

WALDORF CLEARING HOUSE NEWSLETTER

Waldorf School
Cambridge Avenue
Garden City, N.Y. 11530

FALL 1975

Dear Colleagues:

I should like to quote from a letter I recently received from the Clearing House correspondent in one of the larger Waldorf schools:

"Here is our order and payment for 18 subscriptions. . . . Practically all orders are from new or special teachers; the older hands feel that the annual teachers' conference has replaced the need for a Clearing House Newsletter."

If this sentiment is a representative one throughout the schools, then my feeling that perhaps the Clearing House is ready for some kind of transformation is a justified one.

In this year of substantial issues to be decided, the fate of the Clearing House is certainly a minor one. However, there will be an interim delegates' meeting in New York City on January 17, 1976. If each school there represented could express some kind of consensus of its own faculty on the usefulness of continuing publication, those opinions would help me in re-thinking the role of the Clearing House and in framing a proposal concerning it at the West Coast conference in June, 1976.

For this year there will be two issues; this one and one in the spring - if contributions come in!

Do let me know your minds about this, will you?

Cordially,



Mrs. Edwin A. Charles
Editor

NEWS IN GENERAL

TORONTO WALDORF SCHOOL

We ended last year with one of the most important events in the life of our school, the annual teachers' conference. Through the physical presence and intense spiritual activity of so many colleagues and kindred souls from all over the continent, we felt truly part of a strong and active community, and we became reconfirmed in our own aims and efforts.

After the last goodbyes to all our friends of the conference, we opened our gates to a group of smaller guests who attended our summer day camp. Quite a number of our teachers were engaged in giving the 60 children, ages 4 to 11, an enjoyable and meaningful three weeks of holiday. This in turn helped raise a considerable sum for our building fund. While some teachers were busy earning some capital for the school, others were engaged in spending it again for building materials. New classrooms and completion of the framing-in were significant accomplishments this summer.

Our first ninth grade this fall initiated our high school program. Concurrently with this, we began a whole series of extra-curricular activities every Tuesday and Thursday for grades 6 - 9. These include drama, photography, cooking, gymnastics, a school newspaper, and our newly formed orchestra. Now there remains only one question: who or what will be ready first - our great central hall or the orchestra to play in it?

- Gerhard Rudolph
Faculty Chairman

GREEN MEADOW SCHOOL

"Education: The Path to Freedom" was the theme of a two day parent-teacher conference held at Green Meadow on October 4 and 5. Teachers prepared for the conference by studying and discussing the five lectures given by Dr. Steiner at Stuttgart in 1924, "Essentials of Education."

Approximately 125 parents and teachers gathered for the conference. A plenary session was followed by discussion in separate nursery, elementary, and high school groups. Reports from these three groups to the general meeting ended the conference. Those attending agreed that there was a need to continue this fruitful search into the nature of Waldorf education in similar weekend conferences in the future.

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Intermittent rain did not dampen the festival spirit of the annual Fall Fair which we held in late October. Large crowds came to admire and buy plants, hand-made toys, gifts, books, and white elephant treasures. Potters,

GREEN MEADOW SCHOOL, CONT.

spinners, weavers, lace-makers, and book binders demonstrated their skills.

Children took part in a wide variety of handwork activities, such as sewing wool gnomes, making corn husk dolls, constructing animals of chestnuts, acorns, and twigs, dipping and decorating candles, and making stained glass panels.

The Fall Fair benefit is vital in helping us meet each year's budget. Perhaps even more important is the joyful and harmonious atmosphere created by the hard work of so many parents, teachers, and children joined in common cause.

- Ann Stahl

FROM THE GRADES

Pre-school:

A two-day conference for pre-school teachers was sponsored this fall by the pre-school teachers of the Rudolf Steiner School, New York City. About 40 teachers from cities as distant as Kalamazoo, Chicago, Toronto, and Bedford, Va. attended.

Elizabeth Haas from Berne, Switzerland, was the principal speaker. Imitation as the Developmental Foundation of the Human Being and Aspects of Freedom through Education were her topics, both of which were thoroughly appreciated by her audience. Werner Glas spoke on Early Childhood Education and the Future.

A practical session on puppetry and children's drama which included several puppet shows, and a fruitful discussion on festivals and other topics took place on Saturday.

All who attended were grateful for the initiative and hospitality of the Steiner School pre-school teachers. Plans for future meetings are under consideration.

