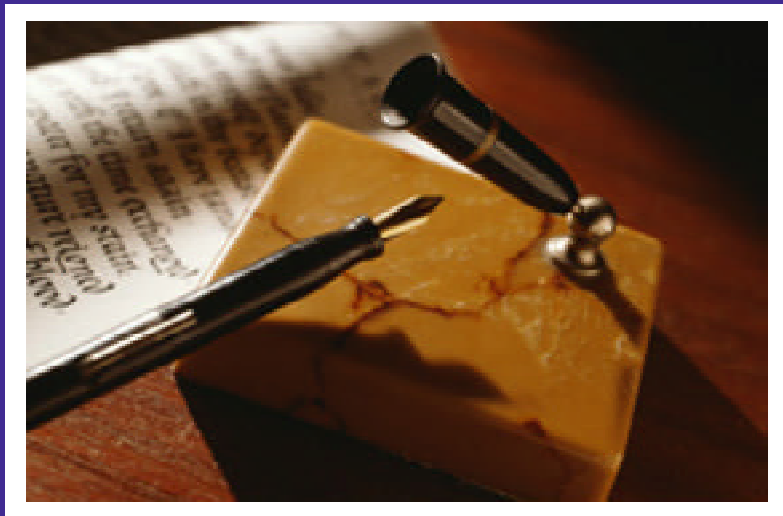




Colloquium on English



AWSNA
High School Research Project
May 2004
Work in Progress

Research Project #9

Proceedings

Colloquium on English

Sponsored by

the Waldorf High School Research Project

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Research Project #7: Proceedings of the World History Colloquium—Symptomatology

Research Project #9: Proceedings of the English Colloquium

Soon to be released:

Research Project #8: Proceedings of the Colloquium on United States History

Title: *Proceedings of the Colloquium on English*

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From the Left: Frank Hall, Carol Bärtges, Linda Sawers, Anne Greer, Craig Giddens, Jason Gross, Michael Mancini, Betty Staley, and Philip Thatcher

AWSNA Waldorf High School Research Project

Description of project: The Waldorf High School Research Project

Since its inception in the summer of 1998, the Waldorf High School Research Project has focused on three areas of research related to Waldorf high schools and the teenagers of today: The Project is asking

What is different about today's teenagers?

What changes are needed in Waldorf high schools today?

- First, the Project has invited leading teachers and international experts in Waldorf education to take part in three-day colloquia around the country on the Waldorf high school curriculum, specifically on the teaching of chemistry, history, mathematics, and movement (eurythmy and spacial dynamics), environmental sciences, computer science, and English. Further colloquia are planned in literature and the arts. Proceedings from these colloquia are being published so as to benefit the broadest possible range of Waldorf high school teachers.
- Some 30 veteran teachers from across North America have undertaken original research in topics related to Waldorf high school issues and the needs of teenagers today.
- The Project sponsored a large-scale research conference in Andover Massachusetts, October 18-22, 2001, on the theme of adolescent development and the Waldorf high school program.
- The Committee planned the North American Waldorf Teachers Conference in Kimberton, Pennsylvania June 2002 on the theme "Ascending the Developmental Staircase" covering kindergarten through high school. Over four hundred teachers attended. A publication of the lectures has been printed.

WHSRP Mission Statement

Formed in August 1998, the Waldorf High School Research Project is charged with strengthening the Waldorf high school movement by creating an updated picture of adolescents today and stimulating curriculum development within the Waldorf high schools.

As a designated committee of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), the Planning Group of this project is specifically responsible for

- identifying and articulating changes in the needs of North American teenagers
- formulating research questions concerning adolescence; commissioning qualified educators and other professionals to undertake research into these questions
- sponsoring subject colloquia as well as conferences on adolescent development and needs for those working in Waldorf high schools
- preparing North American conferences for those working in Waldorf high schools – to share and deepen research; to stimulate dialogue; to activate meaningful change for youth in the twenty-first century
- developing publications and other media resources to assist those working in Waldorf high schools
- stimulating Waldorf high school educators to examine and strengthen their programs
- seeking funds to support the commissioned research, colloquia, publications, conferences, and follow-up initiatives in the Waldorf high schools in coordination with AWSNA Development in line with the overall AWSNA priorities.

Colloquium on English

High Mowing School, Wilton, New Hampshire

10 - 13 October 2003

Schedule

FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER

6:00 P.M.	Dinner
7:00 – 7:30	Introductory remarks and announcements
7:30 – 8:30	<i>“Literature as Unveiling Mirror.”</i> (Philip Thatcher)
8:30 – 9:00	Eurythmy (with Leonore Russell)

SATURDAY 11 OCTOBER

8:00 A.M.	--- Breakfast ---
8:45 – 9:30	Speech (with Craig Giddens)
9:30 – 10:30	<i>“Barfield and Evolution of Consciousness,”</i> (Mary Emery)
10:30 – 11:00	--- Break ---
11:00 – 12:30 P.M.	Discussion: Schooling Imagination
12:30 – 2:00	--- Lunch ---
2:00 – 2:45	Speech (with Craig Giddens)
2:45 – 3:45	<i>“Literature Main Lessons: the Essentials,”</i> (Betty Staley)
3:45 – 4:00	--- Short Break ---
4:00 – 4:30	Eurythmy (with Leonore Russell)
4:30 – 5:00	--- Break ---
5:00 – 6:00	Discussion: Teaching Reading
6:00 – 7:30	--- Dinner ---
7:30 – 9:00	<i>“Keeping the Curriculum Timely,”</i> (Allegra Alessandri /Meg Gorman)

SUNDAY 12 OCTOBER

8:00 A.M.	--- Breakfast ---
8:45 – 9:30	Speech (with Craig Giddens)
9:30 – 10:30	<i>“Portfolio Writing,”</i> (Linda Sawers)
10:30 – 11:00	--- Break ---
11:00 – 12:30 P.M.	Discussion: Teaching Writing
12:30 – 2:00	--- Lunch ---
2:00 – 2:45	Speech (with Craig Giddens)
2:45 – 3:45	<i>“Is there a Phenomenological Approach to Grammar?”</i> (Anne Greer)
3:45 – 4:00	--- Short Break ---
4:00 – 4:30	Eurythmy (with Leonore Russell)
4:30 – 5:00	--- Break ---
5:00 – 6:00	Discussion: Teaching Grammar
6:00 – 7:30	--- Dinner ---
7:30 – 9:00	Discussion: What Else Should English Teachers Be Doing?

MONDAY 13 OCTOBER

8:00 A.M.	--- Breakfast ---
8:45 – 9:30	Eurythmy (with Leonore Russell)
9:30 – 10:30	<i>“Benchmarks: Transition from Grade 8 to High School,”</i> (Carol Bärtges)
10:30 – 11:00	--- Break ---
11:00 – 12:00	Wrap-up discussion and appreciations
12:00 noon	--- Lunch ---



From the Left: Philip Thatcher, Betsy Barricklow, David Sloan, Betty Staley, Joan Calderera, Craig Giddens, and Allegra Alessandri Pfeifer

To One Who Understands the Sense of Language

To one who understands the sense of language
The world unveils itself
In image.

To one who hears the soul of language
The world opens itself
As Being.

To one who lives the spirit of language
The world gives the gift
Of Wisdom's power.

To one who can feel love of language
Language lends
Its own strength.

So will I turn heart and mind
To the spirit and soul
Of the word;

And in my love for it
I feel myself
Now whole.

Given by Rudolf Steiner for the beginning of the classical language instruction at the Stuttgart Waldorf School, November 26, 1922

— translated by Douglas Miller



From the Left: Patricia Ryan and Mary Echlin

“Respect for the word – to employ it with scrupulous care and an incorruptible heartfelt love of truth – is essential if there is to be any growth in a society or in the human race.”

— Dag Hammarskjöld

OVERVIEW

High Mowing School in Wilton, New Hampshire, in the glory of New England autumn, was the perfect setting for the Waldorf High School English Colloquium. Of the nineteen participants, many had been teaching in Waldorf high schools for 20 years or more, while others were comparatively new to the task. Even before coming together, we recognized that collectively we represented a wealth of questions and suggestions that we were eager to share.

Our goal was to attempt to articulate what we as English teachers are offering in Waldorf schools that is different, and perhaps deeper, than what is offered in other schools. What are we doing well? Why are we doing it? How could we do it better? What more should we be doing?

Each session began with a presentation and was followed by discussions, which, of course, continued long after the time allotted: during breaks, over meals, and far into the night.

Craig Giddens and Leonore Russell generously agreed to lead us in speech and eurythmy sessions twice a day. This artistic work contributed greatly to our understanding of the depth of our task as English teachers and our awareness of the richness of having such colleagues to strengthen our work.

Each morning began with a reading of Rudolf Steiner’s “To One Who Understands the Sense of Language”. At our opening session, David Sloan suggested that we follow this with offerings of favorite poems. This was enthusiastically embraced.

These *Proceedings* are meant to encapsulate what was presented and eavesdrop a little into the discussions provoked. Christine Meyers and Michael Mancinni took lap top notes throughout, and these form the basis of our *Proceedings*. As other Colloquia have done, we too focused on what we can expect from and encourage in our middle school colleagues. Carol Bärthes, who has had the experience of moving from grade school into high school, summarized this well. Throughout, we were aware of missing John Wulsin who is on sabbatical; a short piece from him, *On Reading* is included here.

Of course, there are important issues that we were unable to touch upon including how to meet the demands of students with special learning needs and how to meet the demands of state and national testing.

We left feeling that we had much more to learn and share and would welcome further colloquia on any aspect of Waldorf High School teaching.

Our meetings took place in the newly opened, beautifully functional Dr. Bruce Barstow Science and Technology Building. We wish to thank the students and faculty of High Mowing School for their welcome. Virginia Buhr saw to our nurturing with her usual capable care. We were smoothly transported, comfortably lodged, and excellently sustained; meals and snacks were a delight to the eye as well as the palette. Thank you, Virginia.

Thank you, too, to Douglas Gerwin for recognizing the need for this Colloquium, handling the practicalities, and pulling together such a group of dedicated disciples of The Word.

I would also like to thank Roberto Trostli for his invaluable work in finding and translating Rudolf Steiner's observations on teaching language arts and for allowing the sections pertaining to high school to be included here.

Being at High Mowing brought to many of us memories of another English Colloquium held there in 1993 when both Christy Barnes and Sabina Nordhoff inspired us with enthusiasm and wisdom that has sustained many of us through the past decade. Being once again where so much had been given before was blessing beyond measure.

— Anne Greer
February 2004

PARTICIPANTS

Betsy Barricklow (Tara Performing Arts High School)
Carol Bärtges (Rudolf Steiner School, New York)
Joan Calderera (San Francisco Waldorf School)
Mary Echlin (Kimberton Waldorf School)
Mary Emery (Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor)
Craig Giddens (Speech)
Meg Gorman (San Francisco Waldorf School)
Anne Greer (retired, Toronto Waldorf School)
Jason Gross (Kimberton Waldorf School)
Frank Hall (Washington Waldorf School)
Michael Mancini (East Bay Waldorf School)
Christene Meyer (Highland Hall School)
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Leonore Russell (Waldorf School of Garden City)
Patricia Ryan (High Mowing School)
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Literature as Unveiling Mirror

by

Philip Thatcher

In thinking about why we are doing what we are doing as literature teachers, I want to bring together two questions.

The first is sometimes asked openly by our students, but more often presents itself in a scenario such as this: You're in front of the class, watching the students; you see a student put down a pen or book and lean back and look at you. It could mean that we are getting close to the bone of something. It could mean, "Do you live what you're saying?" It could mean, "Why have you asked me to read this particular book?"

That is the first question I want us to consider: Why are we asking our students to read a particular book? We could answer simply, "It's part of the curriculum." Or we could reply, "Reading this book will be a life transforming experience for which you will be grateful; trust me." Perhaps we don't have to take responsibility for what we're asking students to read. We could tell ourselves that it is because other Waldorf schools teach this book. In British Columbia's public high schools, *Lord of the Flies* has been required reading for many years. I wonder if teachers ever ask themselves, "Why this book?"

The second question I want to pose is this: "What makes a piece of writing literature?" Steinbeck is a writer who has always been important to me, but when I search him out in bookstores, I find him in the fiction rather than the literature section. Why aren't Steinbeck's books considered literature? In my experience, there are at least four books by Steinbeck that can be taught to our students: *The Pearl* in 9th grade, *Cannery Row* in 10th, *Grapes of Wrath* in 11th, and *East of Eden* in 12th. Are these books not literature? Who decides that a book is or isn't literature?

Is literature an established canon that we read to qualify as being educated? Or, does literature have to do with the quality of the writing itself? Is literature more than simply a use of words to state what I already know? Can I discover meaning through the writing itself? Is language itself a source of creation? Is literature writing that unveils essential truths about the world and ourselves - truths not simply of the present moment, but that go beyond time, that will go on speaking to me for the rest of my life? Often I embrace a book that I will read over and over again because it bears a relationship to who I am as a human being; it helps me discover my humanity. Each reading of such a book may well be a different experience.

Literature is writing that has staying power, is writing that faces reality without shrinking from it, is writing that enables me to bear with the realities that I confront. Literature is Unveiling Mirror.

What can a good work disclose? First, it discloses the world as it is: the good, the bad, and the ugly as does "Realism" in 20th century writing.

Secondly, it discloses the world as it could be or as it is coming to be, or a glimpse of reality that permeates or penetrates the realm of possibility. This is true even of writing that shows us where a character or destiny went wrong. If I don't see where I've gone wrong, how can I find what's right? Thirdly, good writing reveals the boundary between the two interpenetrating realities. How can we move from what is to what could be, and where does the one interpenetrate the other? Barry Lopez writes entirely about boundaries: the place where European and native reality meet, the border between the here and now and spiritual reality. His writing reveals a threshold crossing where students can glimpse what could be from the point of view of what is. It allows the question, "How can I move from the one to the other?" It awakens the sense of possibility.

What are the novels, poems and essays that can give this double vision? Which ones used to work and don't work any more; which ones worked for a previous generation of students, but no longer do? I have found in my own teaching that *The Scarlet Letter* and *A Tale of Two Cities* may no longer work for my students. It is sometimes an act of courage to face that some books we have been teaching for years no longer work.

I would like to share two pieces of writing in Grade 10 that continue to work with my students, and a piece that I am using for the first time in Grade 11.

In Grade 10, students are somewhat lost in their individual soul journeys. Many feel alone and the year is long. It is easy to settle down and accept a fixed view of oneself: as class clown, athlete, or party girl. The curriculum of this year is intended to keep students moving: in chemistry, they study salts; in geography, it's weather with constantly changing seasons and climates; in history, the study is of many cultures. What is the writing that gives the sense of the possibility to go somewhere else? *The Odyssey* works well. (I prefer the Lattimore translation). I spend most of the fall going through it, assigning reading and requiring three essays. Odysseus takes ten years to get home: so many things want to keep him from going home. There is also the story of Agamemnon, who goes home and is murdered. What are the students going home to?

In *The Odyssey* there are two realities meeting and questioning each other. In ancient Greece, the gods are the primary players. By classical Greece, as we see in the transition from Aeschylus to Sophocles, the gods are no longer the primary players. *The Odyssey* is also a moment of transition. Here, Odysseus is the primary player, even though Athena and others are important. The gods are leaving Odysseus alone for the most part; he is the one who has to complete the tasks. We can be like the gods, even if we aren't gods. An excellent example of this is when Odysseus is on the raft, having left Calypso. He has been given a protective veil and, his raft broken apart, is now in the surf, near the rock face of an island. A wave takes him to the cliff face; Athena inspires him to grab the cliff and wait to be carried back out to sea, to find a safe place to land. Yet Odysseus is the one who has to be conscious, even though the goddess has given him a hint. *The Odyssey* is a

paradox of faith and freedom. Calypso had offered Odysseus immortality. He said no; he chose mortality. This is a powerful choice. A question for an essay might be, “What did Odysseus lose by choosing mortality and what did he gain by this choice?” What’s the advantage of knowing you will die?

The Odyssey continues to speak to 10th graders, as does Peter Abrahams *Tell Freedom*. The language in *Tell Freedom* is simple and powerful. Abrahams, a South African, learned simplicity from reading the Bible. The book contains the story of the first twenty-one years of his life, in the colored section of Johannesburg. It begins with an image of Peter being inside a raindrop that shatters when his father dies. He wakes up to racism, discrimination, and all the horror of the political reality of South African apartheid. Nevertheless, it is a book full of fascinating characters, warmth, and humor. The narrator is trapped in this world, because, like everyone else, he has bought into the image that the white community has of the blacks. There seems to be no escape from this reality until he is sent on an errand and encounters a Jewish woman in an office who speaks to him as if he were a real person; she reads to him part of the story of Othello from Lamb’s *Tales from Shakespeare*. She asks why he hasn’t gone to school, that school is where he would learn to read such stories for himself. He replies, “Nobody told me about the stories.” This meeting was life changing. He has encountered another reality that begins to grow in him, and eventually he becomes a writer.

In Grade 11 this year, I am introducing *An Imaginary Life* by David Malouf. This is the story of Ovid who was exiled in the first century and sent to the edge of the Danube, to the edge of the steppes, on the boundary of the Roman reality and the other, “barbaric” one. The story involves a young boy who ends up transforming Ovid rather than the other way around. Ovid writes of a dream experience of horsemen from out of the steppes who seemed to him gods: “Let us into your world . . . believe, believe.” *An Imaginary Life* is concerned with boundaries on many levels – geographic, cultural and linguistic, interpersonal and personal/spiritual.

We need to continue to ask ourselves which novels, stories, poems, plays, and essays reveal the unveiling mirror in relation to the stages of development from Grade 9 to Grade 12 and in relation to a particular generation of students. As teachers we, too, can share our own stories that interweave with the literature that we choose for our students. The breathing in the room changes when we share our stories or betray our love affair with language and how it reveals our selves as we are and as we could be.

* * *

Addendum *An Imaginary Life* worked well with this year’s Grade 11 class. The essay I assigned was as follows:

“The moment we stand at the boundary, the boundary has been crossed.”

Georg Kühlewind

Explore the above statement, drawing upon your reading of *An Imaginary Life*.

Student Response:

In our lives there are many boundaries we must face. Boundaries come in many forms. Some boundaries we create for ourselves, some are created for us; there are boundaries that keep us out, and some that keep us in. Perhaps the most prevalent of boundaries are physical and mental boundaries. Despite the differences between each of the boundaries they have one thing in common – beyond is the unknown.

In *An Imaginary Life* Ovid is banished from Rome and forced to live on the edge of the world. He has physically crossed from his old life; a mountain range acts as his boundary. Yet mentally Ovid does not seem to have stepped over. He still lives in his Roman life, showing disdain for the town and its inhabitants. At the outset, it does not seem as though Ovid crossed the boundary when he stood at it.

When I recognize a boundary, however, I begin to speculate as to what is beyond it. For example, when I was five, I shared a room with my sister. From the very beginning she made it clear I was not allowed on her half of the room. Being the younger sister I was, I decided I would cross over and steal one of her stuffed animals. I thought about every detail of that room, from what her side of the curtain looked like to how loud her cupboard would squeak when I opened it. I hadn't crossed the boundary physically, but I'd certainly done it in my head.

From the first time Ovid hears of the boy he begins to cross the boundary between them. He knows he must meet the boy and civilize him. The boy too, has a similar experience; he is building himself up for more contact, a real crossing over. However, before he can even stand at the boundary, he is dragged over it.

In life there are many boundaries we know we are going to cross. Our whole existence seems to be leading up to these crossing points. Tying our shoes, learning to drive a car – these crossings are the natural progression of growing up. We are always standing on the edge of these boundaries. Ovid experiences this near the end of the book; “Is-ter, Is-ter. It has been there always, somehow waiting, even as my eye noted it on maps, as the final boundary of my life, waiting to be crossed, and patient year after year for my arrival.” (136)

The land beyond the Ister River is flat, wide-open, spacious, boundary less. Ovid knows that by crossing the Ister, he has come to his resting place, freedom. There are no more boundaries left for him to cross except physically dying. Ovid accepts this readily; death is a mental boundary and he has definitely crossed it.

It seems that by crossing the Ister Ovid has crossed into his afterlife, the key word being life, for he truly lives.

For every boundary I cross in life there is always another waiting just beyond it. It is a never-ending cycle that makes life interesting, yet prevents total freedom.

I find it hard to understand even a single boundary; it seems as though there are a million little crossings, as though we could look at every boundary from a million different angles. Every time I am sure of a way a boundary has been crossed, I see it all again in a different light.

— Elena Mathias



Mary Emery making a presentation

Benchmarks: Transition from Middle School to High School

by

Carol Bärtges

Too often when we high school teachers think about the middle school, we start with the wrong question. We focus on all that we perceive has not been done, because we may think that students have not been well-prepared: some students can't spell, they can't make head or tail of *Moby Dick*, they can't write clear essays. We may perceive an insufficient level of ability in reading, writing, speaking. And so, we high school teachers often ask impatiently, "What *have* they been doing in the middle grades?"

But if we start like that, with that tone of voice, we are doomed to failure, for the real question is, "What *have* they been doing in the middle school?" Same question, but notice what happens when one asks this question with interest, not censure. What is the curriculum that we inherit through the students who stand before us? Our disposition must be one of curiosity and reverence, for the curriculum of the lower grades is a golden seed, planted with care and thought, given all the right conditions for germination. If we think of the three areas of the school as being governed by the forces of the Holy Trinity, a metaphor familiar to many of us in Waldorf circles, we remember that the lower grades are led by the image of God the Father, the divine authority. The middle grades work with the image of Christ as a being of compassion and love. But in high school, the reigning principle of authority is the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The inspiration that a high school teacher can instill acts as an agent of divine warmth that brings those golden seeds of the middle school years to light.

Too often in the high school we think that the job of educating the feeling life is over. As academics, we can become over-eager to rush to concept. Of course, we do arrive at concept and judgment in the high school, but this is the result of a transition that is elegantly embodied in the high school curriculum of grades 9 to 12. Teachers in the high school must continue to work with the feeling life that has been developed in the lower grades so that it is not lost, for it is the foundation of concept building in the upper grades. Rudolf Steiner reminds us of this when he says: "The whole of the processes which eventually lead to memory take place in the same region of the soul in which the life of feeling is present. The life of feeling with its joys and pains, its pleasures and discomforts, its tensions and relaxations, is the bearer of what is permanent in the conceptual life."

We can imagine the curriculum throughout all twelve years as a spiral of red and blue moving side by side. The red is the path from kindergarten to the 8th grade, from the cosmos to the world of matter. This form reminds us how aware we must remain that the child begins in spiritual

realms and falls ever more deeply into his or her body. As each school year goes by, we teachers can observe how the child is conditioned more and more by the heaviness of the skeleton. The center point of the red spiral can be thought of as representing the age of 14 when the young person is at the point of greatest density, happily and eagerly immersed in matter, in the contemporary world, in the here and now. We can think of this as the 8th grader, and see in this inmost resting place of the red spiral, the culmination of the first eight years of school life.

The stories told in the early grades connect the child to eternal truths that exist outside us and lead him/her gradually into the world of causality. In the early grades these include the fairy tales in 1st grade, legends and fables in 2nd grade, and Old Testament stories in 3rd grade. With the Norse myths in 4th grade come pictures of deceit and disappointment; these include the death of Baldur, the most perfect of the Norse gods, through Loki's treachery. This is a change in consciousness from the secure world of right and wrong that the child has known through the curriculum up to this point. And the change matches changes in the child's own psyche and soul. Baldur is killed by Loki because Loki is a character who wishes to assert his own authority, his own individuality. As we are reminded so vividly in Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*, we humans often act in our own worst self-interest, precisely because we strive to establish our freedom and independence. The 9 year-old is experiencing this need as well as a new consciousness of life's sadnesses and disappointments. The story of Baldur is a confirmation of what the child already knows unconsciously in his inner life.

The 5th grade curriculum is still located in the mythical world, but real time does come into the experience of the year with the advent of Greek history. In the 6th grade, the true beginning of cause and effect thinking is clearly evident in the Roman world, in the images of human initiative and will that we find in the stories of the heroes and leaders of the Roman Empire. With the 7th grade focus on the Renaissance there is again a birth of a new consciousness. The previous importance of medieval forms, as represented in the triptych of the monastery, castle, and town, gives way to the rise of the middle class in which individuals emerge who are no longer content to be defined by forms of feudalism. In 8th grade, the students study the age of exploration and experience the discoveries and colonizations as their own direct desire to know the world. The teacher must be sensitive to the exploitation and suffering that accompanied such historical activity and convey it in appropriate ways as a parable for modern times. In studying world geography, the Industrial Revolution, North American history, 8th graders are brought directly to the contemporary world; they are at the center of the spiral, living deeply into their emerging adult bodies, living fully in the matter of the modern world, the age of technology. Is it any wonder that they are most intrigued and captivated by the computer at this age? Now, the 8th grader is ready to leave the class teacher and eager to begin a new adventure in the next four years of high school.

Thus the center of the red spiral represents both the curriculum which begins in the world of no time and ends in present day, as well as the incarnating forces of the child which bring him to greatest contact with the density of his own body at the age of 14.

The high school experience can be represented by the blue spiral, which takes off from the red and now moves outward from the center. The direction of the high school student is back out into the world, not back to the outer spaces of the cosmos from whence the child is born, but out into the world of men. The blue spiral shows how closely related is the 9th grade curriculum to the 8th grade in content, and how much 9th grade seems to mirror the 8th grade year. This is intentional, but 9th grade work cannot be a mere review or we will have students who grow disenchanting and resentful.

Thus, in 9th grade, modern history is taught again, as it was in 8th, but it will now have greater consciousness of cause and effect – a bird's eye view of historical events rather than the elementary school close up of, say, the soldier's life or the president's biography. Physiology is taught again in both 9th and 10th grades, but now the topic delves even more specifically into the formation, not just the structure of the bones. A survey of the invisible begins with the study of internal organs. Students have a second year of black and white drawing, but now with more attention to theme and point of view. We return to ancient history in the 10th grade but with a sense of how the various cultures of the ancient world compare and contrast, with a sense of how they influenced one another. As in 7th grade, medieval and Renaissance history is taught in 11th grade with a new emphasis on the birth of individuality. The 12th grade year returns to contemporary ideas and modern history and seems to once again reflect on aspects of the 8th grade curriculum. Having reached the middle of the red spiral at age 14, students in the high school conclude their journey by having spiralled back out into the world, now armed with insight and judgment gleaned from their own struggles and experience.

The consciousness of *what* was brought in the middle school, and *how* the curriculum was brought in all its appeal to the feeling and imaginative life of the students should never be far from the minds of high school teachers. Our training of the intellect in the high school years must continue to be artistic as well as intellectual if we are to enable the young person to rise out of physicality and find the necessary capacities for judgment with which to meet and evaluate the greater world. As mentioned before, Steiner tells us that judgment is not connected with the head but rather with the middle organism, particularly the arms and hands. Judgment has a direct relationship to feeling. It is, as Steiner says, "borne out of the powers of the imagination." Therefore, the high school teacher must always strive to present living images and ideas that allow for growth. Only through imagination are we allowed to grasp the invisible laws that connect and govern unlike things. Imagination allows the students to see that the macrocosm is infinitely repeated in the microcosm of their own individual experience.

Throughout the high school years students should be led to see that thinking can have a profound and critical effect on the world; that thoughts can become deeds. One could almost say that the high school curriculum represents a movement from the activity of perception, embodied by the 9th grade curriculum, to the world of insight represented by the themes inherent in the 12th grade program. Insight means that one's capacity for judgment has been awakened. Thoughts born of insight are free thoughts, not just opinion, not mere observation. If we only repeat in high school what students have learned in the lower school, we make a huge mistake. Their new forces are no longer guided by authority. The student now has a chorus of inspiring voices to turn to: the math teacher, the art teacher, the chemistry teacher, the French teacher. As they make their way out from the center of the red spiral, students will ultimately walk the blue form by themselves; by the time they are seniors, they have the confidence and authority to do this.

I would like to focus on this question of the transition from the middle school to the high school by looking at how we might effectively approach the main lesson books, book report assignments, reading, and grammar.

Main Lesson Book:

In the lower school, the main lesson book demonstrates a recapitulation of the teacher's presentations and very little of the student's own research. The books in the middle grades are carefully directed by the class teacher and have beauty, form, and color; there is great attention paid to the aesthetics of the project – to titles, borders, illustrations, maps, and so on. Something of the spirit of an age is captured as the teacher encourages the students to craft pages of illuminated manuscripts in 7th grade while they study medieval history or create borders with Celtic and Anglo-Saxon motifs in 4th grade when they hear about the Norse myths.

In the 9th grade we can't ignore all that. High School teachers need to continue to concentrate on the aesthetic values inherent in the creation of a notebook, but we must additionally find the idea behind the assignment that moves the work into the proper realm of high school. In 9th grade, careful penmanship and artistic design is still appropriate. But now, more focus on independent thinking should be mandatory. Students should be responsible for the way in which the content of the main lesson is articulated in their books. To do a précis or summary of the day's lesson requires clarity and accuracy; it complements the 9th grade experience of being grounded in the here and now. Writing their own summaries is also a way for the students to put their own voice into the books. At the Rudolf Steiner School, we have instituted keyboarding at the 7th or 8th grade level just when students are at the cusp of their encounter with modern technology. Most are computer competent by 9th grade. Thus, some teachers give the choice of writing or typing to the 9th & 10th graders in a conscious attempt to allow them to learn how to transform technology through conscious

attention to the composition of the page, to the artistry that is possible with type and design. This is huge challenge, and, not surprisingly, many of our students still prefer to write by hand when given the choice.

In the 10th grade, main lesson books may still use color and have beautiful design element. But by this time, one whole page will often present a concept, not merely a recapitulation. Each page in a 10th grade main lesson book can be considered a condensation of a *process of thought* that has spanned several days or even weeks of work in the main lesson time. In a block on the History through Poetry, for example, one page can illustrate, in artistic shorthand, the concept of tone color or alliteration. There is still an emphasis on the aesthetic value of the exercise, but main lesson books have become more condensed and abbreviated.

By 11th and 12th grades, I would recommend that the main lesson book become a completely independent project of the students' own command of the subject material. The organization, design, and content should be as different from book to book as our students one to the other.

Book Reports

Students have been writing book reports since 5th or 6th grade. They know the format: title page, introduction, plot summary, character, and so on. By the 8th grade, they should be trying to think what the author is trying to teach us. This is theme, of course, but that may be too intellectual a concept. At our school, some students type book reports in the 8th grade.

By 9th grade, book reports are essential even though it often seems that there isn't enough time to read. Students should be expected to do monthly book reports as well as summer reading. While the summer reading list before Grade 9 can relate to the recently completed 8th grade in content, the form for the report must change once students reach high school.

One possibility is to have short oral presentations. It is essential that 9th graders learn how to give oral presentations, and in this way we can transform the book report from its elementary school clothing and capitalize on the drama and speech that class teachers have pursued for so many years. One might begin this with a discussion. We could ask 9th grade students, for example, "What makes for an interesting report? What's interesting to listen to? How long can you listen to me without falling to sleep?" The students can devise the criteria for the oral book report. Then they can take turns presenting a novel to their classmates, using the criteria that they have devised. Their classmates need to then give good, positive criticism.

We can be both creative and economical with written reports. One idea I have used with success is the creation of "book jackets". In the 9th grade, I ask students to create an imaginary cover jacket that speaks to the essence of the book. It needs to include a description of the book in précis form on one of the jacket flaps, something about the author, and fictional reviews by critics on the back cover. There should be a thoughtful design or photograph for the front cover. Students might even use computer graphics quite successfully for these reports. Clearly, this is a more conceptual idea of what the book report can be in the early high school years.

Grammar and Writing Skills

In Grade 6, teachers can already expect book reports and simple research, for example “Reports on Volcanoes through History” for the geology main lesson. This means that students should begin using books as resources and reference well before they get to high school. In 6th grade students can begin taking notes of their observations in physics class or geology class. They should be slowly and organically building their note-taking skill because by the 8th grade, it is too hard to remember all the details of the history block without this aid. In grammar, the 6th grade teacher will cover the four types of sentences (declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory), the conditional case: the case for cause and effect that comes naturally out of the study of Roman history (“If Horatio had not held the bridge, Rome would have fallen.”), and with the conditional case, the adverbial clause which arises naturally out of that mood.

Grade 7 is the year for the *Wish, Wonder, and Surprise* main lesson in which students find voice to record these soul moods. They can be introduced to metaphor, metonymy (“he died by steel”), synecdoche (“a flood of letters”; “he is a brain”). They can begin to understand the invisible reader and begin to develop a personal style to suit their audience. This is the age when an introduction to word processing makes sense. And they must continue to practice note-taking.

In Grade 8, students can write sonnets and a variety of compositions and essays. They can now present typed research papers with citation. They can be given skills for oral presentations and for writing tests.

In their first year of high school, then, the teacher needs to do a thorough review of punctuation, including direct and indirect speech. Grammar, too, needs to be thoroughly reviewed with emphasis on subordinate clauses. We can expect them to write internal monologues, monthly book reports, and simple research papers. We need to give them exercises as well in précis, paraphrase and abstract writing. Précis and abstraction are the next steps after the lower school summaries. To practice précis, the teacher should begin with words, move to condensing sentences, and finally to paragraphs.

Always, though, we must remember to use warmth, humor, color, and movement in the 9th and 10th grades. In an attempt to help them enliven their writing by using active verbs, I often ask 9th grade students for synonyms for traditionally weak or passive verbs such as “go.” Students might come up with words such as “perambulate,” “amble,” “saunter.” We then draw a graph that shows the difference between the passive, inactive verbs, and those that contain real movement. Words like “go” can best be represented with a straight line – rather boring. But words like “meander” have wonderful motion in them that can be visualized and drawn. Students thus discover that the best verbs are those that have motion in them. This exercise is an example of what I would consider an approach to high school work that retains an artistic and experiential nature but drives toward concept.

“What *have* they been doing in the middle school?” A lot, it seems, and there’s more to come. High school teachers need to view their work as a true continuum of the inward-turning spiral, as a process which reflects images that are similar but not the same as those from elementary school. In this way, we neither bore nor tax the high school student. And the work of high school will be experienced as an organic outgrowth of earlier years.



From the Left: David Sloan, Betty Staley, Joan Calderera, Craig Giddens, Allegra Alessandri Pfeifer, Mary Echlin, Meg Gorman, Patricia Ryan, and Mary Emery

Barfield and Evolution of Consciousness

by

Mary Emery

Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry by Owen Barfield was my doorway to developing a relationship to the Word. When I began to read Barfield's book, I found it hard to understand at first. But since then, I have actively promoted the reading of all his books. More importantly, I have tried to work with his ideas in the classroom.

Barfield says that an important omission in modern thought and one that needs to be remedied is that consciousness is left out of what we are investigating. Modern physics, particularly in the work of Fritjof Capra (*The Tao of Physics*) now recognizes that the observer has an effect on what is observed. Much of the recent movie *Mindwalk* consists of a discussion of Capra's views of how physics is affected by human consciousness.

Barfield begins *Saving the Appearances* with the image of the rainbow. By asking the simple question: "Is it really there?" he follows a direct line of thought to the recognition that the world is a system of "collective representations." Our culture is permeated by the idea that the world is outside and exists without our participation, but Barfield clearly shows that this cannot be so.

In the beginning of the 11th grade Shakespeare block, I ask the students to describe what they know about the consciousness in the Middle Ages. They put together a picture of the interconnection of all things, of each human being as a microcosm of the universe and at the center of it. Every planet and constellation is expressed through specific plants, animals, and in the physical body of the human being. Medicine for an ailment in the liver, for instance, could consist of plants or animal substances that have the same relationship to the cosmos as the liver. This oneness is a stage of participation, which breaks apart with the Renaissance. A student, as the Earth, sits in a chair as the Sun and planets circle around her. The student always likes this feeling. When we place the student who is the Sun in the chair and ask the Earth student to circle the Sun as her moon circles her and the other planets go around the Sun as well, the peaceful feeling is gone. It's confusing and difficult to understand what's going on. The Earth student then removes herself, asks another student to be the Earth, and stands on a table in the distance, looking at the moving scene. Now, though she's not the center, she can see and understand what's going on. The objective spectator is necessary to understand the ideas coming to light in the Renaissance. Man is no longer the center of the universe and with that, a connection, a oneness is broken. Of course, this allows for a new consciousness and freedom.

Since the Renaissance, the prevailing myth has been that our senses cannot be trusted. At that time, humans began to develop tools that were

more accurate than our senses, the telescope and microscope, for example. Because it seemed then that our senses were inadequate to see what's really going on, we thought that we had to remove ourselves as far as possible from what we were investigating. We seem to live on a flat earth, to see the sun rising and the stars moving, but science with its tools tells us otherwise. In this way, the mathematical model became more reliable than human perception. Thus, the idea of an objective spectator emerged. Sciences such as geology with its carbon testing omit human consciousness, and even history attempts to be objective. While this has probably been necessary to our development as humans, Barfield convinces us that we cannot forget the consciousness of the investigator in relation to what it is being investigated. Is there a rainbow without a human being to participate in seeing it? The particles are there, but there is no rainbow without the participation of the human being, the sense organs, and the concept. We can't perceive things for which we have no concept; development of concept is a human activity.

It's a myth to think we're doing real research on the world if we're leaving out the human being. The rainbow needs the sun, the light, a relationship between the two, and an eye to perceive it. It is the same with the proverbial tree in the forest: without the human ear there is no sound. What about touch? While solid furniture like this table feels real enough, we know that if we take into account the molecules and the space between them, this seemingly solid matter is almost entirely space. The table is mostly "vastness": we experience its solidity because of our configuration as human beings. Modern culture with its belief in objective reality has disenfranchised the human being.

A parallel assumption that needs to be challenged is that consciousness, the psychological nexus between man and nature, is unchanging. Because of that assumption, myths are looked at as nonsense by modern consciousness. How can we account for the ancient gods then except by dismissing them as childish imagination? Modern thinking doesn't believe in any real movement in consciousness.

In the classroom, I make every effort to dispel both the omission and the assumption. For me, a large part of my teaching is investigating with my students the myth of the omission of consciousness and leading them to question the assumption that human consciousness has always been the same. The curriculum becomes an environment of investigation.

To me, education is never about content, never about what we teach. It's about the movement. It's about helping the students to reach the realization that consciousness is moving. In Waldorf education, we choose movement and process in education rather than focusing on content. As English teachers, we choose what we love and take the students through the movement that rises in us through the literature. We are helping the students learn to move.

We need to find ways to challenge students to think about the assumption that consciousness is unchanging. I often have them investigate history through their memories and the memories of their parents. They

come to realize that memory and consciousness has not remained static. As they becoming conscious of their own biography through childhood and adolescence, they begin to realize that each of them is a microcosm of humanity's evolution of consciousness; their own journey provides reference points for the larger journey. When young people begin to perceive that evolution is a movement and that humans are an active part in the movement and, moreover, can direct the movement through choice, they begin to be filled with purpose and hope. Feldenkrais states that only with having a third choice does a person begin to be human. I'm saying that in today's polarized world, Movement is a third choice: to move between poles and find points of health and balance is the challenge before us. This is where my idea of the Christ comes in. I live with Rembrandt's picture, *The Little Children Being Brought to Jesus* ("The 100 Guilder Print") where the arrogant stand to the right and the wounded are bowed down to the left. In the center is the Christ. This fluctuation between arrogance and wound in some form or another seems to be the realm of the astral body. The center, the life giving, etheric Christ is not a static pole but a potential, a movement of putting oneself in balance. Teaching is not about the information, the static, the poles, but about the movement. I try to find literature that allows the students to experience the poles, but also move the balance. Steiner's *Representative of Man* contains a similar polar experience. I always try to remember the little *Humor Being* up there in the corner. That's important too, especially when working with adolescents. I try to pick gentle movements in literature that deal with the pain that the students find in the world today, working with it in such a way as to move through it with the potential of finding a healing balance. The essence of the Christ is love, and love is that which transforms. Maybe we can say that if students are truly experiencing the light of thinking, the Christ is there.

If we take the human being out of anything that we're studying, the result is painful for students. The question is: how can we move to recognize our participation in the world? We know that our consciousness cannot allow a participation like that of people of long ago. Our participation must be a renewed participation, in fact, a constantly renewed participation.

How can we develop thinking as a flow form, move it another way, revitalize it, put the life back into it? One idea that pains students today is the hypothesis of chance. Barfield talks about the irony of chance as hypothesis. Free floating in our culture is the idea that organisms are eliminated or transformed due to external factors only. The environment determines what flourishes or dies but there is no higher consciousness or purpose behind it. It's a materialistic structure to propose that things die out if they're in the wrong place at the wrong time. My thinking does not come by "chance"; my thinking is active and moves, and I can experience it while I'm doing it. This ability to think about what I am thinking leads me to the understanding that I have the potential to be free. Even though I teach English and History, I hope that many of my students will go into science

and bring their free thinking to it. But we as teachers need to train their thinking by making them work at it, by thinking about thinking.

We can find plenty of examples to chew on. Edith Hamilton, for one, in her descriptions of ancient Greece and Rome reveals herself as a Darwinist. Her introductions can be looked at in a 10th grade mythology block: “when man climbed out of the slime . . .” she writes. Or, “ When ancient people hear a bush moving, they make up a story to explain it.”

When students begin to become aware of this bias, they are astounded by the assumption that a writer like Hamilton makes without even being seemingly aware that she has assumptions. In encountering statements like these, we can challenge students to think about thinking. If Hamilton has this assumption, what is her relation to mythology?

When students actually read the primary sources, the original myths, they become more acutely aware of how assumptions shape interpretation, so that a writer can now say “Ancient myths are just stories”, or “the Delphic oracles spoke in “meaningless jabber.”

