The specialty subject classes last only 20 to 30 minutes. Eurythmy is held twice a week for this shorter period while foreign languages are not taught all year but only in blocks. The short classes help to hold the children's interest and make for a more dynamic and productive lesson.

One school in Bern, Switzerland, has experimentally done away with distinct class periods or lessons in first and second grade. Instead, all the different activities—eurythmy, music, handwork, French, and so on—remain embedded in sensory education, movement, and play and stretch through the whole morning in a seamless way.

One important innovation is that the class teacher stays with the children throughout the morning, even during the special subject classes. This provides a continuity through the day, eliminates chaotic transitions, and provides support for the subject teachers. This is an added burden for the class teacher, but it has turned out to be an essential part of this evolving version of Waldorf Education.

Some schools have been experimenting with giving the day a rhythmical "breathing," having one or two short, light class periods followed by a longer, more intense one. This interspersing of movement or handwork activities with more concentrated academic work brings a rhythm to the day and helps the children in their learning. The pattern of classes may change in the course of the year, but the short-long-short, short-long-short rhythm is the one most used.

The Integrated Classroom

Another innovation being used in some schools involves integrating children with physical and/or learning disabilities into the class group. Bringing one or two peers with severe mental or physical difficulties into a group can have remarkable effects. Often such children engender a mood of kindness, empathy, and generosity of spirit that was not there before. The "normal" children get a sense of what the life experience of the special-needs child is like, and they respond with sympathy and helpfulness. Often the way the entire group interacts is changed. And this feeling can continue even if the special-needs child leaves the class.

This phenomenon inspired the formation of integrated classes in Europe. A common model has a class of twenty students including four or five children with disabilities. There is some tracking of ability groups in reading and math, but the special-needs children are not necessarily in the slowest group or the only ones in that group. Thus far, the integrated classes have continued until the fifth grade. The improvement in social mood is a virtue. Some Waldorf schools in America have experimented with taking in one or two such children on a trial basis.

The Meeting of the College of Teachers

In a Waldorf school, the college of teachers, comprised of those teachers with a long and deep commitment to the school, meet regularly to discuss and make decisions about the life of the school. They also discuss their students and how best to work with them. Teachers in the innovative schools felt that along with all the changes in the classroom, they needed to develop a new model for mutual support and collegiality.

In many of these schools, meetings of the college of teachers begin with a group meditation. The Foundation Verse that Rudolf Steiner gave for the first Waldorf school is a common theme for the meditation. After a ten-minute period of silent meditation, the teachers share their own thoughts and experiences related to the theme, avoiding theoretical tangents or references to past reading. This intimate sharing gives the meeting from the start a feeling of intimacy and depth. It also helps less experienced teachers develop their meditation skills.

The focus then moves on to looking at a child about whom concern has been expressed. The teachers may be joined by guests who have a special interest in the child—the parents, therapist, or a subject teacher who does not normally attend the college meeting. Observations of and anecdotes about the child in different situations are shared. There is no attempt at this time to come to a conclusion or to make decisions about the child. Rather this focusing of attention on the child is experienced as a meeting with the child's spiritual core. Developing a plan of intervention is later left up to the individual teacher, perhaps with the help of a mentor. This way of meeting may seem nebulous and abstract, never getting down to analyzing and solving the problem at hand. However, that has not been the experience of the teachers who have tried and then later warmly embraced this new way of working.

Teachers using this approach to meeting and conferring have found it very effective. When the faculty of the

Waldorf school in Bochum, Germany, reported the results of their first year's working in this way, they indicated the following:

- the class teacher had more time to discover what each child's individual needs were;
- the children felt more secure;
- the teacher had more time to work out problems that arose and less need to phone parents;
- the class teachers had fewer sick days.

Teachers in other schools working in this manner report similar positive results.

Conclusion

The work in Waldorf schools with the various experimental and innovative methods described above is still in its infancy. The initial results are encouraging, but no one knows how they will work out over a long period of time. All of this work is evolving and has not yet settled into any fixed curriculum or form. The ideal of the pioneers of this work, of course, is that such a fixed form should never arise. The useful tools, however, which they have designed to help teachers in the improvisational art of Waldorf pedagogy will no doubt be welcomed in many schools striving to meet the challenges of the millennial child.

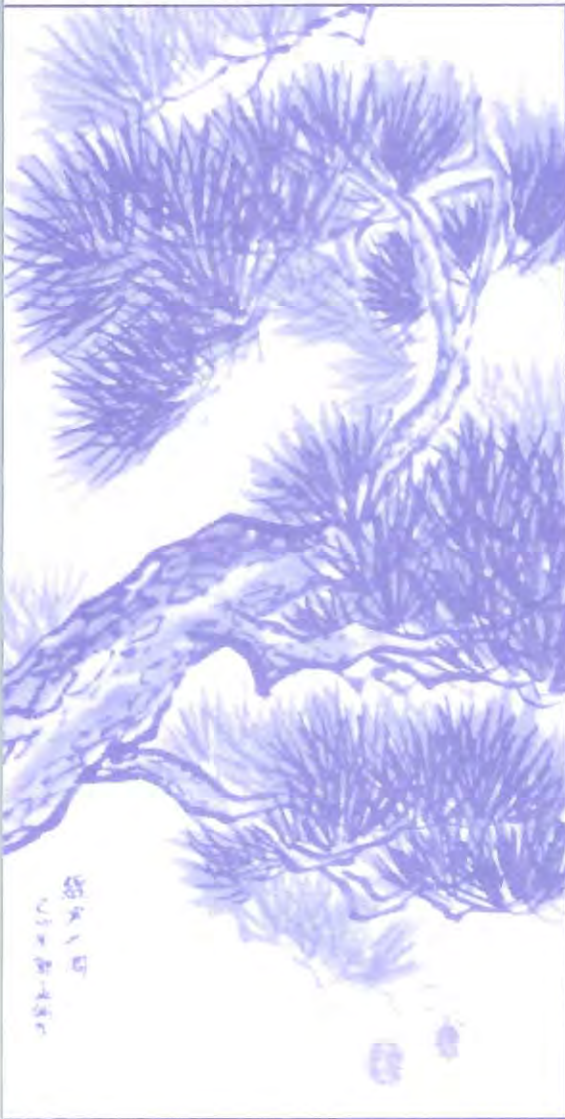
Teachers and parents interested in incorporating some or all of these innovations into their own school should be aware that they involve an investment of time, energy, and money. Teachers must acquire new skills that were not part of their Waldorf teacher training—in using movement and sensory games, in working with music in new ways, and so on. New equipment may have to be purchased. These measures need a more "artistic" working with time. They also require very close cooperation among teaching colleagues and perhaps extra meetings of the teachers in the early grades. All the schools that have worked with the innovations described have chosen to continue working with them.

THOMAS POPLAWSKI, *staff writer for Renewal, is a trained eurythmist, longtime student of Anthroposophy, and Waldorf parent. He lives in Northampton, Massachusetts, and works as a psychotherapist. His wife, Valerie, is a kindergarten teacher at the Hartsbrook School in Hadley, Massachusetts.*

Art

Lifeblood of the Soul

BY VAN JAMES



The two images on this page, as well as the top images on pages 23 and 24, are by Honolulu Waldorf High School student Eric Kuo. These brush paintings, his senior project, demonstrate the traditional Chinese subject of *The Three Friends: Bamboo, Pine, and Plum*.

Art and the encouragement of art is political in the most profound sense, not as a weapon in the struggle, but as an instrument of understanding the futility of struggle between those who share man's faith. Aeschylus and Plato are remembered today long after the triumphs of imperial Athens are gone. Dante outlived the ambitions of thirteenth-century Florence. Goethe stands serenely above the politics of Germany, and I am certain that after the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, we too will be remembered not for victories or defeats in battle or politics, but for our contribution to the human spirit.

—John F. Kennedy

In these challenging times, we often underestimate the role that art plays in current affairs and in human culture. But as John F. Kennedy pointed out some forty years ago, art comprises a civilization's true contribution to the human spirit, and ultimately art is recognized and elevated by history.

Waldorf Education recognizes the importance of the arts in education and their relevance to contemporary life. Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf Education, called art "the lifeblood of the soul," because the artistic process is deeply related to the natural activity of the human soul. In fact, we engage in an artistic process the instant we see something, as soon as someone speaks to us, or whenever we consider an idea. We respond to almost everything we meet in the world by making images and creating mental pictures.

Try, for example, the following exercise: Think of the word *shiny*, then the word *wooden*, and finally *bowl*. As you do so, you go through a unique picture-making process. Although we may not pay a great deal of attention to this process, we nevertheless form new pictures with each word we hear. Upon hearing the word *shiny* we might form a picture of shiny light, water, or metal, but when we hear the word *wooden* we instantly modify our picture of *shiny*. Our image of *shiny wooden* likewise metamorphoses to suit the idea *bowl*, and a creative transformation is completed upon hearing the phrase *shiny wooden bowl*. We go through this artistic, picture-forming process many times during the course of a day, but the way we do this is always entirely unique to each of us. Everyone constructs a different mental picture of the *shiny wooden bowl*; no one creates the same picture that I create. It is no wonder the modern artist Josef Beuys said, "Everyone is an artist."

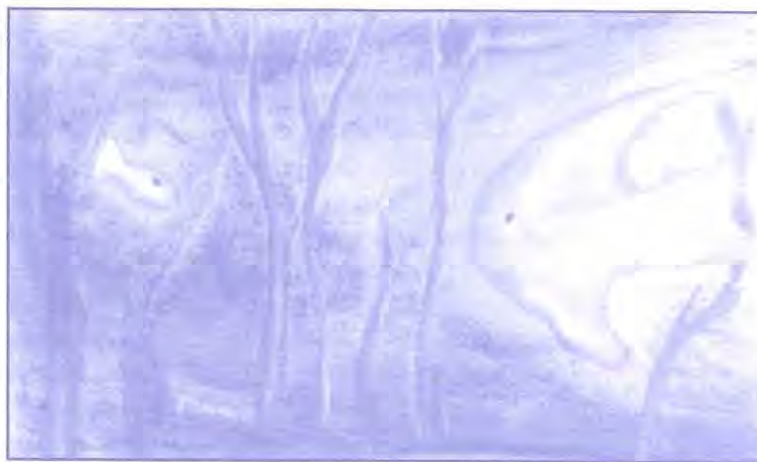
Waldorf Education is based on the principle that creative work in the arts is a necessary stimulus for the healthy development of the whole child and is also an effective aid to learning. Howard Gardner—one of the developers of the theory of multiple intelligences—and Dr. Jane Healy—the author of *Endangered Minds: Why Our Children Can't Think and What We Can Do about It*, a book based on recent brain research—both affirm the critical and unique role of the arts in education. Their work and the work of others have shown that the arts are a path to developing informed perception, enhancing critical thinking skills such as problem solving and decision making, building self-discipline and self-esteem, and encouraging cooperation and multicultural understanding. The arts engage traditional and nontraditional learners equally, offer ways to integrate subjects, provide alternative means for assessing students, and prepare students for future achievement.

According to one of Gardner's colleagues, "A program rich in the arts should assume a significant role in the school. Otherwise, it will be difficult to address the range of intelligences exhibited by students and teachers."¹ Art in education extends our language as it enlarges our store of images and touches us at our most essential human level.