- Marjorie Grochola
Pre-School, Waldorf School
Garden City, N.Y.

Marionettes in the Kindergarten

The work with marionettes has become an essential ingredient in pre-school work abroad. The following description of the use of string puppets at Green Meadow School is meant to stimulate similar efforts at other schools in the United States. However, a short review of the "why" should precede the "how".

In former days when most children grew up in large families and smaller communities, morning and evening devotions and Sunday worship was often a part of their early experience. Life then was less hurried and provided the child with many archetypal pictures, food for his urge to imitate, as he watched the adults go about their work.

Marionettes, continued.

Today's children are exposed to a multitude of sense impressions having little to do with their own everyday life's needs; hence many of their impressions are quite incomprehensible to them. As a result, our schools are filled with nervous, "hyperactive" children that can't concentrate, children with weak will forces. What the village community gave the growing child no more than thirty years ago just by its own everyday functioning, we must now create for him in a different form.

The marionette show is a tool to bring into the life of today's child a reverent mood, archetypal pictures as expressed in the true fairy tale, and a simple melodic experience expressed in lyre playing and singing in the pentatonic mode.

The performance of fairy tales by string puppets can be soul festivals in the lives of small children, particularly when they accompany the changing seasons of the year. In a pre-school of various groups they can be the joyous gathering of 75 to 100 children, full of quiet anticipation as they enter the room where the stage has been arranged. When everyone has settled down, the sounds of the lyre ring through the absolutely quiet room. Soon the children recognize the songs they have learned in the weeks past, and when the lyre has ended they all burst forth to join in the songs. Then another hush falls as some of their teachers move to the puppet stage. The string puppets are guided by teachers behind a stage but in full view of the children. The experience of the puppet being guided from above is an archetypal image that should not be mysteriously hidden. The stage is primarily a symphony of colored veils that suggest in their various greens and browns the woods, in their royal reds and purples the King's palace, according to the needs of the fairy tale. The puppets themselves are a bare suggestion of the human form, but made from colors carefully chosen to give the right image of the character portrayed. As Rudolf Steiner suggested: "The puppets do not talk". Another teacher will read the fairy tale to which the puppets move. In its selection and in the songs the children sang together the mood of the season can speak to the children's soul.

It is not always easy to find a tale suitable for string puppets and expressive of the season. St. George and the Dragon is a wonderful story for Michaelmas and the children enjoy it more as it is repeated once or twice. The confrontation and overcoming of evil is a theme in many fairy tales suitable for the fall. A tale that brings the mood of Advent without already being a Christmas story is harder to find. Some of the legends of St. Nicholas should be suitable. A wonderful story that can be adapted for the purpose is "The Golden Footprint" by Henry Barnes. Giving and receiving are essential elements there. During the Christmas season the children are not in school, but the Three Kings season must be brought to them with a particularly vivid story. In daily living in our society the Christmas mood carries very little into the next year. But the beaming of the star and the gifts of the Kings are both themes that speak deeply to the children's hearts. The story of King Casper and the Lion (from Jakob Streit's "Dreikonigsbuch") has these two elements and can be very adequately performed by the string puppets.

Then what story can better depict the late winter mood with its hope of spring than Mother Holle? A fairy tale of transformation, like the frog prince, leads us into the wonder of spring and the ripe mood of midsummer fills the story of Jorinda and Joringel.

These are only a few examples from the content string puppet shows may have as we progress through the year.

At the end of the performance the children's singing, preceeded once more by the tones of the lyre, will bring the festival puppet show gathering to a close. The children return to their individual groups and play, nourished in their souls and strengthened in their wills. Thus a contribution can be made to the religious needs of the children's souls in their pre-school years.

- Kundry Willwerth
Green Meadow School
Spring Valley, N.Y.

First Grade: One of the most fascinating birds which frequent flowers and blossoming bushes in the West is the hummingbird. The following poem accompanies our beginning lessons on forms and shapes. The moving lemniscate of the hummingbirds' wings allowed the children to perceive the lemniscate as something more than the number 8.

Hummingbird, hummingbird
Whizzing and whirling,
Fast as fire your wings are twirling;
Flitting to flowers so fragrant and sweet,
Your wings hum a song as you eat;
Sipping sweet nectar through beak so long,
Sun-radiant colors flash - and you're gone.

