

Steiner Education

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Life Cycles

**ICT in UK
Steiner Waldorf
Schools**

**Gratitude – Love
– Responsibility**

**Curriculum
Development**

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Contents

Features

Steiner Education...
is a magazine for parents, teachers and others interested in Steiner Waldorf education. Though based in the UK, it has an international perspective. The magazine is dependent on people sending in material and the editorial group welcomes contributions (sent as hard copy and – if possible – electronically as a word file)

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Life Cycles: a new Main Lesson in Class Six as an age-appropriate approach to sex education by Sven Saar
No sooner has SE published an article on sex education than a colleague appears who has already developed and implemented a new Main Lesson. Sven Saar's approach demonstrates how flexible the Waldorf Curriculum can be without straying from basic pedagogical principles. The author gives a good account of his experiences in teaching the Main Lesson and lets the voice of the pupils be heard too.

Information and Communications Technology in UK Steiner Waldorf Schools by William Steffen
This article reports on a research project into ICT that not only established a picture of the status quo, but developed a new model for an ICT curriculum. The project even went on to offer training in the field too. One could hardly ask for a more comprehensive piece of research – an excellent example of action research.

Gratitude – Love – Responsibility by Gisela O'Neil
In 1924 Rudolf Steiner outlined three principles that should be fostered in children in the various age groups. In this article by an educator working at the Constantia Waldorf School in Cape Town, South Africa, these principles are described with simplicity, authenticity and clarity.

Regular Sections

SE Editorial

Curriculum Development

Music education at Michael Hall School by Paul Sand
Prompted by the submission of the excellent art work we asked Paul Sand to outline recent curriculum developments in the music curriculum.

What makes a good problem? by John Bayliss
John Bayliss poses the question whether there is an aesthetic of problems in maths teaching.

European Masters Pilot approved for Switzerland by Trevor Mephram
We knew that Swiss Air was having difficulties... this report however shows us that Swiss ingenuity in the field of practice-based research has linked up with the University of Plymouth and the Goetheanum.

International Section

The Friends of the Art of Education of Rudolf Steiner:
A report on the crisis at the Inkanyezi School in Alexandra Township, Johannesburg, South Africa by Wiebke Holtz
Tashi Waldorf School, Nepal by Laura Wilson
When wounds won't heal: Waldorf education contributes to peace and reconciliation in Kosovo by Beatrice Rutishauser

A Letter to the Editor

Book Reviews

Paula Moraine reviews *Star Children* by Georg Kühlewind
Ann Swain reviews *The Well Balanced Child* by Sally Goddard Blythe
From the introduction by Ewout van Manen to Sally Goddard Blythe's book

From A School Doctor:

Thoughts on vaccination by Dr. Bettina Lohn

Daniel Moreau, painter and teacher

Editorial



In many countries the first day of school is a very special occasion attended by parents and relatives of the child. There is usually a ceremony at school. In Russia, the first day is known as *Knowledge Day*, showing the high regard that people hold for education. The children receive specific presents, often in a large parcel including all the essential items needed: crayons, books, a ruler and compass, gym shoes, sometimes a school uniform of some sort and of course sweets and little treasures. After the school ceremony there is often a feast within the family. Along with baptism, confirmation, graduation and marriage, the first day at school has its place in the spectrum of significant moments in the life of the child within his or her curriculum. Something of this is typical of many Waldorf schools too. The class teacher often tells the children a story and the new class or classes are welcomed into the school community and then led to their class where they receive their first lesson – a ritual that Rudolf Steiner inaugurated in his very first teacher training programme. He had a very specific idea what the children should experience on their first meeting with their class teacher and as far as I know this is practised throughout the world in each and every Waldorf class. My own daughter will experience this, in a few days from now at her school. By the time you read this she, along with thousands of others all over the world will have had their first Waldorf Main Lesson, probably from drawing.

So it is a very special day, a day when the threshold from early childhood to school age is crossed and children move from the informal and implicit to formal and explicit learning. Before the first school day, especially if the children take this step

at the age of six or seven, the children have learned essentially through imitation; now they will add a new way of learning – we never lose our powers of imitation completely since it is physiologically and emotionally a part of our nature – they start to learn out of a love of learning. And this love of learning is personified by the teacher, who is a learner who has already learned a lot and is empowered to teach the children so that they too can learn. Really, school is about cultivating a love for knowledge – as the Russian *Knowledge Day* implies. Learning and consciously acquiring knowledge is an exhausting business requiring a surprising amount of energy, energy that children usually need to establish their bodily and above all neural growth during their early years up until about six when these forces begin to become available for the development of all kinds of intelligences.

I wonder what went wrong in the education and life of the mastermind behind Beslan. That terrible Day of Knowledge was clearly thought out, planned, foreseen and deliberately structured to be what it was. That didn't just happen by accident, nor can we blame events getting out of control, things going wrong. However much the people responsible for the security forces at Beslan are blamed, however much intelligence and security experts elsewhere would have done things better, such facts are totally insignificant in relation to the mind of the planner of the deed. If there is providence in the fall of a sparrow, how much more is there in the death of a single child? This rhetorical question is almost grotesquely inarticulate, I know, but I have no other way of putting it. What Knowledge can we gain from that Day? That seems to be the only real question I have left.

Martyn Rawson

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Classical Chinese orchestra consists of four sections, bowed strings, plucked strings, wind and percussion.

- The preferred size of a Chinese wind ensemble is small.

- The Chinese use a lot of string instruments and flutes in their music.

- They also use a lot of chimes.

- The instruments they have are made of skin, gourd, bamboo, wood, silk, clay, metal & stone.

- Chinese classified instruments from what they were made of.

- The most delicate instrument in the Chinese repertoire is the qin which is like a zither. It usually has 7 strings and is the supreme instrument of the scholar.

- Erhu is a popular Chinese, two string fiddle.

- Pipa is a 4 string lute with 30 frets and a pear shaped body.

- Bawu is a free reed instrument. Played similar to a flute except it has a single pointed reed at the mouth-hole.

- Ruan is also known as the moon guitar. It comes in a variety of sizes and pitches and has 4 strings.

- Sheng is one of the oldest Chinese instruments and is made up of up to 17-36 pipes on a small wind chamber.

- Other instruments include the globular flute, mouth organ, stone and bell chime and idiophones.

- And of course the most common instrument of all is naturally the Chinese language which is the most spoken language in the world.



From the Main Lesson book of Abra Hunt, a Class Ten student; see article on page 19



Life Cycles

A new Main Lesson in Class Six as an age-appropriate approach to sex education

Sven Saar

In the original Waldorf School in Stuttgart, sex education as a subject was not on the curriculum. No doubt this had as much to do with the general standard of mores in the 1920s as with Steiner's (possibly apocryphal) remark that such things are best dealt with by the parents.

It is difficult to ascertain at which point an element of human sexuality and its related issues were introduced into the Class Seven Main Lesson commonly known as "Health and Hygiene", but there it has sat for quite a few decades now. Two aspects led me to reconsider the positioning of this topic:

- If it is to be dealt with in sufficient depth, alongside themes such as blood circulation, airways, nutrition, care of the senses, teenage hygiene and substance abuse, then something surely will have to give, or the

Main Lesson would be at least six weeks long.

- More importantly, while the topic was correctly placed at the beginning of Class Seven for my first class nine years ago, I already had the distinct feeling towards the end of Class Four that my current group of pupils would require this input somewhat sooner. They are not necessarily ahead in terms of their physical development, but have been exposed to such a barrage of sexual imagery and themes through music and films since (in many cases) the age of six, that some amount of "redrawing the picture" seemed advisable.

During the planning for Class Five, the (often sarcastically used) phrase about the "bees and the butterflies" kept coming to my mind. Might there not be something in the old-fashioned

image beyond mere recoil out of prudishness?

The planning process

I decided not to commit myself too hastily to something new and untried, but to put certain things in place that would enable me to go a certain way if I wanted to. To begin with, I outlined my thinking to the parents at a meeting about halfway through Class Five, explaining that I was considering dealing with sex education in the second half of Class Six. Having received a positive response, I then asked them to consider how they would approach the topic with their children when the time came. At the following meeting I requested that at some time in the next eight or nine months they would find an opportunity to discuss the “facts of life” in a way that suited them. The idea behind this was that the first broaching of the subject would come on an individual, less abstract level, in the right mood and from someone close and trusted.

When I dealt with Botany in the summer term, I consciously left out pollination, because by that time the basic idea for the new Main Lesson was forming. In the planning for Class Six that Summer, I created a flexible three week space in the Summer Term, giving me the opportunity to observe the development of the children closely and decide with a month’s notice that the right time had come.

In Class Six, having decided that this time would be in June, I took the parents through an outline of what I was proposing to do in the classroom. This was an important time to receive their approval, for the sensitivity of the issues could otherwise lead to unfortunate and painful disagreements.

An outline

The underlying idea behind the Main Lesson is to look at the male and female elements throughout the natural kingdoms, and to examine similarities and differences as we approach the human being. Having arrived there, we would address the “geography of the bits” as well as their function and various processes, and then move to whatever happens before conception, ending up rather than starting with issues relating to bodily and soul hygiene of the teenager.

Methodology

Week One: Plants and Animals

We began by reminding ourselves of the parts of the **flowering blossom**, this time going deeper

into their function. The children learned about pollination, and how the gesture of the anthers (male) is a giving one, while the carpel (female) receives and transforms. It was pointed out at the time that we would come across these elementary gestures again as we went through the natural kingdoms.

Beginning with the plant has other useful effects, too: it was here we first came across the term “ovary”. By the time we would reach the processes in the woman’s womb the children would be far too taken with the symmetry of terms to still find the word embarrassing.

A natural step took us to the world of **insects**, specifically that of the butterfly which plays such an important part in the way flowers reproduce. As Rudolf Steiner once described, it really is a very little step from one to the other. We learned a verse written for the lesson:

*From different worlds, they resemble each other:
Nature has fashioned mysteriously
The flower to be
Like a butterfly caught,
And the butterfly shaped
Like a flower set free.*

During the study of the mysterious and awe-inspiring metamorphosis that takes place inside the chrysalis, we also found an appropriate moment during recall to make the analogy with the immortal soul – what other image could be sufficiently grand for such a miracle of nature?

There followed a brief study of the life cycle of the mayfly, who lives in the water for up to two years during its nymph stage and then emerges from its final moult without mouth or a digestive system: its adult life is so short it never needs to feed.

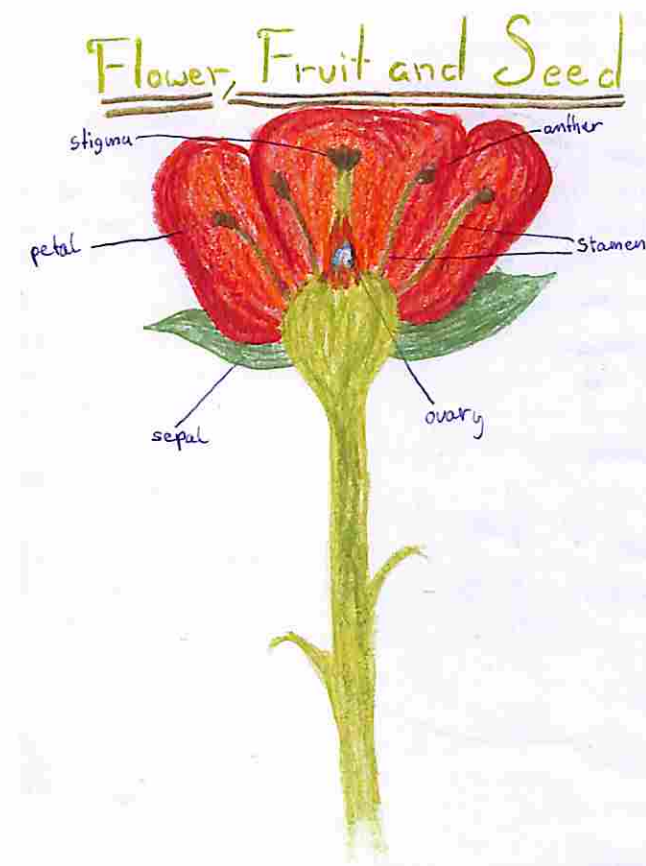
We stayed in the same habitat and arrived at the **fish** that feast on these briefly airborne insects: the salmon. The amazing achievements of this animal in returning to its spawning grounds after migrations of thousands of miles made a deep impression on the pupils, as did its role in the natural food chain between insects and bears: the thought that a salmon made an epic journey of immense proportions, only to be scooped out of the waterfall by an opportunistic bear two miles before reaching its destination provoked loud exclamations of sympathy!

Our main object, of course, was to get an impression of how fish reproduce: fertilization

takes place outside the body (first mention of the word “sperm”), and the parent has no relationship with its offspring. In fact, many salmon are so exhausted from travelling upstream and not feeding for months that they die shortly after mating.

Via glances at **reptiles, birds and mammals** we looked principally at the relationship between parents and their young and discovered that the higher we went up the “complexity scale” in the kingdoms of nature, the closer and more long-lasting this became (there are, as always, exceptions). In broad terms, there is a clear progression:

- Plants reproduce asexually or through pollination and have no relationship to the next generation other than physical proximity.
- In the lower animals, fertilization often takes place outside the body (in the plant world, so to speak) and offspring are self-sufficient.
- Reptiles and birds mate by uniting their sexual organs and brood over their eggs, then abandon their young at the latest when they can feed themselves.
- Mammals mate similarly, but suckle their young and go separate ways when sexual maturity is reached.
- Human beings, while having some of the “mating, suckling and caring process” in common with the mammals, have a life-



long relationship with their families: even if independent and separated in physical space, parents and children live in constant consciousness of each other’s existence.

Week Two: The Human Being

On the first day the children were asked to go backwards in their biography, and on a piece of paper (and later in their books) identify one important event in each year of their lives, going back beyond the first year to nine, six, and three months and then the circumstances of their birth. A typical contribution would look like this:

- 12: I broke my leg in a playground accident.
- 11: We had the Olympics at school.
- 10: My best friend moved away.
- 9: I went on holiday to America.
- 8: We had a new class teacher.
- 7: We moved from East Grinstead to Forest Row.
- 6: I started school.
- 5: I hit my brother with a garden fork, and he had to go to hospital.
- 4: I learned to ride a bike without stabilisers.
- 3: I started Kindergarten and met my best friend for the first time.
- 2: I stopped needing nappies.
- 1: I began to walk and talk. My first word was “teeteeta” (meaning a bird)
- 9 months: I pulled myself upright on chairs.
- 6 months: I started moving around.
- 3 months: My sister dropped me on my head.
- Birth: I was born at 2.22 on the 22nd of February. It was a calm birth, and 2 is my lucky number.

The younger years obviously needed and led to interesting questions and conversations around the family dinner table (this bit was homework), and that was by design: this way a curiosity about “**where do I come from?**” was generated, and the parents could be involved in a creative and satisfying way.