Nevertheless, most industrial nations of the world emphasize a math/science curriculum as early in the educational process as possible while neglecting the arts in school programs. Such curricula are used in the hope

of strengthening practical intelligence in students and giving them, and consequently their country, a technological-economic advantage. However, in America studies have shown that students who take coursework in the arts have higher Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) scores, particularly in verbal skills but also in math, than students who do not take art.²

Waldorf Education can serve as a model of how education can be effectively imbued with the arts. All subjects are taught artistically so that the essential artistic nature of the elementary school child is engaged. Singing, playing music, drama, drawing, painting, sculpture, wood carving, creative movement, and handcrafts serve as a core curriculum, integrating all the other subjects. By practicing a variety of arts, a student can develop various



A watercolor painting by a fourth grader at the Honolulu Waldorf School.

faculties and forms of intelligence. The ultimate capacities of the student will be determined by whether or not brain development is enhanced by creative learning skills or is fashioned by mechanistic, data-oriented patterning.

Barbara Nielson, superintendent of education for the state of South Carolina, notes:

The skills needed in the twenty-first century are the very skills you learn through the arts—teamwork, creativity, discipline, innovation, being open to change. We are no longer a manufacturing-based economy. Part of our strength as a nation has been our creativity and innovation, precisely what we're cultivating through arts education.³



Drawing by Alyssa Heberton, grade eleven, Denver Waldorf School.



Allyse Heartwell and Zora Mueller are two of the Honolulu Waldorf High School students who painted a mural after Paul Gauguin's modern classic, *Where Do We Come From, Who Are We, and Where Are We Going?*

Albert Einstein suggested that present-day world problems cannot be solved by the thinking that created them. He made the striking comment, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." In other words, the ability of the soul to create images and mental pictures in ever new ways is more important than the storage of facts and conceptual information. Future solutions to world problems will really only be possible when we fully put into practice what was intended as the basis of Waldorf Education and the renewal of a healthy social life—namely, that *art becomes the lifeblood of the soul*. Then we might make, as Kennedy suggested, our contribution to the human spirit.

VAN JAMES, artist and writer, has been teaching at the Honolulu Waldorf School for the past twenty years. He is a cofounder of the high school, where he teaches painting, drawing, and the history of art and architecture. He is also a codirector of Kula Makua—Adult Waldorf Education and Teacher Training Program, chairman of the Anthroposophical Society in Hawaii, editor of *Pacifica Journal*, and author of three guidebooks on ancient Hawaiian sites. His fourth and most recent book is *Spirit and Art: Pictures of the Transformation of Consciousness* (Anthroposophic Press). He lives on the island of Oahu with his wife, has four grown children and two grandsons..

Drawing by a tenth grader.

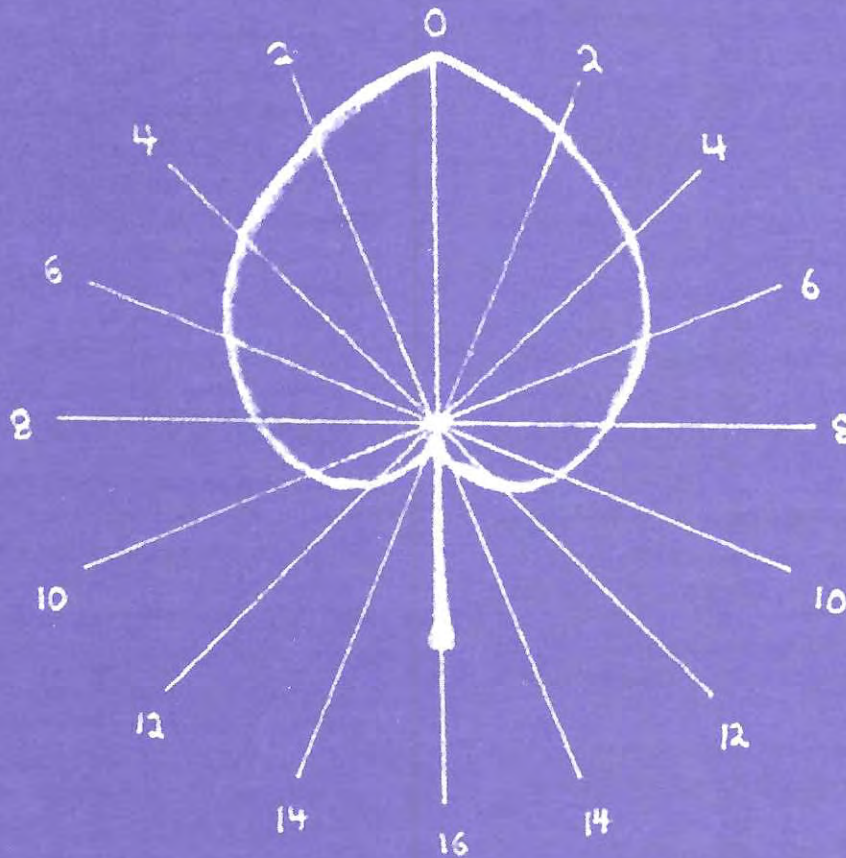


ENDNOTES

1. See Howard Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (New York: Basic Books), 1999.
2. Loyacono, Laura, *Reinventing the Wheel: A Design for Student Achievement in the 21st Century* (Washington, D.C.: National Conference of State Legislatures, 1992), 23–24.
3. Ibid, 13.

RELATED RESOURCES

- Gardner, Howard. *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic Books, 1983.
- _____. *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.
- Healy, Jane. *Endangered Minds: Why Our Children Can't Think and What We Can Do about It*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990.
- _____. *Your Child's Growing Mind: A Guide to Learning and Brain Development from Birth to Adolescence*. New York: Doubleday, 1994.
- _____. *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds—For Better and Worse*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998.
- Steiner, Rudolf. *The Younger Generation*. Spring Valley, N.Y.: Anthroposophic Press, 1967 (3rd printing, 1984).



Living Mathematics

BY BARBARA SOKOLOV

There is something special in the atmosphere of a Waldorf school that reminds one of a healthy garden bursting with life. There is a quality of lightness, of levity, that permeates a Waldorf school, as well as a groundedness, a real connection to the Earth. This emanates from the living nature of Waldorf Education, from the living quality of growth that we experience in the blossoming forth of nature and in the blossoming forth of young human beings. To bring about this living, growing quality in education is an important goal of Waldorf schools.

Rudolf Steiner says, "We should educate children so that all their concepts are capable of growth, that their concepts and will impulses are really alive. This is not easy. But an artistic education succeeds in doing it. And the children have a different feeling when we offer them living concepts instead of dead ones, for they unconsciously know that what is given them grows with them, just as arms grow with the body" (*The Younger Generation*, p. 148).

In a Waldorf elementary school we aim to teach mathematics so that its intimate connection with life is brought clearly and joyfully to the children, so that they experience its living, growing quality. In *The Study of Man*, Rudolf Steiner says, "All comprehension is really a question of relating one thing to another; the only way we can comprehend things in the world is by relating them to each other" (p. 98).

There are many indications from Rudolf Steiner—golden rules of Waldorf Education—that are ultimately expressions of ways to form living connections and relationships:

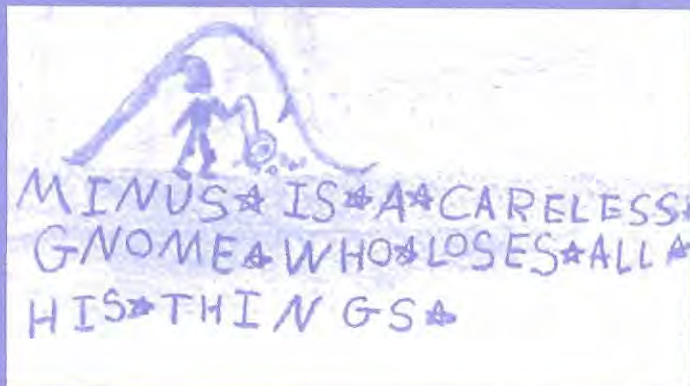
- Relate everything to the human being so that the child has a sense that the world is a manifestation of human reality.
- Teach from the whole to the parts. Start with a feeling connection to the whole, before going into the details.
- Begin with activity. Experience comes before abstraction.
- Engage first the feelings of the children, since they learn best when their feeling life is activated.
- Involve also the will of the children—in activity—and involve also the thinking capacity.
- Have a practical element. Make whatever you do concrete and useful so that the child can experience the connection with his or her own world.
- Take into account the developmental stage of the child.
- Work with the qualities of truth, goodness, beauty, and wonder.
- Look ahead in the curriculum so that seeds for future growth in mathematical understanding can be planted year by year, germinating and growing as the child progresses.
- Work with the interrelationship of subject matter across the curriculum, so that subjects are not taught in isolation from each other but in relationship to each other. This, of course, makes the whole far more interesting than the sum of all the disconnected parts could ever be.

These various indications can be used in the elementary school math curriculum to create living connections and relationships that reveal the living, growing quality of mathematics.

It is not difficult to relate mathematics to the human being, because knowledge of mathematics sleeps within the physical body itself. The mathematical proportion known as the "Golden Section," used so extensively in ancient Greek architecture, exists in the very structure of the human skeleton and especially in the proportions of the human face. Mathematics is in the beat of the heart and in the rhythm of the breathing. Therefore, engaging the physical body in rhythmic activity is an important component of math lessons, especially in the early years, when children clap, step, or jump while working with multiplication tables, for instance.

Even in kindergarten, the mathematical knowledge sleeping in the young child is worked with through the will, in rhythmical singing, clapping, and stepping games. The very acts of coming together in a straight line and of joining hands to form the morning circle are seeds for future geometry lessons. Every time the teacher cuts through the center of an apple, the children marvel and delight in the five-pointed star revealed in the fruit. They marvel again and remember the apple when, in sixth-grade geometry, they draw the same five-pointed star with exact mathematical precision. In playing with objects from nature, the kindergarten children experience the wonder and beauty of geometric forms. They see and touch the spiral in shells, the circular sand dollar with a five-petalled flower etched on it, the shapes and angles of crystals, the symmetry in walnut shells, the rings in the logs of wood. All of these experiences will wake up later on in the conscious activity of mathematical thinking.

In Waldorf schools, a very concrete approach to mathematics is taken in the primary grades. Rudolf Steiner said, "At first one should endeavor to keep entirely to the concrete in arithmetic, and above all avoid abstractions before the child comes to the turning point of the ninth and tenth years. Up to this point keep to the concrete as far as possible, by connecting everything directly with life" (*The Kingdom of Childhood*, p. 126). We attempt to immerse the children in the experience of mathematics by engaging their will forces. They experience math in a physical way, in rhythmic movement—as described above and also through jumping rope and tossing in patterns.



A page from a first grader's main lesson book on arithmetic.

In a Waldorf elementary school we aim to teach mathematics so that its intimate connection with life is brought clearly and joyfully to the children.

When introducing numbers we use Roman figures, which are more real, less abstract. Children immediately understand them. But when we begin to work with quantity, to calculate—add, subtract, multiply, and divide—we use conventional Arabic numerals.

Children also experience mathematics in the feeling realm, beginning with the introduction of number quality in first grade. We usually think of numbers as mere symbols expressing quantity, but they also have qualities that relate to human experience.

In first grade, the children are taught letters as well as numbers. In presenting the letters, the teacher creates an imagination and a picture based on the shape of a letter, like a mountain for the letter M. But Steiner says, "Teaching the child arithmetic is quite another matter. You will sense that here the most important thing is not the shape of the figures but the reality that lies in these shapes" (*Practical Advice to Teachers*, p. 10). This living reality, living quality in numbers, is what we bring first to children in grade one. And the qualities of numbers are clearly brought in a living relationship to the human being.

"I am one." Teachers usually begin by pointing out that each person is a whole that can not be broken up. Then from within this whole we find the other number qualities. Steiner points out, "But the one hand can touch the other hand. This is no longer a unit, this is a duality, a 'two.' See, you are one, but you have two hands" (*The Kingdom of Childhood*, p. 74). The children can find other twos—eyes, ears, feet. Three can be mother, father, and child. Four can be the four directions, four seasons, or our four limbs. Five is easy to find in the human hand, and in the star inside the apple. I'm amazed at the delight of my first-grade children day after day when I cut open their apples! By bringing the qualities of numbers to the children, a deep inner connection to numbers is cultivated.

