

Rudolf Steiner

PRACTICAL
ADVICE TO
TEACHERS

FOURTEEN LECTURES



FOUNDATIONS OF WALDORF EDUCATION

[II]

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RUDOLF STEINER

Practical Advice to Teachers



Anthroposophic Press

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Astrid Schmitt-Stegmann

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Foreword

Before the opening of the first Waldorf school, Rudolf Steiner met with the group of teachers who were preparing themselves for their new task. For fourteen days, from August 20 to September 5, 1919, he gave these teachers a foundation for an understanding of the growing human being in body, soul, and spirit. This understanding made it possible for the teachers to call forth the true artists in themselves, enabling them to create their lessons out of imaginative and inspired thought pictures.

Rudolf Steiner began the day with the lectures that are collected in *The Foundations of Human Experience* (previously titled *The Study of Man*); then he followed these with the practical advice contained in the lectures of this book. The sessions which are known under the title *Discussions with Teachers* followed in the afternoons. Together these three books constitute the solid foundation upon which every Waldorf teacher can build, for, as we hear at the beginning of the first lecture of this book, Waldorf teaching methods will have to differ from other methods. They will draw on the teacher's spiritual-scientific understanding of the child and of the time in which they live.

In *Practical Advice to Teachers*, he spoke to the teachers in the following way: "Concern yourselves with whatever has genuine significance for the child's development (lecture 4,

p.55). Then he proceeded to give invaluable insights into the methodology that no Waldorf teacher can be without. These lectures not only provide insight into how certain subject matter works in the growing child and how it correlates with his or her developmental stages, but also how teachers in their method of working can “bring the Soul-Spirit into harmony with the Life-Body,” (*The Foundations of Human Experience*, lecture 1) and how they can handle the subjects “for the purpose of developing human capacities” (*Practical Advice*, lecture 1).

This book contains so many gems and profound insights into how to address the needs of the growing human being in a healthy way that it is positively astonishing. For that reason these lectures can be an inspiration to parents, home schoolers, and all others who are interested in human development and education.

The harmonizing of the growing human being is an urgent need in our time, now that the technological revolution has propelled humanity into an information age that brings with it a hectic pace of life accompanied by stress and an over-emphasis on intellectual pursuits. Artistic expression as well as other aspects of education that nourish the soul and spirit are neglected and ignored. Our children and teenagers are struggling to find meaningful experiences where they feel met as human beings searching for answers to their earthly existence. The excitement and constant flow of entertainment that the technological innovations supply hold many captive. However, entertainment does not address the need for inner fulfillment that the human individual seeks in order to find his or her place and purpose in this present incarnation.

In *Practical Advice for Teachers*, Rudolf Steiner focuses on just that: giving much practical advice and insight into methodology. He gives a clear picture that the curriculum

does not include art for art's sake. Instead, every subject is to be taught artistically so as to engage the whole child and draw forth the students' own creative essential being as well as their interest in the world. We recognize the mission of the arts rightly if, in addition to the above, we see them also as strengthening the motivational will forces and harmonizing the child's whole being—thinking, feeling, and willing. Rudolf Steiner gives a wealth of indications in these lectures that cover all subjects of the curriculum, showing how to teach the individual subjects artistically, imaginatively, and in such a way that they strengthen the inner being, the true Self of the child. Rudolf Steiner's concern is that growing children be brought into a healthy relationship with themselves and with the world around them. The teacher's presentation must therefore breathe between self and world, thus giving the solid moral foundation upon which the children can build their lives.

He gives expression to this task in *The Foundations of Human Experience* and again in the first lecture of this volume, namely, the harmonization of the child's essential individuality (spiritsoul) with his or her living, hereditary, physical body (lifebody). In the third lecture he addresses this harmonization by way of the two streams in the arts: the sculptural-pictorial on the one hand and the musical-poetic on the other. Rudolf Steiner also developed the art of eurythmy as a higher synthesis of the two, and spoke of it as "visible music and visible speech."

In a masterful way, Rudolf Steiner opens new vistas for the teacher, shedding light on these two poles for the enhancement of the work with the children. He suggests that if it were possible to live solely in our mental images, in conceptual activity, we would live in a realm that consists only of reflected images of the objects of the visible, physical world. This is the world we analyze, dissect, name, and isolate.

It manifests in us as the sphere of the past. Therefore, when we work to develop the children's mental, conceptual side, we must enliven what is dying into the fixed and static condition of our conceptual thought life by quickening it with the help of the pictorial, sculptural element, through drawing, modeling or painting. Crafts and woodwork, which are part of the Waldorf curriculum, also quicken the child's conceptual life. This is the pole of the growing child that suffers much in this information age, that is always in danger of becoming too fixed and static, too hardened. This tendency toward hardening is one effect on our conceptual life of the overload of factual information.

The information age has a different effect on the human will, on human initiative and motivation. It has the effect of putting us to sleep as far as our personal engagement and exploration of the received data is concerned. We feel unmotivated and lethargic, we look at the world through a spectator mentality, not willing to activate ourselves. This is a particularly formidable challenge for growing children who have to form a healthy relationship with the world and with their social environment. It is astonishing to witness how lethargic a great many children have become through our modern culture. It is more and more challenging for them to direct their will and attention toward purposeful doing. At an early age they become used to being entertained, and consequently do not get the chance to engage in the kind of nature-related practical activities they need in order to become balanced human beings in later life. Here, the healing aspect of Rudolf Steiner's education, which is an education through and of the will, becomes very evident. It is the arts that have the mission to connect growing children with their active, striving, energetic, creative Self. It is particularly the head pole of the human being that needs more and more enlivening through

the elements of imagination and creativity imbuing each subject. The head pole, the conceptual thought life, is the Apollonian form element that is easily in danger of becoming fixed.

Rudolf Steiner describes three stages in the development of the child between the ages of seven and fourteen. In the beginning of the first stage, he connects the activities of writing and reading with the intellectual form pole. Both rest on convention and are valuable only for our earthly life. He now shows how these activities can be balanced in their effect on the child by developing them out of the artistic element of drawing. This is also the path taken by the historical development of writing. From early pictographs, (Sumerian, Egyptian and Chinese cultures), individual writing styles were developed. By taking the path from drawing to writing and having the letters emerge out of the drawn picture, the child experiences the process as forming a meaningful whole. The artistic activity harmonizes and enlivens the more intellectual, conventional aspect of writing and its continuation, reading. This path is the path of will, from art to writing—where the child is still actively engaged—to reading, which is the most intellectual process.

This is one example of how all teaching is drawn from the artistic realm, where creative life is at the core of all experience. The whole method with which we approach the child must be steeped in artistry, that is, it must be imaginative, living, colorful, immediate, engaging. By thus harmonizing the experience of learning, we can awaken interest in the events of the world. Then we will have children and young adults who are open and eager to explore and discover the world around them.

If we fail to address the heart and will forces of growing children, if we fill them with a constant flood of information

that only addresses the conceptual life, the unfulfilled, empty soul and spirit will opt for thrill-seeking and entertainment, and, as

Rudolf Steiner points out, “animal instinct will grow rampant.”

The musical-poetic element, on the other hand, can provide a very strong experience, especially for younger children, making them dreamy and exalted. This is connected with the other pole of human experience, the will pole. An effect of overexuberant life can manifest in this musical, Dionysian element. It can have an exalting effect on the child; however, we can keep this effect within healthy bounds by bringing in an element of form through different rhythmic activities with the young child, and through instrumental music that requires reading musical notation with the older grades. There is nothing more wonderful and fulfilling in the middle and upper grades than to start the morning main lesson with recorder playing, particularly when the children are in groups according to the recorder they have chosen (soprano, alto, tenor, etc.). Folk music from around the world, easy classical pieces, and minuets are heartwarming and bring joy and harmony to the whole class. The incoming astral forces of the preteen and teenager are balanced and clarified by lifting the soul—pure music in many ways—into the realm of good music.

In the earlier grades, rhythmic activities are used to introduce arithmetic: rhythmic counting and walking, clapping and stamping, and many other activities that the teacher can develop. The learning of the multiplication tables is steeped in and accompanied by rhythmic activity. The musical basis of number work thus becomes a vivid experience for the child.

Rudolf Steiner then goes even a step further in his illustration of these two artistic streams that are such an

intrinsic part of the Waldorf approach to teaching. He points to the effect of these two streams on human nature, and thus gives the teacher another profound insight for the harmonization of the class. The musical-poetic stream, the auditory arts, have a socializing effect on the students because they do these activities together. The sculptural-pictorial, the visual arts, on the other hand, have an individualizing effect (lecture 3). Here the teacher receives tremendous help and a deep understanding of how to use the arts as healing elements. To balance a class that perhaps is already too critical, the teacher can put more emphasis on music and recitation, while the teacher who sees that a class has become a bit too social can choose for some time to put more emphasis on the sculptural-pictorial element.

The second stage to which Rudolf Steiner points is the developmental step that takes place between the ages of nine and twelve. After the nine-year change, the child awakens more consciously to the environment. Steiner shows that particularly here we have to observe our teaching method carefully. At this time, when children develop their subject-object consciousness, their consciousness of the adult, their self-awareness grows as their ego experience is strengthened and consolidated. With this new self experience also comes a greater awareness of their natural and human environment.

With the children's greater awakesness and awareness of the surrounding world, Rudolf Steiner suggests in the curriculum that the teacher now should lead them in an age-appropriate way into the life sciences. The children of this age, in fourth grade, have a natural love for the animal world, while the interest in plant life takes a little longer to develop.

Before fourth grade, the life sciences are presented to the children through nature and seasonal stories, through practical activities such as gardening, farming, harvesting, and cooking

and through such main lesson topics as clothing and housebuilding. In lecture 11, Rudolf Steiner points out that a child who has had an experience with a plough or a harrow will become a different person because of it. This healthy contact with the earth—actually *doing* something instead of just looking at a picture of the activity—gives the soul life of the child a groundedness that shows itself in self-confidence and self-reliance. This is another example why it is particularly urgent in our time to let the child have healthy experiences. Only by doing the activities do the children really gain abilities and skills that later on they can depend upon.

As we can see in lecture 7, the approach to the life sciences in Waldorf education is also through the artistic element. The threefold aspect of the human form—the head, trunk, and limbs—as seen in relation to the animal world, is the basis for this artistic experience. The freedom that human beings have through their upright posture and the consequent free use of their hands is the external manifestation of our true humanity giving us the possibility for selfless service to the other kingdoms. Through images such as these, we clearly lay the groundwork for a feeling of moral responsibility. For, moral concepts are not awakened by appealing to the children's intellect but only by appealing to their feelings and will.

The feeling life of the child will be further engaged by presenting each animal in a phenomenological way that aims at characterizing the environment in which the species lives and its specialized interactions from birth to death. This awakens a feeling for the differences among the various animals described and the particular environments in which they live. Furthermore, we help the children see the perfected specialization of each animal species, be it a wing, fin, webbed foot, claw, and so on, in contrast to the blessing and gift of the

nonspecialization of the human physical body with its infinite possibilities to create and invent.

Approaching science this way with fourth graders and integrating artistic activities into this process will connect them with their natural environment with awe, wonder, interest, and love. In this way we establish a healthy heart relationship that will remain a living experience from childhood through adulthood. This moral relationship of appreciation and responsibility is the foundation that underlies Waldorf teaching.

Rudolf Steiner also draws our attention to the third stage of development that occurs during the child's elementary grades. At the age of twelve or thirteen, another important phase begins. The children are moving toward puberty. During this time, the "spirit and soul elements in the human being are reinforced and strengthened, that is to say those spirit and soul elements that are less dependent on the ego" (lecture 8). It is the astral body that permeates the etheric body and invigorates it. The astral body, among other things, infuses the child's soul with interest in what works in the outer world to link one event with another. The capacity to think about cause and effect awakens, and study of the physical sciences begins. Here again we see what is a hallmark of Waldorf education, that we wait for the inner developmental step to occur and then we support it with the appropriate educational measure. At this age, then, it is appropriate to present the cause-and-effect-based phenomena of physics.

With these inflowing astral forces, interest in historical observation and development also awakens. In fifth grade we begin ancient history through story and biography, while in sixth grade we can add to our presentations the thread of historical connections; for example, we present the crusades inspired by religious fervor and show their very unexpected

historical consequences. What is often taught under the name of history, dates of kings and battles (though some are necessary and helpful) is dead and completely uninspiring. This is not history. "The real essence of humanity lives in historical impulses" (lecture 8).

The teacher is called upon to open the eyes of the students to the evolution of human culture around the world and to the place and influence of the individual in historical development. The students begin to see the human being evolve through time as they live through the struggles, challenges, and triumphs of human life. Presented vividly and in full, pictorial images, history is not just more knowledge, but is as much food for the soul and spirit of the young person as fairy tales and nature stories are for the first grader. Many questions of students in the older grades, spoken or unspoken, revolve around "who am I and what am I doing here?" By experiencing human struggle as revealed through historical development and biographies, the young people receive profound answers that stir their souls. The Waldorf teacher often has the opportunity to experience this in conversations that arise particularly intensely around historical issues.

Much should be integrated into all the subjects taught, especially into history. Geography, life and physical sciences, mineralogy, meteorology, philosophy, literature, art and more should be incorporated into history presentations. We must bring unity and connectedness into teaching. Subjects should flow together, rather than be so strictly divided, which is not lifelike and leads to specialization. Steiner sees this as inappropriate during the school years. He shows, rather, how everything that children and young people learn during their school years should be linked with practical human life. He also points out that the teacher must be thoroughly immersed

in practical life and teach out of the reality of life. “This ideal of unity that fills the human soul must pulse through all teaching,” (lecture 12). Rudolf Steiner links specialization with consequences that become visible in later life. In the subconscious, lack of connectedness promotes feelings of insecurity and incompetence, even fear of life.

He continues with this topic, pointing out that most people use machines developed by human thought (be it train, car, washing machine, toaster, telephone, computer, etc.) and yet they have no inkling “as to the workings of physics and mechanics that propel it” (lecture 12). Not bothering ourselves to penetrate this manufactured world, and the consequent insecurities arising from this, enabled mass culture and expert worship to arise in the twentieth century. At the same time, common sense and self-reliant thinking have dwindled dramatically.

Linking teaching to practical life means that in addition to having a thorough knowledge of how things work, students will also become acquainted with banking and bookkeeping, and the writing of business letters. This practical approach in teaching will give young people a healthy self-reliance, and the possibility in adulthood to demonstrate independence in thought and action.

Establishing this healthy connection to life will also work against sentimentalism, which is often dragged into education out of a desire to awaken idealism. Rudolf Steiner points out that sentimentalism will decidedly call forth the opposite effect. Idealism arises through practical engagement with life.

At times in these lectures, Rudolf Steiner deals with the particular situations facing the opening of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart, Germany. These few dated indications must not deter us from seeing the uniqueness and universality

of this education that today is practiced in Waldorf schools all over the world.

In his closing words to the teachers (lecture 14), Steiner brings before them the ideal of a healthy and inspired teacher, one who can be a true model for children. It is also the ideal of a healthy human being in general but one that is particularly necessary for the teaching profession. However, it can also stand for the kind of human beings that Waldorf education wants to foster:

Human beings of initiative

Human beings interested in the world

Human beings who seek the truth

Human beings who will not sour.

Astrid Schmitt-Stegmann

Lecture One

AUGUST 21, 1919

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. Imagine, for example, approaching a child by saying, "You have seen a fish, haven't you?" (Today I am merely introducing the subject, just touching on certain points aphoristically.) "Try to remember what the fish looked like when you saw it. If I do this on the blackboard, it looks very like a fish, doesn't it." [See sketch on left.]



"The fish you saw looked something like this drawing on the blackboard. Imagine you wanted to say 'fish.' What you say when you speak the word *fish* is present in this sign [on the left]. Now try not to say 'fish,' but only *start* to say it." Here we try to teach the child only to begin the word *fish*—"ff.f." "There, you see, you have started to say 'fish.' Now suppose people in ancient times gradually began to simplify this sign [see right sketch]. When you start to say 'fish,' 'ff.f,' you express this in writing by making only this sign. People call this sign *f*. So you have learned that what you express by saying 'fish' begins with *f*. Now you write it down as *f*."

Whenever you start writing ‘fish,’ you breathe *fff* with your breath. So you learn the sign for when you start to say ‘fish.’”

When you begin by appealing to children’s nature this way, you really transport them to earlier cultural ages, because this is the way writing originally came about. Later on, the process became a mere convenience, so we no longer recognize the relationship between the abstract shapes of letters and the images that came about purely through things that were seen and reproduced as drawings. All letters arose from such image forms. And now consider that if you teach the child only what is conventional by saying “This is how you make an *f*,” what you teach is purely derivative and unrelated to any human context. This is how we divorce writing from its original context, the medium of art.

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.

After working through the letters in this way for a while, we must make the children understand that adults are able to discover meaning in these strange shapes. While cultivating what the child has learned from isolated instances we go on (regardless of whether the details have been understood) to writing whole sentences. In sentences the children will notice shapes, for example, the *f* they are familiar with in *fish*. They will notice other shapes as well that cannot be addressed individually, because there will not be enough time.

The next step is to write the various printed letters on the blackboard, and then one day we put a whole long sentence on the board and say to the children, "This is what adults see when they have formed everything in the way we formed the *f* in *fish*." Then we teach them to copy the writing. Make sure that what they see passes through their hands, so that they not only read with their eyes but also form what they read with their hands. In this way they come to know that they themselves can give form to whatever is on the blackboard. We do not let the children learn to read unless they can form what they see with their hands, both handwritten and printed letters. We thus accomplish something that is very important—children never read with their eyes only, but the

activity of the eyes passes mysteriously into the whole activity of their limbs. Children then feel unconsciously, all the way into their legs, what would otherwise pass only through their eyes. Our aim is to interest the *whole* human being in this activity.

Afterward we may reverse the procedure. We can fragment the sentence we have written, break up the words, and show the forms of the letters we have not yet derived from their elements; we go from the whole to its parts. For example, if we have written the word *head*, the children learn to write “head” simply by copying it. Then we separate the word into its letters, *h-e-a-d*, and thus go from the whole to its parts.

This sequence of starting with the whole and proceeding to its parts must, in fact, be present in all that we teach. In another situation, we could take a piece of paper and cut it into a number of pieces. We might count the pieces—let’s say there are twenty-four—and say to the child, “Look, I describe these pieces of paper I cut up by what I wrote here: twenty-four pieces of paper.” It could just as easily be beans or whatever. “Now watch carefully. I take some pieces of paper away and make another little pile. Then I make a third and fourth pile. I have made four little piles from the twenty-four pieces of paper. Now I will count the pieces. You are still unable to do that, but I can. The pieces in the first pile I will call ‘nine,’ those in the second ‘five,’ those in the third ‘seven,’ and those in the fourth ‘three.’ You see, at first I had only one pile of twenty-four pieces of paper. Now I have four piles of nine, five, seven, and three pieces. It is all the same paper. If I gather it all together, I call it ‘twenty-four’; if I have it in four little piles, I call it ‘nine,’ ‘five,’ ‘seven,’ and ‘three’ pieces. Now twenty-four pieces of paper are nine, five, seven, and three pieces together.”

This is how I have taught the children to add. I did not start with the separate pieces from which a sum would be derived. This would, in fact, be out of keeping with the original nature of the human being.¹ It is actually this reversed procedure that is appropriate to human nature—first the sum is considered, which is then divided into the separate parts. We teach children addition by reversing the usual procedure; we begin with the sum and then proceed to the addenda. Children will understand the concept of “together” much better this way than if we take the parts separately first and then bring them together in the usual way. Our teaching methods will have to differ from the ordinary; we will teach children the reversed way, so to speak, about what a total is as opposed to its separate parts. Then we can also expect a very different comprehension from the children than we would if we used the opposite procedure. You will discover what is most important about this method only with practical experience. You will notice how children immerse themselves in the subject in a very different way and how they will have a different capacity to absorb what is taught when you begin in this way.

You can apply the opposite process for the next step in arithmetic. You say, “Now I will put all the pieces of paper together again. I take some away, making two piles, and call the pile I took away ‘three.’ How did I arrive at three? By taking it away from the others. But when they were together I called the pile ‘twenty-four.’ Now I have taken three away and call the remainder ‘twenty-one.’” This is how you proceed to the concept of subtraction. Once again, do not begin with the whole and what is to be subtracted; instead, begin with the

¹ . Refer to *A Theory of Knowledge Based on Goethe's World Conception* by Rudolf Steiner.

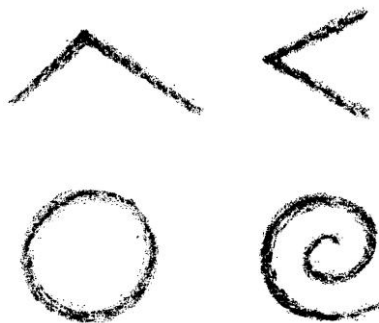
remainder that is left over and lead from that to the whole from which it came. Here you go by the reverse path.

In this way, you can extend to all of arithmetic as an art the method of always going from the whole to its parts. You will see this later when we come to the methods for particular subjects. We must simply accustom ourselves to a teaching process that is very different from what we are used to. We proceed in a way that not only nurtures the subject we impart (which cannot, of course, be ignored, though a rather disproportionate amount of attention is given to it today) but also, at the same time, fosters the children's sense for authority. We say continually, "I call this 'twenty-four'" or "I call this 'nine.'" When I stress in lectures on spiritual science that a "sense for authority" must be nurtured between the ages of seven and fourteen, I do not mean that we must drill children into a feeling for authority. The element that is needed flows from the very technique of teaching, which reigns as an undertone. For example, a child listens and says, "Oh, he calls that 'nine,' and he calls that 'twenty-four.'" A spontaneous obedience arises by listening to a person teaching in this way, and children are thus permeated with what should emerge as the sense for authority. This is the secret. Any unnatural drilling of the sense for authority should not be included because of the very nature of the method.

Next we must develop a fully conscious, ongoing desire to effect harmony of the will, feeling, and thinking, which do, in fact, work together when we teach in this way. It is a matter of continually guiding the will in the proper direction by avoiding false methods. We must stimulate the appropriate expression of a stronger will through the use of artistic methods. From the very beginning, this aim is served by painting and musical instruction. You will notice that, early in the second period of life, children are more receptive to authority in teaching

through art. Consequently, we can accomplish the most in this sense during this period of children's lives using artistic methods. They will very effortlessly find their way into what we wish to communicate to them and take the greatest delight in rendering it by drawing or even painting. We should make sure, however, that they avoid merely imitative work.

We must also remember to "transport" children back to earlier eras, but we should not act as though we still remain in those ages. People were different then. You will transport the children back to those earlier cultural ages that had a different disposition of soul and spirit. This is why, when drawing, we do not aim to make children copy anything. We teach them archetypal forms in drawing by showing them how to make one angle like this or another like that. We try to reveal the circle and the spiral to them. We begin with the form as such; what it imitates is unimportant. We simply try to awaken their interest in the form itself.



You may recall a lecture in which I tried to awaken a feeling for the process of the acanthus leaf's development. There I explained that it is completely erroneous to believe that the acanthus leaf was copied as it appears in legend.² It simply arose from an inner formative impulse and was not felt until later; this resembles nature. Thus, it was not a matter of

imitating nature. We must take this into consideration in relation to drawing and painting. This will finally put an end to the atrocious error that deadens human minds. Wherever people

2. *Acanthus* (bear's breech) is a perennial herb or shrub native to the Mediterranean, having pinnately lobed basal leaves with spiny edges and spiked white or purple flowers. Greek and Roman architects used stylized representations of its leaves on the capitals of Corinthian columns; see "True Artistic Creation" (part

2, lecture 1), *Architecture As a Synthesis of the Arts*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1999 (GA 286).

encounter something artificial, they might say it looks natural or unnatural. It is completely irrelevant to decide whether something is copied properly or not. Resemblance to the external should appear only as a secondary consideration. What should live in people is their intimacy with the forms themselves. Even when drawing a nose, we must relate inwardly to the shape of the nose, so that only later does the resemblance to the shape of a nose become obvious. In children between the ages of seven and fourteen, we can never awaken a sense of the inner laws of phenomena by imitating what is external. We must realize that what we are able to develop in children between the ages of seven and fourteen cannot be developed later. The forces active during that period fade. Later on, all that can arise is a substitution, unless the person is completely transformed through initiation, either naturally or unnaturally.

I will now say something unusual; we must, however, refer back to the principles of human nature in order to be teachers in the truest sense today. In exceptional cases there are those who can recover a certain amount later in life. But they would have had to go through a severe illness or suffered a deformity of some kind—for example, a broken a leg that was then not

set properly. In other words, it must have been something that caused a kind of loosening between the etheric body and the physical body. This, of course, is dangerous. When it happens because of karma, we can only accept it. But we cannot rely on it; nor can we pass a law saying that a person shall in this way make up for something missed (to say nothing of other matters). Human development is mysterious, and all that we strive for in teaching and education should never be concerned with the abnormal but always with the normal. Teaching, therefore, is always a social matter, and we must always consider the appropriate age for developing specific forces, so that their cultivation will enable individuals to assume their positions in life in the right way. We must face the fact that certain capacities can unfold only between the seventh and fourteenth years in such a way that a person can cope with life later on. If such capacities are not developed during this period, people cannot contend with life's later struggles. And this is indeed the situation for most people today.

As teachers, we must provide those we educate with the ability to artistically assume their place in the activities of the world. Human nature, we will find, is such that we are, in a way, born musicians. If people were sufficiently agile, they would dance and move in some way with all little children. We are born into the world in a way that makes us want to join the world with our own bodily nature in a musical rhythm and relationship; this inner musical capacity is strongest in children during their third and fourth years. Parents could do a great deal if they would simply notice this, starting not so much with external musicality but with an attunement of the physical body and the element of dance.

It is exactly during this period of life that an infinite amount of good can be gained by permeating the bodies of little

children with elementary eurythmy. If only parents learned to do eurythmy with their children, something very different would arise in them than is usual. They would overcome a kind of heaviness that lives in the limbs. We all have this heaviness in the limbs today, and this could be overcome. When children change their teeth, the foundation for everything musical would thus remain in them. The individual senses arise from this musical element—a musically attuned ear or an eye for shapes and forms. A musically attuned ear and an eye that appreciates line and form are specializations of the whole musical human being.

Thus, we must cherish the idea that by drawing on the artistic element, we assimilate the disposition of the entire human being into the upper, or sensory, human. Through music, drawing, or modeling, we lift the realm of feeling into the intellectual sphere. But this must happen in the right way. Today everything becomes blurred and mixed together, especially in cultivating the artistic. We both draw and model with our hands, and yet these two activities are completely different. This is expressed with particular clarity when we introduce children to art. When we guide children into the realm of something that can be modeled, we must, as much as possible, see that they follow the forms with their hands. By feeling their way, they make their own forms; by moving their hands and drawing, children are led to follow the forms with their eyes and also with the will emerging through their eyes. It does not violate their naïveté to teach children to follow the forms of the body with the hollow of the hand or to make them aware of their eyes—for example, by allowing children to follow a complete circle with their eyes and saying, “You are making a circle with your eyes.” This does not wound a child’s innocence but rather engages the interest of the whole human being. Consequently, we must become aware that we

are lifting the lower part of the human being into the higher part, or sensory being.

Thus we shall gain a certain feeling, which in turn becomes the foundation of our method. It is a feeling we must each cultivate in ourselves as teachers, since it cannot be imparted directly to anyone else. Imagine that we have here before us a human being, a child, whom we will teach and educate. As far as education is concerned, perception of the child as a growing human being is vanishing today; everything is confused. We must learn to differentiate in how we regard this child. We must, in a certain sense, accompany our teaching with inner sensations, with feelings, and with an inner stirring of the will that vibrates in a lower octave, without being acted out. We must be aware that, in a growing child, the I and the astral body develop gradually and that, owing to heredity, the etheric and the physical bodies are there to begin with.

It would be good to consider this: the physical and etheric bodies, in particular, are always cultivated from the head down. In fact, the head rays out what creates the physical human being. If we practice education properly in relation to the head, we serve the growth processes in the best way possible. When we teach children in such a way that the head aspect is drawn out of the whole being, then what is appropriate moves from the head to the limbs; that person grows better, learns to walk better, and so on. Consequently, we can say that if we develop everything related to the upper human being in the appropriate way, the physical and the etheric will flow downward. If, when we teach reading and writing in a more intellectual way, we have the feeling that the child is open to us while absorbing what we offer, it is sent out from the head into the rest of the body.

The I-being and astral body, on the other hand, are formed from below upward when the child's whole being is

encompassed by education. A strong feeling of the I arises, for example, when we offer children elementary eurythmy between their third and fourth years. This claims the whole person and a proper feeling of I takes root in the child's being. Furthermore, when we often tell them things that bring them joy and other things that cause pain, the astral body takes form from the lower being up. For a moment, just consider your own experiences a little more intimately. I suspect that you have all had this experience: while walking along the street, something startled you. As a result, you found that not only were your head and heart shocked, but the feeling of shock lingered on even in your limbs. You can conclude, therefore, that in surrendering to something, feelings and excitement are released and affect your whole being, not just the heart and head.