Next, we needed to look at what happened before birth, and the development of the unborn child was studied. Much wonder is generated if this is done in a suitably reverential way, and the fact that the seven-week old embryo, at a size of only two centimetres, already has developed eyes, ears, intestines, kidneys, liver, lungs, a mouth and nostrils took all the children by surprise. This process can also be well studied in reverse,

beginning with the full term embryo at 40 weeks.

Now came the topic I had dreaded a little: would the preparation via the natural kingdoms have worked when the diagrams of the sexual organs appeared on the blackboard? On the evidence of this particular experience I need not have feared: while there was lively interest, there was encouragingly little embarrassment. In describing the functions of the ovaries, fallopian tubes and uterus we had the opportunity to discuss menstruation. I decided not to include the work of hormones in the description, but instead followed a factual study of the journey of the either fertilized or unfertilized egg with an image:

In a great palace there is a room through which the queen passes once a month. Usually she goes into the room by one door, and leaves through the opposite exit by herself, but very occasionally she is accompanied by the king, and then everything changes. The palace servants never know in advance whether the king will be with her, so they decide it is safer to be prepared. If they are together, the monarchs will spend a long time in this room, so the servants go to great lengths to make it as comfortable as possible, placing soft cushions and sofas all around the walls. Once the queen – as usually happens – has entered and left the room by herself, everything is removed and cleaned, and then put out afresh the following month.

If one gives a picture like the above to 12-year-olds, it is of course absolutely vital to do so with a twinkle in one's eye, and never in order to avoid calling natural processes by their proper names. Otherwise, the children would quite rightly feel patronised and question whether the teacher really has their measure. It is, however, important to create a mood of reverence for the process of menstruation through appealing to their feeling lives, not least for the boys in the class whom one would expect to develop empathy and respect for the women in their present and later lives.

When looking at the male sexual organs, it is worth pointing out that they are of a much simpler design ("multi-purpose", as one perceptive girl put it), are outside the body rather than inside, but essentially contain the same movement gesture: Keeping the blackboard drawings colourful and strictly diagrammatic (rather than 3D and flesh-coloured) helps the pupils to keep embarrassment to a minimum.

The process of sexual intercourse, fertilization and cell-division can now be described quite

dispassionately, although an element of humour is always helpful and readily available in the race of the sperm towards the egg. At this point one of the most important teaching tools is introduced:

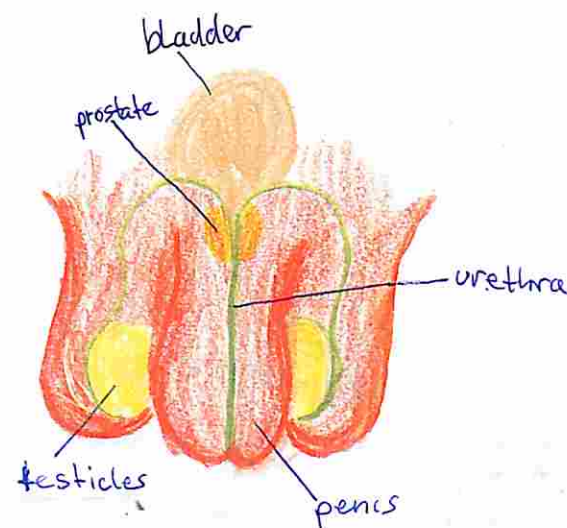
The question box

By this stage of the Main Lesson each pupil, whether already in puberty or still approaching it, will be buzzing with questions that can't possibly be asked of one's parents or even friends. Only the very bravest children will dare put up their hand and ask a question about sex in front of their classmates.

On a table at the front of the room appears a large, attractive cardboard box with an opening cut into the top lid. The pupils are invited to write their questions on pieces of paper (anonymously) and drop them into the box. At the end of each day I empty the box and write the questions into my preparation book. I will then, at some suitable point during the next few days, attempt to address each question openly, without giving the least indication who asked it. This helps me form the presentation so that it is relevant to their needs, and allows them to trust my discretion.

Here are some of the questions I found in the box after the first day:

Does Fuck mean Sex?
Could a human have sex with any mammal?
If you have sex while you are pregnant, does it kill the baby?
Why do people enjoy sex?
What if the penis is too big to fit into the vagina?
How many babies can you have at a time?
How do you kiss while having sex?
Does the penis ever get stuck?
Does the penis only go hard when sperm is produced?



What happens if someone eats sperm?
Why do we cover up our sexual organs in public?
Is this Main Lesson embarrassing for you [the teacher]?

Beyond the physical

At this stage it is important, while recognising their questions about physical processes, to continue the reverse journey we began in their twelfth year. What happened before conception? Is the teacher in a materialistic climate bound to perpetuate the theory that the human being has his or her origin at the point of conception, or even worse, at the 12-week stage during pregnancy?

A short classroom discussion makes it quickly apparent to the children that each of us is unique – would we not be identical to our brothers and sisters if we were merely the product of the union of our parents? Most children at the age of 12 still have a strong, natural awareness of the existence of their soul and its individuality. At this point I offered **a story**, making quite clear to the class that it was merely a story and nothing more or less, but that I would like them to hear it.

In the space that human souls occupy after their earthly death was one who felt that the time was soon approaching when it would want to return. It knew what conditions it would hope to find in this earthly life, and began to look out for a suitable set of parents. When it had found them, one was American and the other Italian, each in their respective country. The soul, however, persisted in following their lives closely, and after a few years both were living in England, he as a journalist in London, she as an exchange student at Bath University.

Shortly after Christmas, he was on his way to Bristol for an assignment when he missed the train at Paddington Station, and in his agitation accidentally knocked down the Italian student who was waiting for a later train. He was far too preoccupied to notice her properly, but shortly afterwards an announcer declared that all trains to the West Country for that day had been cancelled. He organised a staff car through his newspaper to take him to Bristol and, noticing the young student upset and confused, offered her a lift to Bath.

In the car they talked and discovered that his great-grandfather had come from the same town in Sicily where she had just spent her Christmas holidays with her family. He took her phone number after dropping her at the university and continued

onwards to his assignments in Bristol, only to discover that: a) he kept on thinking about her all weekend; and b) he had lost her phone number.

He decided to return to Bath to look for her and, as the uni. term had not yet started and he didn't know her surname, could think of nothing better than to sit in a city centre café and hope to see her pass by (he was definitely very smitten). He found a café, chose a seat by the window and turned to the waitress...of course it was her – this was her student job.

The rest of the story is easily imagined: they discovered their love for each other, she decided to finish her studies in London and they moved in together. When they were still very much in love months later and had each decided they had found the partner they had been looking for, the soul finally was rewarded for its patience: when they made love during her ovulation, it found its vehicle and was born nine months later as their child, having lost any awareness of its former consciousness for the time being.

In the recall of the story the teacher can then deal sensitively and sensibly with questions about karma: not every child enters a setting as perfect as this! How can one choose a life of sadness and suffering? One enters difficult territory here. It is certainly not our task to indoctrinate children towards a belief in reincarnation, and careless handling of these issues can easily be seen as such. I think it is nevertheless justified to offer the children the possibility of exploring the theme from the starting point of a story: then it is up to each individual how it is received. The crucial element is the utmost respect of the teacher for the spiritual freedom of the children: if this is in place, little can go wrong.

Week Three – Questions about Sex and Adolescence

The final week of the Main Lesson is the most difficult to prepare for, and equally difficult to generalise. The teacher knows what needs covering, but the best way to set about it will have been suggested by the reaction of the pupils to the second week's content. Questions from the box are becoming somewhat bolder, but still need to be treated with respect.

As a rule, the teacher should always observe the following when discussing sexual processes:

- no child should feel that it is being singled out or directly addressed, and

- the teacher's words should not give rise to images which will undermine his or her standing in the eyes of the children, for example by referring to his/her own experiences or emotions.

Having recalled the process of conception, at least half the children in the class will have the (unuttered) perception that they haven't been told all: surely grown-ups don't just do this when they want to allow a baby to come?

In order to lay the ground for discussing **sex** as a way of sharing intimacy, we need first to look at **love** in its various incarnations. I found William Blake's poem *The Clod And The Pebble* helpful here:

*Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a Heaven in Hell's despair!"*

*So sang a little clod of clay,
Trodden by the cattle's feet,
But a pebble of the brook
Warbled out these metres meet:*

*"Love seeketh only self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease
And builds a Hell in Heaven's despite!"*

Without going into too much analysis, it is easy to help the pupils to arrive at the conclusion that love can be a force for the good when it has the other at its core, but will work destructively when filled with selfish desires. Many times, when discussing emotions in the following days, we can refer to a **clay-love** or a **pebble-love** and use these expressions to make ourselves understood.

The first example we practise on is the legend of *Tristram and Iseult*, who fall in love through a spell which can never be lifted. To begin with, they abstain from their desire to be together out of love of duty and honour, but then the pebble-forces become too strong to resist. Iseult's husband King Mark, on discovering their treason, wishes to have them both executed – jealousy is one of the strongest forces generated by pebble-love. In the end Tristram is exiled, marries another woman and many years later lies ill with a poisoned wound which only Iseult can heal. He sends a messenger to her, with the instruction to raise black sails on the ship should she refuse to come.

King Mark, seeing how moved Iseult is by the news

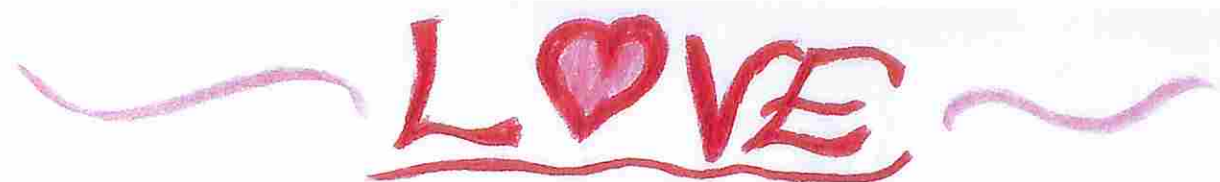
that Tristram is ill, lets her go (clay-love) and she makes haste to get to her love who is by now fading rapidly. His wife sees the white sails of the ship in the distance, but in a desperate and soon regretted pebble-moment tells Tristram that they are black. With all hope gone, he dies barely an hour before Iseult arrives. When she realises she is too late, her heart gives way and she sinks dead onto her true love's breast. Tristram's wife is so moved by this that she arranges to have the two lovers buried side by side, under two intertwining rose bushes – a beautiful clay moment to end this epic story.

There are many possible ways to approach the connection between love and sex. By now the pupils have an understanding of both, but not necessarily of how one can lead to another. One approach could look like this:

When we get undressed in public, what are the bits we keep covered, and why? Even the most revealing swimming costumes tend to cover up the same 5% of body surface – the genital area. The reason lies in the sense we all have that these areas are **private**, and not for general sharing. It may, however, happen that there are two people whose love for one another is so great that they feel that would share even the most private parts of their bodies with one another. Looked at from this point of view, to have a sexual relationship is really about giving another person what is never normally lightly given, and should therefore always be received with greatest respect.

The pupils know (mostly second-hand) that sexual feelings are pleasurable, and that sexual desire is not necessarily an altruistic feeling (years of watching pop videos will have given them quite a definite view on this). Describing the nature of sexual sensations to children who have not yet had them is something most adults will shy away from, and is not really a necessary part of this Main Lesson at this stage. It is well, though, to be prepared for the question which came quite matter-of-factly in my class: why is having sex apparently more special than, say, kissing?

I explained that the skin was more sensitive in some parts of the body than in others – hence a wound will hurt more on a finger than on a knee, and being tickled on the back of one's hand will be unbearable sooner than on one's cheek. The nerves in certain parts of the genitals are even more sensitive, and are being stimulated by sex in a very pleasurable way. When this pleasure gets so intense that one can hardly bear it one has an orgasm. In the man this allows the sperm to be released – they cannot otherwise come out.



I now asked the class to closely observe their reaction to the following question from the box: Can a human have sex with any mammal?

The resounding "Uurgh!" was of course utterly predictable and, I assured the pupils, a sign that we have healthy instincts in us when it comes to our sexuality. Using an animal for sexual pleasure is so "totally pebble" (in the words of one pupil) that it is quite unacceptable to us.

These healthy instincts are very important tools for the children to cultivate as they grow towards adulthood. Especially in our permissive society where religious, gender-based or class-determined rules are quite rightly no longer unquestioningly obeyed, each individual needs to learn to listen to their own common sense, inner voice or conscience. **The absence of a shared moral code is not a tragedy but a step forward for human freedom.** It is our duty as educators to equip young people with the capacity to ask difficult questions of themselves.

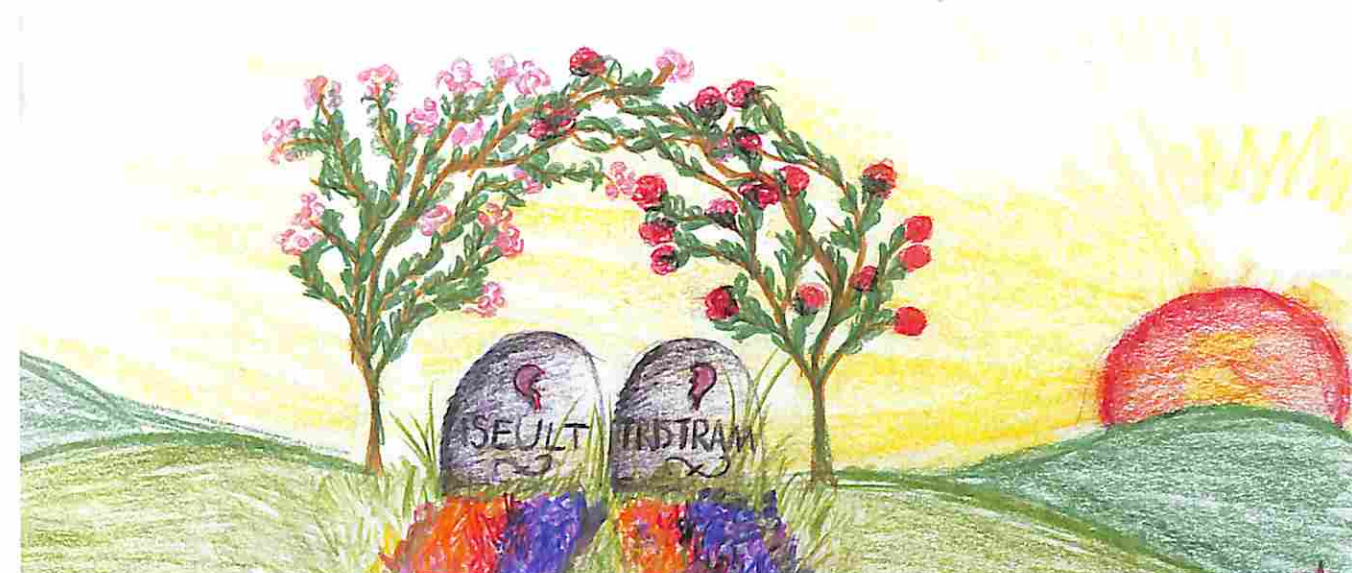
We spent the last two or three days addressing changes in the human body during puberty. The appearance of body hair is by now apparent to most children (but the teacher still avoids the singular "you"). It is probably worth pointing out that the removal of hair through shaving will make it grow back stronger, and that there are no hygienic or medical benefits to be obtained. The children should know this before they decide to follow the accepted fashion.