When they become aware of the evolution of consciousness, they become alert to the inaccuracy in thinking that ancient peoples were “dumb” when they developed myths to explain natural events.

In a mythology block, the teacher can talk freely about many ideas. We are not a religious school, nor do we teach the modern religion of materialism. Materialism is of no use to us because it is only a step along a continuing path of movement. We do not want our students to be stuck at any point in an evolving consciousness.

Much of my English curriculum is about the evolution of human interaction with nature, about the relationship between obedient husbandry and exploiter. The legend of the Garden of Eden took humans from Paradise to living by the sweat of the brow. The myths of Zarathrustra, Eleusis, and Prometheus show the development of a relationship with the earth.

Here, again, students can understand how assumption colors interpretation. In the myth of Zarathrustra and the king and the grain of wheat, for example, they can see that agriculture did not arise from experimentation, as is generally taught; it came from a teacher. Tenth graders all notice that in myths teachers go away to and come back from somewhere. The priests did not need to teach awe of the gods; people were already living in that. Priests taught how to live practically in the physical world. So priests were like engineers and scientists.

Mythology is full of possibilities for questioning. What about Humbaba in Gilgamesh? Why did he have to die? What is the connection between consciousness and death? What does it mean when Prometheus steals fire from Olympus? Fire meant freedom, but it also signals the fall of participation, because fire frees you from unity with nature. Fire brings the light into night. Many myths point to change as losing something as we gain something. We no longer participate in darkness; we sit around the fire, and we tell stories. The outer something has transformed into an inner something in relation to nature. In the works of Shakespeare, Goethe, and the

Transcendentalists, we have many examples of creating a conscious relationship with the natural world.

Many students believe that the earth would be healed if humans were scraped off it. Some feel that it's time for humans too to die out because they're causing such damage to the earth. What hurts is that there is no acknowledgement of a process and consciousness at work in the universe. This is a strong feeling among the young. In studying the Old Testament, they read the story of the prodigal son, who wastes what he was given, and yet the father rejoices at his return. This is the son who has had experience and has come home. Whitman's words resonate: "Prodigal, you have given me love! Therefore, I to you give love!" (*Leaves of Grass*) After students live with this story, they are less likely to want to scrape humans off the face of the earth.

We can choose movement or we can choose materialism, but we can come home again.

Students love the *Ramayana* and *Gilgamesh*. At first, they hate the *Old Testament* because they think they know what it's about; as teachers we know that they don't have a clue. Students are open to the East and closed to the West. I give my students a picture to show the difference between the East and the West. I ask them to imagine a waterfall and to recognize that it is composed of drops. Eastern religions desire union with the waterfall, a loss of individuality. We need to make our students question whether they are really willing to give up their individuality. They can see that the waterfall changes with each particular drop. Our task is to combine East and West. Anthroposophy does that – it is the third choice, it is the movement between.

Students are vitally interested in the question of Good and Evil. If we say that "Evil is Good out of time," does that mean that evil is good done at the wrong time? Or is evil something good that is taken out of time? If you're in the stream of time, good and evil work. If you're not in the stream of time (maya), there is no good and evil.

These questions are most intense in the 11th grade. In Grade 10, they have had the Old Testament. We use *Stories of the Bible* by Roche. When they read the story of Adam and Eve, the first reaction is, "It's always the woman's fault." But they need to go deeper. What does Eve want? She wants to be like a god. What's it like in Paradise? Students quickly come to the realization that it's boring and static. Why would we want to stay there forever? There is no desire, or only for food. Adam and Eve are in an animal state. In 11th grade, we can investigate where the picture of heaven comes from? Paradise was perfect; is heaven like that? If you didn't believe in an evolution of consciousness and there was no movement, what would you do in heaven? Is sitting around preferable to artful activity? We don't want to go back to paradise. There must be movement. We don't want what we have already lost; we don't want to regain Paradise. We want to move on with optimistic hopefulness that we as human beings can participate in the creation of the evolving future.

POETRY EXERCISE

Mary uses this five-minute exercise with her students often, and they love it. We loved it too. She asked us as individuals to choose one slip of paper from each of two containers. One container had concrete nouns and the other abstract nouns. We were instructed to write a poem inspired by those words, but not necessarily containing them and given five minutes to do so. Volunteers read their poems aloud. Here are two of our resulting poems:

He sits behind the bars
where light does not fall
listens for the footsteps
echoing down a long corridor
and for the practice snap
of a trapdoor

(from the words “ shadows” and “condemnation”)

Hard and brittle and self-contained
My golden treasure waits
Unmoving
In walls of ivory
Embalmed and dead
My golden light is buried
Oh break my walls
Free my light
And I will blaze through the world like a meteor

(from the words “egg” and “ imagination”)

English Curriculum: Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor

MAIN LESSONS

Ninth grade

The Evolution of Consciousness Through Drama: The development of drama from the Greek mystery centers through Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; the comedies of Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus, and Terence; Liturgical drama; Commedia Dell’arte; Elizabethan, Spanish, and French theater; Restoration plays to modern.

The Novel: The exploration of plot, character, setting, and theme through discussion, creative writing, and drawing inspired by *Shane*, *Tom Sawyer*, and *A Tale of Two Cities*

Tenth grade

Evolution of Consciousness Through Poetry: The Epic

Tracing the spiritual descent of humanity into the matter of earthy life through the literature of the *Ramayana* and *Bhagavad-Gita*; *Gilgamesh*; Greek, Egyptian, Finnish, and Norse mythology, and finally, *Beowulf*. The students write original poetry as well.

Evolution of Consciousness Through Poetry: Heralds of the Individual

We look at changes in thought and language via the influence of Hindu, Muslim, and Sufi poets on the Troubadours who in turn influenced Dante and Chaucer. We read Elizabethan, Romantic, and modern poets, study the mechanics of poetry, and write original poems.

Eleventh grade

Shakespeare and the Scientific Revolution: An examination of the changing roles of women, nature, imagination, and authority from Medieval to Renaissance consciousness through six Shakespeare plays which are read dramatically by students in class. Students write essays exploring themes from these plays.

Parzival: We read and discuss Wolfram Von Eschenbach's *Parzival*, the medieval story of "a brave man slowly wise", which offers a picture of modern education and initiation. The students have a writing and artistic project.

Twelfth grade

The Transcendentalists: A study of the lives and works of Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Melville, Hawthorne, the Alcotts and Margaret Fuller. The students write essays exploring the pertinence of the Transcendentalist ideas in our life today in relation to nature, work, community, and self development.

Faust and the Modern Path to Meaning: An introduction to the life of Goethe and his Faust.

Senior Play: A three week block in which the Seniors prepare a Shakespeare play to present to the community at the end of the school year. They design and create the program, the scenery and the costumes.

SUBJECT LESSONS

Ninth grade Classes focus on grammar, writing exercises, report writing, and plays and novels read in conjunction with main lesson or separately. Reading may include the plays *Prometheus Bound*, *Agamemnon*, *Trojan Women*, *Oedipus The King*, *The Chester Pageant of the Deluge*, *Everyman*, *Sganerelle*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Inherit the Wind* and the

novels *Shane*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Black Like Me*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Tenth grade Classes focus on grammar, writing exercises, report writing, and works read in conjunction with main lesson or separately. Reading may include *Ramayana* and *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Gilgamesh*, *Greek*, *Egyptian*, Finnish and Norse Mythology, the *Old Testament*, *Beowulf*, *The Song of Roland*, Romantic and Modern Poetry, and the novels *The Chosen*, *Siddhartha*, and *Zen Flesh*, *Zen Bones*

Eleventh grade Classes focus on essay writing and works read in conjunction with main lesson or separately. Reading may include the plays *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *The Tempest*, *Luther*, *Doctor Faustus*, and the *New Testament*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, *The Canterbury Tales*, excerpts from *The Prince* and *Utopia*, as well as the novels *The Robe*, *1984*, *Brave New World*, and the translated poem *Parzival*.

Twelfth grade Classes focus on essay and report writing, and works read in conjunction with main lesson or separately. Reading may include a variety of modern poems and short stories, the plays *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*, *The Crucible*, and *Faust*, the novels *Ordinary People*, *Cry the Beloved Country*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Moby Dick* (excerpts), *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *Fathers and Sons* or *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Cannery Row*, essays in *The Selected Writings of Ralph Watdo Emerson* and "Civil Disobedience" and *Walden* by Thoreau.

Discussion: Schooling Imagination

Our group discussions following the presentations of Philip Thatcher and Mary Emery were understandably exciting. What follows is a compilation of some of the ideas exchanged. Toward the end of our hour on this topic, as you will see, we dissolved into what seemed like somewhat frenzied shouting out of titles of great books for students to read as though they might be lost forever if not recorded in this session. This is perhaps predictable behavior for English teachers. But we began in a more philosophic mode.

Why do we want to school the imagination? In the largest sense, imagination is what we use in solving problems and bringing ideas to reality. Imagination is what allows us to seek new relationships between things and people that have never been seen before.

In what ways do we as English teachers school imagination? Clearly, it is through our devotion to the Word. When we choose literature for our students we need to keep in mind the Greek trinity of truth, beauty, and goodness and choose writing that contains at least one of these. Literature allows us a time consciousness providing a double dimension between historical context and modern experience.

We begin with the understanding that the four years of high school are steps to insight. The aim of the 9th grade is to look at the world, that of the 12th grade is to look at the unseen, at the spirit, which would be an impossibility in the 9th grade. Schooling the imagination leads to intuition – intuitive thought is our highest capacity. But we school the imagination step-by-step. We must have a long view of what we're trying to achieve in the four years. Emerson relates primary imagination to reason; the question for teachers is how do we get there.

Steiner speaks of the fact that if adolescents do not hear beautifully formed speech, they will only hear the driving force of their own hearts at night. Reading aloud can help, and we have rich resources in Shakespeare's plays, *Parzival*, the *Odyssey*, and many other great works. It means a great deal to hear beautifully read literature; it rings in the listener. Many students also read aloud well and can be encouraged to do so. In much of our teaching of literature, however, we are working more abstractly, with written rather than spoken language. *A Is for Ox : The Collapse of Literacy and the Rise of Violence in an Electronic Age* by Barry Sanders is recommended for all English teachers.

Rene Querido gives an image describing the ancient polarities of East, West, North, and South, forming a cross. He then suggests that the Christ impulse is a potentizing of that image of the cross that can be transformed into a pentagram. All humans are part of an intricate knot, endlessly connected and always equal. Our task as teachers is to soak the students in the polarities not only so they become acquainted with the different streams, but so that they also enjoy the play of colors, sounds, and tones. Then they come to recognize that we can't live with a trival mentality any more.

How do we achieve Querido's pentagram form? It is important for students to experience the difference between times and cultures. Their imaginative life is enriched, and by 12th grade they can have developed a sense for the future.

We begin by recognizing the need to strengthen our students in their image forming capacities. Because they are awash in ready-made images, the ability to bring forth their own images is weakening. What do we have to do to strengthen these capacities? How do we teach imaginatively? Metaphor is one of the clues, as we learned in our exercise with Mary Emery. Poetry takes us into a different space, metaphor connects us to our essential humanity. All art does the same thing. Harwood, in "The Wholeness of Imagination," says that it is about inserting ourselves into the universe. Metaphor allows us to insert ourselves into the universe. We are the leaf, the stone, the sun. Primary imagination is the given imagination; secondary imagination is conscious imagination. We can't get to the second stage until we've schooled our thinking. That is the bridge between the two kinds of imagination.

Poetry is the path because it provides the potentized kernel of imagery. Pictorial imagination is a form of freedom. Story leaves you in freedom to exercise the images in meaning and truth. Students can be led to value this freedom to participate in and develop images of the story. This requires an act of will on the part of the students.

How do we bring the will into thinking? We begin through a transition of the word “imagination” from a noun to a verb. Imagination is what gets the will moving. Imagination uses the will to awaken knowledge

This understanding of the freedom inherent in reading literature may be a key to teaching the New Testament. It is difficult to bring any reference to Christ to most students, yet they need to know the New Testament to enter into the 11th grade curriculum. There is such an aversion to the name “Christ” in our students, in part because what immediately comes to mind is the Christian right with its materialistic assumptions. Soloviev says the Antichrist will come with the name of Christ. Do the students bring a pre-birth understanding of this? The Christian right embodies a materialistic assumption. When students understand the law of love, they feel sorrow at what was lost. The images of the Christ as Western is a true perception of the students. It is the world of the deed at the close of a materialistic age. One 12th grader was upset at the idea of Columbus as a hero in Transcendentalism. Another was also upset with the failure of Brook Farm. But what is a life without initiative? The students want to know why they are part of the culture of deed and will. We need to make it real again. We must find ways to overcome student scepticism and cynicism. There must be something good we can put into the world, even while taking the risk that it might not work.

Meg Gorman spoke of an experience with a Mexican Shaman who said that his youth are lost to their own religion and want to go to the west to find religion; the abandoning of one’s religion is not only our question. The young people know in their bones that there is not just “one way.” This can be a problem with Anthroposophy as well; our students can experience it as dogma. Many students are reading *The Life of Pi* by Jan Martel. Pi is a boy who grows up in a village in India. He begins to attend three religious services and forms a connection with the holy men of Christian, Muslim, and Buddhist faiths. All is well until his parents and the three “priests” tell him he can’t possibly combine all three, but must rather embrace only one. He wants the combining of all, as many of our students do.

One participant recommends the books of Mary Doria Russell to students the summer before 12th grade. *The Sparrow* and *The Children of God* treat the issue of colonization from a metaphorical point of view. In 2019, when radio waves are received from space, a Jesuit priest sells off church relics to fund intergalactic travel with a team including the Jesuit priest, non-Jesuit Catholics, a Jew, and a number of atheists. On the new planet Rakhat, the questions begin, “How do we colonize? What is the role of the church? What is the role of the anthropologist?”

Philip Thatcher’s novels *Raven’s Eye* and *Mirror of the Moon* deal directly with the issue of finding identity in a multi-cultural world. The central character, Nathan Solomon Jacob, is born in an aboriginal village on the west coast of British Columbia and grows up full of riddles. In his quest, he attends a Waldorf high school where he is deeply influenced by *Parzival*. He later travels to Wales and Ireland where he finds resonance between Celtic mythology and the stories told by the elders in his own village.

Many of us are experiencing that students don’t want the curriculum to be so Euro-centric. The world is more globally aware than when Steiner was around. Students now want to know what was happening in South America in the 9th century. On the other hand, if we’re talking about the evolution of consciousness, where was it happening? How was it and is it different in other parts of the world? What happens when new consciousness is brought to an old world as when England colonized India, Australia, or North America, for example, or currently when America is colonizing Iraq? What happens when Intellectual Soul violently intrudes into Sentient Soul?

Remembering Babylon, by David Malouf, takes place in Australia during the colonization. The central character grows up in abject poverty in England, is taken by boat to Australia, is taken in by the Maoris, then appears to English children. *Half A Life* by V.S. Naipul works well with this cross-cultural, cross-religious theme in the 12th Grade.

High school teachers need to know what students bring with them from lower and middle school. All religions need to be taught on the feeling level in lower school or students take them into the feeling level in high school when they meet them as new and intriguing concepts. We need to ask whether they have had an introduction to Islam, to Hinduism, to Christianity. There is a yearning in the young to understand Islam after 9/11; the lower school needs to make them familiar with it.

We are all experiencing that more and more students have learning difficulties; does our consciousness of this make us reconsider making them work hard? Many of them have been given accommodations, but we need to remember that Waldorf education is in itself a healing education. Many of us find that students often don't use the accommodations during the school day when they usually function well. We recognize that they often need help at home. Teachers need to help by providing assignments and outlines of major points in printed form, using board work carefully to highlight the progression of a lesson, repeating directions in a variety of ways. To balance this, however, there are two related questions to keep in mind, "How many of the difficulties are in the will?" and, "Do we take away the opportunity for the students themselves to have their own 'Aha!' experience, if we give it to them?"

On the other hand, students with learning difficulties bring other capacities. They are often the heart forces in the classroom and are often extraordinary listeners. Those for whom things are not easy can have developed great strengths and can have understood the deeper meanings of things through the struggles they experienced.

For all students, the development of thinking is helped if the teacher's presentations are artistic and consciously spoken. Even in our high school classes, the students imitate us. If we are breathless, the children will be breathless. We need to be very conscious of our presentations. If we speak in sound bites, the children will think in sound bites. If we lack direction and motivated intensity, the students tend to interrupt the presentation and each other. Do we prepare our blackboard for the students? Do we ask them to sharpen pencils, clear their desks except for notebooks and texts, and go to the bathroom before the presentation? What about asking them to stretch before class begins, so they are able to sit for a while and concentrate?

Several participants have given up teaching Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, in part because the language seems too difficult for today's students. What does it mean that students don't want to read *The Scarlet Letter*? Is it a true rejection, or is it passivity? The children need will in their reading, not just entertainment. This goes back to middle school: if they haven't really learned to read, it is daunting to read Hawthorne. If children are schooled well, they can accept things that are difficult. Nevertheless, we still need to stay with creating imaginative pictures and reading aloud. Some of the seeming rejection is fear of language. We need both the Ahrimanic and Luciferic, but is it better to read something more Luciferic, that's easier to read? They will probably read books like the *Harry Potter* series or Philip Pullman's *The Golden Compass* on their own, but it is our task to find a way into material that is difficult to enter, to give students the tools that make it possible to enter.

In several schools, 9th grade parents are asked to read aloud with their children. Parents can see that such reading helps with the development of imagination, but care must be taken not to enter the area of interpretation. It is important, as Steiner suggested, to "let the story do its own work." 9th graders are looking out, seeing how things work. They should be clearly describing what they see, or emulating the styles of famous writers. They practice summary, précis work; they watch experiments and record observations, not telling how they feel about it. We need time both to read aloud in 9th grade, and to engage in activities. This is only possible in periods of at least 50 minute.

In the 10th grade, we begin to move things, to compare. This is the year of analogy, process, an investigation of how we got here. It is a good year for multicultural literature. The Grade 10 *Art of Poetry* block is a way to apply Coleridge's concept of the synthesizing force of "secondary imagination." Poetry begins and ends in metaphor and we teach through metaphor.

By the 11th grade, students need pictures of transformation, a "double vision" of reality, as Philip Thatcher spoke about on Friday evening. What literature have we found that provides a double vision of reality? Poets, of course: Neruda, Rilke, Rumi, Dylan Thomas. Robert Bly's anthology *News of The Universe: Poems of Two-Fold Consciousness* is excellent for Waldorf students. There are many short stories: one of the best is "The Secret Sharer" by Joseph Conrad. Novels of transformation include Tony Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Vietnamese-American Lan Cao's *Monkey Bridge*. Christopher Fry's play *Thor with Angels* is also recommended, as is Maya Angelou's autobiographical series beginning with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and now numbering six volumes, and *Dibs in Search of Self* by Virginia M. Axline perhaps together with the poem "Once Upon a Time" by Nigerian poet Gabriel Okara. William Faulkner's *Of Mice and Men* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* are powerful when taught in combination as are Thomas More's *Utopia* and Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Another combination that works well in Grade 11 is Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

By 12th Grade, students need to be asked "What are the major issues of the time?" "Has Waldorf education prepared you to meet them?" Many seniors recognize that consciousness is the theme and want to take on the responsibility for consciousness.

One of the strongest themes in the 12th grade is forgiveness. Again, a powerful combination is Tolstoy's story "The Death of Ivan Ilich" with Elizabeth Kubler Ross's *On Death and Dying*. Another recommended combination is George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, followed by Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death* which compares these two novels.

Our seniors need a sense of North America in relation to the rest of the world. As teachers we need to find contemporary novels and introduce students to the contemporary world. They often express a need to hear minority voices and feminine voices as authors and heroines. San Francisco has two electives in the 12th grade: students choose either African American Literature or Global World Literature. Toronto has a block in Modern Literature where each student chooses an author to read and present to the class.

Additional recommendations for Grade 12:

Against Forgetting Carolyn Forché

Native American poet Mary Whitehorse Cochran

Mean Spirit, Red Clay: Poems and Stories, Linda Hogan

Green Grass, Running Water, Thomas King

The Lone Ranger and Tonto; Fist Fighting, Sherman Alexi

House of Spirits, Isabel Allende

Rain of Gold, Victor Villaseñor

Ordinary People, Judith Guest

Cry The Beloved Country, Alan Paton

What are the Essentials in English Main Lessons?

by

Betty Staley

First, I don't think there are essentials that form a canon in literature for Waldorf high school English classes. There are certain suggestions that Rudolf Steiner made, and there are firmly held traditions. This colloquium offers us an opportunity to examine the traditions and the assumptions. I will share what I think are important books to teach and why. What is most important is for us to know why we are teaching a particular book or theme and how we can relate it to adolescent development.

Second, I don't think we should consider only main lessons, but look at the whole field of literature whether we are teaching main lessons or ongoing track or subject lessons.

I was very moved years ago when I had the opportunity to attend a talk by the author Elie Wiesel. He spoke about the process of writing, characterizing each word hovering around his head, calling out plaintively, "Use me. Use me." As he made the decision not to use certain words, he experienced this as a death of these word-beings. Later, when he was going through the editing process and was eliminating more words, the pleas became even more intense. Wiesel's image challenges us to consider when we are speaking about words that we may be dealing with something more profound than what appears on the surface.

Last week I had the occasion to visit a Waldorf high school history lesson on the Middle Ages. It became clear from the questions the students asked that they had not studied the Old or New Testament and had little idea of the content of Judaism or Christianity. They had not had the opportunity to experience the beauty of the psalms or of the Sermon on the Mount. They expressed negativity towards Christianity and a kind of naïve approval of Islam which came out of comparing the horrific aspects of historical Christianity with the beautiful words in the *Koran*. Had they studied the essence of Christianity with the essence of Islam, they would have been able to appreciate and evaluate both religions more effectively. They may have arrived at the same conclusion of which they preferred, but their experience would have been different.

I realized during that observation that I was feeling pain that these students had not had those previous experiences in their literature background before studying the Middle Ages. Aside from the fact that the teacher kept getting pulled away from her focus on history to explain aspects of the religions, the students were gaining simplistic statements in the teacher's attempt to answer the questions and try to regain her focus.

Why do we teach literature? Some reasons are:

1. to help students to explore their longings, ideals, dreams, and extreme behaviors through imagination rather than through raw experience.
2. to meet the students in their development by offering literature that supports their stage of ego development.
3. to educate the students in the great literary traditions from their heritage as well as expose them to works from other cultures.
4. to bring the students into contact with a rich use of language.

Since we have been discussing poetry. I would like to share with you an incident that happened involving poetry. In 1988, I took a group of students to Russia. Since Boris Pasternak is one of my favorite Russian authors, I had looked forward to visiting his house in Peredelkino, a writers' village outside of Moscow. I had read that the house was being converted into a photographic museum devoted to his life and work. In 1987, on a previous trip to Russia, I had approached the guide about visiting Peredelkino. The guide had told me that travel outside Moscow was forbidden. Now, a year later, I was more savvy. I asked the guide, "*If* I were to go to Peredelkino, would I depart from such and such a train station?" She responded, "No, *If* you were to go to Peredelkino, you would depart from a different train station, namely ———."

With that information in mind, I invited any of the students who wished to accompany me to a place I had never visited. Nor did I know the cost of the ticket, or how long it would take us to get there. About ten students accompanied me on this great adventure. We bought pink roses, boarded the train, arrived in the birch forest area of Peredelkino, and found our way to the cemetery. After a thorough search of the gravestones, all the students converged at the gravesite of Boris Pasternak. We spoke his poem, "Resurrection" line by line, placing the roses on the site.

Then, using a few Russian words, we found our way to Pasternak's summer home. The caretaker was very clear that the building was not open and therefore we could not enter. As we stood outside, sharing our disappointment, a woman and two men came walking through the forest. It turned out that one of the men was a French filmmaker, the woman was a widow of the poet Nazim Hikmet, and the other man was her Russian guide. As we shared raisins with them, they introduced themselves. At that moment, my son, who had studied poetry at Brown University, began reciting by heart some lines by Hikmet. The widow was stunned at this young American's grasp of the poetry; the caretaker who had been eavesdropping on the conversation, softened his stance and told us we could have five minutes in the house. He actually let us stay for almost an hour. The experience of being in the room where Pasternak had died, and looking at large photographs of his life, was deeply moving. As we jauntily walked through the forest back to the train station, we were grateful for the power of poetry in softening the heart of the caretaker and allowing us such a rich experience.

Let us now look at each grade and consider the themes and examples of literature that might be fitting. Is there a literary canon that Waldorf schools use? We will consider that. In relation to which books are taught in each grade, let us remember that any book could be taught in any grade, but it would be taught differently. Different themes would be emphasized; the language would be worked with differently.

The Ninth Grade

Our general goal is to help ninth graders make a bridge between their subjective approach to life and objectivity. This means that we awaken powers of thought and judgment out of the extreme forces of sympathy and antipathy, of good and bad, black and white. We need to help bring them down to earth, to ground them, to looking at the question, what does the world ask. We must help them establish order in their own work and in what they learn about the world, before they can grasp what is specifically being asked of them. It is important to address their idealism as well as the reality. The great moral questions of our time provide worthy material. Ninth graders need a connection with their times, to understand how the present time came to be. The way of working with these questions is to present opposites. Because their thinking is still concrete, ninth graders relate to the world out of a black and white perspective. Humor helps to dissipate tensions.

The Comedy-Tragedy block is a good example of working with these issues. As students trace the history of theater, they learn about the Greek plays in which three tragedies and one comedy were presented as a totality. However, Shakespeare brought tragedy and comedy together in one play. Therefore, there are light moments in a tragedy and dark moments in a comedy. Life is not divided into tragedy or comedy. In this way the student learns life has complexity and nuance.

Examples from epic, lyrical, or dramatic works can be taught in a way that shows the extremes of life and ways of finding balance. The autobiography *And There Was Light* by Jacques Lusseyran, Charles Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*, and John Griffen's *Black Like Me* work well.

There is the controversy about whether to teach *Moby Dick* in ninth grade or twelfth. My mentor, the wonderful English teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School in New York, Christy Barnes, recommended teaching it in ninth grade because of its beautiful language. I tried it one year and found it frustrating because the students could relate to it as an adventure story but could not deal with the deeper themes which work so well with the twelfth grade. So, there are schools that teach it in ninth and those that teach it in twelfth. In recent conversations with John Wulsin, who teaches it in ninth grade, I came to some clarity as to how it can be effective. The students don't usually read the entire book; they focus on certain chapters, and the teacher fills in the plot. Melville's writing style serves as an effective model for the students' writing. Then, in twelfth grade, when they are studying the Transcendentalists, they revisit *Moby Dick*. I can see that as an effective way to work with this great novel.

We always have to work with the situation we find ourselves in, and not be slaves to tradition or a recipe of how and what to do. When we first began our high school in Sacramento, I encountered a ninth grade that had few students who had been there in the early grades, especially in the fifth grade. When we were studying History of Art, the images of Heracles, Prometheus, and other classic Greek gods and heroes had no meaning to the students. They simply lacked the background. At that point I designed a block on World Mythology for the ninth grade to be sure we covered the key figures in the myths of the world. This turned out to be a successful block and the school has continued it as the first block of the ninth grade year. It serves as a bridge between the lower and high school experience.

One of the key assignments of the ninth grade is writing of summaries. Those ninth graders who are still young in their thinking cling to the narrative form. When they are asked to summarize a story in a paragraph, they experience this as painful. They still want to tell the story. Through the course of the year we have to help them step back from the direct experience of the story and be able to isolate the key points, the plot, the character development. Especially for children who live strongly in their imagination, this is an unpleasant but necessary experience. The summary also teaches them to be careful observers, objectively examining the story rather than losing themselves in their likes and dislikes.

Tenth grade

Tenth graders are comfortable putting aside extremes and enjoy trying to resolve the paradox that they find in literature. They also are more interested in looking at the ancient world than they were in ninth grade.

The key theme is the transition from myth to literature as well as mythological themes in modern literature. Tenth graders enjoy being independent and forming their own thoughts. They still struggle with the abstraction of a true thesis statement, but their thinking is less concrete than earlier.

Focusing on contrast and comparison helps them move further into abstraction. They learn to treat the story as an object and, at the same time, the teacher needs to keep alive the imaginative element in the literature.

Tenth grade is the year of the Word. Therefore, poetry is an essential part of the curriculum. Some schools teach The Development of the English Language in tenth grade, following the works from Beowulf to Chaucer. Others teach it in eleventh grade as a companion to Medieval History.

Tenth grade is also the year of the Journey. Whether it is the *Odyssey*, *Gilgamesh*, or the *Hebrew Bible*, each focuses on a journey of an individual or of a people. The challenges along the way help initiate the character to a change in consciousness.

Many schools used to teach *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, but that seems to be disappearing. What is essential in *The*

Scarlet Letter is the way the characters appear to be one thing, but in actuality become something or someone else. There are many examples of this transformational quality in other books.

A book I find very helpful in tenth grade is *Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck. Of course, this can be taught in other grades as well. I like this book in tenth grade for several reasons. Steinbeck describes a journey from Oklahoma to California; the characters develop in ways not expected; the social situation of the availability of food and of labor issues awakens the students to the real world; the opposites of the growers and the migrants cannot be seen in just black and white, but both have valid reasons for their actions. The students have to move out of stereotypes to complexity. The language is beautifully crafted. For example, the following excerpt captures the subtlety of feeling so tenderly:

“The people came out of their houses and smelled the hot stinging air and covered their noses from it. And the children came out of the houses, but they did not run or shout as they would have done after a rain. Men stood by their fences and looked at the ruined corn, drying fast now, only a little green showing through the film of dust. The men were silent and they did not move often. And the women came out of the houses to stand beside their men – to feel whether this time the men would break. The women studied the men’s faces secretly, for the corn could go, as long as something else remained. The children stood near by, drawing figures in the dust with bare toes, and the children sent exploring senses out to see whether men and women would break. The children peeked at the faces of the men and women, and then drew careful lines in the dust with their toes. Horses came to the watering troughs and nuzzled the water to clear the surface dust. After a while the faces of the watching men lost their bemused perplexity and became hard and angry and resistant. Then the women knew that they were safe and that there was no break. Then they asked, What’ll we do? And the men replied, I don’t know. But it was all right. The women knew it was all right, and the watching children knew it was all right. Women and children knew deep in themselves that no misfortune was too great to bear if their men were whole. The women went into the houses to their work, and the children began to play, but cautiously at first. As the day went forward the sun became less red. It flared down on the dust-blanketed land. The men sat in the doorways of their houses; their hands were busy with sticks and little rocks. The men sat still—thinking—figuring.”

Eleventh Grade

The eleventh graders are interested in more subtlety than they were in earlier grades. They tend to be more inward and reflective. They begin to recognize that they, too, are on a journey, an inward journey. Themes for this year include individualism, the search for God, the quality of love, responsibility for one’s behavior. Questions begin to emerge such as Who am I? Do I have a special task in life? What are the boundaries that limit me? How can I contribute to society?

The analytical process becomes a clearer part of their learning.

The teaching of *Parzival* provides a focus for this new consciousness. In addition to the meeting with the medieval world with its courtly manners and customs, the book with its plot and sub-plots offers a picture of the maturing process, with questions of readiness for one's destiny, the teachers one has in life, a balance of masculine and feminine, and an integration of each character as part of the whole person. Here are some questions that would be particularly interesting to discuss.

1. What would have happened if Parzival had asked the question when he first came to the Grail Castle? Was he ready to become the Grail King? What does it mean that he glimpsed the grail and then tried to work his way back to it out of a different consciousness?
2. What is the role of helpers along our journey? Sigune, Kundrie, et al? How do we understand that a person who is telling us the brutal truth may actually be helping us?
3. What is difference in Gurnemanz as teacher and Trevrizent as teacher?
4. What qualities does Gawain bring to the story? What is Gawain's path of maturity?
5. What role does misuse of sexuality play in the story?
6. In what way do the elders – King Arthur, Queen Arnive, and Gramoflanz' uncle – play a significant role in the big joust?
7. What is the difference whether a person has to be called to the Grail by having his name show up or if a person fights his way to the Grail? Why did Trevrizent lie to Parzival? How does this reflect in our own life journey (male or female)?
8. What qualities does Feirefiz bring to the story and to Parzival?

Another essential in the eleventh grade is Shakespeare, especially *Hamlet* where the central character represents the consciousness soul. If the *New Testament* has not been taught earlier, it should be introduced in the eleventh grade.

There are many books appropriate for the eleventh grade, as well as Romanticism in English literature.

Twelfth Grade

Twelfth graders are more socially mature, although there is still a difference between the boys and girls. Their thinking is more capable of abstraction and depth. Questions which are relevant to the twelfth grader include: What does it mean to live in the modern world? What is my place in the world? What will my work be? What is the role of good and evil? What are the limits of human knowledge? What is the meaning of human life? What is the foundation of moral action? What is my responsibility to nature, Self, the other, and to Spirit? What do I really believe?

In addition to analysis, a greater effort is made to synthesize material and understand its meaning in different contexts.

I see the nineteenth century novels as great operatic works to be studied during this year – the German *Faust*, the American *Moby Dick*, and the Russian *The Brothers Karamazov*. Of course, other great works could be taken instead. However, I see major themes expressed by each of these works.

In *Faust*, we deal with the question of the scientist and his or her relation to knowledge; scientific research, evil, freedom, responsibility, love, egoism, guilt, transformation, and striving. Faust has many aspects of the modern human being.

In *Moby Dick*, we deal with the question of free will, compassion, obsession, and good and evil. Set within the context of a study of the Transcendentalists, the student becomes familiar with an American stream that seeks the spirit in a new way. This would include several of Emerson's essays, Thoreau's journals or *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience", Whitman's poetry, and hopefully some aspects of Fuller and Alcott.

In *The Brothers Karamazov* a number of significant themes are struck. These include the role of family; the three brothers as the threefold human being; the fourth brother or the outcast; the role of the double; the question whether one can believe in God if children suffer; Father Zossima's teaching as a foreshadowing of the Sixth Epoch; the role of forgiveness and redemption.

It is essential in the twelfth grade to move from the nineteenth century, through the twentieth, and into a study of contemporary world literature.

Besides the literature studied in class, summer reading should be required to broaden the students' exposure to significant works in novels, autobiography, biography, poetry, and plays. Creating an opportunity for students to talk about what they have read during the summer or are reading for pleasure outside of class assignments is valuable for everyone.

Keeping The Curriculum Timely

by

Joan Calderera, Allegra Alessandri, Meg Gorman,

At the San Francisco Waldorf School, the development of a modern curriculum has been a group effort. In the pioneering years, we decided that we wanted to move away from the traditional Eurocentric and North American oriented focus and avoid the criticism that is often leveled at the traditional Waldorf curriculum. We wanted to include other cultures: the Pacific Rim, Africa, and South America. We wanted, too, to investigate world religions. We actively set out to include literature from various cultures within all our blocks. We felt the need to expand the curriculum in order to make it more culturally diverse by approaching historical periods in a more global way rather than simply a focus on Western development. What was happening in the rest of the world beyond Europe during the Middle Ages? We have added a block on Arab studies, for example, which is a combination of literature, history, and cultural studies. We have also been aware that we must include the voices of women and peoples of color.

Our task is to help students be in this world at this time. We need to face the fact that it is not fashionable to discuss *the* cannon. We must realize that there is a changing cannon. As teachers, we need constantly to ask ourselves why we are teaching something.

Our questions might include: How do we make it new? What do students need to know for general cultural knowledge? What is timely? What allows young people to know the world now? What connects them to the richness of their humanity? What connects them to their pre-birth intentions? What meets them at their developmental stages? What books keep them in process? How do we keep our students, even the brightest and most ambitious of them, from opting out of consciousness? How do we create an atmosphere where they don't want to opt out of consciousness?

As literature teachers, we know the value of reading both to meet another consciousness and to understand what is happening in the world. The most important thing for us to achieve is a condition where students can live comfortably in the unanswerable questions, where they can live with what it means to be human. Literature has to open the questions of the students' souls to move them into the will.

How can we as readers discover the experience of the human soul in this age? Every culture is affected by the consciousness soul. Where can we see in other cultures symptoms and ways that we can come to the consciousness soul where transformation occurs? In all good literature, there seems to be a damming up before the movement of transformation is possible.

For our reading list, we have found authors in other cultures to put beside the books that most Waldorf schools use, such as the Colombian

writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Egyptian writer Naguib Mafouz, Nuha al-Radi who wrote *Baghdad Diaries: a Woman's Chronicle of War, Exile, and Identity*, and Nigerian Chinua Achebe who wrote *Things Fall Apart*. We took Hawthorn's *Scarlet Letter* out of the curriculum work and put it on the reading list. Instead, we read in class Zora Neale Hurston's, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

Throughout the four years of high school, we are aware of the need for including the voice of the other. In Grade 9, we use a short story collection called *Points of View*, by James Moffat. Although it was published in 1966, it is an excellent collection of international and female writers and addresses the Grade 9 question: "What is the world like in my time?" However, we are not yet satisfied that this is the best short story collection for our students. We are continuing to read and search for a better selection, one that really answers the question, "What is the World now?" We are being called on, as well, to expand our traditional notion of form. In Grade 12, we use a literature anthology called *Literature Without Borders* edited by George Bozzini. We all need to ask, "What is the new fiction that we can call literature?"

This kind of exploration for new literature and a richer curriculum is ongoing at our school. For instance, Grade 12 asks the question "Who am I in the world?" This is the year for synthesis and the responsibility of the witness. At the San Francisco School, we don't do a block on Goethe's *Faust*. Instead, we ask, "Who is the modern Faust?" What theme are we looking for in *Faust* and can we find it in a modern Faust? Faust is the fragmented individual who finds materialism as the solution. One possible modern novel that addresses that theme is *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison.

We are all reluctant to abandon the great classics that have nourished students for many years. It will take courage to seek the balance between the integrity and historical importance of Western classics while, at the same time, meeting modern world issues. May we never stop searching.

Steiner on the High School Literature Curriculum

Ninth Grade

A teacher asks about the lessons for the ninth grade.

Dr. Steiner: I will write it down for tomorrow, but we will get farthest if we see it as a continuation of what we have already done. I would, therefore, ask you to provide me with all the information about what you have done and achieved in German and literature.

A teacher: I went through Goethe, Schiller, and Herder, but that was all. I was able to bring into history some discussion of things like Dante's *Divine Comedy*, but mostly it was Goethe, Schiller, and Herder. In grammar, we wrote essays and I attempted to work on spelling from the perspective of speech. We did nothing with grammar as such.

Dr. Steiner: Well, what you will need to do in literature is to take care of Jean Paul. In particular, you will need to look at some sections of *Aesthetics, or the Schooling of Beauty* with the ninth grade—particularly the ones concerning humor. You should not pay too much attention to history. That would be about a semester's work. Afterward, you would then go on with the students to something very different. They are, after all, fourteen and fifteen years old, and you could read and discuss some of the chapters in Herman Grimm's lectures on Goethe. That is what you need to do in literature.

In German, I would recommend that you not go too deeply into grammar in the first semester. Discuss the phonetic law, particularly Grimm's law. In the essays, I would recommend that you handle historical themes. The students should work primarily with the material you gave them last year in history. You will certainly have adequate opportunities to discuss grammar and syntax in connection with corrections. Before you have the children write an essay, though, you should have the children from last year orally discuss the theme for the new children in the class. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner I* (176-177)

A teacher: In the eighth and ninth grade German class, we are reading Herman Grimm.

Dr. Steiner: Have you had an opportunity to bring other things into the lectures by Grimm? How far have you come in history? What did you do with his first lecture where he speaks about Rome in the second part of his characterization of the last centuries?

A teacher: The children did not know that history.

Dr. Steiner: It is important that you cover the history of the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, at least in the ninth grade. Perhaps you could do it that way. It is missing in the ninth grade. In teaching about these centuries, the goal would be that the students understand the present, don't you agree? They are now fifteen years old. You could go through those themes as Herman Grimm presents them in each chapter and take the nineteenth century as a confluence of the histories of various peoples. Use the themes of the last four centuries as leitmotifs. Actually, it would be important to do that in both classes, only you should do it in different ways. In eighth grade, more narratively and in ninth grade, go more into the major ideas of the last centuries. You need to work toward being able to present the major ideas to the children. There is a great deal of material in those lectures you can expand upon by bringing in literature from everywhere. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner I* (194-195)

Tenth Grade

Concerning the curriculum of the tenth grade, we need to take into consideration German language and literature. That would be a continuation of what was done in the ninth grade.

A teacher: I had them read Jean Paul.

Dr. Steiner: You had them read and complete Jean Paul.

A teacher: They completed the chapter about humor.

Dr. Steiner: What is now important is that you begin a comprehensive presentation of meter and poetics. Upon the basis of what they have learned from Jean Paul, the children will be able to learn a great deal here. In any event, we must avoid normal pedantic school methods. We must teach living poetry in a living way and treat it in a reasonable manner.

The class could then study *The Song of the Niebelungs* and *Gudrun*. Where possible, you should study it in Middle High German. As time allows, go through it in Middle High German, but also speak about the entire context of the poem, its artistic and folk meaning and, aside from the passages that you read, go through it so that the children learn the entire content. Of course, with *The Song of the Niebelungs*, you could do some Middle High German grammar and compare it with that of modern High German. That would be sufficient for the tenth grade, but begin with meter.

A teacher: Could you perhaps recommend a German book about meter?

Dr. Steiner: ...I gave the basics in a lecture in Dornach and showed how meter is connected to the interactions of the pulse and breathing, look at the caesura when you study hexameter. You can see it as a harmony of the pulse, and, breathing. Today, we can't go into metric theory. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner I* (264-265)

A teacher asks a question about English. The class has read The Tempest.