- Virginia Sease
First Grade
Highland Hall

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Second Grade: Grade 2 is enjoying North American Indian stories. They are primarily nature stodes which give the children an experience of the close relationship of the Indians to the natural world of plants and animals, weather and seasons. We are making leather head bands with feathers, wampum bead belts, and birch bark model canoes as crafts projects. A very solemn naming ceremony was held, where each of the braves and maidens received their Indian names. At the end of this year we will don our costumes and sing the songs we have learned around a campfire to be held for the children and their parents.

Some of the books we are using in the classroom or that I have found useful for preparation are:

Little Wolf by Ann McGovern (Scholastic Book Services) -
used by the children in main lesson writing and reading.
Each child will receive a copy at the end of the year.

Songs and Stories of the North American Indians by Paul Glass
(Grosset & Dunlap, New York)

A Treasury of Memory-Making Indian Campfires by Alan MacFarlan
(Bonanza Books, New York)

- Mel Belenson
Grade 2
Toronto Waldorf School

FIRST GRAMMAR LESSONS

Parts of speech can be introduced with a story. Here is an example of a preposition story that at the same time reviews the other parts of speech:

Verb, Noun, Adjective, Adverb, Pronoun, and Preposition decided to go on a hike together. They knew that as they went walking in nature, they must have a leader to guide them. Who should it be?

"I should be the leader," said Verb. "I can do all sorts of things."

"No!" said the others. "You would be a terrible leader! You are always running about everywhere, doing things that no one else can do. No, you can't be leader."

"What about me?" said Noun. "I am very reliable."

"No!" said the others. "You would be a terrible leader. You never do anything but sit around. It would be too boring. You can't be leader."

And so it went. Adverb was always tagging along after Verb; Pronoun, though independent and strong, couldn't be friends with Noun. Adjective was always looking at the scenery.

"What about me?" asked Preposition. "I can do lots of things. I'm little and afraid ever to be alone, but I am very good at pointing the way."

The others were very doubtful of Preposition, but they decided that since he was the only one left, they would give him a chance. And so they went.....

out the door, across the street, around the corner, up the hill, through the woods, over the field, to the lake. And a good time was had by all!

- Karin Mortensen
Marin Waldorf School

Third Grade: The child in the third grade is ready to step forth firmly on the earth. This realization was made even more clear to me this autumn when we embarked on our annual hike in the beautiful New Hampshire woods. The maples had shed their leaves and provided a soft blanket for our feet.

In first grade the children were overwhelmed by the fairy tale sight which greeted them: "Look at the golden carpet," they all exclaimed. In second grade the magic remained: "Look at the pieces of gold falling from heaven!" chorused the class. Now, in third grade this year, they called out, "Look at the leaves! They look like butterscotch pudding!"

- David Mitchell
Pine Hill Waldorf School

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Fourth Grade: Over the years many fourth grade teachers have bemoaned the lack of good source material for Norse mythology. Here are a few good books I have found:

A Pageant of Old Scandinavia, Henry G. Leach, Ed. Books for Libraries Press, Freeport, N.Y. Reprint 1968 by arrangement University of Princeton Press
The Skalds, Lee M. Hollander. Princeton University Press, 1945 or American-Scandinavian Foundation
The Poetic Edda, Henry Adams Bellows, trans. American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1973.

The beauty of the last-named is that one can find the strong, alliterative verses in translation, with a good rhythm and feel to them. Here are two examples for class recitation:

Passed the peerless
Steepy stone cliffs
Fearsome fastness
Awful series

princely hero
straight and narrow
on footpaths toilsome
of uncouth monsters.

- - - -

Dreadless would I die now -
Dagger-sharp my tongue was -
nor sad, if saved I knew my tongue
soul was with my maker:
I shall not worry - well I
wot that sometime each must
die - hell fire I fear, though -
for my God will keep me.

- - - -

There are also many wonderful "sayings of Odin" which give a good picture of the ideals of Norse culture and religion. Little is to be found of doing the good. Rather, bravery, boldness, willness, and good manners are stressed. These verses can be used as good speech and spelling exercises:

Fire for men is the fairest gift
 And power to see the sun;
 Health as well, if a man may have it,
 And a life not stained with sin.

- - - -

The head alone knows what dwells near the heart,
 A man knows his mind alone;
 No sickness is worse to one who is wise
 Than to lack the longed-for joy.

These offer quite another experience than the Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament.