Educators must keep this truth very clearly in mind. They must make sure that the child's whole being is moved. Consider, from this point of view, telling legends and fairy tales. If you have the right feeling for the stories and tell them from your own inner qualities, the way you tell them enables children to feel something of what is told with the whole body. Then you really address the child's astral body. Something radiates from the astral body up into the head, something that the child should feel there. You should have the sense that you are gripping the whole child and that, from the feelings and excitement you arouse, an understanding of what you are saying comes to the child. Thus, you may consider that the ideal when telling legends or fairy tales, or while drawing or painting with children, is not to explain anything or work with concepts, but to move their whole being. As a result, later on when they leave you, out of themselves they will understand what you told them. Try therefore to educate the I-being and astral body from below

upward so that the head and heart follow later. Try not to tell the stories in a way that causes children to reflect and understand them in the head. Tell them in a way that evokes a kind of silent, thrilled awe (within limits) and in a way that evokes pleasures and sorrows that continue to echo after the child has left you, gradually to be transformed into understanding and interest. Try to allow your influence to arise from your intimacy with the children. Try not to arouse interest artificially by counting on sensation; instead, attempt to achieve an inner relationship with the children and then allow interest to arise from their own being.

How can you do this with a whole class? It is relatively simple with an individual child. As long as you try to do things with a child only out of fondness and love for that child, you will find that you reach the whole being, not just the heart and head. And it is no more difficult to do this with a whole class if what you say and do moves you and if you are not interested only with your heart and head. As a simple example, let's say that I wish to teach a child about the continuation of the soul's life after death. I would only deceive myself and never make it clear to the child if I taught only theories about it. There is no concept that can teach a child under fourteen about immortality. I could say, however, "See this chrysalis; it is empty. Once there was a butterfly inside, but it crept away." I could also demonstrate the process of how metamorphosis happens. It is good to show such things to children. Then I make a comparison: "Imagine that it is you who are the chrysalis. Your soul is inside you, and later it will emerge just as a butterfly emerges from its chrysalis. This, of course, is rather naively stated.

You can talk about this for a long time. However, if you yourself do not believe that the butterfly is an image of the human soul, you cannot accomplish much with children by

using this analogy. You should not allow yourself the false notion that this whole idea is merely a contrived comparison, which it is not; it is a fact presented to us by the divine, cosmic order. These things are not invented by the intellect, and if our attitude toward such matters is correct, we come to trust the fact that all nature offers us analogies for the realities of soul and spirit.

As we unite with what we teach children, the way we work affects their whole being. When we can no longer feel with children and instead offer only rational translations of everything that we ourselves do not believe in, we cease to teach children very much. Our relationship to reality must be such that, out of our own comprehension, we bring to children's souls more than an arbitrary picture of the butterfly emerging from the chrysalis, for example, and instead present something we ourselves understand and believe in as given by divine cosmic powers. We must not offer children understanding merely for their ears, but we must communicate from soul to soul. If you remember this, you will make progress.

Lecture Two

AUGUST 22, 1919

Now we will develop more fully what we only outlined yesterday. You will see from what was said that, even in the details of teaching, there is much that needs to be transformed and renewed.

Consider for a moment what I pointed out to you an hour ago.² If you think about what I presented, you will realize that human beings carry three inner focal points, and within each, affinity and aversion meet. We can say that aversion and affinity even meet in the head. We can simplify it schematically. Imagine that in a certain part of the head, the nervous system is first interrupted while sensory perceptions enter, and they encounter aversion arising from the individual. This example demonstrates how we must view each individual system anew in the whole human being. Sensory activity itself is essentially a kind of delicate limb activity; it occurs in such a way that affinity dominates the senses, and the nervous system sends aversion to meet it. In the activity of seeing, a kind of affinity occurs in the eye's blood vessels. Aversion flows through that affinity in its nervous system. This is how seeing takes place.

² . See lecture 2, *The Foundations of Human Experience* (previously *Study of Man*).

And more important to us, for the moment, a second meeting takes place between affinity and aversion in the central part of the human being. Affinity and aversion also meet there; thus, in the middle system, the chest region, there is another meeting of affinity and aversion. Again, the whole human being is active as affinity and aversion meet, with our awareness, in the middle system. You also know that this meeting can be expressed in response to an impression—a rapid reflex involving very little thought, since it is simply an evasive, instinctive act directed against a perceived threat. These subconscious reflexes are also mirrored in the brain and the soul, and so the whole again acquires a kind of pictorial nature. With images, we accompany what occurs in the chest (the respiratory and rhythmic system) in relation to the meeting between affinity and aversion. Something happens in the breast that is intimately related to the whole life of a human being. There is a meeting between affinity and aversion that has an extraordinarily significant connection with our outer life.

In our whole being, we develop a certain activity that becomes affinity. We cause this affinity to interact continually in our chest organization with the cosmic activity of aversion. Human speech is the expression of these sympathetic and antipathetic activities that meet in this way. And the brain complements this meeting of affinity and aversion in the breast through our understanding of speech; we follow speech with understanding. Fundamentally, in speech there is an activity in the breast, and there is a parallel activity in the head. In the breast the activity is far more real, whereas the activity in the head fades to an image. In fact, when you speak, you have a constant breast activity that you accompany with an image through the head activity. This makes it obvious that speaking is based on the constant rhythm of sympathetic and

antipathetic activity, just as feeling is. Indeed, speech originates in feeling. The way we accompany the feeling with the knowledge or image causes the content of speech to be identical with thoughts. We understand the speech phenomenon only when we truly understand how it is rooted in human feeling.

Speech is, in fact, rooted in two ways in human feeling. First, it is based in everything a human being brings toward the world through the feeling life. What do we bring to the world in our feelings? Let us look at a distinct feeling or nuance of feeling—for example, astonishment or amazement. To the degree that we remain within the microcosm that is the human being with our souls, we have amazement. If, however, we can establish a cosmic connection—a cosmic relationship that can be connected to this feeling nuance of amazement—then amazement becomes the sound *o*.³ The sound of *o* is really the breath working in us when caught inwardly by amazement. Thus, you can consider *o* an expression of amazement.

In recent times, outer consideration of the world has related speech only to something external. The question was this: How did the relationship between sounds and what they mean first arise? No one realized that everything in the world leaves an impression on a person's feelings. In some situations, it may be so vague that it remains half-unconscious. But we will not find anything described by a word with the sound *o* that does not in some way engender—however slightly—astonishment. If you say “open,” the word contains an *o* sound, because something inherent in it causes slight astonishment. The roots of speech are contained in human

³ . The vowels in this context are the pure vowels of the German language: *a* as in father, *e* as in eight, *i* as in me, *o* as in order, *u* as in blue.

feelings in this way. Feelings link you to the whole world, and you give the whole world sounds that in some way express these feeling connections.

Typically, such things have been viewed superficially. There was the belief, for example, that speech imitates the way an animal barks or growls. Based on this belief, the well-known “bow-wow” theory of linguistics asserted that *all* speech is imitation. Such theories are dangerous, because they are partly true. By copying a dog and saying “bow-wow” (which carries the feeling nuance expressed in “ow”), one has entered a dog’s soul condition. The sound is not formed according to theory but in a less direct way by placing oneself in the dog’s condition of soul. Another theory maintains that every object contains an inherent sound, just as a bell, for example, has its own sound. The “ding-dong” theory, as it is called, arose from this assumption. These are, in fact, the theories. But we cannot understand the human being unless we acknowledge that speech expresses the world of feeling connections we form with objects around us.

We also tend to have a nuance of feeling toward empty or black objects that is related to emptiness. This feeling toward anything related to blackness is the feeling of fear or anxiety. This is expressed in the *u* sound. The feeling nuance of wonder and admiration is expressed in the *a* sound; this is a feeling toward what is full—everything white, bright, and related to whiteness and brightness and the feeling toward the sound related to brightness. When we feel that we must ward off an external impression or in some way turn away from it for selfprotection, and if that feeling is one of resistance, it is expressed in the *e* sound. And its opposite feeling, that of aiming toward, or approaching and uniting with something, is expressed in the *i* sound.

These, then, are the main vowels. We will cover the details later, including the diphthongs. One other vowel should be considered, which occurs less frequently in European languages and expresses something stronger than all the others. If you try to find a vowel by letting *a*, *o*, and *u* sound together, this expresses at first a feeling of fear, and then an identification with what is feared. This sound expresses the most profound awe. It is found with particular frequency in Asian languages and shows that Asians are able to develop tremendous awe and veneration, whereas in Western languages this sound is missing, since awe and veneration are not the strongest traits of Europeans.

We now have an image of the inner soul moods expressed by the vowels. All vowels express the inner soul stirring in our affinity with things. Even when we are afraid, the fear is based on a mysterious affinity. We would never fear something without having a hidden affinity for it. In examining such matters, however, you must remember that it is relatively easy to make the observation that *o* has something to do with astonishment, *u* with fear and anxiety, *a* with admiration and wonder, *e* with resistance, *i* with approaching something, and *aou* with veneration. Nevertheless, one's ability to observe these connections will be obscured by confusing the feeling nuance that comes from *bearing* the sound and the feeling nuance that arises when *speaking* the sound. The two are different. You must bear in mind that the nuances of feeling I have enumerated are related to communicating the sounds. They apply when you want to communicate something to someone by using the sound. If you wish to tell someone that you are afraid, it is expressed by the *u* sound. There is a difference of nuance when you yourself are afraid and when you want to arouse fear in someone else by articulating *u*. Your own fear will be echoed back when you attempt to

arouse it in another, for example, by saying to a child, “*u-u*” [“ooo”]. It is important to consider this aspect with regard to the social implications of speech. If you do so, you will easily see the point.

The feeling here is a pure inner soul process. This soul process, which is specifically based on the effect of affinity, can be met from outside by aversion, and this occurs through the consonants. When we join a consonant and a vowel, affinity and aversion mingle, and the tongue, lips, and palate make themselves felt as organs of aversion that ward things away. If we spoke only in vowels, we would continually surrender ourselves. We would, in fact, merge with things and be extremely selfless; we would unfold our deepest affinity for everything around us and would withdraw somewhat only because of nuances of affinity—for example, when we feel fear or horror. Even our withdrawal would contain an element of affinity. Vowels are related to our own sounding; likewise, consonants are related to things, which sound with consonants.

Consequently, you find that we must view vowels as nuances of feeling, whereas we find that consonants, *f*, *b*, *m*, and so on, are imitations of external things. Hence, I was correct yesterday when I showed you how *f* is related to a fish, since I imitated the shape of the fish. It is always possible to trace consonants back to an imitation of external objects, whereas vowels are very elementary expressions of feeling nuances in people toward things. Therefore, we can view speech as a confrontation between aversion and affinity. Affinities are always present in vowels, and aversions are always present in consonants.

We can also view speaking in another way. What kind of affinity is expressed in the chest region of the human being so that, as a result, the chest arrests aversion and the head merely

accompanies it? The basis of it is musical, something that has passed beyond certain boundaries. Music is the foundation, and it goes beyond certain limits. In a sense, it surpasses itself and becomes more than music. In other words, to the degree that speech contains vowels, it encompasses something musical; to the degree that it contains consonants, it carries a kind of sculpture, or painting. Speech is a genuine synthesis, a true union in the human being of the musical with the sculptural element.

Thus, we can see that, with a kind of unconscious subtlety, language reveals not only the nature of individuals but that of human communities as well. In German, *Kopf* ("head") expresses in every sense a roundness of form. *Kopf* denotes not only the human head but also a head of cabbage, for example. In the word *Kopf* the form is expressed. The Romance languages do not depict the form of the head. There [in Italian] we find the word *testa*, which expresses something in the soul realm. *Testa* expresses the head as witness, something that testifies and identifies. This word for "head" comes from a very different foundation. On the one hand it expresses a sympathetic feeling of the mind, while, on the other, it depicts a fusion of aversion with the external world.

For now, let us try to determine the difference in terms of the main vowels. In *Kopf*, the *o* relates to astonishment. The soul feels something like astonishment in relation to anything round, because roundness is itself related to all that evokes astonishment. In *testa*, the *e* relates to resistance. If someone states something, we must in turn assert ourselves and resist; otherwise, we would simply merge and mingle with that individual. This feeling nuance is well expressed where a national tendency to testify, or witness, is an aspect of the head.

When you consider these matters, you are led away from the abstraction of looking to see what the dictionary says: this word for this language, that word for that language. The words in the different languages are in places taken from quite different connections. Merely to compare them is a purely external matter and to translate by the dictionary is on the whole the worst kind of translating. The word *Fuss* in German (“foot”) is related to taking a step, making an empty space, a *Furche* (“furrow”). The word for “foot” is related to the word for “furrow.” We take the foot and name it for what it does—make an impression. The word for “feet” in the Romance languages [Portuguese], *pés*, is taken from standing firmly, having a standpoint.

This linguistic study of meaning is extraordinarily helpful in teaching, but it does not yet exist as a science. We could ask why these things are as yet not included in science, even though they offer real practical help. The reason is that we are still working out what is necessary for the fifth post-Atlantean age, especially in terms of education.⁴ If you accept that speech in this sense indicates something inward in the vowels and something external in the consonants, you will find it very easy to create images for the consonants. You will no longer need the pictures I will give you in the next few lectures; you will be able to make your own and establish an inner connection with the children. This is much better than merely adopting an outer image. In this way we recognize speech as a *relationship* between the human being and the cosmos. On our own as human beings, we would merely remain astonished, but our relationship with the cosmos invokes sounds from our astonishment.

⁴ . The “fifth post-Atlantean” period refers to our current cultural and historical era, the fifth since the so-called Atlantean period of earth’s evolution. See *An Outline of Esoteric Science*, chapter 4, for a full overview of this subject.

Human beings are embedded in the cosmos in a particular way, and we can observe this externally. I am saying this because (as you saw in yesterday's lecture) much depends on the nature of our feelings toward growing children—the degree of reverence we have toward the mysterious revelation of the cosmos in growing human beings. A tremendous amount depends on our ability to develop this feeling as teachers and educators.

Now let's take a broader view and look again at the significant fact that the human being takes about eighteen breaths per minute. How many breaths is this in four minutes? $18 \times 4 = 72$ breaths. What is the number of breaths in a day? $18 \times 60 \times 24 =$

25,920 per day. I could also calculate this in a different way, by beginning with the number of breaths in four minutes—seventy-two. Then, instead of multiplying this number by 24×60 , I would simply multiply it by 6×60 , or 360; I would arrive at the same number of 25,920 breaths per day: $360 \times 72 = 25,920$. We can say that our breathing for four minutes—breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out—is, in a sense, a microcosmic “day.” The sum of 25,920 I obtained by multiplying it by 360 relates to this as the process of a whole year: the day of twenty-four hours is like a year for our breathing.

Now we will look at our larger breathing process, which is made up of a daily alternation between being awake and sleeping. What, basically, is being awake and sleeping? It means that we breathe something out and breathe something in. We breathe out our I-being and astral body when we go to sleep, and we breathe them in when we awake. This occurs during the course of twenty-four hours. To arrive at a sum for the course of a year, we must multiply the day by 360. So with the greater breathing process, in one year we complete

something similar to what we complete in one day with the microcosmic breathing process, assuming that we multiply what takes place in four minutes by 360. If we multiply what takes place with waking and sleeping during one day by 360, the answer shows us what takes place in one year. And if we multiply one year by an average life span—that is by seventy-two—we arrive again at 25,920.

Now we have discovered a twofold breathing process: our inand out-breathing, which takes place seventy-two times in four minutes and 25,920 times in one day, and our waking and sleeping, which takes place 360 times in one year and 25,920 times during a lifetime. Furthermore, we find a third breathing process by following the sun's course. You know that the spot of the sunrise in spring appears to advance slightly every year. After 25,920 years, the sun has moved around the whole ecliptic. Once again we have the number 25,920 in the planetary cosmic year.

How is our life ingrained in the universe? Our average life span is seventy-two years. Multiply this by 360, and you arrive again at 25,920. You can imagine that in a Platonic year—the cosmic revolution of the sun—our human life span is but a day. Thus we can regard what is depicted as a year in the universe as one breath in our human life span and see our human life span as a day in the great cosmic year. Accordingly, we can revere even the smallest process as an image of the greater cosmic process. If we look at the whole process more closely, we find in the Platonic year—that is, in what happens during a Platonic year—an image of the process of evolution from the old Saturn through the Sun, Moon, and Earth stages and right up to the Vulcan stage.⁵ All the processes that take

⁵ . These evolutionary stages have been given planetary names, though they do not relate directly to the physical planets as such. See *An Outline of Esoteric Science*, chapter 4, "Cosmic Evolution and the Human Being."

place as indicated are ordered like breathing processes related to 25,920.

All that occurs in our life between waking and sleeping expresses the ancient Moon period of evolution, the present Earth evolution, and the future Jupiter evolution. This expresses all that makes us members of what exists beyond our earth. The same thing that makes us earthly human beings also takes place in our smallest breathing process. As human beings, our alternation between waking and sleeping expresses our relationship to the ancient evolutionary periods of Moon, Earth, and Jupiter, and our life span expresses how, as cosmic human beings, we are rooted in the conditions of the universal year. For cosmic life and the whole planetary system, one day of our lives is a single breath. And all the seventy-two years of our life are a single day for the being whose organs are our planetary system. Overcome the illusion that you are a limited human being; think of yourself as a cosmic process—that is the reality—and you will be able to say, “I am a breath of the universe.”

If you understand this so that you can remain completely indifferent to the theoretical aspect (a process of interest only in passing), and if, on the other hand, you can maintain a feeling of immeasurable reverence for what is expressed so mysteriously in every human being, this sense will become the solid foundation within you that must be the foundation for teaching. In the future, education cannot proceed merely by bringing conventional, adult life into teaching. It is truly awful to consider the possibility that in the future, elected parliaments will meet and decide questions of education based on the recommendations of those whose only reason for involvement is their sense of democracy. If things develop in this way, as they are now doing in Russia, the earth would lose

its task and have its mission withdrawn; it would be expelled from the cosmos and fall to Ahriman.⁶

It is time to derive what belongs to education from our knowledge of the relationship between humankind and the cosmos. We must imbue all our teaching with a feeling that standing before us is a growing human being, one who continues what took place in the supersensible world before conception and birth. This feeling must grow from the sort of recognition we arrived at as we considered the vowels and consonants. This feeling must permeate us completely. Only when we are truly permeated by this feeling can we teach properly. Do not believe that this feeling can be fruitless; the human being is organized so that, if our feelings are oriented correctly, we will derive our guiding forces from them.

If you cannot manage to see every human being as a cosmic mystery, you will not get beyond the sense that people are no more than mechanisms, and if such a feeling were cultivated, it would lead to the downfall of earthly culture. On the other hand, earthly culture is raised only when we permeate education with the feeling that the whole human being has cosmic significance. And this cosmic feeling arises only when we regard the content of human feeling as belonging to the period between birth and death. Human thinking indicates the period before birth, and what exists in the human will points to what comes after death as a seed for the future. As the threefold human being stands before us, first we see what belongs to the time before birth, then we see what lies between birth and death, and, third, we see what awaits us

⁶ . *Ahriman* is the name given a spiritual being who wants to hold humanity in a hardened, material state and no longer evolving. *Lucifer* is Ahriman's counterpart, who tempts humankind to disembody spiritually, thus "evolving" too quickly and becoming overly emotional. Rudolf Steiner posited the Christ as mediator and balance to these two retarding forces.

after death. Our life before birth enters our existence as images, and the seed of what lies beyond death exists within us even before death.

Only facts such as these will give you some idea of what actually happens through human interrelationships. When reading older works on education (the pedagogy of Herbart, for example, which was excellent in its day), we always have the feeling that those people were using concepts that could not help them reach the world; they remain outside reality.⁷ Just consider the way affinity permeates all willing when properly developed in the earthly sense—how the seed of the future that belongs to the time after death, yet exists in us as a result of the will, is permeated by love and affinity. Likewise, in education, we must watch everything in an especially loving way, so that it can be arrested or cultivated properly. We must assist children in their affinity by appealing to the will. What will the true impulse for an education of the will have to be? That impulse can only be the affinity we must develop toward the child. As that affinity develops toward our students, our educational methods will improve.

Because educating the thinking is the opposite of educating the will, since it is permeated with aversion, you might ask whether we should develop aversions when we educate the thinking intellect of students? Yes, indeed, but you must understand it correctly. Place your aversions on the proper foundation. You must try to understand the students

⁷ . Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776–1841), German philosopher and educator. He tutored in Switzerland, where he became interested in Pestalozzi's pedagogical methods. He developed a general metaphysical theory of pluralistic realism (with implications especially for psychology) that rejected notions of faculties and innate ideas and constructed a theory on which to base a pedagogy similar to that of Pestalozzi. Major works include *Allgemeine Pädagogik* (1806); *Psychologie als Wissenschaft, neu gemeine Metaphysik* (1829).

themselves if you want to properly educate their thinking capacity. Such understanding contains within it an element of aversion, since it belongs at this end of the scale. By comprehending your students and endeavoring to penetrate all their nuances, you become the teacher of their understanding, their faculty of knowledge. The aversions exist in this very activity, but you make the aversion good by educating your students.

Furthermore, you can be certain that we are not led to meet one another in this life if there are no preconditions for such a meeting. These external processes are always the outer expression of something inner, regardless of how strange this may seem to a conventional worldview. The fact that you are present to teach these children from the Waldorf factory, and the fact that you will do what is necessary in this regard, indicates that this group of teachers and this group of children belong together in terms of karma. You become the appropriate teacher for these children because in previous times you developed aversions toward them. Now you free yourself from these aversions by educating their thinking. And we develop affinities in the right way by aiding the appropriate development of the will.

Be very clear about this; you can best penetrate the twofold human being as discussed in our seminar. But you must try to understand every aspect of the human being. Through what we attempted in the seminars, you will become a good educator of only the children's thinking.⁸ For the will life, you

⁸ . They discussed ways of dealing with children in terms of their temperaments; on the twofold human being and the four temperaments, see discussion 1 in *Discussions with Teachers*; this discussion is also included in *Rhythms of Learning* (Roberto Trostli, ed.) as "Understanding Children's Temperaments"; also see Rudolf Steiner's "Four Temperaments" in *Rhythms of Learning* and in *Anthroposophy in Everyday Life*.

will be a good educator by trying to surround each individual with real affinity. These things belong to education: aversion enables us to comprehend, and affinity enables us to love. Since our bodies have centers where affinity and aversion meet, this affects our social interaction as expressed in the process of teaching. I ask you to think this through and take it into your feelings so that we can continue tomorrow.

Lecture Three

AUGUST 23, 1919

Yesterday I pointed out that our teaching should begin with a formative, artistic quality, so that the whole being of the children, especially the will, can be stimulated by the lessons.⁹ Our discussions here will help you understand how important such procedures are. And they will help you understand that we must always be aware of the fact that there is something dead in the human being—something dying that must be transformed and brought to new life.

When we approach beings of nature and the world as a whole merely as passive viewers, with an understanding that works only in mental representations, we exist more within a dying process. But when we approach beings of nature and the world through the will, we exist within an enlivening process. As educators, therefore, our task is to constantly enliven what is dead and prevent what approaches death from dying entirely in the human being. Indeed, we must fructify that dying with the enlivening element developed through the will. Consequently, when the children are young, we should not be afraid to introduce an artistic form into our lessons from the very beginning.

⁹ . Steiner is referring to lecture 1 in this course.

Everything artistic that approaches humankind divides into two streams: the stream of sculpture and images and the stream of music and poetry. These two artistic streams are really polar opposites, but there is also a real capacity for synthesis to higher unity precisely because of this polarity. You surely realize that this duality in the artistic realm finds expression even in the world's evolution of the races. You need only recall certain writings of Heinrich Heine.¹⁰ This will direct your attention toward a certain duality—everything that has arisen from the being of the Greeks in the way most suited to them, in the most exalted sense, has a tendency toward sculpture and images, and all that emanates from the Jewish people tends toward music. Consequently, we find these two streams divided, even racially, and those who are open to such observations will not find it difficult to follow this thinking in the history of art.

Of course, there are always efforts—justifiably so—to unite the musical with the sculptural and pictorial. However, the only way they can be completely united is in eurythmy, once it has been fully developed so that the musical and the visible become one. I am not referring, of course, to the beginnings of eurythmy as we are working with it now, but to what must eventually exist in eurythmy. We must, then, consider the fact that within the totality of harmonious human nature, there is a sculptural, pictorial element toward which the human will tends. What is the proper characterization of this human tendency to become sculptural and pictorial?

¹⁰ . Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), German lyric poet, satirist, and publicist (lived in Paris after 1831). Owing to an incurable spinal disease, he was confined to bed in 1848. His verse transcended Romanticism and began to express a more modern temperament, containing political and social criticism notable for its sardonic wit and arrogant radicalism. His volumes of verse contain some of the best-loved German lyrics, many set to music by Schumann and Schubert.

If we were beings of understanding only, if we were able to observe the world only through our mental representations, we would eventually become walking dead—we would present the image of dying beings on earth. We save ourselves from this mortality only by feeling in ourselves the urge to enliven what is dying in concepts through sculptural and pictorial imagination. If you wish to be true educators, you must be on your guard against making everything abstractly uniform. Do not allow yourselves to say that we should not develop the death processes in the human being—that we should avoid training the conceptual realm of ideas in the children. This mistake in the realm of the soul and spirit is like that of a doctor who observes cultural evolution and then announces, as though he is a great teacher, that bones are a dying part of human beings. Therefore, he says, let us guard people against this dying element by keeping the bones soft and lively. If physicians acted on such an opinion, it would lead to a world of rickety people unable to fulfill their tasks.

It is always incorrect to speak as many theosophists and anthroposophists do about Ahriman and Lucifer and their influence on human evolution, saying that they harm human nature and must be guarded against. This would eventually exclude human beings from everything that should constitute humanity. We should not avoid educating the conceptual, thinking element. We *must* educate it, but we must also never fail at other times to approach the nature of the child through the elements of sculpture and image; unity arises out of this.

Unity does not arise by extinguishing one element, but by developing both sides. People today cannot yet think in this way about unity. This is why they find it so difficult to

understand the threefold arrangement of society.¹¹ It is entirely appropriate in society that the spiritual, economic, and legal spheres exist side by side; this is how unity comes about, instead of being constructed abstractly. Imagine what it would mean for people to say that because the head is a unity, as is the rest of the body, the human being should not really exist as such—that the head should be formed separately from the rest of the human being and be allowed to move about on its own in the world. We follow the creativity of nature only by allowing the whole to arise from all the independent parts.

It is a matter of developing on the one side mental, conceptual education and, on the other, the element of sculpture and image, which enlivens what is developed in the conceptual. We live in an age that always attempts to destroy consciousness, so we are concerned with raising these things into our awareness without losing our innocence. We need not lose it if we avoid becoming abstract and establish things in a concrete way. It would be very good in every way if we could, for example, begin at the earliest possible point with the sculptural and pictorial element, letting children live in the world of color. Likewise it would be beneficial if we as teachers would steep ourselves in what Goethe presents in the instructive part of his *Theory of Color*.¹² It is based on the way he always permeates every color with a nuance of feeling. Consequently, he emphasizes the challenging nature of red; he stresses not only what the eye *sees* but also what the soul feels in red. Similarly, he emphasizes how the soul feels the stillness

¹¹ . See Rudolf Steiner, *Social Issues: Meditative Thinking & the Threefold Social Order*, and *Towards Social Renewal: Basic Issues of the Social Question*.

¹² . *A Theory of Colors*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1970. Johann Wolfgang van Goethe (1749–1832); during the late 1800s, Rudolf Steiner was an editor at the Goethe archives in Weimar; his introductions to Goethe's works are collected in *Nature's Open Secret: Introductions to Goethe's Scientific Writings*.

and absorption of blue. It is possible, without piercing children's innocence, to lead them into the realm of color so that the feeling nuances of the world of color emerge in a living way. Although at first the result is a great mess, it provides a good opportunity to train the children to be less messy.

We should introduce children to color as early as possible, and it is helpful to let them use colored paints on both colored and white surfaces. We should also endeavor to awaken in children the feelings that can arise only from a spiritual scientific perspective of the world of color.¹³ Working as I did with friends in the small dome of the Goetheanum can provide a living relationship to color.¹⁴ One discovers when using blue, for example, that within blue itself there is a characterization of the whole realm of inner absorption. So if we want to paint an angel moved by inner absorption, we instantly have an urge to use blue, since the nuances of blue, the light and dark of blue, evoke in the soul a feeling of movement arising from the soul element. A bright orange evokes in the soul a sensation of shining and outer revelation. Therefore, if we want an effect that is aggressive or an exhortation, if the angel wants to speak to us, wants to emerge from the background and speak, then we express this with bright orange nuances. It is perfectly possible in an elementary way to show children this inherent liveliness of colors.

Next we must become very certain in ourselves that plain drawing has something false about it. The truest of all is the feeling that comes from color itself; somewhat untrue is the

¹³ . See Steiner's lectures in *Colour*.

