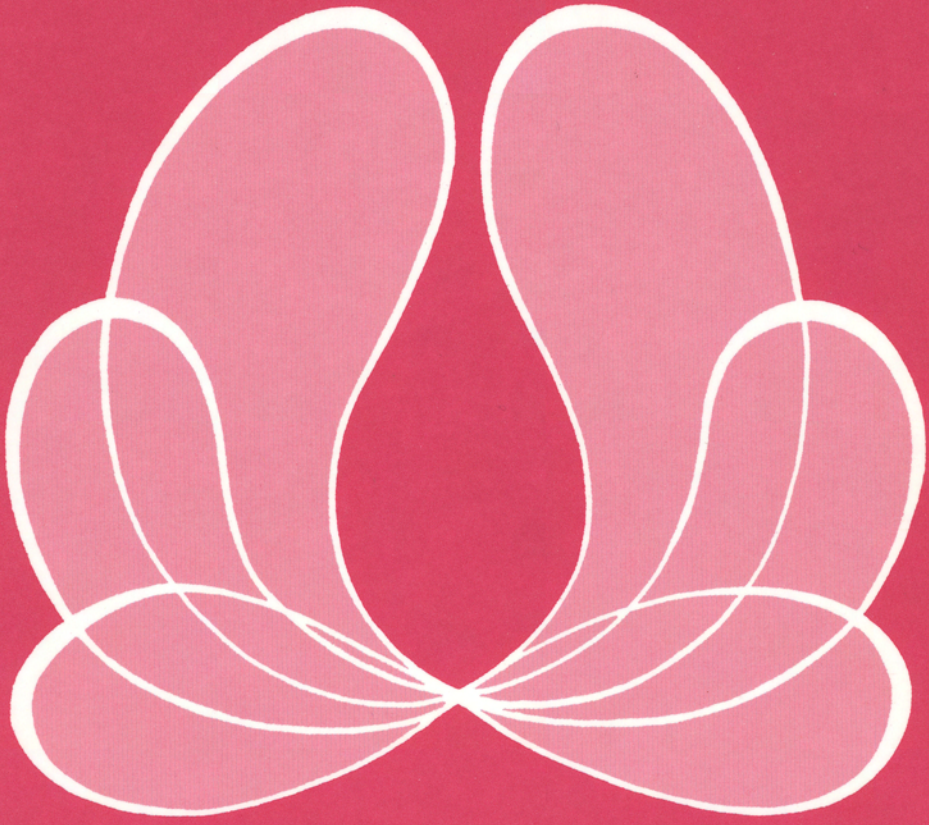
Leaving Room for the Angels



Eurythmy and the Art of Teaching

Reg Down

Leaving Room For The Angels

EURYTHMY AND THE ART OF TEACHING

by

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AWSNA

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David S. Mitchell
For The Publications Committee
AWSNA

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Dedication

To Rudolf Steiner—
who told us
what the little bird said
when it flew in the window.

To my mother and father—
for giving me a rich childhood.

To my children—
Aran, Oisin, and Isa.

To my real teachers—
especially Margarete Proskauer-Unger.

To my students—
with thanks.

Table of Contents

PART TWO

Preface

This book is an attempt to address the art of teaching within the context of eurythmy. It assumes a working knowledge of both eurythmy and anthroposophy, as elucidated by Rudolf Steiner. While it is directed to eurythmists in particular, I feel that the contents of Part One will be of interest also to subject and class teachers who wish to gain an insight into Waldorf education from an artistic-eurythmic viewpoint.

Because teaching is as much a matter of what our students bring to us as what we bring to them, what arises from this deep-rooted union is highly mercurial and by no means predictable. As a result, what we "know" is constantly confronted by a "do not know." Thus, whatever can be written in a book is at best only half of the reality of teaching.

As will probably be clear, this is not a learned book. I have always chosen to do my own exploring, preferring to make a workingman's mistake than remain safe with a hundred quotes from the horse's mouth. Above all, my aim has been to be practical. Very little is theoretical in the sense of having been thought through, but not actually lived or experienced. In this sense the book is personal. Therefore, believe nothing and test everything. It should be possible to recognize the contents at work in the actual teaching and to apply the advice and suggestions fruitfully.

Eurythmy must be given away in order to be meaningful in life. If I have a hope, it is that the contents will provide the means for more eurythmists to successfully enter the world of bringing eurythmy to children and teenagers.

Reg Down
Nelson, British Columbia,
Canada, 1995

Preface to the Second Edition

It is almost a decade since this book first appeared in 1995. Much has changed in the world since then—especially in the United States. It is a much less certain place than it was just a few years ago. Time seems to be hastening. My feeling with respect to eurythmy is that it is even more important for today's children and youth. I feel similarly with respect to a pedagogy which is artistically imbued. Both are critical for a future which will stand in need of, even demand, creative solutions from creative human beings.

This book has received a positive reception. It is heartwarming to have a colleague say that she reaches for it when she finds herself stuck and in need of refreshing. I have also been encouraged by the number of class and subject teachers who have told me that they found it useful.

This edition has been thoroughly revised—rough passages smoothed out, unclear paragraphs clarified, and trains of thought linked up with greater cohesiveness. Two new sections have been added to "Aspects of the Lesson." While the thoughts previously expressed therein were implied within the book as a whole I felt they needed stating directly. In addition, the chapter on the zodiac and the twelve years of schooling has been considerably expanded and clarified, the section on bringing eurythmy and eurythmy tales to the young children rewritten, and some new eurythmy forms and exercises have been included as well.

My thanks go, again, first to David Mitchell for his support and energy in getting this edition out into the world. My thanks also go to Miki Higashine for the patience and support she shows when I need to focus (for hours on end) on a project of this size.

Reg Down
Sacramento, California, 2004

PART ONE

The Role of Eurythmy within Education

An understanding of Waldorf education as an organic totality includes a clear perception of the role of eurythmy within it. Eurythmy, a unique addition to pedagogy, has come about through a spiritual-scientific beholding of the human being. It is a gift from one of the great geniuses of the twentieth century, Rudolf Steiner. In his leading series of lectures to teachers, *The Study of Man*, Steiner noted that "the task of education conceived in the spiritual sense is to bring the Soul-Spiritual into harmony with the Life-Body. Of all the subjects within Waldorf education there is none which so completely addresses this ideal as does eurythmy. In eurythmy the whole human being, as body, soul and spirit, is engaged. Its gestures are a revelation of the divine-spiritual out of which the human being has been fashioned. Because of this, the "Soul-Spirit" of the child is most powerfully brought into harmony with the "Life-Body" via the medium of eurythmy. For this reason eurythmy and Waldorf education are inextricably entwined; a grasp of eurythmy inevitably leads to seeing its role in the education of the child, and a grasp of Waldorf education de facto points to eurythmy as the subject which most nearly unites itself with the ideal at the heart of Waldorf education.

When eurythmy enters a school successfully, a fundamental change occurs in the school's atmosphere. This is my own direct experience, and attested to by many colleagues. Class teachers, who are especially sensitive to the children in their class, have repeatedly commented on the positive difference in their children. To characterize this change we can draw on the image of water.

Water flows; it dissolves, unites and makes malleable. Water allows substances to blend and mix together in a manner not previously possible. Similarly, without eurythmy, the contents of the curriculum have a tendency to remain separated, their elements

lying side by side, but finding no means of truly integrating. With the introduction of eurythmy, the element of "water" enters into the process. The "substances" of the subjects, when permeated by "water-eurythmy," are dissolved, united, and made malleable within the children. Furthermore, an element of inner vitality enters into the picture, for water is also the bearer of life.

Life is more than the sum of the substances found within a body. Something intangible, imponderable, yet very concrete, flows through an organism when it is alive. Water is a medium that provides the conditions necessary for the alchemy of life, for substance to be permeated by the living etheric world. Likewise, eurythmy provides the conditions in which spiritual life-processes are strengthened within the children.

Because of the water-etheric nature of eurythmy, we can characterize it as an "alchemic" medium brought within the domain of education. As a result, both class and subject teachers find that what they bring to the children is more readily assimilated. The children display a heightened inner mobility, flexibility, and dexterity. This reveals itself not only in manual and academic ability, but also in the social life of the classes. Eurythmy is very much a social art in addition to its other virtues, and many of the exercises the children engage in are directed towards cultivating a healthy social life. Thus, eurythmy is not only of inestimable value to the individual child, but for the classes and the school as a whole. For this reason teachers rich in teaching experience and well-grounded in the principles underlying Waldorf education show an unswerving determination to provide the necessary conditions for a thriving eurythmy program in their school. One faculty, who were interviewing me for a eurythmy position, stated directly that they could not in good conscience think of themselves as a Waldorf school unless eurythmy was part of their curriculum. Coming from a faculty with a long and successful track record, this is a powerful endorsement.

As we embark on the twenty-first century, we find our children subjected to the widespread, pervasive and negative influence of images and "games" supplied by the media and electronics industry. Our children have become profit-centers. Tens of thousands of children are drugged on a daily basis to make them more "manageable." One has the impression that

children, even childhood itself, is under attack. More than ever is the unifying, ennobling influence of Waldorf education a necessary counterweight within our culture—and at the core of this approach to childhood lies eurythmy.

Aspects of the Lesson

The Ideal Lesson

The ideal lesson does not exist—at least not in the physical sense. It does, however, live in the imagination of every sincere teacher. It is the ideal we strive for, that we hold before us inwardly. When we first began teaching, this ideal was probably somewhat generalized, a little vague perhaps, but luminous nonetheless. This ideal has a profound effect on our actions in the classroom. The richer and more mobile the picture, the better able we are in dealing with the multitude of situations which come to meet us. As time passes and our experience grows, we notice that our ideal picture gains shape and form. We discern various elements within it, each distinct in its function, yet interconnected with the whole. Although not always systematically addressed in the course of the book, these ideal elements do underlie its contents and will be visible to the attentive reader.

There is, for instance, a distinct group of four elements at work in this picture. There is the element of fire. We will meet fire in the form of enthusiasm, humor, and warmth of heart. We will see that love is the highest form of fire. There is the element of air, of everything which constitutes the breathing of a lesson. I will address directly, and in depth, the breathing aspect of the lessons, as this so corresponds to the sanguine nature of our students. There is the element of water, of the flow of a lesson, of its mobile interconnectedness. Lastly, there is the element of solidity, of being grounded and down to earth, such as in the logical transparency of our pedagogical process, and in the matter of fact way we deal with the deeper aspects of eurythmy.

Thus, we find the four elements of antiquity—Earth, Air, Fire, and Water—reappearing quite naturally within the context

of our lessons. One element will always tend to predominate in any given lesson with any given teacher, yet the successful lesson will always have all four present. If any one is missing, however, the lesson cannot but lack something essential. Imagine a lesson without fiery enthusiasm, or quiet warmth of heart. Imagine a lesson which does not breathe, which suffocates the children. Or a lesson without flow, which is nothing but a series of forward and backward jerks. Or a lesson which is not grounded and wafts unintelligibly here and there.

Other aspects also come into view. For instance, our lessons, both individually and taken as a whole in the course of the year, display a subtle threefold structure reflecting the threefold membering of the human being. In addition, as will become clear, dynamic polarities play an essential part within our pedagogy. One of these dynamic principles, whose symbol is Staff of Mercury, will be found repeatedly throughout the book. All of these are aspects of the lesson as a living organism whose ultimate unity is indivisible.

The more we contemplate our ideal lesson, the clearer it becomes, the more profound the awe which arises within us. For what we find ourselves beholding inwardly is none other than the ideal human being, the archetypal human being. We grow to realize that this archetypal human being is actually present in all our lessons.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that the ideal picture we carry is accessible. We do not have to rely on the one given to us by our own (mis)education. We may enrich, deepen, and vivify our ideal picture, and quite literally project its image out into the lessons. If we are successful in this, it will instantly tell us not only where something is going wrong, but also the direction to go in order to correct ourselves. The ability to intensify an imagination to such an extent is itself somewhat of an ideal, of course, but that is no reason not to actively pursue it.

The Fire

In the beginning is fire. It warms through, it shines through, it burns. We cannot even begin to teach without this essence.

Without it there is no malleability, no quickening. It manifests itself in many forms, whether as spirit-enthusiasm for our task, soul-warmth for our students, or earthly-warmth sustaining us in the environment of our room.

Somehow we must strive to permeate our lessons with warmth. It is the sine qua non of teaching. There are a thousand and one ways we can engender warmth: by striving to be a better teacher; by shaking our students' hands as they enter and showing there is a desire to meet them as individuals; dealing with them in such a way that they sense we are searching for their higher and better selves; by the color of the walls and the care we put into our rooms. Warmth can be a difficult thing to define, yet it becomes the atmosphere in which we work. There can be nothing false or contrived about it. We cannot take it for granted and must always make efforts towards it.

Without warmth we are lost. It can be a bitter pill to swallow when we admit to ourselves that we have no affinity for, or even dislike, a student or class. We quickly realize that as a consequence there is nothing we can really bring them. Without fire we can only achieve good behavior through a discipline of consequences. Not through theory or logical thoughts, but through direct experience we must come to know fire as the highest element, that love is the truest pedagogue.

Time—Rhythm—Breathing

Children's souls climb into the sun's chariot and follow its circuit from season to season. Living within the sun's light, its growing strength, its waning into winter darkness, brings about in the child's sympathetic nature a powerful in-breathing and out-breathing.

The children arrive back in school at the end of summer, and as the seasons pass through Michaelmas and Martinmas towards Christmas, they become more and more willing to dwell on the inner aspects of what eurythmy has to bring. In the New Year, this process is slowly reversed. The senses turn outward by degrees, and the children seek the outer sun again. In the last few weeks of school they are fairly fit to fly out the opened windows—and who can blame them when the eurythmy teacher is probably in the same condition.

The sun not only waxes and wanes in the course of the year, but also though the course of the day. Arriving in the morning, the class teacher awakens the children through rhythmical activities. Gradually they come to themselves and enter into the events of the day. Towards school-end they grow restless and ready to move out of its forms and structures.

Everywhere we look, whenever we have to do with processes in time, we see rhythmical, cyclical patterns. Between the polarity of birth and death lies the life-long process of incarnating and excarnating. Between Sunday and Sunday lies the rhythmical procession of the week. There are many other patterns to be found, but in practical terms, the years of life, the seasons of the year, the days of the week, and the hours of the day, have perhaps the greatest effect on the students vis-à-vis our lessons. Embedded within the context of these many layers lie the actual times we spend with the children, and each lesson is remarkably different according to age, season, day, and hour.

With the exception of the very young children, eurythmy lessons are generally forty to fifty minutes long. Whether these short periods are experienced as an eternity roasting over hot coals, or an all-too-brief moment of bliss, depends very much on the inner structure of our lessons. There are a number of general principles which reveal themselves when we review successful lessons. These can be a tremendous help in assisting the beginning teacher as he or she seeks their bearings. We should remember, however, that just as Beethoven did not collect general principles, put them together, and come up with a masterpiece, so, too, the successful lesson cannot be wholly calculated and planned. A successful lesson is a work of art which cannot be repeated. Something moves through it which is magically above its separate parts. The teacher as artist needs a firm grasp of the laws and principles of pedagogy, but at the same time must be inwardly free, using these principles as tools rather than rules.

As teachers, our overall task is to lead the children to themselves, to bring them into harmony, into healthy breathing. With the exception of aspects of high school teaching, it is not our primary aim for the children to carry eurythmy around as a body of conscious knowledge. Our real task is to incorporate eurythmy

into the depths of their being as a vivifying force. Just as the true teacher is more concerned with teaching *how* to think than with *what* to think, so, too, in eurythmy we are less concerned with a knowledge of eurythmic elements than with laying the foundation of a healthy soul life. A verse from Rudolf Steiner is especially apt for us:

To educate youth means to foster and tend
In matter the spirit.
In the today, the tomorrow,
Spirit existence in earthly life.
— Rudolf Steiner

"In the today, the tomorrow. . ." We occupy ourselves more with what is of a germinal, seed nature, than that which is fulfilled and finished.

Especially in eurythmy must we engender breathing within our lessons. Breathing has to do with the air and the lungs in our breast; thus, there is often a sanguine element within the eurythmy period. The world becomes bright, the atmosphere clear, and the students, especially the young ones, live happily within the "air" of our lessons. When our classes are breath-full, then the children's eyes are bright. They light up and shine.

Air also has a relationship to light. Light flows freely through the air. Light reveals. Colors are revealed in the light-filled atmosphere. Likewise, the children light up and become color-full; they "reveal" their colors when breathing healthily in our lessons. Even their cheeks are tinged with color, and their eyes sparkle vibrantly!

Staff of Mercury—Staff of Pedagogy

A plant grows according to the laws of life. It unfolds in time through a rhythmical series of contractions and expansions. It also has a heavenward striving principle, juxtaposed with a meandering principle. With incredible diversity of form the plant world aligns itself with an invisible archetype.

Likewise, a successful lesson is an organic entity; *it, too, has an etheric master plan* which is remarkably plant-like. It unfolds

rhythmically through periods of activity and quiet. It lives between the dynamic of form and freedom, between keeping a sun-ward uprightness, yet freely playing and twining about this verticality.

We need to carry in our inner life the image of the Staff of Mercury. In its simplest form it is made from two elements—a vertical unbending line or staff, and one or two curving, serpentine lines twining around this staff. Repeatedly, the polar principles contained in its forms can be found within, and applied to, eurythmy and pedagogy in general. It is perhaps *the* symbol, the talisman we hold before ourselves. If our teaching is going well, we will discern its silent presence, and if anything is amiss, we will almost inevitably find that we are ignoring its principles.

We might, for instance, find ourselves being too stiffly upright and disciplinarian, not allowing the children to expand away from and swing back towards our directness. This has the effect of preventing the children from breathing within the lesson; it stifles them, leading, in the end, to resentment. Or we might be too lax and indeterminate, causing the children to lose their sense of purpose and direction.

Likewise, in our lesson plans, we also apply the principles of the Staff of Mercury, searching for the dynamic balance between predictability and unpredictability, swinging between being methodical and being sanguine. This gives the students a sense of security combined with surprise. While typically we may

pursue a general lesson plan as regards content for a whole term or longer, it would be a mistake, however, to picture the same lesson constantly repeating itself.

When we have many things on the go, we concentrate intensively on one or two items in any given lesson, and only lightly touch on the others by way of upkeep. The danger of the more sanguine lesson plan is a lack of focus. To counteract this, it can be very helpful to have a time when the children show their work to the whole school towards term end. With a simpler lesson plan, which has fewer, but more complex pieces, the longer time needed to teach each item keeps things moving. The danger with this approach is not lack of focus, but too much focus, leading to a sense that the projects are never-ending. Here it is good to have some stock fun items which the students enjoy in our back pockets. These can be thrown in when we deem fit. Then again, we can periodically give a totally different lesson, leaving the children refreshed, but perhaps wondering if we had mistaken them for another class!

As we practice teaching between polarities, we will perceive the positive effect on our students. We may also notice that we have to develop a fine sense of pedagogical judgment which we must keep honed. We need to constantly lead the students between pleasure and work. Work hard, play hard—of all the class types a hard-working, hard-playing class is the greatest pleasure. If we do not maintain this balance, there will be a tendency for the class to respond only to what pleasures them. It behooves us to remember that *we* are the ego principle guiding the content of the lessons, and not the desires of the students. Here again we find the principle of the Staff of Mercury— namely, the teacher as upright Ego around which the souls of the children twine. The children need our uprightness, for it gives them the form they need to hold them to the light.

Serious to Light

As a general rule the eurythmy lessons move from the serious to the light, from the earnest to the fun-filled, the contemplative head pole to the active limb pole. There is infinite variety within this model, and the novice teacher is well advised not to ignore

this principle. As a rule I plan all my lessons with this polarity in mind, and try not to worry if the actual lesson takes on a life of its own and flagrantly disregards my intentions. Below are two different examples drawn from actual lessons.

The first is from a grade four class I have been working with for a year:

- Opening verse
- Intervals of the fifth and major / minor thirds
- Concentration exercise to music
- Building up a "castle walls" form until the whole class is moving
- *"We seek one another"* form with speech and music
- Rod work comprising: the sevenfold exercise; the twelvefold exercise with music; rod rolling on the arms; "Jack be nimble" (vowels with arms and legs over the rod); threefold walking with the rod on the head
- Flying Horsemen (see appendix)
- "Skilled Eh" with music (see Appendix)
- Quiet moment to close

The second example is from a grade seven class I have worked with for two years:

- Opening verse
- Octave with interval form
- Working with the opening section of Chopin's *Funeral March***.** It is strictly stepped on a geometrical form with tones and intervals.
- Working with *The Joke* by Bela Bartok—a precise, humorous piece
- Moment of sitting quietly

As can be seen, it is possible to have a sanguine lesson plan moving through a number of activities leading gradually from serious to light. On the other hand, we can have a simple, straightforward diet of two main items; one very serious and the other a light humoresque.

Whole lessons also fall between many degrees of earnestness and lightheartedness. We may become interested in some aspect of the serious project on which we are working and find ourselves at the end of the lesson wondering where the time has flown. This is not an unusual occurrence between November and March, but would be highly unusual for the beginning or end of school. From the other side, I have had classes—especially in high-school—with gales of laughter to such an extent that other teachers were leaving the faculty room to see what all the fun was about. Work was, in fact, being done—it was simply a lighthearted class from beginning to end.

Macropolar—Micropolar

As macropolar principle we proceed from serious to light throughout the lesson as a whole. As micropolar principle we alternate breathing-wise, from the serious/contractive to the light/expansive as we move from exercise to exercise. This brings the children into the necessary swing to make the eurythmy effective.

An example from a grade five class which I have only just begun teaching. It is our sixth lesson:

- (Contemplative) Opening verse:

  He who offers to me with devotion
  only a leaf, or a flower, or a fruit,
  or even a little water,
  this I accept from the yearning soul
  because, with a pure heart,
  it is offered with love.
  — from the *Bahagavad Gita*,
  Krishna speaking to Arjuna

- (Invigorating/controlled expansion) Stepping and clapping a vigorous music rhythm
- (Forming/organizing) C Major scale
- (Harmonizing) Working on the Harmonious Eight
- (Expansive/chatty) Rod rolling on the arms and tossing the rod over the head to a partner

- (Disciplined) Sevenfold rod exercise with *King William's March*
- (Vigorous light) Left across/right across rod exercise (see addendum)
- (Controlled fun) "Skilled Eh" exercise
- (Settling) Sitting quietly for a minute

If we look inside one of these single elements, we find, again, the same polarities at work. It's like one of those Russian folk toys—a doll within a doll within a doll. In grade four, for instance, after the opening verse we might work with the interval of the fifth:

- first three times in standing—quiet, calm, and balanced
- then an octave higher—lightly reaching up, rising on toes
- then an octave lower—warm, round, and full
- then an octave even higher—leaping lightly
- then an octave even lower—very round and heavy; our leg might humorously join in.

Or if working with the Harmonious Eight in grade six:

- one pair moves the eight to a calm Bach prelude
- add two or three more pairs and repeat
- build up to the whole class moving the eight
- again one pair, but this time they step to the beat of a hand drum (one step per beat): beginning *very* slowly; rising to an elastic, smooth running gait; then speeding to full tilt and slowing down again
- add two or three pairs and repeat
- eventually the whole class attempts the exercise

The first way of moving the Harmonious Eight is very calming and gentling; the second demands great precision—and is also great fun.