New wonder can be brought back into numbers later in the curriculum. In fifth grade, the children study ancient civilizations, and with that comes a block on ancient mathematics. Students learn about the many different symbols people used to express numbers. They gain new insights into the qualities of numbers as these were experienced in various ancient cultures.

In the sixth grade, we review decimals that were first studied the year before. Now the children are studying Rome, the Middle Ages, and the flowering of Arabic and Islamic culture. We can tell the story of how in about A.D. 800 traders from India brought their goods to Baghdad and brought also a new and revolutionary mathematical idea—the zero. At this point in history the cumbersome Roman system could be replaced with only nine other symbols and zero to write any number in our familiar base-ten system. The idea of place value

made possible the writing of decimal fractions. The children are amazed that it took thousands of years for human beings—who were able to keep tallies and who made incredible discoveries in geometry—to think up zero. The children can imagine what it had been like to calculate before the invention of zero. Integrating the curriculum in this way brings new interest and wonder to the study of mathematics.

At every stage of the children's development we seek to relate math to their world. Ron Jarman, in his book *Teaching Mathematics in Rudolf Steiner Schools for*

Waldorf fifth graders study the mathematics of ancient civilizations, including Egypt and Greece.



Classes I–VIII, tells how his first grade worked with multiplication by comparing the steps of gnomes, elves, dwarves, and giants crossing a stream on twelve stepping stones. The short-legged gnomes have to step on every stone: $12=1 \times 12$; the elves step on every other stone: $12=2 \times 6$; dwarves every third stone: $12=3 \times 4$; and the giants cross the stream in two great leaps: $12=6 \times 2$. The math lesson based on movement and story engages the willing and feeling of the child. This experience of twelve and its factors is a seed that will grow and assist the children in the understanding of factoring and reducing fractions in the fourth and fifth grades.

Mathematics is about relationships and making connections. As teachers we work to bring math in a way that allows students to make connections with themselves. If we bring abstraction too early, the children lose a connection to the subject matter, and math loses meaning. Therefore, through the third grade, mathematics is very concrete, practical, and closely connected to the human being.

The third grade has blocks on farming, building, and Old Testament stories. These include many practical mathematical activities that sow seeds for future math study.

We begin measuring things in third grade. While studying the Old Testament, a child might naturally ask, “Just how long was Noah’s ark?” A cubit is the distance from the fingertips to the elbow, and the third graders can actually go out into a field and, by knotting rope in cubit lengths, measure the 300 cubits. Through this activity the children have a real human relationship to measurement, a concrete experience using their own bodies, before they begin working with rulers.

A balance scale is often used in third grade to measure weight. Children observe that for the scale to remain in balance the same amount must be added or subtracted from both sides of the scale. This is a perfect image to bring up again when teaching algebra in the seventh and eighth grades. The scale is the equal sign, and the same operation must take place on both sides of the equation if it is to remain balanced or equal. So the seed planted in the third grade has grown from an example of how to measure weight into a living picture of more abstract mathematical thinking.

In the third grade the children also have a house-building block. In ancient times professional rope-knotters were employed to tie equally spaced knots in ropes used for measuring. Someone discovered that if you peg certain lengths of rope in the form of a triangle, a right angle

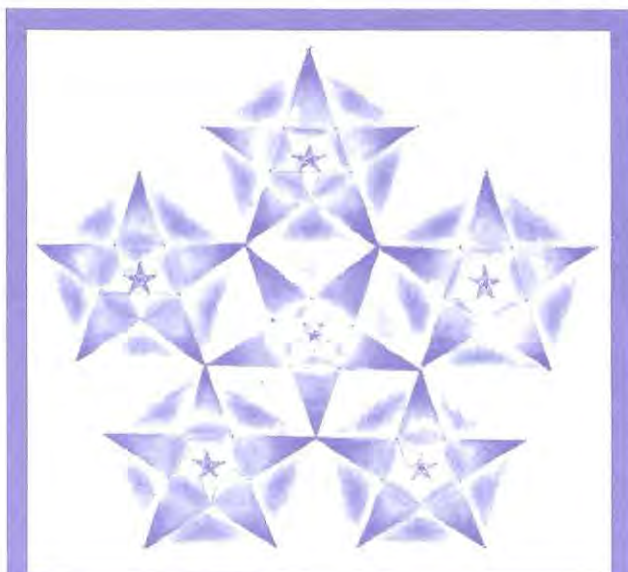
opposite the longest side is created. Knowing this and looking ahead in the curriculum to geometry and the Pythagorean theorem, the teacher may ask third graders to use a knotted rope, with lengths of three, four, and five, to make right angles at the corners of the house they are building. This mathematical relationship can be used again in a drawing of a farmhouse surrounded by three fields. The house is drawn inside a right triangle, and three square fields are drawn using the three sides of the triangle.

Steiner points out in lecture five of *The Kingdom of Childhood*, “... If I am planting potatoes and put them at the same distance from each other everywhere, I shall plant the same number of potatoes in the two smaller fields together as in the larger one” (p. 85). This is a remarkable thing! The children can experience this truth as a picture in third grade. Later, in sixth grade, they will see this relationship again as the Pythagorean theorem.

The fascinating biography of Pythagoras can be told at this time. Pythagoras lived about 500 B.C. in a time when people began to develop their ability to reason. Pythagoras noticed that a right triangle with sides of three, four, and five and a right triangle with sides of five, twelve, and thirteen have something in common. In each, the square of the largest number equals the sum of the squares of the two smaller numbers. He developed a rule that works for all right triangles. This is brought to children in the sixth grade at the stage in their development when their own powers of reasoning are awakening.

The genius of Waldorf Education lies in Steiner’s insight that each child recapitulates, within his own development, the evolution of human consciousness. And these stages of development in the child are reflected in the curriculum at any given age. After the nine-year change, the child experiences a sense of separation between his outer and inner world. The earlier harmony is broken. So in fourth grade the child begins to work with broken numbers—that is, fractions. At every stage of child development, the subject content speaks to something that the children are also experiencing within themselves.

Fifth grade is the pivotal point between childhood and puberty. The curriculum reflects this in the transition from myth to history. The study of ancient math brings mathematics into a historical context. Images of Egyptian pyramids, of Greek temples, and of the living geometry in the botany studies all lead to the study of geometry in sixth through eighth grades.



The seventh and eighth grades are a time of transition from imagination-bound thinking to conceptual thinking. What the children gained through wonder and amazement during sixth-grade geometry is now worked on in thinking.

The sixth-grade block on geometric drawing (see example above) inspires students with a deep experience of beauty, truthfulness, precision, and wonder. They are delighted by the many amazing forms they can construct with nothing but a compass and a straight-edge, working in the same way as Euclid and other Greek mathematicians over two thousand years ago.

By the seventh and eighth grades, the many seeds planted in the earlier grades have grown and metamorphosed. These seeds were cultivated by engaging the physical body in will activity and by engaging the feeling realm through connection to the human being and through the use of imaginative pictures. Now, the students are beginning to awaken to new capacities. The seventh and eighth grades are a time of transition from imagination-bound thinking to conceptual thinking. What the children gained through wonder and amazement during sixth-grade geometry is now worked on in thinking. Rules and formulas become important as increasingly complex geometry is studied. Algebra, with its abstract thinking and puzzle-solving quality, is introduced. The math curriculum, at the end of this eight-year journey, strives to cultivate in the students a new trust in thinking.

With the blossoming of thinking capacities in the high school years, the study of mathematics will have moved from the concrete to the more abstract and spiritual activity of pure thinking.

Mathematics, as taught in Waldorf schools, grows and blossoms within the child. It is experienced with joy, wonder, and the bright excitement of discovery and intellectual activity. When math is taught as "living mathematics," the possibilities for continued growth are infinite.

BARBARA SOKOLOV studied history at the University of California at Santa Cruz and received her teaching credential there. She taught for a number of years in public and parochial schools before becoming a Waldorf teacher. Barbara has five children. Her article on reading appeared in the Spring 2000 issue of *Renewal*. Barbara is currently the second-grade class teacher at the San Francisco Waldorf School.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Diggins, Julia E. *String, Straightedge, and Shadow: The Story of Geometry*. New York: The Viking Press, 1965.
- Ghyka, Martha. *The Geometry of Art and Life*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1977.
- Harrer, Dorothy. *Math Lessons for Elementary Grades*. Spring Valley, N.Y.: Mercury Press for The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, 1985 (4th printing, 1998).
- Hogben, Lancelot. *The Wonderful World of Mathematics*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1955.
- Jarman, Ron. *Teaching Mathematics in Rudolf Steiner Schools for Classes I-VIII*. Gloucestershire, U.K.: Hawthorn Press, 1998.
- Rawson, Martyn and Tobias Richter. *The Educational Tasks and Content of the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum*. Forest Row, Sussex, U.K.: Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, 2000.
- Steiner, Rudolf. *The Younger Generation*. Spring Valley, N.Y.: Anthroposophic Press, 1967 (3rd printing, 1984).
- _____. *Practical Advice to Teachers*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1976.
- _____. *The Kingdom of Childhood*. Hudson, N.Y.: Anthroposophic Press, 1995.
- _____. *Discussions with Teachers*. Hudson, N.Y.: Anthroposophic Press, 1997.
- _____. *The Study of Man*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1998.
- von Baravalle, Herman. *Geometric Drawing and the Waldorf School Plan*. Fair Oaks, Calif.: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 1991.
- _____. *The Teaching of Arithmetic and the Waldorf School Plan*. Fair Oaks, Calif.: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 1991.

Book Review

Rudolf Steiner College Press
Fair Oaks, Calif.

2nd edition, 2002

145 pages \$19.95

Teaching Children Handwriting

BY AUDREY McALLEN

REVIEWED BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH

In 1977 Audrey McAllen's book *Teaching Children to Write* was first published. The author, a remarkable Waldorf teacher in England, hoped through her work to help Waldorf teachers teach children to write by hand in a clear and beautiful way and in a manner that supports their healthy development. She saw proper training in handwriting as positively affecting physical, emotional, and mental health. The book has become a Waldorf classic and has aided countless educators all over the world in meeting the increasingly difficult challenge of helping young children to write in a healthful manner.



Audrey McAllen

A revised and expanded edition of *Teaching Children to Write* has just been published under the title *Teaching Children Handwriting*. While still meant primarily for teachers, this book will be interesting to and of practical use for parents also. It presents and explains many basic practices of Waldorf Education—the teaching of writing as a preparation for reading, the use of form drawing exercises, teaching the letters as pictures, and so on—in a clear and accessible way. Also, it provides a wealth of practical advice on how to direct children toward sound habits in writing by hand (and also in drawing and painting). This can be used by parents in the home as well as by teachers in the classroom. Also, much of the advice pertains to adults in their own practice of writing by hand.

The practical suggestions (expressed here for right-handers) include the following:

- Chair height should allow both feet to rest flat on the floor. The right foot should be slightly forward.
- Table height must allow the forearm of the writing hand to be supported from two inches below the elbow without the right shoulder being drawn down or pushed up.
- The writer should be sitting up straight, with the torso and head erect. Curling the upper body over the desk and holding the head to one side are not correct. They lead to poor breathing and circulation and to muscle fatigue. Formerly, desktops were sloped to allow the writer to sit up easily.
- The paper should be placed parallel to the front of the desktop and slightly to the right of center.
- The left hand rests on the upper left corner of the paper and, as the writing comes down the page, draws the paper away toward the far edge of the desk. This allows the right forearm to continue to be supported by the desk.
- Pencils and crayons should be at least 4.5 inches long. They must be long enough to be supported by the base of the index finger. Short writing instruments should be equipped with an extender or discarded.
- From the first time the children use a crayon or thick pencil, they should use the physiologically correct grip. In this, the middle finger supports the pencil, and the thumb and index finger rest next to each other on the pencil. (See drawing on the book cover.) This grip allows the hand to rest on its side and the forearm to be in a neutral position. Gross and fine motor movements are in balance. The grip should be firm but relaxed. A tense grip creates muscle fatigue. (For more thoughts on how to hold a pencil, please see Vivian Jones-Schmidt's article on page 37.)

