

WORKING TOGETHER:
*Mentoring for
Eurythmy Teachers*



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Eurythmy Teachers

*Compiled by the participants of the AWSNA
Collaborative Mentoring Seminar for Eurythmy Teachers
2010–2013*

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Eurythmy Teachers

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Title: *Working Together: Mentoring for Eurythmy Teachers*

Authors: Leonore Russell, Carla Beebe Comey, Connie
Michael, Karen Guitman, Raymonde Fried, John
Holmes, Bonnie Freundlich, Barbara Richardson,
Christina Wallace-Ockenden

Other Participants: Claudia Fontana, Susan Elmore,
Cezary Ciaglo

Editor: Leonore Russell

Copy editors: Susan Eggers, Carla Beebe Comey

Layout: Ann Erwin

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Foreword*

Rudolf Steiner had a strong vision for the future of humanity. His every indication was for us as students of anthroposophy to continually strive to create cultural institutions where true individual freedom and diversity can live. Waldorf schools are a testimony to Steiner's picture of an ever-alive and developing cultural community. Waldorf schools do not have the usual checks and balances found in educational institutions where school principals, headmasters/mistresses or department heads oversee the quality of the teaching. Instead, each Waldorf teacher strives individually in the classroom and works with colleagues in a learning, educational community. This is done in accordance with his or her conscience and will. We Waldorf teachers are grateful to be able to work in freedom, a freedom where our own initiative and capacities allow us to be humanly creative.

What does this mean? Beginning with a thorough study of the Waldorf curriculum and then embracing the principle of working out of anthroposophy, a path of self development, the Waldorf teacher realizes one can never fully reach the ultimate or top level in one's work. There is always more to learn. Each child, class or even decade changes previously known ways of teaching. The Waldorf teacher continually strives to read the moment and create a lively class atmosphere for the students, where they feel known and challenged. Inherent in

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Waldorf teaching is working with the unfolding child in a conscious, open mode allowing the rigors and excellence of the class curriculum to develop capacities. With the help of working with the anthroposophical picture of the unfolding human being, Waldorf teachers try consciously to teach not for immediate results, but for the future, where lasting capacities and skills will serve the student for life.

Rudolf Steiner described teaching as an art. Waldorf schools respect and encourage differences in styles of each teacher. But, as with all fine artists, basic skills must be mastered and understandings become second nature before interpretation and inspiration take hold.

This sounds good in the ideal, but given the Waldorf school community without a hierarchical structure, where individual freedom in the classroom reigns, many questions arise.

- How can we be assured in our school that the quality of the teaching and the depth of understanding of Waldorf education grow stronger each year?
- How do we know what our colleagues are doing in the classroom?
- What is the best way to support a new teacher?
- Where can we go with our questions and inevitable struggles as teachers?
- Are there agreements we can reach as an Association on best principles of mentoring and basic benchmarks for each grade?

It was out of this thinking that the regional leaders of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America back in 2002 recognized the need to bring together, from all over the

continent, experienced teachers who mentor for collaboration on professionalism in teaching in Waldorf schools. There were then, and are now, schools with excellent mentoring and evaluation programs. There were and are schools that are struggling to exist. The Pedagogical Advisors' Colloquium was founded to raise the awareness of the need for networking in strengthening mentoring and evaluation in all schools. In keeping with Steiner's indications, mentoring, like teaching, is an art requiring certain basic understandings for a foundation.

It is our hope that the regional seminars and workshops on mentoring and evaluation that have grown out of the Pedagogical Advisors' Colloquium will provide new enthusiasm for supporting and expanding programs in every school. Such programs assure parents and colleagues that a level of professionalism lives in the school.

We hope this booklet, written from our findings, will serve mentors and school faculties in "raising the bar" and deepening the support for Waldorf teaching.

– Virginia Flynn

Introduction

The Mentoring Seminar for Eurythmy Teachers seminar has a direct relationship to the Pedagogical Advisors Colloquium that took place from 2002 to 2005. This work had its inception with Else Göttgens and Ann Matthews who had held many successful seminars for teachers in the Western Region of the AWSNA membership. The initial AWSNA Pedagogical Advisors' Colloquium had approximately thirteen teachers who were from every region of the United States. These first colloquium members worked twice a year for four years under Else Göttgens, Ann Matthews, Leonore Russell and Virginia Flynn with support from other teachers. At the completion of their work together, many formed regional teams and initiated similar seminars in their regions. Seminars have been held in all regions of the United States and have been attended by over 70 teachers. The seminars continue to be held to this day.