Polar—Polar

To round off this section on the Staff of Mercury and polarities we need to add another beautiful element, namely, that we must not only work out of polarities, but also out of double polarities. This double polar element lies not so much in plan or process as in the manner in which we bring things to the children, in our inner stance as a teacher. It is not enough, for example, simply to be serious at the beginning and lighthearted at the end of a lesson. We must be *festively earnest* at the beginning of the class, and *earnestly festive* at the end. In the beginning, although the verse is serious, and should be taken as such, we are also radiant and light-filled. At the end, although we might be doing lighthearted exercises, nevertheless we are strict and consequent about achieving precision and technique.

This polar-polar principle actually accompanies us in all of our teaching; from the way in which we discipline (the seriousness of the moment—accompanied by an eye on the eternal), to how we correct and guide students into gesture (with warm, personal objectivity). It is well worth keeping this principle in mind when deciding how to approach pedagogical matters.

The Threefold Lesson

Lessons not only have a dynamic polar aspect, but they are also threefold in nature. The human being has a spirit, a soul, and a body. Inevitably this reality is reflected in our working with the children. Each lesson incarnates from what is spirit-oriented, through a period corresponding to the soul, and then moving to what is of a bodily nature. The sequence of unfolding follows the development of the growing child: from the head, moving down through the rhythmical system, and into the limbs. Thus, it is good to begin with a verse or poem containing an ideal, a beautiful thought, or a picture of what lives in the season. This verse, and the thoughts within it, imprints itself onto the class. It is like a seal which shines a light into the classroom and sets a tone for the lesson. The verse can simply be done once, or worked on for a period of time. If the class needs to focus their attention, we can pass from doing the verse with the arms, to doing it with the hands, and then with the fingers.

We then pass over into that which has more of a soul, or feeling, character. This can take many forms—music pieces, poems, *auftakts*,[1] and so forth—and this part often, though not always, provides the center of a lesson.

Lastly, we enter into those exercises of a bodily-will nature. Rod work and rod exercises in whatever form are often a main aspect of this part of the lesson. They lead the children into living in their body in a healthy manner, teaching them skill, dexterity, and adroitness. Also included here are vigorous fun items such as the Flying Horsemen, "Skilled Eh" stepping with music, Peewit step, birthday dances, and so forth. Here again the children must take hold of their limbs and their will, leaving them feeling strong, invigorated, and capable.

The Flow of the Lesson

Every successful lesson is like a river. It meanders quietly, lightly trips down the mountainside, or rushes around rocks and over rapids. Whichever way, however the geography, a good lesson flows. Our picture of the ideal lesson allows us to be inwardly mobile, to accept the day, the hour, the moment, and the mood of the children and to make of it what we can.

Maintaining the flow of a lesson means to keep things moving. We do this by plunging into the lesson with our artistic will. It is the same activity that every artist engages in when working on a sculpture, painting or playing a piece of music. We dive into the creative flow and pour ourselves into the medium, and out of the conjunction of inner activity and outer substance, a work of art is created. As teacher-artists we extend our willing to embrace the class; we send forth our feeling to sense the moods of the class; we direct our thinking to the overall aims we have set for the class. When all three are harmoniously united then the lesson flows.

In many respects, a good lesson depends not so much on getting things to move but avoiding those things which stop the natural flow. Water flows downhill and time moves onwards; these are a given; we do not have to work at it. I have often been amazed to (re)discover that successful teaching has as much to do

[1] An *auftakt* is an impossible-to-translate German word. It refers to any ordered, lawful choreography. Generally the eurythmy *auftakt* forms are geometrical and follow geometrical principles—though not always.

with getting out of the way as with getting in the way. Children love choreography, they love gesture, they love movement. How can we go wrong! We don't have to make our lessons flow, we allow them to flow. All we need to do is plunge into our artistic medium and guide these traits into the right channels by creating within the natural scheme of things.

The flow of the lesson has to do with water—but not only its flowing, fluid quality. We also need to develop water-consciousness. Water is open; it is transparent and self-effacing. It accepts, surrounds, and supports whatever is placed into it. Substances are buoyed up by water; they lose some of their weight when in water—as per the law of Archimedes. This lifts them up; they become less earthbound, fixed and immutable. These

Water-consciousness is one in which we are open to whatever comes to meet us. We are lifted up and mutable. We accept and do not impose. We remain self-effacing and selfless. This does not mean we remain neutral, however. Water-consciousness allows disparate elements to blend together without losing their identity. It also allows them to be raised up and rendered open to outside influences—as when substance is potentized in homeopathic medicine. In this sense water-consciousness is one stage higher then earth-bound consciousness. Earth-consciousness is human, while water-consciousness is angelic. Thus, the flow of the lesson not only means to keep things moving smoothly, but also that we are open to what arises in the moment so that it can flow into the lesson. This allows our lessons to be inspired, to take directions we would never have imagined.

Generally, we might have the impression that we are in our classroom with the children. This is an illusion. We are in the classroom with the children *and their angels*—at the very least. They, too, have something to add to the lesson—and very valuable it is when we manage to allow it to manifest. When we succeed in really allowing a lesson to flow, it becomes musical. This is the sound-ether manifesting within the flow of the lesson. Music has a huge number of elements: tones, intervals, rhythms, beats, scales, major chords, minor chords, and modulations. A composition uses only a limited number of these elements, and yet a minuet or sonata has something over and above all the individual parts—the indefinable music itself, within which all

parts are raised to a greater symphony. Music happens in a successful lesson which truly flows; it sings.

The Grounded Lesson

As with the flow of the lesson, there are two sides to a grounded lesson. The flow of the lesson has the water element and the water-ether at work within it; one relates to the fluidity of the lesson, the other is the magical, musical, angelic, "chemistry" of the water-ether. Likewise, the grounded lesson contains the twin aspects of element and ether.

Stones are firm; they do not run through our hands like water when we grasp them. The earth element is cohesive; it holds together. The good earth supports us and bears our weight. Ensuring the earth element within our lessons means being grounded ourselves—we are substantial, practical, ego-endowed citizens of the earth. We know what we are about and act accordingly.

Groundedness, if we can use such a word, differs from fluidity in that it is formatively and structurally cohesive within itself. It is rock versus river. A river flows—but it needs banks within which to flow! Similarly, our lesson "flows within banks"; it has firmness and cohesion.

But a living organism, such as our physical body, is cohesive too—but without being hard and fixed. Plants, for instance, are not hard like rocks, and yet they do not flow away like water. Organisms preserve boundaries; they maintain their wholeness. Likewise, a lesson has clear boundaries; it, too, is cohesive within itself and maintains its own "body," its own integrity. Within the successful lesson lies a force which brings boundaries; beautiful, harmonious boundaries like those of the human form. We bear this force within us. In anthroposophy we call it the life ether. Here I am calling it the earth-ether. Having the earth ether at work means that the lesson is a single organism. It has completeness. As a consequence, the children come away feeling whole, that they gain something concrete and substantial from our lessons.

Being grounded is crucial—especially in eurythmy. While it is wonderful to be angelic in eurythmy, we must also bear in mind that the children are not here to learn to live in heaven. They are here to live on earth, to be human. Thus, we must have our feet on the ground and guide our lessons purposefully with

focused determination. We must know how to bring the children through right process, to carry them through a viable series of steps competently. We must be practical and capable as a teacher and know how to handle a group of children. This cannot be the case, for instance, if we call on other teachers to be present to keep the children in line while doing eurythmy. This is not being grounded and standing fully on one's own two feet as an ego being. Nor is it the right picture for the children to have of adults (or eurythmy).

There are other aspects, too. For instance, if we happen to be ill-prepared, or inwardly off balance, then the lesson can easily feel anchorless. Even if it appears to be going well outwardly, we feel it to be drifting "at sea." And drifting at sea is not the same as flowing in the moment; one is active, the other not. A grounded lesson does not drift; it is resolute; it provides something tangible to the students. We have to be prepared on the inside as well as the outside.

A subtler aspect lies in our gestures. We must pay attention to the "character" of our gestures; this grounds and individuates them, giving the children something to grasp; it makes gesture substantial. This aspect of eurythmic gesture is discussed further in a later chapter.

Atmosphere

A key word in our lessons is "atmosphere." Although a nebulous term, atmosphere is instantly recognizable when present—or not. Atmosphere renders the students susceptible to eurythmy—something not always easily achieved in our fast-paced, technological culture. On a practical level, our ability to create the right mood can be greatly enhanced through the architecture and ambiance of our room. Most of us, however, make-do with less than perfect classrooms, but even cosmetic changes, such as the use of colored cloth, or strategically placed plants or flowers, will make a big difference to our lesson's atmosphere.

When we have done all we can in caring for the physical space, we can then ask ourselves how to create atmosphere through our own effort. The problem is that "atmosphere" is not a ponderable item. It is imponderable; it is "in the air." But there are things we can consider.

Firstly, there is the soul of the teacher. If he or she "wonders at beauty," this will be a step in the right direction. Then there are the children. They, too, bring their soul condition to the lessons and add to the atmosphere. Then both teacher's soul and the children's souls are there "in the air" of the lesson. So, really, in the end, "atmosphere" is space, the space between the teacher and the children. Atmosphere is relationship. Atmosphere is relationship "in the air." It is the imponderable soul living in the air.

Atmosphere is the air we breathe, figuratively, at least, in our lessons. And good air is healthy and health-giving to breathe, and this, if for no other reason, is why we should strive to cultivate atmosphere in, and for, our lessons.

Aftereffects of a Good Lesson

There are two basic kinds of aftereffects to a healthy lesson. In one, we sense an in-streaming mood permeating the children, and they display an inner satisfaction and wholeness of being which can be quite intense. The class gives the impression of digesting a meal—which is of little surprise because that is what they have just been given. Eurythmy is real "substance," and the children need a moment to assimilate it in quietness. A palpable atmosphere is present; if someone enters the classroom at this time, they often remark on how calm and mellow the children appear, and we may get reports from the teachers who follow as to their quietness and inwardness.

Ideally we will have picked up on this effect early enough to give the students a few minutes of digestion time. We can do this by having the children sit quietly in the circle at the end of the lesson, or delaying their exit by writing notes in our teaching journal. When they are in this mood, they will sit silently or have a quiet conversation with their neighbor.

In reality, however, this effect tends to sneak up from behind, and only shows itself after the end of the lesson proper. It arises as a complementary image which only reveals itself when we *stop* what we are doing, thus allowing the counter-image to assert itself. This is why a brief coda of quiet is so necessary at the end of our lessons.

The other aftereffect is an out-streaming mood filled with lightness. The children are hardly able to contain themselves

for sheer vigorous life. Their eyes sparkle, and they verily skip out of the lesson whistling and singing to their hearts content. The class is filled with strength and joie de vivre. Again there is the impression of having given them a meal, but now that they have had it they are rearing to go.

These opposite effects, though not uncommon, are not the norm with respect to the class as a whole. Usually there is a mix of the two reactions amongst the children, depending on temperament and personality. Although one aftereffect streams upwards and the other streams downwards, in both cases the children are living in the rhythmical part of their being and stream inwards or outwards from there. We have brought the children into breathing, into their soul center, and this is what gives them such satisfaction and joy.

In 1924 Rudolf Steiner, in replying to a question by Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, made the thought-provoking statement that "nutrition as it is today does not supply the strength necessary for manifesting the spirit in physical life. A bridge can no longer be built from thinking to will, and will to action. Food plants no longer contain the forces people need for this."[2] Having seen its effects, I hold it as a thought that eurythmy contains forces that people, and especially children, need for manifesting the spirit in physical life. Eurythmy really is alchemical in the sense that it is able to bring about transformative processes within the human being.

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[2] Quoted from an article by E. Pfeiffer *New Directions in Agriculture.* Published in *A Man Before Others: Rudolf Steiner Remembered,* Rudolf Steiner Press.

The Teacher

The Teacher and the Teaching

O chestnut-tree, great-rooted blossomer,
Are you the leaf, the blossom or the bole?
O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
How can we know the dancer from the dance?
– from *Among School Children*
W.B.Yeats

Just as little as we can "know the dancer from the dance" can we separate the teacher from the teaching. Teaching is an inner activity which streams out into the world. Children, fresh from the heavenly world, absorb as much of our inner being as they do of our outer actions and words. In the ideal act of teaching there is a perfect consonance between inner and outer deed —as the story about Ghandi, recounted in a later chapter, so clearly shows.

Here we touch on an aspect of the dual nature of teaching—the development of self and the development of others. That is, to bring the children a step further in their development requires an act of self-growth on the teacher's part. And the truest form of self-growth is one which is directed not to oneself, but to the selfless furtherance of the development of the other. It is one of those paradoxical laws of life with which we are continually confronted. In the end, teaching is about the loss of the "little self" and the search for the higher being within our students and ourselves.

In one respect, teaching is a form of listening, a listening with the heart, and the more we cultivate this aspect of ourselves, the greater our ability to bring forth what is necessary. Eurythmists who are teachers are in a doubly blessed position, because not

only does teaching demand a selfless listening, but eurythmy itself is a listening activity brought over into movement and gesture. We pour our whole listening activity into the music or speech, and, in a Goethean sense, draw forth the movements and gestures divined within. We feel uncomfortable when we see a eurythmist who is not intently listening to what is being spoken or played when they perform. We have the impression that the head is severed from the rest of the body. When this happens, the eurythmy ceases to be a creative act of revelation and becomes a series of movements dictated by rote. Likewise, we feel discomfort when observing a teacher who is not listening to the heartbeat of the class. They become a talking head separated from the essence of the lesson. This is easier said than done, of course. It takes a great deal of courage to really listen to a class, without preconception, without prejudgment, and to act out of what is alive in the moment.

Towards an Imagination of the Inner Stance of the Teacher

When we engage a group of children successfully, when our inner awareness is in harmony with the being of the children, we find ourselves, quite naturally, shifting between different modes of being. It is not the case that our approach remains constant and unchanging. Some situations demand a long-term approach, others an instant and forceful response. Over time we discern patterns emerging with respect to how we approach and engage the children.

There are eight stances which we need to cultivate in our pedagogical life. They are no mere figures of speech, and they can shape themselves into quite concrete pictures. They are modes of consciousness in a very real sense. We place our consciousness within them, and from there our actions proceed. Each is an attitude, a way of being, a perspective, a stance. Four are more outwardly visible in the classroom, and four retain a more inward nature.

To the outer four belong the attitude of the Farmer, the way of the Merchant, the gesture of the Hunter, and the stance of the Warrior.

The Farmer

The farmer loves his meadows and fields. He loves the animals under his care and has a deep and abiding sympathy with all living things. He lives within the weather, the soil, the plants, and the seasons. He gazes over his fields and sees not only what is there before his eyes, but bears within his consciousness the knowledge that three years previously a field of wheat grew here in this field before him, and two years ago one of potatoes. Now the field lies fallow, basking in the sun. The farmer sees what will occupy this piece of land in coming years, and how, with care, he will be able to steward the soil and maintain its life and health.

The farmer plants trees realizing he will never see them full grown, but knows his actions to be right ones. He is of the earth; he turns the sod one spade at time. He enjoys a good laugh, takes a great interest in the characters, personalities, and happenings on the farm, and does not take himself too seriously —knowing that everything has its time, its place and season, and that he is only one part, one facet, in God's creation.

When he walks, he sways from side to side, and when he stands, his feet seem to extend like roots into the earth. He is old, but hale; the experiences of his father's fathers lie within his bones. Above all he is patient; he bides his time, living one day at a time. His eyes are clear and steady, and when he speaks, his voice is such that the soil itself, the very form of the plants and animals, rivers and stones, live in his words.

The Merchant

The merchant is open to everyone and accepts each person as they are. He deals with people of many kinds; from the laborers in the field to bankers with refined tastes; from seamstresses sewing silk to the mayor's wife who wears it.

Fluidity of being is the essence of his nature—and of his success. He conveys the quality of yielding, but a yielding like water, which flows around rocks, and yet, in the end, sculpts them. He has a flexible personality, remarkably and even mysteriously free from any trace of falseness or insincerity, which allows him to pour himself into—and out of—many situations. While he has absolute integrity, he is able to mold himself to situations in such a way that they turn out best for both his client and his business.

He perceives the interrelatedness of life, and foresees when a seemingly insignificant line of action will create either problems or benefits later in time. He abhors anything which arrests or disturbs the peaceful and commonsense passage of business.

The merchant loves good food, good music, and poetry of refined taste. His eye is calm and a beautiful blue color. He has fine feet and delicate hands. They are soft to the touch, but surprisingly firm. He is supple in gesture, pleasingly well-rounded in form, and moves with a fluid, slightly lemniscatory gait. His voice has a silvery tone which is relaxed, yet gently persuasive.

The Hunter

The hunter lives in the forest. He knows the ways of wild animals and finds domestication slightly distasteful. He is in his element when tracking and stalking, reading from the signs the correct behavior of his prey. He has a tremendous respect for his quarry, for his knowledge is real and hard won. His whole being is one of expectancy and seeking. He moves quietly and unseen, knowing that not only must he achieve outer silence, but inner stillness as well. He must not only find his prey, but also listen for the moment when the being of the animal is ready to relinquish his body. He also knows that if he does not still his inner voice, if he pays too much attention to the animal, it will hear his thoughts and flee. This ability to pay attention not only to the outer, but also to the inner that arises out of the outer, gives him an uncanny sense of timing, as if something speaks to him silently. When stalking and tracking, his senses are fully awake, heightened, absorbing every detail. His outer senses read the tiniest of signs, while his inner senses read these signs imaginatively. Hunting is a mystery training, and it has prepared him for the inner attitude needed to pursue real knowledge. When he shoots his arrow, it finds its mark. It has been calculated carefully, and he has the patience to await the right moment.

The hunter wears soft, moccasin-like shoes and walks on the supple balls of his feet. His clothes are likewise supple and silent. His gait grips the earth with swift sureness. His fingers and hands are long, handsome, and capable of crafting beautiful tools and weapons. He works alone and values solitude, but will work with others for a common cause.

He has developed the capacity for pouring himself totally into what he is doing, for only in this way can he gain practical knowledge of how to act rightly. Competent and self-reliant, he rarely speaks except to teach and guide his sons. When he does speak, it is brief and to the point, capturing the essence of the subject.

The Warrior

The warrior has the capacity to do what is needed. He is prepared to act with courage and directness when he sees a wrong taking place. He has a streak of iron in his being and places the good and his duty higher than himself. As a result he is prepared to lay everything, even his life, on the line. He is not someone to be treated casually, though the use of humor will cause him to sheath his sword. What strikes you about him, even when he sits quietly, is his capacity; his sheer capacity for action gives him authority and power.

His thighs and calves are powerful, his arms swarthy, and his fingers short, blunt, and strong. When aroused, he moves from a center below the diaphragm. When he moves this way, we instantly understand what is meant by a Mars type. The quality of his voice is determined, somewhat rough, and when need be, commanding to the point of being compelling. He is not the sort of person we would wish to come to blows with, because he will waste no time in going for the kill. When he displays his capacity to fight, he stands firmly with his feet gripping the ground, giving the impression of a coiled spring ready to act in whichever direction the situation demands.

These four postures or attitudes we use to greater or lesser degree throughout the lessons. They are forms of consciousness and ways of being which create an underpinning to our work in the lessons. To give concrete examples of how these pictures can be read:

We stand within the farmer-teacher when we view the organic totality of childhood and see: "Ah, this is a particular phase of human development. Now, if I pursue such and such an activ-

ity in the present, it will bear fruit in later times." The farmer consciousness can enter into a school and see the oats and barley growing in a class where presently there are too many weeds.

The children feel secure with the farmer. His age and wisdom sees through their silliness, and they know that he perceives their real being. Even if they do not always understand his actions, they learn to trust the inherent rightness of his deeds, and this quality they admire and value.

The merchant-teacher manages things in such a way that the class runs smoothly. He will not necessarily get stuck in the fact that Jane insists on bringing attention to herself through minor misbehaviors, but will blithely ignore her misdemeanors and continue with the lesson. The merchant has no difficulty with the variety of children and their different needs. He is able to meet and accept them all on their own terms in such a way that the class functions cohesively. This is the merchant's mark. It is a highly eurythmic attribute, as disparate elements must constantly be permeated with an uniting wholeness. If a conflict arises, he instinctively sees the best solution and accomplishes this end with the minimum of fuss.

Yielding is also characteristic of the merchant-teacher, allowing us to fall and tumble without losing our true footing. Yielding is applied in cases where rules will not bear fruit, and it is best to circumvent a situation and deal with it later. A classic conundrum in which we may find ourselves is when we mistakenly apply authority, instead of wisdom, to a difficulty. Having gotten ourselves thus far entangled, and realizing our mistake, we are at a crossroads. If we take the route of applying more authority, we will fail—especially if we stoop to self-authority and get personally involved. We will succeed if we simply yield and deal with the situation outside the class.

The hunter-teacher has the capacity to see the goal and to achieve it—sometimes despite adverse terrain and dense bush. The children sense his directness and will follow him even if they do not always know his goal. Sometimes they get a shock when they realize that they have gained a new skill which seemingly crept up on them. In truth, the hunter-teacher has been stalking this skill with expert craft. The hunter-teacher also has the ability to await the right moment, and when the time is ripe, to strike instantly. The Eskimos hunted seals by going to a breathing hole

in the ice, kneeling down beside it, raising their harpoon, and then sitting utterly motionless. They could hold this pose for hours without stirring, and if a seal surfaced, instantly strike the blow. Every teacher needs to develop this capacity of awaiting the right moment.

The hunter-teacher also knows that if he wishes to teach something, and holds this thought with the right inner attitude, then the right circumstance will come to meet him. When the hunter-teacher is being effective, the lessons can be very exciting.

To the warrior-teacher belongs the quality of presence. Without this element it is not possible to teach, and a good teacher is instantly recognizable by the way they take command of a class. It can be wonderful to watch such a teacher enter the classroom and infuse it with their presence without saying a word. Presence is a tough thing to define, but we all recognize its existence—or the lack thereof.

The warrior-teacher seldom emerges in full battle gear with sword unsheathed. If the farmer, the merchant, and the hunter are doing their proper work, his presence is rarely necessary. Sometimes, however, influences are brought into the lesson from outside which must be dealt with forthrightly. When the warrior-teacher does fully emerge, however, it can be a bit of a shock to the children, because they see an ego capacity displayed which is not yet within their power. He is the one, for instance, who brings home the message when the absolute rules are broken, for instance: "You will *never* deliberately throw a rod with all your force directly at someone."

Usually the warrior-teacher need only display his capacity for action via body language and expression. This often acts, without recourse to words, as a warning whose meaning is rarely mistaken. If a student tests this warning, the teacher will need to act instantly. A basic reality of discipline in teaching is: *If you act, act effectively*. If you fail to act effectively, then the children will perceive your weakness and behave disrespectfully—for the simple reason that their ideal adult has ego presence.

Each of these pictures also assumes female forms. It would be a gross mistake to see one as better or stronger. They are pictures, a clothing for deeper realities which we may all recognize. The male and the female imaginations complement one another, and, from my experience, we are weakest in those elements which

belong to our opposite sex. In observing good teachers at work, we will see that they have been able to reach into themselves and create a balance. The female counterparts are the Earth Mother, the Nurse or Healer, the Huntress, and the Female Warrior.

The Earth Mother

The Earth Mother embodies the living qualities of the earth and is the soul of maternal ripeness. She has arisen out of the forces which gave birth to the earth and the creatures upon it. When she gazes within, she knows that what lies within her body finds its counterpart in the world of nature. Her memory reaches back into primeval ages, and she knows the becoming of all beings. As a result, her love and care for the world are boundless. She forms a counterpoint to the farmer who gives structure and form to nature, while she is the one who brings forth that which needs to be structured and formed. We sense that she would become wild and formless were it not for her husband. Likewise, the farmer could become over-formed were it not for the Earth Mother.