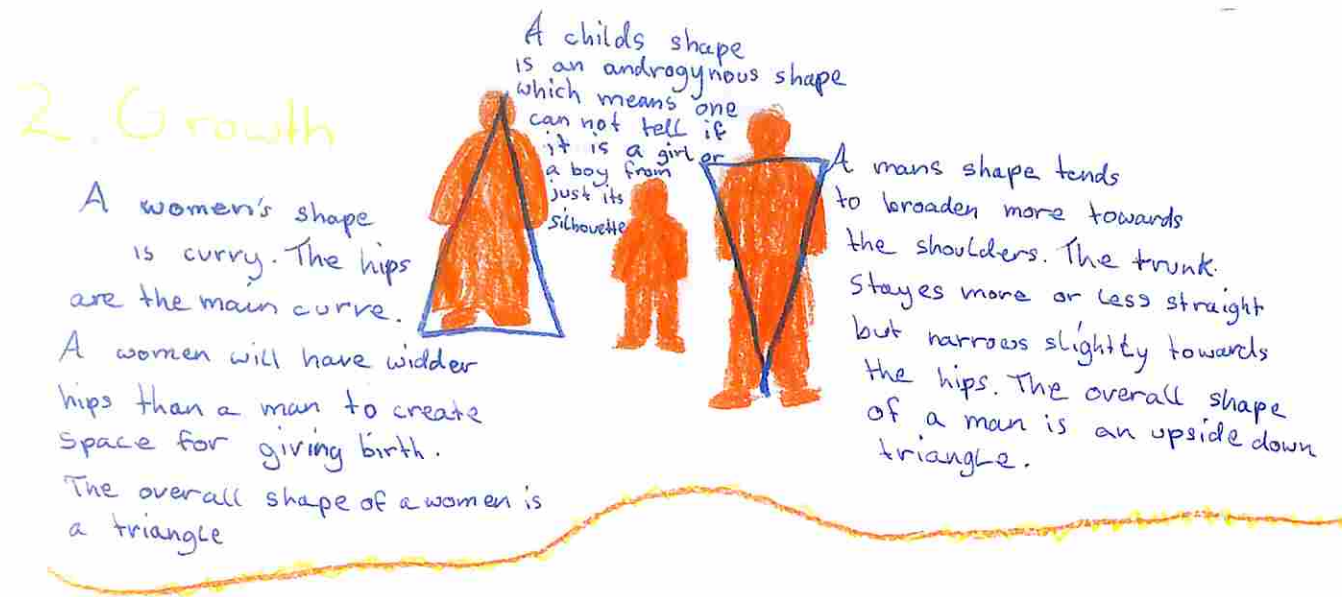
Growth can be addressed next. Lined up opposite each other, the boys are on average slightly bigger than the girls. Is this the same with Class Seven next door? No, there the girls are much bigger than the boys. The reason is of course that girls have their growth spurt between 11 and 13 years, while boys shoot up between 13 and 15. Body shapes also change: while we can't really tell an eight-year old girl from a boy of the same age by their silhouettes, teenagers increasingly develop the 'opposite triangles' of wide shoulders in men and wide hips in women:

This is an opportunity to address the issue of **breasts**. Their primary function is of course a mammary one, and most pupils are amazed that the amount of milk a baby receives does not depend on breast size.

The care of breasts is important, and a few general words can be said about the effect of various types of bra. I chose to dwell a little on this, as the current fashion among teenage girls in this school is to reveal a lot of cleavage created by *Wonderbras* and the like.

We looked at the fact that a secondary function of breasts is to attract men to women, and how that was used in different ways in the history of fashion. If a woman presents her breasts to the world as if on a tray, so that they are the first thing people notice about her, what image has she of herself, and what does she want people (well, men) to think of her? In an age where a woman had to attract a man at all





costs in order to be provided for it may have been understandable that no strategy was considered too desperate, but surely things ought to be different for modern women?

It may be objected that discussions like this come too early in Class Six. In response to that I would argue that they merely redress the balance in a media world saturated with the image of women as sexual objects. By making girls and boys aware that they have a choice how to react to fashion pressure before their consumer habits are fully formed one increases their personal freedom. While it occasionally went over the top, feminism achieved a lot in the seventies and eighties – the generation we currently teach are in danger of growing up with the gender models of the 1950s unless the grown-ups in charge of their education take an active role.

The two key words I want the pupils to remember in connection with sexuality are love and respect. Sexuality is a wonderful way to share yourself with someone you love – and the more clay-like the love, the greater the gift.

In order not to descend to pebble-level we need to respect the feelings of the person we are intimate with, and also our own conscience. If we can keep these things in mind, we will develop a healthy sexuality in ourselves.

Conclusion

We need to remember at all times that the pupils in front of us are not yet sexually active and (hopefully)

won't be for several years. This consciousness – that we are speaking about a foreign country, as it were – needs to inform and guide the mood of the presentation. But it is no excuse for dodging the truth or patronising the children with answers that they experience as lacking sincerity. As in any other subject the pupils look to their teacher for guidance. In this case we are giving advice at a time when it is received with the greatest trust, although it won't need to be acted on for years.

Being open and straight while not revealing unnecessary and possibly disturbing details isn't easy. Answering a question about rape, for instance, may be very important for one child while it is deeply unsettling for another. However, that would probably be so at whatever age one dealt with it. When I asked my pupils for feedback after the Main Lesson had finished an interesting conversation developed:

"It was good to have three weeks for it. My brother did it in Class Seven and they had only one."

"Well, I would have preferred it later. All this yucky stuff – isn't it a bit too soon for us?"

"It's good to know this stuff before it's happening, though."

"I thought the box was a good idea."

"I thought the Main Lesson was disturbing but helpful!"

It is probably impossible to get it exactly right for every pupil, with the topic being so personal. When the time is right for the class as a whole, however, I am convinced that much can be gained from the experience.

Curriculum Research

SE has undertaken to be a forum for practice-based research within the Waldorf schools movement. We publish reports on research that is being done or is relevant to our educational development. In this report William Steffen, who was for many years an Upper School teacher at Elmfield School and Botton Village School, undertook to investigate the situation with regard to Information and Communications Technology and to develop a curriculum. Though the project is not complete it has gone far enough to present this report.

Editorial comment:

We are hugely grateful to William for his excellent and conscientious report, and for the care he has put into formulating a curriculum. There are many problems with creating an ICT curriculum for Waldorf schools and he has bravely addressed many of them. For a long time schools turned a blind eye to ICT, partly because of a lack of resources, partly because of certain technophobia in some staff rooms, and partly because the curriculum already seemed full enough. All these viewpoints had their justifications. Initially, it was the maths and physics teachers who broke the ice; early ICT lessons were devoted to understanding the hardware and basic programming. This meant it was a fairly specialist approach. In the meantime ICT became a real part of the lives of most adults and a large portion of school children down into the lower school. It was a joke, but also true, that many pupils had more working knowledge of computers, the internet and mobile phones than their teachers.

The fact that ICT is a continuation of literacy has begun to be recognised and schools like Michael Hall have introduced elements of ICT (emailing, using CD ROMs and the internet for research etc.) into their Middle School literacy programme. But this is fairly unusual. The original history and economics curriculum thought it important that children understand the importance of the Industrial Revolution. Today it is vital that they understand the electronic revolution and the forces of globalisation that came with it. These cultural elements belong in the curriculum just as much as the technology and the need for user skills. The problem is integrating them into the rest of the curriculum, rather than seeing ICT as a bolt-on addition.

Our wish is that William's pioneering work might encourage real dialogue about such curriculum innovation. Sadly the response of schools to his report has been minimal so far. Perhaps parents will show more interest!

Martyn Rawson

ICT in UK Steiner Waldorf Schools – A Curriculum Development Project

A Progress Report by William Steffen

Background

Rudolf Steiner demanded that pupils in Waldorf Schools gained an insight into the working principles of the technological devices in use at the time. At the same time the introduction of any new technology is to be explored for its historic roots and social, economic and cultural dimensions. Such insight enables freedom and judgement in their use.

Almost without exception our pupils aged 14 and over now have access to and use computers, the Internet, mobile phones, on a daily basis, and their actions are supported by an invisible network of electronic data handling and processing (shopping, bookings, media etc.).

The introduction and teaching of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in Waldorf schools in Britain and abroad has been largely left to the individual schools and, in most cases, to the initiative of particular teachers who happened to have the relevant interests and skills. Some schools have rejected the idea of introducing ICT teaching and computers on grounds of principle, or due to lack of finance and/or skilled teaching staff. Where ICT teaching is happening, considerations such as what skills the students will be expected to have at further education level usually determine the curriculum content.

The current project is based on the perception that the time has come when our curriculum needs to integrate in a deeper and comprehensive

way the reality of this technology that shapes our life daily. This called for work in three specific areas:

1. Surveying the current situation in UK Waldorf schools
2. Research and development of key aspects of an ICT curriculum
3. Sharing insights and supporting the implementation of ICT teaching in schools

ICT survey

In a survey of the majority of UK schools with an Upper School I found that with one or two exceptions no coherent curriculum is in place anywhere. Skills teaching happens in a few schools, though this is often hampered by outdated make-do facilities that are badly or not networked, open to students tampering with systems and therefore mostly locked away, inaccessible for independent work. High technician costs often prohibit sorting out hardware and software problems, leading to further erosion of the facilities. In most schools a very small minority of teachers is ICT literate and able to support students in using ICT for subject and project work, or to consider the social dimensions adequately in their subject areas. In most schools the lack of teachers in general, and of science teachers in particular, seems to make it virtually impossible to even consider developing this area. Visits to a school in Germany and a number of schools in the USA showed that the situation in the UK is similar to the one in those countries. However, in both countries I also found a very small number of highly interesting models.

Supporting the implementation of ICT teaching in schools

We invited all UK schools with a Middle and Upper School to participate in a series of Seminars, dedicated to the sharing of this work and to the support in implementing ICT teaching in schools. It was a reflection of the results of my survey that 7 out of 13 invited schools were unable to identify anyone at the school who would be able to give this area some attention.

So far, two 2-day Seminars have been held, at each of which 5 schools were involved. The deal was that for a one-off contribution of £200 participating schools could attend all Seminars to be arranged, with accommodation and catering covered; they would also qualify for a 1-day advisory visit to their school subsequent to the first two Seminars.

The first Seminar at Michael Hall in November 02 focused on the rationale, qualities and contents of an ICT curriculum. At the second Seminar at Elmfield School in February 03 we turned to the difficult issues of how to implement this area. As part of my research and development work I have produced a range of practical tools that participating schools could take away to adapt and use in their specific context (ICT delivery models, sample ICT policy, development and action plan templates, financial development models, facility database structure, Internet policy, ICT code of conduct for students, sample Internet project work, security manual, software audit templates, etc.).

The SWSF has recently invested in an Internet-based document-sharing facility. The Seminars made use of this for sharing teaching and development resources.

A third Seminar is currently planned which will focus on two aspects of this work:

1. Binary encoding, algorithms; practical electronics to build basic elements of a processor;
2. Hands-on training in hardware and software management and troubleshooting – an area where, with a little training, many schools could do day-to-day systems maintenance without frequently incurring prohibitive expenses.

The advisory visits to participating schools started during the summer term 2003.

Finance

The SWSF has committed £1000 towards travel costs related to survey and research. It is also funding the advisory visits. The Seminars are self-funding with a budget of £2000. A Charitable Trust has promised a research grant of £1500.

An Information and Communications Technology Curriculum for Steiner Waldorf Schools

William Steffen

We need to be clear why we are teaching ICT in our schools. The strands of the curriculum need to embrace the range of pedagogical and social aspects that we want to address in any subject taught in a Steiner Waldorf School.

We accept the fundamental insight and pedagogical conviction that the teaching of ICT skills or the use of computers as a learning tool has no place in our education for pupils up to the age of about 13 (Class Seven). There will be exceptions here for pupils with special educational needs. This means that in order to do justice to the expectations indicated above, the ICT curriculum in our Upper Schools will need to be given an adequate place in terms of time and resources to achieve its aims in the relatively short time span available.

The curriculum needs to set a number of fundamental objectives that can be achieved by each student:

- An understanding of the underlying scientific principles and technology;
- An historic perspective of the development of information and communications systems and their cultural significance;
- The development of an appropriate range of computer skills;
- The use of these skills creatively in a variety of subject and life skills contexts;
- The constructive working together with others in the use of ICT for more complex tasks;
- An awareness of the social, cultural and personal impact of this technology;
- The ability for critical review and judgment of one's own and other's use of this technology.

These objectives can be achieved in a number of quite different ways. They can be centred on a single subject area as demonstrated in an interesting way at the High Mowing Waldorf School in the USA (Digital Arts). They can be achieved in a way that spans a broader range of Main Lessons, subjects and activities. I have developed an outline for a coherent curriculum that reflects this latter approach. This could serve as a guide and context for individual schools to develop their curriculum, which will always be specific to their own situation (particularly teachers).

In the present model these objectives give rise to the six curriculum strands outlined below.

Curriculum Strands

Strand 1 – Understanding the technology

This strand will be largely addressed in Main Lessons and practical blocks, particularly in Classes Nine and Eleven. Topics include an understanding and, wherever possible, hands-on practical work on: coding, binary and other number systems, algorithms for arithmetic/logic operations, electromagnetic and transistor switches, logic gates, simple circuits for bi-stable, adder and decoder, electromagnetic information storage, the working of the processor unit, components of a PC, printers, CD-ROM, visual displays, the basic technology of telegraphy and telephone, networks, the Internet, virus and other security technology.

This strand is strongly embedded in the Middle and Upper School maths and physics (technology) curriculum and will usually be taught by these specialist teachers.

Strand 2 – Historic perspectives

This strand will usually be addressed hand-in-hand with Strand 1. It gives historic and social depth and significance to the emergence (and loss) of these man-made 'tools'. This will include topics such as number, letter and image representations, forms of writing through various cultures, forms of human communication from beacons to the Internet and the personalities associated with such inventions, the development of calculating devices from the abacus through Pascal's early calculating machines to modern computers and the emergence of firms such as IBM, Microsoft and Cisco.