In addition to her work with handwriting, Audrey McAllen developed the remedial work, based on Waldorf principles, known as The Extra Lesson,TM currently used in Waldorf schools around the world. Now retired and in her eighties, Audrey McAllen has made unique and inspired contributions to the development of Waldorf Education and to the healing of children in today's world.

our score and seven years ago our fathers began
forth, upon this continent, a new nation, con-
- liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that
all men are created equal."

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, to
whether that nation, or any nation so con-
- so dedicated, can long endure. We are

Paper, Pen, and Child

Teaching the Endangered Art of Handwriting

BY MICHAEL PRESTON



A Waldorf school is a place where the endangered art of careful and beautiful handwriting development still flourishes. From the first grade, the children learn to write by hand and to do so beautifully and in an artistic way. They learn to use a fountain pen, and they record in their main lesson books—in cursive writing—what they learn about the subjects they are studying. One of the great exponents of the teaching of good handwriting in Waldorf schools is Audrey McAllen, whose book *Teaching Children to Write*¹ has guided generations of Waldorf teachers.

This emphasis on handwriting, however, goes back to Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf Education. He gave exact instructions on how it should be taught and provided form drawing exercises that help children develop and keep a legible and aesthetically appealing way of writing. As with many of the aspects of Waldorf Education, this respect for the value of good handwriting is being corroborated by recent scientific research. Studies—to be cited later in this article—show a correlation between handwriting and emotional and

*Handwriting can be a mirror of the soul,
as illustrated by the above fragment of text
from Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.*

psychological condition. They suggest the learning of good penmanship can support the healthy development of the child; that analysis of handwriting can be a tool for understanding a child's development; and that handwriting exercises can be a means to improve mood and behavior. In other words, handwriting is potentially an important pedagogical and remedial tool.

In his introduction to the teaching of writing,² Rudolf Steiner recommends three steps. The first links the child to the past, to the heritage of the culture into which she has been born; the second to the present and to the capacities that the human hands give each child; and the third to the future, to what she can accomplish by acquiring the ability to write.

Steiner begins by saying:

The child must look up with reverence, with respect, to what the older generations have already achieved and what he is to achieve, too, through school. This looking with a certain respect to the surrounding culture must be inspired in the child from the very first, so that he really sees almost a kind of higher being in the people who have already grown older. Without awakening this sense in teaching and education one cannot get on. . . .

Rudolf Steiner then suggests:

You [the teacher] can say to the children: "Look at yourself now. You have two hands, a left hand and a right hand. You have these two hands to work with; you can do all kinds of things with these hands."

The teacher should elaborate, creating a picture for the child of the many and wonderful things human beings can do and make with their hands. Working with one's hands leads to the future, but the work must be shaped by the right soul mood.

The teacher must raise to the level of the soul's consciousness the ideals that are to be realized.

Thirdly, Steiner suggests:

You [the teacher] can say to the child: "Watch me do this." You draw a straight line and then say: "Now do it with your own hand." Now you can let the children do the same, as slowly as possible, for it will naturally be a slow

process if you are going to call the children out one by one and let them do it on the board and then go back to their places. The right assimilation of teaching in this case is of the greatest importance.

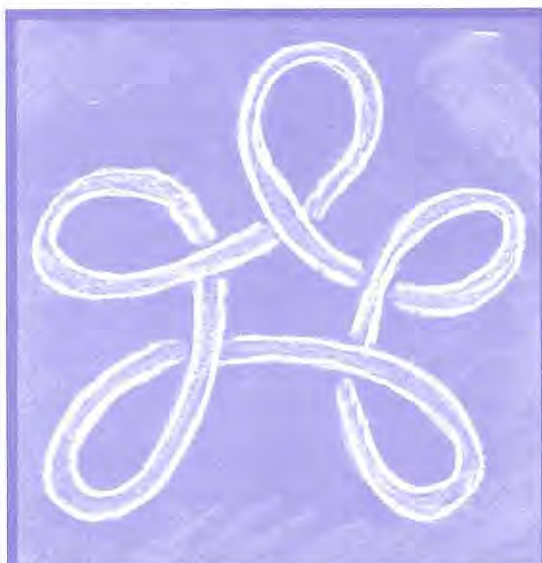
He concludes this section by saying:

In this way, then, see that you let the children do something by themselves from the first. . . .

What Steiner is suggesting is that the children must now set to work, building a path to future experience and understanding through their own effort and skill.

Steiner here integrates the past (the stream of society and culture into which we are born); the present (the capacities of our hands); and the future (our shaping of our destiny through our hands and our idealism) into the process of learning to write. These three aspects are important in understanding the meaning and role of handwriting in children's development.

The Past: Handwriting and Culture



Exercises in form drawing can help children develop beautiful handwriting.

In Waldorf schools, the learning of writing begins in the first grade, when the children consciously draw straight and curved lines and then do many exercises in rhythmic linear patterns, involving sequences of straight and curved lines, called form drawing. These are accompanied by little stories, but the heart of the work is in the care, repetition, and manual skill in accomplishing these forms on a consistent, daily basis. These are "pre-writing" exercises, and many teachers use them intensively for the first two to three weeks of the first grade.

Then, in an artistic and meaningful way, the children are introduced to the shapes of our Western, Roman alphabet. The teaching of each letter is accompanied by a story and by an artistic exercise connecting the letter with some living image. Steiner said that bringing the letters to the children in an imaginative, artistic way would help the children assimilate them more easily. Mastery of the

alphabet leads to the children reading their own writing and then eventually reading texts. This process continues through the early grades until reading and writing become established as habitual skills.

Steiner noted that the phonetic alphabets are conventional and arbitrary. Unlike speech, number, and a sense of rhythm, the shapes of letters and their connection to a particular sound are not natural aspects of human physiological expression. A given alphabet is physiologically and psychologically arbitrary. Nevertheless, every writing system contains certain archetypal features and makes universal pedagogical and developmental demands.³

All alphabets consist of straight, curved, and mixed lines. Alphabets vary, though, in the relative importance of each type of line and in how they are combined. Each writing system is both a manifestation and carrier of a culture. A child born by destiny into a particular culture must learn to use that culture's alphabetic system in order to express herself and to communicate in writing. Each child learns, more or less unconsciously and with relatively little effort, the rules of speech in order to communicate orally. Eventually, however, she must also learn the rules of writing that govern both the form of the letters and words and their proper placement on the paper. Coordination of the eye with the fine motor control of the hand must be worked at with great effort of will, concentration, and repetition, in order to achieve cultural standards of written expression and communication.

In time, the child internalizes these conventions of self-expression and becomes able to learn through reading and to express thought and feeling through writing. Here the child's imitative capacity, manual skill, and willpower connect him with his heritage, with the wisdom and cultural embodiment of his language in writing.

A child meeting her culture through language and its expression in writing is meeting a hugely significant part of life that sustains and enables her to launch into her own possibilities and future destiny. It is for this reason, perhaps, that Steiner places such importance on drawing children's attention to the contribution of prior generations. Today we easily forget the past generations through human history who have helped create our understanding and consciousness. It is important that the teacher possess gratitude and reverence for the past, engendering in children a similar reverence and respect for the past and the extraordinary gift of writing our forebears have given us.

The Present: Relationship between the Hand and the Brain

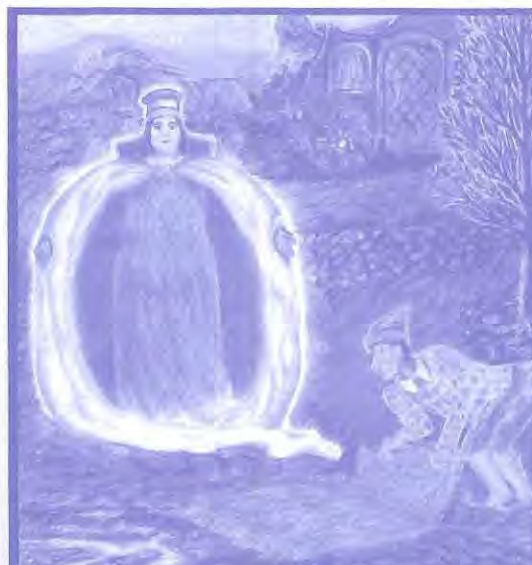
The human hand, in and of itself, is an unalloyed miracle. But recent research points to the crucial relationship that the hands and their activity have in relation to the whole human organism, particularly the brain.⁴ In

human evolution as a whole, and in the development of each individual person, there is an interplay between manual skill, experience, and mental development. Rudolf Steiner was ahead of his time in clearly understanding this, and hence activities involving the use of the hand—handcrafts, playing of instruments, painting, drawing, beeswax, clay modeling, wood carving—have a central role in the Waldorf curriculum.

Handwriting, however, is unique. It involves not only the careful, rhythmic exercise of fine motor skills but also the communication and the expression of ideas, imagination, thoughts, memories, wishes, experiences, and emotions.

Modern scientific research has made a number of interesting and relevant discoveries about the importance of the hand and manual activities. These include:

- The right hemisphere of the brain controls gross motor



Waldorf first graders learn the letters through imaginative pictures.

The above illustration is taken from the book L M N O P and All the Letters A to Z, with poems by Howard Schrager and illustrations by Bruce Bischof (Santa Cruz, Calif.: LemonTree Press, 2000).

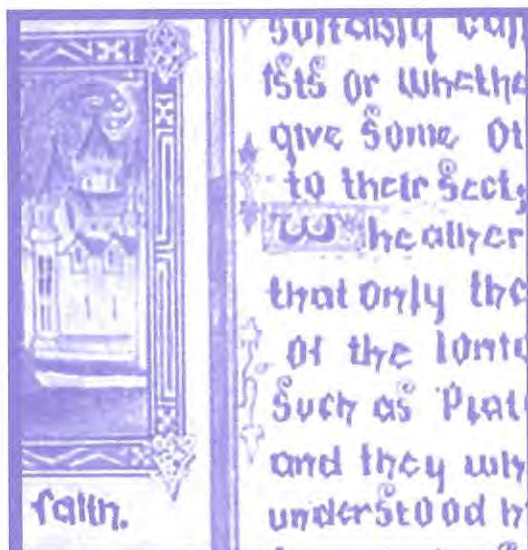
and sensory activity and is more ancient in our historical development. The left brain hemisphere governs language, sequential thought and reasoning, and also the fine motor skills that are used in activities such as handwriting. Fine motor activities stimulate the development of the left brain.