All animals, even wild ones, approach her and know they are safe. In her presence the plants grow strong and vigorous. Her garden is a veritable paradise, and whenever she walks within it, the flowers bend toward her, the wind plays about her head, and the bird song grows sweeter.

She is ample, the image of roundness. She has eyes so deep and warm that they seem to embrace our whole being. Her hands are plump and soft. We feel that if she were to hold an ill animal, it would be healed before our eyes. Were she to hold some seeds, we would not be surprised if they started sprouting. Like her husband, she laughs easily and heartily, her voice rich and mellow. The sounds of her speech, though gentle, can be quite extraordinary, as they are imbued with primal forces that move us to the core of our being.

The Nurse or Healer

The healer has an utter disregard for all social status. To her all people are equal. She sees that all have a body born of God and a sin born of the Fall. Because of her power all people hold her in respect, though some feel a certain fear, as they know she perceives their weaknesses—otherwise how could she heal?

Their fear is their own weakness, however, for she never judges the human condition, but merely seeks to make whole what has been sundered.

She observes the world impartially. She holds herself open, and what comes to meet her she absorbs and thereby knows. Her ability to create living, mobile, pictures allows her to enter into and find the healing correspondence between illness and the world of plants. She understands the essential health of the plant world, and how their forces can be used to renew life. When she enters a sickroom, her presence pervades it with a quiet calm. Even the specter of death flees from her patients, as she can intuitively impart her understanding that death is a part of life, and that the soul must eventually return to its first home.

She is a quiet person, with a peaceful smile and a cool touch. Her voice is fluid, and when she is speaking, gives the impression that she is listening for something beyond our hearing. She is gently rounded and beautiful, but not in the sense which would arouse men's desire. Men have a natural respect and love for her because she carries qualities to which they often have little access.

She is happiest with the children in her village. She sings with a voice which contains the waters of life and never tires of telling the most wonderful stories. The children crowd around her and love her deeply. If they do something wrong in her presence, a quiet, inward look towards them is all that is needed to call their better nature forth.

The Huntress

The huntress is a far more elusive figure than the hunter. He hunts and stalks in the outer world, while she hunts within the human soul. The huntress, moreover, hunts by night, while the hunter hunts by day. Her task is not so much to stalk skills as to bring about, in a silent, unobtrusive manner, conditions which allow the wild and shy animals to come forth. In short, the huntress moves more from the periphery, the hunter more from the center. She never confronts an animal directly—this is the hunter's task. While he sees clearly during the day, she has a highly developed capacity to listen during the night. She moves and countermoves by listening to the inner being of the other.

She has long, dark hair and dark eyes. Her form is lean

without being unfeminine. Her gestures are lithe and strong, and she is capable of traveling great distances. She loves well-crafted objects, and her clothing is simply, but beautifully, adorned. She often goes barefoot, or wears moccasins, allowing her to move with complete silence. Like all the female imaginations, she has a tremendously warm heart. She is, however, very silent and difficult to know, as she places so much of her own personality in the background in order to create the silence into which she can listen.

The Female Warrior

The Female Warrior is a divine battler. She is less concerned with outer order and obedience than with rightness of soul. She will vigorously oppose any form of denigration of another human being. She openly address wrongs which live on a silent and subtle level and which others might avoid discussing. Her fearlessness acts in such a way on those about her that their consciousness is raised. This is often a painful process for those concerned, but in the end they recognize the rightness of her actions.

Unlike the male warrior, who has a definite physical image, she is less defined by body and spirit than by soul and spirit. She can appear in many forms and shapes, her physical image changing with the circumstances. There is no mistaking, however, her penetrating eyes. Only one who stands on the ground of moral purity is able to look steadily into them and not flinch. Like the warrior, we recognize her by her stance. She appears rooted and unmovable when aroused, and her determination is formidable.

Overall, the female imaginations are less immediately obvious in the classroom because they lie in the unspoken realm. Their essence lies not so much in what is done, than in how it is done.

The Earth Mother can be found whenever nature breathes through stories and tales, or, in eurythmy, in the gestures for the consonants. When our stories and gestures are formed in this way imaginations arise in the children and exude a tremendous

fullness into the room. Clearly, the Earth Mother frequents the young grades, but she can be just as necessary in high school. To develop her, we must live into nature as an image of divine creative forces. I once heard a well-known eurythmist describing her visit to a place with strong volcanic forces. There she realized: "Ah, that's how you do it." Her artistic nature perceived in the extraordinary landscape a picture of the particular way certain consonants and poems were to be done. This is true of everything within nature, large and small, and it can be a potent teacher.

The Healer is desperately needed in the classroom at every age level because of the damage incurred through civilization. She can give new forces and wholeness to what had been eroded. The Huntress is much needed in the adolescent years, because without her we can never call forth the permeating of gesture with soul from the shy and "wild" children.

The Female Warrior steps to the fore in high school as the darker aspects of the astral body sometimes come out in the lessons. In particular, the boys may make sexually disparaging remarks and innuendoes towards the girls which need to be countered in a way that brings about a raising of consciousness.

Eurythmy and the Eurythmist

When I began teaching, I naturally carried my training with me. I soon learned that there were many aspects of my training which could not be directly carried over into pedagogy. There needs to be a transformation on a subtle level. We need to balance, and have command over, two opposite tendencies—one which is center oriented, and the other periphery oriented. One is more earth directed and incarnating, the other more heaven directed and excarnating.

At risk of being tarred and feathered and hung upside-down by my veil, I am going to say that eurythmy trainings are too much on the loosening, periphery side. But what is possibly a correct one-sidedness for adults cannot be applied to children. As adults, in our training, we engage in a process of loosening ourselves, of dissolving into the space around us. If this is brought into the classroom, however, the children are presented with an adult who has a tendency to stream upward and dissolve into the periphery around them. *This is the opposite picture to that of the*

child. They are moving from the periphery towards their body. Their whole striving is directed towards the earth and not away from it. We must learn to teach in such a way so as to satisfy the needs of the *incarnating* child. This does not mean negating the outward flow to the periphery, but adding to it the inward flow from periphery to body.

Steiner noted that in teaching children we must pay attention to the "Character."[3] While this applies specifically to the third element within a gesture, Character does not apply only to sound gestures. Character is found in all aspects of eurythmy; it is that element which incarnates and individuates the gesture. Without this bringing-into-something-definite, our students will not be inwardly met. To present children with nothing but Movement and Feeling, no matter how beautiful, will make them uneasy and lead to discipline problems — especially with the boys. They need to take hold of something, and Movement and Feeling, of themselves, are not concrete.

In my experience all good eurythmists, be they therapists, teachers, or performers, grasp what Character really means. Indeed, without this grasp their eurythmy would be nondescript, and, quite literally, Character-less. Steiner chose his words carefully, and attention needs to be paid to this word. To translate into children's terminology: Character means interesting and true; Character-less means boring and wishy-washy. Children are interested in teachers who, above all, are grounded and stand fully in life and their art.

How can we gain clearer insight into Character? We can take the gesture for consonant "B" and move through its colors. First comes the yellow Movement; it streams outwards, and our whole being brightens. Then, from the periphery, the blue Feeling envelopes and surrounds us. Playing with this interaction can be a wonderful exercise. Allow the in-streaming blue to be held in check by the radiating yellow. Do not allow the colors to mix, but experience how through their opposite natures yellow and blue balance each other so that a skin or sheath arises. Our arms come to rest in this perfect balance. If we were to take a photograph of this gesture and show it to someone, they would say that this was the gesture for "B." They would be wrong, however, for this

[3] All gestures have underlying color experiences which generally unfold in sequences of three. Steiner most frequently, though not exclusively, called them Movement, Feeling and Character.

gesture has only reached the outer position of "B," but not the gesture of "B." What is lacking is that nothing has been *grasped*. "B" is the consonant of "taking hold." We must exert ourselves inwardly, down into the muscles, and go the third step and add the red Character. Character means to become something, and until this element is added, the gesture remains only a Movement and a Feeling towards……. but without actually arriving.

Beyond the individual gestures we also need to adhere to the spirit of what Character implies. Do our lessons have Character? Have we grasped the essence of a piece of music so that its Character is visible, or are we merely choosing convenient tones and intervals? Is the choreography for a poem true to its inner dynamic; have we Characterized it correctly? All these questions we should ask ourselves if we are going to stay true to our task.

This search for Character leads to color in our eurythmy. Because we are striving to find the uniqueness in every sound, poem, or music piece, Character leads to variety and personality. Children and teens love the spice of life, and since eurythmy is infinitely various, how can we go wrong?

Another, possibly sensitive, issue is our speaking voice. Whatever you do, avoid the extremes of the silken-soft, pregnant-paused, slow-motion-replay manner of speaking. It is enough to drive any self-respecting child bonkers—especially the boys. They find it positively weird. Of course, we must alter our normal speaking voice for eurythmy, but at all cost do not become a caricature. Just as we strive for Character, color, and variety in our eurythmy, so, too, in the voice. Each poem has its own tempo, be it *largo* or *presto*. Each has its own unique color, musicality, and architecture. Few of us are great maestros of the voice, but we must avoid the cardinal sins of weirdness, monotony, and color-dullness.

Overall, we might characterize our stance vis-à-vis eurythmy as natural, relaxed, and down-to-earth. If we are free of false reverence, full of life, and do not take ourselves too seriously, we will find that what we have to bring is very welcome in the classroom.

To the New Teacher

An excellent training, educational courses, and pedagogical books are only supports in the process of becoming a teacher.

They are valueless if we do not have the ability to take command of a class of children and make a connection to them. The initial period is a trial of worthiness, and often also a trial by fire. Eurythmy ranks among the most difficult subjects to teach. Therefore, expect an intense period of learning and testing—as well as remembering that the worst comes at the beginning.

Realizing this, and knowing that we are going to learn the most from our mistakes, we should not judge ourselves too harshly in the first term, or even first year. Certainly, review each lesson to see where improvements can be made, but hold your overall personal review on a monthly basis. Reviewing shorter periods of time is not really of value as even the best teachers in the world have lousy weeks. They know from experience that this is not the end of the world.

In the first days and weeks we can be nervous, our voice uncertain, and our hands sweaty. We know the children are cognizant of our condition, and our lack of inner peace merely adds to their lack of outer peace. Speaking from experience, we might even find ourselves praying to God to give us strength before that wild grade two enters the room. Despite everything that may come our way, however, bear in mind that the difficulties are good for us. We will be better, stronger, and more mature if we work our way through to recognizing the gift we are being granted. One of the first signs of this gift is a sense of growing together with the classes. Our good times and rough times are also their good and rough times. After a few months even our worst students will greet us with a smile on the playground. This is the beginning of a working relationship.

I hope this picture does not seem too difficult and testing. If we are at all interested in children, wonderful experiences will also come. Both in and out of classroom there will be many, many times when the sun shines upon us. Children fresh from the heavenly world, with their aliveness and heartfelt spontaneity, act upon us as a blessing.

Because eurythmists expend tremendous amounts of life-forces in the initial year or two, it is important that they be protected. Being over-extended in our lesson load, or through too many outside expectations, easily leads to burnout. Eurythmy is, in many respects, a future art, drawing on parts of ourselves that are not fully mature. I have never met a eurythmist who has

not experienced exhaustion during their training, even though, on an outer level, there would seem to be no solid reason; the same is true for teaching eurythmy. Ideally, the college of teachers will view the novice teacher as someone who is going to be involved in Waldorf education for the rest of their lives, and will assume the responsibility of making the first couple of years of teaching a positive one. To this end a mentorship can be crucial. Normally, the school assigns a mentor to a new teacher. If you find that this arrangement is less than it might be, then actively seek someone else out. Find out who is the best, accessible teacher and communicate with them. They may not always be someone we like personally—the best teachers are always busy, and often people who call a spade a spade—but this is what we need, so keep trying.

In addition, note that I said *ideally* the college of teachers will act responsibly towards you. The reality, however, is that this is not always the case. This is not done through ill intention, but through lack of understanding. Many teachers, especially those acting as a group, simply do not know *concretely* that there is a *real* connection between doing eurythmy, the life forces, and our physical and psychological health. *Therefore, be self-responsible*. Do *not* be a prima donna and demand special dispensations, but *do* know your limits, and, while gladly stretching to the limits, do not go beyond them.

It is also important to maintain some level of artistic activity. This should be supported by the school and includes working time with a pianist—and a speaker if available. The growth a class teacher undergoes while taking a class through the grades is recognized as an essential aspect of the educational process. For subject teachers, however, this opportunity does not always happen de facto as we teach all the grades all the time. Therefore, make room for it to occur, not only for personal growth and satisfaction, but also in order to bring eurythmy to the children. Regardless of our level of ability, when children see us engaged in our art form, it makes a deep impression. They gain respect for us as an individual pursuing our discipline in a way that is only possible for an adult.

The Children and the Teacher

The Kingdoms

As we incarnate, we bring with us impulses out of the spiritual world that are connected with our individuality. These impulses into life do not appear instantly—after all, little of the nurse or social reformer is visible in the baby in the cradle. Step by step, preparations have to be made, capacities formed, and tendencies nourished, before we can bring our individuality to light. On our path to maturity, while always retaining our essential humanity, we pass through conditions that can be related to the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms before we reach our own, specifically human, kingdom. These stages have a direct bearing on our manner of teaching.

The mineral world is characterized by its passivity. It is completely open and externalized, exposed to all that occurs in its environment and retaining an exact imprint of any forces acting upon it. A piece of clay or rock which is pushed or gouged bears the imprint of whatever is stamped onto it. In the mineral kingdom everything lies on the outside, behaving as mere body.

For the first seven years or so, the child is in a condition similar to the mineral kingdom. The young child is imprinted upon by its environment and is quite defenseless in the face of its influences. Children are, so to speak, all body, and their bodily senses are wide open, accepting the world unequivocally as it occurs around them. Only at a later point is the child truly able to bring inner resources that are capable of transforming what comes towards it. Thus, in kindergarten, we do not teach per se; *who we are* is what is most deeply absorbed. Precisely because of the child's "mineral" state of openness are they most imprinted by our individuality, personality and the environment

we prepare for them. The ideal is that our actions and gestures proceed out of our higher nature, that everything in the young child's environment is indeed worthy of assimilation.

The plant kingdom lies a step above the mineral kingdom. While also having a passive side, plants go a step further by assimilating and transforming their environment. They assimilate the surrounding minerals, water, air, and sunlight, creating a huge variety of forms not found in the rocks and crystals. The plant's forms and whole manner of being are an expression of life—pure, innocent life.

Wild plants grow in an environment naturally suited to their needs. What surrounds them gives them all they need for healthy growth. When we cultivate plants, however, we continue the work of nature by adding a human dimension. Cultivated plants depend on the environment created for them by the gardener, and they flourish when he brings about the right conditions. The gardener does not have to make the plant grow and shape itself, but he knows that if he takes care of the soil, supplies the right nutrients, ensures a healthy flora and fauna on the farm, in short, if he creates the right environment for the plant, then the plant will thrive.

When we teach children, we also are "cultivating" them and continuing the work of the gods. From about grade one through grade seven, the children live in a plant-like state. They assimilate their surrounding world and transform it. Never content with merely allowing it to remain as is, children take their environment up into a sprouting, growing, burgeoning inner world. The inner world of the child between seven and fourteen is full of living, mobile pictures, and, like the plants, the innocence of their inner life is what is most characteristic.

While "who we are" remains important for these grades, the main feature in our pedagogy is to bring the right "substances" for the children's development. If we create the right environment and atmosphere, bring the appropriate pictures, stories and exercises, the children will take these up into their being and thrive. This is why teaching eurythmy at this age is so wonderful. All we need is a green thumb and the common sense not to step on the plants that are growing quite happily by themselves.

Animals have greater independence than the plant. Unlike the rooted plant, the animal can move away from, or toward, a particular environment. They have sentience and mobility, live with pleasure and pain, and are instinctively aware of their needs and how they can be met.

Animals exhibit passions and drives which are quite foreign to the plant world. If we look at the soil and the plants in an animal's surroundings, we cannot find the source of these drives. Something is making an appearance from within, from an unseen world. We can sense how the form of the animal is the expression of a particular soul force or drive. In this sense, they are higher than plants, but we can also see how they are trapped because they have specialized themselves through bringing only one particular set of drives to expression.

From grade seven or eight to grade twelve, our students share qualities with the animal world. Like the animal, an unseen world makes itself felt in a host of ways, and parents and teachers are at times hardly able to recognize the golden child they knew in grade five. The human child, however, has one more stage to achieve than the animal. The impulses which make themselves felt out of their inner world are not confined to those associated with reproduction and are of a higher nature. The young adult does not immediately plunge into specialized activities and forms like the animal. Sometimes dim and tentative, sometimes transparently clear, these higher impulses are always present in the soul of the teenager, and those who know them well begin to sense the dawning personality, talents, and life motif of the individual. Because of this, it is no longer sufficient to bring predigested content to our youth. We must give them opportunities and capacities to explore their own environment, in order that they might find what they "instinctively" surmise within themselves.

In this kingdom of the child's development, our teaching can no longer be centered around bringing things to the children; rather, it is focused on giving them the ability to explore their own environment in such a way that the creative impulses living within them are able to find expression. Especially in the arts, we must lay open before them the whole world of possibilities. They must experience the full range of artistic expression, as well as explore what rings true for their own interest and development.

By grade seven or eight the children themselves must have begun the task of exploring their world. The insightful subject and class teachers will have laid the groundwork for this ability in the younger grades while the children are still working out of authority, so that the *habit of creative exploration* is established. By high school, this habit can be transformed into an exploration of their individual impulses vis-à-vis the world in a supportive environment. If this is not cultivated, then the next phase, the truly human kingdom, may be experienced as tremendously difficult, as the capacities for developing meaning and purpose in their own lives have not been cultivated. These considerations present many questions as there are multiple factors which must converge: appropriate forms of guidance, teaching method, school structure, scheduling, and subject matter.

In addition there stand the words of Rudolf Steiner admonishing us to teach prophetically. There is such a thrust in our society toward specific forms and specialization. We are too eager for teenagers to "be something" before they have even arrived at the true, ego-endowed, human kingdom and are able to explore specializations out of their own individuality. Somehow we must meet the impulses our youth bring with them and give them a training ground. Herein lies a double task. Firstly, we must create pedagogical methods which develop capacities in students which remain at the prototypic stage. These capacities form the basis for abilities our students will need in their future, but which we cannot foresee. Secondly, we must develop forms of schooling able to meet the specific impulses living in each individual. At the heart of a general methodology, the arts play a major role as they develop protean capacities capable of adaptation and transformation. In a rapidly changing world, the ability to meet life and work creatively is at a premium, and is liable to remain so for the foreseeable future. On the other hand, specific capacities need to be developed through honoring the natural interests of the students and intuitively guiding those who have difficulty finding their own way.

In practical terms this means moving away from teaching high school students as though some large (though never specified) amount of knowledge has to be accumulated, or cater to parental pressures that their child will (whether they want to

or not) follow in their footsteps into college. We must allow our students to feel a sense of ownership in what they create. For eurythmists this is, in principle, quite simple. We allow the students to be creatively engaged in the process of building up eurythmy pieces and in their performance. To execute these principles within much of our present schooling structures is another question to which there is no easy answer. I am not the only one who feels that our high school schedules have become overloaded and unyielding. A space needs to be formed which allows the students time to be creatively engaged. In addition, what they create needs an appropriate time and setting in which to be performed. Each school situation is unique, but the above picture implies a high school steeped in the arts, which cultivates a creative social and festival life, and which actively makes the time and space available for the arts to come to meaningful expression.

Kindergarten

Teaching kindergarten and the younger grades often appears easier, and a preference for this age group is sometimes voiced because of this. In reality, however, the human being is no less complex at the age of four or six, than at fourteen or sixteen. What *is* easier is that the children are still living imitatively, and, as a result, accept our teaching, whether good or bad, in the mood of "the world is good." It is therefore more difficult to discern whether or not our pedagogy is true in these years. If we are a nice person, and in a sing-song voice do eurythmy to $E = MC^2$, young children will gladly follow along with great smiles on their faces. At this age we are God, and God can do no wrong in their eyes.

Children develop so rapidly in their early years that small differences in age make a great difference in the way they behave and relate to eurythmy. They imitate to such a high degree that their kindergarten teacher and their physical and cultural environment are reflected in their whole bearing and being. As a result, such factors as age, sex, number of children, and how they are grouped, is of great significance. A kindergarten group of eighteen children from a country school with a majority of five and six year old boys is radically different from twelve chil-

dren in a city school composed of four and five year olds with a majority of girls.

I once gave a demonstration lesson to a city kindergarten in the eastern United States. It went terribly. I had been teaching in a small country town in western Canada where the children, especially the boys who formed a strong element in our kindergartens, were used to running free and had little fear or shyness around adults. While they did respond to the normal "soft" kindergarten eurythmy, they also loved, and needed, vigorous, strong movement, such as galloping around as horses, and so forth.

The eastern U.S. children had quite a different reaction to me and what I brought. I failed to remember that culture in the East is much more on the antipathy pole, and that, especially in big cities, all strange males are suspect until proven otherwise. As a result, I was not able to establish an immediate connection with these children. They definitely viewed me as an outsider. When I brought the same basic lesson to a school in the western United States, it went wonderfully. Live and learn!

Regardless of any cultural considerations, the basic necessity for teaching very young children is to establish a heart connection, and our best approach is to find what meets the needs of each group. If need be, when first teaching a kindergarten group, spend a couple of mornings assisting their teacher as she goes about her activities. This will go a long way towards building the necessary bridge with the children.

In kindergarten we avoid all traces of ordering the children into fixed groups and forms. What is called for are simple, clear gestures, often repeated and saturated with pictures from the imaginative world. If we can imbue our brief time with them with music, and our speech with musicality, then we are on the right path. The best kindergarten lesson I ever observed was given by a French eurythmist. The children followed her about the room like a school of fish; there was such a oneness between them that it was truly magical. An outline of a kindergarten session is given later in Part Two.

The Twelve Years of School and the Zodiac

The sun moving on its circuit through the zodiac is an archetypal time process. Within any process having a beginning and an end, we find a reflection of the qualities of the zodiac moving

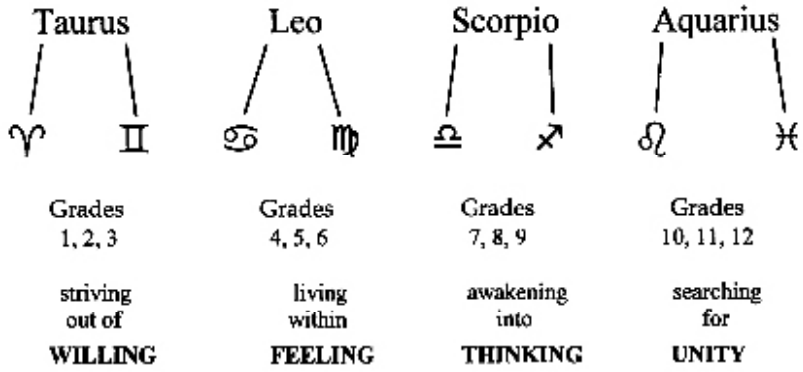
from Aries to Pisces. Its reflection is found in many aspects of our lives, for example, the course of human life from birth (Aries) through to death (Pisces). Or the stages of physically growing up, where we begin as "head" and grow downwards into our limbs. Likewise, in a wonderful way we can experience the twelve signs of the zodiac reflected within the twelve years of school. While this is a qualitative viewpoint having to do with the journey through school, there are also some remarkable parallels between the qualities of the zodiac signs and changes taking place within the body, soul, and spirit of the child during these years. The grade one child, for instance, lives in the mood of Aries, where everything is fresh and spring-like. The grade five child lives in the mood of Leo, governor of the heart. In grade twelve, Pisces, with its quality of the dying of the old and striving towards the new, makes its presence felt.