Strand 3 – Developing computer skills

This covers the systematic acquisition and practice of computer literacy skills. In most instances this will be best addressed by concentrated initial blocks of skills teaching in group sessions, using an ICT room. Applications skills will include typing, word processing, spreadsheet, desktop publishing, spreadsheet databases, using CD-ROM and Internet for study resources as well as email, and

Curriculum strand	Class 8	Class 9	Class 10	Class 11	Class 12
1 Understanding the Technology	Number systems (10, 2, 16 base etc). The abacus. Algorithms for arithmetic operations.	Electromagnetism; relay switch; simple circuits with relays (AND, OR, NOT switches); truth tables; circuit diagrams for bi-stable, adder, decoder with truth tables. Magnetic storage (tape, disks). Elements of a PC (motherboard, CPU, RAM, disk storage, peripherals). Disassemble and rebuild a PC. Technology of telegraph, telephone, internet.	Semiconductors; transistor; gating chips (AND, OR, NOT); Build bi-stable, decoder, counter, adder with gating chips; Machine code programming. The myth of the 'intelligent computer'. Technology of printers, CD-ROM, CRT monitors, TFT screens.	Networks, IP/TCP, LAN, WAN Network security, data backup strategies; Virus protection, firewalls Broadband internet access	
2 Historic Perspectives	Coding (Roman, Maya, Egyptian, Indian numbers; Morse code, ASCII code)	Development and cultural significance of Communication: Beaborns, runners, books, newspapers, telegraph, telephone, internet. Faraday, Morse, Bell, Pentagon, Cisco.	Development of calculating devices: Abacus, Pascal, Hollerith/BM, Intel. Development and cultural significance of information systems: from Babylonian writing, hieroglyphs, text to graphic design, web design, computer-generated film and art; virtual reality.	Optional: Relational databases; website design; specialised graphics software, CAD, control software.	
3 Developing computer skills	Learn to (touch) type (at home and in breaks at school). Basic PC and Windows handling skills: Basic word-processing, Find relevant and good quality reference material from CD-ROM and Internet.	Concentrated course on word-processing, spreadsheet, spreadsheet databases, DTP; Windows file system and management.	Digital photography, scanning, image processing, printing; DTP; internet, email.	Use ICT skills in many subjects; coursework, maths investigations (eg fractions, chaos theory), main lesson projects.	
4 Using computer skills in other subjects	Use CD-ROM and Internet reference material for class 8 project (if passing a typing speed test, pupil may write up project on computer).	Use ICT skills in some subjects (English, history, geography, science, maths)	Use ICT skills in many subjects; coursework, maths investigations (eg functions, iterations), main lesson projects	Use ICT skills in many subjects for coursework, projects etc. Class 12 projects.	
5 ICT in support of life skills		Preparing class trip or other outings, play programmes etc. Exploring careers options with careers resources program.	Course on life, careers, citizenship, business skills; working through a range of documentation items (letter styles, CVs, logos, job applications, job descriptions, adverts etc).	Project to set up and present an enterprise (in groups), creating logo, leaflets, letterhead, advert, job descriptions, agenda for board meetings, development plan, web page	
6 Health & safety, security, legal and social aspects	Copyright issues; health issues; good posture; The role of computers and communication in society.	Copyright issues; health issues; good posture; The role of computers and communication in society.		The role of computers in society: Corporate interests/influence Intellectual property rights; Protecting Privacy - Data Protection Act; Protecting the enterprise	
<i>Suggestions for Timetable allocation</i>	1, 2: 10 main lesson sessions in class room (part of a maths main lesson?) 3, 6: block of 10 single or 5 double lessons per group. 4: Occasional supervised access to ICT room in breaks or project lessons.	1, 2: 3-4 week technology main lesson block (additional technology ML block on power and transport). 3, 6: 8 week block of 1 single lesson per day per group or half year 1 double lesson per group (30 Lns). 4, 5: Regular open access to ICT facilities in breaks or as part of some subject lessons.	3, 5: 6 week block of 1 single lesson per day per group or half year 1 double lesson per group (30 Lns). 4: Regular open access to ICT facilities in breaks, study periods, or as part of subject lessons.	1, 2: Electronics practical and media main lesson (3 weeks). 3, 5: weekly double lesson for half year per group (30 Lns) 4: Regular open access to ICT facilities in breaks, study periods, or as part of subject lessons.	

may go on to presentation software, relational databases, HTML and web page design, specialised graphics and CAD software; it will also address the handling of printers, scanners, digital photography and possibly other multimedia forms.

As there is usually a huge dispersion of previous experience in this field, student groups will often need to be formed on the basis of this criterion. Critical review of the students' own approach and standard of work is to be cultivated. The practise and reinforcement of what has been learned is difficult to achieve without open access to the ICT facilities for the students. Experienced ICT teaching staff will be teaching this component, using 'real' materials and tasks as much as possible.

Strand 4 – Using computer skills in other subjects

Developing applications skills is no end in itself. The skills are to support pedagogically relevant tasks and projects in a number of subjects. This requires that as far as possible subject teachers have a certain level of ICT capability. Opportunities where ICT can support and enhance work include maths investigations, media studies in English, project work across most subjects (including Class Eight and Class Twelve projects), science investigations (planning and write-up including use of graphs). Again, this aspect is difficult to foster without open access to the ICT facilities for the students during break or study times.

Strand 5 – ICT supporting the development of life skills

Beyond the use of ICT in other subjects it can serve a range of issues and activities in which the student is creatively involved, possibly outside of school. This may range from club activities, drama groups, Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, careers explorations, organising work experience placements, college or UCAS applications, job applications. Indeed the whole realm of business studies and citizenship offers a focus to combine

the development of ICT skills with vocational and life skills. This curriculum model suggests providing such a specific focus. This lends itself to work creatively and critically in smaller or bigger teams and on more complex tasks such as setting up an enterprise. Open access to the ICT facilities for the students during break or study times is an essential prerequisite here.

Strand 6 – Health & Safety, security, legal and society issues

Almost at every instance of using ICT issues such as these crop up: How do I care for my and other people's health when using computers? How do I recognise that I'm heading for addiction, repetitive strain injury? What are the implications of generations who have grown up on violent computer games? Who 'owns' the program I'm using? Who has access to what? Who will use the personal information I am disclosing? Why do we have a new operating system every two – three years and a spiralling escalation of speed, memory, etc., in our PCs? What are the prospects of cyber-terrorism? These questions will be looked at formally or informally on many occasions. This curriculum proposes to give these a special focus in Classes Eight and Twelve.

Mapping the Strands and specific content to classes and timetable allocations

On the following page a first attempt has been made to map the curriculum strands and content indications to specific classes, and suggest ways of implementing this in a time and space / facility regime. No doubt this is an optimistic picture, assuming a school that offers a full Upper School to Class Twelve. However, this may serve as a 'backbone' to arrive at 'real' situations which will always be restricted by teaching staff, facility and timetable constraints.

Gratitude – Love – Responsibility

Gisela T. O'Neil

The philosophy that underpins Waldorf education is one in which human possibility is seen as infinite. Waldorf education recognises the genius in the child entrusted to its care and sets out, quite deliberately, to coax the muscles of that genius into play in a unique and profound way. Intellectual prowess is but one facet of the growing child, the child's development of emotional and moral fibre is given equal attention. In her article, printed below, Gisela T. O'Neil highlights the way in which the Waldorf curriculum attends to these realms.

The course of a human life falls roughly into two parts. In the beginning, we are at the receiving end of life: parents, teachers, and society bestow their care upon us. As adults, we are called upon to contribute to other people and to society. This is part of growing up, of maturing.

The receiving comes naturally; the giving has to be learned. Although they both interplay, there is a definite dividing line. This falls perhaps between romance and married life, between being a student and taking on a job-responsibility. The transition we all have to make can either be hindered or helped, according to the education we have received.

Society faces many problems today. There is the inability to make commitments to others or to one's work, the rising divorce rate, the problem of deserted children, the lack of work ethics and so much more. There seems to be a prevailing attitude of, "What's in it for me?" This self-centredness may be proper for a young child but is misplaced in the adult, creating social ills and thereby affecting the lives of others adversely. What then can or should be done, how can we help the child by other means to develop eventually into a mature, responsible person?

Every gardener knows that in order to enjoy blossoms and fruits, careful early work is required in preparing the soil, planting the seeds, tending the growing plants. Roots, stems, and leaves need much care in order for blossoms to appear. Pruning may be necessary, insects kept at bay and weeds eliminated.

Education, like gardening, is a life-process that requires time and care. Like the plant, the child goes through various phases of maturing; and the educator (the parents or teacher) can well be likened to a gardener who cannot harvest through neglect. The gardener will not be able to change a rose into a lily, but with the proper know-how, can certainly nurture the rosebush until it bears blossoms. So the educator can enable the child to bring out those



innate human qualities that, without adequate help, might suffer the fate of the rosebush that blooms sparsely or not at all. **What we are really talking about is education of the moral life, over and above intellectual training.** We have to look at it in three phases: the early childhood years, the elementary-school age, and adolescence. They relate to the growing child, just as the root, the stem with leaves, and the blossoms relate to the unfolding plant. If the goal is responsibility, inner discipline, the willingness to do one's share, and eventually the ability to give oneself direction and purpose in life, the soil for this blossoming will have to be prepared early in life.

Responsibility grows out of love, which in turn has grown out of gratitude. Rudolf Steiner

Steiner gave the above sequence in an educational lecture, in 1924, entitled "Human Values in Education". He gave the three soul-qualities to be fostered during the three phases of growing up as:

- thankfulness during the years of the pre-school child;
- love as the virtue for the elementary-school years;
- responsibility as the outgrowth of these qualities during the adolescent period.

If these concepts seem startling to begin with, they become obvious to one working with children and reflecting upon life in general. Isn't thankfulness and appreciation the mother-soil of love? And then, doesn't genuine love, not infatuation, lead to the wish to reciprocate, to help, to do one's share? It is so in life, and it works also in the education of the child.

Thankfulness during the years of the pre-school child

During the early years, when everything is given to the child and he is solely a recipient, thankfulness is the natural response. Fortunate is the child who can learn early in life to bow his head in reverence and gratitude at the dinner table, while

the family says grace. Who, before going to bed, is led to look up to the stars and the moon at night in thankfulness and security for their watching over him while he sleeps. Who is guided to speak a prayer in bed, in thankfulness for the varied gifts of the day. Who can even thank the sun for shining or the rain for watering the trees. Who can live in a family atmosphere where gratitude and appreciation are expressed for the work and care that Father and Mother contribute daily. Indeed, fortunate is the child who can thus imitate the very gestures and language of gratitude, thereby learning from early years to turn his attention to the source of the many and varied gifts of life, instead of concentrating on his own wants.

Why does the child do this or that in the years before he is seven? Because he wants to imitate! He wants to do what he sees being done in his immediate surroundings. But what he does must be connected with life, it must be led over into living activity. We can do much to help him bring this about if we accustom the child to feel gratitude for what he receives from his environment. Gratitude is the basic virtue in the child between birth and the change of teeth. If he sees that everyone who stands in some relationship to him in the outer world shows gratitude for what he receives from this world; if, in confronting the outer world and wanting to imitate it, the child sees the kind of gestures that express gratitude, then a great deal is done towards establishing the right human moral attitude.

During times of loss and loneliness, it has become part of folk wisdom to learn to "count one's blessings". This means to find consolation by actively replacing self-pity with the feeling of gratitude for the gifts of life that remain. How much richer, happier, and more fulfilled the lives of our children could be if, instead of an impoverishing self-centredness, their parents and teachers were to foster the life-habit of thankfulness for the many blessings around them, which otherwise remain unnoticed and unappreciated.

Love as the virtue for the primary school years

The cultivation of thankfulness should not cease with the elementary-school years, but as the child becomes ready to leave the small family unit and go to school, a new force, beyond that of imitation, comes to the fore. "Do as I do..." is gradually replaced by, "love as I love ...". Love for learning and love for his teachers now expand his inner horizon (however – premature schooling before the child is ready and longing for it, will certainly suffocate this love of learning).

Again, fortunate is the child who can learn from loving and enthusiastic teachers in an atmosphere

of sympathy – from teachers who can open his soul to the beauty and wonders of nature and to the achievements, struggles, and possibilities of man as they are depicted first in myths and legends, and later in historical figures. Who can glow for heroes, legendary or historical, for their courage and their victories over adversity; who can identify with the good forces that prevail, and can develop antipathy for base deeds. A student who can react with anger and indignation, even outrage, to unjust or destructive actions as they have occurred in history, is well on the way towards responsibility. He will not tolerate destructiveness and irresponsibility in his environment, because moral feelings are implanted deeply within him.

Here we have to say a word about the prevalent, indiscriminate television viewing by children, where misfortune and destruction become funny and provide amusing entertainment. There the child lives in an amoral climate, his values become confused, his feelings callous, his responses paralysed. Any parent, who cannot see this detrimental influence on the moral development of a pliable, vulnerable child, must be blind.

Love grows out of gratitude; the feeling of responsibility, as the blossoming of the earlier stages, awakens with adolescence. Although there are some children who may show this quality in earlier years, they are the exception. This does not mean that, until it awakens, children should not be asked to do things, far from it!

Children who learn early to be useful, to do constructive work, to contribute in small and then in larger ways, having their work appreciated and valued, will not easily become discipline problems. But children, who are non-participating, unoccupied, bored and ever dependent on stimulation from outside for entertainment, expecting constantly to have things done for them, will be far less co-operative at home and in school. And their path to maturity will be blocked by poor habits and attitudes.

Responsibility as the outgrowth of these qualities during the adolescent period

Adolescence need not be a time of instability and confusion. It can be a period of learning, of intense idealism, of love for the whole world. A youth who has been taught in early childhood to look in thankfulness to the source of the many gifts of life, who has been guided during the school years to love the good and to abhor evil, will have a moral basis for his intellectual capacities and judgements

as they awaken with puberty. He will be able to act and to judge out of his own insight, without the need to imitate his age-peers. He will also know his proper place in life, in proportion to other people's contribution. He will want to build upon, not tear down the work of others. He can look forward to the future, with all the idealism of youth, to the time when he will be able to make his contribution to society.

By way of gratitude and love, he will come to responsibility. These are the goals for an education of the moral life; and reality will often fall short of the attainable ideals. But, unless we firmly know the direction, we will never find the way!

This article was first published in the Michael Mount Messenger school magazine and is printed here with their kind permission.

Chinese Music

- Chinese music is thought to be the oldest recorded music.
- It has a staggering 4 thousand year old history.
- Chinese music is pentatonic (5 note scale). The scale can be started on any note.
- In the 20th century Chinese music became vastly influenced by western styles.
- They mix their pentatonic melodies with western music to create Chinese pop.
- Much of the fun + tradition of Chinese music has been lost.
- In August 2002 China held 1st Rock 'n' Roll concert.
- An important instruments in China is the Qin, a Chinese zither.
- The Shen is the forerunner of the organ. It is a wind instrument system of pipes going up in a spiral. It is especially in spiritual music.
- They use flutes + bells.
- The bamboo pipes and Qin are amongst the oldest known musical instruments from China.
- Rhu is an important solo instruments and also accompanies singing and dancing. It has two strings tuned a 5th apart.
- U-chin is a fiddle with the bow threaded between the strings.
- There are eight categories of musical instruments that Chinese men made from the earth: Metal, Stone, Skins, Gourds, Bamboo, wood, silk + earth.
- In Chinese music the single tone is more ^{important} than the melody. The orchestra consists of four sections: Bowed strings, plucked strings, wood wind + percussion.