¹⁴ . See Rudolf Steiner's lecture, "The Building at Dornach," in *Art as Spiritual Activity: Rudolf Steiner's Contribution to the Visual Arts*, Michael Howard, ed.; also Steiner's *Architecture as a Synthesis of the Arts* (includes *Ways to a New Style of Architecture*).

feeling that comes from shades of light and dark; and the least true is drawing. Drawing as such, in fact, approaches the abstract element in nature as something that is dying. Indeed, we should always draw in such a way that we become aware of drawing essentially what is dead. When we paint with colors, we should do it in such a way that it makes us aware that we are invoking the living out of what is dead. After all, what is the line of a horizon?



If we simply take a pencil and draw a horizon, it is an abstract, deathly untruth against nature that always has two streams: the dead and the living. We merely cut off one of the streams and say that this is nature. If, on the other hand, I say that I can see something green and something blue that are adjacent but separate, then the line of the horizon appears where the two colors meet, and then I am saying something that is true.



blue green

In this way you gradually come to appreciate that the forms of nature really arise from the colors, and that drawing is therefore a process of abstraction. We should create in growing children a good mental picture and feeling for such things because this quickens the whole soul, creating for it a proper relationship with the outer world. Our culture has become sick because we lack a proper relationship with the external world. In teaching this way, we do not need to

become onesided. It would, for example, be valuable gradually to develop the possibility of moving from purely abstract artistic work, such as a person creates out of delight in beauty, to a concrete art or artistic craft.

People today urgently need crafts that are truly artistic and can find a place in our broader culture. During the nineteenth century, we reached the point where furniture was made merely to appear pleasing. For example, a chair was made to delight the eye, whereas a chair's inherent character should be felt when we sit on it, and this should determine the chair's form. It should not merely be beautiful; it should invite us to feel our way into it and should have an inherent character that makes it suitable for sitting. The way the arms are attached to a chair and so on should express an integration with even a cultivated sense of touch; a person wants to be supported by the chair.

We would do modern culture a great service by introducing artistic craft classes into education. Those of us who want the best for humankind become tremendously anxious about our culture today when we see, for example, the way abstractions and the primitive ideas of those with socialistic tendencies threaten to flood our culture (which will not happen if we attain our goals). We would no longer find beauty in our civilization, but only what has utility. Even when people dream of beauty, there is no feeling of the urgent need to stress the necessity of beauty as we drift toward socialism. This must be recognized.

We should not be sparing with the sculptural and imagistic aspect in our classes. Likewise, we should not spare any effort in creating real feeling for the dynamic element expressed in architecture. It will be very easy to erroneously approach the children with certain aspects too early. But, in fact, in some ways, it's all right when this happens. I was asked to say a few

words to eighty children from Munich. They have been spending their holidays in Dornach, where Ms. Kisseleff gave them twelve eurythmy lessons.¹⁵ They demonstrated what they had learned to some of their teachers and anthroposophists from Dornach. The children were very sharp, and after the performance (which included presentations by our Dornach eurythmists) they crowded around and asked whether I liked their performance. They really wanted to perform well; the whole occasion was very heartwarming.

The people who arranged the event had asked me to say a few words to the children on the evening before they returned to Munich. I said, “What I am going to say you will not understand now, but you will understand it later. Be alert in the future when you hear the word soul, since you cannot understand it yet.” It is extremely important to point out things in this way—things that children do not understand yet. One of today’s primary principles effectively says that one should teach children only what they can understand; this is wrong. Such a principle deadens all education. Education comes to life only when children can take in what they are given, carry it for a while in their depths, and then bring it back to the surface later. This is most important for educating children between six and fourteen years of age. Much can be allowed to trickle into their souls that will not be understood until later. Please do not have the feeling that you are wrong to overreach children’s maturity by mentioning what they will understand only later on. The opposite principle has brought a somewhat deadening quality into our school systems.

¹⁵ . Tatjana Kisseleff (1881–1970), eurythmy teacher at the Goetheanum from 1914 to 1927, then performance eurythmist at the Goetheanum.

Children, however, must be made aware that they will have to wait. You can awaken them to the feeling that they must wait until they have the capacity to understand what they are absorbing. In this sense, it was not necessarily bad when, in the past, children were made to learn by rote— $1 \times 1 = 1$; $2 \times 2 = 4$; $3 \times 3 = 9$; and so on—instead of learning as they do today with the help of a calculator. We need to break through this principle of holding back the child's understanding. This should, of course, be done with the necessary tact, since we must not distance ourselves from what children can love; yet they can be permeated, merely through the authority of the teacher, with much that they will be unable to understand until later. When you bring the elements of sculpture and image to children in this way, you will find that you can enliven much of what otherwise has a deadening effect.

The musical element—which is inherently an element of the will that carries life—lives in us from birth and, as I said earlier, is expressed especially during the third and fourth years as an inclination to dance. Although this may sound odd, in the way this element expresses itself in the child initially, it carries life too strongly—it is too much of a shock and easily numbs awareness. This strong musical element very easily brings about a certain dazed state in the child's development. We have to say that the educational influence we exert through the musical element must consist in creating a harmony of the Apollonian element with the Dionysian element welling up out of the human being's nature. In the same way that the deadening influence must be enlivened by the sculptural, pictorial element, something that is intensely alive in the musical element has to be damped down so that it does not affect the human being too strongly. This is the feeling with which we ought to teach music to the children.

We must recognize that, through the workings of karma, a person's nature develops with a bias toward one side or another. This bias is particularly noticeable in connection with the musical element, but I would point out that it is overly emphasized. We should not lay too much stress on the notion that one child is musical and another is not. Differences do exist, but to take them to their ultimate conclusion, to exclude the unmusical child from everything musical and give musical education only to children with musical inclinations, is most definitely wrong. Even the most unmusical children must at least be present for any performance of music. It is right, of course, that as far as musical performances are concerned, increasingly only those children who are really musical will participate. But the unmusical children should always be present, and their receptivity to music should be developed; you will notice that even the most unmusical child has a trace of musical talent that is merely deeply buried and can be brought to light only by a loving approach. This should never be neglected, for it is far truer than we imagine that, in Shakespeare's words, "The man that hath no music in himself, / nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, / is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils ... / let no such man be trusted!"⁸ This is a fundamental truth, and, for this reason, no effort should be spared in bringing the musical element even to those children who are considered at first to be unmusical.

It is of the greatest importance, particularly with respect to the social life, to foster music in an elementary way by teaching the children directly out of the musical facts, without recourse to confusing and abstract theories. The children should gain a clear idea of elementary music, of harmonies, melodies, and so on, through the study of basic facts, through analyzing melodies and harmonies by ear. In this way, we build up the whole artistic realm of music in the same simple

fashion as we do the sculptural, pictorial realm, where we similarly begin with the details.

This method will help mitigate the amateurishness that plays

8. *The Merchant of Venice*, act 5, scene 1; in full:

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov'd with the concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted.

such a major role in music. It cannot be denied that musical dilettantism serves a certain purpose in the social life of the community; without it we would not progress particularly well. But it should be confined to the listeners. If this aim were to be achieved, it would be possible for those who perform and compose music to gain proper recognition within our social order.

We should not forget that everything in the sculptural, pictorial realm works toward nurturing the distinct, unique nature of the human being, while all that is musical and poetical fosters our social life. Human beings are brought together as one through music and poetry; they become individuals through sculpture and painting. The sculptural, pictorial element supports the individuality, and people's living and intermingling in community through music and poetry sustain society. Poetry is conceived exclusively out of the solitude of the soul, and it is comprehended through the community of humankind. It is entirely accurate, not at all abstract, to assert that a person reveals their inner being through poetry and that, in taking in the created work, another individual meets it with their own deepest inner being. For this reason, a delight in music and poetry, and also a yearning for them, should be encouraged in the growing child.

A child should come to know what is truly poetical early in life. Today we grow up into a social order in which we are tyrannized by the prose element of speech. Countless reciters intimidate people by emphasizing the prose element in poetry, in other words, merely the actual meaning. When a poem is presented in a manner that gives pride of place to the nuances of content, it is regarded as faultless recitation. Truly perfect recitation, however, stresses the musical element. In the introductions I sometimes give to eurythmy performances, I have pointed out how, with a poet such as Schiller, a poem emerges from the depths of the soul.¹⁶ With many of his poems an undefined melody first predominated in his soul, and he only later immersed the content, or the actual words, into the undefined melody. The content is suspended in the general melody, and the creative poetic activity comes into play in forming the language, not the content, forming the beat, the rhythm, the rhyme—the musical element on which poetry is based.

I said that people are coerced by the modern method of recitation because it is always an act of coercion to place the main emphasis on the prose, the content of a poem considered quite abstractly. In spiritual science we can overcome this tendency only by depicting a subject from the most varied viewpoints, as I always try to do. In this way, our concepts remain artistically fluid. It gave me particular pleasure to be told one day by one of our artistically gifted friends that some of the lecture cycles I have given could be

¹⁶ . See chapter 3 in *An Introduction to Eurythmy*. Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805), German poet, playwright, as well as a surgeon while in the military. After his arrest by the Duke of Württemberg, he was allowed to publish only medical works. His “An die Freunde” was used by Beethoven in his Ninth Symphony. His friendship with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Hölderlin helped to inspire Schiller as a poet.

transcribed into symphonies purely on the basis of their inner structure. Some of the courses indeed evoke a musical quality in their form. Consider, for example, the course given in Vienna on life between death and a new birth.¹⁷ You will see that you could make a symphony of it. This is possible because a lecture concerning spiritual science should not intimidate but should instead arouse people's will. Yet when people encounter an idea like the threefold social order, they say that it is incomprehensible. It is not incomprehensible; it is only that they are unaccustomed to the manner of its presentation. This is why it is exceedingly important to draw the child's attention to the musical element on which every poem is founded.

The lessons in a school should be arranged in a way that allows recitation to be closely connected to the musical element. The music teacher should be in close contact with the teacher of recitation so that instruction in one subject follows directly on instruction in the other and so that a living relationship between the two is established. It would be particularly useful if the music and recitation teachers could work together in the classroom, so that each could point out the links between the two subjects. This would be one way to eliminate a truly dreadful teaching method that is still very much prevalent in our schools—the abstract explanation of poems. This abstract explanation of poetry, verging almost on grammatical dissection, spells the death of everything that ought to work on the child. Interpretation of poems is quite appalling.

You will protest that interpretation is necessary if the children are to understand the poem. I would counter that all

¹⁷ . April 6–14, 1914, *The Inner Nature of Man and Our Life between Death and Rebirth*.

the lessons must be structured to form a totality. This has to be discussed in the weekly meetings of the teachers. If a poem is to be recited, then the other lessons must encompass whatever might be necessary to shed light on the poem. The teachers must properly prepare the children to bring to the recitation lesson whatever they need to help them understand the poem. If, for instance, the children are to recite Schiller's "Der Spaziergang," the cultural, historical, and psychological aspects of the poem can quite easily be presented to the children, not by going through the poem line by line but simply by telling them whatever they need to know about the content. The recitation lesson itself must focus on the artistic presentation.

If we were to bring the two streams of art together in this way to harmonize human nature through and through, we should indeed achieve a great deal. Consider only that an infinitely important advance in human beings' harmony with the world is achieved when they sing. Singing is a way of reproducing what is already present in the world. When human beings sing, they express the momentous wisdom out of which the world is built. Likewise, we must not forget that in singing the cosmic element of the actual sequence of notes is linked with human speech. This brings an unnatural element into singing. We can perceive it even in the incompatibility of the sound of a poem with its content. It would be a step in the right direction if we could further develop our considerations of poetry by reciting each line and enlivening only the rhyming word with melody, so that the line flows along in recitation and the rhyming word is sung like an aria. This would ensure a clear distinction between the intonation of a poem and the words, which actually disturb the musical part of human beings.

When the musical ear of human beings is cultivated, they are inspired to experience in a living way the musical essence of the world itself. This is of the utmost value for the developing individual. We must not forget that in the sculptural, pictorial realm we look at beauty, we experience it in a living way, whereas in the musical realm we ourselves become beauty. This is extraordinarily significant. The further you look back to ancient times, the less you find anything that we call musical. We have the distinct impression that music is still evolving, even though some musical forms are already dying out. This is rooted in a most significant cosmic fact. In all sculptural and pictorial art the human being is the imitator of the old celestial order. The highest form of imitation of the cosmic celestial order is the representation of the world in sculpture or painting.

In music, on the other hand, the human being is the creator. The human being does not re-create something that already exists but lays the firm foundation for what is to arise in the future. Of course, simply imitating in music the sighing of the waves or the singing of the nightingale can produce a certain musicality. But all true music and poetry are new creations, and it is out of this act of creating anew that the Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan evolutions of the world will arise. Through music we rescue in some way what still has to transpire; we rescue it out of the present nullity of its existence and give it life.

Not until we link ourselves in this way to the great facts of the universe do we gain a genuine understanding of the nature of teaching. Only on the basis of such an understanding can the appropriate attitude of solemnity emerge so that teaching really becomes a kind of service to God, a consecrated act. What I present to you will become more or less an ideal, but surely what we put into practice can embrace the ideal. For

instance, when we take our students into the mountains or the fields, out into nature (which we shall certainly do), we must not neglect a certain fact. We must always remember that lessons on natural science have their proper place only inside the classroom, as opposed to outside in nature. Let us assume that we step with the children out into nature, where we draw their attention to a stone or a flower. In doing so we should strictly avoid any allusion to what we teach inside the classroom. In natural surroundings we should draw the children's attention to nature in a way that is totally different from the method we use in the classroom. We should never forget to point out to them that we take them out into the open air so that they can experience the beauty of nature and we bring the products of nature into the classroom so that we can dissect and analyze nature.

We should never speak to the children out of doors about what we show them indoors, for instance plants. We should emphasize how different it is to dissect dead nature in the classroom and to look upon the beauty of nature outdoors. We should compare these two experiences. It is not appropriate to take the children outside into nature in order to use natural objects to exemplify what we have taught them in the classroom. We should seek to arouse in children a different kind of feeling, the feeling that it is unfortunate that we have to dissect nature when we bring it into the classroom. But the children should nevertheless understand this as a necessity, for the destruction of what is natural is necessary in the building up of the human being. We should certainly not imagine that we are doing any good by giving a scientific explanation of a beetle out of doors in natural surroundings. The scientific description of the beetle belongs in the classroom. When we take the children out into the open we have to arouse in them delight at the sight of the beetle,

delight in the way he runs about and in his drollness, delight in his relationship to the rest of nature. Furthermore, we should not neglect to call forth in the child's soul a clear sense of how a creative element lives in music, transcending nature, and of how the human being shares in the creation of nature in creating music. This feeling will take shape only very primitively, of course, but it will be the first feeling that must emerge from the will element of music—that the human being feels an integral part of the cosmos.

Lecture Four

AUGUST 25, 1919

Building on the ideas we just discussed in our session on general education, I would like to start with a detail of method that is exceedingly important. This detail is also related to our recent discussions of various teaching methods.¹⁸

You must regard the first lesson you have with your students in every class as extremely significant. In a certain sense a far more important element will emanate from this first lesson than from all the others. Of course, the other lessons will then have to be turned to account—so that the substance arising in the first lesson becomes fruitful for all the others. Let us imagine in practical terms how we shall shape the very first lesson, for soon you will be making the acquaintance of the children, who will bring with them the consequences of every kind of upbringing, both good and bad. Naturally I can make only general suggestions here, which you will be able to develop further. The point is that you will not have to follow the misguided educational principles that have been prevalent lately; you must concern yourselves with whatever has genuine significance for the child's development.

¹⁸ . See first four discussions in *Discussions with Teachers* and lecture 4 in *The Foundations of Human Experience*.

You are faced, then, with a class of all sorts of children. The first thing to do is to draw their attention to the reason they are there in the classroom. It is very important that you should speak to the children somewhat in this vein: "You have come to school, and now I am going to tell you why you have come to school." This act of coming to school should immediately be drawn to their attention. "You have come to school in order to learn something. You have as yet no idea of all the things you will be learning in school, but there will be all sorts of subjects that you will have to learn. Why will you have to learn all sorts of different things in school? You no doubt know some adults, some grown-up people, and you must have noticed that they can do things that you cannot do. You are here so that one day you will also be able to do what grown-ups can do. One day you will be able to do things that you cannot do yet." It is most important to work through this network of thoughts with the children. And these thoughts lead on to yet another matter.

No teaching can flow in the right channels unless it is accompanied by a certain respect for the previous generation. This nuance must remain in the realm of feeling and sensing, but we must nevertheless cultivate in the children, by every means, respect and reverence, with which they look up to the achievements of former generations and to what they are also meant to achieve by going to school. We must from the start arouse in the children this way of regarding the culture around them with a certain respect, so that they see those people who are older as somewhat higher beings. If this feeling is not kindled, there will be no progress in teaching and education. Similarly, no progress can be made if we do not bring to consciousness in the children's souls what they can expect. Proceed to reflect with the children, without hesitation, that you are looking beyond their horizon. It does not matter, you

see, if you say a great deal to the children that they will understand only later. The principle that dictates that you teach the children only what they can understand and form an opinion about has ruined much in our culture.

The very well-known teacher of an even better known contemporary personality once boasted of having educated his student according to the following principle. He said that he had trained the boy well, for he had forced him always to form an immediate opinion about everything. Many people today agree with this principle of forming an opinion without delay, and it is not remarkable that this teacher should stress the wish to emphasize it in books on education. With regard to this principle, I have come across the statement in a modern work on education that we can only hope to provide such exemplary education for every German boy and girl. You will gather from this notion that you can find in modern works on education a great deal of what ought not to be done, for there is a great tragedy in this kind of education, and this tragedy in its turn is linked with the present world catastrophe.¹⁹

The point is not that children should immediately form strong beliefs about everything, but that between their seventh and fifteenth years they should learn out of love for their teacher, out of a sense of the teacher's authority. For this reason, the suggested conversation with the children, which you can expand on as you wish, should continue along the following lines: "Look how grown-ups have books and can read. You can't read yet, but you will learn to read. When you have learned how to read you will also be able to take books and learn from them as grown-ups learn from them. Adults can write letters to each other; in fact, they can write down anything they like. Soon you will also be able to write letters,

19 . The effects of World War I.

because you will also learn to write. Besides reading and writing, grown-ups can also do arithmetic. You don't yet know what doing arithmetic means. But you have to be able to do arithmetic when you go out into life, for instance, if you want to buy something to eat or to wear or if you want to make something to wear." This is the kind of conversation you must have with the children. Then you say: "You will also learn to calculate." It is useful to draw the children's attention to this thought once and then, perhaps the next day, draw their attention to it again, so that you repeat the idea a number of times. It is vital to raise to consciousness what the children will learn in this way.

It is most important in teaching to become aware (if I may put it this way) of what otherwise remains a force of habit in life. In contrast, there is no advantage in bringing all sorts of things into the lesson simply for their own sake, even when it seems to serve the lesson. You may hear someone recommend that children should bring a box full of used matches to school, so that they can be taught how to make patterns with them. Of course, the matches should have a square shape if possible, not round, so that they stay on the slanted desks. Children may be taught, for example, how to arrange the matches in the shape of a house and so on. Organizing matches in this way is a favorite subject and generally recommended for small children. But rather than offering any real understanding of life, such lessons offer nothing but amusement; learning by arraying matchsticks in patterns means nothing for inner human nature. Wherever such an activity may lead, in later life people can consider it merely a form of recreation. It is not beneficial to merely introduce play into education. On the contrary, it is our task to bring the fullness of life into education; we should not bring in things that are no more than a diversion. Please do not

misunderstand me. I am not saying that play should not be used in education; I mean that games artificially constructed for the lesson have no place in school. There will still be a great deal to say about how play can be properly incorporated into the lessons.

How can we work effectively right from the start, particularly in forming the will? The time will come to move on to another matter once there have been enough discussions with the children, as I have outlined—that is, discussions about ways of helping children become more aware of why they come to school and ways of helping them come to respect and admire adults. Then it becomes useful to say something like, “Look at yourselves. You have two hands, a left one and a right one. These hands are for working; you can do all kinds of things with them.” In this way, you also make them aware of what concerns them as human beings. The children should not just know that they have hands but become *aware* of their hands. Naturally, you may be tempted to say that the children are, of course, aware of having hands. But there is a subtle difference between knowing that they have hands with which to work and never having that thought cross their minds.

Having spoken with the children about their hands and about working with them, we then proceed to let them do something skillful with their hands. This might even take place in the very first lesson. You might say to them: “Watch me draw this [drawing on left]. Now take your hand and draw it, too. Then we let the children draw what we have drawn, as slowly as possible.



Actually it will be a slow process if we call the children up one by one to the blackboard, letting them make their mark on the board and then return to their seats. The most important point is that they should digest the lesson properly. Then you might say to the children: “Now I am going to draw this [drawing on right]. And you can use your hands to draw it too.” Each child then draws this as well. When they have all finished, you say: “This one is a straight line, and this one is a curved line; with your hands you have just made a straight and a curved line.” You can help the clumsier children, but you should see to it that each child does it as perfectly as possible from the start.

Right from the start we let the children do something, and we must make sure that in subsequent lessons this is repeated a number of times. In the following lesson, for example, we let the children make a straight line and then a curved line. Let us consider a subtle distinction. You need at first attach no great value to letting the children make a straight and a curved line from memory; once again you first make the straight line on the board and let the children copy it, and the same with the curved line. Then you ask individual children: “What is that?”—“A straight line.” “What is that?”—“A curved line.” You use the principle of repetition by letting the children copy the drawing and then, without repeating it yourself first, letting them name it themselves. It is most important to use this subtle nuance. You must make great efforts to cultivate the habit of doing the right things in front of the children; the

educational maxims you believe in must become second nature to you.

You need not hesitate quite early on to take out a box of paints and set a glass of water beside it (indeed, it is a good idea to conduct such lessons quite soon with the children). After you have pinned white paper to the blackboard with drawing tacks, you take up a brush, dip it in the water and then into the paint, and make a small yellow patch on the white surface. When you have finished, you let each child come to the blackboard and make a similar small patch. Each patch must be separate from the others so that in the end you have several yellow patches. Then you dip your brush into the blue paint and put blue next to your yellow patch. And you let the children come up and put on the blue in the same way. When about half of them have done this, you say: "Now we shall do something else; I am going to dip my brush in the green paint and put green next to the other yellow patches." Avoiding as well as you can making them jealous of one another, you let the remaining children put on the green in the same way. All this will take time, and the children will digest it well. It is indeed essential to proceed very slowly, taking only a very few small steps in the lesson. The time then comes for you to say: "I am going to tell you something that you will not yet understand very well, but one day you will understand it quite well. What we did at the top, where we put blue next to the yellow, is more beautiful than what we did at the bottom, where we put green next to the yellow." This will sink deeply into the children's souls. It will be necessary to return to this thought several times, but they will also puzzle away at it themselves. They will not be entirely indifferent to it but will learn to understand quite well from simple, naïve examples how to feel the difference between something beautiful and something less beautiful.

A similar method can be used when you introduce music into the lesson. It is good here, too, to start with one note or another. There is no need to tell the children the name of the note. You simply strike the note in some way. Then let the children strike the note, too, so that here you also bring the will element into the lesson. Afterward, you strike a second, concordant note and then allow a number of the children to strike it too. The next step is to strike a note followed by a discordant note and again have the children do the same. Just as you did with the colors, you try to awaken in the children a feeling for the concordance and discordance of notes. You do not talk to them about concordance and discordance but speak of the beautiful and the less beautiful, thus appealing to their feelings. These examples, and not the letters of the alphabet, are the proper starting points for the early lessons.

Let us turn our attention to the class teacher. The class teacher will hold with the children the conversations I have just described. Perhaps the musical element will have to be treated separately and introduced to the children in another lesson. It will then be beneficial for the music teacher to conduct a similar conversation, though oriented more toward the musical, and to go over the same ground more than once. In this way, the children will discover that the same lessons are repeated by one teacher after the other, so that they will find that they are learning the same from both teachers. This method will help give the school a more unified and cooperative character. In their weekly meetings the teachers should discuss these lessons so as to instill a certain unity in them.

Only when you have taught the children in this way to use their hands and ears is the time ripe for progressing to the first elements of reading, in particular reading handwriting. (We shall pay greater attention to the details later. Today, in this

preparatory talk, I want to suggest the points of view according to which we can proceed, rather than pedantically examining one aspect after another.) With respect to method, it will have had an extraordinarily good effect on the children to have spoken to them as early as the first lesson about writing, reading, and arithmetic and about how they cannot do these things yet but will learn them all in school. As a result of this discussion, a certain hope, wish, and resolve will form in the children, and through what you yourself do, they will find their way into a world of feeling that, in turn, acts as an incentive to the realm of the will. As an educational measure you do not present the children directly with what you want to teach them; instead, you leave them for a while in a state of expectation. This has an extraordinarily positive effect on the development of the will in the growing human being.

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.²⁰ 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

²⁰ . This refers to Steiner's experiences while lecturing on his proposed "threefold social order"; see, for example, Guenther Wachsmuth, *The Life and Work of Rudolf Steiner*, pp. 354–361.

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 mousetrap." 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.

Lecture Five

AUGUST 26, 1919

We have already discussed how the first lesson in school should begin. Obviously I cannot go on to describe every step, but I would like to indicate the essential course the lessons should take in a way that will enable you to put some of what I say into practice.

We attached the greatest importance first to telling the children why they come to school and then to making them aware that they have hands. When they have grasped these two ideas, we should start with drawing and even make the transition to painting, through which a sense for what is beautiful and not so beautiful can be developed. We saw that this emerging understanding can also be found in hearing, leading to the first elements of a musical sense for what is more beautiful and less beautiful.

Let us now turn to the next step. We shall assume that you have continued for a while in the exercises with crayons and paints. If what is learned is to be built on good foundations, it is essential that learning to write be preceded by concentration on drawing, so that writing can, to some extent, be derived from drawing. It is also essential that reading print be derived from reading handwriting. We will try to find the transition from drawing to writing, from writing to reading handwriting, and from reading handwriting to reading print. Let us assume

that you have reached the stage where the children are finding their feet in drawing and have mastered to some extent how to make the curved and straight forms that will be needed in writing. We now seek the transition to what we have described as the basis for writing and reading lessons. Today I will start with a few examples of how you might proceed.

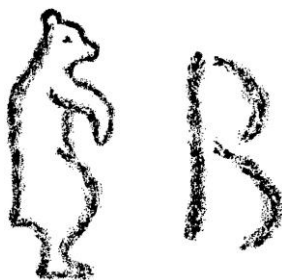
We assume that the children have reached the point where they can master straight and curved lines with their little hands. You then try to show them that there are such things as letters, a whole lot of them. We started with the fish and *f*. The sequence you follow is quite immaterial, and you need not proceed in alphabetical order; I will do so now merely so that you will have some sort of comprehensive record. Let us see what success we have in evolving writing and reading out of your own free imagination. I would now say to the children, "You know what a bath is." Let me here interject another point. It is very important in teaching to be cunning in a rational manner, that is, always to have something up your sleeve that can contribute unseen to the children's education. In this sense it is good to use the word *bath* for the step I am about to describe, so that while they are in school the children are reminded of a bath, of washing themselves, of cleanliness as such. It is good always to have a hidden purpose in the background, without actually mentioning it or masking it in admonishments. It is helpful to choose examples that compel the children to think of things that might also contribute to a moral and aesthetic attitude.

Then you continue, "You see, when grown-ups want to write down what a bath is they do it like this: 'bath.' This is the picture of what you express when you say, 'bath,' and mean a bath." Now I again let a number of the children copy this word, just copy it; whenever they are given a concept like this, it should go straight into their hands so that they take it in not

just by looking but with their whole being. Then I say, “Watch how you start to say, ‘bath’; let us look at the beginning of the word *bath*, *b*.” The children have to be led from saying the whole word *bath* to just breathing the initial sound, as I illustrated with the fish. The next thing to make clear to them is that just as *bath* is the sign for the whole bath, so *b* is the sign for the beginning of the word *bath*.

Then I explain that a beginning like this can also be found in other words. I say, “If you say, ‘band,’ you also start like this; if you say, ‘bow,’ like the bow some people wear in their hair, you again start in the same way. Have you ever seen a bear in the zoo? When you begin to say, ‘bear,’ you breathe the same sound. All these words start with the same sound.” In this way I try to lead the children from the whole word to the beginning of the word by finding the transition to the single sound or letter, always taking the initial letter from the whole word.

It is important that you yourself try to develop the initial letter in a meaningful way out of the drawing element. You will achieve this very well if you simply use your imagination. Just think that the people who first saw such animals as beavers and bears drew the animal’s back, with its hind paws on the ground and its forepaws lifted up. They drew an animal in the act of rising on its hind legs, and their drawing turned into a capital *B*. You will always find that the initial letter of a word is a drawing, an animal or plant form or some external object. You can give your imagination free reign; there is no need to delve into cultural histories, which are incomplete in any case.

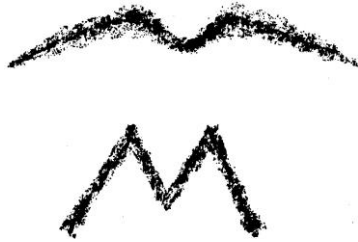


The fact is that if you go back in history to the most ancient forms of Egyptian writing, which was still a type of sign writing, you find many copies of objects and animals in the letters. Not until the transition from the Egyptian to the Phoenician culture did the change take place that brought about the development of the picture into a sign representing a sound. It is this transition that the children must experience anew. Let us therefore gain a clear idea of the theory of it ourselves.