In the first edition of this book, the above paragraph served as an introduction to this chapter. I had arrived at the views expressed through direct experience. Initially my perceptions came while teaching a broad range of children and working intensively with the zodiac gestures. The twelve grades of school and the twelve signs of the zodiac seemed to me to be a fortuitous coincidence—especially so as this model is followed by many schools not in the Waldorf tradition. On reading Henry Barns' book *A Life for the Spirit—Rudolf Steiner and the Crosscurrents of our Time*, I was surprised when he reports that, in Steiner's day, a twelve year schooling, such as the one he proposed, was not the norm. Furthermore, that Rudolf Steiner had made four preconditions of Molt before accepting the challenge of founding a school based on a spiritual-scientific understanding of child development—one of which was that it be a twelve year schooling.

Clearly, in Steiner's view, the choice of twelve years was not arbitrary, but fundamental. Perhaps this should not surprise us; the number twelve is significant and is found repeatedly in many cultural traditions, as well as within literature on spiritual matters—including anthroposophy—for instance, twelve apostles, twelve Knights of the Round Table, twelve Bodhisattvas, twelve members of a jury, twelve world views or philosophies, to name a few. Twelve contains a wholeness; it is complete in itself, and adding another world view, apostle or Knight of the Round Table would, with respect to quality, merely be repeating a view already represented.

Looking at the curriculum as being intrinsically twelve-fold provides a potential guide for issues related to the Waldorf curriculum. A question close at hand, and which is periodically raised, is whether the role of the class teacher should be approached differently in the eighth grade. It can seem a little out of place to follow seven-year cycles—the birth of the etheric body at age seven, the astral body at fourteen, the ego at twenty-one—and yet have an eight-year cycle for the class teacher. From the point of view of the zodiac, divided as it is into the seven day signs and the five night signs, we see that grade seven is the last of the day signs and grade eight belongs to the night signs along with the high school years. What I am pointing to is that when the students enter grade eight, a fundamental shift occurs and needs to be recognized. This is seldom done, in my experience, and grade eight students, as a consequence, often chafe at the bit, or even leave the school. This is a natural, if instinctive, reaction on their part as they have outgrown the mentality appropriate to the previous seven-year cycle and their developmental needs will not be met if they are treated by their teachers in a mode more suited to a previous stage. This issue will be further discussed when we characterize the relationship between grade eight and Scorpio/Eagle.

The twelve stages the children pass through from Aries to Pisces can be subdivided into four groups, each one centered around one of the four archetypal signs—Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius. Seen from this point of view, the overall correspondence between the zodiac and the path through schooling is even more apparent. In my estimation this grouping into four sets of three is how we actually experience the grades from a qualitative point of view.



This view, in addition to giving an overall perspective of the child vis-à-vis their school years, also allows us to see that four distinct styles of teaching are needed. These different styles, noted in the following diagram, are characterized briefly in the course of the chapter.

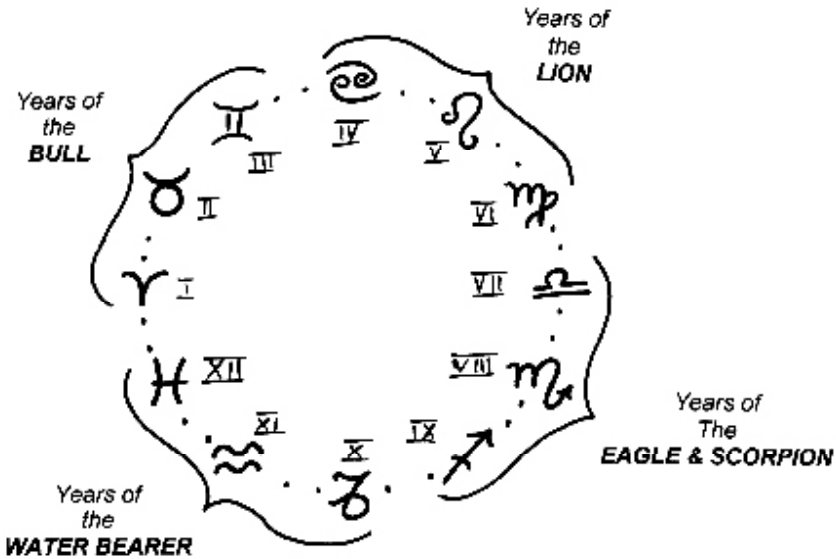
TAURUS
Aries ***Gemini***
Teaching out of knowing-doing

LEO
Cancer ***Virgo***
Teaching out of Leonine mastery

SCORPIO
Libra ***Sagittarius***
Teaching with directed purpose

AQUARIUS
Capricorn ***Pisces***
Teaching toward wholeness

A perception of the correspondence between the zodiac and the grades is an artistic-intuitive one, and, as such, is a direct one. It should be borne in mind that characterizing this relationship, as I attempt below, is perforce not the same as direct perception. Also, it is not possible to deal fully with this subject in this context. Hopefully, however, a clear enough picture will arise in the reader from my description that, should they choose to exercise their own intuitive faculties, they will make this perception their own in the course of working with the children. Further descriptions of the zodiac also follow in later chapters for those unfamiliar with the qualities characteristic of each sign.



The Years of the Bull

The first three grades are very much the childhood phase of school life. In these years the willing-doing element is foremost in eurythmy—and also finds expression in the class teacher's active circle work, moving and stamping the timetables, and so forth. We see to it that the active flow of the lesson predominates, and a sense of life and joy are uppermost. Our teaching is guided by the principle of actively leading the children within the realms of imagination. Through fairy tales, fables and stories, through music and geometry, we lead the children into the world of eurythmic movement in such a way that form arises.

Bringing the children into form, to act and move cohesively as a class, is one of the major tasks in these years. It is at its most intense in grade one—as the exhausted countenances of many grade one class teachers attest. Especially in the first term, the children come to us quite unformed, as they have never been together as a class before. Fresh from the "wilds" of kindergarten, they enter our classroom surrounded by bright radiance. Everything is new and different. They are entering a whole new world with a mixture of awe and expectancy, even a touch of anxiety, as some children are not quite sure what this new world will bring. I always tremble a bit in these first few weeks. I feel like a clumsy giant, whose task is to teach a flock of wildflower fairies how to dance together. I could, of course, use my giant's strength to gather them up and place them where I wish. But this would be wrong, because I would crush not a few in the process. Better that I enter their world and have them willingly dance out of the pictures my words create.

The "bright radiance" surrounding the grade one children as they enter our classroom is that of Aries. Aries is the shining birth sign – "*Arise, oh shining light / Take hold of birth and becoming …*"[4] Traditionally, it belongs to spring time when all is fresh and newly sprouting. The birth of the etheric body is also the birth of new faculties of cognitive perception in the child —one which is thoroughly imbued with feeling. Their awakening feeling-thinking is spring-like and full of tender buds. It is fresh, picture-filled, luminous and innocent—all qualities belonging to Aries.

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[4] From the *Twelve Moods* by Rudolf Steiner, (Mercury Press, Spring Valley, NY 1984); Sun, then Venus, "speaking" in Aries.

The symbolic picture of Aries is a ram, with beautifully curled horns growing out of the forehead. Aries "governs" the form of the head as a whole, and the forehead especially. It is also associated with the Lamb, not just a lamb as an animal, but the Lamb as a symbol for Christ. Christ was resurrected—or reborn—into the etheric world, and thus we can see in the Aries Lamb a picture of Christ reborn in the etheric world. The birth of the etheric body in the child at the age of seven must therefore, it seems to me, be deeply connected with this event.

Taurus, whose symbolic picture is the bull, spreads its influence over this quarter of the zodiac. The bull is an animal which possesses great physical strength, a large, weighty physical body, and a highly developed metabolic-digestive system. This is the exact opposite of the eagle which is found on the opposing side of the zodiac in Scorpio. The eagle has a light body —even its bones are hollow. Everything about the eagle has been so organized that its physical body is kept to a minimum—suitable for a being of the wind and air. Its whole nature is "dry"; its nerve-sense system is highly developed, finding expression in its highly developed sense of sight while its digestive system is reduced to a minimum. The Taurus bull, on the other hand, is a picture of will at work in matter, and it is the will which most characterizes the first three years of school.

The grade two children are quite different from the grade one-ers. They often have the air of being veterans. They have passed through the "initiation-birth" of the first year; they know what school is all about, see themselves as old hands, and are vigorously prepared to tackle the job of learning without hesitation—in other words, very much a picture of Taurus. Taurus is connected with doing and deeds, and it is little wonder that the curriculum calls for animal fables and stories of saints. These provide the children with a guide to doing deeds—and not just any deeds, but good deeds.

When the children enter grade three, they move towards their nine-year change—characterized in more detail below. This year is over-shone by the sign of Gemini—the Twins. Gemini has to do with symmetry, as per our left and right sides, on the one hand, and with the sense of ego, or "I", on the other. Gemini can also be characterized as the sign in which we develop capacities, that is, we make ourselves capable of achieving or sustaining

ourselves in various contexts and environments. The children in grade three are busy doing just that within the overall context of willing-doing and becoming a citizen of the earth—they build houses! They learn earth-inhabiting skills such as building simple shelters, plastering, wattle and daub, roofing, and so forth. They also visit farms, help to gather food, shear sheep, process the wool, and similar activities. They learn, in other words, to integrate themselves with the earth and human life on the earth. They lay the foundation for becoming a world citizen.

As the children move through these first three grades, the demands upon the children as regards discipline and group working increases, so that by the time grade three is over, they are quite accomplished. Nevertheless, especially in grades one and two, be very cautious about insisting on perfect quiet, perfect circles, perfect stance and behavior before the lesson can continue. Unless done for sound reasons, this is like a muscle spasm for the little ones. Likewise, breaking up into ones and twos, or having fixed groups that have to stand around endlessly (and "endlessly" is not very long for a young child), or following a whole set of verbal instructions is not necessary—there is so much else we can do. Out of our leadership of knowing-doing, we direct the children clearly and formatively in the right directions. The ordering power of our natural authority grants the children freedom because they feel secure and protected under our guidance. The children have no problems with us ordering the class; indeed, they almost beg for this to come out of our authority. Bring the children into form out of the movements, gestures, and choreography of eurythmy itself—and if the odd lamb frolics in its own way behind us—so what! The children's innate joy for imaginative movement is at stake.

Towards the end of this phase, in grade three, the children go through a process which we can relate to the Twins, of the incarnating ego.[5] While they are still childlike, still move very much out of imitation, still thrive on the doing of things, nevertheless, there is a subtle, but fundamental, change. As the years

[5] The interconnection between the sign of Gemini, the "I," the nine-year change, and the directions of space are fundamental in my opinion. Gemini has a picture of the Twins. As regards our physical body, it indicates the capacity to bring our left and right together so that deeds may arise—left space and right space. We also see the Twins on a delicate soul level in as much as the soul has two sides—the experience of self (inner world) and the experience of the other (outer world)—back space/front space. On a spirit level the Twins have a relationship to the 'inner' physical ego and the "outer" spiritual ego—above space/below space.

of teaching go by, this change assumes ever greater importance for every eurythmy teacher, for the children move out of "we" space, and into "I" space. It seems to me, that the nine-year change originates in the spiritual members of the child's being. That is, the Spirit of the child takes a step in its development, whereby the earthly ego begins to separate from the heavenly ego. This reveals itself by the soul experiencing its inner world as separate from the outer world. The body, on the other hand, must be integrated as regards its left and right sides, in order that the child may live properly as a citizen of the earth.

The Nine–year Change

During the ninth year, children undergo a shift in their perception of the world. For the inexperienced teacher it is one which can easily be overlooked or underestimated as it is a shift in consciousness, as opposed to an obvious physical change such as puberty. Until this time the children live within their souls in such a way that the outer world is not experienced as separate, but is, in a dreamy way, part of the great totality of experience. Now a revolution occurs—sometimes quietly, and sometimes with great difficulty. The veils of soul, which have sheathed the child, part, and the world begins to be experienced as something other than what lies within them. What used to be a "we," becomes an "I" and "you" with respect to others, and an "I" and "it," with respect to nature.

My own experience at this age was one of feeling cast out from the world of nature. I kept returning to the fields and meadows surrounding my home, and wondering why I was no longer allowed in. I gazed at the landscape with an intense longing and sense of loss, for a gate had suddenly been shut, and now the trees and streams and animals were "out there," and I was left standing merely within myself. This experience was so powerful that it accompanied me right into adulthood.

For the eurythmy teacher, the completion of this process by grade four marks an important threshold, as the children acquire a different relationship to space. The children break out of the circle, the "we" space, and stand in their own individual "I" space.

The metamorphosis from the circle of space to the cross of space is quite remarkable. Each child has to take what used to be

the commonly shared center of the circle and place it within themselves. Only now does front-space truly exist. Only now does the potential exist to become conscious within the back-space. The new left and right no longer contain one's fellow beings who, because they formed a unity within the circle, continually upheld and strengthened each other. Now, the individual child must bring left-space and right-space into dynamic balance out of his or her own activity. Similarly, in circle-space the heavens were in our midst; now the child stands alone, experiencing the vault of the heavens in the heights, and the earth lying beneath his feet.

This is the time when we begin to bring frontal forms to the children—and they thrive on them. They love the challenge of moving forms while facing front the whole time. It is such a wonderful experience for them, and they love seeing their own form on the blackboard and following it through the room—as the experience related in the chapter "Leaving Room for the Angels" reveals.

Eurythmy-grammar is also brought at this time, revealing another aspect of the child's changed relationship to space. The children begin to step out of the unconscious nurturing of the spoken word, and their mother tongue is made increasingly conscious through the study of the parts of speech. In eurythmy-grammar, the child stands, so to speak, alone in space, facing the front of the room. The sense world makes an impression on the child; what lives in the front-space impresses them, and the backwards angle of the concrete noun arises. When a "spiritual being noun" is spoken, an all-encompassing curve into the back-space arises. Likewise, the verbs lead the children into the spatial directions around them in a qualitative way. Through poems with order-bestowing Apollonian elements, the children are placed into space. Truly, we can say that in eurythmy-grammar the children step out of the Word into Space. In this context, one can hardly help thinking of the words in the *Gospel of St. John*, indicating the incarnation of the archetypal Human Being from out of the heavenly into the human world: "And the Word was made flesh."

This is also the year when the rod exercises proper begin. The children revel in taking hold of them, for they have also forged a new relationship to their body, and any rod exercise which has the

effect of placing them *gently* into space is absorbed avidly. The sevenfold, for example, is a classic grade four rod exercise—for obvious reasons,though, as I said, use it gently, for all the rod exercises are very powerful. Our aim is to *place* the children into space, not to fix them in it.

While grade four is the year when all these eurythmic elements begin, the process of fully stepping into space proceeds over a longer period of time. Indeed, for some individual children, it may take a few years—even into high school. It is worthwhile taking note, however, of those children who still struggle with spatial orientation after grade five or six, and pondering what occurred, or did not occur, in their nine year change.

The Years of the Lion

The years of the Lion are, in many respects, the most eurythmic ones. The children enter the classroom with such an appetite for learning eurythmy that teaching them is sheer joy. Because they are in the phase of development which corresponds to both the plant kingdom—as outlined earlier—and the heart kingdom of Leo, all we need do is bring them the right eurythmic environment, and they will take eurythmy into themselves in a truly heartfelt way

At this age the children's bodies and souls enter into mutual harmony. Physically, they become beautifully proportioned, and their movements and gestures reveal a natural grace. In their personality one senses an inner ease, which reflects itself in their ability to move as a cohesive group.

Naturally, all this does not happen overnight. We might describe grade four as the pre-Golden Age when the children are a little less "cultured" and refined. Steiner characterized Cancer as "impulse to the deed,"[6] and, in addition, its consonant is the pure-willed, fiery "F." The grade four children are indeed willful and impulsive, battling enthusiastically with the elements through Norse myths and alliteration. They delight in exploring their new-found relationship to space and the world. They are busy creating a space to dwell within. This is also a gesture of Cancer in as much as it governs the form of the chest. Taken as a finished product, the chest is an "outer," external form, a shell or

[6] *Eurythmy as Visible Speech*

vessel—similar to the exoskeleton of the crab in which the crab lives. Taken as a dynamic gesture-in-becoming, the "arms" of the ribcage grow out from the spine, curve around and form a protected space. It is an active, space-forming, space-enclosing gesture, and we find the heart within it as its most precious treasure. Without the space Cancer creates, our heart and soul would remain forever "outside" in the world and not be able to find its own inner space.

Grade five is a magical journey through ancient cultures culminating in Greece, where we bring them the Energy and Peace Dance, the Planetary Eights, and so forth. In the course of this year, they pass through so many cultures that the problem is not a lack of teaching material, but rather feeling we cannot do justice to all they are experiencing. With grade five we arrive at the heart of the human being—literally. Leo governs the heart and is the sign of radiant "enthusiasm."[7] The heart truly is a central human organ—and in more ways than one—as Steiner's extraordinary lecture *The Human Heart*[8] shows. It is the sign in which we feel ourselves to be especially human. The symbol of Leo is the lion who lives "within the beat of heart and lung." There is something golden, radiantly enthusiastic, and sun-like about the heart; likewise, there is something golden and sun-like about grade five children. Like the ancient Greeks they have achieved a blessed—though fleeting—stage of dynamic equilibrium in their process of incarnating. Body, soul and spirit are caught for a moment in a beautiful, harmonious interplay, and it will be many years before anything similar will appear again.

Grade six often begins very much in the mood of grade five, though the children are a little more earth-bound. They move from Greece to Rome at this time, with its empire building, social ordering, and lawfulness—something that makes eurythmy exercises with an inner lawfulness (such as the Diamond Auftakt) very suitable for the eurythmy lessons. As the year progresses, a sobering, inward-looking element enters the picture. This is a characteristic of Virgo—"sobering."[9] In Cancer the children are busy building an inner space vis-à-vis the outer world. In Leo they establish and live within the heart-space, breathing out into the world and into their inner world with wonderful harmony. In

[7] Ibid.

[8] Mercury Press, Spring Valley, New York, 1985.

[9] Ibid.

Virgo, the children increasingly dwell within themselves. Physically they become rounder and heavier. The girls, especially, often find themselves unable to run and jump as freely as they did the previous year. In our lessons the first moans are heard that doing a music scale in eurythmy hurts —and for them it does—as their arms no longer feel (or are) as light as they once were, and a touch of melancholia sets in.

The first blushes of woman and manhood appear, though still pure and virginal. By the end of the sixth grade the curriculum guides them into the age of chivalry, in which male and female act towards each other out of romantic ideal. Grade six has about it a pre-puberty "blush," and we sometimes find ourselves thinking: "Oh, no! They're turning into teens already!" But then it disappears from sight (for a while, at least).

Virgo's symbol is a young female virgin, sometimes seen holding a sheaf of grain. But in saying "virgin" there lies the implication of "not virgin." Virgo corresponds to the digestive organs, which creatively builds up and "produces" our body, but does not *re*-produce our body—thus the symbol of the virgin. Nevertheless, there is a connection. We might say that the digestive organs are self-directed, body-creating organs, while the reproductive organs are outward-directed, body-creating organs. Granted, there is a metamorphic step or two between the two, but they are allied.

The keynote for us in these Leonine years is to teach out of inner mastery. We are relaxed, comfortable within ourselves, and our authority and mastery in handling the class and bringing eurythmy are unquestioned. We know where we are going and what needs to be done. We do not, however, lead the children in the same way as in the years of the Bull. Although we certainly join with the classes for the majority of the exercises, we also freely step aside and throw the children onto their own resources. If we do this to the younger grades, the children receive a tremendous shock, for they feel their very ground has been taken away from them. Now we throw it to them as a challenge, and they come to expect us not to baby-sit them. By grade six, we may even tell the children to be "teacher" for certain exercises, where all the rules are, or at least should be, known. This they enjoy tremendously, for they rest secure in the authority of our

presence. We are King of the Realm, in the best, the most sun-like way.

The Years of the Scorpion and the Eagle

This period ushers in radical changes on all levels of body, soul, and spirit. In this quarter we enter what are traditionally called the "night signs" of the Zodiac, and just as there is a division with the coming of night, namely, outer darkness and inner awakening, a division also occurs in the students at this time. This occurrence is perfectly captured by Scorpio's double image of Scorpion and Eagle—one flying high above the earth with piercing gaze; the other found beneath stones with a piercing, venomous sting. The children become "earth ripe" at this time, as the German language so delicately puts it. In this period they undergo a ripening of their reproductive capacity. Likewise, they also undergo a ripening of their thinking capacity. Their thought life is no longer innocent and plant-like, and they can be driven by thoughts firmly bound to their emotional life. They move out of the "plant kingdom" into the "animal kingdom" during these years. They can be seduced by their senses, which become permeated by definite desires and longings. In anthroposophical language, this period ushers in the birth of the astral body, and we should approach the children with the greatest forgiveness for whatever might come to us out of their lower nature, and with the greatest recognition and support for the many ideals that arise out of their higher nature.

It can be a useful imaginative exercise to hold two classes, separated by at least a year, in our mind's eye, and follow inwardly what happens in the year(s) between. We often get a clearer picture this way, as we have a polarity out of which to form our thoughts. If we do this with grades six and eight, we clearly see the scales tipping the grade seven child inexorably towards puberty. Libra is a transition, threshold sign, and to it belongs the symbol of the scales, holding the balance between two opposite worlds. Physically, Libra governs the hips, those wonderful bones which allow us to maintain our mobility and balance—despite various laws of physics which would have us otherwise oriented. The hips are also one stage closer to the

sexual organs than Virgo—and a clear degree of awakening in this area is exhibited by grade seven as the year progresses!

All of this is very much a picture of grade seven. How often do we see a grade seven child enter in September as one person and exit as quite another! The curriculum calls for a study of the Renaissance and the personalities connected with this wonderful emergence of the human spirit. It is the dawn of the individual human ego emancipating itself from family, church, and state. As has often been pointed out, artists at this time began to sign their own names on their art work. This was unheard of before! This is a direct picture of crossing a threshold toward heightened individual self-awareness. The artist felt: No longer is the muse creating through me, but ***I*** create. This is grade seven; so often we see just this heightened individual awareness appear in the children at this stage. So is a degree of unpredictability —as the year progresses, we are never quite sure which way the scales will be tipping when they enter our classroom!

By grade eight, there is no longer any doubt that their free and innocent childhood is a thing of the past, and that both the Scorpion and the Eagle have awoken. Scorpio has a double picture, as it has to do with thinking on the one hand and with the reproductive organs on the other. As pointed out earlier, at this time both thinking and reproduction mature and manifest strongly in the children. Even our language genius has seen to it that some words connected with thinking and reproduction are identical—"to conceive," "conception," also "to know."

The grade eight children delight in practicing their new-found powers of thinking on their teachers, and we should be aware that their thinking is naturally critical: i.e., it has a scorpion's sting. They love to hone their skills on us by making legalistic, hair-splitting, or pointedly one-sided arguments—all of which we deal with an appropriate mix of earnestness, respect, and humor.

Scorpio is the first of the five, so-called night signs. As noted, Scorpio is also the first year of the third seven-year rhythm and the birth of the astral body. In the eighth grade the children complete their second seven year cycle and begin their third. In the first seven years we can say generally that the children learn through imitation. In the second seven years the children learn

best from one who has an innate authority and leadership. Naturally, imitation does not cease in these or even subsequent years, but it does cease to be the hallmark it once had been. Similarly, the teacher's authority (provided they are worthy of it) is unquestioned right up into grade seven. Not so past grade seven. Past grade seven our authority is questioned—and quite rightly so as "authority" is no longer the key with respect to pedagogy.