The next step was to address mentoring for specialists and, with Else's blessing, the first such seminar began for eurythmy teachers in 2010. This group was formed with the intention of building upon the work of the AWSNA Pedagogical Advisors' Colloquium and the AWSNA Mentoring Seminars, specifically in relation to the support and mentoring of pedagogical eurythmists. It was clear that there was an urgent need to deeply consider the importance of eurythmy programs in Waldorf schools, and to formally begin a process of support and mentoring for pedagogical eurythmists. The goals were:

- To strengthen and improve the capacities and skills of the eurythmy mentor
- To strengthen a network of eurythmists working as teachers
- To work collaboratively to explore the eurythmy curriculum and its potential for enlivening the Waldorf schools
- To find agreements in the “when” and “how” of the eurythmy curriculum in order to form an objective basis for mentoring and evaluation
- To found a care group for eurythmists and schools which would provide support for eurythmy in education

This group of eight to twelve eurythmists gathered from across North America for a full week, once a year, over the span of four years, 2010–2013. Initially, they gathered to consider the needs of eurythmy teachers, focusing on the state of eurythmy in the schools in North America. Recognizing the need for mentors with specific experience in pedagogical eurythmy and the ability to mentor effectively, they looked in depth at the art of mentoring and what qualities and approaches are needed for success, delving into the elements of a healthy program and what makes a successful teacher. Part of this process was to consider the eurythmy curriculum in Kindergarten through Grade 12.

Throughout the years, the group served as mentors and brought case studies for consideration, to be worked on by the other participants. They were fortunate to participate in courses with Christof Weichert on child study and the health-bringing aspects of the Waldorf curriculum. He also attended some of

the working sessions and served as an advisor. Meetings during the Renewal Courses in Wilton, NH, were opportunities to work together and to share our experiences with class teachers and other specialists.

Over the four years, the group that gathered represented a wealth of experience in over thirty Waldorf schools and four continents. Even so, we recognized that this group represented only a sampling of the experienced and qualified pedagogical eurythmists working in North America. We recognized that there were many colleagues contributing to the building of strong eurythmy programs. The specific task of this group was to further our training and to begin to form a body of support, a care group of sorts, that could serve as a resource for schools and for pedagogical eurythmists.

After three years of work, we met a fourth time in order to compile a publication containing some of our work. We hope this booklet will contribute to the success of both eurythmy teachers and Waldorf schools. Pedagogical eurythmists tend to work without colleagues in their field, and schools often are seeking guidance in building healthy eurythmy programs. We humbly offer this work in service of eurythmy and sincerely hope it contributes to the success of pedagogical eurythmy programs.

– Leonore Russell and Carla Beebe Comey

Why Eurythmy Mentorship?

Mentoring is most often defined as a professional relationship in which an experienced person, the mentor, helps another in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance professional and personal growth.

New ideas are being developed on how we may, as a movement, work together towards increased excellence in Waldorf schools. Mentoring has been found to be the most effective way of developing excellence in all programs. Working with a mentor through open and honest sharing of effective and non-effective practices in a supportive environment built on trust is ultimately the best way of supporting a new teacher. Some topics the mentors address may be curriculum questions, classroom management, class and student observations, and communications with colleagues and parents. Mentoring that develops into an artistic practice can be of help even to an experienced teacher in finding enlivening new ways of approaching their subject.

Mentoring brings us together – across generation, class, and often race – in a manner that forces us to acknowledge our interdependence, to appreciate, in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s words, that “we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny.” In this way, mentoring enables us to participate in the essential but unfinished drama of reinventing community, while reaffirming that there is an important role for each of us in it.

– Marc Freedman

How Can Mentorship Help You?

Being empowered– A mentor can help you feel empowered by recognizing your strengths and gifts and helping you to use them to their best advantage as a teacher.

Gaining perspective and experience– A mentor can give the benefit of an outside perspective and greater experience in observation, communication and curriculum design.

Defining and reaching long term goals– A mentor can help you define short- and long-term goals and ensure that you don't lose focus even when you become distracted by day-to-day pressures.

Being accountable– When you know you are meeting with your mentor, you ensure that all the tasks you discussed in your last meeting are completed.

Discussing issues with a respected colleague– A mentor can be a great sounding board for all issues – whether you are having difficulty with classroom management, having problems understanding specific students, or managing the practical layout of your work space.

Being supported by a champion and ally– A mentor who knows you well can be a strong champion of your positive qualities and an ally in difficult or conflict situations.

Expanding your contacts and resources– A mentor can help expand your network of colleagues and can help develop curriculum appropriate teaching resources.

Being inspired– A mentor whose work you admire can be an inspiration.