- Franklin Kane
 Grade 4
 Sacramento Waldorf School

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Fifth Grade: During our first Botany block, I told the life story of George Washington Carver. He was scientist with a true sense of the spirit working in the world. The children were quite interested in his life, philosophy, and work. For preparation, I read an excellent biography Dr. George Washington Carver, Scientist by Shirley Graham and George D. Lipscomb (Messner for hardcover, Washington Square Press for paperback).

- Bruce Libonn
 Grade 5
 Washington Waldorf School

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Eighth Grade: What better way to help the normally self-conscious eighth grade student to overcome his shyness than to have him interview an adult. In order to conduct an interview well, the student must be able to think clearly, listen attentively, transcribe accurately and write intelligently. He must strive to be both tactful and discreet.

Since the Eighth Grade has been traditionally responsible for producing the Middle-Lower School news magazine, "The Globe", the interviewing project grew naturally out of our need to create a worthwhile literary news journal.

To prepare for his assignment each child wrote at least ten questions he would ask someone in his home. The questions were read aloud and suggestions made for improvement. After this preparation formal interviews were conducted and rough drafts written at home. The final copies were written in class. Some

of the better interviews were read aloud the next day. It was obviously necessary to teach students how to punctuate direct and indirect quotations.

Finally, assignments were made for students to interview faculty and staff members, and letters of request were posted. Questions which would elicit more than a "yes" or "no" answer were encouraged. Indiscreet questions and questions having obvious answers were eliminated before the interviews took place.

Before we print any of our completed interviews in "The Globe" we will have the accuracy of each verified by the person interviewed.

If one can measure the success of this venture by the children's enthusiasm and a growing sense of responsibility it has certainly proved worthwhile.

- Donald Resnick
Waldorf School
Garden City, N.Y.

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High School:

Our high school started off this year with 21 9th graders and 30 10th graders. The classes are located in a new complex of three rooms (two classrooms and a woodworking room.)

The year began with an Orientation Day. After main lesson on the first day the two classes met together to meet with their teachers for the coming year, heard descriptions of the courses to come, and received a previously prepared packet which included the rules, rotation of main lesson for the year, daily schedules and so on. These same presentations were made in the high school parent evenings, which made for clarity.

Planned activities for the high school this year include attendance at the American Civic Theater productions in San Francisco, as well as seeing Evolution of the Blues (a history of black music).

We are very happy with the quality of students in our high school; we have tried to be very selective about applicants. The whole question of admission procedures is one I would like to hear discussed.

Along with admission procedure, our high school faculty would like to hear the pros and cons of keeping the high school grades separate from the lower school. We would welcome any kind of joint working with other Waldorf high school faculties, or the setting up of conferences specifically relating to this age group and curriculum.

- Betty Kane
High School
Sacramento Waldorf School

Teaching Ideas - Games

Children come to games in the first grade in various states of readiness, with different backgrounds, different abilities, and varied interests. Some lack the skills necessary to perform tasks ordinarily expected of their age group. This lag may result from several reasons. In our modern society, modern conveniences, automation and television deprive children of essential motor experimentation that is necessary for total development. Occasionally a child may come with a perceptual-motor learning disability, or perhaps a slight physical or social-emotional handicap. While there are many reasons behind these children's difficulties, their plight in the Games Class is essentially the same one, that of ineffectiveness of participation.

I wanted to provide for these children increased opportunities for participation in a wide range of developmental activities as well as a more individualized program geared to their specific problem areas. The idea of utilizing high school students as facilitators of such a program occurred to me when several of them expressed the desire to get more involved with the young children.

I developed the idea of a Developmental Skills Class as part of the High School Physical Education program. Initially, I would concentrate on providing the high school students with a background in motor developmental activities and skills, games of low organization, and ball-handling activities through lecture/participation, and most important of all, participation. Then, having a background of experiences from which to draw, each high school student would be assigned to work with a young child on an individual basis.

The response, from all concerned, has been positive. The program, now in its second semester, has yielded many benefits. Through an atmosphere free of criticism and competition, the warm, supportive and enthusiastic high school students have afforded the young children the opportunity to learn skills enjoyably and experience success. The high school students, on the other hand, aside from gaining insight and knowledge in the motor developmental processes and problems of young children, have reaped many intrinsic rewards. The young children are joyful in their anticipation, the older students fulfilled through their efforts.