Dr. Steiner: I would recommend you don't drop that. Discuss the work with the children regardless of whether one or another knows more or less. Discuss it from what they do know, so that the children have to give an answer and can continue the discussion.

A teacher: We read Corneille's *Le Cid* in French.

Dr. Steiner: That could be done in dialogue....

Teachers ask about art class, Goethe's poetry in the tenth grade, and metaphors

Dr. Steiner: That material is included in almost all the grades. Of course you can teach them about metaphors and similes. You can teach them a feeling for poetic forms. We cannot say that Goethe could do that only after a certain age, that he could write a verse only after the age of forty. If we do, the students will ask themselves why they should do it when Goethe could do it only at the age of forty. Such things cause reactions, and you need to be very careful. Nevertheless, you can do it. In art, the problem is the material. You can, however, be guided by what the students understand. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (670)

A teacher asks which texts they should use for foreign languages.

Dr. Steiner: ... it would depend a little upon what the teacher has already read and what the teacher likes, and for that reason, I gave only the qualities. For the tenth grade, you should certainly consider older and more recent lyric poetry.

A teacher says that he began with lyrics from Milton's time.

Dr. Steiner: You should do it in the following way. In the tenth grade, read the lyric poetry from Shakespeare's time and then give a short review in the twelfth grade. We cannot completely ignore lyric poetry from Shakespeare's time because it gives a curiously deep indication of the period of European development when the Germanic languages were much more similar to one another than they are only a few centuries later. English lyric poetry is still unbelievably German. If you read Shakespeare's lyrics, you will see they are not at all un-German. We can show that in the twelfth grade, so that a feeling will arise that is very important for humanity in general. Thus, for the tenth grade, Robert Burns, some things out of the period of Thomas Percy. Some things from the Sea School, for example, Coleridge, and then Shelley and Keats. You will, of course, need to be selective, but do what you prefer, since you will then do it better. You could also present some particular points of view. There is, however, one thing in these lyrics that you will find throughout almost all English lyric poetry, namely, that where it is good it has a sentimental element. Sometimes that is very beautiful, but there is certainly a sentimental element throughout. Something else is that when the English way of thinking becomes poetic, it is not at all appropriate for representing humor. English then becomes trivial and has no humor in a higher sense. There is not even a word for it. How could you say "humor" in English? The way Falstaff is handled would not represent humor today. We would, of course, say there is much humor in it, but we would not refer to the way the whole thing is presented as humor itself. What is apparent to us is how precise the characterizations are. We perceive what is human, but in Shakespeare's time it was not perceived in that way. The well-roundedness and exactness of characterizations was unimportant for people in earlier times. What was important then was that the humors be good for presentation on the stage. People thought much more as actors at that time.

[Throughout this paragraph and the next, Steiner merges the meanings of the word *humor*. On the one hand he uses it to refer to what is commonly referred to as humor today—something comic or whimsical. On the other hand, he reaches back into the much older meaning of the word (a cognate in German and English), which refers to the medieval four basic "fluids" of the four temperaments. He is thus saying that this form of presentation would no longer be a true characterization, nor would it be comic at a higher level. — TRANS]

Today, we can no longer call Falstaff humorous. By the word *humor*, we mean someone who dissolves in a kind of fog, that is, someone not so well defined in regard to his temperament. Humor is the kind of temperament someone has. The four temperaments are humors. Today, you can no longer say that someone has a melancholic humor. Thus, someone whom you cannot really quite grasp, who dissolves in the fog of their temperaments, has humor. In drama, you should show that the development of the English people resulted in the height of English drama being reached by Shakespeare, and that since then nothing else has reached the same height. It is, of course, interesting, but you should draw the students' attention to how development proceeds only in the twelfth grade. You can mention how in Middle Europe, the German Reformation kept its basic religious character through the great importance of church lyric. In France, the Reformation does not have a religious character; it has a social character, and this can be shown in the poetry. In England, it has a political/moral character, something we can see in Shakespeare. That is connected with the fact that for a long time the English did not have an idealistic philosophy, so they lived it out in poetry. That gives their poetry a sentimental tendency. That is what made the rise of Darwinism possible. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner* (753-757, 764-769)

Eleventh Grade

Dr. Steiner: The first thing we need to consider for the present eleventh grade is literary history. I want to begin by discussing the continuation of what we taught in the tenth grade. What was done there? *The Song of the Niebelungs*, *Gudrun*, meter and poetics. I want to include the treatment of meter and poetics for this class in what I yesterday called aesthetics in art instruction. The first thing is to place what is literary in literature in the foreground. That is, you should try to create a bridge from *The Song of the Niebelungs* and *Gudrun* to the major works of the middle ages, *Parzival*, *Armer Heinrich*, and such things. Primarily, you should try to elicit in the children a complete imaginative picture through a survey of such things, so that the children learn about *Parzival* and they feel the part they read in the original reflects the whole story.

A Religion teacher: I have already done that.

Dr. Steiner: That does not matter. When you consider the basic principles in connection with the children in the eleventh grade, it would be good to do the *Armer Heinrich* again. The *Parzival* tale is the most important, though.

At the same time, you should cover the history of that period, something that, for children of this age, will certainly have an effect upon their view of the present. You should connect it with the present and show the children which historical figures of the past are similar to those of the present. In particular, show them which ones we would expect to be similar and which ones different. In this way, you can bring a certain capacity for judging into the whole thing. That is what you must take into consideration, so that the children can see the nineteenth century as growing out of previous centuries. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (357)

A teacher asks about Parzival in the eleventh grade.

Dr. Steiner: In teaching religion and history, what is important is how you present things. What is important is how things are treated in one case and then in another. In teaching religion, three stages need to be emphasized. In *Parzival*, for instance, you should first emphasize a certain kind of human guiltlessness when people live in a type of dullness. Then we have the second stage, that of doubt in the heart, "if the heart is doubting, then the soul must follow." That is the second stage. The third stage is the inner certainty he finally achieves.

That is what we need to especially emphasize in teaching religion. The whole story needs to be directed toward that. You need to show that during the period in which Wolfram wrote *Parzival*, a certain segment of the population held a completely permeating, pious perspective, and that people at that time had these three stages in their own souls. You need to show that this was seen as the proper form, and that this was how people should think about the development of the human soul. You could speak about the parallels between the almost identical times of Wolfram's and Dante's existence, although Dante was something different. When you go into these things, you need to give each of the three stages a religious coloring.

In teaching literature and history, you need to draw the children's attention to how one stage arises from an earlier one and then continues on to a later stage. You could show how it was proper that common people in the ninth and tenth centuries followed the priests in complete dullness. You can also show them how the Parzival problem arises because the common people then wanted to participate in what the priests gave them. In other words, show them that people existed in a state like Parzival's and grew out of that state just as Parzival grew out of it. Show them how common people actually experienced the priests, just as Wolfram von Eschenbach did. He could not write, but he had an intense participation in the inner life of the soul.

Historically, Wolfram is an interesting person. He was part of the whole human transition in that he could not write and in that the whole structure of education was not yet accepted by common people. But it was accepted that all the experiences of the soul did exist. There is also some historical significance to the fact that it is a cleric who is the scribe, that is, who actually does the writing. The attitude in *Faust*, “I am more clever than all the fancy people, doctors, the judges, writers, and priests,” persists into the sixteenth century. Those who could write were from the clergy, who also controlled external education. That changed only through the ability to print books. In the culture of *Parzival*, we find the predecessor of the culture of printed books.

You could also attempt to go into the language. You should recall that it is quite apparent from *Parzival* that such expressions as “dullness,” “to live in the halflight of dullness,” were still quite visual at the time when people still perceived things that way. With Goethe, that was no longer the case. When Goethe speaks of a dog wagging its tail, he refers to it as a kind of doubting, whereas in *Faust*, it means nothing more than that the dog wags its tail. You see, this doubting is connected with dividing the dog into two parts: the dog’s tail goes to the left and the right and in that way divides the dog. This is something that is no longer felt later. The soul became completely abstract, whereas Goethe still felt it in a concrete way. This is also connected with the fact that Goethe once again takes up the *Parzival* problem in his unfinished *Mysteris*. That is exactly the same problem, and you can, in fact, use it to show how such things change. They return in an inner way.

Take, for example—well, why shouldn’t we speak about Goethe’s *Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*? You have probably already done this, that would be just like you. Why should we not take into account that the story of the kings is pictorially the same in Andreae’s *Chymical Wedding*, where you also have pictures of the kings? If you go back to that, you will see the natural connection to the Arthurian tales and the Grail story. You would have the whole esoteric Grail story. You would inwardly comprehend the Arthurian tales and the particular cultural work as the Knights of the Round Table, who set themselves the task of destroying the lack of consciousness, the dull superstition of the common people, while the Grail Castle’s task is to comprehend external life in a more spiritual way. Here you have the possibility for an inner deepening of *Parzival*, but at the same time you can place him in his own time. I have mentioned this in some of my lecture cycles, as well as *Poor Heinrich*, which can also be treated historically as a theme of the willingness to sacrifice. A moral understanding of the world coincided with the physical understanding of the world, something that was lost in the next cultural period. Something like *Poor Heinrich* could not have been written in the fifteenth century.

I have also made a comparison between *Parzival* and von Grimmelshausen’s *Simplicius*. In Christoffel von Grimmelshausen’s time, people were already so advanced that they could treat the Parzival problem only in a humorous manner. You can still find an echo of it in Simplizism. This is something you can do in literary history.

When you continue on to the present, things become very hidden, but you nevertheless should uncover them. It is also good to uncover much of what has been hidden. Take, for example, the training of Parzival by Gurnemanz. The question could arise whether a Gurnemanz existed in the nineteenth century. The answer is, yes, but you must understand the situation. It was Trast in Sudermann’s *Honor*. There you will find Trast and the inexperienced Robert. There you have a real Gurnemanz figure. You will find all the characteristics translated into silliness. But, you will again have an opportunity of showing that Robert is a kind of Faust, but made silly, and Trast a kind of Mephistopheles. Sudermann is a silly fellow and translated everything into silliness. Here you have an opportunity to show the tremendous superficiality that lies in the transition from the Middle Ages into the most modern times. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (480-483)

A teacher asks about German and history in the eleventh grade.

Dr. Steiner: Now you need to give them an overview of literature. You cannot leave everything for the twelfth grade. Why don't you simply continue? You can do what needs to be done in literary history in a few sentences.... In the eleventh grade, you need to cover medieval history. You will not be able to give the boys an understanding of *Parzival* if you do not give them an overview of history. You will need to make a connection with the historical time. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner I* (644-645)

A teacher: You said that in eighth grade we should begin to give them the basics of meter and poetics, and then in the eleventh grade, the aesthetics of the language. What did you mean?

Dr. Steiner: Metrics is the theory of the structure of verses, the theory of how a verse is constructed. Poetics is the various forms of poetry, the types of lyric, epic, and dramatic poetry. That is what metrics and poetics are. You can then go on to metaphor and figures of speech. Always give the children some examples.

The children have a rather large vocabulary, German, French, and English, which you can use as a basis for comparing the different languages. Teaching the aesthetics of a language means that you draw their attention to such things as whether a language is rich in the *o* and *u* vowels or in the *i* and *e* vowels. You can then try to give them the feeling of how much more musical is a language that has many *o* and *u* sounds than one that has *e* and *i* sounds. You can try to give them a feeling for how the aesthetic beauty of a language decreases when the possibility of inwardly transforming words in various cases is lost and when endings disappear. Thus, the structure of the language is part of its aesthetics, whether it is flexible or more lyrical and musical, whether it can express complicated interjections, and so forth. That is different from actual metrics and poetics. The aesthetics of a language is concerned with the actual beauty of the language.

Sanskrit is very rich in *a*'s. *U* and *o* make a language musical. *E* and *i* make it discordant. The German language is discordant. Sanskrit is somewhat monotonic due to the predominance of *a*, but lies between the musical and flexible. It has a strong tendency to be musically flexible, that is, not to be unmusical in its plastic forms. That is how *a* works. It stands in the middle. It is particularly characteristic to find a vowel next to an *a* in Sanskrit. It is very characteristic, for example, to hear an Indian say, "Peace, peace, peace," since an *a* comes first and then there is a soft hint, almost a shameful hint, of the *i*. That is because they say, "Shanti, shanti." *I* is the most egotistical vowel. It is as though the Indian immediately becomes red in the face from shame when he says *i*.

A teacher: The Finnish language also has many *a*'s.

Dr. Steiner: That is true, but you should also consider how long a language has been at the stage of this particular peculiarity. There is something hardened in the *a* of the Finnish language, which, of course, relates to its tendency toward consonants. It is a kind of hardening that begins to become sympathetic. All these things are based upon a subtle aesthetic feeling for the language, but such subtle feelings are no longer natural for people today. If an Englishman spoke the ending syllable of English words the way a German- or a French-speaking person does, that would be a hardening for the English person. English-speaking people have begun to drop the end syllables because they are moving out of the language. What is a hardening for one can be something quite natural for the other.

A teacher asks another question about metaphors and figures of speech.

Dr. Steiner: Metaphors correspond to the imagination, figures of speech, to inspiration. First you have what is absolutely unpoetic and characterizes the greatest portion, 99 percent, of all poetry. You then have one percent remaining. Of that one percent, there are poets who, when they want to go beyond the physical

plane, need to strew pictures and figures of speech over the inadequacies of normal prose. How could you express, “Oh, water lily, you blooming swan; Oh swan, you swimming lily!”? That is a metaphor. What is expressed is neither a water lily, nor a swan; it floats between them. It cannot be expressed in prose, and the same holds for figures of speech. However, it is possible to adequately express the supersensible without using a picture or a figure of speech, as Goethe was sometimes able to do. In such cases, he did not use a picture, and there you find the intuitive. You stand directly in the thing. That is so with Goethe and also sometimes with Martin Greif. [*Martin Greif* is a pseudonym for Herman Frei (1839–1911).] They actually achieve what we could objectively call lyric. Shakespeare also achieves it sometimes with the lyric poetry he mixed into his drama. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner* (753-757)

Twelfth Grade

A teacher: I would like to ask if we can define an order of presentation for art. I thought that I would begin tomorrow in the ninth grade with those things connected with the curriculum as a whole, that is, related to history and literary history. I want to show how art arose from mythology.

Dr. Steiner: It would be good to bring the art class into step with history and literary history. You could try to make a transition from Germanic mythology to art and then remain with that for a time. Then, perhaps you could show how the Germanic myths reappear in a different artistic form as aesthetics. You could certainly show, for example, the connection between Dürer and German mythology. They are fifteen-year-old children. You could use this as an occasion to show how the old Germans painted their gods just as Dürer painted his figures later.

You could then go on into the tenth grade, since the curriculum depends upon the previous year. In the tenth grade, we have Goethe’s poems and style, and that can stay. In the eleventh grade, summarize music and poetry.

Dr. Steiner confirms the teacher’s understanding about art instruction in the previous grades. The same teacher now proposes artistically treating what is done in the twelfth grade German class, literature beginning in 1740, in preparation for the final examination.

Dr. Steiner: Then, we would no longer need a special literary history class. We need to see to it that the students learn the things they may be asked. In connection with modern literary history, they will certainly be asked about things that began with Gottsched and Bodmer and what followed them. German and art class can certainly cover the same material.

In order not to make compromises, I think it would be good to recognize that a large number of Goethe’s works are based upon impressions of paintings, and also that we can trace back much romantic art to musical impressions. Try to develop how the arts are intertwined.

An essay by Burdach, “Schiller’s Chordrama und die Geburt des tragischen Stiles aus der Musik” (Schiller’s choral drama and the birth of the tragic style from music) in the Deutschen Rundschau (German review) is mentioned.

Dr. Steiner: Burdach’s research has a problem in that it has an underlying tendency. He wants to show that somehow certain themes arise out of some primal forces, and then he follows them further. This is really very contrived. Schiller was certainly not as dependent upon earlier streams as Burdach claims. We certainly cannot ignore Schiller’s dramatic experimentation and the fact that he created a choral drama after many attempts. In *Demetrius*, he created a romantic drama in a style much like Shakespeare’s. You cannot ignore

the details Burdach cites, since they may be useful. However, you will probably arrive at a different conclusion, probably that Schiller would have created something quite different from *The Bride of Messina* had he really swum in that stream. That essay belongs with the series of things Burdach has produced. He has an *idée fixe*. He wants to show that a theme arises out of a subhuman source. All these things are similar, so you need to be cautious with Burdach. He also wrote other things where he derives the minstrel from Arabic provincials by finding the original impulse in the middle of the Middle Ages and using it as the beginning of the literary stream. *Faust* and *Moses* also belong in this group, as do Shakespeare's dramas. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (600-602)

The students are about eighteen, and at that age it is best if they attain an overall understanding of history and art. We should give them an understanding of the spirit of literature, art, and history subjects, not only in the content but also in the way we present them. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (607)

They discuss a letter to the Ministry of Education about the students who will take the final examination.

Dr. Steiner: Why was it necessary to add that it lies in the nature of block instruction that some subjects have not been taught? In such official things, the smartest thing to do is not to get people upset by telling them things they don't want to hear. What still needs to be done in literature?

You need to proceed efficiently. Some of the things you want to teach should be taught, but for the examination you do not need to teach the students anything about Goethe as a natural scientist, nor will they be asked questions about his letters on aesthetic education. His poetry will cause them some pain because it is not so easy. Hauptmann's *Hannele* is better than *Die Weber*. They don't have any idea about Goethe as a natural scientist. For such examinations it would be a mistake to feel you need to set up such a curriculum. Those things are not expected even for someone who is working toward a doctorate. They cannot be done in two years in school. Look here, here we have *Faust, Part I*. I would like to know how you could do all that in school. Do you think you will find some themes for German in them? You need to cover what will come up in written examinations. If you go to the ministry too often, they will think you have a bad conscience, and will get the feeling that things are not going right here. You should not go into such things so much, but only answer when the ministry writes. We will see how things go, we can always withdraw. In the last part of school, you need to be sure that the students write and answer as much as possible themselves. They need to be much more active individually. If a student does not already know something, you should not be so quick to help. They need to develop their will and find the answers themselves. This is much better than it was before, when the students had to do nothing more than listen. I need to go through all the classes again and will do so at the next opportunity. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (689-690)

Dr. Steiner: The first thing I would like to discuss is my discussion today with the present twelfth-grade students. With one exception, the students stated they did not need to take their final examinations at the end of this year, but could wait a year. At the end of the Waldorf School, they would go through a cramming class. It was important to them, however, that this cramming for the final examination be taught by the Waldorf School....

The point is that we said we wanted to resolve this matter after meeting with the twelfth-grade students.... In general, we should teach the class in a way appropriate to a twelfth-grade Waldorf School class. The first thing we need to consider for the curriculum is literary history. Yesterday, I mentioned that, in general, they should have already covered the main content of literary history. A cursory survey will have to suffice for the things they have not learned. On the other hand, you should undertake a complete survey

of German literary history in relation to things that play into it from outside. Therefore, you have to begin with the oldest literary monuments and work them all into an overview. Begin with the oldest literary monuments, starting with the Gothic period, then go on to the Old German period and continue into the development of the *Song of the Nibelungs* and *Gudrun*. Do that in a cursory way, but so that they get a picture of the whole. Then, go on to the Middle Ages, the pre-classical period, the classical and romantic periods, up to the present. Give them an overview, but one that contains the general perspectives. The content should enable them to clearly know what they need to knowI think you could cover that in five or six periods. You can certainly do that.

I would then follow that with the main things they need to know about the present. You should discuss the present in much more detail with the twelfth grade. By present, I mean you would discuss the most important literary works of the 1850s, 60s, and 70s, then follow that with a more detailed treatment of the subsequent movements, so that they would have some insight into who Nietzsche and Ibsen were, or such foreigners as Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, and so forth. The result should be that we graduate well-educated people. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (741-74)

General Comments On Literature

A teacher: We did *Faust* in the eighth grade.

Dr. Steiner: I would not read the Gretchen tragedy with fourteen- or fifteen-year-old children, but you can certainly use some passages from *Faust*.

I have given a lot of consideration to Shakespeare and was deeply concerned by it. I was concerned with the question of how to use Shakespeare in school. We would have to have a special edition for school because Shakespeare's plays have been edited so much that they contain many errors. Shakespeare's plays were not originally given as they are performed. The things contained in Shakespeare's plays can be given through a special youth edition. I mentioned this in Stratford.

In England, you can go further in a lecture with some things than you can in Germany, and for that reason I mentioned that Shakespeare was a man of the theater. Just as a genuine painter knows that he only has a surface to work upon, in the same way, Shakespeare knew he had only a stage. That is important. When you make Shakespearean characters living in that sense, you can raise them into the supersensible world where they remain living. Of course, they do not do in the higher worlds what they do on the physical plane, but they remain alive, nevertheless, and they act there. It is, however, a different drama. If you take one of Hauptmann's dramas into the spiritual world, all the characters die. They become simply wooden puppets. The same is also true of Ibsen's characters. Even Goethe's *Iphigenia* does not completely live at the astral plane. Shakespeare's characters move about there and do things in the same style, so that it is possible to rewrite a Shakespearean play. We could actually rewrite them all.

That was something quite surprising for me. I have until now only made some attempts. You could do it with Euripedes, but *Iphigenia* is not completely alive in the astral plane. There is something else that matters and that we should develop in detail. Sophocles and Aeschylus characters, like Prometheus, live in the astral plane. That is also true of Homer's characters, the figure of Odysseus. The Roman poets are not alive in that way. The French poets, Corneille and Racine, they melt away like dew and simply exist no more. Hauptmann's figures are stiff like wood. Goethe's *Iphigenia* is a problem, not a living character, something true of *Tasso*, also. Seen from the astral plane, Schiller's characters, *Thekla* and *Wallenstein* are like sacks stuffed with straw, though *Demetrius* is more alive. Had Schiller worked on the *Maltese*, it would have become a living drama. Such characters as the Maid of Orleans and Mary Stewart are simply horrible on the astral plane. All of which, of course, says nothing about their effect in the physical plane. In contrast, even

Shakespeare's most incidental figures are all alive because they arose out of a true desire of the theater. Things that imitate reality no longer live upon the astral plane. Only what arises from emotions and not from the intellect. Vulgarly comical things come to life immediately on the astral plane as they are not created in order to imitate reality.

I ventured to say that the most important thing about Shakespeare was his enormous influence on Goethe. The reason for that can be found in the fact that Goethe was completely unaffected by what was stated in an academic way about *Hamlet* and *Julius Caesar*. What had an effect upon Goethe was not what we can read everywhere, including those things that Goethe himself said about *Hamlet*. There is certainly much of what he said in that regard that we can object to. I am speaking of something, however, to which there can be no objection. Namely, where he says they are not poems, but are more like the book of fate, where the stormy winds of life flip the pages back and forth. That is something that more closely expresses his own experience, but when he speaks of *Hamlet* he does not really express his own experience.

A teacher: We read *Macbeth* in my eighth grade class.

Dr. Steiner: You can certainly read *Macbeth*. You may need to modify some of the things we cannot give to children....

There is a question about Bible editions.

Dr. Steiner: We should teach the Bible so that the children can understand it. The Old Testament is not intended for children. It contains things you should not teach them. The Catholics have done a good job. Schuster's Bible is good for children. I saw a copy in Schubert's room. It is very well done.

These are problems you could solve within the faculty. How could we prepare the Bible for each age? How about Schiller or Goethe or Shakespeare?

All of the attempts until now are childish. Things cannot be done that way, they need to be done with some interest and insight. Things need to be rewritten and not simply left out. Certainly, we can use Shakespeare's comedies very well.

A teacher: I have been asked about books that are not in the school library, for instance, Hermann Hesse.

Dr. Steiner: Seventeen or eighteen year olds could read that. In regard to reading *Faust*, you should also consider that if children read such things at too young an age, their taste will be spoiled for later life. A young person who reads *Faust* too early will not understand it. I did not even know it until I was nineteen. Fourteen or fifteen year olds can read *Wallenstein* as well as Shakespeare. *Lear* is perhaps the most disturbing modern drama dealing with fate, and should probably be read later. A feeling should remain and you should not numb it....

There are many things you could give to the children as a first drama. I think you might perhaps begin with one of the dramas of antiquity, for example, *Antigone*. However, you cannot present real drama until at least the age of twelve or thirteen.... During the whole week in Stratford, there were performances of Shakespeare.... It was rather humorous that the most important Frenchman, Voltaire, referred to Shakespeare as a "crazed wild man." I noticed how much better the comedies were performed. *Julius Caesar* was not well done. *The Taming of the Shrew* was done well. There was also *Much Ado about Nothing*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, and *Twelfth Night*.

The children should read *Cid* in French. They should know something of that. They can also read Racine, Corneille, and Molière. Every well-educated person should be able to speak of Corneille and Racine. People should also know Molière. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner* (336-340)

Children's Receptivity to the Lyric, Epic, and Dramatic

An artistic element underlies all teaching and education from the change of teeth till puberty. The artistic element is present also in what we are able to teach in the domain of art itself. At first, with the innate tendency to develop the plastic sense into an inner musical life, children are receptive to what we can bring by way of lyric poetry. Then, with the ninth or tenth year—earlier in one child, later in another—a sense for the epic awakens. We can now meet the child with epic poetry and poetic narrative. Then, at a quite definite moment in each child—approximately around the age of twelve—when sexuality is beginning to approach—we can observe how the child becomes receptive to the dramatic element. A demand awakens for what is dramatic. This is clearly evident if we perceive the child's development. Of course, this does not preclude teachers' having a dramatic element in themselves before this moment comes for the child. Indeed, teachers cannot cultivate eurythmy, nor lyric nor epic poetry, if they lack this dramatic element in their whole being. But it is from the age of about twelve that the child requires and needs the dramatic element in life.

This is the age, too, when we begin to make a transition from a purely artistic education to the first elements of intellectual education. Before this time, no importance should be attached to abstract concepts and intellectuality—in the teaching of nature study and natural science, for instance. Indeed, a person's whole life is marred if abstract concepts have been forced on them at too early an age during childhood. Before this twelfth year, everything that is taught should be based upon art and rhythm. But, with the twelfth year, we begin to introduce a certain element of the intellectual in our school—in the teaching of history, for example, inasmuch as history reveals the working of law; and, likewise, in the teaching of physics. And so it is now that, as an opposite pole to the intellectual element, the child demands dramatic activity.

In the Waldorf school at Stuttgart, where we are trying to work out of the child's nature in this manner, we have seen a group of boys of about thirteen or fourteen come and say, "We have been reading Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, and we would now like to act it, too." Thus, while we were careful to begin to develop intellectuality at the right age, young human nature asked for the element of drama of its own accord. This is what happens if we can bring children the right thing at the right time and in the right way. Naturally, the students said how pleased they were to have performed *Julius Caesar* and that this was of greater interest to them than watching a performance by professional actors on the stage. Nor can we wonder that it was Shakespeare who called forth this inner dramatic need in the boys of the Waldorf school. For we know that there is something in Shakespeare from which even Goethe could learn the essence of the dramatic. What lives in Shakespeare works into the soul and mind of the child, and becomes in the child a strong impelling force. "Education and Drama" in *Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy I* (210-212)

Notes for a Lecture on Education and Drama

The question of "Drama and Education" has been raised in history through Goethe's relationship to Shakespeare.

- 1) The question of the relationship between drama and education will be answered by: What drew Goethe to Shakespeare?
- 2) Goethe mentions three teachers: Linnaeus, Spinoza, and Shakespeare. From the beginning, he stood in opposition to the first two. But he remained faithful to Shakespeare, although Goethe himself, in his dramatic works, comes to a different way of creating.
- 3) What attracted Goethe to Shakespeare was what escapes logical reasoning in Shakespeare. If one wanted to explain a Shakespeare play logically, one would be in the same position as someone wanting to explain dreams logically.
- 4) When is it right to introduce this element into education?

5) The Waldorf school is built on the artistic element. But teachers and educators are in a position different from other artists. They are not working with material that they can permanently shape; they are working with human beings.

6) The method of the Waldorf school is built on anthroposophy. Exact clairvoyance. Exercises in thinking and willing. Through these to recognize: the child—as sense organ and sculptor—and subsequently musician and listener to music.

7) Drama: the old Aristotelian definition: Fear and sympathy in tragedy. A human being facing something higher than the self. Satisfaction and gloating over other people's misfortunes. A human being facing a state of subordination.

8) In school, drama is to be introduced only at the time of puberty. But all teaching must pay attention to the dramatic element. The dramatic element escapes the intellect. Hence, it is employed as a counterbalance to the training of the pupils' intellectual powers.

Lyric poetry strengthens feeling; epic poetry modifies thinking. Consequently, a child's words become inward through lyricism. They become worldly through epic poetry.

Tragedy awakens mixed feelings: fear and sympathy. *Comedy* awakens self-satisfaction and gloating over other people's misfortunes. *Comedy*: The human being approaches the soul within. *Tragedy*: The human being approaches the physical within.

Faust: represents the problem of humanity. Shakespeare's characters are the creations of a theatrical pragmatist, created by someone who was in close and intimate contact with the audience. Goethe studies the problem of humanity in the single human being. Shakespeare embodies a certain kind of dreaming. The impossibility for Shakespeare to find support in the outer arrangements of the stage. Hence, the interest is centered in the characters themselves. In order to fully enjoy Shakespeare, Goethe outwardly contrives conditions bordering on dream conditions. People always try to look for the logic in Shakespeare's plays. However, they are guided not by logic but by the pictorial element. "Education and Drama" in *Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy I* (214-216)

The Role of the Plastic, Poetic and Musical Arts in Education

Particularly after the child enters school, until the ninth or tenth year, one may be in a position to use the artistic element, and this must be more than dallying in fairy tales; rather, whatever subject is being taught, the child's inherent impulse to play, which is such an intrinsic part of its makeup, can be guided into artistic activities. And when children enter the first or second grade, they are perfectly able to make this transition. However clumsy children of six or seven may be when modeling, painting, or finding their way into music and poetry, if teachers know how to permeate their lessons with artistry, even small children, as miniature sculptors or painters, can begin to have the experience that human nature does not end at the fingertips, that is, at the periphery of the skin, but flows out into the world. The adult human being is growing in children whenever they put their being into handling clay, wood, or paints. In these very interactions with the materials, children grow, learning to perceive how closely the human being is interwoven with the fabric of the world. And when working with musical sounds and colors, or handling wood, children grow outward into the world. If children are introduced to these artistic activities properly—however clumsy their first efforts may appear—they will greatly benefit from what is received in this way from the world. When music and poetry are brought to children, they experience the musical and poetical element in their own being. Then it is as if a heavenly gift had been bestowed on young students, enabling them to experience a second being within. Through sounds of music and poetry, it is as if a grace-filled being were sinking down into us through sounds of music and poetry, making us aware even in childhood, that in each of us something lives, which has come from spiritual heights to take hold of our narrow human nature.

If one lives this way with children, with the eye and mind of an artist and teaching them with a sensitive and artistic touch, their responses will reveal qualities that the teacher must endeavor to cultivate,

however clumsy the children's first efforts may be when working with color, sound, or other artistic media. One learns to know children intimately, both their gifts and limitations; watching the artistic element of the sculpture as it flows from little hands, living in empathy with the child, one learns to recognize the strength with which the child directs every bit of attention and forces toward the spirit worlds, and then brings that back into the physical world of the senses. One learns to know the children's entire relationship to a higher spiritual world. And if music and poetry are brought to the children, as a teacher, one gains a glimpse of the latent strength in them, ready to develop later in life.

Having brought the children into close contact with the plastic, poetic, and musical arts, and having brought eurythmic movements into their bodies, having awakened to life through eurythmy what would otherwise be the abstract element of language, we create in the human being an inner harmony between the spirit-winged musical and poetic elements, and the spirit-permeated material elements of modeling and painting. Human consciousness, spiritually illumined, weaves soulfully and artistically into the physical corporeal part of the human being. One learns to teach by awakening spirit and soul in children, in such a way that teaching becomes health-permeating, stimulating growth and strength for all of life. This brings to mind a beautiful and deeply meaningful Greek expression. The ancient Greeks spoke of Phidias's statue of Zeus as "healing magic." Genuine art will not only take hold of soul and spirit, but it will also enhance health and growth. Genuine art has always had healing powers.

Educators and teachers who have the proper love for art and the necessary respect for human nature will always be in a position to implant the artistic element as a magic healing into all their teaching. Then training the intellect, which is a necessary part of schooling, as well as religious teaching and training the heart forces, will be permeated by an element that is inextricably connected to human freedom and human love. If teachers themselves feel a strong bond with the artistic element and appeal to the artistic appreciation in their pupils, and if they create an artistic atmosphere in the classroom, the proper teaching methods and human influence will stream out into all other aspects of education. Then they will not "save" the artistic element for other subjects, but let it flow and permeate all their teaching. The attitude must not be: Here are the main subjects—this one will train the intellect, this one the feelings and the sense of duty, and over there, separate, more or less on a voluntary basis, is the art lesson. On the contrary, art is in its proper place only when all teaching is arranged so that, at the right moment, the students' souls feel a need for the artistic; and art itself must be cultivated so that, in the artistic activities themselves, students feel the need for a rational understanding of, and dutiful concentration on, the things they have come to see as beautiful, as truly free, and thus as human. This is intended to indicate how art can pervade the entire field of education, how it can illumine and warm through the entire pedagogical and sermonizing realm of education. Art and the esthetic sense place knowledge of the human being at the meeting of purely spiritual knowledge on the one side, and external sensory knowledge on the other. It also helps lead us most beautifully into the practical aspects of education. "Education and Art" *Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy II* (59-60)

The Effect of Poetry and Imagination on the Etheric Body

Now what about this etheric body? In the waking state we are ordinarily entirely dependent on our physical body. Materialists are quite right in stating that the thought the human being evolves in the physical world is connected to the brain or nervous system. We do need the physical body for ordinary thinking. But the moment we deviate even a little from this ordinary thinking to a certain freedom of inner life and experience, as in the case, for example, of exercising artistic imagination, the almost imperceptible activity of the etheric body grows more intense. Therefore, if a person is thinking in the ordinary "matter-of-fact" way (we must do so in ordinary life, and I am really not speaking of it in a derogatory sense), then

thinking must occur mainly with the organs of the physical body, while the etheric body is called into play only to a lesser extent.

But if I switch to imaginative creation, let us say to poetic creation, the physical body sinks a little into the background, while human ideation, using the etheric body, grows more mobile and active during this process. The various viewpoints are joined together in a more living way, and the whole inner being acquires a mobility greater than in the exercise of ordinary, matter-of-fact, everyday thinking.

“Why Base Education on Anthroposophy?” in *Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy II* (105-106)



From the Left: Allegra Alessandri Pfeifer, Mary Echlin, Meg Gorman, Patricia Ryan, Mary Emery, Leonore Russell, and Jason Gross

Discussion: Teaching Reading

Our colloquium gave a welcome opportunity to celebrate the publication of *Books for the Journey*, by Pam Fenner *et al*, published by Michaelmas Press. This list of almost 1500 annotated titles was gathered from the curricula and reading lists of sixteen Waldorf high schools and is a welcome resource for librarians, students, parents, and teachers.

Rudolf Steiner said very little about how to teach reading in the upper grades. What follows is a compilation of strategies and concerns expressed during scheduled discussion time.

Most English teachers have degrees in English literature but have never been given direct instruction in how to teach reading as a skill. We all recognize the need for more careful investigation in how students learn and how they read. One participant recommended the book *Smart Moves* by educator and neurological researcher Carla Hannaford (1995). She recognizes that movement is necessary for learning, beginning *in utero*. The warmth of the mother induces movement in the child and as the movement is repeated the myelin sheath grows and memory is strengthened. Once the child is able to walk upright, the hands are free to be used. The speech center in the brain “warms up” as the hands move. In turn, the memory center adjacent to the speech center then “warms up.” Progression occurs from walking to speaking to thinking. Moving strengthens memory and language while flooding the entire neurological system with activity. Waldorf English teachers can use eurythmy and drama, and we need to remember that handwriting is also movement, as is the tracking of the eyes in reading.

There are a variety of reasons to read and each purpose requires somewhat different skills including various speeds for various tasks. The two largest divisions of purpose might be between reading for information and reading for enjoyment and insight. We read many things and don't need to read everything with the same degree of attention that the best literature requires.

We all recognize the need to start with oral language. The good reader “hears” inside. Reading is inner hearing as writing is inner seeing. If students cannot inwardly recreate either sight or sound, they cannot read or write. The inner memory that allows them to do this has been well bolstered in Waldorf lower school through the richness of the language of the teachers and through recitation. In high school, language is now softer and more inward. Part of the high school teacher's task is to put the living language back into the air. To help our students become good readers, we must create a classroom full of speaking, with recitation and reading aloud. When they learn to read well, students will love the experience of sinking into themselves and hearing the voice of the author or the various characters and visualizing characters, setting, and action. As one participant said, “High school education without pictorial thinking is worse than intellectualized grade school teaching.” There is certainly a place for illustration in the reading classroom, but the picture must also be brought into words, otherwise the students are left too dreamy and have only a generalized idea of what they have read.

Most English teachers have a variety of ways to bring language alive in the classroom, in all four grades. Small groups for classroom dramatized reading give everyone a chance to be involved. In Grade 9, for example, with *A Tale of Two Cities* or *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, parts are given out within small groups where the risk for exposure of uncertain reading is lessened. By reading aloud, students gain confidence in their ability to read. Another idea is to have each student choose a short excerpt from the assigned novel to read aloud in class the next day. Each student can practice “finding his or her tongue” at home beforehand.

Everyone was in agreement that the worst way to have students read aloud in the classroom is the “round robin” approach, especially in a predictable pattern. Recommended is *Goodbye Round Robin: 25 Effective Oral Reading Strategies* by Michael F. Opitz.

How do we encourage reading for pleasure? As in all our teaching, our best tool is our own enthusiasm. We begin lighting the fire of young people wanting to read with the spark of our own love of the book, next we read aloud, letting them hear the language, then we hand them the book and let them

continue. One teacher has students keep a 3x5 card in their books as a bookmark on which they write down main characters, themes, or questions. Some teachers give short comprehension tests every day during a reading block to make sure students are understanding what they read.

Another idea is to have the students ask questions while they are reading. To become an active reader is a process, and part of the process toward teaching students how to read for themselves is leading them to formulate questions and anticipate the next step in the plot. In reading, a good reader anticipates what's happening. Some teachers have students prepare questions for the next day's discussion. Others ask students to break into groups and focus on a paragraph from the previous night's reading. The teacher might ask them to find three factual statements about a character, for instance, and then ask interpretive questions. They might be asked to make three observations about the setting, then to pose a question about those observations. This can lead to a question that combines a fact about the character with a fact about the setting. Often this becomes the basis for a discussion, but sometimes the resulting observations are simply shared. Working in small groups help make all the students feel part of the larger discussion. *Peer Talk in the Classroom* by Jeanne Paratore and Rachel McCormach has many ideas for getting students to speak.

To encourage pleasure reading, we might ask who likes to read at home, and give an opportunity to share with others what they are enjoying reading, without any judgment on the part of the teacher about the quality of what they choose. *Better Than Life: The Secrets of Reading* by Quebec author Daniel Pennac, a high school teacher with many years experience, proposes the thesis that teachers and parents cause so much anxiety about reading that students don't want to read. He asks us to truly embrace his "Reader's Bill of Rights" for our students as well as for ourselves: the right not to read, the right to skip pages, the right to not finish a book, the right to re-read, the right to read anything, the right to escapism, the right to read anywhere, the right to browse, the right to read out loud, and the right to not defend your tastes. His book is a highly readable account of how he arrived at a new way of teaching after years of frustration. Now, he brings stacks of his favorite books into class, reads aloud even entire chapters, and passes specific books to individual students.

Many of us remember *Hooked on Books* first introduced by Daniel Fader in 1966. Fader died in June of this year; however, his ideas are still current. *The New Hooked on Books* (1976) is full of ideas to promote reading in the classroom.

Do we split classes for reading, and, if so, on what basis? Some school do, some don't, some by ability, others not. Still others split classes on ability only in Grade 12. Many schools have tutors available for particularly challenged students. Most of us use books on tape for students not yet reading to grade level.

What do we ask students to get from the reading at each grade level? Over the years, Green Meadow school has found that most students enjoy reading and get the mood but standardized tests show that detailed reading comprehension is not as good as it could be. Students have a holistic picture of the piece, but detailed comprehension suffers. As teachers, we can help students focus by asking for details. *The Great Books Foundation* is based on shared enquiry. One suggestion from that program is to pick an important paragraph and have groups come up with the three main points in the paragraph. All group responses are written on the board, and the entire class discusses the choices. Older students can choose the paragraph that will be discussed. Teachers need to know when to stop talking. We often do too much work, and don't make the students work hard enough.

In grade 9, they need to be led to specifics of detail. It helps if we recognize the text as phenomenon and observe it as carefully as we would observe in a science class. One participant proposed that in Grade 9 "conflict is to short story as thesis is to essay." Students can learn how to underline and notate, and how to recognize patterns in the writing (and then use them in their own writing). Teachers need to demand

specifics from the text in discussion and in written response. Teachers can help students observe ever more carefully. In grade 9, avoid interpretation. Work only with what's there. After the story-telling mood of the lower school they need "firming up." We can ask them to draw something from a description in the text or map the story, being exactly true to the words of the book. This will not tax the memory but it will strengthen the picture-forming capacity. Discussion can then be based on the picturing. Quizzing in 9th and 10th grades on the small details helps school students in observing the details as they read. Ninth graders can get the plot in Steinbeck's *The Pearl*, for instance, but need help with metaphors. The teacher gives the students ideas for questions that they should be asking. But, if we ask the questions all the time, they don't learn how to ask their own questions, which they should certainly be doing by high school. Still, they need help early on formulating these.