- Drawing a straight line requires greater impulse control and is more related to the left brain. Drawing a curved line is free, more natural, more of a gross motor movement and hence connects to the right brain. When a child begins to work intensively with straight and curved lines, especially when he begins to write, the right and left brains are brought into greater and more intensive relationship. Both intellectual and emotional focus, necessary for the very complex task of letter recognition and reading, is energized. This research offers a neurological explanation and contemporary validation of Steiner's firm insistence on form drawing and writing before reading.
- The use of the hand impacts not only motor control structures but also emotional tone.⁵ There is correlation between fine motor control, tension and release, and emotional expression and maturation. The content of what we write by hand is consciously produced. The form and movement of the writing, however, is influenced by unconscious, emotional factors. Handwriting is an expressive gestalt rather than a set of isolated movements.⁶
- Fine motor control and emotional control are neurologically deeply intertwined. The physiological activity involved in writing is influenced by individual psychology but also reciprocally affects emotional and psychological life.⁷
- People who develop a skill involving the refined use of the hands also develop an increased sense of identity and self-worth. Working with

the hands is not merely an accomplishment of a skill but also a change in self and one's self-image.⁸

- Regular expression of feelings and thoughts through writing for twenty minutes a day for a week has resulted in a significant strengthening of the immune system.⁹ (While usually these studies involve writing by hand, writing by typing can have a similar effect. It too is the expression of feeling in language, mediated by the hands.) Other neurological research has found that rhythmic movement in both gross and fine motor movement produces a feeling of well-being. Repetitive movement also achieves a better balance between the parts of the brain governing thinking and feeling and promotes better coordination between the left and right hemispheres of the brain.
- Children from the early grades through high school, including children with attention and behavior problems, can be positively affected by doing simple

drawing and writing-like exercises. With soft rhythmic music in the background, children doing sequences of simple straight and curved forms¹⁰—very similar to ribbon form drawing—become significantly calmer and better able to focus on their subsequent work. Fifteen minutes daily for three weeks can bring about this effect.¹¹



A Waldorf twelfth grader's main lesson book written in the style of a medieval manuscript.

People who develop a skill involving the refined use of the hands also develop an increased sense of identity and self-worth.

The Future: Handwriting as a Pedagogical and Therapeutic Tool

These research results suggest that teachers (and parents) can use handwriting in their work with their children in several ways. They can use it

- as a means to observe and assess children's emotional and psychological condition and their stage of development;
- as a therapeutic and remedial tool to promote healthy and balanced development;
- as a way to immediately affect mood and behavior.

As children get older, their writing slowly deviates from the copybook script and develops into their own unique style. This reflects the child's physiology, including motor and psychological dispositions. This usually unconscious individualizing of handwriting is especially pronounced after puberty. Among the aspects of the writing that typically change are slant, size, looping, connections, margin size, regularity, and spacing between words. Some changes are intrinsic to the child's individuality, others the result of carelessness or bad habits.

Graphology, or handwriting analysis, is an old and well-established field of study. Many great thinkers, including Goethe and Einstein, have been convinced that handwriting expresses character. The English painter Thomas Gainsborough is said to have placed a sample of his subject's writing next to his easel as he observed and painted her, in order to deepen his understanding of her character.

Two major approaches to handwriting analysis are practiced today. One correlates certain traits with certain strokes and is detail-oriented. The other school is holistic and concerns itself with gestalt features of writing such as layout and margins, slant, size of writing, pressure, speed, and line and word spacing.

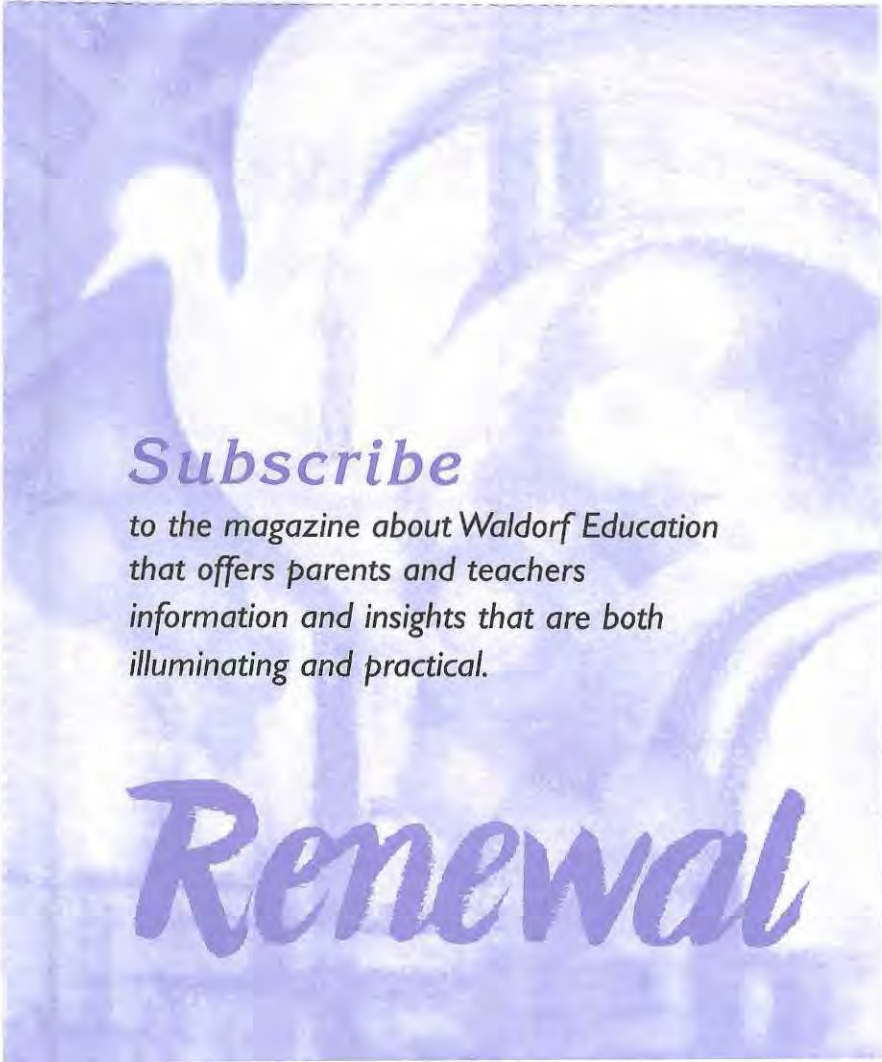
Teachers can easily grasp many of the principles of the gestalt approach and use them as another means to observe children, in a phenomenological rather than diagnostic way. Just as a child's body language and his relationship to form, as expressed in drawing, painting, eurythmy, and handwork, are indicative of growth and health, so his handwriting reveals much of importance. Observation of handwriting can help us understand a child's development and challenges. As children mature, their writing is a gestural picture of overall developmental progress.

The blank page is like a stage onto which the actor—the person who writes—walks. Some walk in boldly, perhaps overconfidently, or even carelessly. Others are aware of their surroundings, stepping carefully, paying attention to protocol and aesthetic niceties. Others are timid or lost in their own world. Their writing may even appear marooned on the page. Some have a lot to say and use every inch of space. Others allow for areas of quiet, white space. A graphologist will often turn a page upside down before reading anything, just to gain an impression of the gesture of the writing in the space of the page.

Other things to note include: letter size and consistency of letter size; slant; size and evenness of the four surrounding margins; white space between the lines; size and evenness of spaces between words; consistency or rise and fall of the line of writing—particularly where there is no guideline or liner; degree and quality of connective strokes between letters; and pressure or intensity of the writing.

According to graphology, the upper zone of a line of writing—comprised of the upper extensions of letters—corresponds to thought and imagination. The middle zone—composed of nonextended lowercase letters such as *m, n, o*—reflects social emphasis and feeling-life invested in day-to-day, practical concerns. The lower zone—the downward extensions—reflects practical/physical interests and willing. The three zones give a picture of the relative dominance and balance between these three areas of human activity.

The teacher can also use handwriting to promote healthy development. In other academic and artistic activities, we do not accept just any work or behavior. We guide the children according to certain patterns and



Subscribe

*to the magazine about Waldorf Education
that offers parents and teachers
information and insights that are both
illuminating and practical.*

Renewal

models with inbuilt aesthetic and moral standards. This should also apply in the realm of penmanship.

Some of the individual deviations from copybook writing are healthy and normal developmental expressions of individuality. Some, however, suggest negative inclinations and traits. Since there is a mutual interrelationship of handwriting and character, continued instruction and training in penmanship may positively influence the developing character. In other words, ongoing guidance in clear, balanced, aesthetically pleasing handwriting may encourage a clarity, harmony, and balance of soul. It is interesting to look at Abraham Lincoln's handwriting in this regard. Care, beauty, balance, clarity, evenness, steadiness, legibility, originality, strength, energy, and focus are some of the desirable qualities of any page of writing.

Even brief exercises in penmanship can serve short-term goals, such as the calming of a class. Some experience with my own class bears this out. Early in the year, I had my fifth-grade students do writing exercises similar to form drawing each morning while I softly and rhythmically played chimes in the background. (For a younger class, a set of pentatonic chimes should be used.) The

children's ability to be calm and quiet and to engage the material of the subsequent main lesson noticeably increased. They greatly enjoyed this activity but wanted a break after about five weeks. Later in the year, I had the children do exercises from a practice book for cursive handwriting before main lesson. This had a similar quieting and focusing effect. I also introduced this activity in a workshop on handwriting at a recent Waldorf teachers' conference and in faculty meetings at my school. Colleagues reported a similar calming and focusing effect.

Thus, handwriting can be used to create a positive classroom environment for learning. It can be used as a way to understand the children more deeply. Steady year-to-year guidance toward aesthetic and balanced handwriting can promote psychological growth and health.

If we can consciously guide children in their handwriting with the same devotion we give to other areas of teaching, handwriting can take its rightful place alongside the arts and intellectual learning in the Waldorf curriculum. It will become a powerful and anchoring means of strengthening children on a consistent basis, developing their capacities, and helping them move confidently and courageously toward their future and their destiny.

MICHAEL PRESTON was educated in Kenya, New Zealand, and England. He taught as a volunteer in Vanuatu, was a teacher in state schools in England, and has been a Waldorf class teacher for twenty-one years. Michael earned a Ph.D. in the philosophy of education, specializing in the phenomenology of perception. Recently he gained California state accreditation in handwriting analysis. Michael and his wife teach in the Honolulu Waldorf School. Their three children have all happily graduated from Waldorf schools.

ENDNOTES

1. Audrey McAllen, *Teaching Children to Write* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1977). A revised, expanded second edition of this book was published in 2002 by Rudolf Steiner College Press (Fair Oaks, Calif.) as *Teaching Children Handwriting*.

2. Rudolf Steiner, *Practical Course for Teachers* (London: Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co., and New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1937). Now available as *Practical Advice to Teachers* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1976). The pages of the three given quotes are, as they appear in *Practical Course*, 52, 54, and 55 and, as they appear in *Practical Advice*, 54, 59, and 60.

Renewal

☐ One-year subscription \$12 or ☐ Two-year subscription \$24

Name (please print)

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone Number

E-mail Address

☐ Check Enclosed ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ AMEX

Card Number

EXP

Signature

Thank you! Please mail or fax this form with payment to:

AWSNA/Renewal

3911 Bannister Road · Fair Oaks, CA 95628
PHONE: (916) 535-7595 · FAX: (916) 961-0715

3. Georges Jean, *Writing: The Story of Alphabets and Scripts* (London: Thames and Hudson, and New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1992). This book gives a history of the development of writing.

4. Frank Wilson, *The Hand: How it Shapes the Brain, Language and Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998). See also Frank Wilson, "The Real Meaning of Hands-On Education," *Waldorf Education Research Bulletin* (Hadley, Mass., January 2000).

5. Jeanette Farmer, *Training the Brain to Pay Attention the Write Way* (Denver: WriteBrain Press, 1993). Jeanette Farmer is editor of the *Journal of the American Handwriting Analysis Foundation*. For many years, she has studied the developmental effects of handwriting on children. Her research in this area is seminal.

6. Dr. Rudolf Pophal was a German neurologist and a professor of psychology and graphology at the University of Hamburg during the 1950s and 1960s. Dr. Pophal researched for thirty years the relationship between the motor centers of the brain, movements of the hand, and handwriting. He was one of the first to see that handwriting is an expressive gestalt, not just a set of isolated movements. His work laid the basis for neurophysiological research on the connections between the hand and psychology.