Curriculum Development

Music Education at Michael Hall School

Paul Sand

Editorial comment

Each school has to adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of its pupils based on the resources it has. Some years ago Michael Hall school reviewed its whole music provision and the then music teacher, Craig Taylor, developed a music policy and musical development plan designed to build/cultivate music skills/band appreciation as well as contributing to the overall educational aims of the school. His successor, Paul Sand, has been able to build on that original plan and expand in into the Upper School. Despite the heavy demands made on the timetable trying to do justice to the Waldorf curriculum and the exams, the school has been able to implement a quite new approach to music education within the school. Michael Hall certainly doesn't claim to have found the best solution with the highest standard of provision, but they have succeeded in bringing many more children into an active relationship with music. This brief description of the Middle and Upper School music programme gives some idea of this innovative new approach. We wish them all the best in developing it.



The illustrations are taken from a Class Ten music Main Lesson.

Each class at Michael Hall from Class Six upwards has three music lessons per week (a music lesson, class orchestra and the Middle / Upper School choir). In the Upper School, there are music Main Lessons in Classes Ten and Twelve and the school offers a music OCN programme.

There are also after-school clubs (including choirs, orchestras, string and wind ensembles), regular concerts, incoming performances and seasonal events.

All these classes and activities are increasingly integrated to serve the curriculum, which itself develops to encourage students' enthusiasm and the gaining of skills.

Whilst guided by the curriculum, each year-group takes on a series of specific projects:

Class Six: Rhythm, Melody & Harmony

Class Seven: The Ages of Music (Medieval, Renaissance, etc.)

Class Eight: Introduction to World Music

Classes Nine and Ten: Twentieth Century Music

Form & Structure in Western

Music 1600 - 1900

Aspects of World Music

Classes Eleven and Twelve: Composition & Performance

Musical Arranging & Recording

Each project, in its way, follows a similar pattern: we listen to a selection of music and make observations. We sing and play pieces. We improvise within the style or culture.

Improvisation is important; it opens the form to us, allowing us to be creative within it, and leads us to composition. The students can now compose a strand of music, or an entire piece. We then play or sing the compositions.

Sometimes the compositions simply fulfil the brief. Often the children, eager to express themselves, come up with wonderful surprises. A girl in Class Nine recently submitted her composition with an apology:

"I meant to write a pop song, but this is what came out."

She had composed a rather beautiful folksong, which the Girls Choir later performed.

Technical skills (of notation, sight-reading, singing, playing...) can happen almost inadvertently. At the heart of this approach lies the creative impulse, which we all have within us, and which is always a wonderful surprise.

Facts on African Music



- Africa is the birthplace of mankind.
- The oldest skeleton ever found (Lucy) was discovered in Africa.
- African people invented their rhythmic music in ceremonies to try to contact the gods, e.g. to ask for rain.
- They used their surroundings to inspire their music and also in their instruments.
- Horns and trumpets are used and are made from wood, ivory and animal horns.
- The African people believed music linked them to the spiritual world.
- They deliberately beat their spears against their swords so as to make themselves look more impressive.
- African music uses lots of drums.
- They always play in groups of up to 30.
- As Africa has the most continents then anywhere else on the planet it has a wide variety of music.
- Traditional African musicians aim to express life through sound.
- All African music can be considered as music.
- They use music as a way of communication. When they sit around in a circle and pass the rhythm from one to another.



Facts on Chinese Music

- Chinese Music has a 3000 year old history.
- Traditionally the Chinese believed, and still do believe, that sound influences the harmony of the universe.
- They don't play to entertain but rather so that they can feel the music.
- Melody, tone and rhythm are the three main features of Chinese music, however, the single tone is more important than the melody.
- Ancient Chinese hymns are slow & solemn and are accompanied by large orchestras.
- The Chinese dress in traditional costume when performing.
- At weddings or funerals you will hear the most lively forms of music meant to entertain both mortals and gods.
- They used music to frighten their enemies.
- In the 1950's revolutionary music which was much like and opposite to the traditional.
- The revolution was led by the communist leader Mao Zedong.
- Various forms of traditional Chinese music was made illegal with the introduction of the communist party. This included Peking Opera.
- During the 1950's western influence penetrated Chinese music to an unprecedented extent. The Chinese Communist regime gave special prominence to Russian music.



What Makes a Good Problem?

John Bayliss

It has often been said that problems are the life-blood of mathematics. So what is it that makes one problem good and another problem bad? Is there an aesthetic of problems?

I am a newcomer to Steiner education, but have been involved in setting, solving, discussing and thinking about problems for most of my life. It seems to me that the general approach of Steiner education provides a fertile soil for the growth of problem appreciation in young people. By this I mean the sort of appreciation that mathematicians have, but which is now very rare among the current generation of school pupils and undergraduates. It is easy to find answers, even excuses, by drawing attention to the relentless utilitarianism of our lives, and to claim that educators should be in the business of preparing their charges for life in the cut-throat 'real' world. But this is the blinkered view that has led to the arid 'basic skills only' philosophy that now grips most of our education system, a grip that even extends to students on mathematics degree courses.

I should make it clear that I am not talking about the mathematical education of a highly gifted

elite. My remarks in this article concern the opportunities we should be giving to our pupils. Paradoxically, in spite of all the strident clamour for basic skills being restored to the top of the priority list, the trend has been to downgrade these skills. But this is a digression: basic skills are vitally important and my point is that a system in which competence in such skills is the sole criterion of educational excellence has seriously lost its way.

My purpose here is to present these problems, explain why I consider them to be 'good' and to encourage a healthy correspondence in which we swap our favourites and argue their merits.

1. *A man lives on one bank of a river. He has a boat and three prized possessions – a goat, a wolf and a cabbage. He needs to get himself and these to the other side, but he has some problems: if left unsupervised the goat would eat the cabbage and the wolf would eat the goat; he needs to row the boat, but it is small so on each trip he is only able to take one possession. Can you help him?*

This is a very old chestnut that I guess most

people with an interest in problems will have seen. Nevertheless it is still a favourite of mine, so here is a list of what I consider to be its merits.

- (a) It seems to appeal to a wide range of ages. I have had 'children' from 7 to 70 getting quite excited by it. It can be tackled by acting out the situation with young children, paper and pencil experimentation for older ones, or just pure thought.
- (b) It encourages perseverance. It quickly becomes evident that the obvious first thought of '3 possessions so 3 trips' will not work, so greater mental effort is required.
- (c) It is not a 'trick'. Solutions are possible within the spirit of the problem – no need to resort to 'man throws cabbage across...' etc.
- (d) It is a good vehicle for exploring logical consequences: "If he takes x over first then y will happen."
- (e) It is fanciful. In the education system I have caricatured above this is a fault – totally unrealistic, frivolous, etc. ... yes – but remember that the younger children who find this problem appealing do so precisely because their lives are still inspired by myths and fairy stories, a fact which Steiner educators regard as a very positive feature. Older children can see through the fanciful background, smile and get on to enjoy solving it.
- (f) No vulnerable child needs to experience failure. If, as suggested above, the children act out the situation the teacher can organize things so that the children discuss each suggested move, decide whether to accept and try it out, or perhaps reject it as they see its consequences, so that eventually a solution to which all the children have contributed is obtained.

2. *Gwen, Sven and Lars take part in a race. Sven finishes in the middle position, and he beats Gwen who is 10th. Lars is 16th. How many are there in the race?*

This also is not original. I stole it from *The Inquisitive Problem Solver*.¹ It has the advantages of the previous problem, though its minimum age suitability is somewhat older. Here are some additional thoughts on it.

- (a) There is an element of surprise – how can such minimal information yield the answer?
- (b) Partly as a result of (a), solving it will engender a sense of joy.
- (c) It shows the power of simple mathematical imagery. What I mean by this is that a bald mathematical statement is often useless

accompanied by a set of images associated with the meaning of the statement. For example "Sven is in the middle" triggers the picture of a line of runners in front of him and an equal number behind him. "Lars is 16th" means that there are at least 16 runners. Giving Gwen's position and the fact that Sven beats her gives a range of possible positions for him. Only one position for Sven in this range is consistent with the other clues.

Remarks (a), (b), (c) above are not only relevant to young children. For professional (especially 'pure') mathematicians, surprise and joy are important motivations, and imagery is often a significant factor in achieving a solution.

3. *I've forgotten my padlock number but I remember that it has four distinct digits in descending order, and that when I add it to its reverse I get 14553. What is my number?*²

- (a) This seems to me a good puzzle for children who have reached a good level of competence with the standard addition algorithm. It enhances understanding of it and again shows the power of fairly minimal-looking information.
- (b) It can be unwieldy to discuss strategies for this problem unless a device like "let's suppose the number is ABCD" is used, and start with the clue from the units digit of ABCD and DCBA = 14553 to get $A + D = 3$ or 13. In other words, letters are being used to stand for (as yet unknown) numbers, and we have a good way of setting the scene for one aspect of algebra, a powerful idea which children will meet more formally perhaps a couple of years after meeting this particular problem.

I would be delighted to receive any response to my comments or to the problems, either in a letter or through the pages of this journal.

1. *The Inquisitive Problem Solver*, by P. Vederlind, R. Guy and L. Larson. Mathematical Association of America, 2002.
2. *Mathematical Pie No.155*. Published by the Mathematical Association (UK), 2002.

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European Masters Pilot Approved for Switzerland

In July 2004 staff from the Pedagogical Section, the Institut für Praxisforschung (IPF) and the University of Plymouth met in Dornach to approve a Swiss Pilot Project of the European Masters Programme – EMP.

It was agreed that the pilot programme would begin in September 2004, with a cohort of 12 students from Switzerland.

This initiative marks a major development arising out of the work of the EU-funded Comenius Project to design and approve a flexible, practice-based, European Masters Programme in Waldorf pedagogy.

The Comenius Project began its work in Autumn 2002 and over the last 20 months the project partners – from Germany, Sweden, Hungary, the Netherlands, UK and the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (ECSWE) – have been researching the design of the programme and meeting regularly to research the different national situations regarding higher education, including the varying legislative requirements and questions of programme accreditation and recognition. This work has been carried out in awareness of the emerging Bologna Process – a European political process concerned with the future of European higher education.

In September 2003 a pilot Masters module of the developing EMP programme was launched at Cotswold Chine Home School near Stroud in England. A second pilot module at M-level will begin in Autumn 2004. During the Winter of 2003-04 a period of intense collaboration, research and planning began between staff at IPF and the

University of Plymouth (the lead partner in the Comenius Project). Under the auspices of the project a series of meetings was held in Switzerland and the UK. The collaborative activity culminated in the approval event, held at the Goetheanum in July.

In the Swiss pilot, IPF will work as an accredited partner of the University of Plymouth. Thomas Stöckli (www.ipf-ipr.net) is the Swiss Co-ordinator and John Burnett (jburnett@plymouth.ac.uk) is Director of Studies for the EMP. The principal language of teaching, study and assessment will be German. A representative 25% sample of submitted assignments will be translated into English for purpose of quality assurance. Staff from the University in England will support IPF staff in areas of training and moderation. Professor Hans-Fred Rathenow (Technische Universität, Berlin) will be external examiner and moderator to the Swiss pilot of EMP.

In addition, a small number of individuals are enrolled on EMP as “mini, or solo pilots” and are carrying out the work as independent study students. The first assignments at M-level have been successfully submitted to the University!

It is hoped that the implementation phase of the Comenius Project can gradually be extended to other parts of Europe in the short to medium term. Discussions and initial planning for further pilots are currently taking place in Germany, Holland and Sweden.

Trevor Mepham (Comenius Project Co-ordinator,
August 2004
(trevor.mepham@lineone.net)

The Friends of the Art of Education of Rudolf Steiner

Since 1976 the Friends have worked in support of the worldwide development of Waldorf education and other forms of autonomous educational initiative. The Friends raise money to support Kindergartens, day care centres, schools, curative education, teacher training centres and individual students as well as other initiatives that help children. In 2001 they were officially recognised as a Charity by UNESCO. Since 1994 the Friends have also been an official partner of the German government in facilitating voluntary service abroad.

The Friends are supported by many individuals and institutions who make regular donations. The Friends as an organisation are able to pass on all designated donations in full to the recipients. If you wish to become a member of the Friends or make a contribution to a specific project please contact the Friends via the address on page 28. (English is spoken).

Inkanyezi in South Africa: no future for the Starlight Express An appeal for help for the Inkanyezi (Starlight) School and its 185 children

The Friends of the Art of Education have been supporting the school since its founding in 1989 in the poorest township of Alexandra, a part of Johannesburg. The donations collected in 1997 have now run out and the school cannot continue without a further injection of funds.

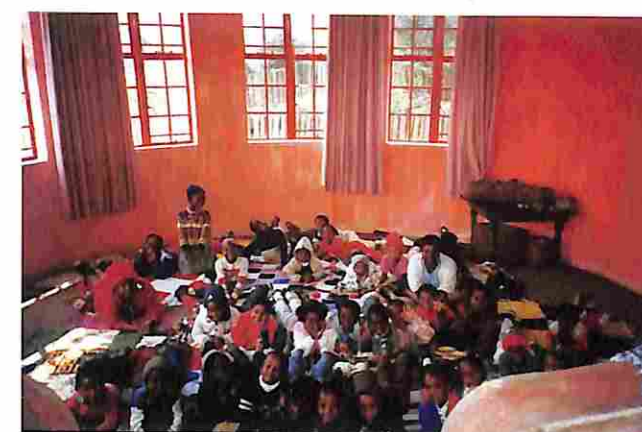
In all the years that I have been connected with the school I never had a better feeling about it than now! There is an open and warm atmosphere among the teachers, they help each other, exchange classes and respond positively to new impulses and constructive criticism. In the weekly teachers' meetings the children are studied in an open and courageous way. The College of Teachers as a democratic community have begun to realise that their way of working is absolutely unique in the township. Above all, the children love the school. It was they who, during the violence following the breakdown and end of Apartheid, persuaded their often-reluctant parents to allow them to go to school and who have since frequently stunned the local people by processing through the streets singing and celebrating their school life.

It is ironic that at such a time of strength and positive impulses we find ourselves in a situation where some of our best teachers are resigning, not out of a desire to leave but out of sheer desperation at not being able to sustain themselves and their children any more. I have spoken about it with several colleagues and tried to help financially where the need is too great. The teachers' salaries have not been increased for three years, whilst the cost of living has gone up all the time. One teacher lives in a garage with her child, another lives in a temporary shack. Because there are no more rooms in the overcrowded township, six of the eleven teachers have to travel the long distance from Soweto and a third of their salary (which is between £170 and £200 a month goes on travel costs alone). The teachers in the Zenzeleni Waldorf School in Khayelitsha in Cape Town earn about £500 and state school teachers begin at about £700.

The school is in one of the poorest parts of the township, which is one of the reasons why it has never been able to have more than 200 children, despite having seven classes. The parents, who are mostly unemployed, usually can't pay anything

to the school, although the teachers try hard to encourage them to do so. The basic fees of about £15 a month together with the subsidies the state pays for the relatively small number of children just about pays the teachers' low salaries.

For years now we have cut out all other expenses and have fundraised for crayons and paint. The teachers have organised several fundraising events last year, but the amounts brought in were modest. We rent out almost all the classrooms to Sunday Church groups for a nominal fee only. We have for years tried to interest businesses in our area



to support us, but other than one-off donations in kind or for a specific event, there is generally no interest in nursery and primary schools.