The "how" questions work best in grade 10: "How does the poet create this effect?" "How does the short story writer bring us to this conclusion?" Comparison of characters or motives or themes also works well in grade 10.

In the 11th grade, we can ask the students to understand the individual character through motivation or relation to setting: "Why does Hamlet do this or that?" In 11th and 12th grades, they can then be asked to write thoughtfully write on a question, supporting what they say with reference to the text.

By the 12th grade, students are forming their own questions and are usually deeply engaged in discussion. Our task then is to give them reasons to keep returning to the text. Even in Grade 12, there are effective activities that can be assigned to help put things together, for example, working in groups to outline a family tree for Tony Morrison's *Song of Solomon*.

In *Evolution's End*, Joseph Chilton Pearce says that adults must model for adolescents (in asking questions, for example) so that they learn how to do it. Also, if we want the students to be imaginative, we as teachers must live in pictures and imaginations and bring these into our teaching.

Vocabulary:

All teachers recognize that **vocabulary building** is an essential part of reading. There seem to be two general approaches. Many teachers assign words from the reading that is being done in class, for example from *And There Was Light* or *A Tale of Two Cities*. Students aren't asked to define the words, but to use each word in a meaningful way. At the end of a novel, one teacher has a vocabulary bee from the full list the class has prepared over a number of lessons. Another teacher recommends that students buy a sturdy book for a "Word Hoard" where they keep all the words, either over the year, or over the full four years.

Other teachers prefer a systematic way to teach vocabulary. Most teachers feel that knowing roots from Latin and Greek are essential. **Vocabulary from Classical Roots** by Nancy and Norma Fifer is a series of workbooks (grades 7 – 11) used by several schools.

Another approach is to give students several roots, prefixes, and suffixes each lesson and have them discover how many words they can make. Once these words are listed on the board, choose ten for a test the next week which will include questions on how to spell the word, how to use it in a sentence, and what the root, prefix, or suffix means. For tests, students can work in groups with a rotating "tester and marker" each week. The series of SAT vocabulary books can also be useful in the senior grades.

Other Types of Reading:

Many of us feel that it is part of our task as English teachers to help students cope with reading things other than literature. When we read for information, usually in non-literary texts, we naturally focus on comprehension and concept. For this purpose, it is necessary to help students to let go of the need to read every word. They need to be taught how to skim and scan. Most exposition is set up in predictable ways for ease in reading. For example: using an article of about 1500 words, ask students to preview for 90

seconds. They read the first and last paragraphs, look at (skim over) headings, photographs, illustrations, diagrams, and quickly read the first sentence of each paragraph. Ask them: What is the article about? They are usually amazed at what they can learn in a minute and a half using this approach. The next step is for them to articulate what questions they have about the article. This is to engage them as readers and the questions may range from, “Why would somebody want travel by air balloon across Africa?” to “How fast does a gazelle run?” Any question is a good question. Ask them to read again, perhaps for 15 minutes and then respond, either as they wish to freely in a brief summary or as they have been asked to, as answers to a series of questions.

Students can be taught that purpose determines how they need to adapt their reading strategy and to be aware of their purpose before they start reading. Students can learn to train the eyes to roam down the page reading and anticipating groups of words; they can practise by moving a hand or finger down the page so that the eye moves more quickly.

— compiled by Anne Greer



Joan Calderera and David Sloan

Steiner On Reading

The Effects of Reading and Listening to Stories

We must now be quite clear about the processes taking place during reading. The activity of reading is initially spiritual and then continues into the physical body. It is especially the activities that are of a cognitive, mental/spiritual nature that considerably tax the delicate parts of the physical organization. You can picture, physiologically, the deeper parts of the brain, the white matter. The white matter is the actual, the more perfectly organized part of the brain. It is organized toward the more functional tasks, whereas the gray matter at the surface - which is especially well developed in humans - provides the brain's nourishment. The gray matter has remained behind, in a very early stage of evolution. In regard to evolution, it is the deeper part of the brain that is more perfect.

If we teach a child to observe well, as in reading, we greatly tax the gray matter, engendering a very delicate metabolic process. And this delicate metabolic process then spreads throughout the organism. It is especially when we believe ourselves to be occupying the children mentally and spiritually that we affect their physical organism most strongly. The observation and comprehension during the reading of and listening to stories engender metabolic processes that tax the children to an inordinately strong degree. We could call what is happening the impression of the spiritual into the physical. A kind of incorporation of what we observe and comprehend during a story is necessary. Something akin to a physical phantom must develop and then impart itself into the whole organism. The organism is filled with delicate salt deposits. Not coarsely, of course. A salt phantom is imparted into the whole organism, and the necessity arises to dissolve it again through the metabolism.

This process takes place when the children read or listen to stories. When we believe ourselves to be occupying the mind and spirit in our lessons, we really evoke metabolic processes. And this must be considered. We cannot do anything else but to see to it that our stories and reading material are faultless in two respects. First, the children must be interested in the subject. Genuine interest is connected with a delicate feeling of pleasure that must always be present. That feeling expresses itself physically in very subtle glandular secretions that absorb the salt deposits caused during reading and listening. We must endeavor never to bore the children. Lack of interest, boredom, leads to all sorts of metabolic problems. This is especially the case with girls. Migraine-like conditions are the result of a one-sided stuffing of material that must be learned without pleasure. The children are then filled with tiny spikes that do not get dissolved. They tend toward developing such spikes. Yes—we must be aware of these problems.

Second, immediately connected with the metabolic problems arising from boredom is the unhappy situation that does not allow us enough time for everything we ought to do. We should really see to it that the currently available readers which can drive you up the wall—are not used. The books I have seen in the classrooms are really quite awful.

We must not forget that we are preparing the children's physical constitutions for the rest of their lives. If we make them read the trivial stuff contained in most readers we affect their delicate organs accordingly. The children will turn into philistines rather than into complete human beings. We must know that the reading material we give our children strongly affects their development. The results are unavoidable in later life.

I really would like to ask you to compile your own anthologies, including the classics and other worthwhile authors, and to refrain from using the available books. This additional effort is necessary. We must do something. It is, after all, the task of the Waldorf school to use methods different from those practiced elsewhere. What matters is that in reading or storytelling, and also in the presentation of the natural sciences, we take great care not to harm the children in these two ways. *Education for Adolescents* (63-64)

Working Hygienically with Reading

When we receive a child into our school, we are expected to teach and train the youngster. We introduce all kinds of activities, such as writing, reading, and arithmetic, but really we are assaulting the child's nature. Suppose that we are to give reading lessons. If taught in the traditional way, they are certainly one-sided, for we make no appeal to the child's whole being. Essentially, we are actually cultivating a malformation, even a predisposition toward illness. And, when teaching writing, we are cultivating a tendency toward illness in another direction. In teaching young children, we are making assaults on them all of the time, even if this is not always evident because the illness lies hidden and dormant. Nevertheless, we have to make continual attacks upon the children. At our stage of civilization there is no other way. But we must find ways and means of making amends for those continual assaults on our children's health. We must be clear that arithmetic represents a malformation, writing a second malformation, and reading a third malformation, not to speak of history or geography! There is no end to it and it leads us into a real quandary. To balance out those malformations, we must constantly provide what will make good the damage; we must harmonize what has been disturbed in the child. It is most important to be aware of the fact that, on one hand, we must teach children various subjects but that, on the other, we must ensure that, when we do so, we are not hurting them. The right method in education therefore asks: How do I heal the child from the attacks which I continually inflict? Awareness of this must be present in every right form of education.

How often have I emphasized that anthroposophical spiritual science addresses itself to the whole human being! In anthroposophy, the whole human being enters into a relationship to what a specific branch of spiritual science can contribute. If teachers are introduced to both healthy and sick development of children in a living way, if they can harmonize those two aspects of child development, then their own feeling life will at once be motivated. They will face each individual child with his or her specific gifts as a whole human being. Even if teachers teach writing in an artistic way, they can still be guiding their children in a one-sided way that comes very close to malformation. But, at the same time, they also stand there as whole human beings, who have a rapport with their children's whole beings and, in this capacity, as whole human beings, they themselves can be the counter-force to such one-sidedness.

If, as a teacher who has a living relationship with everything that has to do with the human being, I *must* lead the child in a one-sided way when I teach reading or writing, then I must go about it in such a way that, precisely through leading the child into one-sidedness, I at the same time bring about an inner harmonization of the child's being. The teacher who always has to work toward the wholeness of all things must stand there as a whole person, whatever subject is taught. There are two things that must always be present in education. On one hand, the goal of each particular subject and, on the other, the 1,001 imponderables which work intimately between one human being and another. If teachers are steeped in knowledge of the human being and the world—and if their knowledge begins to live in them when they face their children—we have a situation similar to that of the plant. As the entire formative force shoots into a single organ in a plant, only to withdraw again in the right way and shoot into another organ, so the teacher holds this totality, this unifying force, in his or her own being, while guiding the child from stage to stage. Spiritual science can stimulate this way of guiding the child, for spiritual science is related to all branches of outer, natural science in the same way as the soul is related to the human body. And, as, according to the old saying, a healthy soul is to be found in a healthy body, so, too, in and through a healthy science of nature there should be found a healthy science of the spirit, a healthy anthroposophy. “Knowledge of Health and Illness” in *Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy I* (76-77, 86-87)

Reading as a Means of Developing the Intellect

We should always remember that, during that period of the child's life, we should always consider the child's developing soul forces. During this time, we make many mistakes by giving more attention to

the school subjects demanded by life and by the state than we do to the developing human being. Common, everyday things, such as reading and writing, lack the inner basis of, say, geometry and arithmetic. The fact that we have the language we have is not fundamentally connected with anything external or generic. The existence of written letters doesn't have much to do with relationships in the world, whereas the existence of a triangle is based on the fact of its three sides, and that the sum of its angles is 180 degrees. All conventions, such as reading and writing, are primarily useful for developing the intellect and, in particular, reasoning. For now, it would be too much to fully explain that statement in a way acceptable to a genuine psychologist, but those who consider life fully will certainly see the truth of that statement. By comparison, everything that corresponds to general relationships in the world or appeals to human memory—such as history or geography—is more connected, oddly enough, with the feeling forces. It forms feeling. Everything we teach young children about art forms the will. We should teach individual subjects with an eye on the developing human being and always remember that we form thinking with one thing, feeling with another, and willing with yet another thing. The important thing is the developing human being, not any particular collection of knowledge.

When we use these principles, children learn something seldom learned these days. They learn many things today, such as geography, arithmetic, drawing, and so on, but I don't want to speak about them. Children should learn as I just described, but there is not enough being taught about *how* to learn. Life itself is the greatest teacher. We leave school properly only if we leave with the capacity to learn from life for the rest of our years. But this is impossible if, in school, we are merely filled with facts. It becomes possible only when we use school to develop in the human soul the forces of thinking, feeling, and willing. That's how we learn to learn from life. "The Tasks of Schools" in *Education as a Force for Social Change* (199-200)

Reading and Writing as Conventions

My dear friends, first we must make the distinction that the lectures on education in general differ from those in this course, which will deal more with specific teaching methods. I would also like to say a few words as an introduction, since the methods we will use differ from the prevalent teaching methods, which are based on premises very different from ours. Our own methods will certainly not differ from the other methods applied so far merely out of obstinacy, for the sake of being new or different. They will be different because we must begin to see the special tasks of our age and how we must teach so that future humanity can fulfill the developmental impulses prescribed by the universal cosmic order.

We must realize above all that by employing our method we will, in a certain way, harmonize the higher human being (the human spirit and soul) with the physical body (our lower being). The subjects you teach will not be treated as they have been up to now. In a way, you must use them to develop the soul and physical forces of the individual correctly. The important thing for you is not to transmit information as such but to utilize knowledge to develop human capacities. First and foremost, you must begin to distinguish between the conventional subject matter of tradition (though this may not be stated clearly and concisely) and knowledge based on the recognition of universal human nature.

When you teach children reading and writing today, simply consider the place of reading and writing in culture as a whole. We read, but the art of reading evolved through the development of culture. The shapes of our letters and the connections among their shapes are purely a matter of convention. By teaching children reading as it exists today, we teach them something that means absolutely nothing to them as human beings, apart from its context within a particular cultural period. We must be aware that nothing we practice in terms of material culture has any direct significance whatsoever for supraphysical humankind or for the supraphysical world. The belief advocated in certain quarters (especially among spiritualists) is that spirits use human script to bring the suprasensory into the physical world; in reality, this

is incorrect. Human writing is derived from human activity and convention on the physical plane. Spirits are not the least interested in complying with such physical conventions. Although it is true that spirits communicate with us, they do so only through the medium of a person who fulfills a kind of translation function; spirits do not themselves directly transform what lives in them into a form that can be written and read. The reading and writing you teach children is based on convention; it came about within the realm of physical life itself.

Teaching children arithmetic is a very different matter. You get the sense that the most important thing in arithmetic is not the shapes of the numbers but the reality living in them. This living reality has much more meaning for the spiritual world than what lives in reading and writing. Finally, if we begin to teach children various activities that we may call artistic, we enter an area that has a definite, eternal meaning—something that reaches up into the activity of the human spirit and soul. In teaching children reading and writing, we work in the most exclusively physical domain; in arithmetic our teaching becomes less physical; and in music or drawing, or in related fields, we really teach the children's soul and spirit.

In a rationally conducted lesson we can combine these three impulses of the supraphysical in artistic activity, the partially supraphysical in arithmetic, and the completely physical in reading and writing. In this way, we harmonize the human being.

So we begin to teach writing by using art and by drawing forms; we use the forms of consonants when we want to reach back far enough that children will be moved by the differences in the forms. It is not enough to tell the children merely through speaking, which is exactly why people are the way they are today. By removing the shapes of letters from the current convention and showing their source, we move the whole being of the child, who thus becomes very different than would otherwise be the case if we appeal only to the intellect. We must not allow ourselves to think only in abstractions. Instead, we must teach art in drawing and so on, teach soul substance in arithmetic, and teach reading and use art to teach the conventional in writing. In other words, we must permeate all of our teaching with an element of art.

From the very beginning we will have to greatly emphasize our encouragement of children's artistic capacities. The artistic element especially affects the human will in a powerful way. So we arrive at what is related to the whole human being, whereas everything related to convention remains in the realm of the head. So we proceed in a way that enables every child to draw and paint. We start with the simplest level, with drawing and painting. We also begin by cultivating music so that children quickly become accustomed to handling a musical instrument; this also generates an artistic feeling in children. From this, children also learn to sense in their whole being what would otherwise be mere convention.

Our task is to find teaching methods that continually engage the whole human being. We would not succeed in this endeavor if we failed to concentrate on developing the human sense of art. By developing this sense we lend strength to the future inclination of children to become interested in the world in ways that are appropriate to each individual's total being. The fundamental flaw so far has been the way people inhabit the world with only the head, and the rest of their being merely trails along behind. Consequently, those other human aspects are now guided by animal urges that indulge only untamed emotions, which we are currently experiencing in what we see spreading so strangely from the eastern part of Europe. This phenomenon arose because people have not been nurtured in their wholeness. It is not simply a matter of cultivating the artistic aspect; our teaching itself, in every subject, must be drawn from the artistic realm. Every method must be permeated by the artistic element. Education must become a true art. The subject of the lesson itself should not become more important than the underlying basis. Drawing thus provides first the written forms of letters and then their printed forms. Based on drawing, we build up to reading. As you will see, this is how we strike a chord with which the souls of children happily vibrate, because they are then no longer interested in the external aspects but see, for example, how a breathed sound is expressed in reading and writing.

Consequently, we will have to rearrange much of how we teach. You will find that what we aim at in reading and writing today cannot, of course, be established exclusively as indicated here; all we can do is awaken the necessary forces as a basis. If we were to base our teaching only on the process of drawing evolving toward reading and writing (modern life being what it is), we would have to keep the children in school until they were twenty. The normal period of education would not be enough. All we can do now is accomplish our method in *principle* while continuing to educate the children and retaining the artistic element. *Practical Advice to Teachers* (1-3)

Strengthening Reading Comprehension

Experimental psychologists have recently been particularly interested in what they call the process of comprehension, for instance, the process of comprehension in reading, in the reading of a given passage. In order to determine the nature of the process of comprehension, they have tried to work with people whom they designate “experimental subjects.” Put briefly, the very lengthy experiments take the following course. An experimental subject, a child or an older person, is presented with a written passage to read, and investigations are then made into what the child, for instance, should most profitably do first in order to achieve the most rapid comprehension. It is noted that the most expedient method is first to introduce the person to the subject matter of the passage.

A further series of experiments shows that the experimental subject then carries out a process of “passive assimilation.” After the content has been introduced, it is then passively assimilated. Out of this passive assimilation of a written passage is supposed to arise the faculty of “anticipatory learning,” the ability to reproduce what was first introduced and then passively assimilated in a free spiritual activity. And the fourth act of this drama is then the recapitulation of all the points that are still uncertain, in other words, that have not entered fully into the person’s life of soul and spirit. If you let the experimental subject carry out in proper sequence first the process of becoming acquainted with the content of the passage, then passive assimilation, then anticipatory learning, and finally, recapitulation of whatever is not fully understood, you will come to the conclusion that this is the most expedient method of assimilating, reading, and retaining. Do not misunderstand me—I am putting this idea forward because I *must*, in view of the fact that people talk at cross-purposes so much these days; it is possible to want to express an identical point with diametrically opposed words.

Accordingly, the experimental psychologists will maintain that by such painstaking methods we can learn what we ought to be doing in education. But those who recognize more deeply the life of the human being as a whole know that you cannot arrive at a real educational activity by these means any more than you can put together a live beetle after you have dissected it. This is just not possible. It is equally impossible when you anatomize the human being’s soul activity. Of course, it is interesting, and in other connections, can also be most fruitful to study the anatomy of human soul activity. But it does not make teachers. This experimental psychology will not, in fact, lead to a renewal of education, which can arise only out of an inner understanding of the human being. I had to say this lest you should misunderstand a statement I now want to make, a statement that will very much irritate those who are attached to the present-day climate of opinion. The statement is naturally one-sided in the way I shall put it, and its one-sidedness must, of course, be counterbalanced. What do the experimental psychologists discover when they have anatomized, or should we say tortured (for the procedure is not pleasant), the soul of their experimental subject? They have discovered what is, in their opinion, an extraordinarily significant result that is written boldly again and again in educational handbooks as a final conclusion. Put in clear language, the result, roughly, is that a passage to be read and learned is more easily retained if the content is understood than if it is not understood. To use the scientific idiom, it has been determined by research that it is expedient first to discover the meaning of a passage, for then the passage is easier to learn. Now I must make

my heretical statement. If the conclusion of these experiments is correct, then I could have known it anyway. I should like to know what person equipped with ordinary common sense would not already realize that a passage is easier to remember if you have understood the sense of it than if you have not. There is no doubt that results of experimental psychology bring to light the most obvious truths. The truisms you find in the textbooks of experimental psychology are on occasion such that no one who has not been trained in the pursuit of science to accept the fascinating along with the absolutely tedious could possibly be persuaded to bother with them. People do, in fact, become inured to this kind of thinking even by the way they are drilled in their early school days, for the phenomenon is present even then, though it is less pronounced by far than in the universities.

This heretical statement, namely, that you have to know the meaning of something that you are supposed to remember, is aimed particularly at teachers. But there is another point to consider: What is assimilated as meaning works only on the faculty of observation, the faculty of cognizing through thought; by laying emphasis on the meaning, we educate a person one-sidedly merely to observe the world, to know it through thought. If we were to teach only in accordance with that statement, the result would be nothing but weak-willed individuals. Therefore the statement is correct in a way and yet not entirely correct. To be absolutely correct, we would have to say that if you want to do the best you can for an individual's faculty of cognizing through thought, you would have to analyze the meaning of everything that the person is to take in and retain.

It is indeed a fact that by first one-sidedly analyzing the meaning of everything we can go a long way in the education of the human being's observation of the world. But we would get nowhere in educating the will, for we cannot force the will to emerge by throwing a strong light on the meaning of anything. The will wants to sleep; it does not want to be awakened fully by what I might call the perpetual unrestrained laying bare of meaning. It is simply a necessity of life that penetrates beyond the simple truth about the revelation of meaning and gives rise to the fact that we must also do things with the children that do not call for the elucidation of meaning. Then we shall educate their will.

The unseemly practice of one-sidedly using the revelation of meaning has run riot; this can be seen particularly in movements like the theosophical movement. You know how much I have protested over the years against a certain bad habit in theosophical circles. I have even had to see *Hamlet*, a pure work of art, explained in theosophical jargon. It is said that this represents *manas*, something else the I, and another the astral body. One character is one thing, another something else. Explanations of this kind have been particularly favored. I have fulminated against this sort of practice because it is a sin against human life to interpret symbolically a work that is meant to be taken in directly as pure art. A meaning is thus read into things in an unseemly fashion that raises them up as objects of mere observation to a position they should not occupy.

All this stems from the fact that the theosophical movement is a decadent movement. It is the ultimate remnant of a declining culture, not something that has, in its whole attitude, anything to do with anthroposophy. Anthroposophy aims at the opposite—an ascending movement, the beginning of an ascent. This is radically different. That is why in the theosophical realm so much comes to the fore that is fundamentally a manifestation of extreme decadence. That there are people who can actually perpetrate the symbolical interpretation of the different characters in *Hamlet* is the consequence of the atrocious education we have had and of the way we have striven to be educated only in the realm of meaning.

Human life calls for more than education in the realm of meaning; it calls for education in what the will experiences in its sleeping condition—rhythm, beat, melody, harmony of colors, repetition, any kind of activity that does not call for a grasp of meaning. If you let the children repeat sentences that they are nowhere near ready to understand because they are too young, if you make them learn these sentences by heart, you are not working on the faculty of understanding, since you cannot explain the meaning that will

emerge only later on. In this way, you are working on the children's will, and that is what you should do, indeed, you must do. On the one hand, you must try to bring to the children whatever is preeminently artistic—music, drawing, modeling, and so on. But, on the other hand, you must introduce the children to things that have an abstract meaning. You must introduce them in such a way that even though the children cannot understand the meaning as yet, they will be able to do so later on, when they are more mature, because they have taken them in through repetition and can remember them. If you have worked in this way, you have worked on the children's will. You have also worked on the children's feeling life, and that is something you should not forget. Just as feeling lies between willing and thinking—and this is revealed from the point of view of both the soul and the spirit—so do the educational measures for the feeling life lie between those for the faculty of cognizing through thought and those for the will and its development. For thinking and knowing we must certainly undertake measures that involve the revelation of meaning: reading, writing, and so on. For willed activity we must cultivate everything that does not involve just the interpretation of meaning but needs to be directly grasped by the whole human being—everything artistic. What lies between these two will work mainly on the development of the feeling life, of the heart forces. These heart forces are quite strongly affected if the children are given the opportunity of first learning something by rote without understanding it and without any explanations of the meaning though, of course, there is a meaning. When they have matured through other processes, they will remember what have learned and will then understand what they took in earlier. This subtle process must be very much taken into account in teaching if we want to bring up human beings who have an inward life of feeling. For feeling establishes itself in life in a peculiar manner. People ought to observe what goes on in this realm, but they do not do so effectively. *Practical Advice to Teachers* (76-82)

Brahma

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same,
The vanished gods to me appear,
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Writing Portfolio: Creating a New Responsibility for the Word

by

Linda Sawers

Rudolf Steiner tells us about the critical effect of language on young children.

He urges us all as teachers and parents to understand the relationship between the use of beautifully crafted language and speech during the day and the child's ability to receive the presence of the spiritual world during sleep at night. The deprivation of communication between the child and the world of the spirit results in difficulties in learning and a feeling for life. Steiner's insights give us a clue to understand why our high school students struggle with the world of the "Word" in present times. New strategies for reading, speaking, and writing must be developed for a generation that has been largely separated from the solace and encouragement of the spiritual world through the abasement of language. Still, adolescents long for the truth which can be revealed through language. Writing regenerates and invigorates the use of the word in our students, and we can use various approaches to awaken the power of the word in them. As they explore their own expressive and distinctive styles, a new voice and a new appreciation for the word develops. Creating a portfolio of writing over a period of time, including multiple revisions, brings to consciousness the living quality of each word and why each word must be chosen carefully.

An exploration of writing in our own voice needs to be coupled with an ability to look objectively at what has happened to language, particularly vocabulary, in the last century. We need to understand that the undermining of our own ability to think and create in words is the result of the general reduction of the average vocabulary. A hundred years ago students had a vocabulary approximately twice the size of students today. Our tendency to use the same general words to describe many things results in limited choices when we have something important and precise to say. C.S. Lewis points to this "dyslogistic abyss" in his fine essay "The Death of Words." He observes that the death of words begins with the adjectival parasites "real" and "true." We can observe adverbial parasites as well. Once these "parasites" are applied to what was once a perfectly precise word, we know the meaning of the word has lost power and is dying. (You may note the word "precise" is on its way to the burial ground!) Statements such as "He is a real friend" or "He is a true friend" diminishes the meaning of "friend" and the adjectives "real" and "true." Other words gone to the abyss are "unique," "significant," and "tremendous." These words have lost the power to stand alone. Lewis tells all of us who love language and under-

stand its truth and beauty, to be aware of stripping words of their power. Today, writers and commentators commonly use these “parasites” Lewis warns us to avoid. As a society, we have diminished our feeling of responsibility for what we say, and we seem to be losing the battle Lewis wants us to win.

Responsibility for language begins with a regard for the word itself. In the oral tradition people felt a deep meaning in each word and the silence that lived between them. Once a word was spoken it could not be retrieved. It lived. Caution and care showed in the delivery of stories and invocations in the knowledge that the Word is Creation. Once the oral tradition vanished, the responsibility for language shifted to the literate tradition. The idea of the living spoken word as a powerful force began to diminish, and the ensoulment of language took on a new form. The spirit lived on in the great poetry captured on the page directly from the inspiration given to the poet or the writer. While this inspiration still happens today, the ensoulment of the word is mostly forgotten consciously now, yet students long for language endowed with meaning. They need to hear it from their teachers, through the great writing of the past and the present, and they need to hear it in the language of the teachers themselves.

The development of the literate tradition and the lessening of the oral tradition brought less responsibility for the spoken word and a diminished ability to listen. Generating a consciousness for language in the students, helping them to listen to language spoken by others and the language they use themselves, challenging them to think about what they hear and discern what is fine and meaningful, will make them better writers. Using their own penchant for lower levels of language, a discussion of the differences between profanity and a swear word or curse can be enlivening and entertaining. When we ask if they actually picture what they say, we see a new awareness appear in their eyes, as they imagine the words they just used acted out in real life! This exercise becomes a touchstone for the better meaning of “are you listening to what you are saying?”

Already suspicious of the words spoken by politicians and others in the media spotlight, students enjoy finding the weaknesses and the strengths manifested in the society around them. Although they often resort to weak and unattractive language themselves, they appreciate muscular and well-formed language that is full of intelligent clarity, direct honesty, good humor and concern for the audience. The most respected teachers have the capacity to speak with these qualities – qualities the students value more than the knowledge of the teacher. The students develop these qualities in their writing portfolios as well.

In this time of language abasement, we have the mission to keep language alive, helping our students to grasp the essential and to consciously decide how they will write. In the oral tradition there was no question about the responsibility to the audience, the receivers of the spoken word. We must bring this responsibility for written language to our students as well. We need to train our students to write for an audience and not just for themselves. For writing to become public we must consider the needs of the

audience. Remembering the audience and the purpose of the writing allows us to think about different approaches to the piece and leads to the realization that revision is the key to success. Movement in the process leads to meaning. Movement is not an easy achievement for any writer, because writing itself makes us vulnerable, especially if the piece is meant for an audience. A progressive and successful writing process includes various strategies.

The first strategy asks why we write at all: What is new? What can be done that has never been done before? Ultimately, we know there is a story waiting to be told, an interesting biography to be revealed, an image to be conveyed. Further, writing connects us with others, takes us beyond ourselves and allows us to witness ourselves and others. This kind of conversation helps us overcome the one thing we all have in common as writers: the empty sheet of paper that makes us feel vulnerable. We are all afraid of judgment, and writing, especially, makes us feel insecure. Writing reveals a part of us to others, and we are not always comfortable with this side effect of writing. Still, once we move through this discussion, we can approach writing with a sense of common experience, including the company of some of the great writers.

We cannot separate reading and writing with a wide divide. Writing is generally easier for students who love to read, but even they are not spared writer's anxiety. Almost all students remember books or stories they loved at some point. Looking at these works with new eyes helps awaken interest in style—the syntax of the words on the page, and the deliberate choice of words used to evoke the images for the reader. A reading history developed by each student leads to an exploration of how the writers engaged their audience and can inspire the students to learn how to do the same.

The three main components in any written piece include image, form, and content. Once students realize these three elements need to be part of everything they write, they know a college essay without an opening picture to provide context for the reader is a dead essay. Just as every piece of writing needs an image, it needs content beyond description to deepen the meaning of the piece. Still, none of these elegant and profound ideas, observations, or insights would work without structure to make the whole stand up. No piece of writing comes from the writer simultaneously or immediately. Improvements, revisions and corrections are always needed to strengthen the work. These days the three “R’s” stand for “Revision, Revision, Revision.”

In the 1980s emphasizing revision rather less than the product began in many schools. This good beginning responded to the “instant gratification syndrome” still prevalent today. Insisting on several drafts pushes the student beyond the first draft attachment of “this is what I want to say”. Students who find satisfaction in the first draft often write for themselves and not for the reader, and they need to be challenged to find a voice for a greater audience. Practical solutions to writing and rewriting can be enlivening, as well as challenging.

The writing experience begins with a brainstorming exercise or a free writing exercise in journal form. The chosen topic is taken through at least three drafts, the last draft is the final and most polished draft. Between each draft, writing conferences are scheduled during class time. In these sessions, students pair up and read their drafts to each other. Good critical skills develop in the process, as the students not only listen as they read their own work aloud, they listen and respond to the work of others as well. Reading aloud reveals errors and awkward phrasing very quickly. In the writing conference, the writer should be encouraged to ask pointed questions to the listener: "Is my point clear?" "Is the image strong?" The listener should answer these questions and go beyond them as well. The listener may say: "I think this section is too long. You lost me in that paragraph." or "I liked that image. Try to keep it when you revise." or "What is your main idea?"

Naturally, the conferencing requires an atmosphere of support and the knowledge that everyone will participate in the process. If students are shy about reading their own work aloud, another student can read it aloud. Even the shy students enjoy this part of the process, and they all take the important step of genuine interest in the work and voice of the others. All pieces of writing, including the initial brainstorming, are kept in the folder for the final presentation and the teacher's evaluation.

Teachers can decide the weights of the individual components of the portfolio. Generally, 50% for revision and 50% for form and mechanics reflects the emphasis on editing and revising. These weights reward taking risks, changing perspectives, increasing the power of the theme or the image, and choosing new vocabulary and phrasing. The portfolio piece can then be transformed into a stronger piece with balance in all dimensions, including form and mechanics. The first challenge is to break down the "instant gratification syndrome" in order to build up the excitement of creating writing that is crafted and polished through finding the right image, expression and structure for the theme.

Developing writing in a disciplined and progressive way brings the students to an awareness of the importance of language in a new way. They take responsibility for their work with a new pride and a new interest in the work of their peers. They have increased their abilities to look with new intelligence and knowledge at the work of some of their favorite authors. They experience building the muscles of language they actually crave, despite their tendencies toward casual language that is at best empty of meaning and at worst dehumanizing. Most importantly, the elevation of their own writing skills and styles is clear to them as individuals and as a collective body, and they want to continue to do the work they have started.

Resources:

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Discussion: Teaching Writing

As English teachers, most of us have the urge to write and love doing it. We have to begin by understanding that our students have not yet been schooled in writing and that we must teach it as a craft, as art teachers teach the craft of drawing, or music teachers the craft of singing. Some of us remember unpleasant experiences learning another art or even avoid attempting to learn another art. It is useful for us to remember such experiences to gain sympathy with how our students might feel when faced with learning the art of writing. However, all humans, unless impaired in some way, use language, so there must be a latent desire and ability in everyone. We are speaking beings, but how does that translate to being writers. We must never forget that at the heart of language is a mystery and for some of our students waking up to language is a difficult thing

Teaching the craft of writing encompasses several genres in high school. The first major division is between creative writing and exposition. Creative writing itself divides into poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and drama. Exposition includes letters, instructions, and essays.

We all have students write in a variety of genres, primarily essays, research papers, fiction, drama, and poetry. All these activities enhance observation, thinking, and writing. The more we work with all genres, the better the skills become. Each genre has a specific history, and we all agree that one of the things that Waldorf schools are able to do consistently over four grades is to give the students an idea of this history. By the end of high school, they should know something of the history of poetry, novels and short stories, playwriting and screenwriting, essays, biographies, and scientific and technical writing. Some teachers are also able to include something of the history of communication.

We are fortunate in Waldorf schools that many of our students write all the time in many of their classes. They learn to write more effectively by practicing, sharing, and revising.

Generally speaking, ninth graders are happy to do whatever they are asked to do. Being active in their will, they learn by doing. English teachers need to provide plenty of opportunity for them to write.

In Grade 9, we should establish the ground rules for the process of writing that will carry them through all of high school:

- Every work is a work in process.
- Everybody will read what he or she has written.
- Listeners must be specific about what they like or do not like and why.
- The writer must listen to the response and decide if she or he wants to incorporate the changes.

In-class writing is critical. Writing ceases to be a large imponderable mystery and becomes instead an exercise. Group writing alleviates fear.

Rather than asking students to “write a poem”, give them exercises in the crafting of poetry. Many exercises can be found in Paul Matthews’ *Sing Me The Creation*. Here is an off-shoot of one used with great success at Green Meadow:

The teacher intones two lines composed entirely of nonsense words:

“Thungth gwallig ummi go
schnuba blab blab frigglig”

The words are then translated by the meaning of the sound:

“Thump colleague you me go
Snooze but plop plop frilly”

Now the students individually have a go at making up two lines of nonsense words and translating them. Then, as a homework assignment, they are asked to take the translated words or just some of them and form an artistic form from it in poetic lines. A variation might be to have one student make up the words and another, or several others, “translate” them. (for a fuller explanation and some “warm ups” to arrive at nonsense words, see Matthews, pages 105-107)

We might choose a theme such as the snake and show them different types of poetry: D.H. Lawrence, and Emily Dickinson, for example. Then ask students to write for 10 minutes about a snake.

Perhaps they could be asked to write a first line of a major piece of work. There is no pressure then of completion and such an exercise arouses a new interest in opening lines of any text.

The beginning of grade nine is the time to teach revision. Students in Grade 9 want to do well in high school and are generally eager to improve grades. They appreciate us giving them the skills to do so. Many students do not yet recognize that revision is part of the process of writing an essay. It might come as something of a shock that rather than an hour’s work, it will probably take three days to write an essay with revisions. While there is some variance about when teachers ask students to take notes, some during the presentation of new material, some waiting for review, everyone agrees that students need to take notes in ninth and tenth grade to build muscle and foundation for essential skills.

In the main lessons, we need to show them how to write an essay that might be included in their main lesson books. For example, the teacher presents a lesson taking care that there is a clear central idea or thesis. In the history of drama block, such a thesis might be that drama moved from the heavens to the individual in mask to the individual removing the mask. Students are asked to review the previous day’s lesson orally, perhaps in small groups. The next step might be to have all students write that “stream of progression” from the notes they have taken on what has been said. This is in preparation for an essay in their main lesson books. They become used to the idea that writing something for their books isn’t a one-step process, but takes preparation. If there is time, an interim step could be having students read their essays aloud to one or two other students for peer-review. Another writing possibility for the drama block, often called Tragedy and Comedy, is to ask students to keep a journal of tragic and comic events in their lives, the death of a pet, for example, or being invited to a party.

In a block on the novel, reader response questions might be inviting. For example, after they have read the first chapter of *Shane*, have them write the last chapter. Or, after they have read first chapter of *Tale of Two Cities* write the last chapter. Or, ask them to write the letter that Dr. Manette wrote, trying to imitate the style and staying true to the rest of the novel. With *Tom Sawyer*, have them write what will happen when the boys go to the graveyard, including dialogues between the characters.

English teachers can seek and expect help from their Humanities’ partners, the History teachers. In the Revolutions block, for instance, or in the Struggle for Canada, they can write a biography, choosing from a list of possibilities. They can be encouraged to go to libraries outside the school for research. These biographies form part of the Main Lesson book.

In English blocks as well as on-going lessons, the warm up can be writing, instead of speech, or following speech. For example, the teacher can quickly distribute art postcards and ask students to write a description or a poem. Then they can read them right away. They’re not so invested in such a short piece of writing and they get used to reading their work aloud. Another idea is to keep a box of “poetry props” as prompts.

We can use warm-ups as preparation before introducing a piece of writing. We might have students work outdoors for 15 minutes, cleaning up and so on. Then they can be asked to write silently for 15 minutes. They could begin by writing down what question(s) came to them and begin an answer. Then introduce Robert Frost’s “Going to the Woods” and tell something of his biography. The warm-up work connects them to the poet.

Part of our task is certainly to see ahead from Grade 9 to Grade 12 so that by graduation our students have written a major research paper. This requires that we break up the task into skills and that we give plenty of opportunity for practice.

In Grade 9, we might expect two short research papers, giving instruction on note-taking and bibliography. One school assigns “Countries Americans do not Know”, and provides a strict outline: describe where the country is, describe the terrain and weather, describe the economic activity, describe the culture, draw a map, and conclude if you would choose to move there.

San Francisco helps Grade 9’s focus on what is essential in research. In a research project, they must compile their information in order of essentials. Outlining is taught. Students go to the public library and learn how to use the internet search process appropriately and effectively. They take notes on notecards. They are restricted to articles rather than books because books are too long. They are provided with a specific list of cites from the library databases.

Another possibility for Grade 9 is to read *White Fang* and then write about a little-known creature. Again, a provided outline is useful: life cycle, habitat, interaction with human beings, and concluding with what is our responsibility toward the creature.

Even main lesson tests can provide opportunity for practicing essay skills. In 9th grade, they can be asked to make five statements about a piece of writing and give supporting evidence for each statement. Students can even proofread and grade each other’s papers.

One of the parts that students find most difficult in writing essays is coming to an understanding of a thesis statement. One teacher has her Grade 9 students read the weekly book reviews in the Sunday newspaper. For each review, she has them provide a thesis statement.

In Grade 9, teachers can give the thesis statement and have students write the body of the essay. In later grades, it will help if we as teachers remember the possibility of metamorphosis in the thesis statement. The question for the student changes from “How do I find the thesis statement?” to “How can I come to a thesis statement that has a possibility for growth and change?” It is also vital to remember that the writer needs to be an active participant. This moves the thesis statement from an intellectual soul activity to a consciousness soul activity.

We know the need to train the observation skills to develop thinking. Observation can also be used to pay close attention to the text of a piece of writing. Many teachers use models of good writing as springboards for student writing. Recommendations include: “Inside an Omnibus” by Lief Hunt (Describe people getting on and off a bus or subway); “Shooting An Elephant” by George Orwell; “The Fire Next Time” by James Baldwin (Particularly to illustrate paragraph development); “Sweetness and Light” by Jonathan Swift in the preface to “The Battle of the Books.”

A collection of springboard pieces for writing would make a useful anthology for Waldorf English teachers. *Edge of Awareness* is a collection that contains a number of fine essays.

Through such essays, students can perceive and relatively quickly become quite good at form. Where they need help is with supporting statements.

Of course, there are many springboards to writing. One teacher performs magic, or puts art in front of the students and has them describe what they see.

Students also find it useful to have exercises on how to begin a piece of writing. They can be given short exercises with a variety of possibilities; for example, have them start with the image and move to an anecdote. Or the teacher can provide the image and the students can provide the anecdote. Or the teacher can provide three pieces of information and ask the students to bring them together in a meaningful way.

One key to essay writing is having students choose something that is meaningful for them. Kimberton uses the *I-Search* in Grade 11 (a full description follows) and this leads naturally over into the Grade 12 senior project and college application essay. San Francisco has a Junior Project. This isn’t as personal as the *I-Search*, but often it is obvious that students choose topics that have special meaning for them. A research

paper is an abstract concept. The “I-search” or a similar shorter assignment where the student feels personally involved is an uncovering and objectifying of the “I” and “non-I”. This happens when we write anything, but this particular project makes the process clear. Ken Macrorie’s books *I Search*, and *Writing to be Read* are highly recommended :

What is the sequence by which a student takes another’s words and puts them into his or her own voice? Some of our students seem to carry from middle school the thought that the Encyclopedia or the internet is the word of God. There is an obvious need to be working with middle school teachers to encourage activities to help students write in their own words. In task-oriented Grade 9, we can ask them to write their notes on notecards in their own words. This ensures that they understand the information they have gathered.

By Grade 10, we may be able to give them a brief account of how dictionaries, thesauri, encyclopedias and even the net came to be. By the end of Grade 10, students need to be aware that every source of information is directed by the bias of a human being.

Peer sharing helps in individual voice development because students no longer feel that they are writing for the teacher. Beginning with simple sharing of “warm up” pieces in Grade 9, we can make sure that each student has opportunity to be comfortable reading his or her own work aloud. This is most effectively achieved in small groups. One teacher found the “Vibe” award a great tool for having students write for and listen to each other. In her classes students share poetry daily, and the students make the award. They point out what words and phrases “vibrated” with them. Interestingly, the students seem to make sure that everyone earns the award.

We must seek ways to help them own their own writing: if the teacher always gives the assignments and always corrects the assignments, they often end up in the trash. One teacher sets aside one day out of the week for free writing. The students write and choose something from their writing for peer review and polishing.

By Grades 11 and 12, students can begin to evaluate their own work particularly if they are given a form geared to the assignment. Asking them how successful they think they were helps students stretch themselves.