What is now called for is *respect*. This word may, however, be easily misunderstood. It can be justly argued, for instance, that the teacher should always respect their students, but this is not what is meant. If questioned by a student why the class, or an individual, should or should not do such and such, the grade five or six teacher can, with justification, say to their students: "Because I have said so," or "That's the way I choose to conduct this class." This reply can take many forms, and repeatedly I have observed how the younger children feel safe under the teacher's firmness. Even a difficult child shows from their body language that they are relieved the teacher has enough ego strength to give form to the class.

Approaching the children in this way is not appropriate from grade eight upwards. A reply, such as the one above—in spirit, if not in word—is experienced by them as disrespectful on the part of the teacher. Why? Because the individuality of the child is "gestating" within the astral body being born at this time.

In the first seven years we make ourselves worthy of imitation *not* because this belongs to the period when the physical body is born and undergoes its first cycle of development, but because the etheric body is "gestating" at this time. Being worthy of imitation provides the right milieu for the etheric body to come to a healthy birth at the age of seven. This parallels the situation whereby the mother's body provides a proper form, environment, and protection for the physical body of her child to gestate within.

Likewise, we work out of "authority" in the seven to fourteen year period *not* because the ether body has been "born," but because the astral body is gestating at this time. It is busy preparing itself for birth, and authority provides a proper form and structure for the nascent astral body. Authority holds it in check. This allows it to develop unhindered by influences which might call it out too early.

Similarly, within the astral body being born at fourteen, the ego of the child is gestating, and this is what the teacher now directs their attention towards with regard to their overall attitude—and the key word is "respect."

A common, seemingly minor, example of disrespect is linking grade eight students up in a line and walking them duck-wise from one classroom to the next. Another is to insist the class all stand up, fold their arms over their chests, and say in unison: "Good morning, Mr. Teacher," or "Goodbye, Mrs. Soandso." These methods may be appropriate for the younger grades, but this is because the astral body is a group body, so to speak, and can legitimately be treated as such. Not so the ego. The correlate to the astral body is found in the animal world. Here we find animals spontaneously forming into, and acting as, a group, a herd, or a flock, and so forth. The ego is the very opposite to a group or herd. It is profoundly disrespectful to treat the ego as if it were a group or herd, and treating children in this way is not appropriate for cultivating and fostering the ego within each child. Each "I" is unique and deserves respect. If we do not recognize this principle and make it a fundamental attitude within our teaching in these years, we run the dire risk of calling forth negative attitudes from the students towards their teachers and to their schooling as a whole.

We can sum it up by saying: If we treat them as a herd, they will treat us as a herd. If we treat them as individuals worthy of respect, then they will treat us as an individual worthy of respect. This reality holds good for the fourteen to twenty-one year period. After the age of twenty-one a higher possibility opens up for our students, namely, that should someone treat them with disrespect, they will now have the ego strength, at least potentially, to turn the other cheek, and choose to treat the abuser with consideration. A strengthened ego, in other words, can choose to go against the natural inclination of the astral body. The natural inclination of the immature astral body is to take "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." After twenty-one the possibility of a New Testament attitude becomes a reality, whereas between fourteen and twenty-one the quid pro quo of the Old Testament is dominant.

Naturally, this is a large subject, and a full discussion is not possible in this context. Perhaps the greatest possibility of mis-

understanding the point being made would be to believe that we have to debate all things with the students—as per a highly liberal school—so as to have their full agreement before we can proceed with a lesson or subject. This is not what the students are asking for. They are not necessarily looking for a democratic approach to classroom management, scheduling, or school policies. But there will be areas where they feel their voice should be heard—in which case we must listen respectfully, and with true respect, not merely giving polite lip service. Earlier we discussed the "animal kingdom" and the impulses "instinctively" at work within this period of adolescence. These impulses are connected with the individuality, the "I," of our youth. The specific nature of these impulses will depend entirely on the individual. Thus, we cannot foist a generic educational method upon our high school students, but must facilitate what is gestating within them. This will give the right conditions for the nascent ego to develop.

The implication is that each school will be unique at any given moment. It will arise through the conjunction of what the teachers have to bring and what the students are gestating for the future. Is this not at least one aspect of teaching prophetically? It won't be sufficient merely to give the students what, in our opinion, we know to be "good" for them. It will call for flexibility. It will call on us to meet the unexpected, the new, even the revolutionary. There is no generic answer to how this principle of respect will play out in reality with our students. What they are asking for, and seeking from us, they themselves will voice. Only they can ask the questions relevant to them. This calls for our ears to be wide open and awake—especially so as their immaturity does not allow them to express themselves with great skill. Succeeding in this will allow what is distinctive and inimitable to blossom in our schools out of the developmental needs of the students themselves.

Libra balances left and right; it holds darkness and light on each side of its scales. Scorpio also contains the polarity of the eagle in the light-filled heights above, and the scorpion in the dark depths of matter below. In the sign that follows, we see the Sagittarian centaur thrusting forcefully from behind forwards. As with the preceding two signs of this quarter, the forces of light and dark are being held in dynamic tension in Sagittarius. The

centaur is a powerful figure, half-animal, half-human, aiming for the light-filled heights with his bow and arrow. The half-horse, half-man image of Sagittarius is perhaps as perfect a picture of the grade nine student as we could wish for. They struggle with their lower half and yet are filled with ideals. This year is often a difficult one for students and teachers alike, for the lower half of the students' nature is strong and willful, and its darker sides are strongly supported and tempted by many aspects of our present culture, making it even more difficult for our youth to pass through this phase unscathed. Our task as teacher is to keep their attention firmly fixed on ideals outside of themselves. If we fail, then the horse half will find itself leaderless. The curriculum at this time calls for strong contrasts with respect to content or materials—such as black and white drawing or blacksmithing. Similarly, strong contrasts are called for in eurythmy—especially calling on those exercises where the students either get it right or everything falls apart—such as the multi-rhythm rod throwing in a hexagon exercise outlined later.

A favorite opening verse of mine at this time begins with the words: "Girt on thy sword, O Man." A colleague once described these years as one in which we must put on a raincoat. Thus, to the words "Girt on thy sword" we may humorously add: "Put on thy raincoat, O Teacher." Our raincoat allows us to shed the torrents the students sometimes send our way. Indeed, the greatest antidote for this period is a sense of humor. Nothing disarms an individual, or a class, more than a teacher with a sense of humor. Still, teaching eurythmy during this period is potentially at its most challenging, and there is no point in avoiding this reality. In fact, rather than avoiding it, we need to take hold of it—*vigorously*. The key in our pedagogy is to teach out of our will-imbued Ego. There are a plethora of images we can apply to teaching in this period. One is of a kayaker going through a set of rapids. If he tackles the rapids by vigorously propelling his craft forward and choosing his line of attack, then he will make it though unscathed. But if he tries to drift through, or ceases paddling half way, he will be at the mercy of the waters. Only by actively and purposefully moving through the turbulence of these years can one remain in control. If one pauses and relaxes, then the turmoil below is liable to tip us into the brink. This

period holds a counter-picture to the years of the Bull. In the years of the Bull, we enter the children's morning world and lead the children out of doing. In the years of the Scorpion-Eagle, we invite the students to aspire to our world of will-endowed egohood. Our aim as teachers is to lead the ego of the students out into the world, so that they do not dwell upon the processes occurring in their lower part. Not that the students will not be aware of the changes occurring within them, but that the upper half, the "Eagle" of what is being born at this time, rules.

This whole period is one of polarities, of heights and depths, of exploring the outer world, and awakening to the inner world. For teachers, these years are often love-hate ones, whereby the students can give us a hard time one minute and turn around and place us in the heights the next. The worst year I ever had was with a grade nine class, bar none. In the same breath, I can say that the best year I ever had was with a grade eight class, bar none. Nothing went wrong, no outer discipline needed, not once! We flew high like the eagle, and even though I occasionally gazed down and experienced a kind of pedagogical vertigo—for I knew how painful a fall would be—we nevertheless kept our wings and had a truly wonderful year. If we do manage to teach successfully at this time, there are great rewards, for we can see, quite visibly, the positive assistance we are giving our students by bringing them eurythmy during their great transition out of childhood.

The Years of the Water Bearer

In this phase the students move towards the Aquarian attributes of unity, integration, and harmony. Their soul-life calms down, their thinking matures, and the storms of the previous period gradually abate. By grade eleven or twelve it becomes possible to deal with them as young adults.

All the zodiac signs that precede the four archetypes of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius act as transitions into the new phase. The symbol of Capricorn is the goat, a hard, bony animal at home in rocky hills and mountain heights. In Capricorn the demanding, "rocky" world of the hard-headed goat clashes with any thinking that does not flow in accordance with reality. As

a result, the grade ten students lose some of their sharp edges and begin to act in a more well-rounded fashion. Previously, the inner life of the students had a tendency to charge around—with the horse half of the Centaur in charge. Now, when the students bump into the reality of the world, they are liable to stand back, assess what happened, and adjust their behavior accordingly. This is how Steiner characterized Capricorn: "thinking clashes with the reality of the world."[10] Capricorn presents the picture of the goat climbing to the rocky heights, and our lessons in this period can be quite unpredictable, as we never quite know whether the students will be butting heads or standing on the mountain top.

Sagittarius corresponds to the thighs which combine great physical strength with a capacity for sensuality. Capricorn on the other hand governs the knees. The knees are where the upward supporting function and the downward bearing weight of the body meet most directly. They absorb and transform tremendous opposing forces. Also the consonant belonging to Capricorn is "L," which, although it is often moved lightly by eurythmists, is actually a powerful earth-transforming consonant as Steiner's sketch of the "L" shows.[11] His sketch shows the "L" reaching powerfully downwards with the arms (Movement), on the other hand it has wing-like forms coming out of the back (Feeling), while its Character color is an activity-filled orange.

Having come to accept at least some of the realities of the world, including those that belong to their own personality, the students enter into a degree of harmony that has not been experienced since Leo in fifth grade. This is a key word for Aquarius—harmony. The students earnestly begin to search for the higher meaning of life, and it is possible to have profound conversations with them if we have their trust. For the first time in years, there is enough inner quiet for them to really listen to what the other person has to say. They have matured, feel confident about themselves in many respects, and yet are still protected by the buffer of the twelfth grade.

Aquarius has a picture of a female figure holding a pitcher or amphora, out of which water is flowing. This figure is almost Grecian in quality—which seems fitting as she stands opposite to the Leo year in which Ancient Greece is studied. To Aquarius

[10] Rudolf Steiner: *Eurythmy as Visible Speech.*
[11] Ibid.

belongs the life-giving waters of the etheric body. In this function Aquarius is the sign which unifies and makes human the eagle, lion and bull. As with Leo, Aquarius also carries a highly eurythmic quality, and this is often experienced in the lessons with grade eleven. The consonant of Aquarius is "M"—the sound which integrates, melds, and molds. Likewise eurythmy integrates and makes whole the thinking, feeling, and will of the students, and this is precisely the quality they are searching for at this time.

When the students reach their final year of school, they are on the verge of entering the world at large. They know that in a matter of months they will leave the school and its protection. This fact gives rise to both a sense of expectancy and an element of fear and uncertainty. Regardless of how they view school and their teachers' various abilities, the students realize that in a short while they will be judged and assessed by a yardstick that only asks what they made of themselves in their education. Now the students become a living picture of Pisces, carrying two opposing realities side by side. Their school consciousness is dying and falling away, while simultaneously they are freeing themselves and striving into new realms. Towards school end, they become anxious to complete this dying process, and long to enter into the birth of their new Aries—the beginning of exploring the world as a young adult.

The Pisces eurythmy gesture reaches firmly downwards on the left side and upwards on the right. Here we see the diverging tendency of Pisces whose symbol is two fishes—usually facing in opposite directions. Fish live in the water and yet are not fully conscious of it. This is an image of our destiny whereby we are so immersed within it that at any given moment we cannot fully see the significance of the recent past nor the immanent future. Pisces sits next to, and yet is at the "opposite" end of, Aries. Aries is the head and birth; Pisces is the feet and death. Aries is "the event," while Pisces is "the event becomes destiny."[12] With Pisces we have completed the circle, and yet, as if begging the question of reincarnation, it lies next to Aries. As noted, Pisces governs the feet, and it is the feet which have borne us from

[12] Ibid.

the past and will bear us into the future. To Pisces belongs the consonant "N"—the sound of separation, on the one hand, and of knowledge on the other—both of which are fitting

Teaching at this time, especially in grades eleven and twelve, is a pleasure matched only by the Golden Years on the opposite side of the zodiac circle. In the years of the Lion we taught out of inner mastery, out of a sun-like authority that permeates the whole class. Now we teach out of a sense of wholeness. All that we bring to the students in eurythmy acts as a unifying, integrating force that lifts the students towards their archetypal selves. We strive in a very real sense to bring them to the "waters" that Aquarius has to offer. In the lessons we bring the *TIAOAIT*, a thinking exercise in movement and space, with a strong connection to, and effect upon, the etheric body. The planets are taught, with their soul qualities of love, aggression, wisdom-working activity, and so forth. In the final year comes the study of the zodiac gestures, with their deep connection to the human ego, to human biography. The zodiac is truly the crown of their whole Waldorf education, for there is nothing else to match it in my opinion.

Because high school forms a separate entity and has a character quite of its own, it deserves a more detailed chapter unto itself.

Terribly Terrific Teens

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,
We were all going direct to heaven,
We were all going direct the other way !
A Tale of Two Cities
— Charles Dickens

With a pinch of salt Mr. Dickens' quote applies to the teaching of youth as they mature. The revolutionary birth of the astral body brings with it a host of changes that defy enumeration. The "children" grow and sprout in all directions. They no longer know the boundaries of their own bodies, let alone those of others. The girls can become coquettish, shy, sullen, loving, catty, or any combination thereof. They become prone to fits of giggling that nothing seems to cure, and awaken to the effect they have on boys. The boys may be super-sensitive, insensitive, gallant, callow, boorish, and awkward. They do not fully perceive the effect they have on girls—who are ahead of the game. Both sexes alternate between being boys and men, girls and women, and often both elements lie side by side in a confused concoction.

Teaching during this transition towards adulthood demands patience and a willingness to instantly forgive their transgressions. They are not yet able to see themselves with full objectivity, and we need to be a mirror for them. This means letting them know when they have done something inappropriate in such a way that they see the situation for themselves. This process can take any number of forms, but the end goal is to bring about a raising of consciousness. The golden rule of discipline—*act, don't react*—is vital in these years. Nothing less than acting out of our ego will do. If we react out of our astral body, we only join forces with the students' condition, and then feathers really fly! It can

be extremely trying and highly exhilarating to be a teenager. It can be extremely exasperating—and highly rewarding—to be a teacher of teenagers.

Because the astral body is being born, the students carry a subtle sense of shame within themselves, and we need to exercise a delicate tact in many situations. As brutal as they can be at times to others, they are also exquisitely sensitive to what others say and do to them. Trust and mutual respect must live between student and teacher. Teenagers are often so open and exposed in eurythmy that without these virtues we will never call ensouled gestures forth. As a result, it takes time to establish ourselves with the students. Once we have done this, we find that new students entering the class take their cue from the others. When new to a class, we should expect a couple of months, minimum, of careful cultivation before they really relax and are on our side. Give them ample room and leeway to find their way into the lessons before demanding too much to come out of their inner life.

It is hugely important for eurythmy to continue in high school, for it orders and ennobles the newly born astral body. It directs the will into the body in accordance with social principles in a way that no other form of education can do. It serves as an antidote to the destructive elements imposed on the students by our civilization. Every school should strive mightily to have a successful program—not just in the kindergarten and grade school where it is easy—but also in the high school where it is just as essential. Sometimes eurythmy is curtailed or not taken very seriously in our high schools, which, in my opinion, only indicates a lack of understanding of the basis of thinking in the human being. As is known through an anthroposophical view of the human being, there is an intimate connection between thinking and the etheric body. The movements within the ether body are thoughts, thoughts that are at the same time life forces, life movements. If we "bind" these life forces, prevent them from coming to physical expression, "squeeze," so to speak, the life from them, as we do in the head, their spirit element becomes unbound and lights up. We then perceive them as conscious thoughts.

Bearing in mind that the ether body is a mirror image of the physical body, we can put the above considerations in another

form. We can say that our ether-limbs are "bound" in our head, and therefore we can think. Conversely, that our ether-head envelopes our limbs, and therefore we can move. The highest, most noble form of movement is one whose gestures correspond to what lies in the ether-head enveloping our limbs. This noble form of movement is eurythmy.

A thinking that truly moves within reality is one which moves in accordance with the etheric world. Rudolf Steiner's lecture, *Practical Training in Thinking*, speaks directly to this reality. In this lecture Steiner gives exercises to assist a practical working with the ether body—not intellectual exercises as one might assume. Eurythmy and Goethean thinking-perception are complementary. What takes place in the Waldorf science laboratory and what happens in the eurythmy room are metamorphosis of one another in this respect. They are two sides to the same coin and mutually support one another.

In the ideal world, Waldorf schools would keep all their students from grade one to twelve. In North America this is rarely the case, and we are repeatedly confronted with classes containing disparate levels of ability and experience in eurythmy. What this means in practical terms is that we need to live as much by our wits as by any ideal curriculum outline. Each class will present particular problems as well as strengths for which we must search. Within a single grade which has been split due to its large size, we may find two groups of totally different qualities. In one, all sorts of fine and delicate work can occur; in the other we feel lucky to come out with the shirt on our back. With difficult classes it is often not a question of what should be done, but what can be done. As a rule, the more difficult the class, the greater the need to polarize the lessons. This has a quieting effect on the students and allows them to regain a middle ground.

It would be a mistake to believe that all high school eurythmy must be much more complex than it is in grade five or six, for example. Certainly the content as regards poems and verses become more mature, but many of the forms Steiner gave, for instance, are practically ageless. This realization came as a shock to me when I brought the "We seek one another" form to a grade eleven just for fun. As they moved across the curving

diagonal, their eyes glittered every bit as brightly as those of grade four students. Just because the older students can grasp a form instantly does not mean that their enjoyment of it is any the less. Within the context of many of our high schools' orientation towards college, simple eurythmy forms that speak directly to the feeling realm come as a relief.

The adolescent period is one where rod work comes to the fore. It gives the students something objective to grasp and counteracts the chaotic elements within them. This is especially true of rod rhythms and rod throwing, which they love—but which sometimes call for ear protectors on the part of the teacher.

As difficult as some lessons with teenagers can be, there are other lessons which truly touch the heart. The teenager is still malleable, awake to the world of artistic feeling, and pictorial in his thinking. They can grasp artistic principles with an ease and directness that is refreshing. Personally, I have found that it is possible to take eurythmy to greater heights and depths with teenagers than is often the case with adults.

The Teaching

Process, Process, Process

The importance of process in teaching cannot be emphasized enough. Eurythmy is a training of the will, and therefore process is more important than product. By process I mean the steps we take in leading our students through an exercise. Right pedagogical process is a geometrical-architectural unfolding of the content of our teaching in time. Stepwise, each element complements, supports, and illumines what came before and what is to come. As teachers it is our business to know how to lead a class through viable process. Not to cultivate this in ourselves is parallel to a house builder failing to learn in what order to install foundation, floors, walls, and roof.

Repeatedly I have experienced how the simple act of leading the children through a series of consistent steps gives them great satisfaction and delight. It is not surprising that children love right process, for they, too, are developing and unfolding

according to consistent inner laws. By working organically, and holding a picture of the total process in our mind's eye, we engender valuable qualities in our classes. The children become curious about what comes next, and the brighter ones even try to second-guess our intention. Or their eyes light up with enthusiasm and wonder when an unexpected turn is taken and a whole new form revealed. By not rushing, we allow them to digest and savor each step. By not spending too long in any one stage, we keep freshness alive.

Interestingly, a core element in pedagogical eurythmy is the moving and unfolding of geometrical forms in space. This thought-filled activity forms a parallel to right teaching process. Eurythmy not only develops social willing and artistic feeling, but also works directly on the foundations of harmonious, inwardly consistent thinking. The very movements and processes followed by clear thinking are actually moved by the children. This extends from the simplest triangle in grade one to performing a verse from the *Calendar of the Soul* in grade twelve. Our teaching *must* complement this reality if we are not to undermine the very thing we are trying to create.

Process is also directly linked to efficiency in pedagogy—something we sorely need if we are to cover the curriculum in the older grades. It allows us to move with fluid clarity through an exercise, as well as extend the range of pedagogical possibilities. Equally so, a missed step can take three remedial steps to repair, and if there is lack of clarity in the lesson, then the lion's share of the fault inevitably lies here. The greater the transparency of our teaching the better, and if we succeed we will notice that our teaching takes on an objective hue.

One of the novice teachers' most common weaknesses is failing to lead the children through an exercise via clear process. Perhaps this is because much of what is assimilated in the eurythmy training does not apply to children. In the eurythmy schools, for instance, a music piece might be worked on from anywhere between twenty minutes to an hour plus per day. Under these conditions the choreography is learned simultaneously with the music with little difficulty. The children, however, might hear a music piece only a few times per lesson per week. Many simply

do not have the musical memory or focused concentration to retain the phrasing, melody, tones, and so forth under these conditions. The novice teacher will often make the error of believing that the children must know a piece far too early. The children themselves might even claim to know a piece well—but knowing in the head and knowing in the limbs are two different matters.

For example: A new teacher introduces a short music piece to a class eight. It turns out that they have already worked rhythmically with the piece a year previously with another eurythmist. The children claim they know the piece, and in many ways this is true, for they can clap and step the melody easily. The teacher then puts the form on the blackboard and begins to work with a group of children. The choreography presented, however, calls for discriminating between two voices in the melody. The children simply don't get it, and the lack of clarity ends up leading to unrest in the lesson.

Clearly the teacher opted for going to a more advanced phase far too early. Although this is a more extreme example for the sake of characterization, the same basic misperception is often made. Even if the children know a poem or music piece, which they usually do not, we must go through the process of allowing them to assimilate it into their will and habit life. At risk of becoming unreadable for a page or so I will outline the process we bring the children through with a music piece of reasonable length, suitable for grade seven or eight, and with an A/B/A structure:

1) listen to the whole music piece two or three times, allowing the children to find that it has an A/B/A structure
2) clap section A until they have a grasp of the melody
3) step the rhythm of section A in a circle
4) clap section B
5) step section B
6) clap and step sections A and B. Later add second section A

7) listen again to the piece, pointing out the two voices to the students
8) clap voice 1 only
9) step voice 1
10) clap voice 2 only
11) step voice 2
12) one group claps voice 1, and another voice 2
13) one group claps and steps voice 1, and the other group voice 2. (Two circles going in opposite directions)
14) pairs of children take turns stepping the two voices while the others watch
15) the children begin to practice the clearest notes and intervals of the piece with pitch in between, etc.
16) the choreography is presented to the children and outlined on the blackboard. They now instantly see how the two voices interrelate and are eager to get hold of the piece and bring it a stage further
17) choreographic form A is worked on
18) form B is worked on
19) form A followed by form B are worked on. Later add the repeated form A
20) form A plus tones/intervals, etc. worked on
21) form B plus tones/intervals, etc. worked on
22) total form plus tones/intervals, etc. worked on
23) intermediate tones, phrasing, motif "schwungs" (breaths), and so forth, are worked in according to the ability of the class
24) the piece is polished, perfected, and performed.