On top of this there have been setbacks such as a break-in last year in which practically everything was stolen, from kitchen equipment to cursive shoes.

Without any donations, the school will gradually go backwards; the teachers will have to look elsewhere for sustainable jobs. They have been so faithful to the school over the years and none of them actually want to leave. When you visit our festivals at school, witness the joy and enthusiasm, the quality of the performances, you really *believe* what I have said. In the words of a former teacher of the school, who hadn't seen the school for a while: "These children are truly Waldorf children... what a joy it is to teach them!"

This is the picture of Inkanyezi I am proud to be associated with. My heart is sore when I think of the lack of opportunity for so many already-deprived children in the future, were the school to lose its vibrancy and warmth. It is a haven for so many severely hurt human beings, who have very little chance of healing anywhere else!

The policemen from the nearby police station were invited to our last Advent fair. As these tall uniformed men, who are daily confronted with such crime and violence, came out of our Kindergarten they appeared as if transformed. They had the same gentle expressions as the children and were somewhat helpless and embarrassed, they had been so moved...

Wiebke Holtz, Advisor to the Inkanyezi School

Tashi Waldorf School and Teacher Training Summer Newsletter – 2004

Tashi Waldorf School began its fifth school year serving 80 children in three Kindergartens, a Class One, Two and Three in April 2004. As we now begin our second term the classrooms are full of very happy children and decorated with beautiful paintings and handwork. Our teaching group has grown to seven teachers and one Kindergarten assistant, all of whom are Nepalese and Tibetan women. There are photos for all to see with this newsletter.

In April, we said farewell to Marjorie Theyer and Kate Bryant. Kate finished her year with us as teacher trainer and Marjorie, as visiting mentor over

the past four years. It was very sad to say goodbye and difficult to convey the extent of our thanks for their help to everyone at the school. We hope that one day they will be with us again in Nepal.

Laura Wilson arrived from New Zealand in April to spend a term with us training the teachers. Laura has written of her experience at Tashi Waldorf School as follows:

"Having just completed five months as a teacher-trainer at Tashi, I would like to share some of what I have seen. It is a lot to expect of the teachers here, that they teach out of Waldorf concepts that are not mirrored in their society at large. Teachers in Nepal are not expected to be highly creative, to 'own' what they teach. At first I found the teachers at Tashi somewhat reluctant to expose what they considered to be their lack of artistic talent, on the blackboard and elsewhere. So we worked at undoing a myth that they had been taught: that some people are good at art, and others are not.

I found the teachers extremely willing to learn. Being observed, assessed and advised is not always easy to take! Yet here the openness and keenness of the staff is a joy to work with. In many areas, all that was needed was a boost to their confidence, so they could see they are as good as good Waldorf teachers anywhere.

A walk into any of their classes will prove this. Their children are happier to be at school than any I have seen. Their attention is caught by the marvelous stories that unfold each day, accompanied by wonderful blackboard art, form-drawing, music and movement. The children's creative responses are varied, sometimes wax models are made, or pop-up castles glued into workbooks, or large chalk drawings made on outdoor paving.

I no longer have to worry about the teachers being creative; they come to realise that this education is about their own freedom as well, not just the children's. Everyone has something unique to offer, and it is the teachers' job to explore this uniqueness.

What I found most remarkable is the harmony. Every school has problems, maybe some teachers who don't quite gel, or some student-teacher relationships that are a struggle. Not here! The entire staff, including the brilliant cooks and administrators, is a family and all teachers are simply adored by their students. This is because school for them is a place of fun, of love, of challenges and of security. No child could feel they do not fit in.



This harmony is due in a large part to the school's strong Kindergarten base. The four kindergarteners (three teachers and one assistant) do a superb job of guiding the new entrants into a world of beautiful rhythms, of goodness, thoughtfulness and patience, so that by the time children reach Class One they are in such a harmonious group that classroom management is not an issue for the teachers. This school has managed to achieve what Rudolf Steiner wanted. The school is a seamless, healthy extension of home and family life."

Laura Wilson

When wounds don't heal: Waldorf education contributes to peace and reconciliation in Kosovo

By Beatrice Rutishauser

It was hot and dusty in Kosovo. That didn't stop us working though. On the contrary, the training in the 'Dielli' Kindergarten went forward as planned on the 21st July. As I arrived from Pristina on the 20th the participants were already waiting in the Kindergarten. I was even more amazed when I discovered that many of the women had travelled long distances from the villages to come to the town of Drenas for the Early Years training. For many this was the very first educational training they had ever had though they work in the village Kindergartens. The UNMIK had just announced a new law stating that only those with a university education can teach in a school. In reality such women from the villages have no opportunity to be trained in anything because of lack of money and because of the transport difficulties in a land linked mostly by rough tracks. So our training programme also had to take account of the village bus timetable.

Because Mehreme Gillareva is getting married and is giving up her post in the Kindergarten in Dielli we have been able to respond to the municipality's appeals and have extended the Kindergarten. Thus on 11th August four newly trained Kindergarten teachers who have completed their in-service training in the Oasis and Dielli Kindergartens will begin work there. The teachers in the school welcome children who have been in Kindergarten, therefore it is good that nothing has to be paid. The wish of the teachers is actually impossible in a town with 18,000 inhabitants and (thanks to Dielli) with only 100 Kindergarten places. The town's own Day Care Centre is not full because the parents cannot afford to pay the fees, which is not surprising with 80% unemployment!

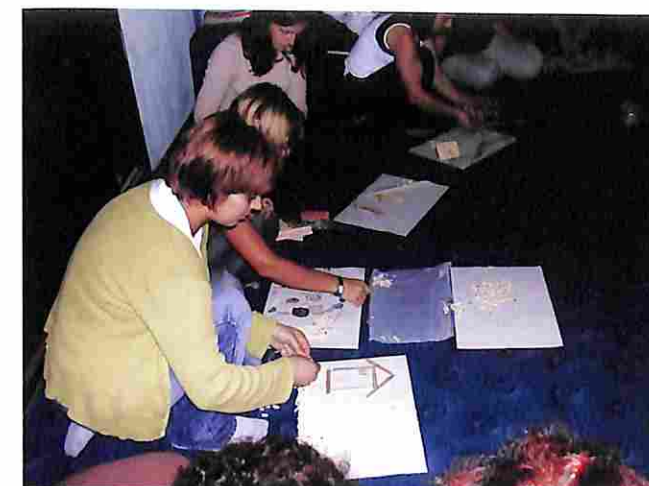


The two teachers who will work in the new Kindergarten in the small village of Terdevc took part in the training programme. There stands a container next to the new school that Thomas Wirth, a student on a work placement from Basel, has built for them. I have collected toys over the past months, many of which were gifts from other Waldorf Kindergartens. The village carpenter has already copied some of these toys. The military helped lay the carpets and carry in the wooden stands. The two teachers Merrushe Halilaj and Florentina Halilaj (who are not related) have christened the Kindergarten 'Ylbere' which means rainbow in Kosovan. The name is no surprise since the village was 95% destroyed and is being re-built by the NGO *Caritas*. A massacre was perpetrated in this village and even now not all the bodies have been found. The dead were a topic of conversation even during my visit to Drenas. Serbia had released another ten bodies. Three weeks before my arrival Violetta Qorri and her family buried two brothers whose corpses had also been returned by the Serbs. During the war she had also lost her mother and aunt and witnessed this crime. She told me, "Now we can begin to heal the wounds." I don't have the words to describe how I felt as she told me that.

The 24-year-old will work in the new Dielli Kindergarten and was very pleased that she could have this training. All the women tell similar stories and their everyday life is now dominated by lack of water and electricity. The teachers from the surrounding villages struggle to get paid for the two hours of pre-schooling they squeeze in over the lunch break in the primary school. The building is used continuously for several shifts of school children. There are no toys and the municipality has no money to pay salaries.

Zhemile Berila brings fresh cheese every day made from the milk she gets from Moritz, a Swiss cow given to the village. The children who tend the cows in the fields risk getting haemorrhage fever caused by a virus carried by ticks that live in the grass.

Our training course concentrated on the education of the young child, especially the development and the cultivation of the senses. We accompanied this by teaching many games, using things we found on the streets, such as plastic bottles, stones, crates, bits of wood, straw and grasses. We also painted with straw and hay because it became clear to me that it was no use training with chalks and paints that won't exist. We told fairy tales and acted them out, because imitation is so important for the children. We saw that this was immediately



effective when we saw the teachers with the children. Time flew and the intensity and joy of the course gave us all energy.

Frequently I went to the municipality to speak with the Education Minister, who shared with us

his many problems. We negotiated a contract that committed the municipality to paying Kindergarten staff salaries from 2005 onwards. A playground is to be built by *Caritas* but even here there have been delays because everything that is agreed gets continuously changed and material and money disappears. So we had to drink yet more coffee, a ritual that belongs to negotiating as much as showing your displeasure at what has been agreed upon. The school director from Terdevc thanked us for the Kindergarten but was insistent that his daughter should be employed to work there. However the job was advertised and the interviews conducted through *Caritas* and the Education Ministry as well as an independent observer to ensure fairness.

In Tersdenik another Kindergarten will be opened in January. This region is even poorer than Terdevc. As we travelled through there we met a woman with 11 children drawing water from a well. There was barely enough. She gets some three litres of milk daily which, apart from bread, is all her children get to eat. Hunger is everywhere. We were able to arrange a delivery of supplies through one of the NGOs, though little could be done to alleviate the lack of drinking water. Many places are like that in Kosovo and many of the organisations that were helping have moved on. The ruling UNMIK is angry and is being watched over by the United Nations KFOR. The riots in March left a huge amount of damage. In Prizren 16 churches that had been guarded for the past five years were destroyed. The local people claim that the rioters were bussed in from outside and had been hired to do the wrecking. The UNMIK police confirmed this.

I also had the opportunity to visit Serbian villages and speak to people. The Serbs refuse to speak the Albanian language, though they are nominally part of the country. All the school books come from Belgrade, Serbian currency is used and only Serbian products are sold in the shops. Social security is paid from Belgrade and at a significantly higher rate than in Kosovan villages. These villages have their own telephone zip code that doesn't work in the rest of Albania. It is noticeable that when you drive through Serbian territory, your mobile phone suddenly finds a signal. These inequalities contradict the terms of the reconciliation agreement that is supposed to be the basis for rebuilding the nation.

Relations to the other major ethnic group, the Bosniaks who live in the Schar Mountains, where there is a national park with wild bears, seems to function much better. There, products such as the

famous cheese are sold in the markets of Prizren. I was sent there by *Caritas* to evaluate the situation of the schools there. These mountain villages are in an idyllic setting as far as the landscape goes but are only accessible using a good Jeep. I was met by representatives of the villages in a community centre next to an enormous new mosque, which had been built through donations from Saudi Arabia – unfortunately this generosity has not spread to other essential services such as schools and health care. The existing school has three rooms and is used by nine classes. Somehow they forgot to renovate the school when rebuilding was begun. The schoolroom is mainly used for the teaching of Arabic to the children. The people here only speak Bosniak and the children only get one lesson a week from Class Three onwards in Albanian. I asked if it would be possible to use the Albanian language in the planned Kindergarten. The answer was no. There is not a single girl in secondary education and when I asked about the age of marriage I was told it was very early and that marriages are arranged by the families. It is therefore no wonder that there are no Kindergarten teachers.

I had further discussions with the minority Roma people. They had heard about our training and were keen to join.

There seem to be good chances that UNMIK will finance new Kindergarten places. This is really the least that can be done, since in Prizren hardly any children go to school. It is thought that those

who attend Kindergarten may be more likely to find their way to a school. The plan is to create a Kindergarten open to all ethnic groups in which not only Albanian will be spoken but also Roma.

After three very full weeks I am back at home in Switzerland. The headlines in the Kosovan newspaper showed the administrative leader of UNMIK sitting on an ejection seat. This may well happen if there is no significant investment to create work places. The future looks bleak. For the children in the Oases, Dielli and Ylbere Kindertages there will at least be some joy and laughter to help them overcome the drab world around them.

Beatrice Rutishauser (born 1957) is a teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School in Basel as well as being a well-known author of children's books. She is also active in ACACIA, a Swiss Foundation dedicated to overseas development work.

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A letter to the Editor

Brian A. Dawes

I have just come across Josie Alwyn's article *Harry Potter and the Pot of Gold* in the June 2003 edition of *SE*. Josie, formerly in research and lecturing at Sussex University, is now at Michael Hall Upper School, an experienced teacher of all ages in the sphere of "the appreciation and creation of literature". As a former state secondary and Steiner Upper School Mathematics teacher myself, I appreciated her skill in stating the basic facts behind the Harry Potter stories and her comparisons with children's literature. However her emphasis on the young child exclusively (as with the unicorn as 'archetypal image' and the 'darkness at the core of each book') and her statement that Harry is 'a child' and 'too young', is belied by her opening observation that Harry moves through the ages of 11 to 14 in the four books so far. Then there is her interpretation of the names of various characters. Could the Weasleys, for example, represent almost

a term of endearment, the English 'postman' that becomes 'postie' in Scotland? That Dumbledore should merely represent a bumblebee (Oxford English Dictionary) is far from "bumbling" to me. Steiner, in his remarkable *Lectures on Bees* celebrates the rich field of the honey gatherers. Moreover, I fear we have moved almost on to the field of deconstruction in picturing the dead unicorn, whose body is drained of blood by Voldemort.

I read all four books each in a matter of days and was gripped by the ambiguities of good and evil in Snape, which I would identify as part of the normal life experience of the teenager, though not perhaps of the young child (especially in an anthroposophical household), for whom the books are clearly *not* intended. Incidentally, can we really blame Rowling if the 'young reader' digests these books in a 'matter of weeks' – presumably,

coming to them late and having them all available at home?

We read of the books' lack of Christian festivals, Christ, and even Mass in the holidays. Whatever great value we may give to such things, the fact is that they are virtually incomprehensible to vast swathes of young people, possibly even including J. K. Rowling herself. To denigrate "the wholly pagan Halloween" seems to throw away all the Celtic Festivals, Samhain, celebrated around 1st November, included. It behoves Christianity to speak to the real modern condition.

It is in the treatment of Evil in these books that this review is most critical. I cannot compete with Josie Alwyn's knowledge of literature, and possibly of children of all ages, but we cannot pretend that young people's literature can stay in the Kindergarten. The modern child grows, *especially* during adolescence, into a potentially shattering knowledge of the scope of evil in the modern world. Apart from world news, they are likely to meet drugs, violence, failing relationships and deprivation. Most young people meet the full blast of civilisation in crisis by being fully exposed to the media and the Internet. Harry Potter's adventures are addressed to these people, including adults by association. What is astonishing is that in many modern young people we see the Michaelic qualities of compassion and bravery that shame much of our adult behaviour. Somehow they have come to the earth *knowing* the nature of this challenge.