Writing poetry is approached differently from writing essays, although there is always cross-over between different types of writing as well as with reading. In poetry, we are more aware that we need to help students relax and focus. In grades 9, 10, and 11, we can steep them in a variety of poetry and have them attempt the styles of a selection of poets. By Grade 12, they can write in the style of either Whitman or Dickinson, but by then the challenge is to combine styles and evolve into one’s own distinct style.

Of course, we need to keep in mind the developmental stage. In Grade 9, we want the focus to be outside themselves and closely observant. One good poetry or prose exercise is to send students into nature to look for three things that are on the surface the same, three stones or acorns or blades of grass. Then have them pick one of the three and clearly describe how it is different from the other two.

Writing is also revelatory. A technique that one teacher uses with *Faust* and *Parzival* if students are having difficulty understanding the text is to stop reading and write for ten minutes simply and freely about any impressions that they have. Then they have a handle on it; they talk about it, and it can lead to an essay. Such an intuitive, non-linear approach is liberating, but it can lead to linear writing.

By 12th grade, students should be quite comfortable writing out of themselves for peers as well as teachers and even strangers, such as college registrars. One school requires a personal essay from each Grade 12 student, to be revised through workshopping. By 12th grade, the students can be great givers of feedback. They have learned, through the years, the value of revision. Some of these essays come out of the Transcendental block, particularly the assignment asking them to take a line from Emerson or Whitman and apply it to their own lives. Finally, they read their revised essays to each other. Occasionally, the teacher will read an essay for a student. All the essays are bound together and often given as a book to the class sponsors.

— compiled by Anne Greer

The I-Search Project: Grade 11 Research

Grade 11 is the year that young people hold the question, “Who am I?” Two related questions are “How have I become the person I am?” and “Who am I becoming?”

Jason Gross and Mary Echlin at Kimberton Waldorf School have adapted Kenneth Macrorie’s *I-Search* (Macrorie, K: *The I-Search Paper*, Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers. 1988) into a highly popular and pedagogically useful central part of the Grade 11 curriculum. A research paper is an abstract concept to many students. The “I-search” is an uncovering and objectifying of the “I” and “non-I”. This happens when we write anything, but this particular project makes the process clear. As young people explore some compelling area of their own lives in relation to the outside world, they learn the techniques of planning, research (hard copy and media based), interviewing, drafting, editing (including peer editing), and presenting original material with annotated bibliography.

Students begin by posing questions or presenting intriguing statements about themselves: “What does it mean that I like fire?” “Will I inherit the family history of Alzheimer’s?” “I just learned that I have Scottish ancestors.” “I have red hair.” “I’ve moved many times in my life.” “My mother died when I was 11.” In this way, they arrive at the topic. It is important to remember that students can also choose something less personal and still have a worthwhile experience while learning the skills involved in a research paper.

The next step is shaping the topic into a thesis. This requires carrying out two interviews: one with a family member and one with an expert such as a psychologist, a fire fighter, a history teacher, someone who has experienced particular events or who is a re-enactor of events, such as someone at Jamestown. Narratives on the two interviews are written and teacher graded. The family interviews are both warm and objective. Often, the teacher needs to help students devise questions for the interviews.

Students then move on to research, using at least three resources, including one internet resource. The research is summarized in one or two pages without citation. Before they begin research, though, they are taught MLA documentation and how to use note cards.

The final five to eight page paper conforms to MLA style and goes through a peer edit and self-evaluation before submission. The final paper includes an annotated bibliography.

Throughout the process, students are very motivated, because it is a real question for each of them. They do run into dead ends, but that is also a positive challenge. They willingly revise and improve their writing, but it is not merely an exercise. Such a process can also be a life-changing experience.

An overview of a class set of papers gives some indication of the range and depth of topics and the personal significance that each holds: drug abuse, the murder of grandparents, the role of an extraordinary grandmother, home birth, moving from a large city to a small town half a continent away, a grandfather with Alzheimer’s, a father’s paralysis, the role of parenting, the genetic background of being a red-head, being the oldest of four sons, having a mother with cancer, the influence of being breast-fed. Each paper leads from a centrally important question through a series of two interviews, into serious research, and, finally, to a new understanding of the central question.

Each finished essay hints at the progression from a shadowy, half formed riddle of identity through articulation, understanding, and clarity, a progression from intense emotional subjectivity to objectivity.

The project extends over most of a year with several track classes given to its introduction, implementation, and final presentation.

Not only is this an excellent assignment in itself, but it prepares students well for the rigors of the Grade 12 project and college entrance essays.

What follows are copies of handouts given to students to aid them in their I-Search, beginning with four poems for discussion.

I Am

I am: yet what I am none cares or knows
My friends forsake me like a memory lost,
I am the self-consumer of my woes.
They rise and vanish in oblivion's host,
Like shadows in love's frenzied, stifled throes—
And yet I am, and live—like vapours tossed

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dreams,
Where there is neither sense of life or joys,
But the vast shipwreck of my life's esteem
Even the dearest, that I love the best,
Are strange—nay, rather stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes, where man hath never trod,
A place where woman never smiled or wept—
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,
Untroubling, and untroubled where I lie,
The grass below— above the vaulted sky.

— John Clare

I Am a Parcel of Vain Strivings Tied

I am a parcel of vain strivings tied
By a chance bond together,
Dangling this way and that, their links
Were made so loose and wide,
Methinks,
For milder weather.

A bunch of violets without their roots,
And sorrel intermixed,
Encircled by a wisp of straw
Once coiled about their shoots,
The law
By which I'm fixed.

A nosegay which Time clutched from out
Those fair Elysian fields,
With weeds and broken stems, in haste,
Doth make the rabble rout
That waste
The day he yields.

And here I bloom for a short hour unseen,
Drinking my juices up,
With no root in the land
To keep my branches green,
But stand
In a bare cup.

— Henry David Thoreau

I, Being Born a Woman and Distressed

I, being born a woman and distressed
By all the needs and notions of my kind,
Am urged by your propinquity to find
Your person fair, and feel a certain zest
To bear your body's weight upon my breast:

So subtly is the fume of life designed,
To clarify the pulse and cloud the mind,
And leave me once again undone, possessed.
Think not for this, however, the poor treason
Of my stout blood against my staggering brain,
I shall remember you with love, or season
My scorn with pity,—let me make it plain:
I find this frenzy insufficient reason
For conversation when we meet again.

— Edna St. Vincent Millay

Mirror

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see I swallow immediately
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
I am not cruel, only truthful—
The eye of a little god, four-cornered.
Most of the time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is a part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me,
Searching my reaches for what she really is.
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully.
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.
I am important to her. She comes and goes.
Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman
Rises toward her day after day, like a terrible fish.

— Sylvia Plath

I-Search Projects

The purpose of research is to discover information that will help you make connections in a quest for meaning. Whichever of the broad topics you choose to pursue, it is important that you make the line of inquiry yours by following your personal interests as nearly as you can. The topics, which focus on your heritage as an important element of your emerging identity, should be considered as starting places in this endeavour. Here are some ideas about where to begin.

1. What was the world like when you were born? Develop a proposition that demonstrates that you have become who you are, in some degree at least, either because of the “forces” at work in the world at that time or in spite of those forces.
2. Find out about an author who explores the events that helped shape the world into which you were born. Read some other works or interviews with the author or someone who can be considered an expert on the author’s works. Examine the works in an effort to determine influences on the author as well as the influences the author has had on others.
3. Find out about an author who writes from and about a cultural heritage similar to yours. Read some of this author’s works and interview him or her or an expert on his or her works. Develop a proposition that ties this author’s work to the “truth” of your experiences or that of your family.
4. Find out about what your country was like when your family “became” part of it. How did that milieu shape the history and character of your family and you as a member of it?
5. Find a document that has influenced the history of your family. Develop a proposition that demonstrates that effect.
6. Find out about some person in your family’s past whose life has had a profound effect on you or your current family.

I-Search Basic Requirements and Dates

Basic Requirements

1. 5-8 pages, typewritten
2. Conforms to MLA style
3. Two interviews: one with member of your family, one with an expert in the field of your inquiry.
4. “Library research,” involving at least THREE printed sources (and a reading of an author’s works in the cases of numbers 2) and 3). Encyclopedic or internet sources may comprise only one of these three or two of five.
5. Well-developed proposition

Due Dates

Submit Interview Plan and have made initial contact

First Interview and Narrative of that interview

Submit Research Summary for Second Interview

Second Interview and Narrative

Proposed Bibliography and Status Report

Annotated Bibliography and First Rough Draft

Final Draft

Self-Evaluations

MLA FORMAT FOR I-SEARCH PAPER

1. Title Page

There is no separate title page in the MLA format. Put the title and course information on the first page of the paper:

Jagger1

Michael Jagger
Mr. Gross
English 3
1/10/97

The Stones are the Greatest Band of All Time

Start of my paper...

2. Annotated Bibliography

A bibliography comes at the end of your paper. It is arranged alphabetically by the first word of your citation. After the **citation**, give the **annotation** - your statement about what information you will use from the source.

Jagger 27

Annotated Bibliography

Breindel, Nathan. *The Beatles are Great*. Providence: Jenkes Center Press, 1996.

In this book, Breindel makes a feeble attempt to assert that the Beatles are cooler than the Stones. This argument has no support and totally ignores the fact that all the Beatles's music is derivative while the Stones are totally original. (The citation is followed by the annotation - your thoughts about what you took from the source).

3. Information you need in Bibliographies in the order you place them:

- a) Author's name
- b) Title of the book
- c) Name of the editor, translator, or compiler
- d) Number(s) of the volume(s) used
- e) Name of the series
- f) Place of publication, name of the publisher, date of publication
- g) Page numbers (for articles in periodicals or chapters of books)
- h) Annotation

4. Common examples:

Article in a Reference Book: Encyclopaedias

Name of article in quotation marks (note that the period comes before the quotation mark). Name of the encyclopedia, underlined, and the edition.

"Rock and Roll Forever." *Encyclopaedia Americana*. 1989 ed.

Periodicals

- a) Author's name
- b) Title of the article
- c) Name of the periodical
- d) Series number or name
- e) Volume number (for a scholarly journal)
- f) Date of publication
- g) Page numbers

Brier, Jacob. "Beatles Do Not Fly These Days." *Rolling Stone*. 12 June 1996: 15-26. (Abbreviate all months except May, June and July.)

An Article from a newspaper

Seadale, Nicholas. "The Rolling Stones Gather no Moss." *New York Times* 20 Mar. 1987, natl. ed.: A8.

Material from a Computer Service

SIRS sample citation:

Franco, Lauren. "Music to Run to." *Futurist* Sept.-Oct. 1990: 20-27. *SIRS Researcher CD-ROM*. Ed. Eleanor Goldstein. Boca Raton, FL: Social Issues Resources Ser., 1994. Earth Science 1991 file. Art. 25.

Sample citation for **magazines**:

Califano, Sophie. "The Stones are Knees up on the Beatles." *Newsweek* 13 July 1994: 34-36. EBSCO: Academic Abstracts in Full Text. CD-ROM. Ebsco. 1995.

Sample citation for **New York Times**:

Andrews, Judith. "Biologists Answer the DNA Question." *New York Times* 13 Apr. 1993, late ed.: Cl. *New York Times Ondisc*. CR-ROM. UMI-Proquest. Oct. 1993.

Sample citation **Groliers on CD-ROM**:

Huang, Heather. "The Need to Eat Snacks During Class." *The New Groliers Multimedia Encyclopedia*. 1994.ed. CD-ROM. Danbury, CT: Grolier, Inc., 1993

Interviews

In citing a personally conducted interview, give the name of the interviewee, the kind of interview (Personal interview. Telephone interview), and the date.

Richards, Keith. Personal interview. 27 July 1996.

I-SEARCH PEER EDIT SHEET

Author

Editor

Date

1. Write in the proposition. Make sure it has two parts: A) a part about the self and B) a part about something outside of the self.

2. Does it simply tell the story? Does it use facts and stories gathered from research to support the proposition? Does it represent an original idea the author is proposing about the self in relation to something else? Comment:

3. Is the research cited in the paper? Is it substantially quoted from? Do the quotes start a paragraph or are they introduced? Do they tell the story or show the validity of the proposition? Does the author explain how the quotes are supportive with a minimum of three sentences? Are paraphrases documented? Comment:

4. Are there transitions between paragraphs? Does each paragraph focus on one idea? Do all the paragraphs focus on the proposition and discuss one complex idea? Do the different sections of the I- search and research components connect smoothly to each other? Comment:

5. Comment on the essay as a whole. Did it make sense to you? Where you interested and drawn in? Did it make an original proposition and support it? Was there too much plot summary? Was there enough analysis? Were the quotes helpful or did they just tell the story or confuse the order of ideas? Did it meet all the requirements for an intro, main body and conclusion? What could the author improve on?

6. Does the paper comply with the MLA format? Are there in text notes with author and page number? Are the sources cited in the bibliography? Is the bibliography in the right form? Comment:

Steiner on Writing and Spelling

Suggested Themes for Compositions

Dr. Steiner: We should try to make the children curious about their work. If you ask the children such questions, that makes them curious about what they can find out for themselves. That is something that will excite them. I would do it in that way. The children cannot develop a feeling of responsibility before you teach them the meaning and consequence of the concept of responsibility.

Give them such themes for their essays as “The Steam Engine: Proof of Human Strength” and then follow it immediately with “The Steam Engine: Proof of Human Weakness.” Give them two such themes, one right after the other, and I think you will certainly arouse their interest. You can organize your instruction so that you arouse the children’s interest. They will become excited about it, but you must keep the excitement down to an extent. They must also be able to attentively follow the instruction without such excitement. People understand the idea of responsibility only with very great difficulty and so late that you should actually begin to speak about it with children. You can give them some examples and teach them about people with and without a feeling of responsibility. The children have understood that the squid is a weeping person and the mouse an attentive eye. We need to develop the things that lie within our pedagogy so that the children receive really strong pictures, and those are engraved in them. We need to give the children pictures that become deeply engraved within them. To do that, however, we need time. We need time until the children understand them. Once they have that, they will yearn for pictures. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner* (335-336)

The ninth-grade teacher asks about essay themes. He has had them write essays about Faust and the character of Faust.

Dr. Steiner: That is really too much for them. You should remember that even Kuno Fischer did not write well about that. I would center the themes more on observations of life, like the ones I mentioned earlier. For the eighth grade, we could also do such things as “What Is Beauty in Nature?” and then follow it with “What Is Beauty in the Soul?” You should use more themes like that, where the children have to concentrate on developing the theme.

A teacher: Should we first discuss the theme?

Dr. Steiner: You should discuss the theme in the normal context of the lesson. You will need to have discussed a number of things. While you were discussing Jean Paul, there were a number of good theme possibilities. You set the themes too high.

A teacher: What would you give the ninth grade as an essay about the friendship between Schiller and Goethe?

Dr. Steiner: I would describe how it looked when Goethe went from Weimar to Tiefurt. Then I would have them describe “A Walk with Goethe” as concretely as possible. These are things they can do. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner* (338-341)

A teacher: In the foreign language class, we read the Forum scene from *Julius Caesar*.

Dr. Steiner: Could you also do that in writing as a kind of essay? You need to do something like that, also. In German, too, so that they have a picture, one that they can really articulate. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner* (195-196)

Spelling as Convention

Some time ago preparations were made to create something culturally, very much like introducing the infamous “official German gravy” in the material realm. You know that it has often been stressed that there should be a standardized sauce or gravy for all inns that serve only Germans and do not have to deal with a select foreign clientele. Well, spelling was supposed to be standardized just as they would this “official German gravy.” People have the strangest attitude toward the matter of standardization, as real examples show. There is in German literature an instance of a most beautiful, tender relationship between Novalis and a certain lady. This relationship is so beautiful because when the lady in question passed away, Novalis continued to live with her quite consciously in the spiritual world, following her through death in an inner meditative activity of soul. He bore witness to this. The relationship between Novalis and his beloved is one of the most entrancing and intimate episodes in the history of German literature. A certain German scholar wrote a highly intelligent (and, seen from its own point of view, also interesting), strictly philological treatise on the relationship between Novalis and the lady. This delicate, tender relationship is “put in its proper light” through the proof that the lady died before she had learned to spell properly. She made spelling mistakes in her letters. In short, we are given, with the strictest scientific accuracy, of course, a thoroughly banal picture of this person who had such a special relationship with Novalis. The scientific method is so good that any dissertation made in accordance with it would earn the highest marks. I only want to remind you that people seem to have forgotten that Goethe was never able to spell properly, that all through his life he made spelling mistakes, particularly when he was young. Despite this, he rose to Goethean greatness. And this is not to mention the people he knew and thought highly of—their letters, nowadays sometimes published in facsimile, would earn nothing but red corrections from the hand of a schoolmaster. They would get very poor marks....

The proper attitude of mind matters most in such circumstances. Obviously we cannot let spelling run riot, but we can at least recognize the opposite points of view. If people, once they had learned to write, were allowed to put down what they heard from others just as they heard it (or what came from within them), their spelling would be extremely varied, exceedingly individualized. This would make communication more difficult, but it would be extraordinarily interesting. On the other hand, our task is to develop not only our own individuality in community with others but also our social impulses and feelings. A great deal of what could be revealed as our own individuality is expunged in what we have to develop for the sake of living together with others. We should feel that this is so; we should be taught to feel that we do such a thing purely for social reasons. Therefore when you begin to orient your writing lessons toward spelling, your starting point must be a quite specific set of feelings. You will again and again have to point out to the children, as I have already said earlier, that they should respect and esteem grown-ups, that they are themselves growing up into a world already formed and waiting to receive them, and that therefore they must take notice of what is already there. This is the point of view from which children must be introduced to subjects like correct spelling. Spelling lessons must run parallel with developing feelings of respect and esteem for what their predecessors have established. Spelling must not be taught as an abstraction, as though it existed as an absolute on the basis of some divine... law. You must develop in the children the feeling that the grown-ups whom we are to respect spell like this, and we ought to follow their example. Variability in spelling will result, but it will not be excessive; the growing child will make a certain adaptation to the world of the grown-ups. And we must count on this adaptation. It is not our task to create in children the belief that this is right and that is wrong. The only belief we should arouse, thus building on living authority, is that this is the way grown-ups do it.

This is what I meant when I said we must find the transition from the child’s first stage of life, up to the change of teeth, to the second stage, up to puberty, by making the transition from the principle of imitation to that of authority. These ideas must be introduced everywhere in practice, not by drilling the children to respect authority but by acting in a way that will help foster their feeling for authority—for instance, by teaching spelling in the way I have just described. *Practical Advice to Teachers* (71-74)

Understanding Spelling Difficulties

This brings me to yet another question which was given to me yesterday and which can be dealt with in this context. The question was: Why is it that some children have such tremendous difficulties in learning how to spell correctly?

Well, anyone who studies Goethe's spelling or that of other great men, may gain a peculiar impression, for many a great personality appears anything but sure of correct spelling. Obviously this must not tempt us to think that any bad speller in our class may be a budding genius and that therefore we must not interfere with such a child. Naturally, this would be an entirely wrong reaction.... The teacher, above all, should endeavor to speak not only distinctly, but also with a rhythmical and harmonious flow . . . it is very necessary for him to cultivate the habit of living himself into each syllable and pronouncing it clearly. In lessons he should ask his pupils to repeat his sentences accurately, giving full value to each syllable, and with the right feeling for flow and intonation. Such practice of clear and well-formed speaking will certainly lead to an improvement in spelling. This is another example showing that what needs to be lifted up into the sphere of consciousness from the unconscious regions below, from the regions of sleep and dream for the unconscious realm is that of sleep should not be artificially imposed upon the child by extraneous methods.

On what does the faculty of listening depend? Psychology does not usually formulate this question. You see, at night we go to sleep and in the morning we wake up again, and from our own experience we know that during sleep our memory is blotted out. What happens to us during the hours of sleep is not known to ordinary science. But when you listen, the inner condition of your soul is no different from what it is while you are asleep. On the other hand, when you are listening, there is a constant interplay between your being outside yourself and within yourself. It is of great importance to be aware of this undulating activity of the soul. When I listen I am given up to the external world. But there are always the other moments, too, in which I wake up. Without these, hearing alone would be of no use. While listening, a continuous process is going on of waking up and going to sleep even in the so-called waking state. A perpetual interplay takes place between waking up and falling asleep so that during sleep our memory is blotted out. This means that, ultimately, our entire intercourse with the world rests on this faculty of being able to enter into an outer situation or, if I may express it somewhat paradoxically, 'to fall asleep into what comes from outside.' After all, what else is listening to a conversation than to 'sleep oneself' into the content of the conversation? On the other hand, the listener's comprehension of what is said is a kind of waking up. This is how it is. But it also means that we should not attempt to appeal to the conscious region of the child when, in fact, the unconscious sphere, the sphere of sleeping or dreaming is the relevant one.

This is the reason why we should refrain from teaching spelling by using artificial means. Rather should we speak every word distinctly, then ask the child to repeat it before he writes it down. In this way we will help him towards better spelling. We can take it for granted that where there is bad spelling, there is bad listening. Therefore the main task is to improve the pupil's faculty of listening which is seated in the unconscious sphere, rather than our laboring with what belongs to the opposite sphere of consciousness. [Spelling is easier in German than in English. In German, spelling is almost entirely phonetic]

Renewal of Education, Kolisko Archives (145-147)

The Development of Spelling after Puberty

If you ask how to awaken the memory for correct spelling, my answer would be that you need to observe the differences in human strengths during the three periods of human life, that is, until the change of teeth, until puberty, and then after puberty until the age of twenty. You need to develop a sense for observing these three periods of life and the differences in the specific forces of life that develop. Then you will notice that people who, until the age of fifteen, have absolutely no sense of correct spelling or correct grammar will develop it if they are treated in the way I just mentioned. If you draw their attention to the rhythm of the language, they will develop this sense out of the depths of their souls after the age of fifteen.

This is why it would be totally inappropriate to keep children who have well-developed talents from progressing through the grades simply because they do not demonstrate any particular talent for grammar. If you look at what Goethe wrote as a young boy and then see that when he was older, he stood in a very exclusive group with regard to grammar, you will think about him very differently than the way people usually think about a boy or girl who cannot spell properly at the age of thirteen or so. Instead of wringing our hands about how poorly such children spell and continually asking what we should do to teach them to spell, it would be much better to think about what capacities the children actually have, seek out those special talents, and then find a way to teach the children what they need to learn from those talents. *The Renewal of Education* (35-36)



Two paths diverged in the New Hampshire woods and Meg Gorman took the one less travelled.

Is there a Phenomenological Approach to Grammar?

by

Anne Greer

Languages

There are no handles upon a language
Whereby men take hold of it
And mark it with signs for its remembrance.
It is a river, this language
Once in a thousand years
Breaking a new course
Changing its way to the ocean.
It is mountain effluvia
Moving to valleys
And from nation to nation
Crossing borders and mixing.
Languages die like rivers.
Words wrapped round your tongue today
And broken to shape of thought
Between your lips and teeth speaking
Now and today
Shall be faded hieroglyphics
Ten thousand years from now.
Sing – and singing – remember
Your song dies and changes
And is not here tomorrow
Any more than the wind
Blowing ten thousand years ago.

— Carl Sandburg

Let us consider the following:

1. He is a slow runner.
2. He ran slow.
3. She is a fast runner.
4. She ran fast.

In traditional grammar lessons, teachers make a distinction between adjectival and adverbial forms. Students are told that many adjectives become adverbs by adding “-ly”. Most of us as English teachers would add an “-ly” to “slow” in the second sentence above. Why then would we not add an “-ly” to the adjective “fast” when it becomes an adverb in the fourth sentence? We often get around such questions, when students dare to ask, by saying that “fast” is “an exception to the rule.” “She is a fast runner” becomes “She runs quickly.” After hearing responses such as this a few times, even the most inquisitive students stop asking

questions. There are rules and there are exceptions to the rules, but there seems no way of predicting what the exceptions are. So they stop questioning and learn what they are asked to learn, or don't, as the case may be. If they didn't stop asking, and if we ourselves dared ask, we might be led to the most important question of all: Where do the rules come from?

None of us, after all, we're English teachers, would utter a sentence like, "I ain't got nobody", although we might sing it in a moment of abandon. Yet, at the same time, we extol Shakespeare and Chaucer as great writers. Chaucer could say of the Friar, "*There was no man nowher so vertuous*"; and Shakespeare could allow Viola to say of her heart, "*Nor never none/ Shall mistress of it be, save I alone.*" But, what brave student would dare to point out our inconsistency?

Some of us would find nothing wrong with "Did you see the man that I saw?" Others would immediately change "that" to "whom". But not many of us bother to understand the several hundred years' history of how "Did you see the man whom I saw?" became preferred over "Did you see the man that I saw?" and how "Did you see the man that I saw?" is at the present time once again preferred.

I'd like you to do the following exercise, then compare answers with your neighbor.

How many usage errors do you find in the following sentences?

1. The philosopher was born in the second century A.D.
2. Did you put the ad in the newspaper?
3. After having eaten his dinner, he left.
4. All of the trees were bare.
5. They bought bread and also butter.
6. Every place I go, I see her face.
7. We are not as young as we used to be.
8. The bus arrived at about noon.
9. Park your auto in the lot.
10. My dog was awfully sick yesterday.

When I set you a task as English teachers to "correct" these sentences, some found an error in every sentence, and some found errors in none. Some of you are vehement in dismissing several of these sentences as "wrong" while many of you are less sure. If a roomful of English teachers disagree on what is current usage, how can we presume to teach students "correct usage"? The question now becomes a variation of "Where do the rules come from?" We need now to ask: "Who determines what's correct?" As Myers points out: "... some of our most cherished beliefs about language are inaccurate to the point of superstition" (Myers 2) and "...there is no such thing in nature as that intrinsically pure, good, or correct English that we would like so much to teach; and there never has been," (Myers 13)

The exercise, by the way, is from Hodges' *Harbrace College Handbook*, a text printed in 1941. Here are the answers given then:

1. absurd: "in the second century A.D." means "in the second century in the year of our lord"
2. colloquial: "ad" should be "advertisement"
3. redundant: "after" should be cut
4. colloquial: should be "all the trees"
5. weak: cut "also"
6. vulgar: "every place" should be "everywhere"

7. careless: the first “as” should be “so”
8. redundant: cut “at”
9. not proper informal writing: “auto” should be “automobile”
10. slang: “awfully”

Now, if you focus with honesty on your response when I asked you to “correct” the sentences, when I put you in the same situation that we put our students in regularly, it is clear that even among us, a group of English teachers, there was an air of general anxiety in the room.

There is anxiety about grammar, too, in our students, because we have focused on error-based revision and called it grammar. We know, in Waldorf education especially, that anxiety inhibits learning. How can we move our way of approach from the anxiety of “mistake detection” to the excitement of open inquiry about our language, how it serves us, and its changing nature?

Let us now consider these selected quotes:

1. “A long overdue revolution is at present taking place in the study of English grammar – a revolution as sweeping in its consequences as the Darwinian revolution in biology.... To anyone at all interested in language, it is challenging; to those concerned with the teaching of English (including parents), it presents the necessity of radically revising both the substance and the methods of their teaching....

Two vital questions are raised by this revolution in grammar. The first is ‘What is the value of this new system?’ In the minds of many who ask it, the implication of this question is, ‘We have been getting along all these years with traditional grammar, so it can’t be very bad. Why should we go through the painful process of unlearning and relearning grammar just because linguistic scientists have concocted some new theories?’

The first answer to this question is the bravest and most honest. It is that the superseding of vague and sloppy thinking by clear and precise thinking is an exciting experience in and for itself.” Francis, W. Nelson. “Revolution in Grammar,” *Exposition and the English Language*. Ed. James Sanderson and Walter Gordon. New York: Appleton/Century/Crofts, 1963

2. “... nearly all grammar books list as undesirable English the use of the split infinitive, the dangling participle or gerund, the possessive case of the noun with inanimate objects, the objective case of the noun with the gerund, the use of whose as a neuter relative pronoun, and many others; yet all of these uses may be found in the authors who form the very backbone of English literature and who are reputable” and the “best writers” in every sense of the word. If the standard-makers defy the standards, to whom shall we turn for authority? ...

The way out of this perplexity is to shift the search for standards away from “authorities” and traditional rules to the language itself as it is spoken and written today. Just as the chemist draws his deductions from the results of laboratory experiments, the biologist from his observations of forms of life, and the astronomer from his telescope, so must students of language draw their deductions from an observation of the facts of language. In establishing the laws of language, our personal desires, preferences, and prejudices must give way to the scientific determination and interpretation of the facts of language. What language we use ourselves may take any form we desire, but the making of rules and the teaching of rules must rest upon objective facts.” Pooley, Robert C. “The Definition and Determination of ‘Correct’ English,” *Exposition and the English Language*. Ed. James Sanderson and Walter Gordon. New York: Appleton/Century/Crofts, 1963

3. “Grammar is notoriously the most widely and deeply hated of all studies, at least in English speaking countries. Several reasons, each containing at least some truth, have been advanced to explain this fact. One is that the kind of grammar that has been traditionally taught in our schools is based on Latin, and fits English so loosely that considerable parts of it can be understood only as an act of faith, with distinct elements of mysticism. Another is that the subject is often taught not as a body of information but as a system of morals, toward which we often have a split reaction. While one side of our minds tells us that we ought to obey the rules because they must somehow be right, the other tells us that if we do we’ll lose our friends and feel like prigs in the process....

It is ... rather early to assume that traditional grammar is completely dead, or even certainly doomed. Some of its assumptions have definitely been exploded, and if it is to be taught in the future by anybody but entrenched reactionaries it must be considerably reformed. But it is still a possible approach, and it has the enormous advantage of being at least vaguely familiar to millions of people who regard it as sacred. We must therefore consider the possibility that it will swallow its invaders and, thus fortified, continue its course.... Our recent advances in knowledge of the language are so important that they must eventually be used in schools. It is as indecent to teach demonstrably erroneous theories in grammar as it would be in medicine.” Myers, L.M. *The Roots of Modern English*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1966

4. “‘ My own research has convinced me that red-inking errors in students’ papers does no good and causes a great many students to hate and fear writing more than anything else they do in school. I gave a long series of tests covering 580 of the most common and persistent errors to students in grades 9-12 in many schools and the average rate of improvement in ability to detect these errors turned out to be 2 percent per year. The dropout rate is more than enough to count for this rate of improvement if the teachers had not even been there. When I consider how many hours of my life I have wasted in trying to root out these errors by a method that clearly did not work, I want to kick myself. Any rat that persisted in pressing the wrong lever 10,000 times would be regarded as stupid. I must have gone on pressing it at least 20,000 times without visible effect.’

[According to overwhelming evidence accrued through research] there seems to be little value in marking students’ papers with ‘corrections,’ little value in teaching the conventions of mechanics apart from actual writing, and even less value in teaching grammar in order to instil these conventions.” Weaver, Constance. *Teaching Grammar in Context*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1996

Take note of the date of the first three of these quotes. In the 1960’s a revolution was occurring in the study of the English language that most of us have never taken into consideration in our teaching of grammar. As a kindergarten parent new to Waldorf in the early 1970’s, I remember my somewhat contemptuous surprise when I discovered main lesson books on Grammar at an open house. Surely, I thought, this school isn’t so far behind the times as to be teaching grammar. Most of us as English teachers in the latter half of the 20th century were trained in and focused almost entirely on the study of literature. It was a rare few who were taught how to teach either writing or grammar. Those of us asked to teach these subjects quickly fell back to reliance on the ways we ourselves had been taught. Thus, most of us greeted with delight the studies from the 60’s claiming that the teaching of grammar had no effect at all on the students’ ability to write. For the most part, the teaching of grammar was abandoned with relief.

As a Waldorf teacher, I have come to consider that the teaching of grammar is essential, but I am also convinced that beyond Grade 5, the teaching of grammar is, at present and in the main, drudge work and does more harm than good.

As most of you here know, I have been engaged in a study of English Grammar over the past several years. It began as an AWSNA research project, although it has not been completed, and has become something of a passion. As part of that project, I sent out a questionnaire and many of you who are participants

in this Colloquium responded. These two responses are typical of the frustration that many respondents expressed:

“ I wish students liked grammar more. I have always found it interesting – like a puzzle to solve and understand. I also loved diagramming sentences. I have read Steiner’s ‘warning’ about this – about killing off the sentence – the Word – I still use diagramming in my mind when I’m trying to understand a difficult sentence – or compose one. But ... I am not a writer so maybe that’s nothing to brag about. I have tried to identify what is not correct in their writing and help them understand why it is wrong. This is obviously not the same as teaching grammar in such a way that it enhances and leads to the development of their own writing. I try to have ‘the other English teacher’ be a writer with a strong grammar background although I do teach – and love teaching – the grammar tracks....”

“I once thought learning about grammar would help students with their writing. Over the years I have decided there is very little transfer: students who already write well can understand and appreciate grammar. Those who are poor writers, who make grammatical mistakes, tend to have the most difficulty understanding it and applying it to their writing. I am willing to consider this my fault, and would be open to learning to teach it in a way that would be helpful for the struggling students if someone has figured out how to do it.”

The questions my research poses are these:

1. What currently is happening in North American Waldorf High Schools in the teaching or non-teaching of English grammar?
2. What currently is happening in North American public high schools in the teaching or non-teaching of English grammar?
3. What did Steiner say about teaching the grammar of the native tongue?
4. Considering Steiner’s basic tenet that teaching anything should lead from the phenomenon to the concept, is there a way to teach grammar that is more in keeping with this principle?

When I asked in my AWSNA questionnaire why you were teaching grammar, almost everyone who responded knew that Steiner had seen the teaching of grammar as necessary for the development of the Ego. Steiner spoke many times about the need to teach Grammar, and also the How. Steiner actually knew how to teach grammar and indicates that it needs to be studied in the same way as all phenomena, from observation, through curiosity and interest, and finally to formulation of patterns. *The Developing Child*, by Willi Apli has an excellent essay on teaching younger children based on Steiner’s indications. I believe that we can continue the excitement of the approach of the beginnings of the teaching of grammar into our high school teaching. One of my favourite quotes from Steiner is this:

“Sometimes I simply cannot understand how one can keep the children quiet if one talks to them about adverbs and subjunctives, for really this is something that cannot be of any interest to a normal child. At best it can happen that the children behave themselves out of love for the teacher... Above all I find that the main trouble is that teachers do not know their own grammar... The way in which grammatical terms are used is quite abominable. (Were I) a pupil I would raise a riot if I did not know why such things were being thrown at my head. The point is that not enough time is being taken by the teachers to acquire a reasonable amount of grammatical knowledge. Only then does it stimulate the pupils. The grammar lessons are horrible, if I may speak plainly. All the stuff which you find printed in books ought to be burnt. Something living must enter....” (*Discussions with Teachers*, Feb. 6, 1923)

In understanding Steiner's position, I have found the *The Genius of Language* particularly useful. The most recent edition has an afterward by Adam Makkai, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Makkai says: "A linguistic approach to language is one of the tools that we can offer to students that will help them become effective in this 'Age of Consciousness Soul.' Georg Kuhlewind has suggested that the three prototypical consciousness soul disciplines are linguistics, psychology, and epistemology." (note 7; Adam Makkai, "Afterword," 1995 edition to *The Genius of Language*)

Steiner was very interested in the history of all aspects of language and felt that students could be, too. Every word has a history. The terminology that we use when we speak of the parts of speech has a history. Each piece of punctuation has a history. (See *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* by M.B. Parkes)

To find out about the teaching of grammar in public schools, I went to the website of the National Council of Teachers of English and discovered an off-shoot of NCTE dedicated to the teaching of grammar: the Association of Teachers of English Grammar (ATEG). I signed on to the ListServe and was soon flooded with messages, often as many as 20 a day, from teachers from kindergarten through university, with many from teachers' colleges. It was immediately clear that the study of language has changed radically over the past several decades. It also became clear that the reliance on tests in the public schools is bringing back the teaching of grammar. Most of the participants on the ListServe are dedicated to finding a way other than traditional grammar teaching, often labelled "Drill and Kill". The point is that there are many languages in English, and each is equally valid. Grammar is coming back and the hope among those who understand language development is that it will have a rebirth in a new form.

The least effective and most boring way that we can teach grammar is the way that I have taught it and witnessed it being taught. At the back of many classrooms is a shelf on which stand a class set of *Warriner's English Grammar and Composition* that are dragged out and worked through in the hopes that something will take and student writing will improve. The following response to such teaching left me both chagrined and delighted:

The Rime of the Ancient Warriner's

It is an ancient Warriner's
And it stoppeth every wight
From doing what is best to do
When learning how to write.

It mixes skills and drills and frills
With exhortation solemn,
And stacks itself on classroom shelves
Column after column.

Amoeba-like, it splits itself
Into scope and sequence clones,
With names alike as Mike and Ike
And wholly writ by drones.

(It transmogrifies itself with ease
Into Little, Brown, and Hodges
And Bedford, Crews and Ebbitts
And a hundred other stodges.)

It names the parts and modes and marks
It's a taxonomic rite—
And multitudes are led through it,
And still they cannot write,

And go as ones that have been stunned
And are of sense forlorn,
Much sadder and unwiser wights
Than ever they was born.

(quoted by Schuster, Edward H. in *Breaking the Rules: Liberating Writers Through Innovative Grammar Instruction*, New York: Heinemann, 2003)

What then are we to do?

GRAMMAR IN A WALDORF HIGH SCHOOL: POSSIBLE EXERCISES

1. Code Switching: Given what Steiner has said about the importance and “life” of dialects, the first step in a conscious understanding of language might be to have students do comparative research. The first place that many linguistics professors suggest as a beginning is to record spoken English. It is interesting for older students to attempt to record the language of young children, those in kindergarten or first grade, or younger siblings. From such an exercise they might discover how young children are attempting to discover pattern as they learn to speak the “code” of those around them. They will probably discover, for example, that children expect logic in plurals and say such things as: “foots” and “mices,” or look for consistency in past tenses and might use “I goed,” or “I holded.” It is unlikely that older Waldorf students will have much exposure to others who speak an extensively different dialect, but some students will have examples. Literature is also a useful resource for examples of dialect. We might even use transcriptions of talk shows that are available on-line. (see: Rebecca Wheeler: *Codeswitching: Tools of language and culture transform the dialectally diverse classroom*)

Students should then be encouraged to discover some of the differences between spoken English and written English that they may encounter is a variety of sources: in newspapers, magazine articles, popular books, various genres in literature. This will lead them to understand some of the ways in which *spoken and written English are different from each other*.

2. Audience: Students might then be encouraged to give an account of the same experience to an imagined variety of audiences. How would they describe a weekend party to a friend, a parent, a grandparent, a teacher? They immediately see that they are “code switching” as determined by their perception of audience. Within most later middle school and high school classes, there are examples of “sub groups” (skateboarders, computer aficionados) all of which use particular “codes”. In fact, asking students to make a small dictionary of words that they use with each other that parents and teachers may not know reveals the quickly changing adolescent code. It is an easy step to looking at how written language also shifts according to audience. Newspapers and magazines are a rich resource for this.

This will lead them to understand that *choices in spoken and written English are determined by the speaker's or writer's perception of audience*. They will also understand that *language is always in a process of change*.

3. Purpose: Engaging students in a discussion of the variety of purposes for spoken and written language use is a delightful exercise. Many keep diaries and journals, for example. Who is the “Diary” in “Dear

Diary”? To whom are they writing and for what purpose? Many still are encouraged to write “thank you notes” and a few might still write hand written letters to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes. There might be a school or class “Newsletter”. They may have written or be encouraged to write accounts of recent class trips for such publications. Some may even have engaged in political activity such as writing to a company or to a politician or letters to the editor of local papers. Many will be e-mailing friends and will be eager to talk about the purpose of such exchanges as well as the conventions used. They can easily be lead to understand that *choices in spoken and written English are determined by the speaker’s or writer’s perception of purpose.*

4. Additional Elements In Spoken English: Close observation of “body language” can be the basis for valuable discussions in language choice. Is gesture arbitrary? What about the gestures for “Come here”, for “Stay there”, for “Bless you”, or attitudes of prayer in various religions? This can easily lead into a discussion about whether the words humans have used to name things are arbitrary. Would “a rose by any other name . . . small as sweet”? (see Adam Makkai “Rudolf Steiner on Language: A View from Modern Linguistics”, an Afterword *to The Genius of Language*, 1995 edition)

By Grade 10, students have enough understanding of other languages to talk about the varieties of ways by which human beings have named things that we differentiate every day, such as tree, dog, sun, star, wind. Such discussion should have moved out of the realm of “one way is better than another” and into an interest in comparison. They need to know that every language has as complex a history as the English language has, and that every word has a history. Such discussions can also move into conversations about the “gestures” of nature. An interesting side path into the wonders of “onomatopoeia” could be tempting. (for excellent exercises in sound, see Mary Oliver’s *Rules of the Dance* and Paul Matthews *Sing Me the Creation*). In Grade 10, it seems essential to give a main lesson on the history of the English language. Through this, we can read Caxton’s own account of not knowing which form of English to use in his printing. Thus, the idea of a dictionary arose. The biographies of Sir William Jones, Jacob Grimm, and the dictionary makers like Samuel Johnson, Noah Webster, and Sir James Murray who undertook the compiling of the *Oxford English Dictionary* are wonderful stories to share with students. Steiner was fascinated by Grimm’s law, because it was true research.

5. Standard English: Once students are aware that there are a variety of codes and that they are constantly switching codes, they can be led into a journal writing assignment and then a discussion of “value judgments” which they or others make based on the way that people speak. A useful preliminary discussion might revolve around judgments they might make about the way people dress. Some students might even be able to articulate moments when they themselves feel or have felt “judged” by their language.