The Role of the Mentor

I. Building a Relationship

Mutual Respect: The mentor must have the ability to build a relationship based on mutual respect between the teacher and themselves. She must identify compatible values and aims and be able to sustain differences so the teacher can feel appreciated in the relationship and in their working environment. This creates trust as a foundation for the work.

Trust and Confidence: It is important that the teacher being mentored feels acknowledged for her strengths. One should always build up the teacher, never tear down. For example, during observations one can always begin by noticing, “What can this person do better than I?” The mentor should create a mood of confidence and trust and exude this calm assurance to the teacher. The teacher will feel reassured when the mentor can be supportive, objective and a competent guide.

II. Qualities of the Mentor

The eurythmy mentor must work out of the principles of anthroposophy and the pedagogical law. In addition, the mentor needs a commitment to life-long learning. The mentor needs the following qualities:

- enthusiasm
- interest
- expertise
- courage
- flexibility
- inner mobility
- understanding

- objective vision
- tact
- integrity
- loving kindness
- open mindedness
- listening skills
- honesty
- discernment
- advocacy
- observation skills
- ability to ask leading questions and to be a guide to self-help
- knowledge of eurythmy content and technique
- respect for the unique style of each teacher
- empathetic and effective communication skills
- healthy collegial relationships
- self-reflection
- humility

III. Beginning the Mentoring Relationship

A request should come from the school or the teacher for mentoring. During this initial conversation, clarify the intention for the visit and determine that mentoring, not evaluation, is called for. Mentors can also provide evaluation, but in the initial contact it should be made clear which is requested. Also, make sure expectations, logistical and financial arrangements are clear.

Have an initial conversation with the teacher where you begin to build warmth and trust. Allow time for the teacher to share questions and concerns. This may include a visit to the working space. This may also include a request for the teacher to fill out a self-evaluation.

Request copies of evaluations and prior recommendations and ask to be apprised of any school concerns.

Make sure the school, the mentor and the teacher are in agreement regarding the expectations for the mentoring. Be clear on the school's governance process, the school's code of professional conduct, and what procedures should be followed if difficulties arise in the relationship for the teacher, the mentor or the school.

Schedule adequate time for observations and follow-up conversations during the visit. Two days are recommended.

If written documentation is called for, complete it during the visit and review the document with the teacher before finalizing.

Make sure there is clarity with the school and the teacher regarding the next steps in the mentoring process.

Consider including the option of the teacher visiting the mentor or other experienced eurythmy teachers.

IV. Questioning and Conversation as Conduits to Learning

Questioning and conversation are conduits for further learning, and the skills of the mentor in engaging in meaningful conversation are very important. He or she can do this by applying a Socratic method of insightful questions* that are by nature supportive and stimulate self-knowledge. Throughout the conversation, encourage the development of common sense and, if requested, provide practical advice and assurance. Tact,

*See *Working Together: An Introduction to Pedagogical Mentoring in Waldorf Schools*, Chapter "Why the Socratic Method?"

sensitivity, and empathy are some of the inter-personal skills that are of immense importance in developing the right attitude for questioning in a teacher's experience of self-exploration.

Here are some examples:

Ask questions and make statements from observations.

“What part did the children enjoy?”

“What do you think went best?”

“What was the mood of the class?”

“When did you notice the children becoming fidgety? What do you think is the cause of this?”

“I noticed that the sequence of getting the students into their shoes and entering the lesson is well understood and went smoothly.”

When your observation differs from the teacher's, ask questions and make statements from your observation.

“I noticed that Connie and Raymonde were chatting while you were giving instructions. Did you notice this?”

“I noticed that John did not participate in making any of the gestures.”

“The students were not able to keep up with the rhythmic exercise. Why do you think that was the case?”

Pose questions that elicit self-observation and knowledge.

“What was the effect of this exercise that you were bringing to the students?”

“What are some of the goals you have in mind for this class?”

“When you said that you ..., what did you envision happening?”

“How will you know when you are successful?”

“What was planned and what was spontaneous?”

Use probes.

“Tell me more about ...”

“Help me better understand what you mean.”

“Did the students have differing reactions?”

“What do you think would happen if ...?”

“Tell me how you did that.”

Share from your own experiences if helpful, but be wary of trying to make the teacher into your own image.

“I’ve seen Leonore bring the epochs in the eleventh grade in this way ...”

“When Bonnie introduces this exercise she breaks it down into smaller sections over three lessons ...”

“I’ve found it helpful to adjust my lessons according to the level of engagement or the mood of the students.”

“This exercise really helps to calm and focus their movement.”

On rare occasions directives may be necessary for the safety of the students.