With the high moral qualities of Harry Potter these books seek to arouse that inner hidden knowledge, from 'magic' to consciousness. Voldemort represents the incredible scope of evil today which most of us

choose to ignore or shield ourselves from knowing. This is the insight of J. K. Rowling, to picture this in her magical world, and it is surprising how close her intuition is to Steiner's insights into the nature of evil and its working in the world. Yes, one can ask what forces revealed the seven-book saga to her on a train journey. Could they be of the new esoteric Christianity, where Christ is at work in the sphere of the earth? Redemption is implicit in Harry Potter's battles. If we hide from this reality we may indeed have nightmares. It is the spiritual presence of Christ that gives the possibility of humanity's redemption.

My feeling is that these books are a unique, 21st century means of helping children to come to such insights without hitching them to the often-moribund labels of church and Christianity still belonging to the past. We must also hand on the tasks to young people.

In the Kindergarten we prepare children with fairy stories of good and evil, in the Class Teacher period with Sagas and the Old Testament. Parzifal is one way to approach these matters with the Upper School; perhaps Harry Potter is a modern equivalent? While traditional religious rules of behaviour have provided a sound basis for civilisation, they cannot provide exact guidance on the increasingly complex issues of today. What is developed to a high degree in the character of Harry Potter is free moral initiative in which the validity of narrowly-conceived rules is overridden by insights that have grown out of his considered experience. Dumbledore, head teacher of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, subtly condones this. Harry Potter is a picture of individual responsibility absolutely necessary for our times the highest personal integrity.

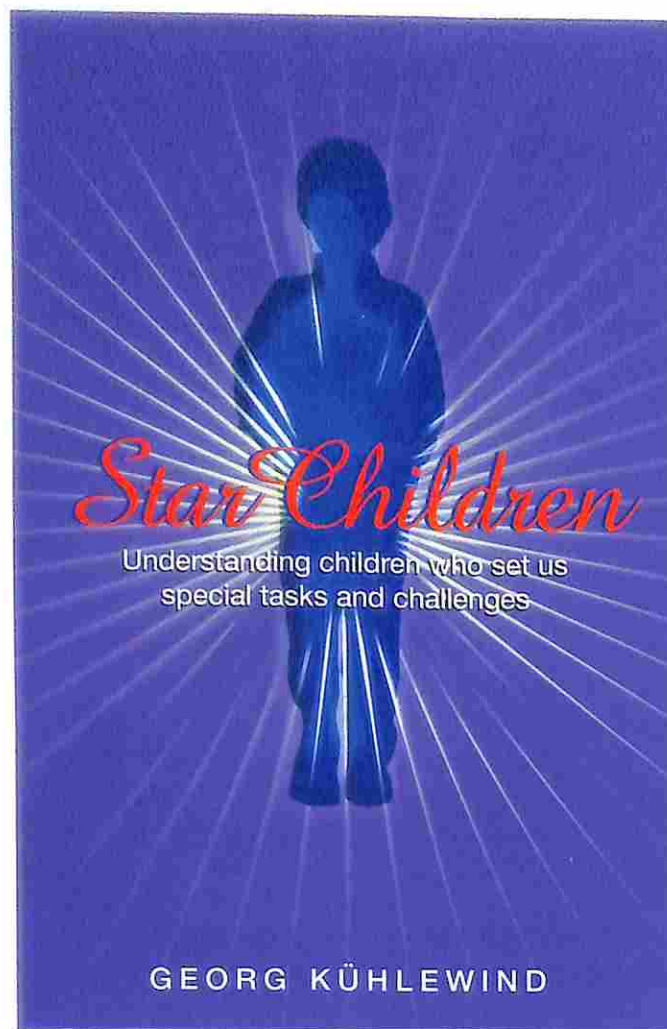
his claims on direct experience or expertise with children.

The book is structured through a series of 16 chapters in Part I that are titled "A Phenomenological Study of the Nature of the Small Child". These chapters consist of a few pages of discussion followed by a suggestion for meditative work on a phrase or word given by the author. As a meditative path Kühlewind's statements would need to be reviewed by someone else with relevant experience. I found them unhelpful in relation to the theme of working with children. They are described as "a path and method of spiritual investigation" which would have been a

Book Reviews

Paula Moraine reviews *Star Children* by Georg Kühlewind

The theme of children in the 21st century is challenging, important and complex. Teachers and parents look for help in understanding the children in their family or class, and are generally open to guidance from those who have gained some understanding through their work with children. I am also very interested to read what authors have to say about their insights and knowledge derived from direct experience with children. This is a sadly lacking element in the book *Star Children* by Georg Kühlewind. There is little to no evidence that this author can base



better title for the book. With a different title a reader would not eagerly open the book, hoping for help in understanding the children in their lives. If it had been titled "Methods of Spiritual Investigation" it would have been more true to the nature of the content. I would not then have ached with disappointment for the teachers and parents reading the book, searching its pages for inspiration and practical suggestions for daily life and finding essentially nothing to help them.

On page 4, the author states that "Researching the consciousness of a small child cannot consist in merely observing its behaviour, for observation always takes place by way of adult consciousness which has been trained to make use of the kind of conceptual images at its disposal." He then goes on to say that "adults cannot experience the soul constitution of the small child" and therefore interpret their behaviour wrongly. Altogether, to indicate that this book is an approach into researching consciousness is a mighty claim; then to diminish an important tool we have as parents and teachers by saying that "mere observation" is not enough for understanding, is condescending. As parents and teachers we are constantly observing the children, bringing our experiences and perceptions together with our understanding and

intuition to form clear ideas about how we should proceed with the education and guidance of these children. "Mere observation" is, in fact, an excellent aid in learning to know our children better.

Part II concentrates on what the author names "Practical Training". Although this section is primarily about attitude and approach, there is only the rare, occasional good idea tucked into the chapters that may be helpful if they could be lifted out of the lengthy discussion about consciousness training and put to use in a practical manner. The rest of this section continues the theme from Part I about the author's interpretation of spiritual development.

There are many of us who would welcome a book about living and working with challenging children that is based on direct evidence in a wide context, that could encourage, inspire and guide our teaching and parenting. I sincerely hope such a book will be written one day.

Ann Swain reviews *The Well Balanced Child – Movement and early learning* by Sally Goddard Blythe

The author states, at the onset, her intention that, in looking at child development, she was interested in marrying the processes employed by science with those intuitive insights that have been part of child rearing in cultures of the past.

Movement, the first form of expression, provides the foundation for the development of a healthy sensory life for all later cognitive skills. The initial chapters offer clear description of the Vestibular system, development of the visual-auditory-vestibular loop, as well as the tactile-kinesthetic-proprioceptive chain. The author describes, in detail, the research she is perhaps best known for – namely the developmental progression of reflexes from intra-uterine through the primitive to the postural reflexes.

The next part of the book addresses what she terms as the human being's second language – Music. Here the voice of the mother sounds clearly through the text – the mother of a son with hearing impairment, elective mutism and learning difficulties. Through his experience in the cathedral choir, he overcame his difficulties. Here, she also describes the work of Tomatis, Madule and Kjeld Johansen and research projects carried out in various schools substantiating the importance that music has on literacy attainment and positive behaviour.

With the importance of movement on growth and academic development made so clear throughout each chapter of the book, it certainly would not be complete without a description of the movement programme the author has developed for teachers to use within the context of primary school classrooms. Before-and-after pictures and testimonies from children who underwent the programme are both dramatic and inspiring for the reader who has experience of the child with school related struggles.

The book covers a vast range of subjects in a very short space. Coverage of neuro-development, nutrition, educational models, parenting practices, motor development and sensory stimulation provides somewhat of a thrilling roller coaster ride for the reader. The different voices that the author has help to both soften the overly technical parts of the researcher, and add clarity to the experience of the mother.

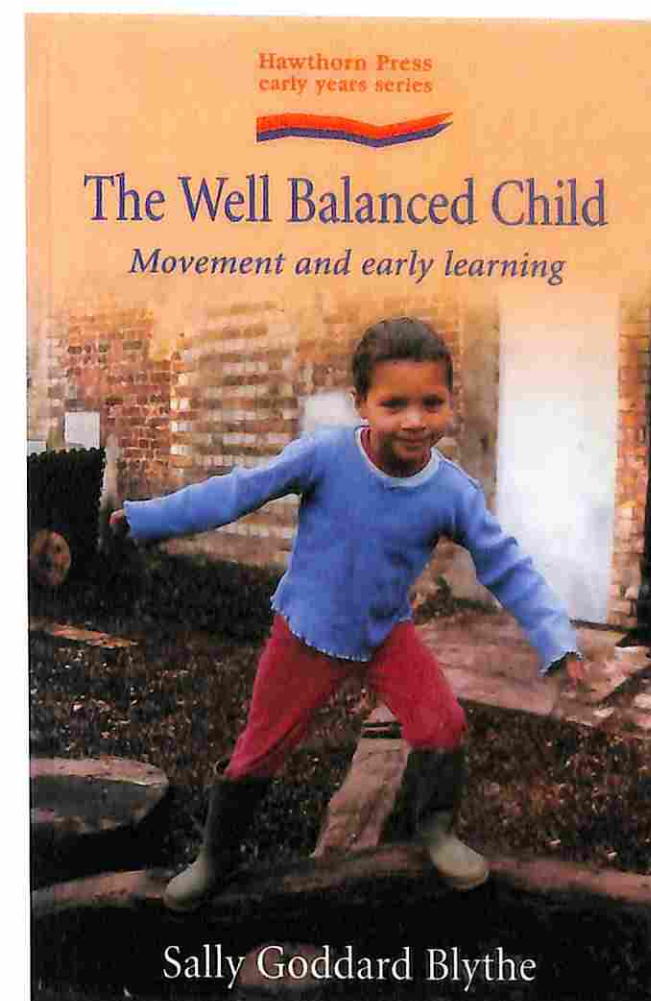
The illustrations by Marije Rowling are delightful, simple and clearly show the reflexive movements of infancy.

As a Steiner Waldorf teacher I found myself most interested in the way Goddard Blythe states, with the weight of research, the practices we (perhaps without really knowing why) incorporate into our morning circle time, our class social structure and especially into our Early Years curriculum.

From the introduction by Ewout Van Manen to Sally Goddard Blythe's book

In times gone by, when people lived in more close-knit communities supported by neighbours, friends, and family, parenting was in some ways a much simpler task than it is in the 21st century. Well-off members of society employed professionals such as nannies to bring up and educate their children, and in the poorer families the whole community was involved, with the children spending much of their time helping their parents with many practical tasks.

Now, in the early part of the 21st century, parenting has become one of the hardest tasks to do well. On the one hand we have much less support from family and friends: mothers who have had successful careers often feel pressurised to return to work to maintain their place on the 'ladder', and many families depend on incomes from both parents to survive financially. We have a dearth of 'advice' from the media and government as to the way we should rear our children. Much of this information is



confusing, with reports frequently being published or broadcast with conflicting views.

How do we sort through, and make sense of, this information in order to be in a position to make informed decisions as to what is best for our children? Clearly, the best way to begin to look at these issues is by looking at general child development. It is only by understanding child development and by observing the children in our care that we can begin to be in a position to make appropriate, informed judgements and decisions.

Psychologists and educationalists point to significant and sequential developmental stages in child development. At the beginning of the last century, the Austrian educationalist Rudolf Steiner described the first stage of child development (up to the age of the change of teeth at about age seven) as being primarily dependent on the child's physical organism. Some years later in the 1940s, the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget observed that a child's physical movement is the basis for cognitive, social, and emotional development. If the physical sense of balance is not developed, there is likely to be a problem with mental equilibrium too. Problems in movement correspond to delayed language development; and if sensory development

is impaired, the development of intelligence is interrupted and learning is hindered.

Unfortunately we live in a time when there is tremendous pressure for children to become literate early on in their lives. It is a time when children are being robbed of their childhood, when a significant amount of time is spent statically watching television, and when 'play' can mean sitting at a computer instead of being engaged in activities that stimulate and develop the senses of movement.

It is becoming more and more common for schools to have classes with many children who have not experienced appropriate amounts of sensory experience, movement, play, music, and speech. As a result, these children are not yet developmentally ready to make use of what education has to offer.

The development of motor skills, language acquisition, and visual and auditory competence must be taken seriously and intensely fostered. If these developments do not occur at the proper age, then although it is possible to compensate for this at a later stage, this can only be achieved with great effort and commitment.

Professor Dr. Peter Strück, a German authority on child development,¹ reports that:

...children who have too seldom run and jumped, who have had insufficient opportunity to play on a swing or in the mud, to climb and to balance, will have difficulty walking backwards. They lag behind in arithmetic and appear to be clumsy and stiff. These children cannot accurately judge strength, speed, or distance; and thus they are more accident prone than other children.

Of course, as parents we instinctively know that it is natural for children to be almost constantly engaged in movement. We cannot expect a small child to sit still for long periods as they are still learning to control their balance. Hopping, skipping, climbing, and balancing are all part of a child's learning to control their balance and body. Without the opportunity to move and progress through the early developmental stages, the brain is unable to develop the skills that are necessary for intellectual development. The (poor) Romanian orphan children who were kept in their cots and were deprived of movement, a chance to play and good nutrition experienced developmental delays as a result.

Professor Strück also reports that, in Germany:
One in ten adolescents already suffers hearing loss; 60 per cent of the children entering school have poor

posture, 35 per cent are overweight, 40 per cent have poor circulation, 38 per cent cannot adequately coordinate their arms and legs, and more than 50 per cent lack stamina for running, jumping, and swimming. The Hamburg Centre for Child Development alone annually treats 4,000 children who have movement and sensory disorders.

A society that does not promote the sensory development of its younger generation is at the same time diminishing its overall intellectual capacity.

When I first came across the research and work of the Institute of Neuro-Physiological Psychology (INPP), I was fascinated. Here, there was research being conducted which looked at child development in a way which showed how the brain and movement interact in child development. I was struck by the fact that the work done by the INPP actually confirmed a common-sense approach to child rearing, and gave us a modern understanding of why movement, music, nutrition, etc., are vital to the development of the child.

The work of this book's author, Sally Goddard Blythe, as a researcher and NDD therapist, has made a significant contribution to our understanding of child development and the neurological relationship between movement and learning. Both as a parent and as a Learning Support teacher, I have been greatly influenced and helped in my work with children by Peter Blythe's and Sally Goddard Blythe's research and insights. Although there are books and many papers available for education professionals and therapists, unfortunately there has not been much material suitable for the wider public – parents in particular. Until now, that is.

This book makes a major contribution towards sensible, informed parenting and educating. It provides the reader with a good introduction to the effect of retained primitive reflexes, music, and nutrition. In *The Well Balanced Child*, Mrs. Goddard Blythe not only speaks out of her expertise as a neuro-physiological psychologist but also as an experienced mother.

Reference

- 1 Peter Strück, *Yesterday's Education, Today's Pupils and Tomorrow's Schools*, Hanser Verlag, Munich, 1997.