Grade 10 seems the appropriate year for students to acquire a basic understanding of the evolution of English into the current “Standard English”, although before then, students can certainly understand that their choice of language for audience and purpose varies and that there is a “preferred code” for spoken and written English in a school setting. An understanding of the remarkable blend of Germanic and Romance elements in the English language allows students to become consciously aware of the concreteness of many Anglo-Saxon derivations and the abstractness of many Romance derivations, where we choose to use each, and the effect this has on listener or reader.

Such a block on the development of the language can also introduce students to the development of the study of linguistics. Giving students practice in tracing the history of words (see *American Heritage Dictionary* especially the Indo-European appendix) can lead to the question: Do all words come originally from a “concrete” beginning? Words such as “calculate,” “language,” “curfew” can spark such a question. Steiner gives some excellent examples in *The Genius of Language*: (“lord”, “lady”). He says, “. . .it is extraordinarily stimulating to point out. . .bits of language history occasionally to the children right in the middle

of your lesson; at times it can truly enlighten a subject and also stimulate more lively thinking.” (*Genius* 64) An obvious discussion point would be the reasons for the spread of the English language. Students can and need to have an understanding of where the standards that are ever changing and somewhat nebulous have come from.

Such an understanding also reminds us as teachers that what is important is that the natural language of students not be impeded by over-consciousness of how far they fall short of a generally undefined “preferred code.” Can we avoid moral judgments by finding other ways to describe non-standard usage than “right and wrong,” or similar terms such as “correct” and “incorrect?”

6. Inductive Grammar: In 1966, Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner published a small book called *Linguistics: A Revolution in Teaching*. It is a remarkable and readable overview of the history of grammar and linguistics, as well as examples of classrooms in which students are active “language – inquirers,” In it, they quote S.I. Hayakawa as he describes such a classroom: “The emphasis in instruction is not upon authoritarian rules and principles, but upon the development of curiosity and habits of accurate observation of language-in-process, whether in the language of Dickens, at Chamber of Commerce meetings, or in labor-organizing drives. Styles of discourse, whether in scientific papers or in under-world argot are studied, and their effectiveness within their social context is noted. Such training in linguistic observation produces students who, instead of being petrified into inarticulateness by stilted notions of “correctness,” take delight in the variety and richness of the English language and seek to cultivate ... flexibility of linguistic resources....” Postman and Weingartner characterize an “inquiry” language class as a place that:

1. requires that the burden of intellectual inquiry be carried by the student
2. requires that students try to solve problems like those that linguists must solve
3. requires that students become involved in processes of defining, questioning, data gathering, observing, classifying, generalizing, and verifying matters of language

An example of such a lesson is from a Junior High classroom in New Rochelle, N.Y. titled: What is an Adjective? It is really a lesson on how we define. Students learned that the definition of a grammatical term reflects the point of view of the definer, that definitions of grammatical terms may be approached in a variety of ways, and that no single type of definition is likely to be completely satisfactory. The students are told that one common definition of an adjective is that it is a word that describes or modifies a noun. How well does this definition work? They were then given these sentences:

1. The boy *smiled*.
2. Those men are *violinists*.
3. The boy is *crying*.
4. He became a *book* salesman.
5. Samoa is an *American* possession.

Strictly in terms of our definition, are these words adjectives?

What other ways are there to define an adjective? The teacher wrote on the blackboard:

She is a ———— person than Kathy. Student suggestions were listed.

Then: What do you notice about all these words? Can we define an adjective as a word to which –er might be added? And the exercise continues.

One high school teacher, in Postman and Weingartner’s book, begins “What to do? Isn’t the answer obvious? Let us return to direct observation, to direct experience” He goes on to describe one of his adventures with students: Someone was asked to speak a sentence. That sentence was then recorded. Students were then given five fundamental questions:

1. Are all words alike?
2. Since obviously not, what are the kinds of words? (These students had read *1984* including “the Principles of Newspeak.” They brought this in as one way of defining kinds of words. They then freely discussed other differences from the number of letters in the word to rhyming possibilities. They arrived at differences in function)
3. Out of this came another question: What are the differences in function?
4. Where do words occur in relation to each other by function?
5. In what patterns do words occur?

They took three weeks to answer those questions. They came up with four classes of words: 1. labels and substitutes for labels 2. predicates that show action and that show being 3. pointers that point to labels, that point to predicates, that point to other pointers 4. connectors. They learned that there is a discoverable pattern of words in English. “Control words” (subject, predicate, object, or complement) are the least variable. Pointers are extremely variable in size and location.

They were then delighted to look at the “control words” in “Ode to the West Wind.”

There are many examples that we often overlook in literature that have an exciting relationship to grammar: finding the subject and verb in the first sentence in “The Prologue” to the *Canterbury Tales*, for example, or noticing the effect of the opening paragraph of *Brave New World* which has no verb.

As part of a review of grammar in Grade 9, I send two scribes to the board and have the students describe all the things that there are in the room. They eventually include abstract nouns as well. Then I give them a paragraph from the literature we are reading and have them underline the nouns. Then, working in groups, I have them discuss how they know the words that they have underlined are nouns. They come up with all sorts of answers beyond the usual definition of a noun. The position or function in a sentence, a pattern of suffixes, often preceded by “the”, “a”, or “an”, or an adjective, the words that start with capitals. It isn’t a radical shift to move to having them discover the “rules” rather than giving them definitions.

At a Waldorf Grade 12 Conference in 1998, I heard a young man from Green Meadow describe an experiment in language that he had undertaken as a project out of *1984*. He limited himself to three phrases only in response to all questions asked him for a full week. He was astonished that no one noticed that his language had been in any way restricted. It was a powerful lesson for him in the general unconscious way in which language is received. This is discovering language!

7. Syntax through Stylistics: The most successful teaching of grammar in high school seems to be lessons that are taught in the context of reading or writing using a constructivist approach rather than an error-based approach. The difference between the two is summarized by Constance Weaver. An error-based approach, which she calls “product” or “behavioral”, is a “teaching perspective: to eliminate all errors by establishing correct, automatic habits; mastery of the target language is the goal.” (*Teaching Grammar in Context*. 63) The constructivist or process approach see “errors as a natural part of learning a language”, and is “a learning perspective: to assist the learner in approximating the target language; support active learning strategies and recognize that not all errors will disappear.” Weaver’s book is an excellent resource for ways to teach grammar through such a process approach. Harry Noden’s *Image Grammar: Using Grammatical Structures to Teach Writing* was developed in part through working with his wife in a Waldorf Middle School (in Akron). He helps students develop a “palette” of stylistic devices through finding them in literature and then trying them out in their own writing. Only after they are familiar with the effect does he apply terminology. He has developed a remarkable resource, complete with CD and a web site for downloading examples and exercises which can be customized.

Integrating grammar into literature lessons would promote a “discovery grammar”, starting with

the students' perception of a certain general characteristic in the style of the text, and tracing that characteristic back to a grammatical feature. This could come from even such a vague response as "it's descriptive" and "it's hard to follow."



From the Left:: Leonore Russell leading Eurythmy,
David Sloan, Betty Staley, and Mary Emery

Steiner on Grammar

Lifting Speech to Consciousness through Grammar

Before delving into these matters in more detail, I want to dispel certain ideas you may have that could cause confusion. So many sins have been committed through the prevailing methods of learning reading and writing, especially in teaching what is connected with learning to read and write, that is, language, grammar, syntax, and so on. There has been so much waywardness in this area that there are doubtless few people who do not remember with some horror the lessons they had in grammar and syntax. This horror is quite justified. We should not conclude, however, that learning grammar is useless and should be gotten rid of. This would be a completely erroneous idea. In seeking to find what is right by going from one extreme to the other, it might be natural enough to come up with the idea that we should do away with grammar. Let's teach the children to read by the practical method of selecting passages for them; let's teach them to read and write without any grammar. This idea could arise quite easily out of the horror that so many of us remember. But learning grammar is not an unnecessary practice, especially in our day and age. I will tell you why.

What do we do when we raise unconscious speech to the grammatical realm, to the knowledge of grammar? We make a transition with our students: We lift speech from the unconscious into the conscious realm. Our purpose is not to teach them grammar in a pedantic way but to raise something to consciousness that otherwise takes place unconsciously. Unconsciously or semiconsciously, human beings do indeed use the world as a ladder up which to climb in a manner that corresponds to what we learn in grammar. Grammar tells us, for instance, that there are nouns. Nouns are names for objects, for objects that in a sense are self-contained in space. It is not without significance for us that we find such objects in life. All things that can be expressed by nouns awaken us to the consciousness of our independence as human beings. By learning to name things with nouns, we distinguish ourselves from the world around us. By calling a thing a table or a chair, we separate ourselves from the table or chair; we are here, and the table or chair is there.

It is quite another matter to describe things using adjectives. When I say, "The chair is blue," I am expressing a quality that unites me with the chair. The characteristic that I perceive unites me with the chair. By naming an object with a noun, I dissociate myself from it; when I describe it with an adjective I become one with it again. The development of our consciousness takes place in our relationship to things when we address them; we must certainly become conscious of the way we address them. If I say a verb—for example, "A woman writes"—I not only unite with the being in relation to whom I used the verb, I also do with her what she is doing with her physical body. I do what *she* does—my I-being does what she does. When I speak a verb, my I joins in with what the physical body of the other is doing. I unite my I with the physical body of the other when I use a verb. Our listening, especially with verbs, is in reality always a form of participation. What is at this time the most spiritual part of the human being participates; it simply suppresses the activity.

Only in eurythmy is this activity placed in the external world. In addition to all its other benefits, eurythmy also activates listening. When one person says something, the other listens; he engages in his I with what lives physically in the sounds, but he suppresses it. The I always participates in eurythmy, and what eurythmy puts before us through the physical body is nothing other than listening made visible. You always do eurythmy when you listen, and when you actually perform eurythmy you are just making visible what remains invisible when you listen. The manifestation of the activity of the listening human being is, in fact, eurythmy. It is not something arbitrary, but rather the revelation of the activity of the listening human being. People today are, of course, shockingly slovenly; at first, when they listen, they do very poor inner eurythmy. By engaging in it as they should, they raise it to the level of true eurythmy.

Through eurythmy people can learn to listen effectively, which they are presently unable to do. I have made certain unusual discoveries in my recent lectures. Speakers come forward during discussions, but from what they have to say, one quickly notices that they really never heard the lecture, not even in a physical sense; they heard only certain parts of it. This is enormously significant, particularly in the present era of our human development. Someone enters into the discussion and says whatever he or she has been used to thinking for decades. You find yourself speaking in front of people with socialist ideas, but they will hear only what they have always heard from certain activists; the rest is not heard even in the physical sense. Sometimes they innocently admit as much by saying, "Dr. Steiner says a lot of good things, but he never says anything new." People have become so rigid in their listening that they become confused about anything that has not already fossilized gradually within them. People cannot listen and will become increasingly less able to do so in our age, unless the power of listening can be reawakened by eurythmy. The human soul being must find healing again. It will be particularly important in school to supplement the healthy qualities provided by gymnastics, which benefits the body and everything that takes account only of the physiology of bodily functions. The other important factor is the health of the soul: To provide benefits for the soul requires that gymnastics lessons alternate with eurythmy lessons. Although eurythmy is primarily an art, its health-giving forces will be especially salutary to the students. In eurythmy they will not simply learn something artistic; through eurythmy they will derive the same benefits for their soul as they derive through gymnastics for their body. The way these two disciplines complement each other will be very helpful. It is essential to educate our children in a way that will enable them once again to notice the world around them and their fellow human beings. This is the foundation of all social life. Everyone talks today of social impulses, yet nothing but antisocial urges are to be found among people. Socialism ought to have its roots in the new esteem human beings should gain for one another. But there can be mutual esteem only when people really listen to each other. If we are to become teachers and educators, it will be vastly important that we become attentive to these matters once more.

Now that you know that when you say a noun you dissociate yourself from your environment, when you say an adjective you unite yourself with your surroundings, and when you say a verb you blossom out into your environment and move with it, you will speak with quite a different inner emphasis about the noun, the adjective, and the verb than you would if you were not aware of these facts. All this is still only a preliminary discussion and will be continued later. For the moment, I merely want to evoke certain ideas, the absence of which might lead to confusion. It is extraordinarily important for us to know what it means for a person to become conscious of the structure of language. In addition, we must develop a feeling for the great wisdom in language. This feeling, too, has all but died out today. Language is far cleverer than any of us. You will surely believe me when I say that the structure of language has not been formed by human beings. Just imagine what would have been the result if people had sat in parliaments in order to decree, in their cleverness, the structure of language. It would result in something about as clever as our laws. The structure of language, however, is truly more clever than our statutory laws. Inherent in the structure of language is the greatest wisdom. And an extraordinary amount can be learned from the way a people or a tribe speaks. Entering consciously in a living way into the framework of language, we can learn a very great deal from the genius of language itself.

It is extremely important to learn how to feel something definite in the activity of the spirits of language. To believe that the genius of language works in the structure of language is of great significance. This feeling can be extended further, to the point where we realize that we human beings speak, but animals cannot yet speak; they have at most the beginnings of articulated speech. In our day and age, when people like to confuse everything, speech is ascribed even to ants and bees. But in the light of reality this is nonsense. It is all built on a form of judgment to which I have frequently drawn attention.

There are some natural philosophers today who consider themselves most wise and say, “Why should not plants, too, have a will life and a feeling life? Are there not plants, the so-called carnivorous plants, that attract small animals that fly near them and then snap shut on them when they have settled?” These are beings that seem to have a will relationship with whatever comes into their vicinity, but we cannot claim that such outward signs are really characteristics of will. When I meet this attitude of mind, I usually use the same form of logic and say: “I know of something that also waits till a live creature comes near it and then encloses and imprisons it—a mouse-trap.” The mere workings of a mousetrap might therefore just as well be taken as proof that it possesses life as the nature of the Venus-flytrap is taken as proof that it possesses consciousness. We must be profoundly conscious that the power of articulate speech is a human possession. And we must also be aware of our position in the world compared with the other three kingdoms of nature. When we are conscious of it, we also know that our I is very much bound up with everything that constitutes speech, even though today’s way of speaking has become very abstract for us. But I would like to make you aware of something that will give you a new respect for language. In ancient times—in the Jewish culture, for example (though it was yet more pronounced even further back)—the priests, or those who administered and represented the cults, would stop speaking when they came to certain concepts while celebrating the rites. They interrupted their speech and communicated the names of high beings—not in words but in silence—through the appropriate eurythmic gestures. Then they continued the spoken rites. For instance, the name that sounds so abstract to us, rendered in Hebrew as “I AM the I AM,” was never spoken aloud. The priest spoke only up to the point where this name appeared, made the gesture, and resumed speaking. What was expressed in this gesture was the pronounceable name of God in humankind.

Why was this done? If this name had been spoken and repeated straight out, people were so sensitive at that time that they would have been stunned. There were sounds and combinations of sounds in speech that could stun the people of ancient cultures, so great was the effect of such words on them. A state like fainting would have taken them over if such words had been spoken and heard. That is why they spoke of the “unutterable name of God,” which was profoundly significant. Such names could be spoken only by the priests, and even by them only on special occasions, for were they to be spoken before unprepared listeners heaven and earth would collapse. This means that people would fall unconscious. For this reason such a name was expressed only in a gesture. Such a feeling is an expression of what speech really is. Today people thoughtlessly blurt out everything. We can no longer vary the feeling nuances, and it is very rare to find a person who can be moved enough, without being sentimental, to have tears in their eyes when they come across certain passages in a novel, for example. This is today quite atavistic. The lively feeling for what lies in speech and sensitivity to language have become very dulled. This is one of the many things that need to be enlivened again today; when we do enliven it, it will enable us to feel more clearly what we really have in speech. We have speech to thank for much that lives in our I-being, in our feeling of being a personality. Our feelings can rise to a mood almost of prayer: I hear the language around me being spoken, and through the speech the power of I flows into me. Once you have this feeling for the sanctity of summoning the I through speech, you will be able to awaken it in the children by a variety of means. Then, too, you will awaken the feeling of I-being in the children, not in an egoistic manner but in another way. There are two ways of awakening the feeling of the I-being in a child. Done wrongly, it serves to fan the flames of egoism; done rightly, it stimulates the will and encourages real selflessness and willingness to live with the outer world.

I said these things to you because as teachers and educators you must be permeated by them. It will be up to you to use them in teaching language and speech. We shall speak tomorrow about how we can permeate them with consciousness to awaken in the children the sense for a consciousness of personality.

Practical Advice to Teachers (55-61)

Introduction to Grammar

Grammar should be taught in a very lively way. It should be taught in such a lively way that we assume that it already exists when the child speaks. When the child speaks, the grammar is already there. You should allow the children to speak sentences in the way they are used to speaking so that they feel the inner connection and inner flexibility of the language. You can then begin to draw the child's attention and make them aware of what they do unconsciously. You certainly do not need to do that through a pedantic analysis. You can develop the entirety of grammar by simply making the children more aware of the life of the grammar that is already there when the child has learned to speak.

We can certainly assume that all grammar already exists in the human organism. If you take that assumption seriously, you will realize that by making grammar conscious in a living way, you work on the creation of an I-consciousness in the child. You must orient everything toward that knowledge that exists in the body around the age of nine, when a consciousness of the I normally awakens. You need to bring forth into consciousness everything that exists unconsciously in the child's organism. In that way the child will reach the Rubicon of development at the age of nine in a favorable way. In that way you bring into consciousness what is unconscious. You then work with those forces in the child that want to develop, not the forces that you bring from outside the child. There is a way of teaching language by using the way the child already speaks and supporting the instruction through a living interaction between those children who speak a more cultivated language and those who speak a dialect. In this way you can allow them to measure themselves against each other, not in some abstract way, but using feeling to guide a word, a sentence, in dialect into another. If you do that for an hour and a half, you will really make the children break out into a sweat. The teachers who teach this way in the Waldorf School certainly have enough when they do this for an hour and a half or so each morning! If you give instruction in language by working with the knowledge in the body so that you create an actual self-consciousness, you are working in harmony with the foundation you have laid in drawing and musical instruction. Thus you have two processes that support each other. *The Renewal of Education* (111-112)

Developing Grammar Artistically

In language, broadly speaking, the unconscious has had a great effect on the child. We should also learn from the fact that primitive peoples have often developed a much richer grammar than those present in the languages of more civilized peoples. This is seldom taken into account outside of spiritual science, but it is something we should consider as a result of a genuine observation of human beings, namely, that the human being develops a logic from within so that language is actually logically formed. Thus we do not need to teach grammar in a way other than by bringing what already exists as a completely developed language structure into consciousness. When teaching and learning grammar, we need only to follow the general tendency of awakening the child and of bringing that into consciousness. We need only to develop those forces that can be developed until the age of nine, in the sense that I described before. We need to use the instruction in language in order to continue to awaken the child. We can best do that if we use every opportunity that occurs to work from dialect. If we have a child who before the age of seven has already learned a more educated informal language, the so-called standard language, it will be extremely difficult to reach the aspect of the child's unconscious that has a natural relationship to the logical formation of language, since that has already withered. Thus if we have children who speak dialect and others who do not in the same class, we should always connect our instruction in grammar with what those children who do speak in dialect already provide us.

We first want to try to find the structure of a sentence and then a word from the perspective of dialect. We can do that if we proceed by having a child say a sentence, for example, one that is as simple as possible. The main thing the sentence will always contain is something that is an inner enlivening of an

activity. The more often we begin with an inner enlivening of an activity, the more we will be able to achieve an awakening of consciousness in the child while teaching language.

There is a very extensive and clever literature about so-called subjectless sentences, for instance, “It is raining,” “It is lightning,” “It is thundering,” and so forth. The most important point about this is hardly mentioned in all of that research, however. What is most important is that these sentences correspond to the child’s actual understanding. The sentences correspond to that feeling in children that exists in people who are not educated, and where the soul feels itself to be at one with the external world. A differentiation between the I and the external world has not yet been developed. If I say, for example, “It is raining,” this is based upon an unconscious feeling that what is occurring as an activity outside of myself continues in that space within my skin, and that my I does not confront the external world. When saying something like “It is raining” or “It is lightning,” we do not feel ourselves separate from the world. In a certain sense, these subjectless sentences are the original sentences of human nature. They are simply the first step of language development which arrests an activity. Originally, we perceived all of the world as an activity, something we do not consider enough. In a certain sense, in our youngest childhood, we see everything substantial as a substantiated verb and accept it simply as it is. Later, what we become aware of, what is active, is what is active and then occupies our own activity. Now you might say that contradicts the fact that children first say “Papa” or something similar. That is not at all a contradiction, since in speaking the series of sounds, the child brings into life that activity which the corresponding person presents to the child.

Learning to speak is at first the enlivening of an activity whose substantiation occurs only afterwards. This is something that, when we look at dialect, we can certainly take into account. You can attempt to feel that by having a child say something and then trying to feel that within yourself. The words in dialect are such that they are extremely close to what lives in the gesture that accompanies the word in dialect. To a much greater extent dialect words require the person to participate, to live into the word. By feeling the word in dialect you can determine what is an abstraction, and what the subject and the predicate are. The predicate is derived from the activity, whereas the subject is actually more of an intellectual abstraction of the activity. When we have children speak sentences in dialect and we then consider the pictures they provide us with, and we can see those as representing what human beings actually feel when we go on to develop the rules of grammar, we are using instruction in grammar and sentence structure to help the child to awaken. *The Renewal of Education* (153-155)

What we want to teach children about language has an effect upon them long before they become aware of it. We should therefore avoid trying to teach them the rules for speaking or writing, but instead enable them to awaken and become aware of what subconsciously acts within. Whether we have one intention or another in our instruction is tremendously important. We should always pay attention to the intention behind teaching.

Speaking a dialect has an intimate connection with the subconscious, so we can develop real grammar and rules for sentence structure from the dialect language by basing our work upon the reason that lives within human nature. If, however, we need to work with children who already speak the standard language, we should whenever possible not work in such a way to develop a kind of grammar through the intellect, and not direct our work by teaching about the dative and accusative and how we write, how periods and commas are placed at particular locations and so forth. We instead need to work in a different way. When we need to teach children who do not speak in dialect, then we must create our instruction and grammar in an artistic way and appeal to a feeling for style.

Children bring an instinct for language with them into elementary school, and we need to develop this feeling wherever possible until the child reaches the age of nine. We can only do this by developing a feeling for style in an artistic way. That is something we can achieve—although in this age where authority is being undermined everywhere this may be laughed at—by using the natural desires of children to follow

authority, and thus to form those sentences that we present to the children in the most artistic way. We need to artistically form the sentences so that we draw from the child a feeling for their artistic form. That is something we can do when we make the children aware of the difference between an assertion or a question, or perhaps a statement of feeling, and have the child speak it in such a way that a statement with feeling is spoken with the intonation of an assertion. We can then make the children aware of how an assertion is spoken in a neutral, objective way; whereas a statement of feeling is spoken with certain nuances of feeling. We can work with this artistic element of language, then out of that element develop grammar and syntax.

If we use dialect in order to develop the natural human instinct for language while using standard language in order to awaken an inner feeling for style, we can achieve what is necessary in teaching language. *The Renewal of Education* (158–160)

Bringing Language to Life

Today hardly anyone is interested in trying to bring life into language. I have tried to do that in my books in homeopathic doses. In order to make certain things understandable, I have used in my books a concept that has the same relationship to force as water flowing in a stream does to the ice on top of the stream. I used the word *kraften* (to work actively, forcefully). Usually we only have the word *Kraft*, meaning “power” or “force.” We do not speak of *kraften*. We can also use similar words. If we are to bring life into language, then we also need a syntax that is alive, not dead. Today people correct you immediately if you put the subject somewhere in the sentence other than where people are accustomed to having it. Such things are still just possible in German, and you still have a certain amount of freedom. In the Western European languages—well, that is just terrible, everything is wrong there. You hear all the time that you can’t say that, that is not English, or that is not French. But, to say “that is not German” is not possible. In German you can put the subject anywhere in the sentence. You can also give an inner life to the sentence in some way. I do not want to speak in popular terms, but I do want to emphasize the process of dying in the language. A language begins to die when you are always hearing that you cannot say something in one way or another, that you are speaking incorrectly. It may not seem as strange but it is just the same as if a hundred people were to go to a door and I were to look at them and decide purely according to my own views who was a good person and who was a bad person. Life does not allow us to stereotype things. When we do that, it appears grotesque. Life requires that everything remain in movement. For that reason, syntax and grammar must arise out of the life of feeling, not out of dead reasoning. That perspective will enable us to continue with a living development of language. *The Renewal of Education* (180-181)

Working with the Unconscious Element in Language

If you understand the spirit of what I have just presented, you will recognize how everywhere there has been an attempt to work with this unconscious element. I have done that first by showing how the artistic element is necessary right from the very beginning of elementary school. I have insisted that we should use the dialect that the children speak to reveal the content of grammar, that is, we should take the children’s language as such and accept it as something complete and then use it as the basis for presenting grammar. Think for a moment about what you do in such a case. In what period of life is speech actually formed? Attempt to think back as far as you can in the course of your life, and you will see that you can remember nothing from the period in which you could not speak. Human beings learn language in a period when they are still sleeping through life. If you then compare the dreamy world of the child’s soul with dreams and with how melodies are interwoven in music, you will see that they are similar. Like dreaming, learning to speak occurs through the unconscious, and is something like an awakening at dawn. Melodies simply exist and we do not know where they come from. In reality, they arise out of this sleep

element of the human being. We experience a sculpting with time from the time we fall asleep until we awaken. At their present stage of development human beings are not capable of experiencing this sculpting with time. You can read about how we experience that in my book *How to Know Higher Worlds*. That is something that does not belong to education as such. From that description, you will see how necessary it is to take into account that unconscious element which has its effect during the time the child sleeps. It is certainly taken into account in our teaching of music, particularly in teaching musical themes, so that we must attempt to exactly analyze the musical element to the extent that it is present in children in just the same way as we analyze language as presented in sentences. In other words, we attempt to guide children at an early age to recognize themes in music, to actually feel the melodic element like a sentence. Here it begins and here it stops; here there is a connection and here begins something new. In this regard, we can have a wonderful effect upon the child's development by bringing an understanding of the not-yet-real content of music. In this way, the child is guided back to something that exists in human nature but is almost never seen.

Nearly everyone knows what a melody is and what a sentence is. But a sentence that consists of a subject, a predicate, and an object and which is in reality unconsciously a melody is something that only a few people know. Just as we experience the rising and subsiding of feelings as a rhythm in sleeping, which we then become conscious of and surround with a picture, we also, in the depths of our nature, experience a sentence as music. By conforming to the outer world, we surround what we perceive as music with something that is a picture. The child writes the essay—subject, predicate, object. A triplet is felt at the deepest core of the human being. That triplet is used through projecting the first tone in a certain way upon the child, the second upon writing, and the third upon the essay. Just as these three are felt and then surrounded with pictures (which, however, correspond to reality and are not felt as they are in dreams), the sentence lives in our higher consciousness; whereas in our deepest unconsciousness, something musical, a melody, lives. When we are aware that, at the moment we move from the sense-perceptible to the supersensible, we must rid ourselves of the sense-perceptible content, and in its place experience what eludes us in music—the theme whose real form we can experience in sleep—only then can we consider the human being as a whole. Only then do we become genuinely aware of what it means to teach language to children in such a living way that the child perceives a trace of melody in a sentence. This means we do not simply speak in a dry way, but instead in a way that gives the full tone, that presents the inner melody and subsides through the rhythmic element.

Around 1850 European people lost that deeper feeling for rhythm. Before that, there was still a certain relationship to what I just described. If you look at some treatises that appeared around that time about music or about the musical themes from Beethoven and others, then you will see how at about that time those who were referred to as authorities in music often cut up and destroyed in the most unimaginable ways what lived in music. You will see how that period represents the low point of experiencing rhythm.

As educators, we need to be aware of that, because we need to guide sentences themselves back to rhythm in the school. If we keep that in mind, over a longer period of time we will begin to recognize the artistic element of teaching. We would not allow the artistic element to disappear so quickly if we were required to bring it more into the content. *The Renewal of Education* (189–192)

Grammar as a Synthesis of the Drawing and Musical Elements

As I mentioned yesterday, we should also take such things into account when teaching music. We must not allow artificial methods to enter into the school where, for instance, the consciousness is mistreated by such means as artificial breathing. The children should learn to breathe through grasping the melody. The children should learn to follow the melody through hearing and then adjust themselves to it.

That should be an unconscious process. It must occur as a matter of course. As I mentioned, we should have the music teachers hold off on such things until the children are older, when they will be less influenced by them. Children should be taught about the melodic element in an unconscious way through a discussion of the themes. The artificial methods I mentioned have just as bad an effect as it would have to teach children drawing by showing them how to hold their arms instead of giving them a feeling for line. It would be like saying to a child, "You will be able to draw an acanthus leaf if you only learn to hold your arm in such and such a way and to move it in such and such a way." Through this and similar methods, we do nothing more than to simply consider the human organism from a materialistic standpoint, as a machine that needs to be adjusted so it does one thing properly. If we begin from a spiritual standpoint, we will always make the detour through the soul and allow the organism to adjust itself to what is properly felt in the soul.

We can therefore say that if we support the child in the drawing element, we give the child a relationship to its environment, and if we support the child in the musical element, then we give the child a relationship to something that is not in our normal environment, but in the environment we exist in from the time of falling asleep until awakening. These two polarities are then combined when we teach grammar, for instance. Here we need to interweave a feeling for the structure of a sentence with an understanding of how to form sentences.

We need to know such things if we are to properly understand how beginning at approximately the age of twelve, we slowly prepare the intellectual aspect of understanding, namely, free will. Before the age of twelve, we need to protect the child from independent judgments. We attempt to base judgment upon authority so that authority has a certain unconscious effect upon the child. Through such methods we can have an effect unbeknownst to the child. Through this kind of relationship to the child, we already have an element that is very similar to the musical dreamlike element. *The Renewal of Education* (194-195)

Teaching Grammar and Syntax

You cannot teach a foreign language in school without really working at grammar, both ordinary grammar and syntax. It is particularly necessary for children older than twelve to be made conscious of what lies in grammar, but here, too, you can proceed very circumspectly. This morning in our study of the human being I said that in ordinary life we form conclusions and then proceed to judgment and concept. [See lecture 9, *The Foundations of Human Experience*.] Although you cannot present the children directly with this logical method, it will underlie your teaching of grammar. Particularly with the help of the lessons in foreign languages, you will do well to discuss matters of the world with the children in a way that will allow grammar lessons to arise organically. It is purely a matter of structuring such a thing properly. Start by shaping a complete sentence and not more than a sentence. Point to what is going on outside—at this very moment you would have an excellent example.

You could very well combine grammar with a foreign language by letting the children express in Latin and French and German, for example, "It is raining." Start by eliciting from the children the statement "It is raining." Then point out to them (they are, after all, older children) that they are expressing a pure activity when they say: "It rains." Now you can proceed to another sentence; you can include, if you like, foreign languages, for you will save a great deal of time and energy if you also work this method into the foreign language lesson. You say to the children: "Instead of the scene outside in the rain, imagine to yourselves a meadow in springtime." Lead the children until they say of that meadow, "It is greening, it greens." And then take them further until they transform the sentence "It is greening," into the sentence "The meadow is greening." And, finally, lead them still further until they can transform the sentence "The meadow is greening," into the concept of a "green meadow."

If you stimulate these thoughts within the children one after the other in your language lessons, you will not be pedantically teaching them syntax and logic. You will be guiding the whole soul constellation of the children in a certain direction; you will be teaching them in a discreet way what should arise in their souls. You introduce sentences beginning “It” or “It is” to the children, sentences that really live only in the domain of activity and exist as sentences in themselves, without any subject or predicate. These are sentences that belong to the living realm of conclusions—they are, indeed, abbreviated conclusions. With an appropriate example, you take the further step of finding a subject: “The meadow greens” or “The meadow that is green.” Here you have taken the step of forming a judgment sentence. You will agree that it would be difficult to construct a similar judgment sentence for the sentence “It rains.” Where would you find the subject for “It rains”? It is not possible. By practicing in this way with the children, we enter linguistic realms about which philosophers have written a great deal. Miklosic, the scholar of Slavic languages, started writing about sentences without subjects, followed by Brentano, and then Marty in Prague. [Franz Xaver von Miklosic (1831-1891), a Slavic philologist and professor in Vienna; considered founder of modern Slavic philology. Franz Brentano (1838-1917), German philosopher, Roman Catholic priest, and professor in Würzburg and Vienna; wrote on “act psychology,” or *intentionalism*, as well as on Aristotle. Anton Marty (1847-1914) was a student of Brentano.] They all sought to find the rules connected with subjectless sentences, such as “It rains,” “It snows,” “It lightens,” “It thunders,” and so on—for out of their logic they could not understand where sentences without subjects originated. Sentences without subjects, as a matter of fact, arise from the very intimate links we have with the world in some respects. Human beings are a microcosm embedded in a macrocosm, and their activity is not separated from the activity of the world.

When it rains, for instance, we are very closely linked with the world, particularly if we have no umbrella; we cannot separate ourselves from it, and we get just as wet as the pavements and houses around us. In such a case we do not separate ourselves from the world; we do not invent a subject but name only the activity. Where we can be somewhat more detached from the world, where we can more easily remove ourselves from it, as in the case of the meadow, there we can invent a subject for our sentence “The meadow is greening.” From this example you see that in the way we speak to the children we can always take account of the interplay between the human being and the environment. By presenting the children (particularly in the lessons devoted to foreign languages) with examples in which grammar is linked to the practical logic of life, we try to discover how much they know of grammar and syntax. But in the foreign language lessons, please avoid first working through a reading passage and subsequently pulling the language to pieces. Make every effort to develop the grammatical side independently. There was a time when foreign language textbooks contained fantastic sentences that took account only of the proper application of grammatical rules. Gradually this came to be regarded as ridiculous, and sentences taken more from life were included in foreign language textbooks instead. But here, too, the middle path is better than the two extremes.

When you develop grammar and syntax with the children, you will have to make up sentences specifically to illustrate this or that grammatical rule. But you will have to see to it that the children do not write down these sentences illustrating grammatical rules. Instead of being written down in their notebooks, they should be worked on; they come into being, but they are not preserved. This procedure contributes enormously to the economical use of your lessons, particularly foreign language lessons, for in this way the children absorb the rules in their feelings and after a while drop the examples.

If they are allowed to write down the examples, they absorb the form of the example too strongly. In terms of teaching grammar, the examples ought to be dispensable; they should not be carefully written down in notebooks, for only the rule should finally remain. It is beneficial to use exercises and reading passages for the living language, for actual speech, and, on the other hand, to let the children formulate their own thoughts in the foreign language, using more the kind of subject that crops up in daily life. For grammar, however, you use sentences that, from the start, you intend the children to forget, and therefore

you do not let them do what is always helpful in memorizing—write them down. All the activity involved in teaching the children grammar and syntax with the help of sentences takes place in living conclusions; it should not descend into the dreamlike state of habitual actions but should continue to play in fully conscious life.

Naturally, this method introduces into the lessons an element that makes teaching somewhat strenuous. But you cannot avoid the fact that you will have to make a certain effort, particularly in the lessons with the students who come into the older classes. You will have to proceed very economically, and yet this economy will actually benefit only the students. You yourselves will need to spend a great deal of time inventing all the techniques that will help make the lessons as spare as possible. By and large, then, let grammar and syntax lessons be conversational. It is not a good idea to give children actual books of grammar and syntax in the form in which they exist today; they also contain examples, but examples, on the whole, should be discussed and not written. Only the rules should be written down in the notebooks the children use for learning regular grammar and syntax. It will be exceedingly economical and you will also do the children an enormous amount of good if on one day you discuss a particular rule of grammar in a language with the help of an example you have invented. Then, the next day or the day after that, you return to this rule in the same language lesson and let the children use their own imaginations to find an example. Do not underestimate the educational value of such a method. Teaching is very much a matter of subtleties. It is vastly different whether you merely question children on a rule of grammar and let them repeat from their notebooks the examples you have dictated or whether you make up examples specially intended to be forgotten and then ask the children to find their own examples. This activity is immensely educational. Even if you have in your class the worst young scamps, who never pay any attention at all, you will soon see what happens when you set them the task of finding examples to fit a rule of syntax. (And you can indeed succeed if you yourself are fully alert as you teach.) They will start to take pleasure in these examples—they will especially enjoy the activity of making them up themselves.

When the children come back to school after the long summer holidays, having played out of doors for weeks on end, you will have to realize that they will have little inclination to sit quietly in class and listen attentively to things that they are expected to remember. Even if you find this behavior rather disturbing during the first week or two, if you conduct your lessons, particularly the foreign language lessons, in a way that lets the children share in the soul activity of making up examples, you will discover among them after three or four weeks a number who enjoy making up such examples just as much as they enjoyed playing outdoors. But you, too, must take care to make up examples and not hesitate to make the children aware of this.

Once they have gotten into the swing of this activity, it is very good if the children want to go on and on. It might happen that while one is giving an example, another calls out: "I have one too." And then they all want a turn to share their examples. It is then helpful if you say at the end of the lesson: "I am very pleased that you like doing this just as much as you enjoyed romping outdoors." Such a remark echoes within the children; they carry it with them all the way home from school and tell it to their parents at dinner. You really must say things to the children that they will want to tell their parents at the next meal. And if you succeed in interesting them so much that they ask their mothers or fathers to make up an example for this rule, you really have carried off the prize. You can achieve such successes if you throw yourself heart and soul into your teaching.

Just consider what a difference it makes if you discuss with the children in a spirited way the process forming "It rains," "It greens," "The meadow is greening," and "The green meadow" instead of developing grammar and syntax in the usual way. You would not point out that this is an adjective and this is a verb and that if a verb stands alone there is no sentence—in short, you would not piece things together in the way that is often done in grammar books. Instead you would develop the theme in a lively lesson. Compare this

living way of teaching grammar with the way it is so often taught today. The Latin or French teacher comes into the classroom. The children get out their Latin or French books. They have finished their homework, and now they are to translate; afterward they will read. Soon all their bones ache because the seats are so hard. If proper teaching methods were practiced, there would be no need to take such care in designing chairs and desks. The fact that so much care has had to be lavished on the making of seats and desks is proof that education has not been conducted sensibly. If children are really taken up in their lessons, the class is so lively that even if they are sitting down, they do not sit firmly. We should be delighted if our children do not sit down firmly, for only those who are themselves sluggish want a class of children to remain firmly seated, after which they drag themselves home aching in every limb.

Particular account must be taken of these matters in grammar and syntax lessons. Imagine that the children now have to translate; grammar and syntax are worked out from the very things of life they ought to be enjoying. Afterward they are most unlikely to go home and say to their fathers: "We're reading such a lovely book; let's do some translating together." It really is important not to lose sight of the principle of economy— it will serve you particularly well in your teaching of foreign languages.

We must see to it, of course, that our teaching of grammar and syntax is fairly complete. We shall have to discover the gaps in the previous experience of the students who are coming to us from all sorts of other classes. Our first task will be to close the gaps, particularly in grammar and syntax, so that after a few weeks we shall have brought a class to a stage where we can proceed. If we teach in the way I have described (and we are quite capable of doing so if we are totally involved in the lessons and if we ourselves are interested in them), we shall be giving the children what they will need to enable them to pass the usual college entrance examinations later on. And we impart to the children a great deal else that they would not receive in ordinary elementary or secondary schools, lessons that make them strong for life and that will serve them throughout life. *Practical Advice to Teachers* (121-128)

Working Hygienically with Grammar

I once again need to take this opportunity of mentioning that in teaching it is of primary importance to take care to bring the nerve-sense system and the metabolic-limb system into a proper balance. When that is not done, it shows up as irregularities of the rhythmic system. If you notice the slightest inclination toward irregularity in breathing or in the circulation, then you should immediately pay attention to it. The rhythmic system is the organic barometer of improper interaction between the head and the limb-metabolic system. If you notice something, you should immediately ask what is not in order in the interaction of these two systems, and second, you should be clear that in teaching you need to alternate between an element that brings the child to his or her periphery, to the periphery of the child's body, with another element that causes the child to withdraw within. Today, I cannot go into all the details of a hygienic schoolroom; that is something we can speak of next time.

A teacher who teaches for two hours without in some way causing the children to laugh is a poor teacher, because the children never have cause to go to the surface of their bodies. A teacher who can never move the children in such a way as to cause them to withdraw into themselves is also a poor teacher. There must be an alternation, grossly expressed, between a humorous mood when the children laugh, although they need not actually laugh, but they must have some inner humorous feeling, and the tragic, moving feeling when they cry, although they do not need burst into tears, but they must move into themselves. You must bring some life into teaching. That is a hygienic rule. You must be able to bring humor into the instruction.

If you bring your own heaviness into class, justified as it may be in your private life, you should actually not be a teacher. You really must be able to bring the children to experience the periphery of their body. If you can do it in no other way, you should try to at least tell some funny story at the end of the

period. If you have caused them to work hard during the period on something serious, so that their faces are physically cramped from the strain on their brains, you should at least conclude with some funny story. That is very necessary.