“When Nina and Carla throw rods at each other in that manner, it is dangerous. You need to ensure safety when using the rods.”

V. The Ongoing Mentoring Relationship

In the course of the mentoring relationship, identify short- and long-term goals. Although the mentor may be aware of the long term goal, the teacher may need the support of the mentor in breaking this goal into attainable steps. It is essential to reflect on progress and assist the teacher in being accountable for attaining his own goals. Be sure to acknowledge and celebrate success and growth. Utilize all forms of communication including face-to-face visits, telephone calls, email conversations. Remember to ask for inner guidance and that insights can arise during sleep. Encourage the teacher to remember this as well.

When Concerns Arise in the Mentoring Relationship

Be clear of the school's governance process, the school's code of professional conduct, and what procedures should be followed if difficulties arise in the relationship for the teacher, the mentor or the school.

Maintain an awareness of the areas in which the mentor can be helpful and recognize when the teacher needs support outside the realm of the mentor's expertise. Sometimes a teacher may need to be referred to a professional from another field.

When the teacher is unresponsive to guidance and suggestions, it is the responsibility of the mentor to communicate with the school. The mentor should inform the teacher that this step needs to be taken. The school may need to assign a new mentor or arrange for evaluation. Refer to the AWSNA Effective Practices – Human Resources.

The Healthy Eurythmy Program

Enthusiasm for eurythmy arises when community members are able to experience eurythmy in many ways. A eurythmy program is vibrant and effective in a Waldorf school where a love for eurythmy is evident.

- Students communicate the joy they experience in the eurythmy lesson.
- Artistic eurythmy performances are offered throughout the year.
- Opportunities exist for adults to experience artistic, therapeutic, pedagogical and social eurythmy.
- Student eurythmy performances in concerts and plays
- Parent education regarding the eurythmy program is offered.
- The eurythmist collaborates well with the class teacher and is an integral part of the full faculty.

The school eurythmy teacher or therapist may be the person who offers or arranges these events throughout the school year.

Program

The experiences described above create an atmosphere in which a healthy school program can thrive. The school program is comprised of these elements:

Early childhood – Eurythmy lessons in the preschool and kindergarten are once weekly, lasting ten to twenty minutes. These lessons are often held in the early childhood classrooms.

Lower grades (One, Two, Three) – Eurythmy lessons for these students require a full subject period, though the grade one

lesson may build up to the full period gradually over the course of the year. Though the original indication for eurythmy in the Waldorf schools was for lessons once weekly, many schools now find it beneficial that the lessons occur twice weekly.

Upper elementary grades, middle school and high school (Four through Twelve) – Eurythmy lessons are a full period and occur two times per week.

Other Points to Consider

Eurythmy addresses the social interaction of the whole class. Classes with more than twenty-four students may be split for eurythmy lessons and each group has a lesson two times per week. This depends on room size. The decision regarding splitting any class requires flexibility and collaboration. It takes into consideration the capacity of the teacher, the size of the eurythmy room and the nature of the class.

It is helpful for students to enter the eurythmy room wearing their shoes and ready to begin working.

The weekly schedule for the school places the eurythmy lesson in relation to the other subjects such that a healthy breathing is encouraged, as indicated by Rudolf Steiner.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Eurythmy Teacher

The eurythmist must be a full member of the faculty to offer an effective program.* This makes it possible to have dialogues about student and class development, to offer eurythmy to the faculty, to coordinate with colleagues around special eurythmy

*Of course there can be exceptions to this; life circumstances must be taken into consideration.

events, etc. The eurythmy teacher should welcome colleagues into the eurythmy lessons, but must remain the authority in the room throughout the eurythmy lesson. A larger Waldorf school which offers a program for preschool through grade twelve needs at least two eurythmists to offer a full program. Some schools have successfully had two eurythmists, but with one being part-time, the other full-time with other duties. However, the focus on eurythmy is essential. A full teaching schedule should include 14 to 16 eurythmy lessons. Other duties and assignments as directed by the culture and needs of the school and the capacities of the eurythmist should be considered carefully and agreed upon rather than mandated.

Professional Development

The eurythmy teacher should have a diploma from a recognized eurythmy school and a pedagogical training. Teachers who are in the early years of their vocation should have a eurythmy mentor, who may or may not be from the same school. Curriculum development for a full program takes time and is best accomplished with support and guidance. An in-school mentor is also necessary in the first, or even second, year of teaching in a new school. The school should offer ongoing support for professional development. The eurythmist must continue to develop and enrich his/her curriculum and to nurture an artistic practice in order to be successful.