- Laura Sellman
Games Teacher
Highland Hall

RECOMMENDED TEXTS - FOREIGN LANGUAGES

High School German I and II:

German Today, One and Two, Moeller, Hoelzel, Simmons, & Taugert
ALM German, Level I, II, III, Harcourt Brace.

German Language and Culture, Lehman, O'Hare, Colet, Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Shorter College German I, N. Blakemore Evans. (Grammar)

We have material available for German I, II, III classes which can be mimeographed on request.

- Margo Patterson
 Sacramento

Spanish:

Since the high school is such a new undertaking in Sacramento, it is difficult to say which books have been most helpful. Some of the best resources have been old readers, old grammars, old anthologies. Some are strictly college level books, but are readily adapted to the needs of high school students. Our basic texts are:

Usted y yo: primer paso and adelante, Zenia Sacks daSilva, MacMillan 1969,
Espanol: a descubrirlo (and a sentirlo), Schmitt, Woodford, & Marshall, McGraw-Hill 1972.

Of the two, Usted y yo is the better. The balance of grammar, reading (high interest and slowly increasing difficulty), and cultural information interspersed with reading lessons is very good.

As resource books, not student texts, the following have been helpful in providing a quantity of practice exercises:

Spanish for Conversation, a beginning grammar. Ginn & Co., 1959.

Shorter Spanish, Review Grammar and Composition, Tarr & Centeno, Appleton, Century, Crofts 1937.

Workbook in Spanish Two Years (Primer Libro y Segundo Libro) Nassi & Bernstein, Amsco Publications, N.Y.

- Joanne Coogan
 Sacramento

FESTIVALS - Michaelmas

Various considerations went into our faculty's celebration of Michaelmas. Following indications for colors for this festival, we used peachblossom and light green in our table decorations. The indicated musical key for this season is F sharp major - we couldn't make use of this. Guided by a sentence from the Michael Imagination, October 5, 1923, "there, out of what I have described emerges the majestic image of Michael," we decorated the walls of the room with paintings and sculptures of Michael and his earthly prototype St. George, including a watercolor by a present fourth grader.

The actual program consisted of the reading of the weekly verse, a talk by Henry Barnes on Michaelic, will-imbued thinking, and a reflection of it in the morning verse of the upper grades. "The Mercury Column", a scene from an unfinished drama by Albert Steffen, was read by ten members of the faculty and teacher trainees; Sophia Walsh introduced it. Chaconne in D-minor (Vitali) for violin and piano concluded the program. Refreshments, and time for looking at the pictures followed. Those present felt that the content and mood of the gathering fitted the closing words of Steffens' Adonis Play, "...the Autumn Festival may be rightly enacted..."

- Lisl Franceschelli
Rudolf Steiner School
New York City

 REQUESTS

I would like to obtain a copy of a mathematics curriculum guide developed several years ago by Amos Franceschelli, and would be grateful to anyone who could advise me how to do so.

- Bruce Libonn
Fifth Grade
Washington Waldorf School

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Is anyone translating the following:

Menschenkunde, O.J. Hartmann
Der Dreigliedrige Mensch, L. Vogel
C.G. Jung und Rudolf Steiner, G. Wehr

Several people have written me offering to translate Anthroposophical works. I would suggest these, if no one else is doing them.

- Fred Paddock
Librarian
Anthroposophical Society

I would welcome any information on high school libraries, people to contact, book lists, aids, college counselling...

- Hilary Winston
Librarian
Sacramento Waldorf School

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I have received many requests both here and from the U.S.A. for publication of the following. Are any being undertaken at the moment?

From the Wellsprings of the Soul, Herbert Hahn.
The Twelve Senses, Aeppli.
Supplementary Course, R. Steiner.
Conferences (English ed., revised and reprinted), R. Steiner.
Urgeschichte (and others), Emil Bock.

- Eric Byford, Librarian
Michael Hall

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

We hope to have available in late 1975 these publications:

Three Lectures to Teachers on Curriculum (Sept. 6, 1919)
Comprehensive List of Educational Lectures, rev. ed., available
in both English and German.

Nutrition

Geology E. Kolisko

Zoology

Curriculum - Stockmeyer

Curriculum - Heydebrand

- Eric Byford
Michael Hall

Publications no longer available - Waldorf Institute, Garden City.

Living World of Plants, Grohmann
Four Educational Lectures (see Michael Hall listing above)