7. H. C. Leiner, A. Leiner, and R. S. Dow, "The Human Cerebro-cerebular System: Its Computing, Cognitive and Language Skills," *Behavioral Brain Research* 44(2) (1991): 113-128.

8. Arthur Auer, "Hand Movements Sculpt Intelligence," *Waldorf Education Research Bulletin* (Hadley, Mass., June 2001).

9. J.W. Pennebaker, "Writing, Social Processes, and Psychotherapy: From Past to Future," pages 281-291 in S.J. Lepore and J.M. Smyth, *The Writing Cure: How Expressive Writing Promotes Health and Emotional Well-being* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2002).

10. Joen Gladich and Paula Sassi, *The Write Approach* (San Diego, Calif.: Handwriting Consultants International, 1988). There is a great similarity between the form drawing patterns presented in this book and the more recent remedial exercises in Jeanette Farmer's workbook.

11. Farmer, op. cit.

How to Hold a Pencil

BY VIVIAN JONES-SCHMIDT



As every first-grade teacher knows, young children love to write, and they seem to be innately aware of the seriousness of the task. Indeed, watching their earnest faces as they take up their writing implements, an observer can easily imagine herself transported to a temple in ancient Egypt, where young scribes are learning to do their sacred work.

The teacher's task is to lead her young charges into the correct practice of this sacred art, and correct practice begins with holding the pencil properly. (I use "pencil" here for the sake of convenience. I am well aware of the conversation in Waldorf circles between advocates of stick crayons as initial writing tools and advocates of chubby pencils.) Many children enter school already in the habit of holding a pencil incorrectly. Sometimes these children were allowed or encouraged to write before they were developmentally ready to do so; sometimes they were simply never taught the correct grip. Regardless of the reason for the incorrect habit, once developed, it is very hard to unlearn.

One can legitimately ask the question, "Does it really matter how one holds a pencil?" Experience answers, "Yes, it matters." Simply put, for most writers, gripping the pencil correctly provides the maximum range of control, flexibility, and fluidity in writing.

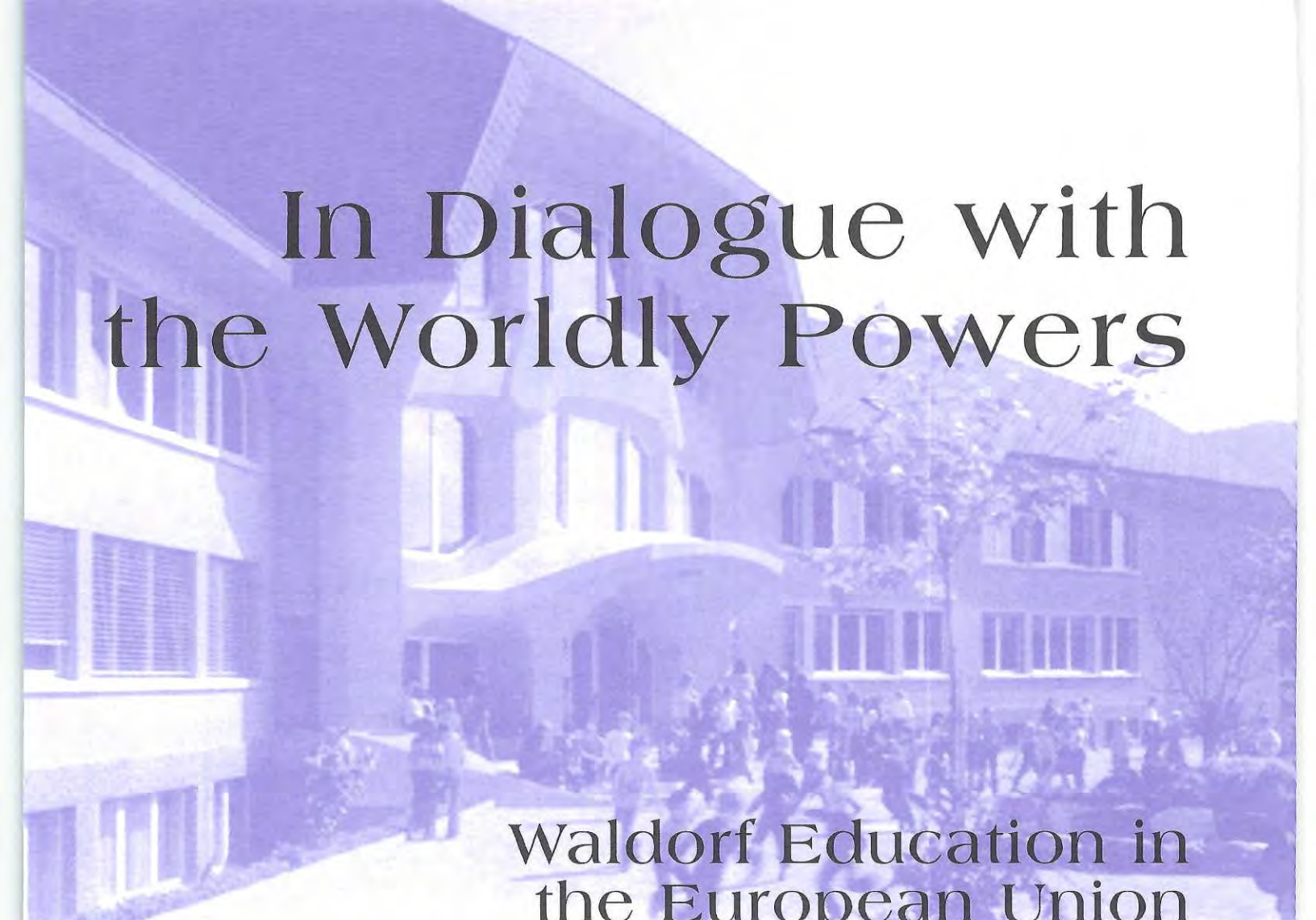
For example, in one very common—and incorrect—grip, the thumb thrusts forward and either sticks straight out or covers the index and middle finger. The pencil then becomes more or less vertical and the tip of the pencil is usually invisible to the writer. Try writing while holding a pencil in this manner, and you probably will find that you have less control over the pencil and less control over the appearance of your handwriting than if you use one of the accepted grips.

Herein lies an additional, and often unspoken, reason for learning how to hold a pencil correctly. Possessing the maximum range of control, flexibility, and fluidity means that one has the freedom to experiment with, and ultimately to choose, one's handwriting, one's signature, one's "mark in the world."

The preferred grip is as follows: Pinch the pencil, about one inch above the tip, between the thumb and the index finger, with the other three fingers curled into a loose fist. Let the pencil rest on the side of the first joint of the middle finger. The upper part of the pencil rests on the side of the index finger just above that finger's base. (Please see the cover illustration of *Teaching Children Handwriting* on page 30.) The outside of the little finger is in continual contact with the writing surface.

There are rare cases of children who cannot master this grip despite long efforts to do so. And some adults with a physical problem such as a frozen shoulder may be unable to write with the recommended grip. In such cases there is another grip that may be used as a last resort and, one would hope, as a stage to the mastery of the proper grip: Place the pencil between the index and middle fingers. Pinch the pencil, about one inch above the tip, between the ends of the thumb and the index finger. Let the pencil rest on the side of the middle finger and slant back to rest in the space between the index and middle fingers. The other two fingers are curled into a loose fist. The outside of the little finger is in continual contact with the writing surface.

VIVIAN JONES-SCHMIDT is a class teacher at the Charlottesville Waldorf School and a member of the editorial advisory board of *Renewal*.



In Dialogue with the Worldly Powers

Waldorf Education in the European Union

BY CHRISTOPHER CLOUDER

Rudolf Steiner Schule, Bern, Switzerland

Education in Europe today is in a state of flux and change. On one hand, the continent is becoming as diverse educationally as it is linguistically. With growing regionalism in educational affairs, decision making is shifting to the local authorities. Countries and regions such as Wales, Scotland, and Catalonia are now fully responsible for their educational policy. This tendency is even beginning to be felt in previously highly centralized countries like France. The central governments still play a role, however. They often insist on keeping their responsibility for the quality of what is provided, enact laws that are operative on a national level, and demand various curricula norms. Some countries are more prescriptive in these measures than others. In general, though, the trend is toward local autonomy.

On the other hand, a new thinking about education on a European scale is emerging, albeit without the wholehearted sanction of all the countries involved. This so-called "European dimension in education" is intimately bound up with a new cultural and spiritual awareness. There now exists, for instance, a European Higher Education Area that includes all countries, not just those within the European Union, and some forms of convergence are becoming unavoidable. The European countries see themselves simultaneously as both collaborators and competitors. Since education is generally recognized as the key to future social and economic success, no country can afford to be unaware of what is going on around it.

These two trends—of local responsibility and of convergence—are producing an increasingly complex environment. They are also creating a pressing need for interested parties—including Waldorf schools—to have their voices heard on significant matters.

The Waldorf schools in Europe vary in their relationships to their national governments. In Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Scotland, Ireland, and England, schools receive no state financial support whatsoever. In France, a few do receive aid but most do not. In Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, Waldorf schools receive anything between 10 percent to 100 percent of their funds from the state.

Because of the increasing tendency for education to be a major preoccupation of politicians and the authorities, independence from state financial aid is no guarantee of freedom. In all countries, both those giving and not giving aid, more and more laws are being enacted that impinge on Waldorf Education. These concern health and safety issues, human rights, employment legislation, and the right of every child to an education that meets certain standards of quality.

Waldorf schools cannot stand aside from this activity without running the risk of adverse consequences for

what Waldorf has to offer to a greater number of families. At the same time, we need to learn from other developments in the educational world through dialogue and expressions of interest.

There were similar questions confronting Rudolf Steiner when the first Waldorf school was founded in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1919. Steiner reached an agreement with the authorities of the state of Württemberg that allowed children in the Waldorf school to transfer seamlessly into a state school at the end of the third, sixth, and eighth grades. Steiner argued successfully that, at these three points, Waldorf students would have realized the same learning goals as children in the state school. The agreement stated:

At the end of these stages the Waldorf school will have reached the same prescribed learning goals as the public schools.¹

In return, there was public funding for the school, and in the class years between the transfer points the teachers were granted complete freedom in the formation of the curriculum.

This particular arrangement might not be universally applicable now, as educational expectations have changed with the times. But it does show a recognition of the realities of the world at the very inception of the



Freie Waldorfschule, Uhlandshöhe, Stuttgart, Germany

The Waldorf movement must become involved in the societywide discussions of health and safety issues, human rights, and quality in education.

their well-being and growth. Over the years, we in the Waldorf movement in Europe have realized that we should be in the forefront of these debates if we are to protect our schools and serve the well-being of the children adequately. It is not a matter of compromising our integrity but of being able to enhance and expand

Waldorf movement. Today still, we have to fight for what we consider to be right for the child, but we also have to be effective in achieving those ideals. Reflecting on this very issue in 1923, when a similar compromise had to be made for the Basel school, Rudolf Steiner said in a lecture:

What must never happen is to allow a more or less sectarian or fanatical zeal to creep into our educational endeavors, only to find at the end of the road that our pupils do not fit into life as it is. For life in the world takes no notice of one's educational ideals, but it is governed from the prevailing conditions themselves. . . . Opponents of Anthroposophy have often attributed fanaticism and sectarianism to this movement, but, as you will see, these two attributes are alien to its nature.²

It is our good fortune to live in a time where educational ideas increasingly do affect the prevailing cultural conditions we live in and are a matter of general concern. For this reason, dialogue and engagement with the world have become extremely vital.

The very recent developments in France, Hungary, Norway, and Finland (as mentioned below) show the effectiveness of such an approach. It must be borne in mind that every country has to tread its own path that is intimately bound up with its culture, history, sense of identity, and relationships to other cultures.