Resources

In order for the students to experience the benefits of eurythmy, the eurythmy lessons must take place in a room that is large enough for the students to move about freely, with a

floor that has enough flexibility that the teacher and students will avoid injury, e.g., a sprung floor or old-fashioned wooden floor supported by wooden beams; no concrete. Ideally, the room is used exclusively for the eurythmy lessons. Adequate light, ventilation and a chalkboard are also important. There must be a piano and piano accompanist. Some percussion instruments are also useful. The eurythmist and the accompanist would benefit from one period a week to practice and prepare. Copper rods are necessary, and it is good to also have copper balls. Students are provided with eurythmy shoes. Costumes for performances are important. The eurythmist should have a budget to purchase these items as necessary, and should be responsible for managing that budget.

Support

Finding a qualified eurythmist can be difficult. Positions are advertised through whywaldorfworke.org and the Eurythmy Association of North America (eana.org). Pedagogical support through mentoring and evaluation is available.

*All indications for a healthy eurythmy program
are in agreement with the AWSNA Effective Practices
document for Eurythmy.*

Questions to Ask

WHEN OBSERVING THE EURYTHMY CLASSES

The healthy lesson:

- Is there warmth between the teacher and the student?
- How do the students greet each other?
- How do the students relate to each other?
- Is there enthusiasm and receptivity?
- Do the students listen well?
- Do the students know the routine and their places?
- Can the students work independently?
- Are the students making an effort?
- Do the students behave with respect and good manners?
- Is there allowance for the spontaneous?

Wholeness of the lesson:

- Does the teacher use appropriate images?
- How does the teacher use the night? What is the nature of the review?
- Is there a balance between the initiative of the teacher and that of the students?
- How does the teacher incorporate or address the temperament of the students?
- Is there laughter during the lessons?
- Is there an effective routine for how the students change into their eurythmy shoes?
- Is there a clear beginning, middle and ending to the lesson?
- Are there smooth transitions between activities?
- Is there new material?
- Is there a healthy breathing?

Are the material and methods age-appropriate?
Is the old material alive and meaningful?
Are there rhythmical activities during the lesson?
How are the gestures of the students?
What is the students' demeanor as they leave the lesson?
Is there a written lesson plan?

Assessment of the lesson:

The students:

Are all of the students actively engaged in learning?
Are the individual differences between students being addressed?
Are the basic skills of the students appropriate to the age level?
Is there an open-heartedness to imagination and student creativity?
How does the teacher handle discipline?
What is the students' response to correction?

The teacher:

Is the teacher prepared for the lesson?
Are the teacher's instructions clear?
Is the teacher's artistic skill adequate?
How does the teacher balance his/her temperament?
How is the voice of the teacher, such as volume, pitch, variety of tone and expression and hygienic modulation of consonants and vowels?
How does the teacher move about in the classroom?
Does the teacher distract the students?
Is the teacher's appearance appropriate in terms of attire and cleanliness, and in keeping with the dress code or code of conduct of the school?

Is the teacher punctual with beginnings and endings of classes?

Physical environment of the classroom:

Is there beauty in the classroom, pictures on the wall, a clean chalk board for drawing forms?

Are the classroom materials well organized?

Is there attention to light and airflow in the room?

Is there a piano and percussion instruments?

Is there an accompanist?

Is there appropriate flooring in the room?

Does the teacher have access to adequate resources for curriculum preparation?

EURYTHMY MENTORING WORK: The Curriculum

This curriculum outline here is only a sketch of the rich tapestry offered to the students. It is not all-inclusive and more resources are available in the many books on pedagogical eurythmy by authors such as Sylvia Bardt, Francine Adams-Marquiss, Lisa Monges, Leonore Russell, Reg Down and Molly von Heider. Many of these resources are available in PDF format from the Online Waldorf Library (www.waldorflibrary.org) for free download.

Kindergarten / Early Childhood

The preschool child has a rich imagination and strong powers of imitation. Through these the children follow the content of the lesson and actively take part. The form of the lesson should be a well-crafted story that has been worked out in every detail by the eurythmist and shared seamlessly and joyfully with the children. Simple themes which include repetition and pictures from nature are best. The story needs to have a variety of movement—fast and slow, light and heavy, contraction and expansion. The inner gesture and voice of the teacher must hold the mood of the young child. Accompany the story with life gestures to bring out an activity such as filling a bucket of water from the well or the roots of a bulb growing down into the soil. Small verses or poems can be included to develop the imaginative pictures in the story. Contrasts between large movements with the arms and small gestures with the fingers are helpful to bring a mood of focus. The lesson should be between ten to twenty minutes, concluding the story with everyone quiet and still.