When writing first began to develop in ancient Egypt, every detail that was written down was written in picture writing; it was drawn, although the drawing had to be as simplified as possible. If someone employed in copying this picture writing made a mistake, if, for instance, a holy word was misrepresented, the scribe was condemned to death. We thus see how very, very seriously anything connected with writing was taken in ancient Egypt. All writing at that time consisted of pictures of this kind. Then cultural life was taken up by the Phoenicians, who lived more firmly in the external world. They retained the initial picture of a word and transferred it to represent the sound.

Since we are not here to study Egyptian languages, let me give you an example that is valid for Egyptian and also easily adapted to our own language. The Egyptians knew that the form of the upper lip could depict the sound for *M*. They

therefore took the sign for the letter *M* from the picture of the upper lip.



From this sign the letter that we use for the beginning of the word *mouth* emerged, and the letter is also valid for any other word beginning with the same sound. In this way the picture sign for the beginning of a word became the sign for a sound.

Because this principle was adhered to in the history and development of writing, it is also excellent for teaching, and we shall use it here. We shall endeavor to arrive at letters by starting with drawings. Just as we move from the fish with its two fins to the *f* and from the bear dancing on its hind legs to the capital letter *B*, so we move from the upper lip to the mouth and from the mouth to the capital letter *M*.

With our imagination we seek to pave the way for the child from drawing to writing. I told you that it is unnecessary to make extensive studies of the history of writing in order to find what you need. What you might discover through such studies will serve you far less in your teaching than what you find through your own soul activity and your own imagination. The kind of activity necessary for studying the history of writing would make you so dead that you would have a far less living influence on your students than you will have if you yourself arrive at the idea of deriving the *B* from the bear. Working things out for yourself will refresh you so much that what you tell your students will have a far more living effect than lesson material you find through historical

research. Looking at life and your teaching with these two aspects in mind, you must ask yourselves which is more important. Is it to take in a historical fact with great effort and then strenuously seek to weave it into your lessons or to have such agility of soul that you can invent your own examples to offer your students with your own enthusiasm? It will always give you joy, albeit a quiet joy, to transfer to a letter the shape you have made yourself out of some animal or plant. And your joy will live in what you make out of your student.

Next we point out to the children that what they have found at the beginning of a word can also appear in the middle. You say, for instance: “You have all seen a little baby; when grownups want to write the word *baby*, they do it like this: ‘BABY.’ Here you can see that what you had at the beginning in *bear* is now at the beginning and in the middle in *baby*.”²¹ You always use uppercase letters in the beginning so that the children can see the similarity to the picture. In this way you teach them that what they have learned about the beginning of a word can also be found in the middle of a word. This is another step in the process of dividing the whole into parts for them.

You see that the important point for us in our endeavor to achieve a living rather than a dead teaching is always to start from the whole. Just as in arithmetic we start not from the addenda but from the sum, which we divide into parts, so here, too, we proceed from the whole to the parts. The great advantage of this method of teaching is that we are thus able to place the children in the world in a living way; the world is a totality, and the children maintain permanent links with the living whole if we progress as I have indicated. Having them

²¹ . Rudolf Steiner used the German word *Rebe* (vine) as his example here, so I have freely adapted his meaning to an English word.—TRANS.

learn the individual letters from pictures gives them a link with living reality. But you must never neglect to write the letter forms in such a way that they are seen to arise from the pictures, and you must always take into account that the consonants can be explained as pictures of external objects, but never the vowels. Your point of departure for the vowels is that they always render the inner being of human beings and their relationship to the external world.

For example, when you are teaching children the letter *A* [“ah”] you will say, “Think of the sun you see in the morning. Can any of you remember what you did when the sun rose this morning?” Perhaps some of the children will remember what they did. If none of them remember, they will have to be helped to recall how they must have stood there and, if the sunrise was very beautiful, they must have said, “Ah!” A note of feeling must be struck, calling forth the resonance that sounds in the vowel. Then you must try to tell them that when they stood like that and said, “Ah!” it was just as if a beam of sunlight from their inner being spread out from their mouths.



That which lives in you when you see the sunrise streams forth out of your inner being when you say, “Ah” (drawing on left). But you do not let all of it stream out; you keep some of it back, and it becomes this sign (drawing on right). You should try to clothe in the form of a drawing what lies in the breath when a vowel is spoken. You will find drawings that can show in a picture how the signs for the vowels have come about. Primitive cultures do not have many vowels, not even the primitive cultures of today. The languages of primitive

cultures are very rich in consonants; these people can express many more things in consonants than we know how to express. They even click their tongues and are skilled in articulating all sorts of complicated consonants, with only a hint of vowel sounds between. You will find African tribal people who make sounds resembling the crack of a whip and so on, while the vowels are only faintly heard. European travelers who meet these tribes usually sound their vowels much more strongly than the tribal peoples do.

We can always evolve the vowels out of drawing. For instance, by appealing to the children's feelings, you can try to make them imagine themselves in the following situation: "Think what would happen if your brother or sister came to you and said something you did not understand at first. After a while you begin to understand what is meant. Then what do you say?" One of the children may answer, or you may have to point out that they would say, "ee" [*i* in German]. When we draw the shape of the sound *ee*, it seems to point toward what has been understood, though it is a somewhat rough expression. In eurythmy you find it expressed very clearly. A simple line becomes "*i*"; the line should be fatter at the bottom and thinner at the top, but instead, we draw a line and express the thinner part with a smaller sign above it. In this way every vowel can be derived from the shape of the aspiration, out of the breath.



Using this method, you will at first be teaching the children a kind of sign writing. You need not feel constrained about employing ideas that arouse feelings that really did live in the

process of cultural development. You could say, “Have you ever seen a tall building with a dome on top?”²² A dome, *D*. You would have to make the *D* like this: ⌒. This writing seemed awkward, however, so people upended it and made *D*. Such ideas really are inherent in writing, and you can make use of them.



Now you proceed to the lowercase letters. You say, “After a while people did not want their writing to be so complicated, they wanted it to be simpler. So out of this sign *D*, which really ought to be ⌒, they made this sign, the lowercase *d*.” You can most certainly evolve the existing letter shapes in this way out of figures you have taught the children in drawing. By always pointing out the transition from form to form and never teaching in an abstract way, you help the children progress so that they can find the genuine transition from the form derived from the drawing to the shape of the actual letter in handwriting.

There are some individuals today who have recognized such things, though they are rare. There are educators who have pointed out that writing ought to be derived from drawing, but they proceed in a different manner from the one recommended here. Their starting point is the shape of the letters as they are today; instead of proceeding from the sign for the dancing bear to the *B*, they try to lead the children from drawing to writing by cutting the *B* into separate lines

²² . Rudolf Steiner’s example here is *Dach* (roof). *Dome* fits the letter *D* so well that I have used it here and very slightly altered the text accordingly.—
TRANS.

and curves: I ∩. They advocate an abstract version of what we are trying to do concretely. These educators are quite right in seeing that it would be practical to proceed from drawing to writing, but people today are too entangled in the deadwood of our culture to hit upon a clearly living way of going about things.

Let me warn you at this point not to be taken in by all sorts of modern endeavors that might tempt you to say that efforts are being made here and there to do this and that. For you will always discover that the intentions do not have very deep foundations. Somehow people are constantly impelled to attempt such things, but they will not succeed until humankind has accepted spiritual science as a part of culture. We can always make a connection between the human being and the surrounding world by teaching writing in an organic way and teaching reading by starting with reading handwriting.

It is natural to teaching that there is a certain yearning for complete freedom, and we should not dismiss this element. Notice how freedom flows into this discussion of how we might prepare ourselves to be teachers; our discussion intrinsically has something to do with freedom. I have pointed out that you should not fetter yourselves by toiling away at studying how writing came into being during the transition from Egyptian to Phoenician culture, that you must develop your own soul capacities. What can be done by this method of teaching will differ from teacher to teacher. Not everyone can use a dancing bear; someone might use a better example for the same purpose. One teacher, however, can achieve the final result just as well as another. All teachers give of themselves when they teach. In this, their freedom remains inviolate. The more teachers desire to preserve their freedom, the more they will be able to enter into their teaching by giving themselves.

This capacity has been almost entirely lost in recent times, as you can see from a certain example.

Some of you who are younger may not remember a certain incident, but it very much annoyed some older people who understood its implications. 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.²³ 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

²³ . Novalis (1772–1801), born Friedrich von Hardenberg, was a German poet who, after losing his 14-year-old fiancée, wrote six prose poems interspersed with verse, *Hymns to the Night*.

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.

All this is linked to a rather unfree aspect of our lives, an aspect that ought to play no part in education. Only a few decades ago it was so pronounced that the more enlightened teachers were infuriated. Standard German spelling—the well-known Puttkammer orthography—was to be introduced. This meant that the state not only exercised the right to supervise and administer the schools but actually laid down the law on spelling. The result is just what you might expect. This Puttkammer spelling system has robbed us of much that might still have revealed a feeling for the more intimate aspects of the German language. Seeing only today's abstract spelling, people have lost much in written German of what used to live in the German language.

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—or, if you will, Puttkammer—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.

Lecture Six

AUGUST 27, 1919

You will have to be not only teachers at the Waldorf school but also, if things turn out as they should, advocates of the whole Waldorf school system. For you will know the real purpose of the Waldorf school far more clearly than anyone who might try to explain it to either the more immediate or the wider public. So that you can be advocates in the right sense of what is striven for within the Waldorf school, and through it for cultural life in general, you will have to be in a position to defend it even against public opinions that are antagonistic or merely disapproving. Consequently, I must include in our discussions of teaching methods a chapter that follows quite naturally from what we have been discussing so far in these sessions.

You know that in the field of education, as well as elsewhere, great results are expected nowadays of so-called experimental psychology. Experiments are carried out on people to determine what constitutes an individual's ability to form concepts or to memorize, or even how their will functions. Naturally, elucidating the latter can be done only in a roundabout way, since willing is a process that takes place in a state of sleep. In the same way, the experiences of people during sleep can be determined only indirectly, by means of electrical equipment in the laboratory and not by direct observation. Such experiments

are actually conducted. Please do not think that I am wholly against such experiments. They can be meaningful as the feelers of science probing new fields like tendrils. Many interesting discoveries can be made by means of experimentation, and I certainly do not want to condemn it wholesale. I would be only too pleased if everyone who wanted to could have access to a psychological laboratory in which to conduct experiments. We must consider for a moment the rise of this experimental psychology, particularly in the form recommended by the educator Meumann, who essentially belongs to the Herbartian school.²⁴

Why is experimental psychology practiced today? It is practiced because people have lost the gift of observing the human being directly. They can no longer rely on the forces that link, that inwardly connect one human being to another and also, in the same way, an adult to a child. Therefore they seek to find out by external means how to treat the growing child. You see how much more inward is the path we want to follow in our education and our teaching methods. This path is urgently needed for the present and also for the near future of humankind. On the one hand we see the growth of this urge toward experimental psychology, and on the other hand, we also see how these very methods lead to a misconception of certain simple facts of life. Let me illustrate this by an example.

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

²⁴ . Ernst Meumann (1862–1915) was a student of Wundt, a pioneer in experimental education. *Herbartians* were those who followed the philosophy of Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776–1841), a German educator and philosopher who developed a metaphysical ideology of pluralistic realism (especially important for psychology) that rejected notions of faculties and innate ideas and constructed a full theory for a new kind of pedagogy.

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.²⁵ 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.

²⁵ . Theosophists use *manas* to designate the “mind principle,” which becomes dual when manifesting in the human constitution, thus dividing into a higher and a lower *manas*.

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 they 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. Let me suggest to you an observation that you can easily make with a little effort.

Suppose you wanted to obtain a clear picture of the state of Goethe's soul in 1790. You can do so by studying just a selection of the works he produced during that year. There is a chronological list of all his poems at the end of every edition of his works. So you ponder the poems he wrote in 1790 and whatever plays he created. You call to mind that he finished his beautiful treatise *The Metamorphosis of Plants* that year, and you remember that he formulated the first ideas about his *Theory of Colors*. Out of all this you form a picture of his mood of soul in 1790, and you ask: What played into the soul life of Goethe in 1790? You will find the answer to this question only if you cast a searching look over everything that happened to Goethe from 1749 to 1790 and over all the events that followed from that year until his death in 1832. These are things that Goethe did not know then but you know now. The remarkable realization emerges that Goethe's state of soul in 1790 was a combination of what was to come later, that is, what still had to be achieved, and what had gone before, that is, what had already been experienced. This is an extraordinarily significant observation, but people shy away from it because it leads to realms that they

understandably do not like to impinge on to make such observations.

Try yourselves to observe in this way the soul life of a person whom you knew for some time and who has recently died. If you train yourselves to a more subtle observation of the soul, you will discover the following fact. Let us say that somebody who was your friend died in 1918. You knew the person for some time, and you can ask, What was his state of soul in 1912? Taking everything into account that you know of him, you will find that in his soul mood in 1912 the preparation for the death he was soon to meet was present; it played unconsciously into his feeling life at that time. The feeling life in its totality is what I call the "mood of soul." A person who is soon to die has quite a different mood of soul from one who still has long to live.

Now you will understand why people are not eager to make such observations, because, to put it mildly, it would be rather uncomfortable to observe a person's imminent death expressed in his soul mood. And it is indeed expressed there. But for ordinary life it is not good for people to notice such things. That is why, on the whole, this kind of observation is removed from ordinary life in the same way that the will as a sleeping force is disassociated from waking consciousness even when we are awake. But the teacher must, after all, take up a position outside ordinary life to some extent. Teachers must not shrink from standing outside ordinary life and accepting, for the sake of their work, truths that may bring a shocking or tragic element to ordinary life. There is some lost ground to be recovered in this respect, especially in the educational system of Central Europe.

You know how during the earlier decades of our educational life in Central Europe, teachers, especially in the grammar and middle schools, were still people who were rather looked down upon by the ordinary person. They were considered unworldly, pedantic people who did not know how to behave properly in

society, always wore long frock coats instead of dinner jackets, and so on; these were at one time the teachers of young people, especially the more mature youngsters. Recently things have changed. University professors have begun to wear proper dinner jackets and even manage to get along quite well in the world, and the fact that the former state of affairs has been overcome is regarded as a great step forward. This is a good thing. But this state of affairs also needs to be transcended in another way. In future, this state of affairs must also be mastered in the sense that the way teachers stand outside life must not consist merely in always appearing in long frock coats when other people are wearing dinner jackets. They may in a way retain their position of being somewhat outside life, but this position should be linked with a deeper view of life than can be achieved by those who wear dinner jackets for certain occasions. I am speaking only figuratively, of course, for I have nothing against dinner jackets.

Teachers must be able to regard life more profoundly; otherwise they will never succeed in handling the growing human being in an appropriate and fruitful way. They will have to accept certain truths like the one just mentioned. Life itself requires, in a sense, that it contain secrets. It is not discreet secrets that we need for the immediate future; in education we need knowledge of certain mysteries of life. The ancient teachers of the mysteries used to preserve such secrets as esoteric knowledge because they could not be imparted directly. In a certain sense, all teachers must be in possession of truths that they cannot directly pass on to the world. The world that lives outside and does not have the task of educating the young would be confused in its healthy progress if it had daily access to such truths. You do not understand fully how to treat growing children if you are unable to discern the path that teachings take within them when you make them known in a way that the

children cannot fully understand at their present stage of development. They will understand these teachings later, when you come back to them again and are then able to explain not only what you now tell them but also what they took in earlier.

This works very strongly on the heart forces. That is why it is essential in any good school that the teacher remain with a single group of students for as long as possible. The teacher takes them the first year, continues with them the following year, moves on again with them to the third year, and so on—as far as external circumstances will allow. And the teacher who has had the eighth grade one year should start again with the first grade the following year. It is sometimes appropriate to return only years later to something you have instilled into the children's souls. Whatever the circumstances, the education of the heart forces suffers if the children have a new teacher each year who cannot follow up what has been instilled into their souls in previous years. It is a feature of this teaching method that the teacher moves up through the grades with the same students. Only in this way can one work with the rhythms of life. And life has a rhythm in the most comprehensive sense.

This is apparent in day-to-day life in the tasks we take up. If, for instance, you have become accustomed over the period of just one week to eating a roll and butter at half past ten every morning, you will probably find that you are quite hungry for your buttered roll at the same time the second week. This is how easily the human organism adapts to rhythm. And not only the external organism but the human being as a whole has a tendency to rhythm. For this reason, it is beneficial throughout life (and that is what we are concerned with when we educate and teach children) to attend to rhythmical repetition. That is why it is useful to consider how quite specific educational motifs can be repeated year by year. Select lessons you want to take up with the children, make a note of them, and return to something

similar every year. You can adhere to this pattern even in the more abstract subjects. In a manner suited to the children's nature, you teach addition in the first grade. In the second grade you come back to addition and teach more as well. And in the third grade you return to it yet again. The same action is carried out repeatedly, but in progressive repetitions.

To enter the rhythm of life in this way is of the greatest importance for all education—far more important than perpetually emphasizing meaningful structure in your lessons so that you can quickly reveal everything significant in all that you have to offer. We can guess what this demand really means only when we have gradually developed a feeling for life. And then, by the very reason of being teachers, we shall avoid the external experimental approach that is so prevalent today, even in education. Once again I am pointing to these matters not in order to condemn them but to improve certain aspects that have turned out to be detrimental to our spiritual culture.

There are also educational textbooks on the results of memory experiments with “experimental subjects.” These people are treated in a peculiar manner. Experiments are carried out with them to determine the manner in which they retain something of which they know the meaning. Then they are given a series of words that have no meaningful connection and so on. Such experiments seeking to determine the laws of memory are practiced very extensively today. Discoveries are made that are formulated as scientific theses. Just as in physics, for instance, we have Gay-Lussac's law and so on, attempts are now made to register similar laws in experimental psychology and education. In accordance with a certain quite justifiable scientific yearning, learned dissertations are expounded on the different forms of memory.

First we have the memory type that assimilates with ease or with difficulty; second, there is the type that finds it easy or

difficult to reproduce what has been assimilated. You see that first, “experimental subjects” are tormented for the purpose of discovering that there are people who find it easy to memorize and others who find it difficult. And then others are tormented in order to find out that there are those who find it either easy or difficult to recall what they have stored in their memories. In this way, through research, we now know that there are types of people who assimilate with ease or with difficulty and that there are types who recall with ease or with difficulty what has been memorized. Third, there is the type of person who could be described as true and exact in their memory; fourth, there is the person with comprehensive memory; and, fifth, there is the type whose memory is retentive and reliable, as opposed to the one who easily forgets. All this very much accords with the yearning of modern science to classify. We are now armed with scientific results, and we can state what has been found out scientifically in the exact psychology of memory types. First, there is the type of person who assimilates with ease or with difficulty; second, the one who recalls with ease or with difficulty; third, the type who is true and exact; fourth, the comprehensive type; and, fifth, the retentive person, who may remember things for years, as opposed to one who forgets easily.

I give all due respect to this scientific method of investigation that devotedly and very conscientiously maltreats countless experimental subjects and most ingeniously sets to work to obtain results so that we may know the types of memory that may be distinguished (now also in the field of education, since psychological experiments with children have shown that it applies to them, too). Despite all due respect for this scientific method, I would nevertheless like to raise the following objection. Surely anyone endowed with sound common sense must know that certain people find it easy or difficult to memorize something or easy or difficult to recall something. We

also know that others can repeat things truly and exactly, in contrast to those who muddle everything up. Still others have a comprehensive memory capable of retaining a long tale, as opposed to those who can memorize only something short. And, finally, some people remember things for a long time, perhaps years, while others forget everything within a week. This is old, established knowledge as far as common sense is concerned. Yet it must be researched by scientific methods that inspire us all with respect, for it cannot be denied that they are very ingenious indeed.

Two comments are applicable here. First, it is better to cultivate sound common sense in education than to enter into experimentation of this kind, which may very well develop ingenuity but does not bring us any nearer to the individual characteristics of the children. Second, we may also say that our era is in a sorry plight indeed if we have to assume that those who are to be teachers have so little common sense that they have to learn by such roundabout means of the existence of the different types of memory. These certainly have to be regarded as symptoms of the state of our spiritual culture.

I needed to draw your attention to these topics, for you will find people saying to you: "So you have found a position at the Waldorf school. It is the most amateurish institution; they do not even want to hear about the greatest achievement of our time, namely, experimental psychology. The professional thing to do is to take up these methods, whereas the way they teach at the Waldorf school is pure quackery." You will have to realize that it will sometimes be necessary to recognize the relationship between science (which should not be any the less respected) and what must be built up on the basis of an inwardly oriented teaching and educational practice. This creates an inner, loving attentiveness toward the child, as compared with the external relationships we learn about through experimentation. Certainly,

the inward quality has not entirely disappeared; indeed, it is more prevalent than we might think. But it is in definite opposition to the scientific teaching that is increasingly being pursued. To a certain extent, it is true that the pursuit of scientific methods at the present time can destroy a great deal, but it has no power to drive out every remnant of sound common sense.

Let this be our starting point, for if we cultivate it well, it will lead us to an inner relationship with what ought to happen in the lessons we teach. We must realize that we are living at the beginning of a new age and that it is essential for us to be thoroughly aware of this fact. Up to the middle of the fifteenth century, surviving elements of Graeco-Roman culture could still be felt. Since the middle of the fifteenth century, these elements have been no more than echoes. But those who even today live in these echoes still have the tendency in certain lower layers of their consciousness to hark back again and again to that Graeco-Latin age that in its place was wholly admirable but whose continuation today no longer has life.

Think how self-satisfied people who have learned something are if they can explain to you. If you want to educate properly, they say, you must not only look at the rhythm and the rhyme of a poem, you must also give a suitable commentary as to the meaning. When you have properly introduced your students to the meaning, you will have reached the point at which they should actively take it into themselves. Even the ancient Romans (they will add after a long dissertation on the necessity of starting with an explanation of the poem) used to say, "*Rem tene, verba sequantur*" (Once you have understood a thing, the words follow naturally). This is a tactic you will frequently encounter in people who consider themselves very learned and far above any dilettantism. First they expound on a subject as being the pinnacle of modern knowledge, and then they bolster

their argument with the words of the ancient Romans. Of course, to be able to quote in Greek is a sign of supreme scholarship. For the fourth post-Atlantean period this attitude was the right one, but it is not in keeping with our own time. The ancient Greeks did not send their children to school to learn ancient Egyptian; they made them learn Greek. But we today first introduce our children to ancient languages. This is a fact that must be understood.

Lecture Seven

AUGUST 28, 1919

In the beginning you will face certain difficulties in teaching that your school, by its very nature, will share with rural schools. Urban schools today do not have especially good methods, and whatever might have been valuable in them is often spoiled by far-fetched ideas. But they do have the advantage of being well equipped with teaching aids, particularly for physics, chemistry, and natural history. It is the same in primary schools as it is in secondary schools and scientific institutes. While the town schools have poorer methods and better equipment, the country schools still (if their teachers have not been spoiled by training in a town before being posted to the country) sometimes have the better teaching methods, even though they are less well equipped with teaching aids. (We should not, however, ignore the goodwill of new teachers in urban schools to find good methods.) Those who are seeking to come to grips with the problems and attitudes of our time have no laboratories and experimental equipment at their disposal, whereas those who are better equipped at universities and other institutions apply the least fruitful scientific methods. This state of affairs has existed for a long time in the scientific world. One cannot help wondering, for instance, what might not have grown out of Schopenhauer's philosophy (which is now no more than a

kind of philosophical dilettantism), if Schopenhauer had had all the means at his disposal that a professor of a few years' standing at a university has today.²⁶ How little of the Schopenhauer spirit is evoked these days by university professors who otherwise have sufficient means at their disposal.

You will often have to rely on your powers of invention and fall back on simple devices in situations for which city schools have plenty of equipment. This may be just what you need to make your teaching really lively, but in some instances it will also detract from your pleasure in your work. You will feel this to be particularly true when the children have reached the age of nine, when it is hardly possible to present the right kind of lessons without proper equipment. You will have to substitute drawings or simple, primitive paintings in all sorts of circumstances where, under ideal circumstances, you would use the object itself in your lesson.

I have made this preliminary observation because today I want to speak to you about the transition in teaching method that must be made particularly carefully when the children approach their ninth year. We will not understand the curriculum until we have schooled our educational capacities sufficiently to perceive the being of the child between the seventh and fifteenth years of life. I would like to show you as teachers what you will have to apply in your lessons at the point when the children reach the age of nine to ten years. Of course, you will present it in a more elementary way that they can understand. The point in question is reached by some children before the age of nine and by others later, but on

²⁶ . Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), a German philosopher who expounded a doctrine of pessimism and irrational impulses arising from the will.

average what I want to tell you about today starts with the ninth year.

When this period in the children's lives draws near, it will be necessary to introduce the subjects of natural history into the lessons. Before this time, natural history is presented in a narrative form, as I described yesterday in our seminar when I spoke about the relationship of the animal and plant worlds to the human being.²⁷ We use a narrative, descriptive form when we introduce natural history to the children early on. But we cannot start giving proper lessons on natural history before they have reached the age of nine.

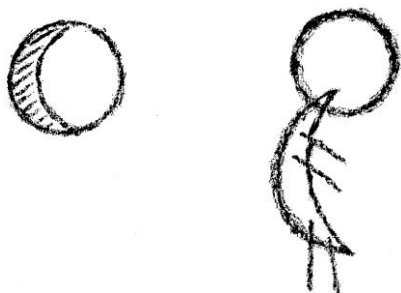
It is enormously important to know that the aim in teaching the children about natural history will be completely subverted if we do not start these natural history lessons by describing the human being. You may say quite rightly that there is not much you can tell nine-year-old children about the natural history of the human being. But however little it may be, you must present it to them as a preparation for all your other natural history lessons. When you give such lessons, you must be clear that the human being represents a synthesis, a bringing together of the three kingdoms of nature, that the three kingdoms of nature are united in the human being at a higher level. You will not have to say this explicitly to the children, but during the course of your lessons you must give them a feeling for how the human being is a synthesis of all the other kingdoms of nature. You will achieve this aim if, in the way you treat the subject of the human being, you awaken in the children the impression of the human being's importance within the scheme of universal order.

Perhaps you will start by describing the human being's external appearance to the nine-year-olds. You will draw their

²⁷ . Discussion 6 in *Discussions with Teachers*.

attention to the principal division of the human being into head, trunk, and limbs; in doing so, you will always have to take account of the external appearance, the external form.

You will do well to make use of drawing, which you have already practiced with the children, to conjure up for them an idea of the main parts of the human form. You will show them that the head is round like a ball—that it is somewhat flattened on the underside where it rests on the trunk and is thus a ball perched on the trunk. It is helpful to give the children a picture like this. It awakens simultaneously the feeling and the will element, for they begin to see the head artistically from the point of view of its spherical shape. This is important. You appeal in this way to the child as a whole and not only to the intellect.



Then you try to awaken in the children the idea that the trunk is a “fragment” of the head. You can do this by drawing and saying that the head is round like a ball. If you take a piece out of the round ball [the shaded part of the drawing] by cutting it off and keeping what remains, so that you have what looks like the moon left over from the sun, you have the basic form of the trunk. It would be a good idea to make a round ball out of wax or kneaded dough and then cut off the shaded part, so that you have the shape of the moon as it arises from the sphere. With this method, you could really call forth in the

children the picture of the human trunk as a fragment of a sphere. And for the limbs, you must awaken the idea that they are appended to the trunk. There will be much the children cannot understand, and yet you will rouse the strong impression that the limbs are added on to the human organism. At this stage, you should not go on to explain that the limbs extend into the body as a morphological potential, linked there with the sexual and digestive organs, which simply continue the limbs inwardly. But you must certainly rouse most strongly in the children the idea that the limbs are inserted into the organism from the outside. You will have given the children a first conception of the human form.

Next you should awaken the idea, however elementary and primitive, that our faculty of looking at the world is bound up with the sphere of our head. You can say to the children: "Your eyes, your ears, your nose, and your mouth are all in your head. You see with your eyes, you hear with your ears, you smell with your nose, and you taste with your mouth. Most of what you know about the outside world you know through your head." If you expand on this idea, the children will gain a concept of the special formation and task of the head. Then you instill in them an idea of the trunk by saying: "What you taste with your tongue goes down into your trunk as food; what you hear with your ears goes into your trunk as sound." It is good to create in the children the idea of the whole constellation of the organs in the human being. Indicate to them that in their chest they have organs for breathing, and in their abdomen they have their stomach for digesting.

Next you do well to let the children consider how the human being's limbs, in the form of feet, serve for walking, and in the form of hands can move and work freely. It is helpful if the children can come to an understanding of the difference between the way the feet and arms serve human

beings. The feet serve by carrying human beings' bodies about and enabling them to go to the different places where they live and work. This activity stands in contrast to that of the arms and hands, with which human beings do not have to carry the body, but with which they can instead work freely. While the feet are planted on the ground, the hands can be stretched out into the air so that they can work. In short, quite early on the children should be made aware of the essential difference between human legs and feet and human arms and hands. There is a distinction between the service rendered by feet and legs when they carry the body and that rendered by the hands and arms that do not work for the body but for the world. This difference between the egoistic service of the feet and the selfless service of the hands that work for the human being's environment should be made clear to the children at an early stage through their feelings.