On paper the above seems long, but in reality a number of the steps, especially the earlier ones, can be covered fairly quickly. Neither do we simply go from step one to step twenty-four. Many stages overlap as the piece progresses. Indeed, I have often found

myself in the process of polishing (step 24) and still warming the piece up by clapping and stepping it at the beginning of each session (step 6). The total process might take anywhere between two to three months, depending on the age and ability of the class and the degree of difficulty of the piece.

I have found that the minimum time needed to do justice to the average item is seven weeks. If it is a grade six or seven working twice a week, this gives us fourteen lessons. If we devote an average of 20 minutes per lesson to the piece, and the class is divided into two groups, this gives each individual child a total of approximately 140 minutes of actual working time – a mere 2 hours and 20 minutes! Looked at this way, it is astonishing what the children can assimilate. What professional eurythmist learns even a simple piece in this amount of time and does it justice? Better, of course, that the children are given a longer period in which to bring a piece into their limbs. Naturally, there can be great variation in the above picture, but the basic principle holds true: that each step must not only be "known" but also digested by the will. We need to develop the patience to allow each step its proper due—combined with a drive to keep things moving.

In the chapter on *Geometrical Forms and Auftacks* I have outlined some exercises in detail, partly by way of example, but also as working recipes for the new teacher. While geometrical forms are the simplest to analyze in terms of process, the principles apply to everything taught, whether poetry, music, chemistry, or wood carving.

Discipline

Possibly nothing is more important to the success or failure of a eurythmy program than the eurythmy teacher's ability to maintain order. The best made plans and trainings fall to dust in the face of loud, unruly, restless, rambunctious, and recalcitrant children. And we, the teacher, are entirely responsible!

It is no secret that the "I," the individuality of the teacher, works on the astral body of both the individual children and the class as a whole. The children do not as yet have the full presence of the adult ego. Indeed, one aspect of a group of children is their astral-elemental nature. They bear the characteristics of

elemental beings in as much as they are able to act and feel as a group. When the appropriate conditions are present, then the elemental beings are also present. Likewise, a group of children reflect both their physical and spiritual environment. They act, or perhaps better said, they *re*-act to what surrounds them with uncanny sensitivity and accuracy. The children's mirroring of their environment creates for the eurythmy teacher a reflection of themselves. *Teacher and class form a total organism*, and we should *never* forget that what exists in the classroom is directly and simultaneously a part of ourselves. While children certainly bring many things with them, what is done with these qualities comes under the aegis of the teacher's ego. Even if we are faced with an objectively impossible situation, we need to remember that it is our ego which cannot heal the situation. Perhaps we have not yet developed the necessary capacities. To do so for the future we need to work on ourselves in the present, as well as turning to the insights our colleagues may have to offer.

When we enter a classroom, the children have direct access to our soul; they are instinctively clairvoyant, and "see us clearly." What they do not always know, and will always test, is our ability to provide them with a sense of security. They aspire to the "fortress" of the individual ego, and as a result, test our own fortress to see if it is strong and worthy. A hallmark of the ego is the faculty of conscious attention. Two of the most important directions in which to develop this faculty is in our ability to pay attention to detail and our ability to see the whole picture. If we have a vision of the whole, the parts will be united and cohesive. If we cultivate a sense for detail, the whole gains clarity and vibrancy.

Our ability to perceive totalities is developed through the arts. We can only grasp the wholeness of things imaginatively, and it is this element that the arts develop. Our sense for detail, on the other hand, is developed through the sciences, cultivating an interest in the world and practicing the "science" of becoming conscious of what lies before us. Between these two disciplines lies the third element—religion—namely, that the warmth of heart which exists between teacher and students is the best discipline, for many problems simply do not occur in the first place.

Discipline also means managing the medium in which we work and is part and parcel of artistic technique. Just as we cannot carve wood randomly, but must work with the natural direction and flow of the grain, so, too, with the children. But how do we hone our abilities and ascertain the trueness of our technique with respect to discipline and correcting? *The key is to pay attention to the children themselves*. They are our true litmus. Be aware of the class as a whole, even when interacting with an individual student, as their reaction will tell us if we have acted correctly. When we become aware of this principle, then we will quickly find our way forward in this crucial area of pedagogy.

Naturally, there will be times when we need to stop the lesson to discipline or correct. But in doing this, avoid stopping the flow of the lesson. If we do need to stop the lesson, it should be done briefly, and for the express purpose of making the lesson flow better! Students never mind necessary correction or discipline. The majority see this as fair and just, and, as a rule, they all wish for a good lesson. Nobody wants a bad one! It is to be expected that most classes contain a few students who, for diverse reasons, can be difficult, either by being clumsy eurythmically, or just plain disruptive. The same can apply to whole classes, but these students and classes are not our enemies, they are our teachers. If we learn how to deal effectively with them, the remainder is easy by comparison.

Another determinant for successful pedagogy is presence. A large part of a teacher's ability to work with children lies in his or her presence. Born teachers have presence naturally, and despite mistakes and blunders, especially in the earlier years, continue to have a good relationship with their students. The eurythmy teacher needs a special dose of presence as we are dealing with a group of active and creative children in an essentially empty room. If we do not engage these active children formatively, then they will actively (and unformatively) engage themselves!

When it comes to discipline, the role of the class teacher in the grade school is paramount. They are the class backbone in these years, and their style and ability can be read directly from the students. If the class teacher is strong, all is well; if not, then whatever we try to establish in our lessons is undermined in the further course of the week. It behooves us to make ourselves

familiar with the class teacher's techniques for dealing with problems. Because they know the children so intimately, they have often developed methods for handling their class or particular students which we need only imitate to be effective.

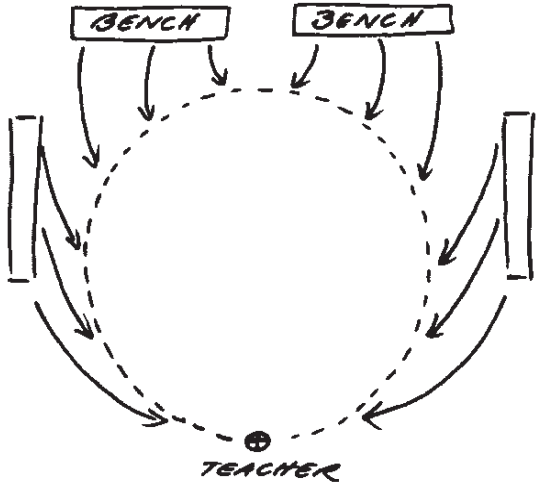
Ninety Percent Habits

The teacher must never lose his inner form, his inner discipline. Any void is instantly filled by our wonderfully elemental children. On the other hand, we do want to cultivate a situation where the outer discipline is as unobtrusive as possible. To achieve this, we need to work on the ether body of the class. Ninety percent of so-called discipline is actually the establishment of good habit. We achieve this through *practice*. And when it comes to practice there is no getting around the direct, straight forward method of engaging the will and doing what needs to be established.

For instance, one of the basic needs in the eurythmy lessons is to form a circle. It can be such a simple thing, or it can be an endless series of boys and girls not wishing to stand next to one another, of pushing and shoving, of pals rushing across to be with their buddy, of changing their minds and going to a different spot, and even arguing as to who gets to stand next to the teacher! How might we deal with this?

An example comes from a fifth grade class that I have never taught before. I have them sit on their benches while explaining that I begin my lessons by standing and waiting for them to be quiet, and, when they are, I will ask them to form a circle. I say that forming a circle is an easy matter. The ones on the benches that are closest to me will be next to me, all the rest need only look to their left and their right to see who their neighbors will be in the circle. I point out that the ones who will be next to me will have the longest way to walk, and the ones opposite me only need to take a step or two.

Then I ask them to form a circle. They are tentative this first time, seeking the balance. "Good!" I say, "Look carefully where you are in the room." I give them a moment to absorb this and ask them to sit on their benches again. I say: "I will count to three. Could we have a large circle, please, grade five?" They find this slightly amusing and quickly form the circle. They half expect me to test them again, but I move on with the lesson.

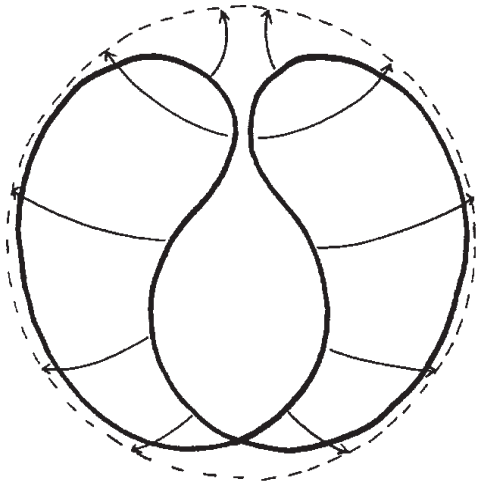


Later, at the end of the lesson, I ask them to sit down, and say: "I will count to five. Could we have a circle, please?" They do so—no big deal. Then, unexpectedly: "Please sit on the benches again." Next, I tell them they have to form the circle by the count of four. They realize that this is both a challenge and a game. Next a count of three. They beg to try in a count of two. I agree with a slight show of doubt, but sure enough they fairly fly to their places. They beg to try on the count of one, but I look at my watch and say that our time is up.

In a later lesson we go through the same process, but this time I allow them to try to arrive on the count of one. They manage this because I speak slowly enough. They want to try faster. I agree, and say: "Could we have a large circle, please, grade five?" and before the seats of their pants and skirts have gotten more than a foot off the benches, I throw up my hands and shout: "Oh, too late! Not fast enough." This brings gales of laughter. In this way we establish good habit.

Naturally, going this route in grade five is only effective the first time or two, and it would wear thin if we pursue it. But the expectation has now been established, and we will only need to find ways of refreshing this habit periodically. This is especially so after a holiday, and we need to keep a sharp eye out at such times in order to reestablish form.

The potential for chaos occurs again when transiting from a form they have been working on back into a circle. For example, after moving the *Harmonious Eight* with a class six, I ask for a circle, and they run every which way. I have two choices, to raise my voice and call for order, or wait patently. I choose to wait. When they have settled, I tell them to go back to their last positions on the *Harmonious Eight*. They seem puzzled, but do so. I then point out that almost everyone is already standing on a circle, and that only a few pairs need move out in order to complete it. The resulting simple, quick, (and quiet) transition comes almost as a shock.



Each group of students is different, and we must learn to discern the difference between what is simply their way of doing things, and what is an unhealthy way of doing things. I had one class whose teacher encouraged them to take their own initiative. When I asked for a circle at anytime (except from the benches), they would immediately zip across the room any which way and, voila, a circle! Technically this was not "right," but they executed the whole thing so quickly and silently that I never quite figured out how they did it so *tout de suite*.

To assist the process of forming a circle, many teachers have designated spots where a child must stand. Then, when they ask for a circle, each child knows where they must go. This is a valid method in some instances and appropriate for the younger

grades. Personally I would only use it if there was a consistent problem, for I feel it better to give the children the greater challenge of ordering themselves without direct intervention.

The method of returning the students to their previous places, as with the *Harmonious Eight*, can be used on any transition which does not go smoothly. It is especially effective when asking the children to sit down again after working with an exercise. They tend to charge back to their seats, and, if it is a large class, or this brings chaos in its wake, we will want to establish a walking speed. Some transitions are more difficult, for example, when half the group is already up and the other half is sitting, and we want to make a circle with everybody. If they do it smoothly, fine. If not, and they enter a chatting mode, have them all sit down on the benches and then reform the circle. In all cases the message to the children is that transitions are not a time of chaos but a practical moving from A to B.

To establish and maintain good habits is an ongoing process. We will not enter a class and find it all laid on for us. We cannot build Rome in a day, and when we have, after a period, built Rome, the children then migrate to another empire, and our task begins over again. Sometimes we ourselves will initiate a change of habit, which is our signal to them that our expectation is either raised or relaxed, or both. Other times the students will ask: "Mr. Down, couldn't we ....?" which might be their signal to me that they are ready to move to a different form. In both cases, it is the teacher's responsibility to choose correctly. By the time the students have reached grade nine or ten, many of these methods are experienced by them as demeaning. Occasionally, we might briefly resort to them with a rougher class, not to establish a habit, but to raise consciousness. They feel slightly silly having to revert to outmoded forms for a day or two and usually get the message.

When establishing ourselves in a new class, we need to work from the large to the small, from the class to the individual. If we have not first established healthy habits in a class, there is little hope of being able to work on the habits and inclinations of a specific child, because the necessary environment is lacking. We also need to proceed step by step, otherwise we will overwhelm the children with too many rules at once. It is a tricky time, because we must strike a balance between giving them too much or too little rope.

Herein lies the two often seemingly contradictory essentials which the teacher must achieve from day one—that the children come into form and that they love eurythmy. Without a love for eurythmy it ceases to be effective and becomes a hollow caricature of its true nature. We will never achieve one hundred percent success—there are simply too many "cultural" casualties amongst our children. The core truth, however, is that a child who seriously dislikes eurythmy is ill. These children are exceptions. If they are not exceptions, but rather the rule, the teacher and the school need to take a hard look at themselves.

Prevention Is the Best Medicine

Good habits need to be practiced at least a couple of times to be established; likewise, bad habits need to be "practiced" at least a couple of times to be established. If undesirable forms of behavior do not occur in the first place, it follows that they cannot become habit. Prevention is the key to this form of class management. Prevention covers a whole host of possibilities and is admittedly difficult for the novice teacher since much is based on experience. Nevertheless, forewarned is forearmed, and at least there is the possibility of learning quickly from our experience.

Prevention is based on the secret and mystical art of accurately foretelling what will happen "if" and arranging the lesson accordingly. It is a silent form of discipline, yet its practical effects are concretely present in the lesson. The best compliment a teacher can receive is: "You did not seem to do anything, yet nothing untoward happened in the lesson." If you have the opportunity of watching a real teacher at work in a successful lesson, pay as much attention to what was not said and done as to what was said and done.

Children behave in fairly predictable patterns. If we see a problem arising, we should first observe the phenomenon and see if it can be altered through a change of procedure, such as rearranging the order of the lesson plan, or simply telling the children that there is now going to be a change in procedure and then practicing it.

I once had a free-standing eurythmy room in a very wet climate. The children brought their eurythmy shoes with them to class. On the way my ever-creative students used the eurythmy shoes to play football, balance them on their heads, throw them so high they would sometimes inadvertently (I like to believe)

land on the eurythmy room roof, and last, but not least, they used the shoes for the entertaining game of dusting each others' butts. All this was well and good, but the shoes rapidly became wet and dirty from falling on the ground. To police this activity was impossible, but the solution was simple. I built an efficient eurythmy shoe cupboard inside the eurythmy room, and shoe problems were reduced by ninety-five percent. (See Addendum.)

Another example: There are a number of exercises that are fun and exciting, but also demand disciplined and cautious movement. Experience has shown that these exercises can be problematic if not established properly. One solution is to tell the class, before we begin, that this is that kind of exercise. While saying this we eyeball, in a *friendly* way, those students who are most likely to fly off the handle—they will get the message. At the first sign of silliness beyond what is reasonable, I pull that child out and have them stand by the side for the remainder of the exercise.

A variation is to have three-quarters or two-thirds of the class establish the exercise. Those who have not been chosen to initiate the exercise are a *mixture* of those we know will get silly and the very strongest students. When the exercise has been given a good form, introduce the remaining students. This can be done with the whole group or in smaller batches. The students think we are introducing the exercise via a smaller number of students for ease of working, which sometimes may be, but they do not realize our real tactic has been to preclude potential problems.

A thoroughly mundane example of prevention is to glue on the tips of the eurythmy rods (silicone actually works better) rather than rely on a slip fit as they tend to come off in the children's hands during the waterfall exercise.

These are simple expedients, yet they work. Prevention precludes problems before they occur and is one of our best allies in classroom management. The more visible methods, such as getting certain children to sit out while we establish a good habit with the rest of the class, brings the majority of the students into healthy form and habit and helps those who are weak in these areas. It brings cohesive form into the lessons as well as telling these students we are someone who knows our business.

Silent Discipline

Physician: Heal Thyself!
Teacher: Discipline Thyself!

A story told of Ghandi illustrates another principle of discipline. A mother once brought her son to see Ghandi. She told him that her child had a problem with eating sugar, taking every opportunity to acquire it, whereupon Ghandi asked the mother to return in two weeks. When she returned, Ghandi wagged his finger at the son, and said: "Don't eat sugar." The mother, surprised, asked why he had not told this to her son two weeks previously. "Because two weeks ago *I* was eating sugar," Ghandi replied.

It cannot be overstated that such things as our own inner discipline, the general condition of our soul life, and our preparedness for a lesson, communicate themselves directly to the students, affecting their behavior and our ability to handle it. This is no secret to the experienced teacher. The children are so sensitive on this level that we can sometimes tell when we are going to get the flu from the behavior of a class *before* we even feel ill.

This high degree of sensitivity also applies to the environment we teach in. We are often told in Waldorf circles that the child, before the age of seven, lives very much in the senses. This is entirely true, but it is also important to realize that the older children are also powerfully influenced by the senses. Advertising companies know this fact well and target our youth in particular because they are so highly impressionable. Because of this, the physical condition and atmosphere of the eurythmy room have a direct effect on our pedagogy from kindergarten through to grade twelve. Even if our room is physically far from perfect, poverty is no excuse for an attitude of soul. Physically caring for our room impresses itself on the students and is a visible demonstration of the principle that what the teacher demands of the students he first demands of himself.

Overall, our aim is to have as little outer discipline in evidence as possible. The children must learn to read our body language and we to read theirs. We need to lead the children. When we are genuinely leading, we are too busy to bother about a slightly

imperfect circle or some child having a quick aside. The class is in swing between contraction and expansion, and order is effected through the elements of eurythmy itself.

When the children read us correctly, and we them, it forms the basis of our most valuable connection to them: silent communication. We build up silent communication over a period of time, and its achievement is entirely dependent on whether we open or shut ourselves off from the students. Through the power of empathy we come to experience the children as an extension of the activity of our being. We think together, feel together, create together. We assume a stance of open heartiness, of silent, expectant waiting. In the times we achieve this, it is as if the sun is sounding forth a tone in our heart.

The Art of Correcting

We are constantly engaged in correcting students in one form or another, and developing techniques to effectively guide them forward is part of our task. We should never allow our correcting to interfere with our healthy relationship with the students, and must find a right balance between working with individuals and with the class as a whole. We need to develop tact, sensitivity, and perhaps above all, the ability to be impersonal without being cold. If our students experience objectivity in our approach, then all will be well. Overall, allow love for the gesture to be the greatest corrective. Children imitate deeply right up into high school, and not only their natural love for gesture, but our own love for eurythmy, works silently within their being.

As a rule, children need to be corrected one step at a time. If we see a number of mistakes, correct one and leave the rest to correct themselves. Recognizing that the etheric body does much of our work for us allows us to practice greater patience. Often a movement, gesture, or form that a class finds difficult almost magically corrects itself, or one day we notice that the hardness in their stepping or a forward thrust into the front-space have suddenly dissolved.

In practical terms, if we are working with a piece of music and the phrasing is off, then work on the phrasing, and forget the rhythm, pitch, tones, and intervals for the day. Work the phrasing first from one side, then from the other, so that it is something they understand, or at least begin to grasp. Or if a sound gesture

is not quite right, we can hold our chins in a thoughtful gesture, saying "Mmmmm" as if something needs improving, and proceed to explore that particular sound with arms, legs, fingers, super-slow, super-fast, watery and fiery, earthy and airy, and then return to the relevant part of the poem. If we have created a vivid picture of the living sound then, more often than not, they will do the gesture correctly.

Praise can also be a strong corrective if it is done in such a way that the students are motivated by it. Because our best students are already well motivated, however, praising them directly can have the effect of making them self-conscious, which separates them from the movement. For these ones a look of quiet pleasure is recognition enough. The struggling ones are those who need praise—though never given falsely, or with a great song and dance. Wrong praise can be as destructive as wrong correcting. Praise is like money; if too much is pumped into the marketplace, it loses its value—and if the praise is false, we end up with counterfeit currency.

We need to know our students well enough to recognize that correcting certain children on an individual basis can be counterproductive. They may feel self-conscious, isolated, or even worthless if they feel (rightly or wrongly) picked upon. If someone is having trouble with an exercise, we can simply place ourselves either opposite, or next to, the student so that they can read our example better. Likewise, knowing that an individual's mistake is rarely of no benefit to the rest of the class allows us to correct it generally instead of particularly. If we see a student going wrong, we can catch their eye in such a way that they know we have been watching. Then, without looking at the student, instruct the whole class on the correct method to use.

Sometimes we may choose to keep repeating the part to be corrected over and over again like a broken record, deliberately looking nowhere in particular. The children realize that we are correcting a classmate (or two, or three), and the game becomes to discover who is still going left instead of right. As long as it does not involve an isolated, sensitive student, this is okay because of the humorous element. Or, if a particular student has still not responded to the correction, jump in among them and *check three students*—though never choosing the one having difficulty first.

These methods not only maintain the general flow of the lesson but build trust between teacher and students. They feel secure in knowing that we will not make fools of them, and that we respect them as individuals. Once they trust us our range of possibilities for correcting broadens.

I once had a student who was not an Einstein when it came to math and geometry and who had great difficulty in the *Diamond Auftakt*. I directed him entirely with my eyes and head, making slight gestures of yes or no, forwards or backwards. None of this interfered with the group work, and after three months he got it! To test him I would look at him at all those places he normally made errors, but now with a completely blank face. A smile and a nod when he had succeeded in doing the whole thing "solo" was more than equal to verbal praise in front of the whole class. I then ignored him during this exercise so that he would truly be just a member of the class—something he was insecure about.

I hope I have not sounded too full of sweetness and light. None of the above precludes us from jumping in, taking a student's arm and leading her through a form—if we do it in the right way. Or correcting a strongly self-confident child quite directly. Or barking at a student who we know is perfectly capable if he would only activate his will.

Boys and Girls

How we approach our male and female students, especially in the areas of disciplining and correcting, is very different. To put it succinctly, we deal with boys in a straight line, and we manage girls in a curve. At risk of generalizing too much we can say:

With boys we can be very direct about making demands on them. Our approach is more out of the farmer and warrior way of being outlined earlier, and they are generally quite at home with our forthrightness as regards correcting and disciplining. With boys it is not necessary that they like eurythmy, a definite blessing for sure, but not a necessity. I have even had male students tell me that they do not feel any affinity for eurythmy at all, yet are doing really well in the lessons. They do it because it is something that has to be done and because I expect it of them. We approach boys much more out of the thinking pole, in as much as thinking is more interested in the object before it than with its own personal activity.

On the other hand, we correct girls in such a way that we call forth their interest. This demands a more circumspect technique as we cannot challenge their personal will. This way of being falls more under the ken of the merchant and hunter-huntress teacher. Unlike boys, it is vital that a girl like eurythmy. If they do not have an affinity for it on some level or other, they simply do not participate in any real sense. Indeed, a girl who dislikes eurythmy, or whom we have handled in the wrong way, can be very difficult to deal with. She may undermine us silently, always staying just this side of correct behavior and never giving us open cause to find fault. Overall, we approach our female students more out of the will pole, in as much as the will is best engaged through sympathy, through an interest in the beauty of the movements of eurythmy

Naturally, within the above characterizations there are many degrees. Some boys are very feminine in the above sense; some girls very masculine. There are also cultural considerations that come into play. American Indian children of the Pacific Northwest, for instance, can never be approached in the normal white man's way. We must always approach both boys and girls out of the sympathy pole, as many of the approaches we take for granted from our cultural perspective are perceived as a distinct lack of respect from theirs.