France

In recent years, the French government was intolerant of diversity in education and was very hostile to Waldorf Education. For a time, the continued existence of the Waldorf schools was in question. At the last election, in June 2002, a new national government was chosen and, fortunately for our colleagues in France, it is thus far

noted educational philosopher, there will be a greater tolerance of diversity, that Waldorf schools will be treated with more respect than hitherto, and that threats to the very existence of Waldorf will recede.

Hungary

Whereas in France there has been a swing to the political right, in Hungary the most recent election resulted in a swing to the left. However, the incoming minister has confirmed that he will abide by the original agreement between the previous government and the Waldorf schools regarding their future funding and independence. This gives the schools great freedom on condition they themselves can mutually agree on the curricula and the quality assurance of what they provide. After a lot of work, the Waldorf School Federation was able to submit a common curriculum by the stipulated date in August 2002 and is waiting for a response. The next tasks of the schools include developing ways to provide "quality care" and providing a sound basis for their mutual working together as a group of schools within an association.

Norway

Norway has been one of the most Waldorf-friendly of countries. Now the situation seems to be getting even better. The government is proposing doing away with the term "private schools" and using "freestanding

Libre Ecole Rudolf Steiner in Verrières, France

**The very inception of the
Waldorf movement
showed a recognition of
the realities of the world.**



proving more Waldorf-friendly. New discussions were started with the national education department almost immediately about the status of the schools. It is hoped that under the new minister of education, Luc Ferry, a

schools" instead. Under new legislation, the state's financial contribution toward operating costs will rise from 85 percent to 90 percent and, instead of the schools having to find their own funds for capital

expenses (new buildings, renovations, and so on), the government intends to pay 90 percent. A few years ago, the minister of education himself acknowledged the debt the nation's educational system owes to Waldorf Education. This past summer, the Oslo Waldorf Teacher Education Course was accredited for a Bachelor of Arts degree and is therefore eligible for government funding. There are no strings attached.

Finland

In Finland, the main Waldorf teacher education institute is Snellman College. Last year, the national parliament,

International Assessment (PISA). In a comparative study of thirty-one countries, Finland's fifteen-year-old students excelled in reading, math, and science skills.

We in the Waldorf movement in Europe are well aware that this work of connecting with the larger world cannot be done at the cost of the inner work we each need to do and of the striving for excellence in each school. These too are necessary for Waldorf to flourish and develop. But the activity in the world complements rather than opposes our efforts as individuals and as school communities. The morning verse used in Waldorf



Steinerskolen, Stavanger, Norway

Connecting with the larger world must be accompanied by the inner work that we each need to do and by the striving for excellence in each school.

after an intensive debate, voted 127 to 54 to recognize Snellman College as an official institute of higher education. This paves the way for state financial support for Waldorf teacher education in Finland. This came about because an evaluating committee reported positively on the quality of the Waldorf teacher education. A highly placed education official in Helsinki stated that Finnish state schools had reason to be grateful to the Waldorf schools for their positive contributions to pedagogical practice in the country's elementary schools. This contribution was also recognized in parliament.

The Finnish Steiner schools first obtained state funding in 1977. Since then, they have continued discussions with policymakers with the aim of participating in the development of the whole educational system in the country. Children start formal education at the age of seven in Finland, not only because of tradition but also as a result of a thorough research-based consideration of the disadvantages of starting earlier. The country did remarkably well in the recent report by the Program for

elementary schools encourages students to "look into the world," and we as Waldorf teachers, administrators, and parents must do the same.

CHRISTOPHER CLOUDER is chairman of the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education, the director of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship in the United Kingdom, and a cofounder of the Alliance for Childhood. He is a visiting lecturer at Plymouth University and Emerson College and lectures publicly worldwide. Earlier in his career, he taught adolescents in state schools in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands and for twenty years in Waldorf schools.

ENDNOTES

1. Rudolf Steiner, *Konferenzen GA 300/1* [Conferences: Collected Works, No. 300, vol. 1] (Dornach, Switzerland: Verlag am Goetheanum, 1919), 28.
2. Rudolf Steiner, *A Child's Changing Consciousness* (Hudson, N.Y.: Anthroposophic Press, 1988), 150. Lecture delivered on April 23, 1923.

Book Review

AWSNA Publications
Fair Oaks, Calif., 2002
151 pages \$12.00

The Dynamic Heart and Circulation

EDITED BY CRAIG HOLDREGE

REVIEWED BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH

Most of us learned in high school biology that the human heart is a four-chambered mechanical pump. The size of a fist, it sends blood to the lungs to be oxygenated and then sends the returning oxygen-rich blood throughout the body in the roughly 60,000 miles of arteries, veins, and capillaries. Even considered only as a mechanical pump, the heart is amazing. The heart beats, without ceasing, about 72 times a minute, over 4000 times in an hour, about 100,000 times in the course of a day, 365,000,000 times in a year, and about 24 billion times in the course of an average lifetime!

But the heart is much more than a pump. Over eighty years ago, Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the founder of Waldorf

Education, remarked that, while the heart has functions that can be interpreted in terms of a pump, the heart is better understood as an internal sense organ. Recent scientific research is corroborating this view. It has shown that the heart is in fact a sense organ that is constantly monitoring and responding to what is going on in the entire body and that it is important in various functions of the human

organism. For example, according to heart transplant studies, memories are stored in the heart, and there are many documented cases of a heart recipient remembering experiences that were the heart donor's, not his own.*

The Dynamic Heart and Circulation is a collection of essays about the human heart. The writers of these essays, most of whom are anthroposophical physicians and research scientists in Germany, use a Goethean approach. This method of studying nature emphasizes the direct observation of the phenomenon in itself, in its processes of change, and in its relationship to other phenomena and to the environment as a whole. Goethean science seeks first to describe the object of study from many points of view and within its context and thus to achieve a deep, many-sided appreciation and understanding. The method was formulated by the German scientist, poet, and dramatist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). Rudolf Steiner—who received the highest level scientific and technical education available in his day—preferred the Goethean approach, refined it, and used it in his own researches. Waldorf

schools use a Goethean, or phenomenological, approach in the teaching of science.

In his introductory essay, Craig Holdrege—a longtime Waldorf high school biology teacher and currently head of the Nature Institute in Harlemville, New York—laments the common understanding of the heart as a pump. But he observes that the approach of modern mainstream science tends to result in just such abstract models. Isolating, analyzing, and trying above all to explain a phenomenon, it typically creates an abstraction that is only partially related to what is actually existing in nature. The abstract model has some value, but it is usually created out of a simplistic, limited, and fixed view. The life and dynamic quality have been extracted from what is studied.

Holdrege argues that the heart must be studied in context as part of the human body and as part of the entire human being. He then presents five essays by researchers and physicians in Germany. These five essays consider the heart from various points of view—anatomical, embryological, morphological, and so on.

The human heart is revealed to be a wonder of biological design that performs many more functions in the human organism than generally understood until now. Even in its form and movement, the heart belies the mechanical model. While it seems to be made of simple bands of muscle fiber, these are in fact complex spiraling intertwined fibers in complex clockwise and counterclockwise patterns. The interior surface of the heart has spiral grooves that reflect the movement of the blood in the chambers—and also create this movement. What the blood does as a fluid in the heart has taken form in the muscle. In the two atria, the blood moves in opposing vortex patterns, one clockwise, one counterclockwise. In systole, or contraction, the heart moves downward and rotates on its axis, and in diastole, or relaxation, it moves upward and rotates in the opposite direction.

The heart is constantly monitoring, through the blood and the nervous system, what is going on in the other internal organs, in the other, peripheral parts of the circulation system, and in the body as a whole. It senses changes in blood pressure, biochemical composition, warmth, and muscle activity and responds accordingly. The heart is in constant communication and cooperation with the other organs and with the entire system of arteries, veins, and capillaries. It is the heart muscle that gives warmth to the blood and hence to the entire body.



A Helping Hand around the World



A classroom in the
Waldorf school in
Grobina, Latvia.

Friends of Rudolf Steiner's Art of Education

BY HOLGER NIEDERHAUSEN AND JAN LECHER
TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH

The international organization "Friends of Rudolf Steiner's Art of Education" (*Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners*) today can look back on over thirty years of work on behalf of Waldorf Education. In Germany in 1971, Ernst Weissert formed "The Friends of Waldorf Education," seeking to bring together people to support the worldwide Waldorf movement—both financially and in terms of ideals. Along with Manfred Leist, he planted the seed for later work, even though they both were also very active in the Waldorf movement in Germany at that time.

In 1976 a number of recent Waldorf school graduates from Germany, the Netherlands, and England came to Weissert with the idea of founding, as Rudolf Steiner had once suggested, a worldwide association of schools. Weissert offered to these young people, among whom was Nana Goebel—the current director of the "Friends"—the organization he had founded as a legal instrument for their work.

In this way, the Friends of Rudolf Steiner's Art of Education came into existence, and since then it has, through its International Aid Fund, assisted Waldorf schools and increasingly also therapeutic schools

around the world. By the end of the year 2000, the organization in its thirty years had distributed to needy schools over \$36 million, and recently about \$3.3 million annually. The Friends has helped over 400 groups in over 60 countries and today gives aid to about 150 initiatives each year. For example, this year the therapeutic Michael School in Tbilisi (Republic of Georgia)—destroyed by an earthquake last spring—can be rebuilt. Over 800 people have donated about \$70,000 through the Friends to make this possible.

The Friends passes on 100 percent of the donations it receives. About 96 percent of the donations are made for designated purposes. The balance goes into the International Aid Fund to help schools in the building-up stage and to meet emergency situations.

In 1997 the main office of the Friends moved from Stuttgart to Berlin. A second office in Karlsruhe, Germany, organizes the assignment of volunteers and of German young people doing social service as an alternative to military service. Through this, over 350 young people each year help out in various Waldorf schools and establishments in Europe and around the world.

The Friends engages in a variety of other activities as well. These include:

Consulting: The Friends offers advice about school construction, raising money (both from private and public sources), and other areas of concern to new and growing schools all over the world.

Scholarship Assistance: Scholarships given by the Friends help Waldorf teacher trainees from countries where there are few Waldorf initiatives.

Sponsorships: Friends' sponsorships make it possible for children whose families cannot afford school tuition to attend a Waldorf school. At the present time, the Friends arranges sponsorships in Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay, Namibia, Kenya, South Africa, Latvia, Nepal, and Viet Nam.

School Partnerships: Partnerships are critical for the future of the Waldorf school movement. Established schools advise, help, and support younger schools, and, in almost all cases, the relationship is very fruitful for both schools. The Friends gladly sets up and helps to mediate partnerships between needy and established schools.

WOW Day: The "Waldorf One World Day" is a further opportunity for Waldorf schools to support other initiatives. For one day each year Waldorf students raise money through various means to help a struggling worthwhile initiative. At present, some forty schools in Europe take part in WOW Day. The children have the important experience of helping others and also have fun in the process. In the past eight years, about \$350,000 has been raised. This is an example of how much help a single impulse can bring. Among the initiatives supported are a social service agency in Colombia, a home for abused children in Thailand, and a school for handicapped children in Russia:

Bogotá

"Extra Muros" is a small service group active in impoverished areas of Bogotá. One of its projects involves some thirty-six families (some 200 adults and children) who two years ago were forced out of their homes—wooden shacks built on a railroad embankment. Extra Muros helped relocate these people in a new housing development and then helped them improve their lives—teaching basic household and life skills, finding work for the adults, and securing school places for the children. The changes are already clear. The people have hope

and ambitions for the future. Drug use and violence have decreased. In May 2002 a kindergarten was founded in the development. The two kindergarten teachers—who each has a year's experience in a Waldorf kindergarten in Cali—found a space and furnishings. Some of the funds raised on WOW Day help to build up this kindergarten.