By letting the concept arise out of the form, we teach the children as much as possible about the natural history of the human being. And only then do we continue with the rest of natural history, first to the animal kingdom. No doubt you will have to contrive some sort of substitute, but it would be ideal if you could bring to the classroom a cuttlefish, a mouse, a lamb or a horse or some other mammal, and some sort of image of the human being. Of course, you will have plenty of human specimens, for all you need do is name one of the children and present this child to the others when you want the human being to be the object of their study. You must be quite clear about how you will proceed. First, you will seek to familiarize the class with the cuttlefish. You will tell them how it lives in the sea and show them what it looks like, either by bringing a live one into the classroom or by making drawings. In short, you will introduce the cuttlefish to the children. When you describe it to them, they will feel that you are doing

it in a particular way. They may not notice till much later, perhaps when you describe the mouse to them, how differently you treat the subject of the mouse from that of the cuttlefish.

You must try to develop an artistic feeling in the children so that in the way you set about describing the cuttlefish quite differently from the manner in which you describe the mouse, you also give them a certain feeling for the difference between these two animals. You must hint at the nature of the cuttlefish by showing how it feels what surrounds it; if it scents danger, it at once emits its dark juice, enveloping itself in a kind of aura to divert the attention of the approaching enemy. You can tell the children all sorts of things to help them understand. You will show them that whatever the cuttlefish does, perhaps when protecting itself from its enemies in some way or when it eats, it does it in the same way that human beings act when they eat or interact with the world. When human beings eat, they experience a taste, a feeling that is communicated through the tongue, the organ of taste. And the human eye feels the constant need to look into the light; by doing this, the eye comes to grips with light. Because the human being's organs of taste want to taste, they take in what serves as food. You should describe the cuttlefish in a way that gives the children a feeling for its sensitivity, its delicate perception of the things around it. You will have to work out an artistic description that will really help the children grasp the cuttlefish.

Then you describe the mouse, giving a picture of its pointed snout and how clearly visible are the whiskers on this pointed snout and the gnawing teeth protruding from the lower and upper jaws. You describe its disproportionately large ears and then come to the cylindrical body with its fine, velvety coat of hair. Next you describe its limbs, the smaller forefeet and the

somewhat larger hind feet that allow the mouse to jump well. It also has a scaly tail that is less hairy. You show the children that if the mouse wants to climb or grasp with its forepaws, it supports itself with this tail. The tail is very useful because it is more sensitive inwardly owing to its scaly surface, lacking hair. Once again you describe the mouse to the children by artistically building up its forms. You will succeed in this artistic construction if you awaken in the children the notion that for all the functions for which the cuttlefish does not need appendages attached to its body, the mouse needs such appendages. The cuttlefish is sensitive in itself, through its body, and it does not need large ears like the mouse. Its relationship to its environment allows it to take in nourishment without the help of a pointed snout. And it does not need the large limbs of the mouse because it uses its body to propel itself along in the water. Sum up in detail what you want to impart to the children in this artistic way, namely, that the cuttlefish manifests itself not through limbs but through the body itself.

I have to describe all this to you so that you can translate it into teaching, for you must become conscious of what you have to bring more unconsciously into the lessons you prepare artistically. You must describe the mouse in a way that gradually awakens in the children the feeling that the mouse is organized in such a way that the limbs serve the life of the trunk. Make it clear to the children that the lamb, too, is organized so that the limbs can serve the trunk, just as the horse, living in the wild, is also. For instance, you can show the children how the mouse must have very pointed and sharp teeth; otherwise, it would not be able to gnaw at objects as it must in order to nourish itself or even bore holes to live in. With so much gnawing it keeps wearing down its teeth, but, like our nails, its teeth continually grow from within, so that

the mouse constantly replaces its tooth substance. This is particularly noticeable in the teeth, which are, after all, also organs that are appended to the rest of the organism and are formed in a way that enables the mouse's trunk to live.

In this way you have awakened in the children through their feelings a clear, though elementary, picture of the cuttlefish and a clear picture of the structure of the mouse. Now you return to the form of the human being. You make clear to the children that if we were to select the part of the human being that is most like the cuttlefish, we would curiously enough find that this is the head. The part of the human being most like the cuttlefish is the head. It is bias that causes people to imagine that their heads are the most perfect part of themselves. It is certainly structured in a most complicated way, but it is really just a metamorphosed cuttlefish, a metamorphosed lower animal. The relationship of the human head to its environment is similar to that of the lower animals to theirs. With the trunk the human being is most like the higher animals, such as the mouse, the lamb, and the horse. But whereas the cuttlefish can entirely maintain its life through its head, the human being cannot. A human being's head must be set on top of the trunk and rest there; it cannot move about freely. The cuttlefish, however, is fundamentally an entire head and nothing else, and it moves about freely in water. You will have to make sure that the children gain a feeling for the fact that the lower animals are heads moving about unhindered, though they are as yet not as perfect as human heads. And you must awaken in the children the understanding that the higher animals are mainly trunks and have skillfully formed their organs out of nature so that these organs can chiefly serve the needs of the trunk. This is much less true with human beings; they are less perfect in the trunk than are the higher animals.

Then we must arouse in the children a sense for what is the most perfect part of the human being's external form. The human being is most perfect in the limbs. If you follow the sequence of the higher animals up to the apes, you will find that the forelimbs are not so very different from the hind limbs and that the main function of all four is to carry the trunk, move about with it, and so on. This marvelous differentiation of the limbs into feet and hands, legs and arms, happens only in the human being; it expresses itself in the predisposition to walking upright and having a vertical posture. No animal species is so perfectly structured as the human being with regard to the complete organization of the limbs.

Here you should introduce a really vivid description of the human being's arms and hands. They have no part in carrying the organism; the hands do not touch the earth with regard to anything to do with the body, and they have been transformed in a way that enables them to grasp objects and undertake work. Then you move on to the moral element, which has to do with the will. Awaken in the children through their feelings, not in theory, a strong picture. "You can, for example, pick up a piece of chalk with your hand in order to write; you can do this only because your hand has been transformed to enable it to work instead of carrying the body. An animal cannot be lazy about its arms because it does not really have any. When we speak of an ape as a four-handed creature, it is an inaccurate way of talking, because the ape really has four armlike legs and feet and not four hands. Even though these creatures are structured for the purpose of climbing, this really serves only the body; their feet have been shaped like hands so that in climbing they can support the body. The human being's hands and arms have become useless to the human body, and this is externally the most beautiful symbol of the

human being's freedom. There is no more wonderful symbol of human freedom than these arms and hands. Human beings can work for the environment with their hands, and since they eat and nourish themselves, they can also work for themselves out of their free will."

By describing the cuttlefish, the mouse, the lamb or the horse, and the human being, we gradually kindle in the children a strong sense of the fact that the character of the lower animals is headlike, that of the higher animals is trunklike, and that of the human being is limblike. It only inculcates conceit in people if they are constantly taught that human beings are the most perfect beings on earth by virtue of their head. This idea causes people unwittingly to absorb the idea that the human being is perfect through laziness, through lethargy. Instinctively they know that the head is a lazybones resting on the shoulders, not wanting to move about in the world but letting itself be carried by the limbs. It is not true that it is through the head, the lazybones of a head, that human beings are perfect beings; they are perfect in their limbs, which are involved in the world and its work. You make a person inwardly more moral by saying not that he or she is perfect by virtue of the lazybones of a head but that he or she is perfect through the active limbs. Those creatures that are only beings of head and have to move themselves, like the lower animals, and the creatures that can use their limbs only in the service of the trunk, like the higher animals, are all less perfect compared with the human being. They all use their limbs less freely than can the human being. Their limbs have only a certain purpose, namely, to serve the trunk. With the human being, however, one pair of limbs, the hands, is fully situated in the sphere of human freedom.

You can instill into human beings a healthy feeling for the world only if you awaken in them the idea that they are perfect

because of their limbs and not because of their head. You can do this very well through the comparative description of the cuttlefish, the mouse, the lamb or the horse, and the human being. You will also realize that you should never exclude the human being when you describe activities in any of the kingdoms of nature, because in the human being all the activities of nature are united. We should always keep the human being in the background when we describe anything in nature. This is also the reason why we must take the human being as our starting point when we teach the children about natural science after they reach the age of nine.

If you observe the human being in the early years, you will find that something occurs around the age of ten or eleven. It is not as obvious as the first step of this process, which took place in early childhood. When children start to move their limbs with more awareness, when they begin to walk (even clumsily), when they start to use their arms and hands purposefully, this is when they first become aware of the I. The memory will later reach back to this point, but not beyond. When you hear the child start to say, "I," you will realize the beginning of self-awareness in a way that is clearly noticeable (though it may happen a little later; there are individual variations, because intentional speech must first develop). The change in the children's self-awareness grows stronger at the age of nine, and you find that they understand much better what you say about the difference between the human being and the world. Before they reach the age of nine, the children merge far more thoroughly with the environment than is the case later, when they begin to distinguish themselves from their surroundings. Then you will find that you can begin to talk a little about matters of the soul and that they will not listen with such a lack of understanding as they would have listened earlier. In short, the children's self-

awareness grows deeper and stronger when they reach this age.

If you come to understand such things, you will notice that at this age the children begin to use words in a much more inward way than before, becoming more aware that words arise from within. Today people are concerned far more about external than internal phenomena, and consequently they pay far too little heed to the change that occurs in the ninth or tenth year. But teachers must pay attention to it. As a result, they will be able to speak to the children with quite a different fundamental mood if they put off the teaching of natural history (which should always compare human beings with the other kingdoms of nature) until after this transition. While the children are still more integrated with nature, we can speak to them about the subjects of natural science only in a narrative form. After the ninth year, we can present them with the cuttlefish, the mouse, the lamb or the horse, and the human being, and it is then permissible to speak of the relationship of the animals' form to the human form.

Before this period in their lives, the children would not be able to comprehend you if you were to connect the cuttlefish to the head aspect and the mouse to the trunk, while also finding in human beings' limbs the element that raises them above the other kingdoms of nature. You ought really to make use of what this special age of the children offers you, because if you apply natural science lessons in the way I have described, you will implant into their souls moral concepts that are very firm and do not falter. You cannot instill moral concepts into the children by appealing to their intellect; you have to appeal to their feeling and their will. You will engage the feeling and the will if you guide the children's thoughts and feelings to an understanding of how they themselves are fully human only when they use their hands for working in the

world. You must also show them how it is through this activity that the human being is the most perfect creature. You must describe the relationship between the human head and the cuttlefish, between the human trunk and the mouse, lamb, or horse. By placing themselves in the natural order of things in this way, the children absorb feelings that later help them understand themselves as human beings.

You can implant this particularly important moral element into the children's souls if you try to shape the natural history lessons in a way that will give them no clue that you want to teach them a moral lesson. But you will not be able to imbue them with even a trace of anything moral if you teach natural history as something separate from the human being. If you describe the cuttlefish, the mouse, the lamb or the horse, or even the human being in isolation, it would be nothing but a set of definitions. You can characterize the human being only by building the picture of the human being from all the other organisms and functions in nature. Schiller admired in Goethe the way his conception of nature led him to build up the human being in a naïve manner out of all the separate aspects of nature; he expressed this admiration in the beautiful letter he wrote to Goethe at the beginning of the 1790s. I have mentioned this letter repeatedly because it contains an idea that ought to be absorbed into our culture—consciousness of the synthesis of all nature in the human being. Goethe again and again says that human beings stand at the summit of nature and there feel themselves to be a whole world of nature. He also says that the rest of the world reaches an awareness of itself in the human being.

If you read what I have written, you will find that over and over again I have included such quotations from Goethe. I did not quote them because I found them pleasing but because such ideas must be absorbed into the consciousness of our

age. This is why it grieves me so much that one of the most important educational writings has remained virtually unknown or at least bears no fruit in the educational field. Schiller learned good educational principles from Goethe's naïve self-education, and he poured these educational principles into his *Aesthetic Education of Man*.²⁸ Much that is fruitful for education is contained in these letters, if only we can think beyond them and extend the ideas to their logical conclusions. Schiller arrived at his views through Goethe's vision. Just recall how Goethe, being as it were a representative of civilization implanted into nature, opposed the educational principles of his environment from earliest childhood. He could never bring himself to separate the human being from the environment. He always looked at the human being in relationship to nature, and he felt that as a human being he was one with nature. That is why he disliked his piano lessons so long as they were conducted in a way that disassociated them from a relationship with the human being. He started to take an interest in these lessons only when he was shown the functions of the different fingers. He took an interest when he was told, "This is Tommy Thumb, and this is Peter Pointer," and shown how Tommy Thumb and Peter Pointer were used for playing the piano. He always wanted the whole of the human being to be embedded in the whole of nature.

You will remember something else that I have mentioned. When he was seven, Goethe built himself an altar to nature. He took his father's music stand and placed on it plants from his father's herbarium and minerals and crowned it all with a little incense candle that he lit by focusing the beams of the

²⁸ . *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1992.

morning sun with a magnifying glass. This was an offering to the great god of nature—a rebellion against everything imposed on him by education. In the very essence of his nature, Goethe was always a human being longing to be educated in the way people ought to be educated today. And it was because Goethe became this sort of person, after he had schooled himself accordingly, that he appealed so much to Schiller, who then wrote as he did about education in his aesthetic letters.

My old friend and teacher Schröer once told me how, when he was a teacher, he had had to sit on a school commission to test prospective teachers.²⁹ He had been prevented by circumstances from preparing the examination. Instead he asked the prospective teachers questions about Schiller's aesthetic letters.

They knew all about all sorts of things—Plato and so on—but when Schröer started to question them about Schiller's aesthetic letters, they rebelled. Soon the whole of Vienna knew that Schröer had asked questions about Schiller's aesthetic letters in the teachers' examinations. Nobody could understand what they were about; no one could possibly grasp such things.

If we are looking for really healthy ideas on education, even rudimentary ideas, we cannot do without returning to such examples as Schiller's aesthetic letters and also, for instance, to Jean Paul's educational doctrine *Levana*.³⁰ This work, too, contains an immense number of practical teaching

²⁹ . Karl Julius Schröer (1825–1900), literary historian and professor at the school Steiner attended in Vienna; see *An Autobiography: Chapters in the Course of My Life*, 1861–1907, pp. 42ff.

³⁰ . Jean Paul (1763–1825), born Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, German writer of novels and romances, and on educational philosophy (*Levana*), patriotism, and politics.

suggestions. More recently, matters have improved to a certain extent, but it cannot be said that the kind of impulse that could come from Schiller's aesthetic letters and Jean Paul's teachings has passed over unadulterated into modern teaching practice.

I have attempted to give you an idea of how you can "read" from a certain period in a child's life, at about the age of nine, what is best done in terms of education at this time. Tomorrow we shall discuss how we can teach the children what is best suited to their being at the ages of fourteen and fifteen. In this way we shall approach an understanding of the way the whole period from seven to fifteen is structured and what we as teachers and educators should do. The curriculum is built on such considerations. People today often put the question in the abstract: How can we develop the child's capacities? But we must be quite clear that you first have to know the capacities of the growing individual before the abstract statement that these capacities must be developed can have any concrete meaning.

Lecture Eight

AUGUST 29, 1919

I have already pointed out that where schools fall under external legislation we must obviously agree to compromise with regard to both religious instruction and the curriculum. But we must keep clearly in mind what is right and best as a basis for the curriculum, so that where stipulations force us to do something unnatural we can perhaps discreetly correct the bad effects.

To find the right curriculum for children aged seven to fourteen or fifteen is bound up in general with a true knowledge of child development over this period of time. Yesterday we threw light on one moment in this development, the moment that falls between the ages of nine and ten, when children have concluded their ninth year and are starting out on their tenth. If we follow the development of the child from the age of seven onward through the ages of eight and nine, we come to the point before the tenth year is reached that I characterized as the time when ego consciousness is strengthened and consolidated. From then on, we can approach the child with concepts in natural science of the kind suggested yesterday with the cuttlefish, the mouse, the lamb or the horse, and the human being. As you have seen, we must still take account of the interplay between the human being and the environment and of how the human being is really a synthesis of all the other realms

of nature and must not yet be sharply detached from these other realms. A great deal of harm is done to growing children if we fail in their tenth and eleventh years to impress upon them again and again, through the feeling life, that the human being is linked to external nature and is even a synthesis of the outer world.

Another important phase in the child's development comes between the ages of twelve and thirteen. At this time the spirit and soul elements in the human being are reinforced and strengthened, that is, those spirit and soul elements that are less dependent on the ego. What we are accustomed in spiritual science to call the astral body permeates the etheric body and unites with it. Of course, the astral body as an independent being is not born until puberty, but it manifests itself in a distinctive way through the etheric body by permeating and invigorating it between the twelfth and thirteenth years. This is another important milestone in a child's development. If we approach them in the right way, children begin to develop an understanding of the impulses that correspond to impulses of spirit and soul, such as those at work in the outer world as the forces of history.

I have provided an example of how the activity of these historical forces can be brought within the scope of teaching at the elementary school level.³¹ You will have to transpose what I said to you into childlike language. You can be as childlike as you want in your expressions, however, and you will achieve nothing in the way of awakening in the children a proper understanding of historical impulses if you make historical observations in your lessons before they have completed their twelfth year. Before that age, you can tell them about history in the form of stories—biographies, for instance. These they would

³¹ . Discussion 7, *Discussions with Teachers*.

be able to grasp, but they will be unable to grasp historical connections before they complete their twelfth year. You will do damage if you fail to observe this turning point. The children will begin to develop a yearning to have explained to them as history what they have earlier taken in as stories.

If you have told stories to the children—for instance, about a crusader or some other historical figure—you must try to transform the material in a way that allows them to see the historical impulses and links. When you note the changes in the children during this phase of their development and notice unmistakably that when you develop your lessons properly, after their twelfth year, the children understand you, it will be possible to say, “Before the children’s ninth year, I should limit myself to the artistic element we have discussed. From this, I will introduce writing and reading and, later, arithmetic. I shall not make the transition to natural history until after the stage we discussed yesterday. Until they have reached their twelfth year I will not teach history, except in the form of stories.”

At this point the children begin to take an inner interest in great historical connections. This will be quite important for the future, when it will become more and more distinctly necessary to educate people in an understanding of historical coherence; up to now they have never really achieved a proper conception of history. People have first and foremost been members of economic and national life, in which they have participated routinely and unthinkingly. They have coped quite adequately with the requirements and interests of this economic and national life by knowing a few anecdotes about rulers and wars—which is not history—and a few dates of kings and one or two famous people and battles. Lessons in the future will have to be particularly concerned with the way in which the cultural life of humankind has developed. They will have to include appropriate views on the impulses of history, and these

impulses will have to find their proper place in the curriculum so that they are given at the right moment.

Something else also begins to become comprehensible to children when they reach the age of twelve. However clearly you explain the functioning of the human eye to the children before this point, they will be unable to understand it properly. What

does it mean to teach children about the functioning of the human eye? It means showing them how beams of light fall into the eye and are taken up and refracted by the lens, how they then pass through the vitreous body and work as a picture on the rear wall, and so on. You have to describe all these processes in terms of physics. You are illustrating a process in physics that

takes place in the human being in one of the sense organs. If you want to describe this process, you must first teach the children the concepts that will enable them to take in this kind description of the eye. This means that you must first teach them the meaning of the refraction of light beams.

It is quite simple to do so by showing them a lens, explaining the focus, and demonstrating how light is refracted. But these are facts of physics that have their place outside the human being. We can describe them to children in the period between ages nine and twelve, but we should not apply such descriptions of physics to the organs of the human being before the children have reached the age of twelve. Only then do they begin to assess properly how the external world is continued in the human being. Before then, they cannot understand this. They can understand the processes of physics, but they cannot understand how these processes take place within the human being.

The comprehension of the historical impulses of humankind and the understanding of nature's laws of physics working in the human organism are akin to each other. The real essence of humanity lives in historical impulses; what is gathered together

in these impulses lives in external historical events that, in turn, have their effect on individual human beings. When you describe the human eye, you characterize an activity of external nature that is also working within the human being.

Both processes require similar powers of comprehension, and these powers start to develop only in the child's twelfth year. For this reason, it will be necessary to arrange the curriculum for children between the ages of nine and twelve in a way that will include lessons on the simple concepts of physics necessary for an understanding of the human being. In addition to natural history, simple physics will be taught, but the application of the laws of physics to the human being will wait until after age twelve. In the same way, stories will be told up to this time and will then be transformed into history.

My explanations so far refer to the way subjects are introduced. Of course, we can continue to enlarge on physics after the twelfth year. Neither physics nor natural history should be introduced before the children reach age nine, however, and neither history nor lessons involving physiology, that is, descriptions of human functions, should start before the end of the twelfth year. If you take into account that comprehension is something that does not simply blossom in the human intellect but always also includes the feelings and the will, you will not be confused by what I just said. If people do not consider such things, it is simply because they have illusions. You can present the human intellect, in a makeshift way, with historical or physiological facts before age twelve, but by doing so you ruin human nature; strictly speaking, you make it unsuitable for the whole of life. But between the ages of nine and twelve, you can gradually introduce the concepts of refraction and the formation of images through lenses or other instruments. You could perhaps discuss how an opera glass works. You can also talk with the children about the way in which a clock functions and

explore the differences between a pendulum clock and a pocket watch and other examples along these lines. Before they reach the age of twelve, however, you should not describe to them how refraction and image formation can also be applied to the human eye.

All this will provide you with points of reference from which you can learn how the material to be taught should be distributed in the curriculum so that the capacities of the children are developed in the right way. There is more to be observed from this point of view. To a certain extent, it is important that we should not move too far away from life in our lessons, though we should not take excessive account of the trivialities of life either. One might have the following conversation with a child. You might ask: "What have you got on your feet?" And you would expect the reply "A pair of boots." You would then ask, "What are the boots for?" The child would respond, "For me to put on." Some teachers might think of this as an object lesson, but it is nothing but a triviality. The object lessons occasionally described in books on education are very boring to children at a subconscious level and as a result cause much damage in them. Remaining too close to life in this way and constantly bringing things to awareness that could very well remain in the unconscious, raising activities that are merely habitual too much into consciousness, is something we should not allow ourselves.

On the other hand, we need not lose all contact with life and teach the children empty abstractions too early. This is especially important for physics lessons. In any case, physics will offer opportunities for interweaving matters that are close to life with those that are initially rather removed from ordinary life. You should therefore make sure to develop the concepts of physics from life itself. As much as your inventiveness will allow, you should give the children real experiences. For instance, after

having lit the stove in the classroom, you would show how the floor remains cold even after the air is warm. In this way, you point out a fact of life. Beginning with that fact, you can go on to explain how the air naturally becomes warm first near the stove rather than near the ceiling, but then the warm air always rises, making the cold air fall.

You must describe the process in the following way. The air first becomes warm below the stove and then rises to the ceiling, making the cold air fall. This is why a room remains cold near the floor even when the air near the ceiling has been warm for some time. In this way, you have started from a fact of life, and from there you seek the transition to the fact that warm air expands and cold air contracts. This statement takes you farther away from life. Another example would be a discussion of the lever in physics. It is not wise to present just the abstract lever. Start with a pair of scales and move on from there to the lever. Start with an object that is used in everyday life and proceed to whatever can be extrapolated from it in physics.

I must point out to you that a considerable amount of what is included in our concepts of physics wreaks havoc in the child and that a great deal depends on the teacher's knowing what is right and trying to be mature in judgment. You cannot avoid saying to the bigger children: "Here you have an electrical generator; what I have here is a frictional electrical generator. I can make electricity by rubbing certain objects together, but I must first wipe the objects carefully because they have to be very dry. If they are wet, the experiment will not work, and no electricity will be made." Then you enlarge on the reasons why electricity cannot be produced with wet instruments. And you go on to explain how lightning occurs, pointing out that it is also an electrical process. There are many people who claim that clouds rub against each other and that the resulting friction causes lightning as an electrical discharge. The children will

perhaps believe this because the teacher actually believes it, but in their subconscious a special process takes place of which they are unaware.

The children say to themselves: "My teacher wipes the instruments before rubbing them together to make electricity, just to make sure that they are not wet, and then tells me that if clouds rub together, electricity is made. But clouds are wet." Children notice such inconsistencies. And much of the disharmony in life stems from the fact that children are told such contradictions. These contradictions ought to arise outside in the world; they have no place in our thinking. Because human knowledge and perception are too shallow today, such contradictions, which really tear apart the human unconscious, continually crop up in what we tell children and, later, young people. We must take care that what we bring consciously to the children does not contain too much of what in their subconscious they will imagine differently. It will not be our task as teachers to eliminate from science such nonsense as is maintained concerning the link between lightning and electricity in physics. When we deal with more obvious matters, however, we should always remind ourselves that we influence not only the children's conscious being but also their subconscious being.

How do we take the subconscious into consideration? As teachers, we must do this by trying not to adjust matters to make them understandable for children. I have mentioned elsewhere what this involves. You must develop in yourselves capacities that allow you, at the moment you enter upon a subject with the children, to become as absorbed by the subject as the child is by the lesson, regardless of the subject you are treating. You should not allow yourself to be filled with the thought that you know a great deal more but that you are arranging it to suit the children. You should not allow yourself to believe that you are quite superior to the children and prepare

everything you want to say to them so that it will be suitable for them. No. You must have the ability to transform yourself in such a way that the children literally wake up through your lesson and that you yourself become a child with the children, but not in a childish way. People caring for children often err in this respect, talking baby language with their charges. If the child says, "Dada," they also say, "Dada," instead of "Father." It is not a matter of becoming childish with the children in a superficial way; we must transform what is more mature into something childlike.

To be capable of doing this in the right way, we have to look rather more deeply into the nature of the human being. We have to take seriously the fact that precisely with regard to their most important spiritual characteristic human beings become productive by retaining the childlike element all their lives. We are poets and artists if we can always relive in ourselves the activity of the child with our more mature nature. To be forever a steady person, unable any longer to use in an inner childlike way our thinking, feeling, and willing (which have absorbed more mature concepts now that we are older than thirty), is not a suitable mood of life for a teacher. The proper mood of life for teachers is always to be able to return to childhood with everything they experience and with everything they learn. They will not return to childhood by describing in baby language something new they have learned; they will return because with every new fact they will experience as much delight and intense joy as the children do when they perceive something new. In a word, it is the soul and spirit that should return to childhood, not the external physical manifestation.

Then, too, a great deal will depend on the atmosphere that is created between the teacher and the students. It is right, for instance, if you speak about life and about nature in such a way that you take as much pleasure in it as the children themselves

do and are as much amazed as the children. Let me give you an example. You have all learned some physics and thus know a fair amount about what is called Morse telegraphy. You know what happens when a telegram is sent from one place to another. You understand how the telegram operator uses the different devices, pressing the Morse key for a short time or for longer, thus closing the circuit for shorter or longer moments, whereas the circuit is interrupted when the operator does not press the key. You know that the actual Morse telegraph apparatus is linked to the circuit by an iron lever attracted by a coil that contains an electromagnet and that the so-called relay is connected into this current. You know that with the help of a wire one such apparatus at one station is linked with another at another station, so that what is produced at the first station is reproduced at the second. By connecting the current for shorter or longer moments, I cause a signal to be received at the next station that, when it is transposed, can be read by the operator there. The shorter or longer bursts of current become visible as impressions on a strip of paper, as dots or dashes. The strip of paper runs through rollers. You see, for instance, a dot and then after an interruption three dots, and so on. The alphabet consists of dots and dashes. The letter *a* is represented by a dot followed by a dash; *b* is dash, dot, dot; *t* is just a dash; and so on. In this way, you can read what is transmitted from one station to the next.

Yet everything that is said about this telegraphy apparatus is really only a question of intellectual consideration. You certainly do not require many soul forces to make comprehensible all the mechanical processes that take place when the mechanism is permeated by electricity, which itself can so far be explained only hypothetically by science. But one thing does remain a miracle; such things really can be described as miracles. And I must say, when I think of the link that is created between the

Morse apparatus at one station and that at another station, it never fails to fill me with wonder when I realize how the circuit is closed. The electrical circuit is not closed by means of a wire running from one station to the next and another wire running back again. This would also be possible, and breaking the closed circuit could then effect the interruption. But this closed circuit containing the Morse apparatus is not created by wires that run back and forth; only one part of the current runs along a wire. At each station the wire ends in a metal plate in the ground, so that the Earth itself provides the link that could be made through a wire. The Earth itself does what the other half of the wire would otherwise accomplish.

Whenever you think of how a Morse apparatus at one station is linked to another at another station, you are reminded of the miracle that makes the whole Earth into a mediator, taking the electric current as though into its care and duly delivering it at the next station. The Earth itself mediates in this way. All the explanations that exist for this process are hypothetical. But the important point about our human attitude toward it is that we should be able ever and again to feel the miraculous nature of this fact, that we should not become blunted in our ability to grasp the processes of physics with our feelings. Then when we explain these things to the children, we shall find the mood that allows us to recapture the way we first grasped such facts. When we explain a phenomenon of physics to a child who is full of wonder, we shall ourselves become children full of wonder. Such marvels are hidden in all phenomena, including the processes of physics that take place in the world.