The Crust

We often find the children coming into the classroom with a "crust." By this I mean a layer that has hardened over them as a result of being over-intellectualized, subject to an unrhythmical lifestyle, exposed to the media, and our mode of civilization in general. This leaves a crust on the children, underneath which lies their true soul nature. We need to develop techniques to break up this coating to gain access to the deeper layers of their being. We must somehow bring the children into their rhythmical homeland in order to allow eurythmy to begin its quiet alchemy. Obviously, this process of making supple begins in the early part of the lesson. In my experience there are two effective techniques. One is to move the students rhythmically-musically, the other is to bring them into a strong, character-filled polarity. Practical examples are outlined below.

Limb Rhythm

We bring the students into their limbs by getting them to step and clap the rhythms of a piece of music. This brings the elements of the child's being into a fluid state. I have tried many other ways, but this one has been so consistently successful that I return to it again and again. It is really a musical concentration exercise which awakens the children, dispels sluggishness, gets the blood flowing, the lungs breathing deeply, the listening faculty attuned, the limbs brought into rhythm, and directs the children into their feet. Who could ask for more? For the sake of readability an outline is given in the addendum of the various ways we can engage the children in musical rhythm. They are loosely listed in order of complexity and pedagogical process.

In my experience, this kind of rhythmical work is only appropriate, and therefore of real pleasure, for children in grade four, or the latter part of grade three at the earliest. Before grade three the children are not able to separate out the rhythm from the music as a whole. Beginning very simply, watch carefully for signs that this is a meaningless or too difficult an exercise for some children. If a clear majority are ready, then proceed. Otherwise, wait a bit before trying again.

If the younger grades have a relationship to music, in so far as stepping/clapping is concerned, it is much more closely bound up with the body/beat element, and they will happily clap a march beat, for instance. I never expect them to step the rhythm of a piece, though I might do so myself for short moments, in a fairy tale, for example.

In grades four, five, and six, the children love stepping and clapping rhythms in ever more complex patterns. If this ability is established in these years, then it will carry through into high school. Students entering the school late, even after only grade five, generally have a far more difficult time integrating opposing rhythms and such like. It is foreign to them, whereas, ideally, it should be second nature.

By the time the children reach grade seven or eight, their limbs may become so heavy and awkward that the complex rhythmic patterns they achieved in grade six often become too difficult to execute precisely. Although we should not stop stepping to musical rhythm entirely, we might choose not to place as

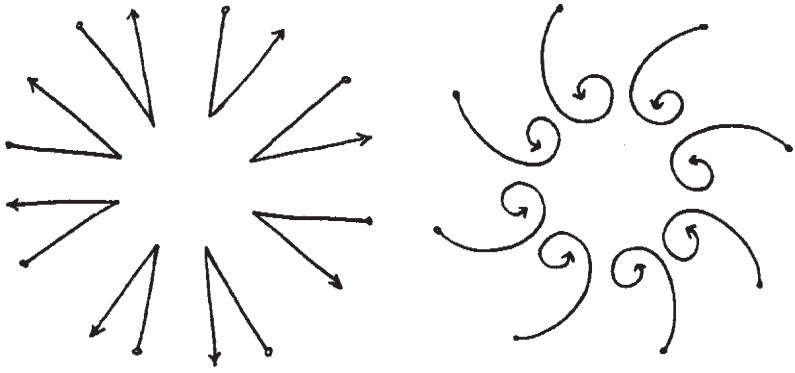
much emphasis on it in these grades. A good alternative technique is to contrast a slow, heavy piece with a quick, light piece. This provides the necessary polarity to bring the students into their rhythmical system and get them moving. Stepping and clapping a rhythm may also seem tame at this age, especially to the boys. Now is the time when it is good to begin working with rhythmical rod throwing combined with rhythmical stepping from position to position. These exercises definitely do not belong to the beginning part of the class, however, unless you intend to make a whole lesson of them.

Deepest Blue—Highest Yellow

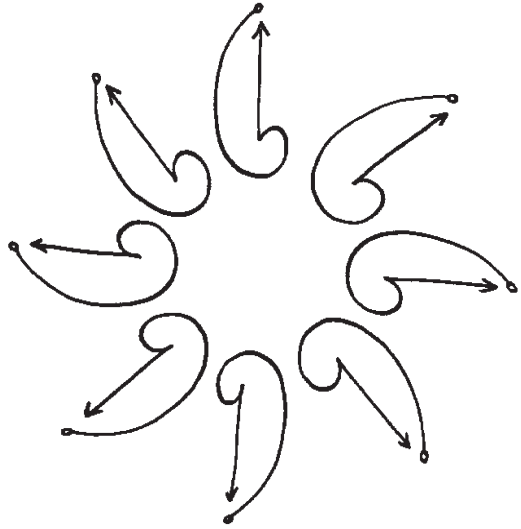
One of the characteristics of "the crust" is a certain grayness in today's youth. One would think that with all the extremes in our society we would have a colorful, vibrant, creative, character-filled youth. Instead, we often get the impression that our civilization has produced grayness instead of rainbows. We see this in youth in general, and while it is there to a lesser degree in Waldorf schools, it nevertheless is present. Little wonder that there can be sudden extremes of behavior and a lust for the kind of experiences that give adolescents a sense of life and allow them to perceive themselves as feeling beings. It is as if they have been suspended between polar forces, but in such away that they do not truly live in their rhythmical system. This is brought about by being over-intellectualized on the one hand, (educated as miniature adults, for instance), and by having their wills directed towards earth-bound activities and the sensual aspects of the senses on the other (inappropriate sports, advertising, and so on). What is secretly longed for, however, is a concrete recognition of the soul as being the true human home. Consequently it is very much our task to bring the souls of our students into healthy breathing, to lead them out of grayness into color.

In the older grades, seven and up, we can quite literally move the students into color—polar color. Ask them to form a gentle medium blue and spend a few minutes with this. Then work with a yellow for a couple of minutes. In both cases we can move the characteristic choreographic forms.

Yellow *Blue*



Then ask the students to form blue immediately followed by yellow.



Progressively darken the blue, making it more inward, more contemplative. Likewise, we intensify the yellow until it is more joyous, youthful, and intensively sun-like. When they have gone as far as they can with intensifying, move over to the opposite pole (of intensifying), and briefly etherealize the colors by making them as delicate and homeopathic as possible.

Working out of polar opposites can be applied to many elements in our rich and varied eurythmy vocabulary. It refreshes and renews the life body and brings color and form to the soul. This technique can equally be applied to any exercise or project piece lacking in vigor, definition, or character.

High School Crust

As the students go into high school, the problem of the crust increases, and there is not necessarily any magic formula. Their "fall" into the astral body, combined with an intense desire to explore the world independently, can make teaching a challenge at times. Only too often, despite throwing all the tricks in the book at a grade nine or ten, do we notice that only at the end of a lesson is eurythmy beginning to live in the room. It can be, and often is, a battle—though never should it be taken personally. And I do not mean that it is a battle with the students directly in terms of discipline, though this sometimes happens as a result of these deeper causes. Often the struggle takes place silently and unspoken, and yet is very real. Nevertheless, what was indicated earlier—that we cannot really begin to bring the students into eurythmy until we have dissolved and broken up the overlay of current civilization—holds true. As stated, it sometimes takes the whole lesson to feel eurythmy living in the lesson, and if we get that far, be thankful for small mercies. It helps to be patient, to remind ourselves that this is only a phase, and that just as they are open and super-sensitive to world experiences at this age, they are also sensitive to what we have to bring.

In practical terms: Hold your ground, be true to yourself, be true to *their* higher selves, never begin a lesson without greeting each individual, be objectively firm, never personal with discipline, and do not despair if things seem to go badly for a period of time—everything that goes down must come up! Plan to work with polar opposites, dark and light, serious and humorous, heaven and hell.

A Sense of Purpose

Eurythmy is first and foremost a performing art. Like all performing arts, it only achieves its full stature when it is given away and shared with others. To keep eurythmy out of sight and hidden in the classroom deprives it of a sense of purpose. This factor becomes increasingly important as we move up the grades. For the teenager, performing brings a vital element of objectivity. Regardless of how the lessons might go, when the time comes, they, and not the teacher, will be on stage before their peers and parents. Because of this objectifying element, it is essential that the students show their work.

There are many formats for showing work which all serve the same purpose. Best, of course, is for the school to have a stage in regular use. This allows for extended high school work and avoids the exhausting bottleneck of having the whole school rehearsing and performing elsewhere once or twice a year. There is also the possibility of an evening show for parents in the classroom, or a few classes getting together during the day to share their endeavors. Not everything need be highly polished. We cannot allow our students to make fools of themselves, or present an evening of half-baked pieces, but it can be just as fascinating to watch students struggle with a piece as to see a perfect execution.

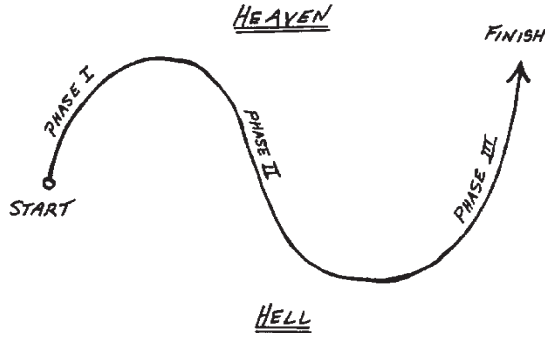
The most important and far reaching times to share eurythmy are at the festivals. Eurythmy adds a dimension that does not exist elsewhere in education. To have the younger children watch the older ones, dressed in white, perform the Hallelujah or the TIAOAIT during advent is a wonderful experience. To have the little ones show their fairy tale in the spring touches the heart of the "toughest" grade niner.

These festival moments are real highlights. Years later they stand out in the memory as something special. Being on stage creates a moment of concentrated awareness. The children put their best foot forward, and a subtle glow of light surrounds them. Many teachers note that the children change after being on stage. This is especially true of the difficult ones. Performing acts as a catalyst on their personality. It also allows others to see them in a new and sometimes unexpected light.

One high school student of mine seemed to be especially difficult for many teachers. She challenged everything, called some

teachers by unprintable names, wore all sorts of junk around her neck, and frankly admitted her opinion that dope was okay. Some faculty members wondered whether she should be in the school at all. She did like eurythmy, however, and wanted to be one of those who performed for the Christmas celebration. After the performance a number of teachers commented on how they saw the performing students in a new light, and her name was mentioned in particular. Moving with strong and graceful gestures, dressed in white costume and veil (and with her hair combed), her natural beauty, which she normally seemed at pains to hide, was clearly apparent. The contrast to their everyday perception of her forced the teachers to reassess their opinions. The higher being of the students often makes an appearance when they perform eurythmy—a fact which educators should note.

Having a purposeful goal such as a performance puts iron in the lessons and brings out the best in the students. There is, however, a landscape through which we must travel with many projects, and it is to our advantage that we understand what to expect on the journey. The journey generally looks like this:



In phase one all is new and each day brings a exciting elements. It is usually a wonderful honeymoon.

In phase two, what the teacher has brought needs to be struggled with, and at this stage anything new merely adds to the difficulty. Towards the end of this phase teachers have been known to mutter to themselves thoughts about quitting eurythmy forever. Children have been known to say: "I'm tired and this is boring." Ignore all of this—it is normal. Not all projects become so difficult, but it helps to be prepared for the worst.

Phase three can be even more exciting than the first. The end is in sight; the classes gain an air of expectancy, and momentum is regained as the polishing of work and rehearsals proceed. The high point comes with the sharing of their work and the praise they receive for their endeavors. All this means a lot of effort, but we did choose a performing art as our vocation, and the rewards are certainly sweet.

Going Walkabout with the Little Ones

Having laid emphasis on right teaching process, we should add a note on the importance of not always knowing where we are proceeding. The more cognizant we are of the steps we plan to take, the less room we leave for the angels. Inspiration has the characteristic of striking into emptiness. It appears precisely at those points where we don't know. This is why it so often occurs when we are doing something for the first time. Happily there are a number of ways of teaching that allow this breath of fresh air to enter the lesson.

The question here is how are we to allow the unexpected and inspired to enter our lessons? Sometimes this occurs by itself, but there are ways of working which call on us to be open to the new. Below is one way when working with the young ones.

Australian aborigines "go walkabout" by heading off into the bush. The duration and destination of the trek are not known. Nothing is known except that they are going walkabout. We can also go walkabout with our children. To go walkabout in eurythmy we first have to gather three nouns from the children. We might stand in the middle of the circle, spin on our heels with eyes closed with one arm out, and whoever we are pointing at when we stop must give a word. Or we can "eenie meenie meiny moe" three times, and the chosen children give the three words. Often they will be things such as a castle, or a flower, a horse, a butterfly, a prince, and so forth.

Now our task is to spin a spontaneous eurythmy tale from the three words the children have given us: "Once upon a time, before the world began, a butterfly lived in a castle . . . ." Long or short, good or bad, where the story goes no one, including ourselves, knows. We give ourselves over to the moment, to inspiration, and we must find the courage to follow where it

leads. Our tale might be profoundly touching, outrageously silly, or healing for one particular child. Naturally, this technique depends somewhat on our ability to spin an improvised yarn and gesture it eurythmically at the same time, but then again nothing improves ability like practice.

There are a couple of parameters which we might wish to observe. One is to have a stock beginning phrase, such as "Once upon a time," and an ending phrase, such as "Snip, snap, snout, this tale is out!" The other is to be aware that imitating someone can be exhausting, even for little children. Therefore, be sensitive to the energy level of the class. Make use of repetition; use dynamic polarities; swinging between rest and activity, contraction and expansion.

Sowing Seed Forms

Going walkabout is clearly for the younger grades. What we can call "Seed Forms," on the other hand, are applicable to all ages and come in many different varieties. They all have the characteristic of starting with a simple form, exercise, poem or piece of music and allowing it to grow. We deliberately do not plan out what is going to happen. The important point here is not that we arrive at something unique, though that sometimes happens too, but that *the growing* develops in a way unique to the class.

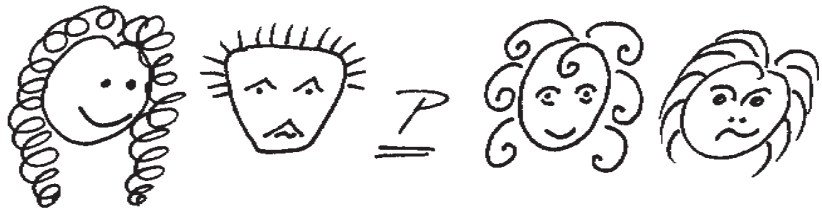
Engaging the students in the creative process in this way is always rewarding. They can be equally, if not more, inspired than the teacher. For instance, I taught a grade six a very simple version of the "Qui" exercise (see addendum). After they learned the basic form, I told them they were on their own in bringing it further. At first they were nonplussed and did not know how to proceed, but soon one thing and then another came to them. They then elaborated the exercise to a degree I would never have dreamed of, let alone taught. We devoted ten minutes each lesson to this exercise over a period of time and performed it at our Spring Arts Presentation. To see fresh ideas tumble out of the students was wonderful. My only tasks were to ride shotgun as regards discipline, and to help with the implementation of their ideas if they got stuck.

Basically, anything we do can take wings and fly given the right circumstances. The beauty of seed forms is that if they do not take root, there is little lost as they are all simple, or in the course of the curriculum anyway. Therefore, it is best not to plan the year, term, or even lesson to the point of being watertight. Even when we have a definite plan, be open to the possibility of the lesson taking off in quite new directions.

Golden Threads

We ignore golden threads laid across our paths more often than we know. In hindsight we see the possibilities, never knowing where that thread might have led, but we get the uncomfortable feeling that we have missed an opportunity. In the midst of an ordinary lesson there are moments when the class suddenly becomes truly engaged. We have brought them something which for us seems quite ordinary, yet in reality is golden in their eyes. Here lies a golden thread. We do not know whither the thread wanders, but it is always golden and always a thread. They are golden, because of their value to the children, and they are threads, because they are often hard to see. To follow them also means throwing out our cherished lesson plan more often than not.

For example: at the beginning of a fourth grade lesson, before we began a frontal form, I introduced how the board was to be read. I explained that the top of the board is where the public or people sit looking at us, and we must now face them just like on a stage. Instead of writing "public" or "people," we write the letter "P." To be more graphic, on either side of the letter "P," I drew a number of faces thus:



Aside from the great delight that children take in such silliness, it does bring the point home. I then drew a form randomly on the board and asked who would like to move this form —but

always facing front? A sea of eager hands arose. My plan had been to let two or three children move the form, and then move onto the "real" business of what I had prepared—but here was a golden thread. I decided to allow all the children who wanted to move a form of their own. There was no let up—everybody had to have a turn "facing front." I drew line after line, and soon the whole blackboard was a veritable spaghetti of lines of many hues and shapes. Each new line brought comments as to its degree of difficulty, beauty, and so forth. When everyone had finished they all moved their lines at the same time to the drum count of ten. This was even more fun! They insisted on doing this again and again. Then we moved the lines both forwards and backwards. Then they all exchanged lines, and off we went again. We then had the pianist play their rhythm piece, and they clapped and stepped the melody, arriving at the end of their forms not a second too early or late. By then the lesson was over. This was such a simple thing that I would never have imagined that a class would enjoy spending a whole lesson working with it, but the thread was there, and we had picked it up.

Inspiration cannot be forced. However, we can prepare for it, teach ourselves to recognize it, even create situations where we put ourselves on a threshold and trust that we will be moved. My eurythmy teacher, who had a strong relationship to this aspect of eurythmy, made a comment to the effect that: "You must grasp the moment. If there is any hesitation, you are lost and the inspiration flees." On another occasion, when I was struggling, she looked at me, and said: "You must let go of yourself. Dive into the music and grasp it." When I said that I was frightened because of the abyss of nothingness that lay between me and the music, she pondered for an instant, and said: "Yes, it is dark. But you must find the courage and leap." The fear arises because we have before us a "future nothingness." But if we do make the leap, and succeed, we find a world of light.

Humor

One of our greatest allies in the classroom is a sense of humor. Humor is "the ruling power of the soul."[13] It refreshes, lightens, and heals. It plays into the joyfulness inherent in children. There

is no age limit to humor, and, to paraphrase Steiner, from kindergarten to grade twelve a eurythmy lesson without laughter is a lost lesson. A eurythmist without a sense of humor really has no place in a classroom full of young souls. One characteristic of a good relationship between a teacher and his pupils is the easy, balanced humor that lives between them. Clearly, a sense of humor also means more than cracking jokes. It allows lightness to enter in when working intensely and earnestly. It defuses an awkward moment, bringing smiles where tears were just around the corner.

As adults we are expected to carry humor in a manner appropriate to our station. The children recognize instantly any gratuitous pleasing or falsity on our part. Our place as adults has been captured by Steiner in his sculpture *The Representative of Humanity*. In the upper corner is a being gazing quizzically down upon all the drama below. This being represents that element in us which is above and apart from all the dramas and operas of life, viewing existence from a higher vantage point. And really, there is not much which the students do in the lessons which is so serious as to shake the foundations of eternity. If we remind ourselves that at some point in evolution these same children will develop into fully realized beings, with many talents greater than ours, then their follies take on a different perspective.

Aside from the quick wit and repartee needed by the aspiring teacher, we also need to engage the students in the humorous side of eurythmy. There are two types of fun items. One is a stock exercise that we can pull out of the hat now and then, and which the children know well. In this category fall birthday dances, the Flying Horsemen, and so forth. The other type is a humorous tale, poem, or musical piece, which is worked on over a period of time and then (preferably) performed. A note of caution, however, with respect to bringing the humorous aspects of the consonants, vowels, and so forth. If we introduce an element via the humorous side, this tends to stick to the students and is very difficult to eradicate. I once introduced the qualities of the major and minor thirds to a class via the feelings of sadness and joy experienced. On the spur of the moment, before we came to an actual gesture with the arms, I passed over to how these

[13] Rudolf Steiner

experiences can even radiate upwards to the head and cause us to smile or look sad. Naturally my ever-alert-for-mischief students tended thereafter to accompany the thirds with a grimace or a grin! The best tack to take in such, or similar, cases is to drop the exercise for a period and return to it within a different, and more serious, context. There is little point in trying to correct our mistake in the moment; we ourselves taught it, and trying to change it is a bit like smothering fire with firewood. If humoresques are done properly, however, it is a great delight and wonder to the students that such serious things as the intervals and zodiac gestures can also have their lighthearted dimension.

"As you start so shall you go." (Chinese proverb)

In diverse ways our first contact with the children sets the tone and mood of the lesson. The exact form this contact takes will depend on the physical access to the room, and we will have to work out the best way of bringing in the students. As a general guide, if they enter with respect and calm—and if not calm, then excited expectancy—all be well. Once the students are in the room, it is best to have as short a period as possible before the lesson itself begins. Inefficient procedures, such as making a big deal about giving out the eurythmy shoes, set up circumstances which cause problems or unrest from the beginning.

Another essential element is shaking hands with each student. This becomes increasingly important as we move up the grades. I would even say that one cannot teach high school effectively without first greeting each student as an individual. High school students are individuals, and treating them as anything less is below their dignity. If we treat them as a herd, then they will treat us similarly. There is always time for a warm greeting or a word to see how they are doing.

The information available to us through a handshake can be immensely helpful. A handshake tells us much about a student: his mood, the moistness or dryness of the skin, whether she is warm or cold, present in her body or not, depressed or happy. At the same time a warm greeting to a student can make a big difference in his or her relationship to us, and to eurythmy. In the younger grades it is not so necessary to speak personally to every child. A warm smile with a "Good morning, Katie" is quite sufficient. Individual children who are brought to our attention

for whatever reason can, of course, be given a longer greeting in order to observe them more closely.

Because we work in groups, and not one-on-one in eurythmy, it is all the more important to have this personal contact —both before *and* after the lesson. If we do not shake their hands at the end of the lesson, how can we really know if that cold-handed girl has been warmed through? How can we crack a quick joke to the student we had to discipline severely to let him know that no grudges are held? How else could we receive the smile from a student who entered heavy and weighted and is leaving lighthearted and whistling? The older students know quite well that we are often checking them out, especially if we gently insist on them looking us full in the face, but this is no matter. If we do not greet the students in this way, we forego much of the knowledge and heart connection this simple gesture brings.

The (Not So) Little Art of the Blackboard

I feel almost apologetic including a chapter on the blackboard, because it might seem such a small thing. Yet it is not a small thing. Wheter in grade one or grade twelve, a perfectly drawn circle evokes surprise and delight, even applause, from the students. Their sense of line, symmetry, and dynamic form speaks vividly to them because all these things are still alive in the students. Eurythmy forms are distilled from the human being and they relate to them intimately. If we draw an especially good form on the board, the children sometimes gaze quietly at it for awhile, drinking in its beauty. Or we might leave a pleasing form on the board while we teach other classes and find that it draws curiosity and interest. We can see the children pondering how it might be moved. It is even possible to play tricks on them, by drawing a form the students already know, but in such a way that they do not recognize their own work—but more of that later.

One of my teachers was a well-known geometrician, architect, and artist who brought great flair and charisma to his teaching. One day he demonstrated how to draw a perfect circle and told this story along with it. Unfortunately, I cannot recall with certainty, but I believe it was Michelangelo who played the main character.

The tale goes that Michelangelo tried to see the Pope one day. The Vatican guard had been changed, did not know who he was, and would not let him pass the gates for his audience, whereupon Michelangelo took out a piece of chalk, and with one swift motion drew a perfect circle on the flagstones before the guards. The guards then let him pass, because they knew that only a true artist could draw a perfect circle.

The technique for drawing a "perfect" circle is relatively easy—though awkward to describe. My instructions might not produce perfection immediately, but they should get you close enough to find your own way. I have shared the technique with the odd class that pressed me to tell them how it is done, and I have seen students in grade five execute perfect circles immediately.