From a School Doctor

Thoughts on Vaccination

Dr. Bettina Lohn



Vaccination is a complex, controversial and emotive issue. However, every parent will meet it and can experience insecurity, uncertainty and questions, despite a wealth of available information. Various aspects need to be considered, like the safety of vaccines, risks of illnesses, the individual child's situation, population concerns etc. – a single answer will hardly suit everybody. This article will not provide readily available information about vaccinations (see below), but will identify aspects and questions to help considering individual decisions.

Historic perspective

More than 200 years ago Edward Jenner observed that people who had caught the harmless cowpox virus rarely fell ill with smallpox. This led to the development and introduction of the smallpox vaccination, which became mandatory in 1874. About 100 years later, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared smallpox eradicated worldwide – the only infectious illness so far. Since Jenner's time vaccinations have undergone continuous development and constitute an important form of preventive medicine. WHO continues to aim for eradication of infectious illnesses worldwide through vaccinations and other measures. However, this proves extremely difficult and previous aims, like the

eradication of polio by 2000, have had to be reviewed. Despite this global aim every country provides their own vaccination guidelines with varying degrees of legal mandate. In the UK vaccinations are not mandatory. When considering these issues it is important to acknowledge the difference between the developed and the developing world.

Other viewpoints

As a doctor working out of anthroposophy I am frequently asked for an "anthroposophic opinion" on vaccination. There is no such defined anthroposophic opinion. Vaccination is considered a personal and individual decision and anthroposophy can contribute ideas and viewpoints that can help in decision making. Coming to one's own decision is of course easier said than done, especially in the presence of strong official guidelines and recommendations, which in practice do not encourage an individual approach.

In general the prevailing attitude towards illness strongly supports vaccination, with the aim of avoiding illness. The idea that infectious, feverish illnesses during childhood can potentially positively contribute to a child's development and future health is not commonly held. There is also not yet sufficient scientific evidence to support such a

notion. Nevertheless, the importance of child health for adult health is increasingly recognised, e.g. in the apparent relationship between feverish illnesses during childhood and cancer in adult life.

Of course all children get ill, whether vaccinated or not, and nobody enjoys children being ill. Even if we accept illness as part of life, it brings uncertainty, anxiety and fear. We know of possible complications and nobody can predict which child will be affected. Due to the rate of vaccinations most of the more serious childhood infections like measles, which really makes children ill, are no longer experienced, and therefore part of the anxiety previously experienced in connection with the illness has shifted towards issues around vaccinations. For instance, the risk of complications with vaccinations is considerably smaller than those associated with the illness itself. Of course, the decision to vaccinate fully, partially or not at all, has consequences. Considering these consequences can help to establish one's personal standpoint. We need to realise that anxiety and fear play a considerable part, and that many questions remain unanswered at present: for example the lifelong effects of vaccination, the long-term health consequences of not experiencing certain illnesses during childhood, etc.

New questions also arise. Many children who have not had the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination will often not develop these illnesses during childhood (below the age of 10 years), as they are much less common. The severity of the illness and the complication rate increase considerably with age, so for this reason one might consider immunising teenagers with the MMR vaccine, especially girls, with the rubella vaccine.

Points to consider and questions to ask

When considering information or advice about vaccinations it is important to be aware of the source of the information. The opinion and background of the provider can bias the advice, some of which could even be conflicting. Providing completely objective information is extremely difficult.

The following points can be helpful when deciding about each vaccination:

1. *The nature of and risks associated with the particular illness, which the vaccination is targeting. Is the child generally healthy or are there underlying health problems?*

2. *The safety and effectiveness of the vaccine.*
3. *Your personal attitude towards health and illness, especially towards the role of childhood illness. There is a considerable difference between the theoretical and actual acceptance of an illness in a child. How would one feel if one's child gets an illness that could have been prevented by vaccination? It might seem over the top, but it can be helpful to imagine certain circumstances (like potential complications of an illness or a vaccination) and try and anticipate one's reaction and attitude. Does one also feel responsible for the vulnerable members of the population, therefore wanting to contribute to the 'herd immunity'?*
4. *Family, social and personal circumstances, also with the view to practical issues. Will it be possible for the parent to care for the child during a possibly prolonged illness and recovery time, considering work or other commitments? What kind of professional health support will a parent have knowing that the illness could have been prevented by vaccination? Are younger, vulnerable siblings present? Etc.*

There are no right or wrong decisions, only honest and personal ones. Everybody will have the child's best interest at heart, independent of whether the decision is in agreement or in conflict with prevailing opinions.

New vaccines – imminent changes

As people will probably know, new vaccines will be introduced to the UK childhood immunisation programme from the end of September 2004. This does *not* mean a change of the ages at which children are vaccinated, *nor* a change of the illnesses which are vaccinated against. But it does mean a replacement of some of the vaccine-products used for initial vaccinations, the pre-school and the teenage boosters. These changes will not affect the MMR, Meningitis C or BCG (tuberculosis) vaccinations.

The three main changes relate to the *pertussis* (whooping cough) vaccine (acellular instead of whole cell vaccine will be used), the *polio* vaccine, which will change from an oral to an injectable preparation, and the vaccine preservative *thiomersal*, which will no longer be present in the new vaccines.

Practically it means two injections at ages two, three and four months (one, the '5-in-one',

with diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis, inactivated polio and Hib and the other with meningitis C), the MMR at 13+ months, two injections for the pre-school booster (one with diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis and inactivated polio and the other with MMR) and as teenagers (13-18 years old) one injection with diphtheria, tetanus and inactivated polio. The BCG is given between 10 and 14 years of age as before.

Further details about these changes will be available from your GP or Health Visitor, or can be found on the website www.immunisation.nhs.uk

One can anticipate that parents who are trying to make decisions about their children's vaccinations will encounter increasing problems with selected vaccines, as the availability of individual vaccines is greatly reduced or absent.

It is impossible to do justice to this wide-ranging theme within the context of this article, but I hope to have addressed some questions and encouraged further discussions among parents and/or with health professionals.

Further reading:

1. *Vaccination – A Guide for Making Personal Choices* by Dr. Hans-Peter Studer, edited by Dr. Geoffrey Douch (Floris Books 2004); ISBN 0-86315-455-7.
2. *A Guide to Child Health* by Drs. Michaela Gloeckler and Wolfgang Goebel (Floris Books 2003 2nd edition); ISBN 0-86315-390-9.
3. *The Vaccination Dilemma* edited by Christine Murphy (Lantern Books, New York 2002); ISBN 1-930051-10-7.
4. *Schutzimpfungen selbst verantwortet* by Dr. Wolfgang Goebel (Verlag Freies Geistesleben, Germany 2002); ISBN 3-7725-5012-6 (German only).
5. *Childhood Immunisation: the Facts* by Drs. Helen Bedford and David Elliman (Health Promotion England 2001); ISBN 0-7521-1931-1.

Websites:

www.doh.gov.uk (Department of Health)
www.immunisation.nhs.uk
www.informedparent.co.uk (The Informed Parent)
www.jabs.org.uk ("JABS", Justice, Awareness & Basic Support)
www.wddty.co.uk ("What doctors don't tell you")

Daniel Moreau, artist and teacher

Daniel Moreau, born in 1948 in Paris, is not only a practising artist, author and adult educator in art and art therapy, but is also a Waldorf teacher. He studied bio-dynamic farming, has worked as a baker and as an art therapist in an anthroposophical psychiatric clinic, as well as running a gallery and bookshop. Alongside his teaching he gives courses in art in Japan, the USA and regularly at the Tobias School of Art in East Grinstead. The pictures shown here are taken from a selection of 12 monthly images in his forthcoming calendar for the year 2005.

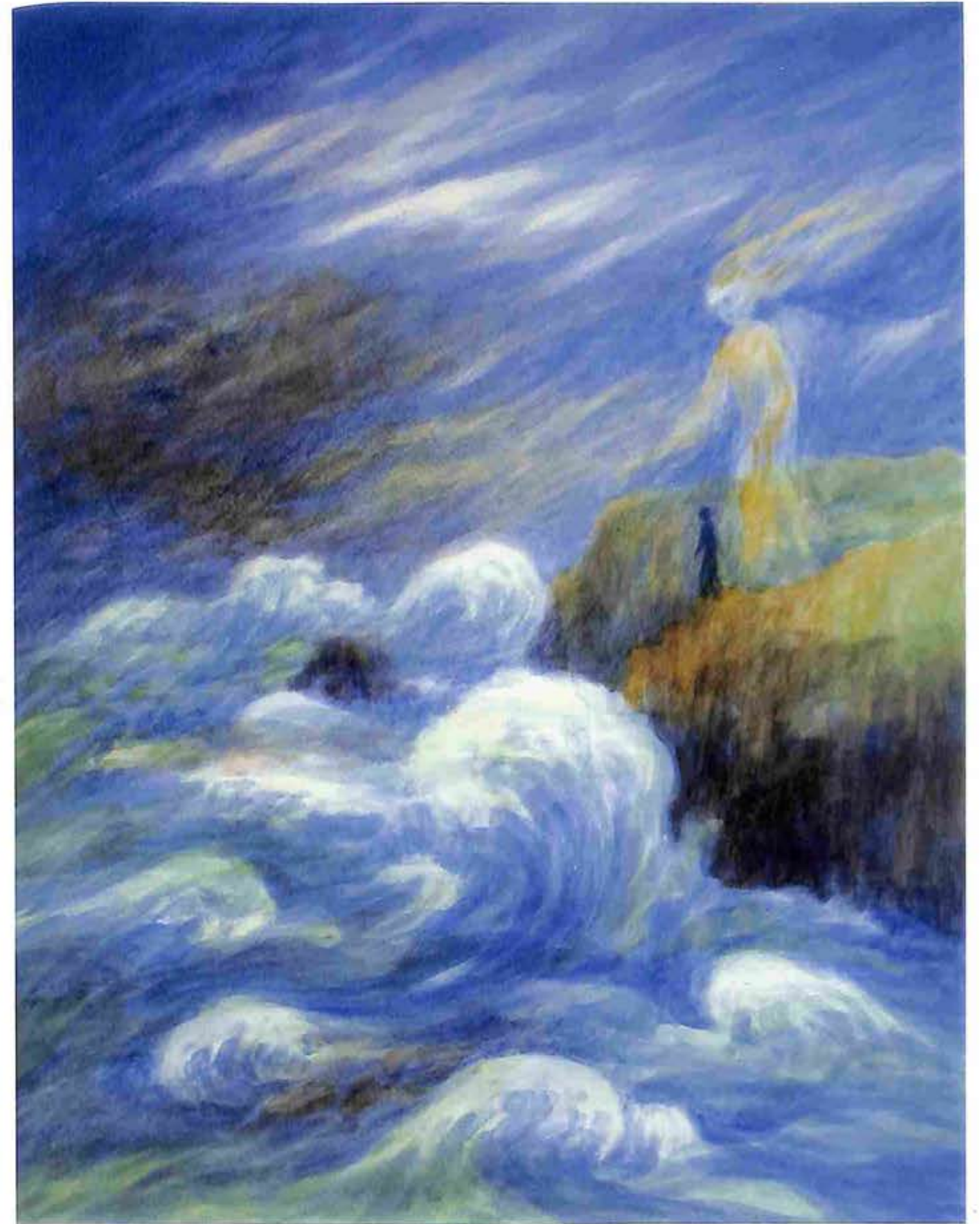
Those wishing to purchase the calendar, which costs £15, can order them from:

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*The paintings on pages 36 – 38 are taken from
Daniel Moreau's calender of seasonal images*





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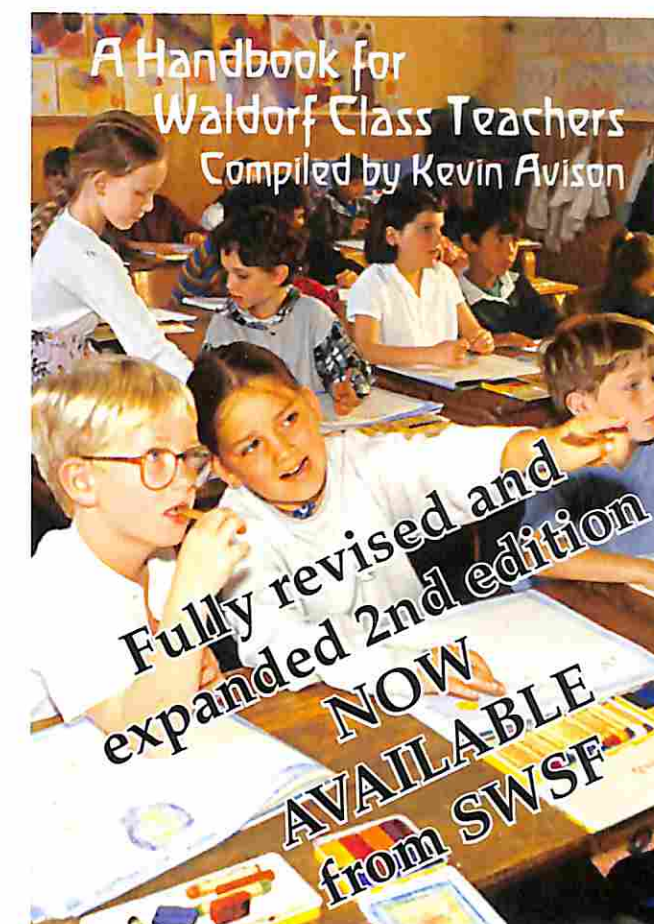
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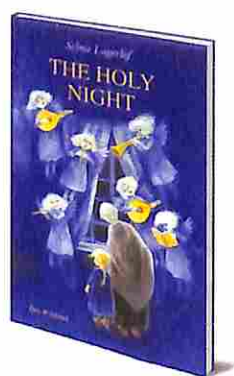
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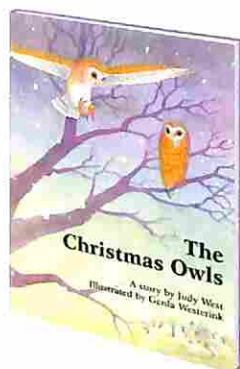
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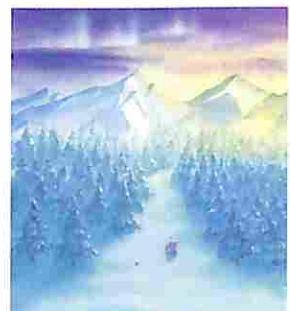
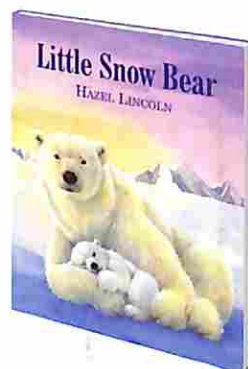
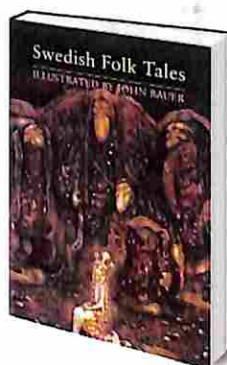
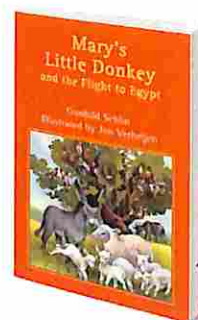
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