First Grade

The First Grade is beginning its journey through the grades and each student in their own individual way is ready. Their anticipation and readiness need to be met with a clear and loving form-giving space and a reliable rhythm. The circle is the archetypal form for this age, giving each child an experience of themselves as a part of the whole. After the class greeting, they move a few short exercises; a poem or a short piece of music is done to bring a wakeful focus into the limbs. This is followed by a story. The pictorial images in the story will bring the children into a wide variety of movements. These will explore the form of the circle and the movement possibilities within it. Contraction and expansion can be incorporated into the story. From the circle the class can be led into a curving meandering form, or the straight purposeful line as well as zigzags.

The characters in the stories can bring out a variety of stepping and real embodiment of the movement form: how the King is so upright when he stands or walks; the bear so rounded in his form; the squirrel stepping lightly along; the old woman with slow, tired steps and bent back. The music that accompanies these movements should be simple and rhythmical; pentatonic music and melodies in major are appropriate here. There are a great number of fairy tales that are suitable for this age but the eurythmy teacher can use his/her own. The season or festive time of year follows as closely as possible with the choice of story. The narrative and any poetry included can be accompanied by clear eurythmy gestures that the child can easily imitate. Remember the guideline: "Less is more." The lesson should be 20–30 minutes in length,

gradually working up to a full period. A story can last between 4 to 6 sessions or for a season, depending on the engagement of the students.

Second Grade

Second grade children are now familiar with the expectations of the school and return in the fall with a renewed interest. Each lesson should begin in the circle, with the same warm and firm structure as in grade one and then go further. The rhythm of the lesson opens slowly with a verse, rhythm or music exercise. To develop spatial orientation have every other student move a simple form, use mirror forms. Simple pieces of music with clear phrases in major keys challenge body coordination and dexterity. Themes relate to the main lesson material, such as fables or saint legends. As part of bringing the story into movement, the eurythmy forms for “we seek one another” and “I and you” and geometric forms are used. Express the story with eurythmy gestures and musical forms. The eurythmy teacher must give the children a good example to follow with clear and harmonious movement.

Third Grade

The students of this age group are now entering the time of the nine-year-old change, gradually coming to a new experience of themselves in relation to the world. The themes of the main lesson subjects meet this stage with Old Testament stories, house building, farming and crafts. These themes continue into the eurythmy lessons, along with developing geometric forms.

The contrast of expansion and contraction can be worked with both to poetry and to music as a constant theme throughout

the year. They can be brought out in heavy and light stepping, slow and fast, as well as with spiral forms. The children's love of movement can be developed with large curving forms and also with straight lines. Concentration exercises can be brought with joyful skipping, side stepping, and with precise steps. New material includes Cassini Curves, crown forms, question and answer forms. In tone eurythmy phrasing and rhythm bring together movement and form. Practicing conscious listening and beginning to use arm gestures for following pitch and stepping rhythms strengthen listening skills.

The children now begin to become more aware of the arm gestures for vowels and consonants and may be led towards forming the gestures for their own names.

Exercises that promote spatial orientation, dexterity and concentration should continue throughout the year. This can include simple copper rod exercises to bring awareness into the arms, hands and fingers, developing fine motor skills.

The growth brought about by the nine year old change will determine how soon we move into the greater self awareness brought through forms that have clear crossings, such as figures of eight, frontal orientation and the elements of tone eurythmy. The use of minor depends on when the children have gone through the nine-year change.

Fourth Grade

Fourth Grade students have come to class ready and eager to learn; this must be met by the content of the lesson. The movement of concentration exercises with number patterns and coordination exercises emphasizing the right and left side, and a conscious crossing of arms and legs, help to waken the limbs

for the main work of the lesson. Introduce geometric forms including the five stars, squares, diamonds and lemniscates with the whole class crossing through at the center. Begin changing their orientation from a circle to frontal to give the children an experience of themselves at the center of the directions in space.

In tone eurythmy work with the 4/4 beat, phrasing and rhythm and the moods of major and minor. Begin adding tone gesture to movement. In speech eurythmy connect to the main lesson in Norse mythology by moving alliteration. Work with the grammar construction of a short poem and introduce the simple grammar forms. Whole words can now be formed in eurythmy and each student can work out their own name.

Continue to work with copper rods to develop dexterity and coordination (save the main exercises until later). Develop a “rod story.” Continue to include all aspects of eurythmy already introduced. In sum:

- concentration exercises
- coordination exercises
- emphasis on crossing of right and left
- geometric forms: 5 star, square, diamond, lemniscates
- change orientation from circle to frontal
- 4/4 beat, phrasing and rhythm
- major and minor moods
- tones with forms
- alliterations
- grammar forms
- words in eurythmy
- copper rods continued
- all basics from previous grades

Fifth Grade

By fifth grade the children are familiar with many of the pedagogical exercises and geometric forms. Now they need to feel challenged by new expectations as the work continues to develop. Start each lesson with concentration exercises and counter movements with arms and legs. Bring the whole class into movement by moving geometric forms, for example, each child in his or her own five star or triangle or one large continuous figure eight with different children leading, etc. Introduce a variety of scales with sharps and flats.