Imagine for a moment that you are giving the following lesson. Over there is a bench and on it is, let us say, a ball. I quickly pull the bench away, and the ball falls to the ground. How would most teachers today explain this to a child? They would say, "The ball is attracted to the earth; if it is

unsupported, it is overcome by the force of gravity.” But that does not really explain anything. Saying that the ball is subject to the force of gravity is really meaningless. It is one of those verbal definitions we have already mentioned. Again, physicists say that nothing is known about gravity and its nature, yet they speak of it anyway. But we cannot avoid speaking of gravity; we must mention it. Otherwise, when our students enter life they may some day be asked to explain gravity—perhaps while being evaluated for a job. Just imagine what would happen if a fifteen-year-old knew nothing of gravity; there would be a terrible fuss. So we must explain gravity to children; we must not be foolish enough to close our eyes to the demands of the world as it is today. But by working on their subconscious, we can awaken beautiful concepts in the children.

Because we have established the groundwork, we can make this clear to them; “Here you have the intake of an air pump containing no air. If you remove the stopper, air flows in quickly, filling what had been empty. This is related to what happens also in the case of the effects of gravity. When we pull the bench quickly from the ball, something flows in there as well. The only difference is that in one case, outside air flows into an empty space, whereas in the other case the effect works in only one direction” [toward Earth]. Now you compare these two phenomena.³² Do not give children verbal definitions but show them the connections between the concepts and the phenomena related to air and those related to solid bodies.

Once we have grasped the concept of solid bodies flowing in the direction in which they tend when not prevented, we can dispense with the concept of air flowing into empty space. Healthier concepts would arise than those that fill the world today—such as Professor Einstein’s complicated theory of

³² . See lecture 7, *The Foundations of Human Experience*.

relativity. I mention this as a passing comment on the present state of our civilization, for I cannot avoid pointing out how many harmful ideas live in our culture (such as the theory of relativity, especially in its most recent variation). These ideas run a ruinous course if the child becomes a research scientist. You have now been introduced to a large part of the basis and method for working out the curriculum.

Lecture Nine

AUGUST 30, 1919

The children coming to the Waldorf school will be of widely differing ages. When we start the lessons in the different classes, we shall have to take particular account of this age range, and we must also not lose sight of another, related point. Unfortunately, we cannot immediately found a university with all the usual faculties to continue from the point where the Waldorf school leaves off. It will be up to us to prepare our students for the other institutes of further education that they will have to attend when they leave the Waldorf school and before they step out into life. We must provide our students by the time they leave with the necessary qualifications for whatever further education will be suitable for them when they go out into life. We shall achieve our aim and accomplish our task, despite the need to conform to these restrictions, if we can put into practice the educational principles we have established in the present cultural epoch of humankind's development. We shall be able to achieve this aim, particularly with regard to the older children, who will soon have to be sent away to the other institutions of life, only if we apply a golden rule—to teach economically.

We shall be able to teach economically, particularly the thirteen-, fourteen-, and fifteen-year-olds, if we carefully eliminate everything that is merely ballast for human soul

development at that age and can bear no fruits for life. For instance, we shall have to make room in our timetable at least for Latin and possibly also for Greek. We must, in any case, really come to grips with language teaching, for this will be a most significant feature of our method as a whole. Let us look at the fact that you will be teaching students who will already have been taught French or Latin up to a certain stage. Their lessons will have been conducted in a certain way. You will have to spend your first lesson or even your first week finding out what they already know. You will have to repeat with them what they have done so far, but you must do so judiciously so that each, according to his or her capacity, will benefit even from this repetition.

You will achieve a great deal simply by taking into account that what delays you more than anything else in teaching foreign languages is translation from the foreign language into the mother tongue and vice versa. An enormous amount of time is wasted when, for instance, so much translation from Latin into German and from German back into Latin is expected of grammar school students. Instead, there should be much more reading, and the students should spend much more time expressing their own thoughts in the foreign language. How then will you set about teaching a foreign language, let us say French, on the basis of this rule?

Let us first consider the older children to whom this will apply—those who are thirteen and fourteen. For them you will first have to select carefully what you want to read in a particular language. Select passages for reading and then call on the students one by one to read them out loud. You will save their time and energy if you do not begin by insisting that they translate the passages into German but instead make sure that each child reads properly in terms of pronunciation and so on. In the classes when you want to review work and cover

new material, it is still good not to require translation but to let the students give a free rendering of the content in the passage they have read.

Just allow children to repeat in their own words what the passage says while you listen carefully for any omissions that might indicate that they have not understood the excerpt. It is more convenient for you, of course, simply to let the children translate, for then you soon see where one of them cannot go on. It is less expeditious to listen for something to be omitted instead of just waiting until the child comes to a stop, but you can nevertheless find out by this means whether something has not been understood, if a phrase is not rendered correctly in the mother tongue. There will be children who make a very capable rendering of the passage and others whose rendering is much freer in the use of their own words; this does not matter. This is the way we should discuss the text with the children.

Next we tackle the opposite procedure. First, we discuss a subject with the children in their mother tongue, a subject that they can follow along with us in their thoughts and feelings. Then we can try to let the children repeat freely (depending on how far advanced they already are) in the foreign language what we have been discussing with them. In this way we shall discover how well these children, who have come to us from all sorts of classes, know the foreign language.

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.³³ 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

³³ . See lecture 9, *The Foundations of Human Experience*.

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. Miklošić, the scholar of Slavic languages, started writing about sentences without subjects, followed by Brentano, and then Marty in Prague.³⁴ 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

³⁴ . Franz Xaver von Miklošić (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.

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.

If you use only sentences from ordinary life, you will not be able to teach pronunciation very well unless you also use sentences like the ones we spoke yesterday as an exercise, for instance:

Lulling leader limply
liplessly laughing

loppetyp lumpy
lackety lout.³⁵

These sentences consider only the essence of language. 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

³⁵ . See beginning of discussion 8 in *Discussions with Teachers*. This version was adapted for English speakers from the original: “*Lalle Lieder lieblich, / Lipplicher Laffe, / Lappiger, lumpyger, / Laichiger Lurch.*”

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.

It would be particularly beneficial in teaching foreign languages if the lessons are organized so that they allow the various languages that children must learn to coexist. An enormous amount of time is lost when children of thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen are taught Latin by one teacher, French by another, and English by a third. Very much is gained when one teacher develops a thought with a student in one language, then that same thought is developed by another teacher in another language, and so on. One language thus abundantly supports the other. Of course, this can be accomplished only when the necessary resources are available—teachers in this case. Whatever is available should be utilized fully. The support that one language gives another should be taken into account. This way, in grammar and syntax lessons it is possible to point constantly from one

language to another, and this touches on a point that is exceedingly important for the students.

They learn a subject far better if they have in their souls the method of applying it in a number of directions. You will be able to say to them: "Now you have spoken a German sentence and a Latin sentence. In a German sentence, if we are speaking of ourselves, we can hardly ever leave out the 'I,' but in the Latin sentence the 'I' is contained in the verb." You need not go any further. Indeed, it would not be good to go any further. But it is wise just to touch on this fact so that the student gains a certain feeling for it; then a force will emanate from this feeling that will work as a living faculty for understanding other elements of grammar. Please absorb this fact and think it over very deeply: that it is possible in a stimulating, living lesson to develop capacities in the children that you need for teaching.

This is indeed so.

Say, for example, that you have touched upon something without pedantically enlarging on it. If you have said to the children, "Latin does not say 'I' because it is included in the verb, but the German language does say it," then for a moment a faculty is awakened in the children that is otherwise not there. At this moment the faculty is awakened, and after this sense has awakened, you can work at grammatical rules more easily with the children than if you had to draw on their ordinary state of soul. You will have to think how you can create the aptitudes you want for a certain lesson. The children need not have the full measure of capacities you intend to use; but you must have the skill to call to life such capacities that can later fade away again when the children leave the classroom.

This technique can be applied specifically to the teaching of foreign languages in the following form. You first have the

children read aloud, paying attention to proper pronunciation— rather than giving too many pronunciation rules, you read a section and then let the children read after you. Then they retell the passage they have read, forming their own thoughts about it and expressing them in different languages. Quite separately you teach the lessons on grammar and syntax with rules to be remembered and examples to be forgotten. There you have the framework of our language teaching.

Lecture Ten

SEPTEMBER 1, 1919

Let us try to proceed with our treatment of teaching methods by keeping one eye on the curriculum and the other on what will be the actual educational content within it. The curriculum will not contain all subjects at first, for we shall build up the way we view things by degrees.³⁶

I started by giving you considerations that allowed us to find characteristics belonging to the various stages of teaching. How many such stages can be distinguished from the beginning of school until the ages of fourteen or fifteen? We have seen that an important turning point occurs at about age ten. We can say that the first stage of schooling lasts until the ninth year. What do we do during that period of time? Our starting point will be the artistic realm. We shall work musically and in painting and drawing with the children in the way we have discussed. We shall allow writing to proceed gradually out of painting and drawing. Step by step the forms of writing will arise out of the forms of our drawings, and then we shall move on to reading.

It is important for you to understand the reasons for this sequence so that you do not start with reading and then link it with writing but rather progress from writing to reading.

³⁶. See Steiner's lectures on curriculum in *Discussions with Teachers*.

Writing is, in a sense, more alive than reading. Reading isolates human beings very much and draws them away from the world. In writing we have not yet ceased to imitate universal forms if we let it arise out of drawing. Printed letters have indeed become extraordinarily abstract, but they are derived from written letters, and so we, too, let them arise from the written letters of our lessons. It is entirely right if, at least for writing lessons, you keep the thread intact that leads from the drawn shape to the written letter, so that the children still sense the original drawn form in the letters. In this way you overcome what is so alien to the world in writing. In the process of finding their way into writing, the children assimilate an element that is very alien to the world. But when we link the written shapes to the universal forms—when we say, for example, that *f* stands for *fish* and so on—we lead them back toward the world. And it is so very important that we do not sever the children's links with the world. As we go farther back in civilization, the links we find that bind the human being to the world become more alive. You need only look with your souls at one particular image to understand what I mean.

Instead of seeing me here talking to you, imagine that you are in ancient Greece, where a rhapsodist is reciting Homer to an audience in that strange style we no longer use—part song, part speech. Imagine a stenographer sitting by the side of this rhapsodist reciting Homer. What a strange scene—completely impossible. Impossible, if only for the simple reason that the ancient Greeks had a very different memory and did not need anything so far removed from the world as the shapes of shorthand to remember what came to them through speech. You can see from this that an exceedingly destructive element constantly interferes in our culture. We need this destructive element. In the whole of our cultural life we cannot possibly

do without shorthand, but we should be aware that there is something destructive in it. What in our cultural life is this awful habit of writing everything down in shorthand? It is as though we were no longer able to regulate our appropriate rhythm between waking and sleeping and were to use our sleep time to carry on all kinds of activities so as to implant in our soul life something that it no longer takes in naturally. By using shorthand, we retain something in our culture that, if left to ourselves with our present natural aptitudes, we would cease to notice and, in fact, forget. We thus keep something artificially awake in our culture that destroys it just as much as all-night studying ruins the health of overzealous students. For this reason, our culture is no longer truly healthy.

We must realize that we have already crossed the Rubicon—that was in ancient Greek times. Humankind has passed the point when we had an absolutely healthy culture. Now our culture will become ever more unhealthy, and human beings will more and more have to find within education a healing process against all the things that make them sick in their environment. We must not allow ourselves to indulge in illusions about this. For this reason it is infinitely important to connect writing with drawing and to teach writing before reading.

Somewhat later we bring in arithmetic. Since there is no exact point in the development of the child when it is essential to begin arithmetic, we can fit it in among the other subjects. We can start later with arithmetic and build its fundamentals into the curriculum later; but we start in the way I have described. At the first stage, the curriculum will always include foreign language lessons, because, from a cultural point of view, they are necessary. For children of this age group, foreign language lessons must involve only learning to speak that language.

Once children have reached the second stage, from ages ten to about thirteen, we begin to develop increased self-awareness in them through grammar. Through the change the children have experienced, as I described it here, they are now able to take in what can grow out of grammar. At this time we deal principally with word inflections. Then we make a start with the natural history of the animal kingdom in the way I outlined with the cuttlefish, mouse, and human being. Later, we follow with the plant kingdom, as you will demonstrate to me this afternoon.³⁷

During this stage of the child's development we can also move on to geometry. Before this stage, all that we later teach as geometry is contained within drawing. With drawing we can elaborate the triangle, the square, the circle, and the line for the child. The forms are developed through drawing; we draw them and then say: "This is a triangle, and this is a square." But the element of geometry that is added—not before the ninth year—is the search for the relationships between forms. Foreign languages continue as well, and the more grammatical side of language is introduced. Finally, we introduce the children to physics. At the third stage, leading up to ages fifteen and sixteen, we start to teach syntax; children are really ready to study syntax only at about twelve years of age. Before that age, we treat in an instinctive way what can lead the children to the forming of sentences.

The time has also come when we can study the mineral kingdom using the forms of geometry. We discuss the mineral kingdom by always linking it to physics, which we also apply to the human being as I have illustrated in the refraction of light through the lens in the eye. We introduce both physics and chemistry, and we also make a start on history. We can

³⁷ . See discussion 10 in *Discussions with Teachers*.

enrich the study of geography with natural history by using physics to link them, and with geometry through the drawing of maps. Finally, we show its connections to history, that is, how the different peoples have developed their characters. These studies are conducted during the whole of these two stages in child development. Foreign languages continue and can now be extended to include syntax.

Naturally, a number of issues will have to be taken carefully into consideration. We cannot study music with the little children when there are other children in the same classroom who need absolute quiet because they are supposed to be learning a lesson. Instead, we must paint and draw with the little ones in the morning and study music in the afternoon. In other words, we will allocate the available space in the school so that one subject does not disturb another. We cannot expect poems to be recited or a history lesson to be conducted when the little children in the next room are playing horns. These, too, are matters that are linked with the structure of the curriculum, and in establishing our school we have to carefully determine which subjects should be taken up in the morning and which in the afternoon.

Now that we know the three stages of the curriculum, we see that we can determine the aptitudes of the children. We have to compromise, but for the moment let me assume that our situation is ideal; later I will look at the curriculum of modern schools so that we can strike an adequate compromise. It is ideal to have a less sharp differentiation between the classes within each stage of development than between the stages themselves. We will imagine that a uniform progression through the school years can take place only between the first and second and between the second and third stages. We will discover that the so-called less gifted children usually take longer to understand.

In each year's age group at the first stage there will be more capable students who grasp things sooner and digest them later, and less gifted students, who have difficulties at first but in the end also understand. We shall certainly experience this phenomenon, and for this reason we should refrain from making premature judgments as to which children are particularly gifted and which are less so. I have stressed before that we will be teaching children who have already attended a variety of classes elsewhere. Dealing with them will be all the more difficult the older they are. To a great degree, we will be able to remold what has been spoiled in them if only we make sufficient effort. After introducing foreign languages to the children—Latin, French, English, Greek—as I have summarized, we should lose no time in starting to engage in an activity the children enjoy most of all. We must let them carry on conversations together in the appropriate language while the teacher does no more than guide the process. You will find that they take tremendous delight in conversing together in a foreign language while the teacher does nothing except make corrections or at most guide the conversation. If one of them says particularly boring things, for instance, the student could be diverted to a more interesting topic. The teacher's presence of mind will have to serve particularly well here. You must really experience the children before you as a choir that you will conduct (though, of course, this must be done inwardly, and not as an orchestra conductor).

Then you must also ascertain which poems and other recitation pieces the children have been taught previously and what they remember, so that you can draw these poems from their memories like a treasure. To this treasure they have stored in their memories you link whatever grammar and syntax they still need to learn. It is extremely important that the children should retain what they have in their memories in

the way of poems and so on and that they connect to them the rules of grammar and syntax they need to master later. I have said already that it is not beneficial when their memories are ill treated through writing out the sentences used in grammar lessons in order to learn rules. These sentences must be forgotten, but what is learned through the sentences must be coupled with what the children have stored in their memories. In this way, what is retained in their memories will help them gain an increasing command of the language. If later on they want to write a letter or talk to someone in that language, they should be able to call to mind rapidly the appropriate turns of phrase they have mastered in this way. Taking such things into account is part of the economy of teaching.

When teaching foreign languages, you have to know what hinders progress. If you read a passage aloud to your class while they follow the text in their books, it is nothing but time eliminated from their lives. It is the worst thing you could possibly do. The right way is for the teacher to relate freely whatever is to be put across to the children or, if a passage or poem is presented verbatim, to speak it by heart without using a book. Meanwhile, the students do nothing but listen; they do not read the text as the teacher speaks. Then, possibly, they are asked to reproduce what they have heard without having read it first. This method is vital for teaching foreign languages, but need not be taken into account so much for lessons in the mother tongue. What matters very much with the foreign language is that the children should understand through hearing rather than through reading—that a language should become intelligible to them through speech. When this has been accomplished, the children can be allowed to take their books and read the passage. Alternatively, if this is not

expecting too much of them, they can be given for homework the task of reading what has been addressed in the lesson.

In foreign languages, homework should be restricted mainly to reading. Any written work should really be done at school. As little homework as possible should be given and not until the later stages, after the age of twelve. Even then it should deal only with the affairs of real life, such as writing letters, business correspondence, and so on. It is real malpractice, in a higher sense, to have school children write essays in foreign languages on subjects that have nothing to do with life. We should be content with letter writing, business correspondence, and similar topics. We can go beyond these subjects at most by letting the children recount events that have happened to them, things that they have experienced. Up to the age of fourteen such narration of real happenings should be cultivated far more than free composition. Free composition really has no place in school before the ages of fourteen or fifteen. What does belong in school up to that point is the narrative retelling of what the children have experienced and heard; they must learn to take these experiences in, for otherwise they cannot participate in an appropriately social way in the cultural process of humanity. Indeed, educated people today generally notice only half the world and not the whole of it.

People do many experiments today, particularly in the field of criminal psychology. Everything has to be proved by experiment these days. Let me give you an example. A lecture is announced (these are academic experiments carried out at universities). For the purpose of the experiment the lecturer plans the sequence of events beforehand with one of the students. The professor mounts the platform and speaks the first words of the lecture. (All this is written down in great detail.) At that moment the student who is part of the plot

leaps onto the platform and tears down the coat the professor has hung on a hook there. He does exactly what they have prearranged. The professor behaves accordingly and makes a rush at the student to prevent him from taking down the coat. All the actions are predetermined. They wrestle, making the movements they have contrived beforehand. They have studied it in detail and learned it by heart so that they do everything exactly as arranged. Then the audience members, who are not in the know, will behave in some way. This cannot be predetermined. But perhaps the plot could include someone whose task it is to carefully observe the behavior of the audience. Finally, at the end of the experiment, the members of the audience are asked to write down what they have seen.

Such experiments have been conducted at universities, including the very experiment I have just described. The result was that, from an audience of about thirty people, at most four or five related the scene correctly. This can be verified because every action was prearranged, and the scene was enacted accordingly. Barely one-tenth of the audience recorded the scene accurately. Most people write down the most absurd things when taken by surprise in this way. Since we are so fond of experimenting today, we conduct this kind of investigation and then scientifically reach the significant conclusion that witnesses in court are unreliable. If only one-tenth of an educated audience in a university lecture hall (they are all educated people, are they not?) report a sequence of events correctly, while the others report incorrectly and some even put down utter nonsense, how can witnesses in court be expected to give accurate accounts about events they saw weeks or perhaps months earlier? People with sound common sense certainly know this to be true, because, in the course of ordinary life, people nearly always incorrectly relate what they

have seen or heard. All you can do is develop a fine nose for detecting whether something is being told to you accurately or not. Of all the things people tell you from every side, hardly one-tenth is, strictly speaking, true, hardly one-tenth is a correct account of an actual event.

As a matter of fact, people do things by halves. They develop the half that they could more easily do without if they were to rely properly on sound common sense; it is the other half that is more important. We ought to see to it that our cultural life develops in a way that will mean that witnesses are more reliable and people tell more of the truth. But to achieve this end, we should start to work on it in childhood. That is the reason why it is essential to let children recount what they have seen and experienced rather than expect them to write free compositions. In this way we will inculcate in them the habit of telling in life, and perhaps also in court, not something that they have invented but whatever is the truth regarding the external facts discerned by their senses. The will realm ought to be taken more into account in this effort than the intellectual realm. The purpose of that experiment of the prearranged scene enacted in a lecture hall and the statements made by the audience was to find out how many lies people tell. In an intellectual age like ours, this is understandable. But we must bring our intellectual age back to the realm of the will. We must pay attention to educational details, such as letting the children (once they can write and particularly after their twelfth year) recount events that have actually happened rather than cultivating free composition, which has no place in education before the age of fourteen or fifteen.

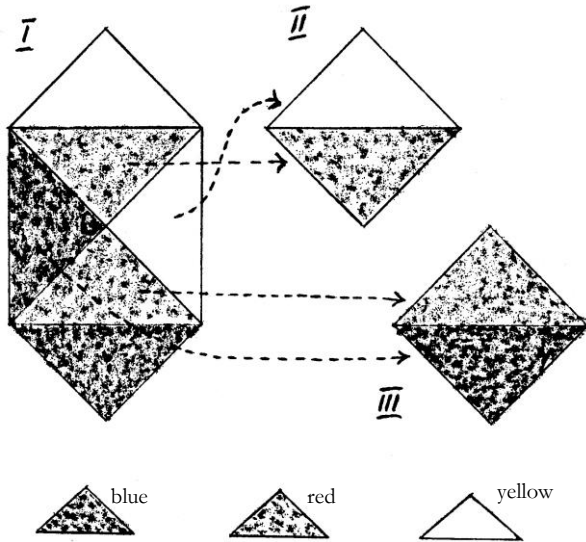
In foreign language lessons it is essential to bring our students gradually to the point at which they are able to retell briefly something they have seen or heard. It is also important to cultivate the element of reflex action in connection with

language, that is, to give the children orders—do this, do that—and make sure they carry them out. In this exercise what the teacher says is not followed by reflection on what has been said or by a slowly spoken answer, but by action. In this way the will realm, the element of movement, is cultivated in language lessons.

These are ideas that you must ponder well and absorb—and take into account particularly in foreign language lessons. Our task is always to unite the will realm with the intellect in the right way. It is also important to cultivate object lessons in our school, but without allowing them to become banal. The children should never have the feeling that what they are being told in an object lesson is really rather obvious. “Here is a piece of chalk. What color is it?”—“Yellow.” “What is it like at the top?”—“It is broken off.” Many an object lesson is given along these lines. It is atrocious. Something that is obvious in ordinary life should not be used as an object lesson. Such lessons should be lifted up to a higher level. When they are being given an object lesson, the children should be transported by it to a higher sphere of their soul life. You can achieve this aim particularly well if you combine object lessons with geometry.

Geometry offers an extremely good example of how to link the object lesson to the subject itself. You start, for instance, by drawing a right-angled isosceles triangle for the children. Below it you attach a square to the triangle. Now we have a rightangled isosceles triangle with a square attached to it (diagram I). If you have not already done so, you teach the children that with an isosceles triangle, the sides a and b are the two that contain the right angle and that side c is the hypotenuse. On the hypotenuse you have constructed a square.

This explanation refers only to an isosceles triangle. Then you divide the square with diagonal lines, coloring one part red (top and bottom) and one part yellow (right). Now you say to the children: “I am going to cut out the yellow part and place it beside my drawing” (diagram II). Then you take the red part and attach it to the yellow part. Now you have made a



square to fit one of the two equal sides, but it is constructed of a red piece and a yellow piece. Thus the second drawing (diagram II) is the same size as the yellow and red portions in the first drawing and amounts to half of the square on the hypotenuse. Then you do the same for the other of the two equal sides, using blue and adding the blue piece at the bottom so that once more you have a right-angled isosceles triangle. Again you cut it out (diagram III), so that now you have a square on the other of the two equal sides.

Schopenhauer used to be furious in his day because the theorem of Pythagoras was not taught in this way. In his book *The World as Will and Idea*, he expressed this feeling in his

rather coarse manner: “How stupid schools are not to teach the Pythagorean theorem by simply placing one part on top of another so that the children can see a concrete demonstration of it.” This applies to isosceles triangles, but exactly the same can be done with scalene right-angled triangles by fitting one part over another in the manner demonstrated. That is an object lesson; you can turn geometry into an object lesson. When you aim to teach the children the Pythagorean theorem after the age of ten, it is vital that you plan ahead how you will demonstrate it for them by fitting together the parts of the square on the hypotenuse. (I have often tested this myself.) If you as the teacher have in mind that you are aiming to teach this in a particular geometry lesson, in at most seven or eight preceding lessons you can teach all the geometry that is necessary to lead up to the Pythagorean theorem, the well-known “asses’ bridge.”

It is very economical indeed to teach the beginnings of geometry in this graphic manner. You will save much time, and you will also rescue the children from a significant pitfall (something that is destructive to teaching). You spare them from carrying out abstract thinking in the effort to understand the Pythagorean theorem; you let them form concrete thoughts and proceed from the simple to the complex. You should start by formulating the Pythagorean theorem as shown here for the isosceles triangle, and then you progress to the scalene triangle. Even when this lesson is taught today in the manner of an object lesson (for it does happen sometimes), it is not broad enough to cover the whole of the Pythagorean theorem. People do not begin with the simple isosceles triangle (which is a good preparation) and progress to the scalene right-angled triangle. But this is the very point that is important—to include it very consciously in the goal of geometry lessons. What you must consider is the use of

different colors. The various areas are treated with colors that are laid one on top of the other. Most of you will have done something similar already, though not quite in this way.

1. Up to the ninth year:
music, painting, drawing
writing, reading foreign
languages arithmetic
(somewhat later)
2. Up to the twelfth year:
geography (continually
from this point on)
grammar and word
inflections natural history
of animal kingdom
and plant kingdom
foreign languages
geometry concepts
of physics
3. Up to the fourteenth year:
geography (continues)
syntax minerals physics
and chemistry foreign
languages, history

Lecture Eleven

SEPTEMBER 2, 1919

I have told you that geography is first introduced during the second of the three stages between the ages of seven and fourteen. We can very well begin with it when the children have reached the age of nine, but it must be approached in the right way. Geography must encompass much more in the future than it does now for children up to fourteen, fifteen, and older. It is pushed too much into the background these days, treated like the stepchild of education. In geography the achievements of all the other lessons should meet and flow together in all sorts of ways. And though I have said that mineralogy is not taken up until the third stage, when the children are about twelve, it can be woven into geography in a narrative way, combined with direct observation, during the previous stage.

It is particularly important in geography that we start with what the children already know about the face of the earth and about what takes place on the face of the earth. We endeavor to give the children, in an artistic way, a kind of picture of the hills and rivers and other features of their immediate surroundings. We develop with the children an elementary map of the immediate neighborhood where they are growing up and which they therefore know. Between the ages of nine and twelve, children can take in an enormous amount from geography if we go about teaching it the right way. We try to teach them what it

means when you change your point of view from being within a neighborhood to seeing it from outside, from the air; we take them through the process of transforming a landscape into a map, at first with the landscape they know. We try to teach them that rivers flow through the district by actually drawing the system of rivers and streams on the map of the neighborhood. We also draw in the hills. It is good to work with colors, making the rivers blue and the hills or mountains brown. Then we add the other things linked to the way people live. We put in all the configurations of the district, drawing the children's attention to them as we go: Here is a part where fruit trees are planted, so we draw in the fruit trees.



Then we point out that there are also some parts covered with coniferous trees, so we draw them in, too.



We show them that another part of the neighborhood is covered with cornfields, and then we include them on our map.



There are also meadows to be added. We point out to the children the meadows that can be mown, shown in this drawing.



Meadows that cannot be mown but that provide grass for the cattle, though it is shorter and sparser, are also included in our map. We tell the children that this is pasture land.



And so we bring the map to life for the children.

From this map the children gain some sort of overall view of the economic foundations of the neighborhood. We also start pointing out that there are many things like coal and ore inside the hills. We show them the way in which the rivers are used to transport things from one place to another place. We unfold for them much of what is connected with this economic structure of the district. Having made clear the economic foundation provided by the rivers and hills, fields and woods, and so on, insofar as these things can be explained to the children, we next put in the villages or towns of the district we are dealing with. And now we begin to point out why it is that a village appears at a particular place and the way this is connected with the courses of the streams and rivers, with the hills and what they might have to offer in their depths. In short, by using the map we endeavor to awaken in the children some idea of the economic links that exist between the natural formation of the land and the conditions of human life. This leads into giving them a picture of the difference between country life and town life. We take all this as far as the children are able to grasp it. And finally we show how human beings with their industry meet the conditions nature offers them. That is, we begin to show the children that human beings make artificial rivers known as canals, that they build railways. Then we point out how provisions can be transported with the help of the railways and how people's very situation in life is affected.

After working for a while toward an understanding of the economic relationships between natural conditions and the conditions of human life, we can build on the concepts the children have gained and lead them further into the world at large. If we have taken the first steps in the right way, it will not be necessary to be excessively pedantic in this. The pedant would say at this point that the natural way is to begin with the geography of the immediate neighborhood and then spread out concentrically from there. Even this is too pedantic. There is no need to enlarge in this way. When a firm foundation has been laid in understanding the links between nature and humans, we can quite well turn our attention to something else. In the way we turn to something else, however, we should continue as effectively and intensively as possible to develop the theme of the economic links between human beings and their natural environment.