A teacher's blackboard drawing in the Waldorf school in Ust-Kamenogorsk in Kazakhstan in central Asia.

Basketry class in the Ojap Waldorf school in Estonia.



Bangkok

In Thailand, sex tourism, child abuse, drug use, and violence are part of everyday life. The Child Protection Foundation (CPF), founded in Bangkok in 1991, helps in hundreds of cases of child abuse every year. The decline in the economy has increased child abuse.

At present, the CPF protects, directly or indirectly, about 230 children between one and seventeen years old.

About sixty-five children live in a residential home run by CPF, and the others are in schools and foster families. A governing principle in the foundation's home is that the children help each other. The older ones help the younger in various daily tasks. Eventually the children have the opportunity to talk about and deal with their experiences. They stay until they are able to take care of themselves.

St. Petersburg

In 1999 two therapeutic educators founded a class for severely handicapped children. A room was painted and, with financial help from the Friends, was provided with furniture, curtains, and an old piano. At first there were just a few handicapped children, but in a few months twenty blind children from a neighboring institution joined. The interest and commitment of parents increased. For many of the children, the only activity they have is at the little school. Otherwise they would be at home with nothing to do.

Every day at the school, the children do eurythmy, physical exercises, speech exercises, therapeutic painting, clay modeling, and also, of course, play together. The children receive much individual attention, and three times a week there is a general lesson.

Unfortunately, the initiative lost its room in 2001 and now is lodged in not very suitable quarters. Despite the difficulties, the parents are determined that the school should continue and are helping to find a new space.

In addition to these initiatives, there are Waldorf kindergarten and school initiatives all over the world—in Peru, Nepal, Taiwan, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere, which are struggling to survive and grow. Any individuals or



Children in the Mbagathi Waldorf School in Nairobi, Kenya.

schools that would like more information regarding the work of the Friends can visit the Web site at www.freunde-waldorf.de

Waldorf Education Worldwide is a 200-page record of the spread of Waldorf Education and therapeutic education around the world. Originally published in German by the Friends, it is now available in English. Schools and homes in over sixty countries are presented, with many accompanying illustrations. The book includes current statistics about the number of schools, kindergartens, students, homes, and training courses in each country. It is available by e-mail at vertrieb@kooperative.de

The Dynamic Heart and Circulation

continued

Also, the heart is intimately related to our emotional and psychological life. It immediately reflects our changing emotional and mental states. The heart can be understood as the center of the human organism, connecting and mediating between the upper and lower parts of the body, the upper pole of the brain and nervous system and the lower pole of the limbs and metabolic system.

This excellent book, easily understandable for most readers, gives us a living picture of the human heart. In doing so, it reminds us of a broader truth: that the human body in each of its parts and in its totality is, in design and function, an absolute miracle.

Materialistic science would have us believe that this miracle and all the others, large and small, that fill our world are the product of blind chance and impersonal processes. An alternate view—that of the spiritual science taught by Rudolf Steiner—views the world and everything in it as the consciously wrought creation of a benign and loving cosmic intelligence.

*See Paul Pearsall, Ph.D., *The Heart's Code: Tapping the Wisdom and Power of Our Heart Energy* (New York: Broadway Books, 1998).

See also Paul Pearsall, Ph.D., Linda Russek, Ph.D., and Gary Schwartz, Ph.D., "Changes in Heart Transplant Recipients that Parallel the Personalities of Their Donors," *Journal of Near-Death Studies* (January 2002).

Readers are referred also to the work of the HeartMath® Institute, based in Boulder Creek, California. This organization, though not connected to Anthroposophy, has carried out scientific research that can be seen as supporting many of Rudolf Steiner's assertions about the heart. E-mail: info@heartmath.org Telephone: (831) 338-8706.

In Memoriam
Christy MacKaye Barnes



January 10, 1909–December 18, 2002

Christy MacKaye Barnes was a poet, a speech artist, a lover of literature, a pioneer and pillar of Waldorf Education in America, and a dedicated anthroposophist. Christy taught at the Rudolf Steiner School in New York City for some twenty-five years and was instrumental in creating the English and literature curriculum widely used in Waldorf high schools on this continent. She was a gifted teacher who inspired her students to share her own deep regard and love for the written and the spoken word. She was a teacher, too, who unfailingly encouraged, affirmed, and helped develop the special gifts of each of the hundreds of young persons she taught. Christy Barnes died on December 18, 2002, shortly before her ninety-fourth birthday.

Christy was born on January 10, 1909, in Cornish, New Hampshire, to Marion Morse MacKaye and Percy MacKaye. Her father was a noted poet and playwright, and in Christy's early years the family lived in various places in and around New York and Boston as well as in Cornish. By the time she was fourteen years old, Christy had attended fourteen different schools!

After two years at Smith College in Massachusetts, Christy transferred to Rollins College in Florida, where her father had been given the post of poet-in-residence. There she met lifelong friends John Gardner—later an important figure in Waldorf Education in America—and Carol Hemingway, sister of Ernest Hemingway and John's future wife. The three spent many hours on the veranda of their dormitory smoking their pipes and discussing their common passions—poetry and literature.

Christy's first book of poetry, *Out of Chrysalis*, appeared while she was in college. In 1931 her second book, *Wind in the Grass*, was published by Harper's with a laudatory introduction by Edwin Arlington Robinson. Introduced to Anthroposophy and the work of Rudolf Steiner by her older sister, Arvia,

Christy went to Dornach, Switzerland—the center of the anthroposophical movement—in 1928. She was present there at the opening of the second Goetheanum, designed by Rudolf Steiner shortly before his death in 1925 to replace the first building, destroyed by fire.

Christy's interest in the art of speech led her to return to Dornach in 1936 to do a three-year speech and drama training with Marie Steiner, Rudolf Steiner's widow. In that same year, she met Henry Barnes. Henry, one of the first North Americans to become a trained Waldorf teacher, was then teaching at Michael Hall, a Waldorf school in England. The two married in September 1939, just after the outbreak of World War II. They returned to America in June 1940 on the last American passenger ship to leave the Mediterranean.

Christy and Henry settled in New York City, and Henry started teaching at the Rudolf Steiner School there. In 1952, when their two children, John and Marion, were of school age, Christy became a class teacher at the school. In 1959 she started teaching English and literature in the high school. Over the next twenty years she helped shape the Waldorf high school English curriculum, introducing the great novels of Russian literature, the nineteenth-century American masterpieces such as Melville's *Moby Dick*, and so on. Christy also edited the school literary magazine, directed speech choruses for students and for adults, and continued to write her own poetry. After retiring from teaching, she took over—at age 80—the running of the Adonis Press and published many fine anthroposophic and literary titles. In 1996 her book of essays, *For the Love of Literature*, was brought out by the Anthroposophic Press in collaboration with AVSNA Publications.

Christy Barnes's long and fruitful life was filled with the light of spiritual science. She touched in a positive way the lives and destinies of her family, students, friends, and colleagues. With her passing, we have had to say farewell to a rare and gifted individuality.

Ronald E. Koetzsch
Anne Riegel-Koetzsch

BOOKS

in Brief

Star and Planet Almanac 2003: Monthly Guide to the Sky at Night

BY LIESBETH BISTERBOSCH

Hawthorn Press

Stroud, Gloucestershire, U.K., 2002



Each night above our heads a magnificent pageant, too often forgotten or ignored, takes place. The constellations of the zodiac appear and begin their majestic procession along an arc in the southern

sky. In the northern sky, the pole star starts to shine, keeping its place while Cassiopeia and the other circling constellations move around it. And among the fixed stars those eternal "wanderers," the moon and the planets, move and with each moment change their relationship to all the other celestial bodies.

Keeping track of this nightly spectacle is a worthwhile activity for young and old. It keeps us in touch with nature on its grandest scale and can keep alive a sense of wonder at the world. All that the naked-eye astronomer needs is a fairly clear nighttime sky (something which, alas, may for some require a drive out of a city) and a good star calendar.

The *Star and Planet Almanac* published by Hawthorn Press is an outstanding star calendar. It has strikingly beautiful and easy-to-use colored monthly sky charts. With these one can locate the constellations and the brighter stars, follow the movements of the moon and planets, and watch for meteor showers. Each chart is accompanied by an explanatory text.

There is also an excellent section of general information, instructions for users of the almanac in North America, and suggestions on how to help in the campaign against the light pollution that threatens to render the stars and planets invisible.

From April 1, 2003, the 2003 almanac will be half-price or \$9.95.

The 2004 almanac will be available from September 2003 for \$19.95.

The almanac is distributed in North America by Anthroposophic Press.

E-mail: sales@anthropress.org Tel: (800) 856-8664

R.E.K.

Practical Beauty Illustrated

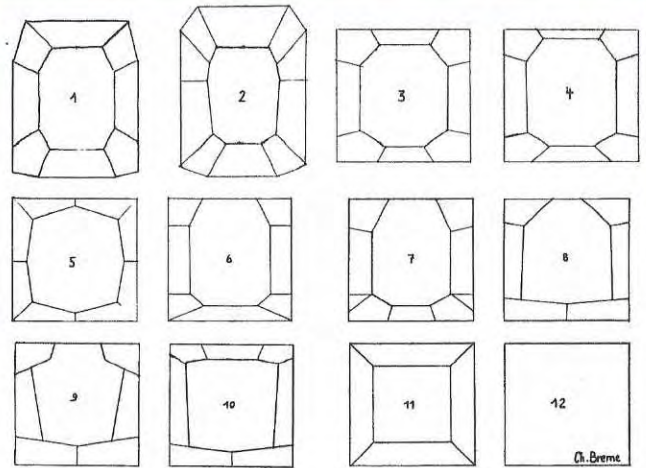
Waldorf School Design

BY DAVID ADAMS

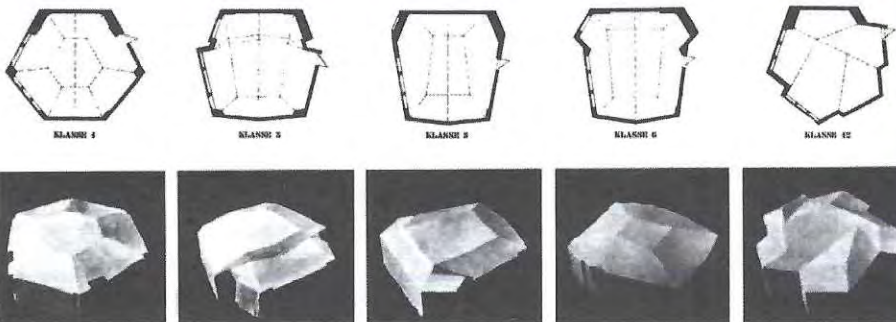
The illustrations on this page unfortunately were not able to be included in the original publication of David Adams's article "Practical Beauty, Part Two: Organic Functionalism in Waldorf School Architecture" (Spring-Summer 2002 issue), so we belatedly include them here to help inspire more effective school design.



Simple, unitary, embracing, rounded spaces and forms best suit the kindergarten child's experience of the world. Kindergarten interior, Ekkharthof, Germany (Rex Raab, architect).



Ceiling plans for classrooms 1-12 for the Waldorf School in Bonn, Germany, show a gradual progression of faceted forms from rounded and embracing to more angular and open (c. 1981-85, Pentzek & Knierem, architects).



Groundplans and corresponding models of classrooms for grades 1, 3, 4, 6, and 12, Heidenheim Waldorf School, Germany (c. 1974, Werner Seyfert, architect).



Rudolf Steiner School, Ittigen (Bern), Switzerland. Side view showing design kinship to nearby traditional Swiss farmhouse.



Broad-roofed farmhouse on grounds of Rudolf Steiner School, Ittigen, Switzerland.