The core material for the lessons draws from the content of the main lessons and seasonal poems. Ongoing work should include working with the Greek circle dances, the forms for “the inner has overcome” and “the outer has conquered.”* The class should also learn the harmonious eight. Continue to develop work on grammar started in 4th grade and introduce the movements for the past, present and future.

Work with music that has a clear classical form. Continue to work with the three main elements: pitch, rhythm and beat. Begin to develop music in two voices.

Sixth Grade

As the students begin to experience puberty and sudden growth spurts, their movements can become more awkward and heavy. At this time in their development, geometry is taken up in the main lesson and should be moved rigorously in eurythmy, individually and in groups, including the transition

*See Molly von Heider's *Come unto These Yellow Sands*

of the triangle and exercises on the square. The Happy Measure (*Heiterer Auftakt*) can be introduced now.

Rod exercises now have a prominent place in each lesson and the students should work toward mastery. Create a medley of exercises with suitable music. Work the students until they're tired. They will enjoy this!

In music add more focus to beat: this brings the sixth graders down into their feet and helps them know where they are. Challenge them to do beat and rhythm simultaneously. The interval of the octave is the key for this period. It lifts their arms over their heads, connecting them with their higher selves.

Work with poems out of the main lesson. Find poetry with a humorous quality and work with the eurythmy gestures to bring out the humor. Continue with concentration exercises.

Seventh Grade

The children are now stepping into early adolescence, which may also affect their spatial orientation. Movements with contrast meet the polarities in their soul lives. Many examples can be found in poetry. In tone eurythmy we use major and minor, forte and piano, and extremes of pitch.

New material will include moving geometric forms such as the seven pointed star to which may be added many variations, and large continuous forms. The students enjoy working them out. Also introduce all of the intervals and the construction of the major and minor chords. Begin to bring soul gestures and eurythmy gestures in a variety of moods with music and poetry. This helps to create a good foundation to work on the ballad form. A ballad may be worked in many varied ways and include group forms, solo sections, musical interludes and

eurythmy gestures for sounds and soul gestures. Encourage active participation by allowing the class to work out the forms and choose some of their own arm gestures.

Another aspect of Grade 7 curriculum is the introduction of humor in poetry. Limericks serve well. Continue to develop all aspects of the curriculum brought in the earlier grades.

Eighth Grade

The eighth grade year signals the end of one phase and the beginning of another. In those schools that only go up through eighth grade it is a year of culmination, of closure and of parting. In the schools that go up through twelfth grade it is the end of the class teacher phase and the beginning of the journey through high school. As this year has within it the anticipation of change, present and approaching, so too this year has a focus that really recognizes transition.

The age of critical thinking has dawned, and the students are expecting to be met differently than when they were younger. They should be given content that reflects this.

Dramatic elements in movement and gesture are emphasized. This work can lead beautifully into the forming and shaping of a story or ballad to be performed when completed. Large, sweeping forms accompany these dramatic texts. This is also a time in which Apollonian and Dionysian principles can be worked with to great advantage.

Greater focus is given to developing and following choreography from the chalkboard.

In tone eurythmy, composers such as Schumann, Beethoven, Mozart and Stephen Heller can be used and the forms should be generous in nature. Also the minuet form with

its accompanying eurythmy form works well. Collaborations and problem-solving challenge the students' ingenuity and strengthen their ability to work together.

Introduction to High School Eurythmy

At the high school level, the students are invited to take a different approach to eurythmy. The overall theme in high school is the development of independent thinking. This is also in the eurythmy class. Questions, creativity and considerations are encouraged in every aspect of the subject.

Mindful and respectful of the changes that are going on developmentally, the eurythmy teacher now engages the students in such a way that they become increasingly aware and conscious of the *what*, the *how*, the *why* and indeed the *who* in all of what they do. Each of these is a thematic approach, one to each grade. It is important that the teacher stands in front of the students as an expert in the field.

Ninth Grade: *What?*

As the students enter the high school they are experiencing both the inner turmoil that comes with puberty and the unfolding of capacities for clear, abstract thinking. It is important to begin “anew” with the elements of eurythmy, both speech and tone. The students are no longer living in the “authority” of the teacher and should be encouraged to explore, question and create. Focus on WHAT is happening strengthens concentration and relieves the student of self-consciousness.