Here in our district, for instance, after developing the necessary concepts from familiar stretches of land and helping the children find their bearings in their own neighborhood, we can widen their horizon by telling them about the geography of the Alps. We can extend the mapmaking already taught by drawing a line showing where the southern Alps meet the Mediterranean Sea. You also draw the northern part of Italy, the Adriatic Sea, and so on, saying there are great rivers there and drawing in the courses of the rivers. You draw the Rhône, the Rhine, the Inn, and the Danube with their tributaries and then add the different arms of the Alps. The children will be extraordinarily fascinated when they discover how the rivers separate the different arms.

Then, along the blue lines of the rivers, you can draw red lines, imaginary boundaries, for instance, along the Rhône from Lake Geneva back to its source, then along the Rhine, over the top of the Brenner, and so on, dividing the Alps from west to

east. You can then say, "Look, down below I have drawn a red line along the rivers, and at the top I have also drawn a red line. The Alps lying between these red lines are different from those lying above and below them." Now you could bring mineralogy into geography by showing the children a piece of Jura limestone and saying, "The mountain ranges above the top red line and those under the lower red line are made of limestone like this." For what lies between you show them a piece of granite—gneiss—and say, "The mountains between the red lines are of rock like this, the oldest rock." The children will be tremendously interested in this Alpine massif. You might perhaps also show them a relief map of the area. This gives a more plastic impression of how the river courses divide the Alps into limestone Alps, gneiss, mica, slate, and so on, and of how the whole length of the range is somewhat curved and shows from south to north the differentiation into limestone—granite—limestone, divided by the rivers. Without any pedantic object lessons, you can bring much to this description that will greatly extend the children's range of ideas.

Then you go on to describe to the children (you have already prepared for this in your nature lessons) what grows down in the valley, what grows higher up the mountainside, what grows even higher up, and also what does *not* grow at the summit. You paint a vertical picture of the vegetation. Next you begin to show the children the ways in which human beings establish themselves in a countryside dominated by massive mountains. Help them picture to themselves a really high mountain village and what people must do to live there. Mark it on your map. Then you describe a village and the roads of a valley and a town at the confluence of a river and one of its tributaries. You characterize in this wider context the relationship between the natural configuration of the land and the way humans establish their economic life. Out of the natural surroundings you build

up a picture of human industry, drawing the children's attention to the places where ore and coal can be found and to how settlements are determined by such things.

Next, draw for the children a picture of a landscape with no mountains, a flat plain, and treat it in a similar way. Describe the natural configuration, the structure of the ground, and show them that some plants grow on poor soil and others on rich soil. Point out the makeup of the soil in which potatoes grow (you can do this with quite simple means), or wheat, or rye, and so on. You will already have taught them the differences between wheat, rye, and oats. Do not hesitate to teach them things that as yet they can understand only in a general way and will grasp more clearly in later lessons, when they return to them from another point of view. Until they are twelve, introduce them chiefly to economic conditions and relationships and make these clear. Concentrate more on describing the geography of their own country than on giving them a complete picture of the Earth. Let them, however, gain an impression of how vast the ocean is. You started drawing it when you showed where the southern Alps meet the Mediterranean. Draw the sea as a blue surface, and draw the outlines of Spain and France, showing that there is an immense ocean to the west. In a way that they can understand, introduce gradually the idea that America also exists. They should have a mental picture of this before they are twelve.

If you start with this good foundation, you can count on the children having sufficient understanding when they are about twelve for you to proceed more systematically. You will take less time to give them a picture of the Earth as a whole by teaching them about the five continents and the oceans (more briefly than has been your method up to now) and describing the economic life of the different continents. You should be able to formulate everything on the foundations you have laid. When

you have drawn together in a picture of the whole Earth all the knowledge you have given the children about the economic life of humans and when you have also taught them history in the manner described for about six months, you can transfer your attention to the cultural environment made by the people who inhabit the different continents. But do not go into this different sphere until you have made the children's souls somewhat pliant through their first history lessons.

You can also speak of the geographical distribution of the characteristics of the different peoples. Do not speak any earlier about the distinctive differences of the various peoples, for only based on the foundation I have described will the children bring their best understanding to this subject. You can speak of the differences between Asiatic, European, and American peoples and of the differences between Mediterranean and northern European peoples. Thus you gradually combine geography with history. You will be fulfilling a beautiful task that brings much joy to the children if you do what I have just described mainly between the ages of twelve and fifteen.

You see that a great deal must be incorporated into teaching geography, so that it can become a kind of summary of everything else we do with the children. And so much can flow together in geography. Toward the end, a wonderful interplay between geography and history will be possible. Because you embrace many subjects in your geography lessons, you will then be able to draw on them for many lessons. This will, of course, tax your imaginative abilities and your inventiveness. When you tell the children that here or there certain things are done, for instance, that the Japanese make their pictures in a particular way, you can then encourage them to do the same, albeit in their much more simple and primitive way. When you are telling the children about the links between agriculture and the way humans live, do not miss the opportunity to give them a clear

picture of a plough and a harrow in connection with the geographical picture.

Also have the children imitate some of the things you tell them, perhaps in the form of a little plaything or a piece of artistic work. This will give them skills and will prepare them for taking their places properly in life later on. You could even make little ploughs and have them cultivate the school garden or let them cut with small sickles or mow with small scythes; this will establish a good contact with life. For more important than dexterity is the soul contact made between the life of the child and the life of the world. It is a fact that a child who has cut grass with a sickle or mown it with a scythe, a child who has made a furrow with a little plough, will turn into a different person from one who has not done these things. Quite simply, the soul element is changed. Abstract lessons in manual skills are not really a substitute. Paper folding and laying little sticks should be actively avoided, for these things tend to make children unfit for life rather than fit them for it. It is far better to encourage them to do things that really happen in life than to invent things for them to do that do not occur in life.

By building up our geography lessons in the way I have described, we acquaint the children in the most natural way with the fact that human life is brought together from many sides in various ways. At the same time we take care to deal with things that the children are well able to understand. Thus, between ages nine and twelve, we describe economic conditions and external affairs in our geography lessons. From this point, we lead on to an understanding of cultural and spiritual matters pertaining to different peoples. Then, while saving the details for later, we merely hint at what goes on in the rights sphere of the different nations, letting only the very first, most primitive concepts peep through the economic and cultural life. The children do not as yet have a full understanding for matters of the rights sphere,

and if they are confronted with these concepts too early in their development, their soul forces will be ruined for the rest of their lives because such concepts will be so abstract.

It is indeed a good idea if you can use the geography lessons to bring unity to all the other subjects. Perhaps the worst thing that can happen to geography is for it to be regimented into a strictly demarcated timetable, which is something we do not want. We arrange the lessons so that each subject can be treated for a longer span of time. When we take children into the school we work first of all toward teaching them to write. That is, we occupy the morning hours with painting, drawing, and learning to write. Our timetable will not stipulate that the first lesson be writing, the second reading, and so on; we will occupy ourselves with similar subjects for longer stretches at a time. Not until the children can write a little will we move on to reading. Of course, in learning to write they also learn to read a little, but these two studies can be combined in an even better way. We assign definite periods for the other lessons too, not following one subject with another, lesson by lesson, but staying with one subject for quite some time and coming back to other topics only after several weeks. We concentrate our lessons. In this way, we are in a position to teach much more economically than would be the case if we had to waste our time and energy on adhering to some dreadful timetable, teaching a subject in one lesson and then wiping it out in the next by teaching something quite different. You can see particularly with geography how you can approach it from all sorts of directions. It is not laid down for you that you have to teach geography from ages nine to ten; instead, you are left free to decide when the time is ripe to fit geography in with whatever else you have been doing.

This method imposes a great deal of responsibility on you, but without such responsibility no teaching can be carried out. A curriculum that from the start lays down a schedule and all sorts

of other dictums completely eliminates the art of teaching. This must not be. The teacher must be the driving and stimulating force in the whole educational system. What I have just shown you about the way to teach geography is an excellent example that gives you a proper picture of how everything should be done. Geography really can become a great channel into which everything flows and from which a great deal can also be derived. For instance, in the geography lesson you show the children the ways in which limestone mountains differ from granite mountains. Later you can show them a lump of granite and point out that it contains different minerals, including a substance that sparkles. Then you show them a piece of mica and tell them that what they see sparkling in the granite is mica. Next you can show them all the other substances hiding in granite. You show them a piece of quartz and try to unfold the whole mineral world out of a lump of rock.

This is another good opportunity for adding a great deal to the children's understanding of the ways in which things that belong together as a whole can be divided into their separate parts. It is far more useful to teach the children about granite first and then about the constituent minerals than it is to start with quartz, mica, feldspar, and so on and then show that they are all mixed up in granite. Mineralogy is a very good subject for starting with the whole and moving to the parts, for beginning with the way a mountain is constructed and progressing to mineralogy. This method certainly helps the children.

With the animal kingdom you will proceed in the opposite direction, building up from the individual animals. As we have seen in our seminar discussions, the plant kingdom is to be treated as a totality before we look at the particulars. And for the mineral kingdom, nature itself often supplies us with the aggregate from which we can then proceed to the distinct constituents. Again linking mineralogy with geography, we must

not omit a discussion of how all the things of economic value we find in nature are used. Referring to what we have said about the stony structure of the mountains, we discuss all the substances, such as coal, that we have a use for, in industry and elsewhere. We depict these things in a simple way, but the starting point is our discussion of the mountains. Nor should we neglect to describe a sawmill when we are dealing with the forest. We start with the forest, move on to a discussion of wood, and come finally to the sawmill.

We can do a tremendous amount with our lessons if we do not have to start with a timetable laid down with military precision but can proceed according to what naturally arises out of them. But we must have a good idea of what is required by the children at the different stages of their development, from the time they start school up to the age of nine, from nine to twelve, and from twelve to fifteen.

Lecture Twelve

SEPTEMBER 3, 1919

We must not close our minds to the fact that the relationship human beings have with their environment is far more complex than simply those aspects of which we are always conscious. From various points of view I have tried to clarify for you the nature and significance of the unconscious and subconscious workings of the soul. In the sphere of education and educational methods, it is particularly important that human beings should be brought up in a way that suits not only their conscious being but also their subconscious and unconscious soul forces. To be a real educator and teacher, you cannot avoid entering into the subtleties of the human being.

We have come to know the three stages of human development between the change of teeth and puberty. We must be quite clear that in addition to the conscious realm, the subconscious plays a large part, particularly in the last of these stages—a part that is significant for the whole future of the human being. By looking at this matter from another point of view, I would like to make clear to you why this is so.

Just think how many people today travel by electric train without having the faintest idea how an electric train is set in motion. Imagine even how many people see a steam engine rushing by without having any clue as to the workings of physics and mechanics that propel it. Consider what position such

ignorance puts us in with regard to our relationship with our environment, that very environment we use for our convenience. We live in a world that has been brought about by human beings, that has been formed by human thoughts, that we use and know nothing about. The fact that we understand nothing about something that has been formed by human beings and is fundamentally the result of human thinking is greatly significant for the whole mood of soul and spirit of humankind. Human beings literally have to turn a deaf ear in order not to perceive the resulting effects.

It is always very satisfying to notice how people from the better classes (now, I do not want to offend anyone with my turn of phrase) enter a factory and feel thoroughly ill at ease. This happens because there shoots up from their subconscious the feeling that they use the things that are manufactured in the factory without having the slightest relationship as human beings with what goes on there. They know nothing about it. When you sense the discomfiture of inveterate cigarette smokers (to take a familiar example) when they enter the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory, knowing nothing about what takes place there so that they can be kept supplied with cigarettes, you can be pleased by the fact that at least they can still dimly perceive their ignorance. They are ignorant about the environment born out of human thoughts—the environment in which they live and from which they obtain the goods they use. We can be glad if people enter and leave an electric train with a slight feeling of unease because they have no idea how it works. This discomfiture is the first inkling of an improvement in this realm. The very worst thing is to experience and live in a world made by human beings without bothering ourselves about this world.

We can work against these things only by starting during the last stage of the lower school. We must really not let the fifteenand sixteen-year-olds leave school without at least

elementary ideas about the more important processes taking place in life. We should teach them in a way that leaves them with a yearning to be curious and inquisitive at every opportunity about what is going on around them, so that they use this curiosity and thirst for knowledge to add to whatever they already know. At the end of the lower school years, we should employ all the different subjects in a comprehensive sense toward a social education of our students, just as we use the separate subjects in geography to build an overall geographical structure in the way I described in my previous lecture. In other words, we must not neglect to use the concepts learned earlier about physics and natural history to introduce the children to the industrial processes closest to them. At age fifteen or sixteen they should have gained an idea of what goes on in a soap factory or a spinning mill.

Naturally, we shall have to proceed as economically as possible. It is always possible to condense out of the overall complicated processes a simple, generalized picture. I think Mr. Molt will agree that one could teach children briefly about the whole process of cigarette manufacturing from beginning to end in a few simple sentences, which would then need only a little explanation taken from the rest of the subjects we have taught them.³⁸ It is entirely beneficial for children between the ages of thirteen and sixteen to be given such condensed descriptions of different branches of industry. It would be very good if during these years they were to keep a notebook in which to record the processes of soap manufacture, cigarette production, spinning, weaving, and so on. They need not be taught about mechanical and chemical technology on a grand scale, but they would gain a great deal from keeping such a notebook. Even if the book were

³⁸ . Emil Molt (1876–1936) was head of the Waldorf cigarette factory in Stuttgart where Rudolf Steiner was first invited to introduce his educational methods into practice.

later to be lost, a residue would remain. They would not simply have the benefit of knowing these things, but, more important, they would feel as they went through life and their profession that they had once known these things, that they had once been through the process of learning about them. This affects the assurance with which people act; it affects the self-possession with which they take their place in the world. It is very important for the willpower and the capacity for making decisions.

No profession is without people of efficiency and initiative who occupy their place in the world with the feeling that they once knew about things they do not actually need for their own profession, even if only in a primitive way. Even if they have forgotten these subjects, echoes will linger. We learn a lot in school, often in object lessons, that so often degenerates into platitudes. But in these cases it is found that later in life no feeling remains that leads a person to say, "I once learned about that, and how fortunate I was to have done so." Instead, the feeling is "Thank God I have forgotten all that; what a good thing that I have forgotten what I learned then." We ought never to be responsible for arousing this feeling in a person. If we have been taught in our childhood in a manner that took account of what I have just said, when we later enter a factory or similar place, innumerable resonances will shoot up out of our subconscious. Today everything in life is specialized. This specialization is truly dreadful. And the main reason why so much in life is specialized is because we start to specialize in the way we teach in schools.

The gist of these remarks might well be summarized in these words: Every single thing children learn during the course of their schooling should in the end be presented so broadly that threads may everywhere be found linking it with practical human life. Very, very many things that are now antisocial in the

world would be made social if we could at least touch upon an insight into matters that later need not have any direct bearing on our own work in life.

For instance, we ought to take careful note of what is considered important in school subjects that are still rooted in older, good, though perhaps old-fashioned insights in teaching. In this connection I want to point to a remarkable phenomenon. When those of us who are now old started on our secondary school courses in Austria at the age of fourteen or fifteen, we had relatively good geometry and arithmetic textbooks. They have now disappeared. A few years ago in Vienna I hunted through all kinds of secondhand bookshops for older geometry textbooks, because I wanted once again to have before my eyes what gave us such delight, for example, in Wiener-Neustadt.³⁹ On the day we entered the first class of the senior school, the boys from the second class met us in the corridor shouting: "Fialkowskiy, Fialkowskiy, you'll have to pay up tomorrow!" We students in the first class took over Fialkowskiy's geometry textbook from the students of the second class and brought them the money the next day. I actually found one of these Fialkowskiy geometry books during my hunt. It gave me a great deal of pleasure because it shows that much better geometry books for schools were written in the old tradition than has been the case lately.

The present-day books that have replaced the older ones are quite atrocious. The situation in the field of arithmetic and geometry is particularly bad. But if we think back only to the generations just before us, they certainly had better textbooks, which nearly all came from the school of the Austrian Benedictines. It was the Benedictine monks who wrote the mathematical and geometrical books; they were very good

³⁹ . Rudolf Steiner's home town.

because the Benedictine Order is the Catholic order that takes great care that its members should be schooled very well in geometry and mathematics. The general conviction within the order is that it is ludicrous for someone to mount the pulpit and speak to the people if he does not know any geometry or mathematics.

This ideal of unity that fills the human soul must pulse through all teaching. Something of the world as a totality must live in every profession. In particular, there must be an element of whatever is opposite to the profession, something one thinks will be of hardly any use in that profession. A person must occupy oneself with what is, in a way, the opposite of one's own profession. But one will long for this only if one is taught in the way I have described.

It was just at the time when materialism spread far and wide, in the last third of the nineteenth century, that this materialism also permeated education to such a degree that specialization came to be considered very important. Please do not subscribe to the belief that you will make children idealistic if, during the last years of the lower school and the first of the senior school, you avoid showing them how what you teach them is linked with practical life. Do not imagine that they will be more idealistic in later life if you have them write essays on all sorts of sentimental feelings about the world, on the gentleness of the lamb, the fierceness of the lion, and so on, and on God-permeated nature. You do not have an idealistic effect on the children in this way. You will do far better, in fact, to cultivate idealism if you do not approach it so directly, so crudely.

Why have people in recent times become so irreligious? For the simple reason that what is now preached is far too sentimental and abstract. People are irreligious now because the church pays so little heed to divine commandments. For instance, there is the commandment "You shall not take the

name of the Lord your God in vain.” If you heed this injunction and refrain from mentioning the name Jesus Christ after every fifth sentence or talking about God's universal order, you are immediately criticized by those so-called church-minded people who would prefer to hear you mention Jesus Christ and God in every sentence. These church-minded circles are the very ones who regard as an irreligious attitude the meek and quiet spirit that seeks to be inwardly penetrated by the divine and avoids uttering, “Lord, Lord,” at every moment. If what is presented to human beings by teachers is permeated by this quiet, inwardly working godliness that is not carried sentimentally on the tip of the tongue, the cry, resulting from wrong upbringing, is heard on every side: “Ah, yes, he ought to speak far more about Christianity and such things.” We must take care in education not to drag everything learned by the children into sentimentality, especially in their thirteenth through fifteenth years, but rather lead what we teach them more toward the workings of practical life. No child ought to reach age fifteen without having been guided in arithmetic lessons to an understanding of the rules of at least the simplest forms of bookkeeping.

Similarly, the principles of grammar should lead not so much to the kind of essay depicting the human being's inner life as though bathed in a soup of sentimentality but rather to business compositions, business letters. The former kind of essay, a glorified version of the spirit that reigns when people gather over their wine in the evening or at coffee parties, is the kind of essay usually expected of thirteen- to sixteen-year-olds. No child should pass beyond the age of fifteen without having gone through the stage of writing specimens of practical business letters. Do not say that the children can learn to do so later. Yes, by overcoming dreadful obstacles they can learn it later, but only if they can overcome these obstacles. It is of great benefit to the

children if you teach them to let their knowledge of grammar and language flow into business letters. There should be nobody today who has not at one time learned to write a decent business letter. A person may not need to apply this knowledge in later life at all, but there really should be nobody who has not been encouraged at one time to write a decent business letter. If you satiate the children mainly with sentimental idealism between the ages of thirteen and fifteen, they will later develop an aversion to idealism and become materialistic people. If you lead them during these years into the practical concerns of life, they will retain a healthy relationship to the idealistic needs of the soul, since these can be wiped out only if they are senselessly indulged during early youth.

This is extraordinarily important; in this connection even a few points about the structure of the lessons are of great significance. You know that with regard to the way we teach religion we shall have to make compromises. As a result, a force that one day will fill the soul element of our teaching with a religious quality cannot at present flow into the rest of our teaching. The fact that we have to compromise in this way stems from the way in which religious bodies have adopted an attitude to the world that is inimical to culture. But even today, if only the religious bodies, for their part, would also make compromises with us, a good deal could flow from this religious instruction squeezed in among the rest of the lessons.

It would be beneficial if, for instance, teachers of religion would condescend from time to time to include material from another subject in their lessons. If, for instance, in the midst of their religion lessons they were able to link what they were saying to an explanation of the steam engine or an astronomical fact, or something quite worldly, the simple fact that it is the religion teacher who makes this connection would be

immeasurably significant for the consciousness of the growing children.

I am quoting you this extreme example because in the rest of our lessons we shall have to adopt this method, even though it can be employed only in a limited way in the teaching of religion. We must not allow ourselves to think pedantically: "Now I am teaching geography, and now I am teaching history. I need not bother about anything else." When we explain to the children that the word *sofa* came from the Orient during the Crusades, we shall see to it that we then include in the history lesson a description of the way sofas are manufactured. This will lead us on to other items of furniture that are more occidental. In other words, we shall extract something quite novel from the so-called "subject" of our lesson.

This method of teaching is immensely profitable for the growing children because moving from one subject to another in a way that connects one thing with another is more beneficial than anything else for the development of spirit and soul, and even of the body. If a teacher suddenly tells children, to their delight, about the manufacture of sofas in the middle of a history lesson, leading perhaps to a discussion of Oriental carpet patterns and presented in a way that gives them a real view of the subject, such children will have better digestion than children who are taught French lessons followed by geometry. The child will actually be physically more healthy. Thus we can well structure our lessons in this inwardly healthy way. Today most people suffer from all sorts of digestive disturbances, abdominal disturbances that are the consequence, to a great extent, of our unnatural teaching. We cannot adapt our teaching to the demands of life. The worst schools in this respect are the upper-class young ladies' colleges. If someone were to make a study of the connection between the teaching in these upper-class young ladies' colleges and the incidence of gynecological

illness, it would provide a most interesting chapter in cultural history. We simply must draw attention to such matters so that through avoiding much of what has come to the fore quite recently, healing may enter into this field. Above all, one must know that humans are complicated beings and that what one wants to cultivate in them often requires initial preparation.

If you want to gather interested children around you (children who are not specially selected but come from widely varying backgrounds) in order, in your religious fervor, to tell them about the glories of the divine powers in the world, what you say will go in one ear and out the other. It will never reach their feelings. Having written a business letter with a group of children in the morning, you might have the same group again in the afternoon, carrying in their subconscious what has been activated by the business letter in the morning. You are fortunate if it is now a matter of teaching them religious concepts, for you yourself will have roused in them the mood that is now calling for its opposite. Truly, these views are not being put before you as matters of some abstract point of method but because they are of immense importance for life. I should like to know who has not encountered, on going out into life, the enormous amount of unnecessary work that is done.

Businesspeople will always agree when you outline the following scenario. Take, for example, an employee in some firm; he is told to write a business letter to a related branch or to somebody who is to undertake selling for the firm. He writes this letter and receives an answer; then he has to write another letter and receives a second answer and so on. This wasting of time has gained much ground in business life today. We certainly proceed in an immensely uneconomical way in our public affairs. You can sense this. Anyone endowed with ordinary common sense suffers real tortures when glancing at the copy file in any office. This is not the result of an aversion to the

forms of address or to the interests depicted there but because everything is expressed in the most impractical manner possible and because this file could be reduced to a quarter of its size. The sole reason for this excess is that the schooling of the fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds is not arranged in a suitable way. This mismanagement can simply not be made up for later in life. When it is, it is done only by conquering almost insuperable difficulties. The opportunities missed during this period cannot even be made up for at college, because the forces that develop at this time in life peter out and are no longer present in the same form later. You count on these forces when you depend on someone to formulate a letter not just superficially, with only half a mind on the matter, but to give it full attention and express it carefully and clearly.

During the first stage of the children's development, from the time they come to school up to the age of nine, it matters most that we should be thoroughly immersed in the nature of the human being so that we teach entirely out of it. In contrast, it is most important in planning the curriculum for thirteen- to fifteen-year-olds that we teachers be immersed in life, that we be interested in life and sympathetic toward it, and that we teach out of the reality of life. I had to say all this to you before going on to put together the ideal curriculum for you, after which we shall compare this ideal curriculum with the ones that will play a part in your teaching, for we are surrounded everywhere with the external world and its organization.

Lecture Thirteen

SEPTEMBER 4, 1919

You have seen in these lectures concerned with teaching methods that we have gradually approached the insights that are to give us the actual curriculum. I have told you a number of times that with regard to what already exists we will have to reach a compromise as to the influences we take into our school and how we incorporate them. For we cannot as yet create in addition to the Waldorf school the rest of the social environment by which it ought to be surrounded. And so, from our existing social environment, influences will stream toward us that will again and again frustrate any ideal Waldorf curriculum we might work out. But we will be good teachers in the Waldorf school only if we know how the ideal curriculum relates to our curriculum, as it will have to be formed in the beginning because of the influence of our external social environment.

We must first be aware of the significant difficulties that will arise for children right at the beginning of their training. There will be other difficulties in the thirteen- to fifteen-year-old age group. The problems we shall encounter with regard to the youngest children will arise because the outside world already has an established curriculum. Such a curriculum stipulates all sorts of educational goals, and we will not be able to risk letting our children reach the end of their first and second years at school without knowing what children being brought up and

educated elsewhere know. By the time they have reached the age of nine, the children educated by our method will have surpassed the others. But in the interim period it could happen that they would have to show to some external commission of inquiry what they have learned by the end of their first year at school. The subjects that an external commission of inquiry would expect them to know are the very ones that it is not good for them to know. Our ideal curriculum would have aims different from the requirements of a commission of inquiry. Stipulations from the outside world will partly destroy our ideal curriculum. This is the position at the lower end of the Waldorf school. In the higher grades we will be dealing with children coming to us from outside schools who will not have been taught by the methods that should have governed their education.

The chief mistake attendant today on the education of children between the ages of seven and fourteen is that they are taught far too intellectually. However much people may hold forth against intellectualism, the fact remains that the aims of teaching are far too intellectual. Children will be coming to us who have a strong tendency to be like old men and women, who have much more of old age in them than children of thirteen or fourteen should have. This explains why, in youth organizations such as the Pathfinders, when young people today call for reforms and stipulate how they want to be brought up and educated, they reveal such appalling abstractions, that is, such senile attitudes.⁴⁰ When our young people demand to be taught in a youthful way, as do the members of a youth movement, they are stipulating the principles of old age. We really do encounter this attitude.

⁴⁰ . The Pathfinders are a variation of Sir Robert Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts.

I myself came across a very good example during one of the sessions of a workers' council for cultural affairs when the young member of a youth movement of some sort came forward.⁴¹ He began to read out his absolutely tedious abstractions about the way in which youth demanded to be educated. For some listeners this was just too boring. Everything he said was so obvious, and this very fact of being so obvious has something senile about it. The audience members grew restless, and the young speaker hurled into their midst: "I declare that the older generations do not understand youth." But the fact was that this youngster, who was still half a child, was too senile precisely because of a thwarted education and thwarted teaching.

We must seriously consider this when children between twelve and fourteen years of age come to our school and, for the time being, we are expected to give them the finishing touches, so to speak. Great problems arise for us at the beginning and end of the school years. We must try to do justice, as much as possible, to the ideal curriculum, and we must do our utmost not to estrange the children too much from modern life.

In the very first school year the curriculum contains a rather disastrous element. It is expected that children should achieve the aim of reading as much as possible, while little is required in the way of writing. Writing need only be started, but reading must be brought to the stage during the first year where the children can read pieces both in Gothic and Latin script that have been read with or to them.⁴² They must be able to do this in both Gothic and Latin script, while relatively little is required

⁴¹ . After World War I, workers' councils of all kinds were established throughout Germany.

⁴² . Many of the Gothic characters differ radically from their Latin counterparts; both scripts were used for writing German during Steiner's time.

in the way of writing. If we could educate in an ideal way, we would start with the forms of letters in the manner discussed, and then we would let the children gradually change the forms, which we have ourselves developed, into the forms of handwritten characters. We will do this; we will not allow ourselves to be prevented from starting with drawing and painting and then evolving the written letters from drawing and painting. Only afterward will we proceed to the printed letters.

When the children have learned to recognize the handwritten letters, we will make the transition to printed letters. We will allow one mistake, however, because there will not be enough time in the first year to mold both the Gothic and the Latin scripts in this way and then go on to reading both scripts. This would overburden the first year of school too much. For this reason, we will follow the path from painting and drawing to writing the Gothic script and then make the transition from Gothic written to Gothic printed letters with simple reading. Then, without first deriving the Latin letters from drawing, we will move directly from printed German to printed Latin letters. We will work this out as a compromise. In order to do justice to true education we will develop writing from drawing, but on the other hand, so that the children can keep up with the requirements of the curriculum, we will also start them on elementary reading of texts in Latin print. This will be our task with respect to writing and reading. In these lectures on method I have already pointed out that once we have developed the forms of the letters to a certain degree, we will have to proceed more rapidly.