There are, of course, all kinds of possibilities for error in this regard. You could, for example, seriously damage the children's health if you have them work for an entire period upon what is normally called grammar. You might have children work only with the differences between subject, object, adjective, indicative, and subjunctive cases, and so forth, that is, with all kinds of things in which the child is only half-interested. You would then put the child in the position that, while determining whether something is in the indicative or the subjunctive case, the child's breakfast cooks within the child, uninfluenced by his or her soul. You would, therefore, prepare for a time, perhaps fifteen or twenty years later, when genuine digestive disturbances or intestinal illnesses, and so forth, could occur. Intestinal illnesses are often caused by grammar instruction. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (538-542)

Maintaining Discipline in Grammar Classes by Awakening Interest

In spite of the fact that we have a Waldorf pedagogy, there is, for example, sometimes too much grammar in the classes, and the children cannot handle that. Sometimes I absolutely do not understand how you can keep the children quiet at all when you are talking, as sometimes happens, about adverbs and subjunctive cases and so forth. Those are things for which normal children have no interest whatsoever. In such instances, children remain disciplined only because they love the teacher. Given how grammar is taught in language class, there should be no cause for any complaints in that regard. We can really discuss the question only if all the language teachers in the Waldorf School meet in order to find some way of not always talking about things the children do not understand. That, however, is so difficult because there are so many things to do. What is important is that the children can express themselves in the language, not that they know what an adverb or a conjunction is. They learn that, of course, but the way such things are done in many of the classes I have seen, it is not yet Waldorf pedagogy. That is, however, something we need to discuss here in the meetings. There are so many language teachers here and each goes their own way and pays no attention to what the others do, but there are many possibilities for helping one another. I can easily imagine that the children become restless because they do not know what you expect of them. We have handled language class in a haphazard way for too long.

A teacher: There is examination fever in the highest grade. The middle grades are missing the basics.

Dr. Steiner: That is not what they are missing. Look for what they are missing in another area. That is not what they are missing! It is very difficult to say anything when I am not speaking about a class in a specific language, since I find them better than the grammar instruction. Most of our teachers teach foreign languages better than they teach grammar. I think the main problem is that the teachers do not know grammar very well; the teachers do not carry a living grammar within them. Please excuse me that I am upset that you now want to use our meeting to learn grammar. I have to admit that I find the way you use grammar terms horrible. If I were a student, I certainly would not pay attention. I would be noisy because I would not know why people are forcing all of these things into my head. The problem is that you do not use time well, and the teachers do not learn how to acquire a reasonable ability in grammar. That, then, affects the students. The instruction in grammar is shocking, literally. It is purely superficial, so that it is one of the worst things done at school. All the stuff in the grammar books should actually be destroyed in a big bonfire. Life needs to come into it. Then, the problem is that the students do not get a feeling for what the present or past tense is when they really should have a lively feeling for them. The genius of language must live in the teacher.... You torture the children with so much terminology. Do not be angry with me, but it

is really so. If you used mathematical terminology the same way you do grammatical terminology, you would soon see how horrible it is. All your horrible habits do not allow you to see how terrible the grammar classes are. This is caused by the culture that has used language to mistreat Europe for such a terribly long time, it has used a language that was not livingly integrated, namely, Latin. That is why we have such a superficial connection to language. That is how things are. ...As it is taught today, grammar is the most spiritless thing there is, and that gives a certain color to teaching. I must say there is much more to it than what we do. It is just horrible. We cannot always have everything perfect, which is why I do not always want to criticize and complain. You need a much better inner relationship to language, and then your teaching of language will become better.

It is not always the children's fault when they do not pay attention in the language classes. Why should they be interested in what an adverb is? That is just a barbaric word. Things only become better when you continually bring in relationships, when you repeatedly come back to the connections between words. If you simply make a child memorize and yourself have no interest in what you had them memorize, the children will no longer learn anything by heart. They will do that only if you return to the subject again in a different connection so that they see there is some sense in learning. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (547-550)

Noun, Article, Adjective, and Verb

I have already given you hints on how to help the children distinguish between nouns and adjectives. You help them see how a noun refers to something that stands outside in space by itself. You say to them: "Let us take the word *tree*. A tree is something that remains standing in space. But look at a tree in winter and again in spring and again in summer. The tree is always there, but it looks different in winter than it does in summer and different again in spring. In winter we say it is brown. In spring we say it is green. In summer we say it is many colored. These are its characteristics." We first teach the children to distinguish between the characteristics that remain the same and those that change. Then we say: "If we need a word to describe what remains the same, that is a noun. And if we need a word for what changes on the thing that remains the same, that is an adjective." Then you teach the children the concept of activity: "Sit on your chair. You are a good child. *Good* is an adjective. But now stand up and walk. You are doing something. That is an activity. The word you need to describe this activity is a verb."

In this way we try to lead the children to the fact, and then we make the transition from the fact to the words. By using this method, we will be able to teach the children, without doing too much damage, the meaning of *noun*, *article*, *adjective*, and *verb*. It is most difficult to understand the nature of an article, because the children cannot yet grasp the relationship between an article and a noun. We shall have to flounder about in abstractions to teach the children the definition of an article. But they must learn it. It is better to flounder in abstractions (since we are dealing anyway with something synthetic) than to invent all sorts of artificial ways of explaining to children the significance and nature of an article, which is impossible. *Practical Advice to Teachers* (169-171)

Working with the Parts of Speech

A teacher: Our proposal in teaching languages was to begin with the verb with the lowest beginners. From the fourth grade onward, we would develop grammar, and beginning with the ninth grade, we would do more of a review and literature.

Dr. Steiner: It is certainly quite right to begin with the verb. Prepositions are very lively. It would be incorrect to begin with nouns. We also need to answer the question of what is removed from the verb when it becomes a noun.... In English, every sound can become a verb. [Nouns in German are often formed by

“substantiating” verbs. In English, a verb is often formed by changing a noun into a *gerund*, or “verbal noun,” for example, by adding “ing.”] I know a woman who makes a verb out of everything that she hears. For instance, if someone says “Ah” she then says that he “ahed.” *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (488)

Working with the Pictorial Element in Grammar

It should not be too difficult to present these matters pictorially in a language, if one thinks it is worthwhile to bring out the pictorial element in lessons. Really one ought not to miss a single opportunity to show even 10, 11 and 12-year-olds how sentences are built up by, let us say, a main clause, a relative clause and a conditional clause. The actual grammar involved is not what matters most—it should only be a means of arriving at a picture. We should not miss the opportunity of giving the child what one could call a spatial picture of a main and a relative clause. Naturally this can be done in the most varied ways. Without wanting to theorize one could represent the main clause as a large circle and the relative clause as a small one, perhaps an eccentric circle. The conditional clause, the “if-sentence,” could now be shown by lines drawn towards the circle like rays indicating the conditioning factors....It is really necessary, after preparation of one’s material, to come back to these matters again and again, and even with 10, 11, and 12-year-olds to go into the moral-characterological aspect of style made visible by pictures. This does not imply teaching syntax, for the pupil should grasp these matters in a more intuitive way. One can really go a long way here. For instance one can introduce a short story from the point of view of the temperaments, having thoroughly prepared beforehand. One can talk—not about the content, but about the style—about a melancholy or a choleric style quite apart from the content, even from the practical content. I am referring to sentence construction. There is not need to dissect sentences—this should be avoided—but one should cultivate this transformation into the pictorial element showing the moral and characteristic quality. One will find that it is possible to teach children aged 10, 11, 12 and 13 in a stimulating way if one struggles hard enough with the necessary preparation. *Erziehungsfrage im Reifealter* translated in Karl Stockmeyer’s *Rudolf Steiner’s Curriculum for Waldorf Schools* (26)

Enlivening the Study of Grammar and Punctuation

The main problem now is that if the children go to their final examinations with the punctuation they now know, it could be very bad. They use no punctuation at all in the 9b class. Teaching them punctuation depends upon discussing the structure of a sentence in an interesting way. That is something you can do well in the course of teaching them literature.

For example, if you begin with older German language forms, you can show them in an intriguing way how relative clauses arose slowly through the transformation of writing into Latin structure. That could provide the basis for studying commas. You can teach the use of commas when you first show the children that they need to enclose every relative clause within commas. It is interesting to discuss relative clauses because they did not exist in older German. They also do not exist in dialect. You could go back to the *Song of the Niebelungs* and so forth and show how relative clauses began to come into the language and how it then became necessary to bring this logic into the language. After you have shown how relative clauses are enclosed with commas, you can go into a more thorough discussion of the concept of clauses. The children then need to learn that every kind of clause is set off by some sort of punctuation. The other things are not so terribly important.

From there, you can go on to show how elements of thought developed in language, and thus arrive at the semicolon, which is simply a stronger comma and indicates a greater break. They already use periods.

There is certainly sufficient time to begin that in the ninth grade. You need to develop it through a positive structuring of language, by going into the intent. It is something that you especially need to do

with some excitement; you cannot do it in a boring way. Grammar alone is one of the most boring things. When you speak in dictations, you must make it clear when sentences end and begin. You should not dictate the punctuation to them. The children will have more when they become accustomed to learning punctuation by working with sentences. It would be erroneous to dictate punctuation. I would never dictate punctuation, but instead have them hear it through my speaking. It would be much better, however, if we could do something else. It would be better if we could divide things as was done in old German, but is no longer done in our more Latin writing—they wrote sentence per sentence, that is, one sentence on each line. You can discuss the artistic structure of a sentence with the children in an unpedantic way. You can give them a feeling for what a sentence is. You can make them aware of what a sentence is. You should also make them aware that well-formed sentences are something positive. You could, for instance, do something like using Herman Grimm's style to show them the form of a sentence, how a sentence is pictorially formed. Now, he really writes sentences. You do not find sentences in the things most people read, just a string of words. Sentences are completely missing. Give them a feeling for well-formed sentences. Herman Grimm writes sentences. They must learn to see the difference between Grimm's style and the things we normally read, for instance, normal history books. You can do that in the ninth grade by giving them a certain kind of feeling for the difference between a complete sentence and an interjection.

The curriculum contains something else that would be very helpful, which is poetics. That is completely missing. You are not taking it into account at all. I have noticed that the children have no feeling for metaphor. They should know metaphors, metonyms, and synecdoches. The result will be wonderful. That is all in the curriculum, but you haven't done it. Teaching the children about metaphors helps them learn how to construct a sentence. When you bring metaphors and figures of speech into the picture, the children will learn something about sentence structure. You can explain these with some examples. You could explain, for example, the meaning of, "Oh, water lily, you blooming swan! Oh, swan, you swimming lily!" That is a double metaphor. Through such examples, young people gain a clear feeling for where the sentence ends, due to the metaphoric expressions. With those who have good style, it would not be at all bad to try to frame the sentences rather than using commas and semicolons. You can do this well with Herman Grimm's sentences and a red pencil. Circle the sentences and then circle twice the things that are less necessary for content, once with red and then with blue. In that way, you will have a nicely colored picture of an artistically formed sentence. You could then compare such sentences with those that are normally written, for instance, in newspapers. The weekly *Anthroposophie* was no exception to this. It used to go on and on just like some boring German, but now it is better. This is something we most definitely need to do. You should teach the children punctuation to give them some feeling for logic. Such things can also be quite exciting. If you first get the children used to enclosing relative clauses with commas, then everything else will fall into place. You need to go far enough that they understand that a relative clause is basically an adjective. You could say, "a red rose." You need no punctuation there. But, if you say, "a rose, red," then you need to place a comma following *rose* because *red* is an appositive. If you say, "a rose that is red," it is quite clearly an adjective.

If you give them such enlivened examples, learning will not be so boring. In dialect, people say, "the father what can write." The relative clause is an adjective, that is, the clause as a whole is an adjective. This view of relative clauses is also very important for learning foreign languages....

Well, that is what we want to do, to begin with the relative clause and go from there into clauses that are abbreviations or indications of an adjective. Beginning with that, which is something we need to emphasize, we can then go on to the semicolon, and finally arrive at the period, which is simply an emphasis or a pause. It is easy to convey a feeling for colons. The colon represents something not said, that is, instead of saying, "the following," or instead of forming a boring relative clause, we use a colon. We express it in speech through tone. For instance, the way every student should name the animals is, "The animals are: the lion, the goose, the dog, the Bölsche," and so on. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (645-649)

Grammar in the Ninth Grade

In German, I would recommend that you not go too deeply into grammar in the first semester. ...In the essays, I would recommend that you handle historical themes. The students should work primarily with the material you gave them last year in history. You will certainly have adequate opportunities to discuss grammar and syntax in connection with corrections. Before you have the children write an essay, though, you should have the children from last year orally discuss the theme for the new children in the class. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner I* (176-177)

Grammar in the Tenth Grade

Everything connected with language is interesting. *Faculty Meetings with Rudolf Steiner II* (486)

Permanently

One day the Nouns were clustered in the street.
An Adjective walked by, with her dark beauty.
The Nouns were struck, moved, changed.
The next day a Verb drove up, and created the Sentence.

Each Sentence says one thing -- for example, "Although it was a dark rainy day when the Adjective walked by, I shall remember the pure and sweet expression on her face until the day I perish from the green, effective earth."

Or, "Will you please close the window, Andrew?"

Or, for example, "Thank you, the pink pot of flowers on the window sill has changed color recently to a light yellow, due to the heat from the boiler factory which exists nearby."

In the springtime the Sentences and the Nouns lay silently on the grass.
A lonely Conjunction here and there would call, "And! But!"
But the Adjective did not emerge.

As the Adjective is lost in the sentence,
So I am lost in your eyes, ears, nose, and throat--
You have enchanted me with a single kiss
Which can never be undone
Until the destruction of language.

— Kenneth Koch

Discussion: What Else Should English Teachers Be Doing?

Drama: most Waldorf English teachers are also drama teachers. Green Meadow has developed a sequence for the drama curriculum. David Sloan's *Stages of Imagination* is a rich resource. Several other schools have drama blocks each year that may or may not result in performance. A typical program goes like this:

9th grade: seven weeks of story building and improvisation usually as a track class

10th grade: stagecraft including acting and design often using a Greek play such as *Antigone*. High Mowing has a block on Greek drama in grade 10, always resulting in a play. There seems to be a great deal of support for a regional Waldorf Greek Drama Festival along the lines of the eurythmy festival being held at the Austin school with about nine groups attending.

11th grade: continuation of design and acting usually resulting in a play or a series of scenes around a theme or as a support for the Grade 12 play. High Mowing does a Shakespearian play each year in Grade 11.

12th grade: all schools produce a senior play. Who chooses the play? What are the criteria? In most but not all schools, the 12th grade tends to choose its own play with direction from the teacher(s). The senior play is a different experience than other plays. It can be difficult to manage in schools where there is not a specific, constant director year after year. An adult consciousness has to ultimately carry the choice to really look at the class and see what is needed. It is a good idea to begin by interviewing the class: what type of play do they want to do? what kind of audience do they want? how many are expecting major roles? One recommendation is to bring the students three plays and let them choose one. There is a natural tension: seniors are drawn to something modern and *avant garde* while at the same time being aware that the play should be a culmination of their entire career and a gift to the community; fourth graders need to be able to watch it. The students have to consider what they want to give to the community. Green Meadow works with the students to see if their choice of play would limit the audience. One class did *Camino Real*, which was only appropriate for 9th grade and up. There was much consternation among the parents. The same thing was true of *Spring Awakening* at the Toronto school. In both cases the play was powerful and appropriate for the class. Play reading and discussion typically spans six weeks of track class. It is difficult to find a modern play for 20 – 30 students. It is also difficult to find something of some redeeming value. Recommended plays include: *The Grapes of Wrath* adapted for the stage, *Under Milkwood*, any Thornton Wilder, the *Madwoman of Chaillot*, *The Crucible*, *J.B.*, *Peer Gynt*, *Museum*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest*, and *Peter Pan*.

Many schools also have a drama club as an after school or extra curricular activity that spans all four grades. At Ann Arbor there is no drama teacher but the after school drama group is very popular. Anyone from any high school class who wants to can take part without audition. Students and teachers write the plays every year to accommodate the students wanting to perform; this year, for example, there are 39 students. Mary Emery described the plays as "Mystery Dramas à la Monty Python." All the work is done after school.

Schools differ on the question of whether all students are required to act. In many schools all students are expected to be on stage; in others, students participate either by acting or taking part in technical crews.

Most of us discourage the videotaping of any play.

How do we incorporate drama and speech into the curriculum? A simple and effective way that most teachers use is to assign various parts for the students to read in short stories, novels, or classic works such as the *Iliad* or *Parzival*. In the Grade 11 Shakespeare block, students are often asked to memorize a solilo-

quy and a sonnet, and to recite these to the class. Occasionally these are performed in a school-wide or public setting. Most teachers use poetry or great speeches as opening exercises in both tracks and blocks.

Leonore Russell reminded us that Waldorf schools have curricula rich in poetry and drama not often considered important in current educational philosophy. We may be the only schools to carry the rich stream of the past into the future.

Betsy Barricklow described how the Tara School for the Performing Arts works. Each grade has a four-week intense work on a play every afternoon. All are performed. During the English class, students write back stories or other assignments for their characters. Performances also follow the block on Ancient History through Eurythmy, developed by Leonore Russell, and the block on History through Poetry.

In addition, there is an all-school play for eight performances. During the rehearsal period, all other classes are suspended. During the February break, the 11th graders go to Vail to see *Hamlet* and work with the teachers on the play. As part of the English curriculum, students see as many plays as they can, including twelve plays each year at the Denver Center. The 9th and 11th grades go to New York to see plays and the 12th experiences theatre in London as part of a month long trip to Europe. The first graduating class had seen 78 plays during their high school years. The school has had to give up most traditional main lesson blocks in subjects other than English and Drama to have this performance focus. Students, parents, and teachers consider the trade-off to be well worth it and continue to be inspired. Betsy feels that the research that was done for this program could be used by other schools, perhaps with a focus on something other than performance.

Media Education: While there was considerable debate about whether English teachers should also consider media education part of our job, we all recognized that it was necessary to “serve the word” by contrasting the uplifting language of literature with the language of advertising and political manipulation while being careful not to make cynics of the students. Many of us include in our curriculum George Orwell’s *Politics and the English Language*, Ray Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451*, Neil Postman’s *Amusing Ourselves To Death*. Some teachers show media awareness films.

Showing films in class: Some participants felt very strongly that film doesn’t belong in the English curriculum because film gives pictures rather than letting students create their own. We certainly cannot assume that all films are worthwhile. Nevertheless, many English teachers do use film versions of novels or plays in class after the students have experienced the text, for example *The Miracle Worker*, *Of Mice and Men*, or *Romeo and Juliet*. One teacher had the class read Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and then showed the first version (1931) of the filming to see how the story was changed. There are many Shakespeare films, for example, some better than others. One teacher collected as many versions of *Hamlet* as possible and selected the “get thee to the nunnery” scene. Showing the students the same scene with Laurence Olivier, Richard Burton, Nicol Williamson, Mel Gibson, Kenneth Branagh and Ethan Hawke helped free up interpretations.

Robert MacNeil’s series of videos on *The Story of English* was seen as useful, although somewhat dated. He has produced a new documentary called *Do You Speak American?*

Many of us realized that we often talk about films in class, but don’t have time to show them. Recommended films included *Winged Migration*, *Baraka*, and *Koyanisquaatsi*.

Often a film can give a flavor of an era or a country. While *Tom Jones* is too long a novel to read, the film gives a perfect picture of 18th century England. *Room With a View* does the same for the Edwardian age. For Russian literature, *Alexander Nevsky* and *Doctor Zhivago*, *Dersu Uzala* by Kurasawa, or the Yul Brynner version of *Brothers Karamazov* are useful examples.

Some teachers use films to discuss the screenplay, lighting, use of music and other aspects of cinematography.

Films were also seen as useful to encourage discussion on social issues. *And the Band Played On* was recommended as an effective way to begin a conversation about AIDS. Several schools have either shown or recommended *Bowling for Columbine*. For the Symptomatology block, films can be extremely helpful: *Jung on Film* is a remarkable resource, and the films of Jane Elliott, including *Blue-Eyed*, are excellent for discussions of prejudice. Martin Luther King's speech on film is more exciting than on the printed page.

We all agreed that whenever films are used, the students need to be brought back to conversation and writing.

— compiled by Anne Greer



Leonore Russell and Joan Calderera converse in front of the new Dr. Bruce Barstow Science and Technology Building at High Mowing School, host of the English Colloquium.

Enlivening English Teaching through Eurythmy and Speech

During the Colloquium, we worked with Craig Giddens and Leonore Russell in speech and eurythmy. Not only did we enjoy ourselves, but we returned to our classrooms full of renewed resolve to bring artistic activity as an enlivening element into our English class.

Eurythmy, in particular, brings students immediately to the movement in language through their own movement. It brings breath back into movement, life into the language. It re-enlivens the language. Eurythmy not only keeps language alive but also brings a new entrance into language. We have new possibilities by combining movement, speech, and language to bring the word back to the students.

Leonore Russell had us moving immediately, first contracting and expanding in a large circle, then circling the periphery as she recited:

“Words are like birds
For birds can sing.
Words are like bells
For bells can ring.
Words cast a spell and dance and glisten –
Then listen,
And use
Words well.”

Each session built on the first till we felt quite comfortable moving in a variety of rhythms, many of us resolving to try this with our poetry classes.

Teaching speech over twenty years has left Craig Giddens with many questions. How do we speak? What happens when we speak? How can one teach others to speak more effectively? It has become clear to him that traditional, technical speech training has little effect. In attempting to understand the speech process and convey that to students what has to be taken into account is that the soul of the teacher is meeting the soul of the student.

It is a soul meeting that is revealed through the speech. In teaching speech, we work with the breath and the sound which enhances the spirit or soul through speech.

Beginning with a concrete imagination it is more akin to how we actually speak. We speak from a desire, a wish to say something. There is a soul gesture that arises into the air and sound gesture. This is true of both eurythmy and speech.

We are so used to speaking in abstract terms that our real work is to strengthen the imagination, so that we can have such a concrete imagination of what we want to say that our listeners must receive an imagination of what we are saying. In teaching speech, we are working on the balance between the will and the imagination. Focusing on the imagination seems to be the most accessible method to school the speaker.

It took Craig twenty years to hear what people are imagining, but he now feels that he can get a room full of people doing it in twenty minutes. He thinks that even only a short while ago people were not so abstract that it was as important as it has recently become to work with images, how we perceive, and the imagination. Basically, we can have a perception of something, have the sounds arise, and have our soul experience it. If we want to say “sunrise” it was easier until quite recently to make a concrete imagination of the sunrise and allow yourself to perceive the impression. When you do this, your soul is then moved and the sound and gestures arise naturally. When the speaker has a concrete imagination, the word is received by the listener in a completely different way. The listener experiences the sunrise and not an empty concept.

But the speaker has to perceive the concrete imagination, the memory picture. We need to be aware of the difference between a head memory which has a photographic quality and the imagination which is more of the will. This activity, described in detail by Steiner in Chapter 2 of *Study of Man*, changes the being of the listener. What is essential in teaching is that the soul of the teacher meets the soul of the student in this way.

Working with concrete imaginations which are perceived by the speaker gives rise to the speech and sound gestures that it is entirely different than what is received from most speech by the listener. The sound gestures begin to flow more naturally. The basic process gets started, is in a flow, and then the pieces begin to come together.

This kind of speaking is not just for reciting poetry but is extremely helpful for general lessons, even mathematics. If the teacher concretely imagines two objects, then the students will receive the objects quantitatively rather than abstractly.

This is why it seems somewhat useless in teaching to refer to lecture notes rather than speaking of what the teacher actually has made her or his own. It is a painful lesson in high school teaching to realize that if the teacher can't remember the information, it is pointless to give it to the students to learn.

The whole process requires creating a soul connection with the material. If you use the imagination in the moment, then you can use the soul connection to the sense perception. Teachers often experience that the first time they teach a subject seems the strongest. This is because the teacher connects with it on a soul level.

We know that our bodies move when we speak but we often forget that this is happening. We have to remember the movement of our bodies and work with that; we have to fully embody our speech.

— Anne Greer from a conversation with Craig Giddens

Craig Giddens is a rich and available resource for suggesting and providing poems and speeches. He has several fat binders full of material that he is willing to share. He encourages any teacher to contact him: 9 Sweethaven Lane, Harpswell, ME 04079; 207-725-2772.; word@suscom-maine.net

Recommended Books For Waldorf English Teachers

(in some cases, original publication dates are placed in brackets following the title of the book)

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- Gerwin, Douglas, Ed. *For the Love of Literature*, Hudson, N.Y.: Anthroposophic Press, 1996.
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- Koepke, Hermann *On the Threshold of Adolescence*, Anthroposophic Press. 1992.
- Knottenbelt, Johanna. *The Art of Poetry in the Light of Anthroposophy*, Spring Valley, N.Y.: The Anthroposophic Press, 1973.
- Lievegoed, Bernard. *Phases of Childhood*, Floris Books, 1985.
- Matthews, Paul. *Sing Me the Creation: A sourcebook for poets and teachers, and for all who wish to develop the life of the imagination*, (1994). Stroud, U.K.: Hawthorn Press, 1996.

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- Morduch, Anna *The Sovereign Adventure: The Grail of Mankind*, Cambridge: James Clarke, 1970.
- Querido, Rene *The Mystery of the Holy Grail: A Modern Path of Initiation*, Fair Oaks: Rudolf Steiner College, 1991.
- _____. *The Esoteric Background of Waldorf Education: The Cosmic Christ Impulse*, Fair Oaks, Calif.: Rudolf Steiner College Press, 1995.
- Raine, Kathleen. *Golgonooza City of Imagination: Last Studies in William Blake*, Hudson, N.Y.: Lindisfarne Press, 1991.
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On Reading

by

John Wulsin

Reading is one of the quintessential human activities. In one way or another, we are learning to read all our lives. As new-born babies, we begin to read human experience through the sounds, intonations, qualities, and rhythms especially of our mother's and father's voices, as well as through their gestures and expressions. We read tastes, smells, and textures of the world through food. As toddlers, we begin the lifelong process of reading the ever-changing terrain of the earth on which we walk. As children, our reading of the surface of the earth quickens, through skipping, running, hiking, bicycle riding, skiing, snow-boarding, even aiming a golf-ball, reaching an epitome in orienteering, the activity of walking/running through wilderness with map and compass. We learn to read the water through swimming, rowing, paddling, skiing, and sailing. We learn to read the air through flying a kite or flying a plane.

We are always learning to read "The Book of Life" in Nature: the many shapes, colors, scents and growing cycles of the plant world, the gestures, movements, habits, and sounds of the animals, including those in the water and in the air. We are always learning to read the weather, the rhythms of the seasons, however they may vary in different parts of the globe.

We "read" gesture in images in art, drawing, painting, film, sculpture, dance, and architecture. In much of the world in recent centuries, between the ages of six and ten, we are learning to read the usually abstract markings of our particular alphabet. Through learning lawful combinations of patterns of sight in relation to sound, we become able to recognize, in these once-abstract markings, representations of worlds of experience familiar to us through our spoken language.

There it is! Aha! Now we can read! The alchemical transformation has occurred. The mystery of the written language has been unveiled. What had been abstract obfuscation has fused into clarifying revelation. What had been frit now is glass. Through the rational act of understanding the signs of writing, we now have access, not only to our own life experience, not only to the oral stories of those around us, but we now have access through reason to others' knowledge, and through an act of imagination to limitless realms of human experience.

However, even through the medium of written language, the process has just begun. One could say that the experience of reading always varies "horizontally," and continually deepens "vertically."

The best example of the "horizontal" variety of reading experience may be Herman Melville's chapter "The Doubloon," in his novel *Moby Dick*. Captain Ahab has nailed a sixteen-dollar gold piece to the mast, as

reward for the first person to sight the white whale, Moby Dick. Around the rim of the circular coin are the letters, "El Quito, Ecuador." Pictured on the coin is a scene: in the sky the sun shines in the constellation of Libra. Below are three mountain peaks. On top of one is a flame, on another is a rooster, on the third is a tower.

Captain Ahab, beholding the coin, sees the flame as Ahab, sees the rooster as Ahab, sees the tower as Ahab; he sees Ahab, Ahab, Ahab. First mate Starbuck, with his melancholic foreboding, sees the three peaks embodying the trinity, and focuses on the valleys between them, embodying the mood of the 23rd Psalm's "valley of the shadow of death." Buoyant second mate Stubb takes the sign of Libra as the start of a rambling, improvised, yet cohesive meditation on the signs of the zodiac as a picture of the stages of a human life. Pragmatic third mate Flask looks at the sixteen-dollar-coin and sees nothing more than a means of purchasing 960 cigars. The black cabin boy Pip, who has lost himself while floating adrift one long day before being rescued, sees neither himself nor even the coin itself, but rather everyone else's "reading" activity. "I look, you look, he looks. We look, you look, they look. Where's Pip? Where's Pip? Where's Pip?..." Every member of the Pequod's crew reads the same golden doubloon differently. So any book speaks to each of us somewhat differently, although we may be, figuratively, on the same journey.

How does reading continually deepen, "vertically?" Harvard's Professor William Alfred, featured by *Life* magazine in the 1970's as one of the ten best college professors in the U.S., said that after he had read John Milton's *Paradise Lost* fifteen times, he had started to "get it." What are the implications of that statement? Not that he didn't get anything during his first reading of it. And certainly not that he had read it fifteen times in a row to start to get something from it. But perhaps over the years the parts had been leading him toward the whole, until during his fifteenth read, like frit turning to glass, the whole started to illumine all the parts. William Alfred the reader had been maturing continuously over the years, not only through years of life experience, but also through the influence of *Paradise Lost* itself. Mediocre books we read once and outgrow. Masterpieces we can always grow into; they grow us, always further.

Acknowledging the "horizontal" variety of reading experience, and realizing the "vertical," growing capacity of masterpieces, how can we, as teachers, think about the most important question of all in relation to reading: timing? Of course, one aspect of timing is as unpredictable as fate, fortune, karma, falling in love, "accidents." Books have a way of appearing at just the right time in a person's life. Or one is given a book, and three years later, at just the right time, one is moved to read it finally. Such examples of individual timing are impossible to write about generally. The best we can do as teachers is to listen and to trust our intuitions in relation to particular books for particular individuals at particular times.

However, the accuracy of our intuitions can be greatly helped by deepening our understanding of child development. And our reasoned understanding of the stages of adolescence can lead to many timely choices.

A number of good books exist which can help one to think about the teen-ager's development year-by year: Betty Staley's *Between Form and Freedom*, Julian Sleight's *From Thirteen to Nineteen*, Bernard Lievegoed's *Phases*, George and Gisela O'Neill's *The Rhythms of Life*, Douglas Gerwin's introduction in *The Genesis of a Waldorf School*, to name a few.

Ninth Grade

Since the ninth grader is stepping out of the lower school into high school and waking up anew to his or her place in the contemporary world, contemporary authors will often guide our students well into our modern world.

- 1) In the context of the transition from childhood into adolescence, one can look for books that explore the transition from a harmonious, "innocent" relationship with nature into a more conscious "separation" from nature. Books with a sensitive eye for nature can have a healing effect on the inevitable separation. Among these are Forrest Carter's *The Education of Little Tree*, Gerald Durrell's *My Life With Other Animals*, Willa Cather's *My Antonia*.
- 2) All books with a "coming of age" theme are appropriate, such as Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*
- 3) For the sake of the birth of the more conscious soul life, it can be helpful for students to read books which do not fix on one point of view, but rather which reside in the healthy tension between polarities, such as black and white, tragedy and comedy, war and peace, rebel and oppressor. Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* is just such a book.
- 4) It can be helpful for a ninth grader to read one or two books about actual and/or potential tragic dimensions of the twentieth century, perhaps Elie Wiesel's *Night*, or Nevil Shute's *On the Beach*. It's best when such a book can inspire hope or courage as do Jacques Lusseyran's *And There Was Light*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, or Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- 5) Since the birth of the new soul life is inevitably painful, and adolescents can become too absorbed in their sufferings, humor is a healthy antidote. America's tall tales about Paul Bunyan, Davy Crockett, and King of the keelboaters, Mike Fink work well, as do selections from Mark Twain, James Thurber, and E.B. White.
- 6) Short stories, the most contemporary form of literature, are wonderful windows into modern life for ninth graders.

Tenth Grade

The tenth grader, having survived the ninth grader's often initially awkward "arrival" into the high school and into modern life, usually needs to take a step back, to gather perspective on this mighty journey. The growing thinking capacities are increasingly able to serve a deepening wish to understand the origins of our world, the origins of cultures, and how things grow and develop.

- 1) Tenth graders may wish to read, or re-read, one of the great epics of world literature such as *The Ramayana*, *Gilgamesh*, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, or even a great epic novel, such as John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*.
- 2) Tenth graders are often drawn to historical novels of earlier cultures such as Isha Schwaller de Lubicz' *Her-Bak*, Mary Renault's, *Bull from the Sea*, or W.H. Hudson's *Green Mansions*.
- 3) Native American literature is especially appropriate for tenth graders, as a way of looking at relationships between timeless ways and contemporary ways. John Neihardt's *Black Elk Speaks*, Farley Mowat's *People of the Deer*, Frank Waters' *The Man Who Killed the Deer*, and Louise Erdrich's many novels are all possibilities.
- 4) African literature can be timely for tenth graders for similar reasons. Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* or the novels of Laurens van der Post are examples.
- 5) Tenth graders, with their new interest in the *how*, also enjoy short stories, more aware now of plot, character development, and imagery. Some sophomores want to know how the world works and enjoy reading books about science and technology.

Eleventh Grade

Having as tenth graders reconsidered their cultural origins, the eleventh graders are ready to re-embark on what Joseph Campbell refers to as the "journey of the hero." The eleventh grader will inevitably experience inward separation in some way from family, from friends, from the familiar, as he or she explores unfamiliar worlds of thought and feeling. Along the way there will be loneliness, challenges, dangers, temptations, fears, but also excitement, help, hope, wonders, great discoveries, and great accomplishments. Historically, the eleventh grade curriculum usually spans Rome, the births of Christianity and Islam, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and often the Romantic era.

- 1) It can be especially timely for eleventh graders to read medieval literature, particularly original legends of Celtic, Icelandic, Norse, German, or French origins such as *Tristan and Isolde*, *Gawain and the Green Knight*, Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, *Nibelungenlied*, and Nobel Prize winner Sigrid Unset's *Kristin Lavransdatter*. Grail literature holds special attraction, particularly Chretien de Troyes' *Comtes du Graal* and Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*. There is also value in contemporary imaginations of Arthur and Grail matter such as the series by Mary Stewart,
- 2) Some may be drawn to early Christian literature by such authors as the Desert Fathers, St. Augustine, St. Francis, Hildegard of Bingen, St. Teresa of Avila, and St. John of the Cross.
- 3) Others may be drawn to the Arab Persian or Sufi stream in poets such as Rumi, Hafiz or in Attar's *The Conference of the Birds*.
- 4) This is an age when literature about the great explorers of once new worlds appeals in accounts of the travels of Marco Polo, Henry

the Navigator, Christopher Columbus, Cortez, Magellan, Pisarro, or Henry Hudson.

- 5) Biographies of great figures of the Middle Ages or the Renaissance are also tempting: Eleanor of Aquitaine, Becket, Saladin, Richard the Lion-hearted, St. Francis, Thomas Aquinas, Joan of Arc, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, Luther, Sir Thomas More, Queen Elizabeth.
- 6) Stories portraying an individual's journey or quest can meet the eleventh graders well, whatever the setting may be: Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*, Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Wordsworth's *Prelude*, Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.
- 7) Grade 11 students respond to poetry including any of Shakespeare's plays or sonnets, the Metaphysical Poets John Donne, George Herbert, and Andrew Marvell. The Romantic Poets, Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats, especially heal the separation between mind and matter, between subject and object, engendered by the scientific revolution, the Age of Reason, and the Industrial Revolution.

Twelfth Grade

As is true with each grade, one can think of twelfth grade in a number of ways. Now that the eleventh grader has survived the dangerous, wondrous journey through the wasteland, the twelfth grader "returns home," bringing back to the original society, in this case the whole school community, the riches of wisdom which the newly emerging individual has gained on the journey. The twelfth grader can fertilize the wasteland and give the society new life.

- 1) Literature about utopias and dystopias can be especially timely for the senior "world-makers." Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Zamyatin's *We*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, Orwell's *1984*, Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* are all to be recommended.
- 2) Whereas the ninth grader had jumped into the modern world, the twelfth grader re-enters the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with a newly conscious sense of context. The great nineteenth century novels that shaped modern American consciousness can now be read with deepened awareness: Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Poe's stories, Melville's *Moby Dick*, Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*.
- 3) The great nineteenth century Russian novels are also potent at this stage: Gogol's *Dead Souls*, Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, Tolstoy's *The Cossacks*, *Anna Karenina*, *War and Peace*, Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, *The Brothers Karamazov* are excellent, as are the nineteenth century European novels: Hardy's works, Stendhal's *The Red and the Black*, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*.
- 4) Twentieth Century Russian novels that appeal include Zamyatin's *We*, Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*,

Solzhenitsyn's *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *Cancer Ward*, and *The First Circle*.

- 5) The new twentieth century genre of science fiction and fantasy is extremely popular. Classics include Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles*, Clarke's *Childhood's End* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and Herbert's *Dune*. In the same vein, an interest in apocalyptic literature can lead from the books of *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel*, and *Revelations* in the *Bible* to Walter Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz*.
- 6) Twentieth and twenty-first century world literature offers an explosion of possibility for 12th grade readers. The list of works is endless, of course, but could include novels by Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Bellow, Morrison, McCarthy, Welch, Silko, Erdrich, Helprin, Ondaatje, Michaels, Mistry, Malouf and translated works from Central and South America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, India, and Asia.
- 7) Twelfth graders can follow the path of poetry as it moves from the nineteenth century into the twentieth and twenty-first with Poe, Whitman, Dickinson, Hopkins, Yeats, Eliot, Williams, Stevens, Rilke, Bishop, Plath, Roethke, Auden, Jeffers, Brodsky, Ginsburg, Brooks, Collins, Dove, Forche, Graham, Haas, Hall, Harjo, Kinnell, Kunitz, Lee, Olds, Pinsky, Snyder, Strand, Wilbur, Wolcott, and on and on.
- 8) Biographies of especially courageous individuals of the twentieth century inspire, among them Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom*, Iraina Ratushinskaya's *Grey is the Color of Hope*, and Anatoly Sharansky's *Fear No Evil*.
- 9) By the twelfth grade, many students are interested as well in psychological, sociological, political, and environmental books including Mary Pipher's *Reviving Ophelia* and Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death*.

All these suggestions, arising out of decades of experience with high school students reading, are meant not as prescriptions but as indications, with the hope of helpfully stimulating one's own understanding of stages of adolescent development and how a book might appropriately meet, serve, enhance, and help awaken that particular stage. And of course, all this general context should better enable us, rather than blind us from being able, to recognize any individual need which may declare itself at any moment.

John Wulsin's essay was written for *Books for the Journey, A Guide to the World of Reading* © 2004 and is used with permission by Wulsin and Michaelmas Press (www.michaelmaspress.com)

The Sensing Word

by

Philip Thatcher

To one who understands the sense of language
The world unveils itself
In image

Rudolf Steiner

The corrected proofs of my novel, *Mirror of the Moon*, are now back at prepress, one more stage toward the launching of this second volume of *The Raven Trilogy*.

As I went through the proofs, I was struck by an experience of “I, yet not I.” I was an active agent in putting these words together over a period of two years, yet the finished work is more than my I-activity. It has become in itself a “mystery of the will” that language, working through my I-activity, has brought into being.

In the writing of both *Raven's Eye* and *Mirror of the Moon*, I have had the experience of knowing a moment in the story through and through before putting pen to paper. In the fall of 1993, for instance, I stood beside a double dolmen in Brittany, known locally as “The Fairies Mound,” and saw in a flash a sequence of events in Part IV of *Raven's Eye*. When it came to the writing of that sequence of events, it was a matter of finding words and images that could embody what I already knew.

There is, however, another experience. I sit, pen in hand, knowing where the story needs to go. But how will it go there? More specifically, how will the characters go there? What in the mystery of their wills will move them toward that moment, event, destination that I know truly belongs to the story?

Let me explore this question through an image.

During these past days of Christmas, I went to an exhibit at the Vancouver Art Gallery featuring the work of Tom Thomson. Thomson's work as a painter, mainly in Algonquin Park in Ontario, spanned an intensive six years before his death in 1917. Some of his works are clear vistas across a lake to its far side, toward the hills of the Canadian Shield beyond, overarched by skies filled with cloud and light. What interested me, however, were those paintings where clear distances were obscured in part or almost totally by foregrounds of bush and trees—the barely penetrable bush of much of Canada's wilderness. Stands of white birch, black pine or a shock of red maple leaves fill the foreground. Behind them, there are hints of skies massive with cloud or immense with light; a glimpse of hills reddened by sunset; a clear horizon on the far side of a river or lake—the larger picture partly or barely visible through the tangle of trunks, branches, leaves.

How in the act of writing itself to go through that tangle of bush— or the tangle that is woven of the wills of the characters of a story—toward what I know is waiting on the far side of it? Perhaps it is only the writing itself that can find a way through as the writer lets go, for the moment, of the far horizon he or she has beheld and simply follows into the bush the words that flow from the moving of the pen:

My pen moves along the page
like the snout of a strange animal
shaped like a human arm
and dressed in the sleeve of a loose green sweater.

I watch it sniffing the paper ceaselessly,
intent as any forager that has nothing
on its mind but grubs and insects
that will allow it to live another day.

— Billy Collins, “Budapest”*

The lines from Rudolf Steiner’s meditation on language speak of “the sense of language” that allows—persuades?—the world to unveil itself “in image.” Can we also hear in these words “the sensing of language?” Is language not only a means of capturing in images that which is known, but also a sense organ capable of discovering and flushing out that which is not yet known?

To take this question further, can what is already known, conceived, imaged in and of itself ever penetrate the mystery of the will? Or do I as a writer need to let go of—even risk the loss of—that overarching imagination of the story in order to discover as I write what it is in the wills of the characters that could move them toward that end?

Yet without that overarching imagination of the story as a whole, the characters stand a good chance of wandering off into the bush and getting lost.

It then becomes a matter of living within the tension between images already beheld and images that can only be discovered as the sensing word noses its way forward, line by line, listening even as it speaks, into the mystery of the characters who will bring the story to life as they meet, act, speak, die – and live.