In keeping with the 9th grade main lesson curriculum, the eurythmy curriculum has a very strong focus in the study of polarities that reflect this contrast. The eurythmy classes become an exploration of polarities in forms, sounds and movement,

using both music and poetry as a basis. The students consider: What are the differences between moving the straight line as opposed to the curved line? What, in either music or poetry/the word, suggests the straight line or curved line? Exercises that foster exploration between the straight line principles and those of the curved forms are taken up.

Through their understanding of eurythmy, the students observe what happens in movement with a text constructed predominantly of plosives and vowels and contrast that with a text constructed out of breath sounds and vowels. The 9th grader can be reminded that the rhythmic element finds its physical expression in the action of the lungs and the heart. Contraction and expansion go on continuously: the lungs and heart never tire of their action until life ends, without rhythm there is no life.

Tenth Grade: *How?*

The 10th grade curriculum is there to meet what now begins to emerge in the student with a question like: “Things happen. They come about. How?” No longer is the world experienced as extremes at odds with one another, but a balance is sought, which one could see as a search for a third or balancing element.

The subjects taught during this year take this up by bringing the question of the HOW front and center. The eurythmy class therefore looks to develop that which lies between extremes. In poetry, exploring the differences between Thinking, Feeling and Willing truly addresses the reality of a third and balancing element. This is also the perfect time to work with Apollonian and Dionysian forms. Rigorous geometric forms bring clarity as well as concentration.

Musically, the students can expand their work to include ensemble work with the sonata form and three-part harmonies. This can be used with the study of the three archetypal instruments (strings, woodwinds, brass) of the orchestra, particularly if representatives from the school can be brought into the class and the students have the opportunity to move to these instruments. Big, harmonically rich pieces are highly suitable here in addition to pieces that challenge the students to listen and work discerningly. Identifying distinguishing musical themes and elements is essential at this level.

The eurythmy class is a time to explore the relationship to the four elements in nature and from there to go on to the four temperaments. Bring examples of these in poetry and encourage those students who delight in the opportunity to write their own examples.

Eleventh Grade: *Why?*

The student of this time has reached a greater level of independence and begins to turn more and more inwards where thoughts, feelings and actions are reflected upon; an unsettling time when existential questions are rife and answers not so immediately available. Analysis is required and the overarching question: WHY stands over this year of questing.

The “quest” or “question” is the great theme of the Parzival block. Sections from this work can be chosen, the planetary gestures, moods of the vowels and biographical signposts can be presented within the context of this story.

In tone eurythmy large complex pieces can be worked with or Rudolf Steiner forms for pieces where the compelling structures and musical elements are so effectively connected

with the choreography. If it is possible, take up an orchestral piece and have the students work with group or individualized choreography and a full orchestral score. The upper middle school orchestra may learn the piece and play for the 11th grade when they perform at an assembly or other event. Students will help each other and this work is taken quite seriously as it is such an example of all the individual parts working within the whole. Costumes, veils and lighting should complete this project.

Twelfth Grade: *Who?*

Having arrived at the pinnacle of their education after a rich and diversified journey through the grades, the Grade Twelve student can begin to see a wholeness in their education. It is as if, having reached the top, a full panorama opens before them, and what seemed like many disparate experiences fit together. This process is unique to this grade, and with it, the dominant question can be realized: WHO? Who is this person I am becoming? How do I fit into this? It is therefore so profoundly satisfying for the seniors to return to the place where the journey began: the first grade. They may see the thread that weaves through their education. In doing so, the synthesizing activity can be completed.

The eurythmy class can take up this theme in so many ways; the most obvious one of which is to review the curriculum through the years. Twelfth graders often study child development, and they may present a fairy tale to the youngest children. Other connections with Grade One can be made, including an understanding of eurythmy for the developing child. The eurythmy teacher who works with the youngest

students could be invited to a class with the twelfth grade and allow them to re-experience the purpose of the eurythmy lesson for the young child. Their questions are important and are addressed.

The Zodiac gestures are taught. The archetypal social forms, especially the EVOE, as well as the *Auftakt*/prelude forms by Rudolf Steiner, such as the Cosmic measure, the Romantic *Auftakt*, and the Question of Destiny, help the students work with the leaving to come.

In tone eurythmy large group pieces can be worked with, but students can also take up solos. In speech eurythmy the ultimate focus that draws everything together, completing the cycle of the grades, is to develop a fairy tale in eurythmy to present at the end of the year. The EVOE is also crucial as they greet and say goodbye to each other consciously.



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