Above all, we must try to cultivate as much simple speaking and conversation with the children as possible during the first year. We read aloud as little as possible, but instead prepare ourselves so well that we can bring to them in a narrative way whatever we want to tell them. Then we seek to reach the point

where the children are able to retell what they have heard from us. We avoid using passages that do not stimulate the imagination and make as much use as possible of texts that activate the imagination strongly, namely, fairy tales—as many fairy tales as possible. Having practiced this telling and retelling with the children for a long time, we start in a small way to let them give brief accounts of experiences they themselves have had. We let the children relate something they like talking about. With all this telling and retelling of stories and personal experiences, we develop the transition from the local vernacular to educated speech by simply correcting mistakes the children make, without being pedantic about it.⁴³ At first they will make many mistakes, but later fewer and fewer. Through telling and retelling, we develop in the children the transition from vernacular to educated speech. In this way, the children will have reached the desired goal by the end of their first year at school.

Nevertheless, we will have to introduce a topic that really ought not to be included in this very first year of schooling because it weighs on the child's soul. We have to teach the children the difference between a vowel and a consonant. If we could follow the ideal curriculum, we would not do this during the first year. But then an inspector might come at the end of the first year and ask the children to define an *i* and an *l*, and they would not know that one is a vowel and the other a consonant. And it would be said that this ignorance was the result of anthroposophy. We must make sure that the children can distinguish between a vowel and a consonant. We must also teach them the difference between a noun and an article. Here we find ourselves in a real dilemma, because, according to the

⁴³ . This is necessary in German-speaking countries because the dialects bear little relation to the written language.

present curriculum, we are expected to use the German and not the Latin expressions for grammatical terms, and so we ought to say “gender word” instead of “article.” In this case, I think it would be better not to be pedantic and simply to continue to say “article.”

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.

In short, it will be good for us to teach in full consciousness of the fact that we are bringing a new element into teaching.

The first school year will afford us plenty of opportunity for innovation. During the second year, too, a great deal of this sort of innovation will creep in. But there will be much in the first year that is enormously beneficial for the growing child. It will encompass not only writing but also elementary painting and drawing, since we need them as our starting point for writing. We shall not just teach singing during the first year but also start instruction in music in a simple way, with the help of instruments. From the beginning we will not only let the children sing but also guide them toward an instrument. This will benefit them greatly. We will teach them the first elements of listening to the relationship between notes. And we will try to hold the balance between bringing out the musical element from within through song and listening to the tonal element from outside or producing notes through an instrument.

All these things—painting-drawing, drawing-painting, and also finding their way into the musical realm—will be a wonderful way to develop the children's will during their first year at school; this focus is almost totally removed from present-day schools. If we can also guide these little children from ordinary gymnastics into eurythmy, we shall be promoting their will development to a very special degree.

I have been handed a curriculum for the first year of schooling. It says:

| | |
|----------|-------------------|
| Religion | 2 lessons / week |
| German | 11 lessons / week |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Writing | (no specified number, but it is taught at length in the German lessons) |
| Local Geography | 2 lessons / week |
| Arithmetic | 4 lessons / week |
| Singing & Gymnastics | 1 lesson / week. |

We will not follow this guide, for if we did, we would be sinning too much against the welfare of growing children. Instead, we will arrange, insofar as possible, to have the singing and music and the gymnastics and eurythmy in the afternoon and all the other subjects in the morning. In moderation, until we think they have had enough, we will practice singing and music and also gymnastics and eurythmy in the afternoon with the children. To set aside only one lesson a week for these subjects is quite ridiculous. This alone must prove to you how the whole of teaching today is aimed at the intellect.

During the first year of elementary school we are dealing with children who are only six or a few months older. When they are this age we can quite well practice the elements of drawing and painting, and also music, with them, and we can perform gymnastics and eurythmy. But if we give them religion lessons in the style of today, we are certainly not teaching them religion but merely giving them a form of memory training, which is about the only good thing that can be said about it. It is utterly nonsensical to speak to six- or seven-year-old children about the concepts that play a part in religion. All they can do is memorize them. Memory training, of course, has positive aspects, but we must be aware of the fact that we are presenting to the children all sorts of concepts for which they have absolutely no understanding as yet.

There is something else written down in this schedule for the first year of school about which we shall think, or at least act, in a way that differs from the usual. During the second year it

appears even more prominently as a separate subject—good penmanship. Since we shall let writing evolve out of painting and drawing, there will be no need for us to draw a distinction between poor penmanship and good penmanship. We shall try not to distinguish between bad writing and good writing, and to ensure that all our writing lessons are such that the children always write well, so well that they need never distinguish between good penmanship and bad penmanship. (This is possible despite the external curriculum.) If we take pains to converse with the children for a long time and let them do plenty of retelling, making an effort ourselves to speak correctly, we will be able to introduce the matter of right or wrong spelling by making a few corrections, without distinguishing the two as different aspects of learning to write.

In this regard we will have to watch ourselves carefully. We Austrians have to deal with a particular difficulty as teachers because in Austria, in addition to vernacular speech and educated speech, we have a third element—special Austrian “school speech.” In this form of speech, all the long vowels are pronounced short and the short vowels long. If the vernacular said “Sun” and educated speech said “Sonne,” school speech would say “Sohne.” You cannot help getting into this habit, and constantly revert to it, like a cat falling on its feet. It is very upsetting for the teacher as well. And the farther south you go the worse it is, until you find this problem at its worst in Southern Austria. If vernacular speech says “Su” [the son], school speech says “Son.” So you end up using the word *Son* instead of *Sohn* for “boy” and *Sohne* instead of *Sonne* for what shines in the heavens. But this is only the most extreme case.

But when we converse with the children, if we are careful to pronounce long what is long, short what is short, sharp what is sharp, drawn out what is drawn out, and soft what is soft, we shall create for them the necessary foundation for correct

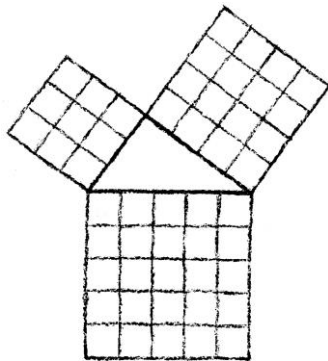
spelling. We must also watch carefully what the children do, correcting them and seeing to it that they speak properly all the time. During the first year we need not do much more than create the proper foundations. With regard to spelling, we can remain in the realm of speaking for as long as possible and let it merge with actual correct spelling last of all. This is the kind of thing that must be taken into consideration when it comes to approaching in the right way the children who stand at the beginning of their school life.

The children who come to us at the end of their school days, the thirteen- to fourteen-year-olds, are already warped by too intellectual an education. Too much emphasis has been laid on the intellect in the way they have been taught. They have experienced far too little of the blessings of also having their will and feeling life developed. Consequently, we will have to make up for lost ground in these spheres just in these last few years. We will have to seize every opportunity to try to bring will and feeling into what is merely intellectual by taking much that the children have absorbed purely intellectually and transforming it into something that also stirs the will and feeling.

For instance, we can assume with absolute certainty that the children who come to us at this age will have been taught the Pythagorean theorem wrongly, not in the right way that we have discussed here. The question now is how we can contrive to give the children not only what they have missed but also something more, so that certain forces that have dried up and withered may be enlivened anew to whatever extent is still possible. Let us remind these children about the Pythagorean theorem. We will say: "You have learned it; now tell me what it says. You see, you have just told me the theorem of Pythagoras, which is that the square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides." But we can be certain that there is nothing

in the soul of the children that ought to have penetrated as a result of learning the Pythagorean theorem.

I now do something more. I show the children the theorem as a picture and explain how it is developed. I let the picture arise in a specific way. I say, "Three of you, come up to the blackboard. The first can cover this area with chalk; everyone watch to make sure that no more chalk is used than needed to cover the area. The second can cover this other area using another chalk." And then I say to the child who has covered the square on the hypotenuse with chalk, "Look, you have used just as much chalk as the other two children together. You have spread as much chalk on this square as the other two together, because the square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides." In other words, I let the child get a picture by using the chalk. The children get more deeply into it with their soul by thinking about how much some of the chalk has worn away, so that it is no longer on the stick of chalk but on the blackboard.



Then I go a step further and say, "Now I am going to divide the squares—one into 16 smaller squares, another into nine squares, and the last into 25 squares. One of you will stand in the middle of each square and imagine that it is a field that you

have had to plow. The child who has dug the 25 small squares in this big square has worked just as hard as those children who have dug the 16 small squares and nine small squares put together. Through your work, the square on the hypotenuse has been dug over and so has the square on each of the other two sides.” In this way I link the theorem of Pythagoras with something that has a will influence in the children, something that lets them imagine themselves doing meaningful work with their will outside in the world. I bring to life a theorem that they have had planted in their heads in a rather dead way.

Let us now assume that these children have learned Latin and Greek. I will attempt to bring them to the point where they not only speak Latin and Greek, but also listen methodically when one of them speaks Latin and another Greek. And I try to bring vividly to life for them the difference between the life of the Greek and the life of the Latin. I would not need to do this in the course of ordinary teaching, since it would come about intrinsically in the ideal curriculum. But we need to make this point with the children who come to us, because we must teach them to feel that when they speak Greek, they speak only with their larynx and their chest. When they speak Latin, on the other hand, something of their whole being reverberates with the language. The children’s attention must be drawn to this difference.

I must also make them aware of the living quality of French when they speak that language and its very close resemblance to Latin. They must realize that when they speak English, they almost spit out the sounds. The chest is less involved than when speaking French—much is cast off. Some syllables are literally spat out before they have their full effect. You need not actually say “spit out” to the children, but you must make them understand that in English a word dies off toward the end. In this way you try to bring the element of articulation with

particular clarity when teaching languages to children of thirteen and fourteen who have come to you from today's schools.

Lecture Fourteen

SEPTEMBER 5, 1919

If you were to look at the sort of curriculum still being disseminated until quite recently—a mere fifty or sixty years ago—you would see that it was relatively brief. A few short sentences described what was to be studied in the different subjects each year. Such a curriculum covered at most two to four pages; all the rest in those days was left to the actual practice of teaching. The practice of teaching itself, out of its own needs and its own powers, was to stimulate the teachers to do what they should with the curriculum.

Things are different today. The curriculum for secondary schools has swollen to the proportions of a book called *Official Document*. It stipulates not only what must be achieved, but also contains all sorts of instructions on how to do things in school. In recent decades we have been allowing education to be swallowed by state legislation. Perhaps it is the dream of many a legislator eventually to reintroduce everything that used to be contained in the old literature on education as official publications and decrees. Socialist leaders certainly have this intent in their subconscious. Today they are embarrassed to say this openly, but it is certainly there in the subconscious; their ideal is to regulate what until a short while ago belonged to the domain of free culture, even in the sphere of education.

Consequently, those of us who want to preserve the educational system and teaching from its collapse under Lenin, which could spread to Central Europe, must approach our understanding of curriculum in quite a different way. Our stance toward the so-called *Official Document* must be different from that of ordinary teachers. They have taken it very seriously both under the monarchy and during the era of ordinary democratic parliamentarianism. But they will view it with particularly servile feelings once it is sent to them by their dictatorial comrades. The tyranny inherent in socialism would be felt with particular strength in the realm of teaching and education.

We must view the curriculum in a very different way. Our approach has been such that we must put ourselves in the position of being able to create it ourselves at any moment; we must be able to read from the seventh through tenth years of childhood what we ought to do during these years. Tomorrow we shall juxtapose the ideal curriculum with what is now most prevalent in other Central European schools. We can prepare ourselves thoroughly for the concluding remarks by getting a feeling for all that must be absorbed before we can understand the curriculum.

There is another exceptionally important aspect that is rather misjudged in today's official educational circles. At the close of my previous lecture, I spoke about the morality of education.⁴⁴ The morality of education must be practiced in our class lessons. But this becomes actual practice in the classroom only when we avoid many of the examples provided by books on education. Such books speak about object lessons. There is nothing inherently wrong with these, and we have discussed how to conduct such lessons. Again and again, however, we have had to stress that they must never be allowed to become

⁴⁴ . See lecture 14 in *The Foundations of Human Experience*.

trivial and that they should never exceed a certain limit. The eternal cross-examination of the students on obvious matters in object lessons spreads an unnecessary cloud of boredom over the lessons. It deprives the lessons of the very element I stressed as being so important at the end of my lecture an hour ago: the development of the children's imaginative capacity.⁴⁵

Speaking comparatively, if you discuss with your students the shape of a saucepan by way of an object lesson, you will undermine their imaginative faculty. You will do much better than what passes today as an object lesson, if you discuss with them the shape of a Grecian urn and leave them to use their own soul forces to carry these thoughts over to an understanding of an ordinary cooking pot. Object lessons as they are given today often literally stifle the imagination. It is not at all a bad idea to leave a good deal unsaid in teaching, so that the children are induced to engage their soul forces with what they have absorbed during lessons. It is not at all beneficial to explain everything in the lesson, down to the last dot on the *i*. When you do this, the children leave school with the feeling that they have learned everything already and begin to look for some form of mischief. If, on the other hand, you plant seeds for their imagination, they remain interested in what was offered during the lessons and are less inclined to seek out mischief. That our children today turn into such troublemakers is solely because we give them too much of the wrong sort of object lesson and too little appropriate training for their feelings and will.

There is still another way in which it is necessary for our souls to become intimately linked with the curriculum. When children come to you during the early years of school, they are quite different beings from the same children at the ages of thirteen through fifteen. During these years, children are very much

⁴⁵ . See lecture 14 in *The Foundations of Human Experience*.

bodily beings; they are still very much immersed in their bodies. When the time comes for them to leave school at the age of fourteen or fifteen, you must have implanted in them the capacity no longer to cling to the body with all the fibers of the soul but to be independent of their bodies in thinking, feeling, and willing. If you try to immerse yourselves somewhat more profoundly in the nature of the growing human being, you will find that during the early school years children still possess relatively healthy instincts, particularly if they have not been spoiled.

In these years children do not yet have such a craving to stuff themselves with sweets and such. They still have certain healthy instincts with regard to food, just as an animal has very good instincts with regard to food because it is completely immersed in its body. The animal avoids what is bad for it. It is certainly an exception in the animal world for an evil to spread in the way alcohol has spread in the world of human beings. The spread of such evils as alcohol is due solely to the fact that human beings are spiritual beings and can become so independent of their physical natures. The physical body is far too sensible ever to be tempted to become an alcoholic. Relatively healthy instincts with respect to food still live in children during the early school years. For the sake of the individual's development, these impulses fade away at the ages of thirteen to fifteen. When puberty finally overtakes children, they lose their good instincts with regard to food; they have to replace with reason what their intuition gave them in earlier years.

This is why you can intercept, as it were, the last manifestations of the growing child's instincts about food and health at the ages of thirteen to fifteen. You can still just catch the tail end of a healthy regard for food, for growth, and so on. Later, you can no longer reach an inner feeling for proper nutrition and health care. In these years the children must

receive instruction on nutrition and health care for the human being.

This is the proper subject for object lessons. Object lessons can support the imaginative faculty very well. Show the children (or remind them that such things exist, for they will have seen them before) a substance that consists mainly of starch or sugar, one that is chiefly fat, and another composed mainly of protein. The children know these differences, but remind them that it is generally from these three ingredients that the activity of the human organism proceeds.

Taking this as your point of departure, you can explain to the children the mysteries of nutrition. Then you can exactly describe the breathing process and develop for them concepts related to the care of the human being's health through nutrition and breathing. You will gain enormous benefits in terms of your teaching by instructing them in this way during these years, for you will intercept the last manifestations of the instinct for what is health-giving and nutritious. You can teach children about conditions of nutrition and health at this time without making them egotistic for the whole of their later life. It is still natural for children of this age to fulfil their health and nutritional needs instinctively. Accordingly, you can speak about the subject, and what you say will be met by an innate understanding that is natural to human beings and does not make them egotistic.

If children are not taught about the conditions of health and nutrition at this time, they have to inform themselves later by reading or from information others give them. The knowledge that comes to people after puberty, by whatever means, with regard to the conditions of nutrition and health produces egotism in them. It is entirely unavoidable. If you read about nutritional physiology, if you read a summary of the rules of health care, you become more egotistic than you were; it is inherent in the very nature of the subject. The egotism that

originates in our becoming acquainted through reason with the way we have to take care of ourselves must be fought with morality. If we did not have to care for ourselves physically, we should need no morality in our souls. But people are less exposed to the dangers of egotism later in life if they are taught about nutrition and health care at the age of thirteen or fourteen, when such instruction does not yet make for egotism but supports what is natural to the human being.

You see to what a degree the very questions of life are embedded in the right moment for teaching different subjects to human beings. You make provision for the whole of life if you teach the human being the right things at the proper time. It would be best of all if we could teach the seven- and eight-year-olds about nutrition and health care. Then they would absorb this knowledge in the most selfless way, because they still hardly know that it refers to them. They would regard themselves as an object and not as a subject. But they cannot understand enough at that age; their power of judgment has not developed sufficiently for them to understand. Consequently, we cannot teach the subjects of nutrition and health care in these early years. We must save these subjects for when children reach the age of thirteen or fourteen. This is the age when the fire of their instinct for nutrition and health is beginning to fade but when the presence of the capacity to comprehend compensates for the fading of this intuition. With older children there will be every opportunity to mention almost as an aside many things that relate to health and nutrition: in natural history, in physics, in lessons that expand on geography, even in history.

You will see that it is not necessary to include these two as subjects in the timetable; much in the lessons must live in a way that enables us to let it mingle with the other subjects we teach. If we have an understanding of what the children ought to be taking in, then they themselves, or the whole community of

children gathered in the school, will tell us daily what we ought to be including by way of interspersed remarks in our lessons. They will let us know how we have to develop a certain presence of mind just because we are teachers. If we have been drilled as subject teachers of geography or history, we will not develop this presence of mind, for our aim will be to teach nothing but history from the beginning of the history lesson to the end. In this circumstance, exceptionally unnatural conditions are created—their damaging effects on life have not been fully considered as yet. It is an intimate truth that we benefit human beings, we do something that prevents egotism from developing excessively, if we teach them about nutrition and health care at the age of thirteen or fourteen in the way I have described to you.

Many things can permeate with feeling the whole way we teach our lessons. If you attach a feeling element wherever you can to your subject matter, what you want to achieve in your teaching remains with the students for the rest of their lives. If you teach only what appeals to reason and intellect when the children between thirteen and fifteen, not much will remain with them later. Accordingly, it must be your intention to permeate with feeling in your own being whatever you impart in an imaginative way during these years. You must try to present geography, history, and natural history in a vivid and graphic way that is nonetheless filled with feeling. To the imaginative element must be added the feeling element.

With regard to the curriculum, the time between the ages of seven and fourteen or fifteen does indeed fall clearly into the three divisions outlined here. Up to the age of nine we teach the growing child mainly the conventional subjects—writing and reading. Up to age twelve we continue the more conventional subjects, as well as subjects based on the human power of judgment. As you have seen, we study the animal and plant

kingdoms, because at this age children still have a certain instinctive sense of the relationships that play into these realms. I have shown you during our lectures on teaching methods how you should convey an idea of the relationship of the human being to the whole world of nature—cuttlefish, mouse, lamb, and human being.⁴⁶ We have also made a great effort (which I hope will not be in vain, for it will bear flowers and fruit during the botany lessons) to impart a sense of the human being's relationship to the plant world. These subjects should be elaborated through mental pictures filled with feeling during the middle period of a child's life, while an innate understanding of the animals and plants is still present. This is the time when human beings easily experience themselves at one moment to be cats, and at the next wolves, lions, or eagles, even if not with the ordinary light of reasoning consciousness.

Children still have this feeling of being first one creature and then another until just after the age of nine. Before that age it is stronger, but they cannot penetrate it, because the necessary power for understanding it does not exist. If children are very precocious and talk about themselves a great deal at the age of four or five, they will frequently compare themselves to eagles, mice, and so on. But if, in their ninth year, we set about teaching children natural history in the way we have indicated, we will still encounter a wealth of related instinctive feeling in them. Later, this instinct matures to the point where they also have an understanding of being related to the plant world. Consequently, we first teach the natural history of the animal kingdom and then the natural history of the plant kingdom. We reserve the minerals until the last, because to understand the minerals requires almost nothing but the power of judgment, and this effort does not call upon anything through which the human

⁴⁶ . See discussion 8 in *Discussions with Teachers*.

being is related to the outside world. The human being is not related to the mineral kingdom. More than any other, it is the mineral kingdom that we must dissolve, as I have shown you.⁴⁷ Human beings do not even tolerate salt that is not dissolved in the organism; as soon as they take it in, they have to dissolve it.

It lies very much within the nature of the human being to arrange the curriculum in the manner suggested. There is a beautiful balance in this middle period from the ages of nine to eleven between instinctive capacities and the power of judgment. We can always be sure that the child will meet us with understanding if we count on a certain instinctive comprehension and if we do not describe things too graphically, particularly in natural history and botany. We must avoid external analogies, particularly with reference to the plant world, for this really goes against the grain of natural feeling. Natural feeling is in itself predisposed to seek qualities of soul in plants— not the external physical form of the human being in this or that tree but soul relationships such as we have just tried to discover in the plant system.

The actual power of judgment that lets us count on reasoned, intellectual understanding belongs to the last of the three periods of childhood. That is why we use the twelfth year, when the child is moving toward an understanding based on judgment, to let this power of judgment merge with what still requires a kind of instinct, even though it is already strongly overshadowed by the power of judgment. Here we find the twilight instincts of the soul that have to be overcome by the power of judgment.

We must take into account that during this stage the human being has an innate sense for the calculation of interest rates, for

⁴⁷ . See *Foundations of Human Experience*, lecture 12.

what can be raked in as profit, for the principle of discount, and so on. This information appeals to the instincts. But we must let the power of judgment be much stronger; during this period we must deal with the relationships that exist among the element of calculation, the circulation of commodities, and the ownership of property and wealth. In other words, we must concern ourselves with percentage and interest calculations, discount calculations, and similar matters.

It is exceedingly important that we not teach the children these concepts too late. If we do, it means that we can count only on their egoism. We do not deal with egoism if, toward age twelve, we begin to teach them about concepts of monetary transactions and commerce. Actual bookkeeping can be addressed later; it involves more reasoning. To teach them these concepts at this age is very important for them, because the inner selfish feelings for interest rates, bonds, and so on are not yet stirring in children who are so young. When they are older and enter business schools, such concepts become rather more serious.

Such are the elements of teaching that you must take to heart. Try not to overdo, for instance, when you are describing the plants. Particularly in plant lessons, you should try to teach in a way that leaves a great deal to the children's imagination, so that out of their own feelings they can imaginatively form the soul connections between the human soul and the plant world. Those teachers who wax too enthusiastic about object lessons simply do not know that the human being also has to be taught about things that are not visible externally. And if, by means of object lessons, we try to teach human beings particular subjects that we ought to teach through working on them in a moral and feeling way, we do them actual harm. We must not forget that mere observation and demonstration of things is very much a by-product of the materialistic views of our age. Of course,

observation should be cultivated in its proper place, but it is wrong to transform into observation what is more suitably imparted through a moral and feeling influence working from teacher to student. I believe that you have now taken in enough to make it possible for us to form our curriculum.

* * *

With this, Rudolf Steiner ended these lectures. On the following day, he gave three lectures on the appropriate curriculum and outlined the goals of teaching in various subjects for students of different ages.⁴⁸ He pointed out the subjects that might be connected in the way they are presented. At the end of those lectures, Steiner made the following concluding remarks:

Today I would like to conclude these discussions by pointing out something I want to lay upon your hearts; I would like you to stick firmly to the following four principles.

First, teachers must make sure that they influence and work on their students, in a broader sense, by allowing the spirit to flow through their whole being as teachers, and also in the details of their work: how each word is spoken, and how each concept or feeling is developed. Teachers must be people of initiative. They must be filled with initiative. Teachers must never be careless or lazy; they must, at every moment, stand in full consciousness of what they do in the school and how they act toward the children. This is the first principle. *The teacher must be a person of initiative in everything done, great and small.*

Second, my dear friends, we as teachers must take an interest in everything happening in the world and in whatever concerns humankind. All that is happening in the outside world and in human life must arouse our interest. It would be deplorable if we as teachers were to shut ourselves off from anything that

⁴⁸ . The lectures on curriculum are included in *Discussions with Teachers*.

might interest human beings. We should take an interest in the affairs of the outside world, and we should also be able to enter into anything, great or small, that concerns every single child in our care. That is the second principle. *The teacher should be one who is interested in the being of the whole world and of humanity.*

Third, *the teacher must be one who never compromises in the heart and mind with what is untrue.* Teachers must be true in the depths of their being. Teachers must never compromise with untruth, because if they did, we would see how untruth would find its way through many channels into our teaching, especially in the way we present the subjects. Our teaching will only bear the stamp of truth when we ardently strive for truth in ourselves.

And now comes something more easily said than done, but it is, nevertheless, also a golden rule for the teacher's calling. *The teacher must never get stale or grow sour.* Cherish a mood of soul that is fresh and healthy! No getting stale and sour! This must be the teacher's endeavor.

And I know, my dear friends, that if during these two weeks you have properly received into your inner life what we were able to shed light on from the most diverse viewpoints, then indirectly, through the realms of feeling and will, what may still seem remote will come closer to your souls as you work with the children in the classroom. During these two weeks I have spoken only of what can enter directly into your practical teaching when you first allow it to work properly within your own souls. But our Waldorf school, my dear friends, will depend on what you do within yourselves, and whether you really allow the things we have considered to become effective in your own souls.

Think of the many things I have tried to clarify in order to come to a psychological view of the human being, especially of the growing human being. Remember these things. And maybe there will be moments when you feel unsure about how or when

to bring one thing or another into your teaching, or where to introduce it, but if you remember properly what has been presented during these two weeks, then thoughts will surely arise in you that will tell you what to do. Of course, many things should really be said many times, but I do not want to make you into teaching machines, but into free, independent teachers. Everything spoken of during the past two weeks was given to you in this same spirit. The time has been so short that, for the rest, I must simply appeal to the understanding and devotion you will bring to your work.

Turn your thoughts again and again to all that has been said that can lead you to understand the human being, and especially the child. It will help you in all the many questions of method that may arise.

When you look back in memory to these discussions, then our thoughts will certainly meet again in all the various impulses that have come to life during this time. For myself, I can assure you that I will also be thinking back to these days, because right now this Waldorf school is indeed weighing heavily on the minds of those taking part in its beginning and organization. This Waldorf school must succeed; much depends on its success. Its success will bring a kind of proof of many things in the spiritual evolution of humankind that we must represent.

In conclusion, if you will allow me to speak personally for a moment, I would like to say: For me this Waldorf school will be a veritable child of concern. Again and again I will have to come back to this Waldorf school with anxious, caring thoughts. But when we keep in mind the deep seriousness of the situation, we can really work well together. Let us especially keep before us the thought, which will truly fill our hearts and minds, that connected with the present-day spiritual movement are also the spiritual powers that guide the cosmos. When we believe in

these good spiritual powers they will inspire our lives and we will truly be able to teach.

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THE FOUNDATIONS OF WALDORF EDUCATION

THE FIRST FREE WALDORF SCHOOL opened its doors in Stuttgart, Germany, in September 1919, under the auspices of Emil Molt, director of the Waldorf Astoria Cigarette Company and a student of Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science, and particularly of Steiner's call for social renewal.

It was only the previous year—amid the social chaos following the end of World War I—that Emil Molt, responding to Steiner's prognosis that truly human change would not be possible unless a sufficient number of people received an education that developed the whole human being, decided to create a school for his workers' children. Conversations with the minister of education and with Rudolf Steiner in early 1919 then led rapidly to the forming of the first school.

Since that time, more than six hundred schools have opened around the globe—from Italy, France, Portugal, Spain, Holland, Belgium, Great Britain, Norway, Finland, and Sweden to Russia, Georgia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Israel, South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Japan, and others—making the Waldorf school movement the largest independent school movement in the world. The United States, Canada, and Mexico alone now have more than 120 schools.

Although each Waldorf school is independent, and although there is a healthy oral tradition going back to the first Waldorf teachers and to Steiner himself, as well as a growing body of secondary literature, the true foundations of the Waldorf method and spirit remain the many lectures that Rudolf Steiner gave on the subject. For five years (1919–24), Rudolf Steiner, while simultaneously working on many other fronts, tirelessly dedicated himself to the dissemination of the idea of Waldorf education. He gave manifold lectures to teachers, parents, the general public, and even the children themselves. New schools were founded. The movement grew.

While many of Steiner's foundational lectures have been translated and published in the past, some have never appeared in English, and many have been virtually unobtainable for years. To remedy this

situation and to establish a coherent basis for Waldorf education, Anthroposophic Press has decided to publish the complete series of Steiner lectures and writings on education in a uniform series. This series will thus constitute an authoritative foundation for work in educational renewal, for Waldorf teachers, parents, and educators generally.

RUDOLF STEINER'S LECTURES (AND WRITINGS) ON EDUCATION

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During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the Austrian-born Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) became a respected and well-published scientific, literary, and philosophical scholar, particularly known for his work on Goethe's scientific writings. After the turn of the century he began to develop his earlier philosophical principles into an approach to methodical research of psychological and spiritual phenomena.

His multifaceted genius has led to innovative and holistic approaches in medicine, philosophy, religion, education (Waldorf schools), special education, science, economics, agriculture (Biodynamic method), architecture, drama, the new arts of speech and eurythmy, and other fields of activity. In 1924 he founded the General Anthroposophical Society, which today has branches throughout the world.