The larger picture of hills, skies, open water can always be glimpsed through the thickness of trees and bush in the foreground of the painting. Yet the tangled foreground stands as a reminder that reaching the far shore of that lake can never be taken as given, however clear and vivid my glimpses of it.

Then there is also the mystery of my own will as the writer and the human being to whom the writer constantly turns, asking, “What do you

know about this moment in the story out of your experience? What are you willing to give of yourself, and where are you willing to go in yourself to make it possible for this character to become the story?"

And finally, there will be that which lives in the minds and hearts and wills of those who take a book such as *Mirror of the Moon* in hand and begin to turn its pages—a mystery in itself that will have little to do with what has lived in the writer or even the process of writing, but only with what the story has become.

*From *Sailing Alone Around the Room* (New York: Random House, 2001) published in the Newsletter of the Humanities Section of the Anthroposophical Society

Philip Thatcher's novels *Raven's Eye* and *Mirror of the Moon* are the first two volumes of a proposed trilogy. For further information visit the website: www.goodknights.org/raven

The Hammock

When I lay my head in my mother's lap
I think how day hides the stars,
the way I lay hidden once, waiting
inside my mother's singing to herself. And I remember
how she carried me on her back
between home and the kindergarten,
once each morning and once each afternoon.

I don't know what my mother's thinking.

When my son lays his head in my lap, I wonder:
Do his father's kisses keep his father's worries
from becoming his? I think, Dear God, and remember
there are stars we haven't heard from yet:
They have so far to arrive. Amen,
I think, and I feel almost comforted.

I've no idea what my child is thinking.

Between two unknowns, I live my life.
Between my mother's hopes, older than I am
by coming before me, and my child's wishes, older than I am
by outliving me. And what's it like?
Is it a door, and good-bye on either side?
A window, and eternity on either side?
Yes, and a little singing between two great rests.

— Li-Young Lee

Lee visited Green Meadow Waldorf School in October, 2004 for readings and workshops.

The Wholeness Of Imagination

by

A. C. Harwood, MA.

(A Lecture given at Attingham Park Adult College, first printed in *Child and Man* in 1959)

Every language possesses words of special historical value. Such words are windows through which we may catch glimpses of the developing human consciousness. Perhaps the word which of all modern words gives the most profound view into this changing landscape is Imagination. It is a word which has had a growth almost opposite to that which generally obtains in language.

It is the usual fate of words to lose their original active quality and die into abstraction. 'Imagination' began as a thing, a noun, meaning a concrete pictorial representation: then at a definite point in history it sloughed off its noun-skin, and appeared all new and glistening as a force, an active principle of the mind, as in essence a verb. (See *History in English Words* by Owen Barfield [Faber & Faber].)

The transformation occurred about the year 1800, and was accomplished by the great poets of that extraordinary age, by Blake, by Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats and above all by Coleridge, who being a philosopher-psychologist as well as a poet gave definition to the new word within a theory of knowing and being. Shakespeare was almost alone in anticipating the never active use of the word when he made Duke Theseus in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* say that in the poet's mind Imagination "bodies forth the shape of things unknown." But the general use of the word in his time was that of the Magnificat in the Authorised translation of the Bible: "He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts"; which means, of course, "He has destroyed the picture they have of themselves."

There is a deep historical reason why the poets of the time of the industrial revolution needed to attach a new meaning to the word Imagination. From the earliest ages men had always thought in pictures. Mediaeval thinking still lived in such a world of pictures, which it had received from the Greeks, who had in part received it from the Chaldaeans, who had received it from, literally, God knows where. It was a world in which the heavens and the earth were part of one great spiritual being, in which stars and planets lived on the earth as influences in stones and plants and animals, in which man, as the supreme of creatures, was an image or microcosm of the universe; a world, therefore, into which man could place himself with all his powers of heart and mind and soul, as scientist, as artist, as poet, as philosopher, as mystic. But after the sixteenth century a new world had come into being, the world of Bacon, of Descartes, of Locke, of Newton, where mechanical forces worked on each other at a distance, or 'bil-

liard-ball' atoms chivied each other in proximity, a world which could only be pictured, if it could be pictured at all, in terms of a wound-up clock or other mechanism, a world into which man could only insert himself by becoming a part of that mechanism. The reasoning mind had separated itself from the instinctive picture-forming faculty, poetry and science had fallen apart, and religion was already trying to keep a foot in both worlds.

To begin with, the objectivity and practical triumphs of the new scientific consciousness carried all before them.

Nature and Nature's laws were hid in night,
God said 'Let Newton be,' and all was light.

But by the end of the century more sensitive spirits were recognising that the science whose object was power over nature was in fact divorcing man from nature, that man was losing himself in conquering the earth.

First and fiercest of these spirits was the visionary William Blake, for whom the mathematical consciousness of Newton was merely a kind of sleep—the sleep of Ulro he called it in his prophetic books. “May God us keep,” he wrote, “from single vision and Newton's sleep.” Locke, Newton, Voltaire, Johnson and their like were the objects of Blake's anathema, the people who saw in the sky a “disk of fire somewhat like a guinea” where Blake saw an “innumerable company of the Heavenly Host, crying, ‘Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty.’” For Blake regarded Imagination as the divine, the Christ principle in man. “O Human Imagination,” he writes, “O Divine Body I have crucified!” It is the Imagination won through mental fight which will restore to the soul the vision of God and build ‘Jerusalem’—the heavenly state of the soul—in England's green and pleasant land.

Blake was a soul standing apart in his age, whose prophetic voice is only now beginning to be heard and understood. It was Wordsworth and Coleridge who mediated the idea of the creative imagination into the language and thought of England, Wordsworth more successfully because he kept within the sphere of poetry, where one could still pretend there was one truth for the imaginative mind and another for the rational (we must not forget that Wordsworth's rational mind denied the imaginative vision of his *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in Childhood*); Coleridge more profoundly because he saw the implication for the whole of life of the faculty of creating images. For Coleridge believed that imaginative thinking—thinking in pictures—is continuous with the divine act of creation. We become spectators when we think about the world abstractly, we unite ourselves with the world when we think in images. It was the danger of becoming mere spectators and losing contact with reality which made Coleridge warn his generation of the danger of thinking without images. He felt the loss of living reality even in the ‘billiard-ball’ universe of his day. In the modern age, when the scarcely pictureable universe of Newton has passed into the completely unrepresentable world of mathematical physics, Coleridge's warning has a new insistence.

Coleridge was an exact thinker and believed in making what he called 'fruitful distinctions.' He began by dividing Imagination into two parts, Primary and Secondary. Primary Imagination he describes as "the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite 'I am.'" This means that even the simplest act of perception is not (as the analogy of the camera has led most people to believe) an act of passive reception, but an act of creation, and an act, moreover, which is continuous with the divine act of creation itself. Man instinctively thinks in images because God created the world in images. This first kind of Imagination is something which is 'given': it is the primeval picture consciousness which still speaks to us in Myth and Saga and Fairy Tale, and into which all children are born. But Secondary Imagination is something over which we have conscious control. Coleridge says we must think of it 'as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency and differing only in degree and in the mode of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates in order to recreate ... and, even where this is impossible, yet still it struggles to idealise and unify.'

It is this seeking for unity, or ideal wholeness, which Coleridge used as a touchstone in another 'fruitful distinction', that between Imagination and Fancy. He invented the dreadful word 'esemplastic' for the power which Imagination wields of fusing parts into a living whole. This fusing is only possible if every part has in it the *quality* of the whole, is connected inwardly and plastically with the whole, is something like a microcosm of the whole. Fancy on the other hand has only an 'aggregating' power. It has 'no other counters to play with but fixities and definitives.' It builds an agreeable totality by similarities and contrasts, but these are of an external kind only and add nothing of essential meaning. Being a poet, Coleridge naturally applied the distinction in the first place to poetry. He gave as an example of Fancy a verse from Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*:

Full gently now she takes him by the hand,
A lily prisoned in a gaol of snow,
Or ivory in an alabaster band,
So white a friend engirts so white a foe.

Here almost the only thing which connects the images together is the external appearance of whiteness. There is no inner significance linking together a hand, a lily and a snow-prison. With this passage he contrasts, as an example of Imagination, another two lines from the same poem:

Look, how a bright star shooteth from the sky,
So glides he in the night from Venus' eye.

Here the comparison carries a depth of inner meaning, the swiftness and silence of the movement, the finality of the disappearance, the blankness and darkness when the bright one is gone, the hopelessness of pursuit.

Such a distinction is fruitful in any of the arts. In literature it is a touchstone to distinguish verse from poetry, and might with advantage be applied to much modern writing. But Coleridge by no means considered Fancy and Imagination as opponents or enemies. On the contrary he thought that the one could hardly exist without the other. "Imagination must have Fancy," he wrote, "in fact the higher intellectual powers can only act through a corresponding energy of the lower." A young writer will enrich his perception in the sphere of fancy; only maturity brings true imagination. But if Fancy holds its domain in fee to Imagination, it is nevertheless a rich domain with hunting grounds of its own in which the over-lord will not despise the game.

Imagination not only gives significance to a whole poem (or work of art in general) it invests even the single words with meaning. The greater the poem the more we need to call forth the imaginative quality of every word. We need not do this to any great extent with a simple descriptive poem such as Gray's *Elegy*:

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

This is a scene which is easily pictured, a painting of great charm but no great depth or richness of colour. Contrast this verse with a passage from Shakespeare's *Tempest*.

The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palace
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a wrack behind.

The apparently simple catalogue with which the passage begins is deceptive. In reality it calls forth in the fewest possible images the totality of human achievement on the earth. Tower—palace—temple, with what a wealth of meaning we can, and must, invest these simple words if we are to appreciate these lines!

If Imagination invests words with their meaning, the reverse is true that without Imagination words become mere counters or symbols. They turn into a kind of algebra. But like the symbols of algebra they can be made to work even when they have no meaning. Some modern philosophies deal with words as mere algebraical symbols—and in the process human values disappear. The conception of the world postulated by mathematical physics certainly works at one level. But it has lost all meaning for human life. Man cannot insert himself—his rich experience of life—into this network of formula. And because man is part of the universe, any con-

ception of the universe into which he cannot be inserted must *ipso facto* be lacking in wholeness, and therefore be untrue.

In his way and in his age Coleridge already saw this. He was a philosopher as well as a poet, and he wanted to create a science based on the faculty of the Imagination. He saw that abstract scientific thinking contemplates the world as something outside the ego. It thinks about the world and does not experience it by uniting itself with it. Now it is true that from one point of view the ego and the world it contemplates are in opposition to each other, are different from each other. But life works in polarities, and the other pole is the union of the ego with the universe. Abstract thought knows only one pole and is therefore dead itself and only understands death. Imagination grasps both poles and is therefore living, and understands life. For just as God—the divine ‘I am’—created man—the human ‘I am’—as something both like Himself, a being able to speak the ineffable name of ‘I’, and yet at the same time different, so Imagination lives also in the polarity of sameness and difference. Hence an essential mark of secondary Imagination in works of art is to unite opposites, “Novelty with Tradition, the General with the Concrete, the Idea with the Image, the Natural with the Artificial, more than usual emotion with more than usual order.”

It is evident that if Coleridge had succeeded in founding a Natural Science on the faculty of Imagination, the idea of polarity would have played a very important part in it. It would also have been a science in which the Logos manifested itself in all realms of nature. Geology being the Logos in the earth, Biology the Logos in the plant. Zoology the Logos in the animal, Anthropology, the Logos in man. But though Coleridge threw out some very interesting ideas, they were at best fragments. He was notoriously lacking in system, and he had little of the quality of patient observation.

In this he appears in striking contrast to the contemporary he so much admired, Goethe. It almost seems that by a trick of fate, the English and the German character were reversed in these two men of genius. Germany, the home of introspection and philosophy, produced Goethe, who wrote:

Mein Sohn, ich hab' es klug gemacht,
Ich habe niemals über denken gedacht.

which may be translated:

I tell you, son, I'm pretty clever,
About thinking I've thought — never.

England, the home of observation and experiment, produced Coleridge, who did little else but think about thinking! But while Coleridge was thinking about thinking, Goethe's imaginative eye was seeing the Archetypal Plant, in relation to which every plant is the same yet different, or maintaining that the single bone contained the wholeness in the part, so that the entire skeleton could be built up from it, or studying the polarity of

light and darkness and the appearance of the living world of colour as their intermediate term.

The impulse given by Goethe in Germany and Coleridge in England—in such contrasting ways—to an imaginative interpretation of the universe did not find any immediate success. Human consciousness had to travel further from its own original instinctive picture-thinking into the dead world of mere number, measure and weight before a resurrection could take place into the new world of consciously—and therefore freely—created pictures, which is the world of Imagination. The work of Coleridge and Goethe and their contemporaries marks the beginning of this resurrection. The work of Rudolf Steiner carries it very, very much further. Indeed Imagination as understood by the Romantics, even in its deepest sense, is only the threshold of Steiner's spiritual perception. But in every aspect of Steiner's work you will find the beginning is made by the conscious creation of pictures, whether in the process of self-development, or in the study of morphology in the kingdoms of nature.

It follows as a natural course that the educational work founded by Steiner is shot through with imaginative understanding and the understanding of Imagination. Indeed the child—being himself a part of that imaginative whole we call humanity—echoes in his development the course taken by human consciousness in history. He begins by seeing the world in terms of pictures. In his play the carpet becomes a sea, the chair a ship, the sofa an island. He lives in a world of changing scenes inhabited by characters of whom the adults around him often know little or nothing. He does not see the world around him in the stark matter-of-fact outlines which the modern adult sees. It is the task of a true education to foster and enrich this marvellous gift of Fancy in order that it may later be reborn as Imagination. Most forms of education set to work to destroy it by scientific explanations, which do not so much explain as explain away. They furnish the child with head knowledge, when he is craving for heart knowledge. When he asks for bread, they give him a stone.

Fantasy can be kept alive till the advent of puberty when intellectual thought is born. As it declines the keenness of perception for the world outside increases. For small children have not, for instance, acute visual perception.

It is difficult to get them to see the distant ship in the ocean, or the bird hovering in the sky; nor do they perceive the 'hidden' thimble so palpably obvious to the adult. They see best what is in movement. The form and gesture of things suggest pictures to them. As the pictures of Fancy disappear, the objects of the world become more distinct. But, as Coleridge truly held, even the immediate pictures of sense-perception are acts of creation, not of passive receptivity.

Therefore one of the tasks of a true education is to help the child's vision of the world to be as vivid and creative as possible. For this reason the first science lessons in a Rudolf Steiner school, which begin about the age of twelve, are observational in character. Theories come later.

The theories must indeed come. It is a necessary part of human experience, a necessary condition of human freedom, to detach oneself from the world and consider it abstractly. But this is only one half of the story, and a true education will also sow the seeds of imaginative thinking by which ultimately the adult may regain in consciousness that union with the spiritual being of the world from which he fell in childhood. This is also attempted in a Steiner school.

The world is interpreted morphologically rather than atomistically. The life-giving principle of polarity is again and again invoked. The exact eye of the scientist is enriched with the vision of the artist. The Fantasy of the young child is born again in the creative act of Imagination, which becomes an organ not for the inner life of man alone but for the understanding of the world.

It is here where the education founded by Rudolf Steiner stands in the very centre of one of the most acute problems of to-day—the relation of the Sciences with the Humanities. By its very definition modern Natural Science investigates a world outside man—moral and aesthetic considerations which form the core of his being have no place in the laboratory. The Humanities on the other hand (as their very name implies) are essentially concerned with human values. The two may be taught side by side, but they share no common language, and man remains in a divided world where his moral and aesthetic being cannot converse with his scientific knowledge. The dichotomy was clearly seen, and its solution prophetically envisaged, more than a hundred years ago by the American Ralph Waldo Emerson in his *Essay on Nature*, only that he uses the term naturalist where we would say natural scientist or simply scientist. A few of his more pregnant sentences will make a fitting end to this article.

“The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is because man is disunited with himself . . . He cannot be a naturalist till he satisfies all the demands of the spirit . . . There are innocent men who worship God after the tradition of their fathers, but their sense of duty has not yet extended to the use of all their faculties. And there are patient naturalists, but they freeze their subject under the wintry light of their understanding. But when a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations and see it in the light of thought, shall, at the same time, kindle science with the fire of the holiest affections, then will God go forth anew into the creation.”

Such a faithful thinker was Rudolf Steiner, and we owe it to his recovery of the wholeness of Imagination that we can show our children a world where God has gone forth again into the creation.

Childhood Falls Silent: The Loss of Speech and How We Need to Foster Speech in an Age of the Media

by

Rainer Patzlaff

In civilised nations it is taken for granted that every school graduate can read and write. But the reality is different. Especially in the highly developed, rich industrial nations of the world, a new form of illiteracy is spreading more and more. It is called functional or post illiteracy because it concerns people who, in spite of having finished school, have not learned or have forgotten how to read and write. In the USA in 1994 it was estimated that 70 million people (28% of the population) fell into this category. Added to this are millions of so-called alliterate people who can read but don't like to, or simply don't. Altogether, according to international studies, this group of non-readers today represents a third of the population of most OECD states. In 1995, Barry Sanders impressively described the catastrophic social and cultural consequences of this development in his book "The Loss of Linguistic Sophistication". These consequences affect us all.

When the problem of declining ability to read and write was just beginning to be recognised there arose another, until then unimaginable, degeneration of human cultural faculties: not only the command of written language is lost to large parts of the population, but gradually the relation to the spoken word as well. As unbelievable as it may sound, speech falls silent!

Joachim Kutschke found some bitter words for it in the magazine *Spiegel* (38/1993): "Whether at home at the dinner table or in the car on the road, in German families, (what's left of them), people don't converse. At most functional instructions are still in use: 'Don't be so late!'; 'Leave that!'; 'Hurry up!'; and the binary answers of the little ones: "Yes". " No". "Yes"... ..end of conversation. Those who have as children been spoiled and tranquillised by the baby-sitter called television evidently fall silent later on as well. Do the mass media silence us more and more; do they produce a generation of mute zombies?"

Konrad Adam reported in 1993 that experienced primary school teachers expressed dismay about the inability of first graders to deal with speech at all: "The children have great difficulties understanding instructions, executing them and recounting events. Those who have grown up in healthy circumstances (which are no longer typical) would be astounded to discover in how many families today, days and weeks go by with hardly a word spoken." (Reported in the German newspaper, *FAZ*, 18.6.1993).

This problem has grown to such an extent that in Great Britain, according to a press release in 1996, emergency programs had to be set up "where first graders learn how to greet people or how to ask the way."

Disturbances in Speech Development at Preschool Age

As families fall silent in daily life and in front of the television screen we will see dramatic consequences in the acquisition of speech by small children. Physicians dealing with speech and hearing problems in children have long ago sounded the alarm, since the phonemicist Manfred Heinemann in Mainz, Germany, came across an unexpectedly high number of cases of children at the age of three-and-a-half to four years in need of treatment. Research carried out from 1988 to 1992 found, an average of 25 percent of the children had speech disorders, half of these cases being classed as mild and the other half ranging to severe. At first this result seemed unbelievable as a comparable study ten years earlier only found four percent, a figure which corresponded to previous results. The numbers were examined, but did not change. In ten years the level had risen by more than 20% - a frightening diagnosis!

Further research has been carried out, national and international congresses of logopaedists have dedicated themselves to this subject, and still the numbers do not change. Today we have to assume that on average every third or fourth child of preschool age suffers from a delay in, or disturbance of, its speech development, independent of social class or the level of educational opportunity Children of academics are affected as much as those of unskilled workers.

It has also come to light that speech disorders can have an effect on the entire motor and sensory development. Even years after therapy most of the children still show conspicuous shortcomings. Follow-up research on second and third graders who had had speech therapy for difficulties four years earlier, showed that 44 percent of them still had shortcomings and 36 percent had difficulties with orthography The short-term memory was less developed and dealing with sentence structures proved notably difficult for them. Many of the children displayed deficient motor skills as well.

Disturbances to speech development can lead to ongoing handicaps in other areas of a child's development.

“Talk To Me!”

For thousands of years speech has surrounded people like the air they breathe: children grew into it instinctively; learning to speak seemed to be a gift of nature. Today, however, it is no longer like this. In 1997 a leading health insurance company felt compelled to publish a book with the title “Talk to Me!” with the sole purpose being to stimulate parents to speak with their child! The reason is obvious: It would be unaffordable for the health insurance company if every third or fourth child would require speech therapy, not to mention that there would not be enough specialists to deal with the onslaught. All observers agree that preventative measures are needed!

For this, however, you need to know the causes, and they prove to be complex. Specialists like the above mentioned Manfred Heinemann,

and Theo Borbonus, director of a speech therapy school in Wuppertal, Germany, emphasise that the increase in cases of speech disorders is less due to medical factors than due to the changed socio-cultural conditions in which children grow up today. "Hearing problems, as obvious medical cause, have in fact increased", says Heinemann, but physicians and therapists unanimously see the main cause as deriving from the speechlessness between parent and child.

Parents "today have less time for their children: on average only 12 minutes per day remain for the mother to have a real conversation with her offspring", reports Borbonus and adds: "High unemployment, heightened competitive pressure, pressure to rationalise and painful cuts into the social security system, all make people more disheartened, more speechless and colder."

Television Harms Speech Development

The most significant factor, however, would be television consumption that devours more and more time of parents and children alike. In Germany, consumption has climbed from an average of 70 minutes per day in 1964 to 201 minutes per day among adults (where only the actual viewing time has been counted; the time when the television is running is much higher). In practice this means about three-and-a-half hours of communication shutdown between parent and child. From the remaining leisure time of employed fathers and mothers there would be hardly any time left for the child, and so it is to be expected that more and more children will be provided with their own TV-set and also spend three to four hours a day watching, as new statistics show.

It is particularly alarming that children between three and five years of age watch an average of two or more hours daily, some up to five and six hours. Heinemann remarks on this: "These are the children, in our experience, who also watch videos and play with the game-boy or play on the computer." And they are the ones who develop speech problems and have to be treated in a speech clinic. However it is not only the silence in front of the screen that has a disadvantageous effect on speech development in these children. Heinemann claims that this medium has an extremely unfavourable effect because it is "overvaluing visual information". "Even children's programs are often completely unrealistic," he criticises, "and 'fast cuts' do not let the child follow through the action sufficiently. The programs are structured according to stereotypes so that the imagination and creativity are not stimulated." The language used by the children at play is correspondingly limited, reduced to comic-like exclamations, fragments of sentences out of context and bizarre sound imitations accompanied by rigid movements. To aggravate this situation, television consumption keeps children from spontaneous, creative play, and natural movement, impeding their development even further. The stimuli and incentives that they urgently need for the development of their gross and fine motor skills as well as for their sense organs are denied them. When diverse stimuli are absent from the environ-

ment then the development of the brain can be harmed, according to Borbonus. Creativity, imagination and intelligence fall by the wayside. From long educational practice he observes that children are impeded through lack of primary experience in developing their sense of warmth and balance, their sense of smell and taste and their sense of touch and motion. The lack of adequate playgrounds and stimulating surroundings in a big city contributes to and reinforces the deficiency. Children need an environment that promotes development. "Human warmth, play and movement are indispensable", according to Borbonus.

Disastrous Consequences of a False Paradigm

One thing is obvious: the roots of the problem reach deep into the common habits and living conditions of our time. Speech problems are just the tip of an iceberg that starts to threaten our entire culture and civilisation. Big efforts will be necessary to correct these tendencies. The prospects of success will be small if we do not succeed in changing something decisively in ourselves, in our habitual way of thinking. Take the habit of wanting to grasp everything that is linked with speaking and listening with the purely technical model of sending and receiving, of input and output, as if we were dealing with an information exchange between two computers. This view is circulating widely in scientific communities today, and has been applied to the complex process of speech acquisition in children. It is claimed that this process just depends on the right input from the surroundings and this could not be provided better than through radio and television, as hardly any adult ever attains the speaker's perfectly trained language-use, not to mention the wealth of other educational possibilities that radio and television provide. It is claimed that television is the ideal source of learning for small children and nowhere can speech development be better promoted.

We see how grotesquely this view is divorced from reality when in 1996, Sally Ward, a leading English academic in the area of speech development in children, presented the results of ten years of research. She found out that 20 per cent of the investigated children by nine months of age proved to be behind in development when parents had used television as a baby-sitter. If television viewing was continued, most of the children at three years of age were one year behind: that means they spoke the language of a two-year old - a circumstance that endangered their whole development. When parents showed insight and switched the television off, replacing it with direct contact with the child, then the nine month old baby could be brought back to a normal stage of development within four months, through nothing but words: words spoken by their parents - live! In 1990 many scientists still considered it to be a cruel idea to expose children in their first years of life exclusively to speech through electronic media in order to find out if they could learn to speak that way. Now this idea for an experiment has become cruel reality, and it teaches us that speech coming out of a loudspeaker does not have the same effect as the speech of an adult in direct contact with the child. Coming from a loudspeaker it

deters development; coming from the mother it works so constructively that damage can be rectified.

So researchers have to ask the question: what distinguishes the speech coming through a loudspeaker from live speech? Physically there is no difference at all. How can it be then, that artificially generated speech interferes with brain function in children, whereas the original promotes it?

Speech is No Taxi

Linguistics has become used to viewing human speech as nothing other than a means of transportation where information goes from 'sender' to 'receiver'. This view which arose in the 19th century has, however, a serious consequence: if it is just a question of content that has to be transported, then the spoken word has no particular importance of its own, for the information could reach its destination by completely different means such as print, signage or gestures. What kind of medium is chosen does not matter to the information any more than it would matter to the passenger of a taxi to be brought to the station in a Daimler, a Volvo or a Ford.

However for the child, who is finding its feet in the world of language, the medium is by no means a matter of indifference. Only by means of the words directly spoken to her can a child become a human being in the most fundamental sense. Here we are not talking primarily about transferring information, but about a totally different, much more significant process. Before the small child is able to form a single sentence it has to learn the perfect control and coordination of more than a hundred muscles, all of which are involved in the act of speaking. This is an extremely complicated process, more difficult than any other movement capability that the human being acquires. And still it is only one of the processes, which a child needs to master to attain control over its body. From the first day of life the child is exercising the muscles of its whole body and their coordination. Beginning with the first hand and eye movements, through the processes of gaining uprightness, balance and the ability to walk and finally with the attainment of fine motor coordination, the child is a "being of movement". Out of this activity the articulation of the sounds of speech emerge like a ripening fruit.

Speech is an Art of Movement

As little as it is possible to comprehend the whole of a concert by an analysis of the sound frequencies, so is the spoken word not limited to the production of sound waves and information transfer. Behind speech is not a vibrating vocal cord but an artist of movement, who has "tuned" his instrument with the greatest effort until it is able, without apparent strain, to draw the innumerable sounds and nuances of language from the flow of breath.

If we could observe this unconscious activity we would discover that sculptural forms are continually being created, akin to the work of a sculptor in wood or stone. Only here the material is the soft musculature in

which the forms are continually being shaped and reshaped. To articulate speech it is by no means enough to send the flow of breath through the larynx and to release it as a sound out of the mouth. In fact, on its way through the windpipe, throat and mouth to the outside, breath has to run through a hollow passage formed like a relief - a kind of riverbed, the form of which is changed by the muscles of the palate, the uvula, the tongue, the jaw and lips, almost instantaneously, depending on the sound that will be created. As the flow of air passes the lips, it not only carries the sound but also a particular tendency to form according to the shape of the 'riverbed' just passed, and it impresses this into the air in front of the mouth. From the inner relief of muscles outward sculptural forms of air are generated.

Rudolf Steiner, in 1924, was the first to point out these invisible forms in the air that are created in front of the mouth of the speaker. The Dresdener teacher, Johanna Zinke, followed up with decades of research demonstrating that in fact every sound creates a characteristic and recurring form in the air outside the mouth. To make these visible and to record them photographically she initially used the natural condensation in cold air. Later she worked with cigarette smoke that was inhaled before speaking. Photos were also taken using a 'Toepler-device' and an interferometer. A complete picture unfolded when the 'air-sound forms' were filmed with a high-speed camera. Here it was observed how, within fractions of a second, every form develops from the smallest beginnings, reaches a climax and dissolves again, each with its own tempo and unmistakable gesture. Every sound revealed itself as a flowing sculpture. Speech is in the first place a form-generating, movement process. Dynamic shapes are built, some of which float in the air for seconds after the corresponding sound-wave has died away. At the same time the entire body of the speaker performs movements corresponding to each sound, which are not perceivable to the naked eye. This has been discovered by the young science of kinesics when speaking persons were filmed with a high-speed camera and the individual pictures were carefully analysed. It was seen that these fine movements occur exactly synchronously with the act of speaking and involve all the muscles of the body, from the head to the feet.

The Listener "Dances" to the Sounds

With great surprise kinesics found that the listener answers the perceived speech with just the same fine movements as the speaker unconsciously performs, also incorporating the whole body and with a delay of only 40 to 50 milliseconds, precluding the possibility of conscious reaction. Condon, the one responsible for this discovery, describes this astonishing synchronicity of movements in the speaker and the listener as follows: "Figuratively speaking it is as if the whole body of the listener was dancing in precise and flowing accompaniment to the perceived speech."

Even if you cannot establish a physical connection between both processes, it is as if both speaker and listener are moving in a common medium of rhythmic movement. And this applies only for speech sounds,

not for noise or disjointed vowels, as repeated tests have proven. The spoken language, however, can be of any kind: Condon found that a two-day-old baby in the USA reacts to spoken Chinese with the same minute movements as to spoken American-English.

From this we can see that heard speech is first registered by an unconscious physical response. Like a dancer this faculty in each of us places itself in the vibrant, streaming and sculpting motility of speech. We do this directly, without first consciously recognising and processing the sound - 0.04 of a second does not allow time for intellectual reflection or an emotional response!

Speech Resounds through the Whole Person

Here we are in the most profound, most elementary layer of speech, where it is pure movement. The very essence of speech arises out of movement. It is the nature of speech to transform the hard rigidity of a corner or edge into a flowing process of muscular movements and air-sound sculptures that continuously unfold from E to D to G and to E. This process of movement enters the muscles and limbs of the listener, so that the same process seizes them. Literally the whole person listens. Even the larynx of the listener continually joins in the speaking and singing of what the other speaks or sings.

But this is just the first step in the process of listening. In the next phase of the process the movement changes from being purely muscular activity and enters the rhythmic system of heart and lung. There it causes, as every narrator can observe in his listeners, tension and easing of tension, acceleration and slowing down of the natural rhythms and these fine deviations now seize the soul as well and are experienced vividly. The physical movement changes into a soul-movement. From the realm of the unconscious, that resembles deep sleep, we enter the realm of dreamy, half-conscious feelings.

Only at the third step does the movement reach the nerve-sense pole, the head, where it changes once again, this time into activity in the spiritual realm that enters the wakeful consciousness as an idea or imagination. In this conceptual sphere the concept edge becomes something firm and motionless, whereas in the physical event of sound shaping it has still been a pure movement, and on the soul level an animated emotion. As such, speech resounds through the whole person from below upwards and not vice versa:

Nerves/Senses	Spiritual Activity	Understanding	Fully Conscious
Heart/Brain	Emotional Activity	Sensation	Half Conscious
Muscles	Physical Movement	Action	Unconscious

Acquisition of Speech and the Development of the Brain

These steps from below upward in the process of listening also correspond to the process that the child undergoes when it learns to speak. Here too, the starting point cannot be found in the cool, registering head, but in the completely unconscious, rapt movement of the body. This activity takes place simultaneously with the speech movements of the speaker and in this light we will have to correct the familiar idea of childhood imitation: It is not imitation after the event but a concurrent interplay. The case of the American newborn mentioned above, whose physical movements resonated to the sounds of the Chinese language as much as to the English language, demonstrates how this process is really functioning. The child does not wait motionlessly listening to the incoming speech sounds, in order to try to imitate them with its own attempts at movement. Rather it puts itself from the first moment onwards with its whole physical body, into the movement sphere of sounds. It “dances,” with full precision and regularity, and in unison to the flow of speech of the adult, without adding its own interpretation. Condon has summarised this in the title of his research report: “Neonate Movement is Synchronised with Adult Speech.” This does not have anything to do with feeling or thinking, but is pure activity: form-giving movement. And out of this movement the child forms its speech.

A profound mystery is dwelling in this process, which we should become more and more aware of if we want to support the development of speech in the child in the right way. While the child learns to form sounds it simultaneously works on the development of the brain, which only through this experience reaches its final maturity. In this way the foundation is laid for all later intelligence, with the adult participating in a decisive way. Whether we recognise it or not, we have an effect on the physical body of the child through the spoken word and we consequently influence the emotional and spiritual possibilities for the child’s development later in life. Which of us is aware of this immense responsibility when we talk to a child?

The Autistic Loudspeaker

No loudspeaker can take this responsibility. Actually the loudspeaker proves to be hopelessly deficient in providing what is essential in early childhood. The sounds are lacking the most crucial quality on which speech development depends: the human being and the intention in speech. It is precisely this human intention that works deeply into the child, shaping the musculature so that speech arises; sounds formed by the warm, moist breath sculpting ever-changing forms in the surrounding air. An active will is at work and it awakens the will in the child to form sounds for itself. For only the will ignites the will; only a fully present “I” awakens the “I” of the child and arouses it to engage the instruments of speech and to fully develop their function. What speech scientists blandly call “interaction” reveals itself as a spiritual event between two beings, between two wills; a

driving force that works out of the spiritual down into the physical processes, as much in the adult as in the child.

The loud speaker lacks this dimension entirely. It is impossible for it to shape these air-sound forms. It produces nothing but sound waves, mechanical vibrations of a paper membrane that address themselves to nobody in particular and do not expect a reaction from anybody. In fact children do react to these sounds with the imperceptible movements in their bodies, but their own sound-forming will is not engaged and therefore no significant speech development happens, as the findings of Sally Ward make clear. The loudspeaker remains autistic, contributing nothing to child development.

The Music in Speech - The Life-element of Children

Speech lives in community. As soon as one person speaks and another listens (as kinesics shows), both speaker and listener enter a common sphere of movement and flowing sculpture that seize them and wash around them like a form-creating sea. This common sphere does not only comprise the word as such, but everything that can be called musical in speech: intonation and emphasis, timbre and tone, rhythmical structures, pitch and nuances of the voice – loud and soft, fast and slow – these are all elements of speech that have a much deeper effect on the child than the content of the spoken language. At every place where singing and playing, speaking and moving flow together to a unity, children find themselves in their element. For good reasons they demand songs and rhymes, verses and circle games to be sung and spoken not only once but over and over again. They do not care for the conceptual information, where a single communication would be enough. Rather, for them, it is the forming and sculpting quality of the word as music which is important; in harmony with this they form their whole organism. In the same way that we need to eat and drink with rhythmic regularity in order to nourish the body, the “speech body” of the child lives off rhythmic repetition. Children themselves discover compositions of sounds that contain nothing other than the music of speech and the joy of rhythm, as the following verse for choosing a person clearly demonstrates:

Ennc denne dubbc denne
Dubbe denne dalia
Ebbe bebbe bembio
Bio bio buff!

Unburdened of conceptual information you can dream into the sound magic of this verse, carried pleasantly by the steady rhythm of each word, until finally the wake-up comes and the one who will do the seeking or catching is chosen!

Those who want to do children a favour should consciously encourage the kind of speech and movement games that used to arise automatically in children's play. When choosing children's books we should not gauge the value of the text so much on the intellectual and conceptual content as

on the musical and rhythmic quality of the language, the image-creating power of the words and the artistic composition of the sentences. These aspects make up the real nourishment which children relish. Perhaps, to some degree, one has to become a child again to feel wonder at the musical quality of poetically formed language and to feel its healthy, uplifting power. Then one feels what it means to be in the realm of creative and formative life-forces, where the child is at home in its entire being.

Words Create Images Building the Soul-life

These life-forces however, transform themselves into something higher, following a principal common to all development. When their work on the physical organisation of the body is complete and the most important functions have developed, the magical effect of speech on the body of the child slowly declines, and instead we see speech now working formatively in the realm of fantasy and inner imagination. Just as the single sound selflessly becomes part of the word and in a way disappears within it, so does the moulding quality of the sound recede behind the emotional experience of the image that is conjured up from the linked sounds of the word. This begins to occur from the third or fourth year of life onwards. The moulding quality still acts in the background as demonstrated by the joy children continue to display in rhymes, rhythmic sound games, word tricks and verses, continuing into the first school years. However the image that arises out of the sound composition comes more and more to the fore, and this image is more alive for the children the more it arises out of the sounds themselves. Two examples should make this clear.

In the fairy tale “The Bremen Town Musicians” the donkey says to the run-away dog: “Why do you gasp so, Packan?” Even if the children have never heard the word “gasp” they understand it from the onomatopoeic sounds and see with their inner eye the dog with his tongue hanging out and panting for air. The sharp teeth become a concrete image through the onomatopoeic quality of the dog’s name “Packan” (English: “get him!”), which makes the sharp bite of the animal audible through the P and K. In this way it is possible for the sounds to create very concrete, almost sensually comprehensible images in the soul of the child. As rich as sensory reality are the possibilities of language to name every thing and every being with its own appropriate name. And so the donkey talks in a very different way to the pitiful looking cat. He greets her with the words: “What has crossed your path old Muzzle-wiper?” where the consonant sequence (M-W) characterises the elegant aesthetics of the cat wiping her snout with her velvety paws and licking them with her tongue. Children are delighted when the image arises out of the sounds.

This image however has a completely different quality than the television image. It is of utmost importance for adults to recognise that one is shot on the retina as a prefabricated image from outside while the other is formed by the child from the image-creating powers of its own soul and is therefore an active, creative achievement. The technically produced and

forcibly coerced image paralyzes the inner image-creating power of the child, and with it an essential part of its spiritual and soul development. Only out of intense inner activity do ongoing abilities arise.

A New “Undertone” in the Words

As important as was the formative impact of speech on the physical organs during the first years of life, equally important is the unfolding of the soul faculties of fantasy and imagination for the future life of the child. Children, however, rarely find the appropriate environment for this unfolding to occur, since the general usage of language has become highly abstract, without us being aware of it. It can be very significant for the healthy development of children if adults try to use an image-rich and concrete language. We can educate ourselves to do this if we sometimes look for the images that lie dormant and unnoticed in every word. Often it just needs a little jolt in our consciousness to notice them and suddenly you grasp something, you understand it, feeling enlightened you recollect that the adjective hard-headed means a hard head! Many images have become so pale that you can no longer detect them behind the word, in spite of all efforts. In these cases an etymological dictionary that shows the background and the original meaning of words can be useful. It is well worth leafing through one from time to time. Who would know, for example, that the German word “Treue” (English: “faithfulness”) dates back to an old Indo-European word which referred to the solid wooden core of an oak tree! What a beautiful image of faithfulness!

Sometimes etymological dictionaries give you something to chew on. If you look, for example, for the original image in the German word “denken” (English: “to think”) you are told that it is related to the German word “dunken = scheinen” (English: “seem to”) that means, “to appear.” What is meant by this you only conceive when you understand “Schein” (English: “appearance, shine”) not philosophically and abstractly but sensually and concretely as “shine of light.” Then thinking means, “to ignite an inner light.”

Similarly the German word “werden” (English: “to become”) is related to the Latin word *vertere* and means turn, rotate, turn over. But what has “become” to do with “turn over?” The riddle is solved when you get to know that *vertere* can mean “to plow” as well: The farmer turns over the clod of earth so that it becomes fertile for the new seed, and as such he turns the formerly visible soil over to become invisible and vice versa, the previously invisible becomes visible. In the same way the annual plant “turns over” in spring from invisibility to visibility and in autumn back to invisibility.

As the adult makes such forays into the history of words and begins to listen more concretely, very soon his own language becomes more concrete, more substantial and more saturated with images, and the more he “tastes” the life-juice of words, the more nourishing his speech will become for the souls of children. Outwardly the words don’t change. How-

ever something begins to permeate them which Rudolf Steiner called an “undertone.” It goes straight to the heart and creates a new level of interaction.

The relationship to speech changes completely when puberty starts. The young person sorts the conceptual structures and the laws of logic out of the language and starts to juggle with them like a virtuoso. He leaves the spoken language behind him completely and rises up to the sphere of pure thinking where mathematicians of all languages and nations reach the same incontestable results. But this is another subject that will not be dealt with here.

In the Beginning is the Word

Our contemplation has shown us the significance of the creative power of “the Word”, with ramifications for the entire life of a person growing up. “The Word” sculpts the organs of the small child, it gives life and form to the soul-life, and it releases the spirit of the adolescent. Without “the Word” a person would not become a human being; no growth, no development would be possible. “In the beginning was the word.” The profound truth of this biblical quote takes on a new meaning in the face of the current speech catastrophe. In German the words “Wort” (English: “word”) and “werden” (English: “to become”) have nearly the same linguistic root. And in the creative word there is always the potential for something to come into being, in the sense of a “turning over” as described above. That which lives in the speaker in the form of thoughts and feelings is “turned over” by speech to become outwardly audible sounds passing through the air to the listener. Then in the listener the acoustic sound phenomena “turn over” again to become the inner perception of concepts and emotions. The word changes the supersensory into the sensory and the sensory into the supersensory. This principal of speech does not however work through machines. It needs the human being as medium of the word. Only then can speech be instrumental in leading the “I” of the child down from the supersensory world to the sensory world; only then can speech release from the sensory world the super-sensory forces which the child needs to unite soul and spirit with the physical body.

The adult has the chance to place herself in the service of the creative phenomenon of speech and she must constantly remind herself: although it is I who speaks, and without me the words would have no effect, still the power of the word does not come from me. Speech has made me human and I pass it on to the child who wants to become human.

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