Stand sideways to the board holding a piece of chalk in your right hand. The upper arm, to the elbow, is held parallel to the ground, with the elbow pointing towards the board. The lower arm hangs parallel to the board, so that hand and hip are approximately on the same level. In this position the chalk, if held normally in the fingers, is pointing towards the body at a slant. Rotate the wrist counter-clockwise until the chalk is facing the board. This will put the whole arm under some tension. Press the chalk against the board—this being six o'clock on our circle—and draw a circle clockwise with *one swift motion*. We will notice after a few attempts that our elbow acts as pivot from six o'clock to about twelve o'clock—and that the tension is released from the arm as we go. From about twelve o'clock back to six o'clock, the arm is straight and the joint in the shoulder acts as the pivot. We must stay flexible on our feet and move gently away from the board in this last phase.

From four o'clock back to six o'clock is the trickiest part. When you have gotten the hang of the thing, you can improve on this area by beginning at about four or five o'clock instead of six o'clock. This puts the arm under more tension and is about as

far as you can move it counter-clockwise in this position anyway. This reduces the tricky area to some degree, but concentration and practice are the best teachers. Getting the two ends to meet is assisted by using a half inch piece of chalk held flat, thus creating a thicker line. Varying the diameter of the circle can be achieved by moving closer to, or further away from, the blackboard.

Aside from obvious things, such as having our blackboard washed spotless so that the chalk colors really shine, there are a couple of pointers that can make this little art alive. Most important is visualizing the whole form we wish to draw and its various interrelationships. Also we must really move our whole body and being while executing it. If we only move our arm or hand, this is merely "head" drawing—which has nothing to do with eurythmy. When we draw a figure eight, for instance, we throw ourselves into the whole lemniscate movement. If we do this, we sometimes sense the whole class moving in sympathy behind us. It is often better to hold a small piece of chalk flat when we do this, as it gives a more dynamic quality to the line. From time to time, we can also teach the children these methods, as it allows them to further absorb the forms right into their limbs.

While using the blackboard artistically is part of our repertoire, there are a couple of cautionary points. One is not to use the board before grade four to show how to move a form. This does not mean we never use the board in the younger grades, however. Once the children know a form very well, moving a triangle followed by circling around, for instance, then we can draw it. In this case, we can sketch the triangle's path in yellow and then the circle in blue. This is not teaching a form from which we move, but rather a revealing of another way to see what they already know. Then we always get comments as to how beautiful it is.

In grade four, but especially from grade five and up, we can *periodically* introduce a form via the board. But if we introduce a form this way, do not allow the children to become habituated to having the form in front of them. The eurythmy lies in their movement, and not on the board; therefore, eliminate its use after the introduction.

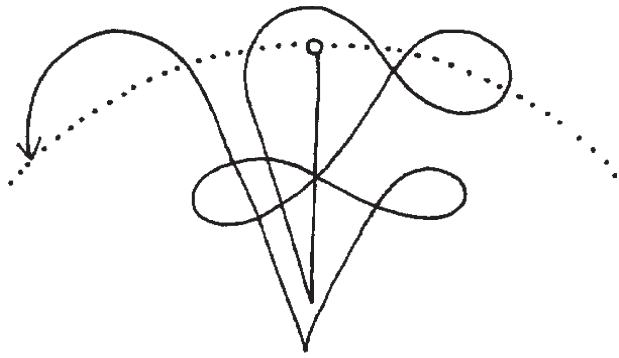
Similarly, if you see the children fixated on the blackboard when moving a form, rub it out. This sometimes happens when

we have redrawn a form to illustrate a point, or for them to see certain interrelationships which are easier to sketch than to put into words. As noted, not every piece of choreography should be first drawn on the board. The blackboard is a tool which assists us in some pieces, but others not. If you keep your eyes open, you will soon develop a feeling for what is appropriate.

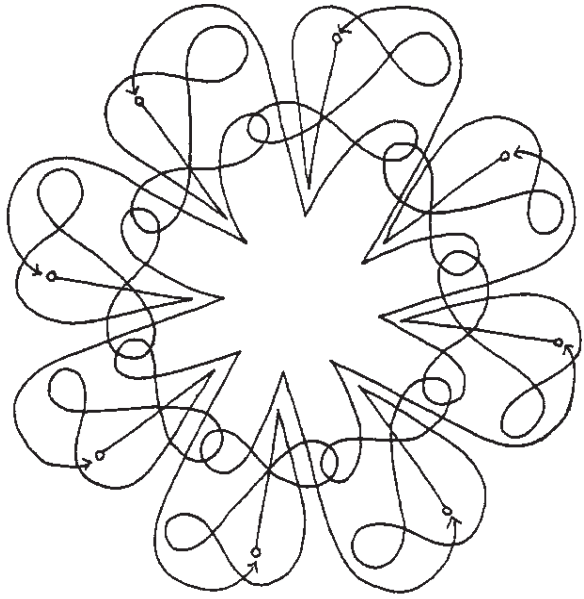
A review exercise which the children enjoy from time to time is to ask them to draw a form they are working on. This is not always easy, and usually takes a few children a few tries before they succeed. Then wipe out what they have drawn and proceed.

For children who have difficulty grasping a form, it can help to have them watch you draw it on the board—remember, not drawn by "head" forces, but by mobile, rhythmic forces. Then rub it out, but in such a way that the form can still be discerned. Have the student copy the form a number of times while you continue to work with the rest of the class. Initially, the student will merely trace the form using head forces, but each further tracing will gain greater flow and rhythm. Then, next to the first form have them copy the original. Again, they will initially use head drawing, but then, as they repeatedly trace over their form, they will begin to flow rhythmically.

As to playing that trick I mentioned earlier: whenever we do a poem or music piece using a circle form, we normally teach it without using the blackboard as we are moving with the class. At most we draw it only once or twice to clarify a point, or to show the total movement. When we do so, it might look like this:



When we draw this same form with an eight- or twelve-fold division of the circle, it suddenly assumes a mandala-like quality. By coloring the opposite pairs or quadrants in different shades, this effect is heightened:



After the class knows the movements well, we draw the mandala version of the choreography on the board before a lesson. When they enter the room, the blackboard becomes the focus of attention. Often they ask which class is doing such a complex and glorious form. When you tell them that they are the ones who have done it, they can be quite stunned, and the art of eurythmy goes up another peg in their estimation.

Overview of the Year

Experienced teachers will instantly recognize this chapter. As a novice teacher I would have been saved considerable grief if I had been able to read what follows.

The teaching year falls into three parts: September to Christmas, Christmas to Easter, and Easter to school-end. For the southern hemisphere the dates are different—and also more

difficult—because Christmas, and its attendant frenzy of activity, comes at the end of the school year—and with the heat of summer to contend with as well!

As a rule, the best teaching time lies between September and Christmas. After the long summer's break the children are more than ready to get back to the business of exploring what their new grade has to offer. Christmas to Easter is generally the second best period for work. There is often a slump, however, around the end of February, especially in climes with long winters. By then, school seems to have gone on forever, and there is no major festival to brighten the spirits. Easter to school-end generally runs a poor third place for eurythmists. The children are drawn out to the sun so strongly that they become restless indoors, even if they enjoy this subject. In addition, there is often a massive disruption in weekly rhythms. Many grades are involved in producing their class play; then they disappear on various outings arranged by the class teacher; then there is the class trip; then the aftermath of the class trip; and, and, and . . . At times we can feel like a mere baby-sitter, removed from what is really happening in their lives. The big project we had naively planned is shredded to bits. Also, there can be a decided lack of focus in the last two or three weeks of school, unless a class is to perform for the graduation or end-of-term assembly. If that is the case, make amply informed preparations if you wish to carry this off successfully.

We can discern shades of spirit, soul, and body, or thinking, feeling, and willing in this division of the year, and this can be a guide in choosing material. The first period is well suited to anything requiring greater concentration, order, and consistent weekly rhythms. The second period is suitable for whatever engages the feelings in a colorful way. The third period demands more vigorous exercises which do not involve the students in memorizing large amounts of choreography, rules or gestures. If the students are going to perform at the end of the school year, brief, humorous items and rod work are good bets. These end the year on a note of laughter and good will towards eurythmy, standing us in good stead come September.

At the beginning of the new school year we remember the progress we made previously and plan to build on it further. We

know that a class now moves well together, has learned a great many elements, and can simultaneously clap the melody and step the bass of a piece of music without difficulty. Therefore, we can proceed where we left off—right? Wrong!

What is called for is review and recapitulation. We do this by taking up exercises the children know well and allow them to get the feel of their classmates and eurythmy again. This does not mean that nothing new is brought, but for the first few weeks only the beginning stages are tackled. We need to exercise caution, feel our way forward, and assume nothing. When the children are settled and moving well together again, then we can forge ahead with our game plan. Proceeding cautiously needs to be observed, even if only briefly, after every break. If you are working on a piece and a holiday intervenes, quickly recapitulate the important steps after the break so that what has already been Other times in the year when it is not always advisable to try to forge ahead with a lot of new material are the days after Halloween, the week before a holiday, the week of, and the day after, a class play, and the days after a class camping trip. On a subtler level, if we live where a time change occurs in autumn and spring, the added or missing hour is enough to set the children's biological clock off balance. As a rule it takes seven days to settle into the new rhythm, and the children do not learn well in this period.

Challenges

"A Crisis is a Dangerous Opportunity"
— Chinese proverb

It is no secret that our greatest growth is often accompanied by our greatest challenges. Although it is good to write positively about teaching, for it truly is rewarding, nevertheless, too much sweetness is also a form of untruth. This chapter tries to give a picture of some of the situations that may arise in the course of teaching. It is by no means exhaustive, but I hope it provides at least some of the topographical maps essential to traversing the pedagogical terrain.

Too Light—Too Heavy

Every class has a unique personality which is more than the sum of its individual members. This personality is determined not only by who is presently in the class, but also who previously belonged to the class, who the teachers are, and were: in short, its biography. Some class personalities have been known to remain recognizable despite a change of the majority of the students over the course of the years. Like all personalities, each class is subject to the experiences it undergoes and to changes of mood. When the class comes to us, we must read its mood instantly. Failure to do so may throw us on our heels if they do not arrive in a well-balanced mood.

Not surprisingly, the two common difficult moods are, in my experience, of polar opposite kinds.

The Lightheaded

Generally, this condition is found in the lower half of the grades. The class comes in giddy and lightheaded. They are having a great time, but if we look carefully, we see that they

are not fully in control. They are scattered, noisy, and restless. They shake our hand only briefly and then fly into the room. Our warning to "Walk, please!" merely converts their gait into something approaching Olympian speeds. They bounce off one another, or slide along the benches and crash together. Some of the students might even tell us outright that they are very giddy and cannot help themselves.

I always begin my lesson standing in a particular place and waiting quietly. This is my signal that the lesson has begun, but when a class is in this mood, they simply cannot settle down. As soon as there is silence, one or the other will start giggling, or make a silly noise, or whatever. It is enough to drive the teacher batty—which only adds to the fun. This kind of mood can continue throughout the lesson and be highly disruptive, and it definitely gets under our skin.

In the younger grades it is normal to be very light and popcornish, and there are often a few gigglers. It is generally not a 'bad' condition, and we usually need only proceed with the lesson and not pay too much heed to the silly ones. If we sense them getting out of hand, sitting the worst offenders out for a while generally calms things down. For the more severe cases, causes may lie in defective class teaching, a break in their normal rhythm, or the weather—especially windy days and the first days of snow.

In the middle grades, if persistent, this kind of mood can be the result of teaching which has given the students too much rein, resulting in them having the bit in their mouth. Other causes may be over-stimulation during the previous weekend, or a break in their normal rhythm, such as a substitute teacher in their main lesson.

In the upper grades the causes generally are found in a lack of general school discipline and good habits, puberty symptoms (especially in girls in grade eight and nine, and in boys grade nine and ten), an upcoming big party, or the misfortune of teaching them on a Friday afternoon.

There are three main methods which can be effective for dealing with this lightheaded mood.

The first method depends on reacting with discipline quickly and effectively from the very beginning. At the first infraction

give a quick, objective correction. This sharp and short public correction gives the children a slight shock and brings them into themselves. It lets them know that our ego is in charge, even if theirs is not. We might have to do this a few times, but be sharp, watertight, and do not let anything pass. Our own attention to detail causes them to focus, and this in itself is a corrective. This method fails, however, if we cannot discipline effectively. The children will sense this and play games with us at their leisure.

Another classic method is to begin where the children are "at" and move through the lesson with such sanguinity that they have difficulty keeping up and inwardly wish for us to slow down. While this is a very Waldorfian method, it can be very difficult to do in eurythmy. The children are not tied to their benches as in the normal classroom, and if we are not careful, we may end up with chaos instead of calm. In our teaching method, be careful not to mistake sanguinity for silliness. Be sanguine with the utmost seriousness, and still expect discipline.

The third method calls for a little more sweat on the part of the teacher, who must move with the class. Early in the lesson take up a fast, vigorous item in which it is easy to maintain the form. (Musical rhythms are a good choice). Work the children hard until they are panting. Follow this with a quieter item which we keep unexpectedly short, then move immediately to another vigorous exercise, perhaps not as long as the first. Then apply method one, and they will be less likely to create problems.

The Heavy Limbed

The opposite type of class mood generally applies to the upper half of the grades, though I have also experienced it occasionally in the lower. The class enters feeling heavy. As we shake their hands, there is no firmness in their grip and little enthusiasm in their eyes and voices. Instead of a smile, we get an unintelligible grunt of some sort, and if we crack a joke as they pass, their half-smile tells us they are not really interested. We get the impression that they are carrying a load that forces them over towards the horizontal. If we persistently find this condition in a younger grade, it indicates a serious problem as it is quite unnatural for young children to be heavy, and the issue should be taken up with the college of teachers. Otherwise, check the

weather conditions as the young ones can be very sensitive to the natural environment. In the middle grades it might indicate problems with the overall way they are being taught, a growth spurt by the majority, or teasers and clique makers creating a silently discordant class. In the upper grades it can arise through the students being taught in such a way that their life forces are being drained. This includes a lack of spirituality within the curriculum that is meaningful to adolescents, discordant scheduling, etc., all of which can give rise to an undertone of hopelessness. Other factors can be general puberty symptoms, inappropriate social behavior (substance abuse, sexual innuendo, power politics, etc.), or a big party the night before.

As a rule, to counteract this mood, we should begin where the class is "at"—minus some. Move the verse with a quality just a fraction slower and heavier than they are, and slowly increase speed. Move to the next item and repeat the procedure of heavy to light, slow to fast. Do not get too light or too fast too early, but apply a series of upward brush strokes so that the class gradually rises and becomes light. For the middle and upper grades, rhythmical rod throwing, or rod tossing/balancing exercises will generally leave them with a sparkle in their eye at the end of the lesson.

A second method is to polarize the students as outlined in the section on "The Crust," though we might have to work harder at getting them to really become heavily blue, and weightlessly, radiantly yellow. Nevertheless, working with polarities will often have the effect of leaving them in balance.

Broken Rule

Though the heavy-limbed and lightheaded are the two main types of mood, each class is unique. In one instance I taught a class during grades one, two, and three. Many teachers noted how this class became progressively heavier and more burdened, showing signs of disinterest, cynicism, low self-image, and sheer bad will—highly unusual for so young a class. I threw every trick in the book at them in the eurythmy lessons, but with little effect. Finally, in despair, I turned the principles outlined above, as well as the general principle of moving from serious to light in the course of a lesson, upside down. Instead of beginning

where they were (heavy), I began light and proceeded to weight. Instead of leading the class from serious to lighthearted as is the norm, I taught from light to serious. I began with a very loose lesson, and ended with a strict one. It worked! – at least for the most part.

It took me a long time to sort out why this topsy-turvy method succeeded as the overall situation of the class was complex. Through pedagogical circumstances this young class had had their critical faculties awakened and their self-esteem damaged. Thus, when I began the lessons with lightness, and even a bit of controlled chaos, the heavier, morose elements were dispelled. Because I engendered a degree of disorder early in the lesson, they did not notice, nor was it important, that their forms and gestures were far from perfect. They began to play! And, through their playing, they came into eurythmic movement. I was then able to coax greater effort and precision from them, and because they now could do what was being asked of them they reacted favorably to my increased demand for appropriate movement towards the end of the lesson.

It hardly needs to be said, but if discordant moods *result* from our lessons, we need to take a hard look at ourselves. If this is the case, *please ask for help*, as our first duty is to the well-being of the children.

Stormy Seas

Periodically, a class may become unsettled for no apparent reason. The lessons no longer flow smoothly, and everything seems rough around the edges. Dealing with this situation depends on a correct analysis of the root causes. Talk with their other teachers to see how they find the class. If their experiences with the class are the same as yours, and the class has previously been manageable, the chances are good they are in the midst of a change of consciousness. Parents are aware of the phenomena of individual children becoming ornery, willful, and sometimes downright awful for a period. Then something happens in the child's personal biography—an illness, a high fever, even an

injury, and violà, the phase is over, and the child emerges older, wiser, and stronger. Classes do the same thing.

If we feel that this is the case, we should simply see their behavior for what it is, put on our pedagogical raincoat, and ride the bad weather out. The phase can last anywhere from a quick, tough bout of a few weeks, to a term-long, lingering malaise which vanishes over the holidays. This does not mean, of course, that we excuse inappropriate behavior, but our greatest allies for the long run will be objectivity and a sense of humor.

If the problem does not stem from a developmental "node of chaos," the possible reasons for the difficulty can be so varied as to defy generalization. The first thing to do is to check ourselves and our teaching—thoroughly. If we see we are not the primary cause, then the search begins. Sometimes a rough period for a class can be caused by a change of class teacher, loss of stabilizing children, or rampant adolescence. Typically, the class will have the bit in their mouth in one form or the other. There may be disruptive noise, constant roughhousing by some of the boys, or a severe outbreak of chatteritis by the girls. The children seem to have cotton wool in their ears as nothing we say seems to stick, and their behavior pattern continues unabated.

There is a technique for dealing with these cases, but we have to be extremely confident of ourselves and pretty sure the method suits the situation. We have to induce in the class the same "fever" that occurs when an individual child goes through an illness or natural crisis before reaching a new stage of consciousness. We induce this by deliberately demanding more and more of the students, both eurythmically and in terms of discipline. In a sense we allow our warrior-teacher to engage in a battle. We must *never*, however, be unjust or unkind. Our conduct must be utterly irreproachable, but we must be strenuously exacting. When the students complain to their class teacher, saying that we are asking too much of them, that we are working them too hard, that they feel pressured, and even angry, then we know we are being effective. Naturally, our already rough relationship with the class only gets rougher. Then, when it has reached crisis stage, we suddenly back off, and take a new tack. We stand back, giving praise where praise is due and being quietly helpful when correction is needed.

Every anthroposophical doctor will understand what is being described here. When a patient has a lingering illness, it is sometimes necessary to induce a fever. This brings the illness through to a crisis so that a new balance can be gained.

Although I have given a strong picture for the sake of characterization, the same principle can be applied in subtler fashion to individuals and subgroups within a class. By pressing the students who are caught in a lop-sided pattern of behavior, we cause them to contract. When we release the pressure, they bounce back into the middle again. From there we can begin to work effectively.

Another scenario touches on a point which needs elaborating. It tends to occurs in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades when eurythmy is new, or has been little cultivated in a school. Bringing eurythmy to these grades can be particularly difficult—especially with the boys. If eurythmy is new to the students, the unique attributes and skills needed for eurythmy will be foreign to the students. Compounding this understandable lack of experience and ability, there is a decline in fine limb coordination due to the extra growth of the students' limbs. This growth spurt often makes eurythmy a challenge even for experienced students who like the subject. Little wonder that these situations are liable to be challenging. It may feel a bit like hell-fire standing there as a new eurythmy teacher—possibly doubly so if we are female. If a teacher—even an experienced one—is put into this situation without proper allowances having been made, then the program is liable to suffer seriously, or even fail.

Expecting a teacher to succeed in these circumstances is parallel to trying to teach students of this age to play orchestral music when they have never learnt to play an instrument! The developmentally appropriate music lies far above the classes ability, and they are stuck with the equivalent of *Ba, Ba Black Sheep*! Little wonder that such classes chew teachers up! No responsible school would ask a music teacher to enter a seventh, eighth, or ninth grade that has little or no experience playing musical instruments and expect orchestral music to issue forth. Likewise with eurythmy, the school should recognize that special conditions exist, that the real window of opportunity has passed for introducing eurythmy to these children, and the necessary

provisions made for accomplishing the task. This can take a number of forms, such as reduced class sizes, treating eurythmy as a track subject for a period of time, scheduling the eurythmy class in a block rotation, and so forth. All of this serves to introduce eurythmy to these classes in manageable pieces—both for the students and the teacher.

If we find ourselves in this type of situation—or just with a very difficult class—we will want to give ourselves a fighting chance. One method of doing so is outlined below. For this we need the assistance of another teacher.

Over a period of two or three lessons, as soon as a disruptive student misbehaves, send them from the lesson to the other teacher. Disruptive students are often weak in other subjects, and they can then be tutored. These students do not return to eurythmy for four to seven weeks. The effect on the class is two-fold. First, they realize that disruption is no longer an option. Second, the ones who do enjoy eurythmy are given the circumstances in which to develop their abilities and cultivate group working. Most importantly, we begin to establish good class habits. With the negative cloud eliminated the sun begins to shine, and what is possible in eurythmy becomes apparent. Only when this atmosphere has been achieved and becomes the norm are the disruptive students reintroduced one by one. What these students now come into is a class with a very different form from the one they left. Returning them singly prevents them entering as a small, but cohesive, group. This is not necessarily a technique we want to apply often, but it can be effective if the need arises.

Challenging Spaces—Challenging Numbers

Eurythmy is about movement and the space around us. Because of this, the size of the eurythmy room and the number of students attending the eurythmy lessons must be such as to allow children to really move and have the experience of space about them. This might sound obvious, but the obvious is not always recognized in institutions. Classes that are too large, and rooms that are unsuitable, are preconditions for management problems

on a host of levels. Every school has its particular facilities, but the greatest effort needs to be made to provide the conditions in which eurythmy can flourish.

There are some simple guidelines which indicate class size and room suitability:

- all the children should be able to step a vigorous rhythm without bouncing off one another;
- the children should be able to move their arms without hitting against each other when they stand in a circle;
- the children should not have to sit out for more than a third of a lesson; this will vary with each grade due to the type of choreography they need to experience.
- the physical attributes of the room should support the atmosphere needed for healthy eurythmy. Any number of things can detract from this: undersized spaces, rooms with low ceilings, lots of fluorescent lighting, overlarge gymnasiums, multipurpose rooms full of clutter, and so forth. All of these are best avoided.

At risk of being too specific, the maximum number of children per class, under ideal conditions, is approximately as follows: 26 children for grades one and two; 24 children for grade three and four; 22 children for grades five and six; 20 children for grades seven and eight; 18 for high school. The ideal minimum number of children stands at twelve per lesson. I have found that a class size of 15 to 18 students allows a healthy balance of large and small group work.

For a more detailed treatment of eurythmy room design see the paper entitled "Eurythmy Room Design—Principles and Criteria" (AWSNA Pubications) written by the author. This discusses architectural principles underlying successful eurythmy room design as well as outlining materials and construction needs. It is primarily addressed to the architect or builder.

Part Two

Fairy Tales, Tall Tales, and Fables

Kindergarten and the Young Ones

Overall, the same principles which hold true for our lessons apply to the formation of fairy tales, tall tales, and fables. Contraction and expansion, polar contrasts and rhythmical principles are vital. Likewise, clarity of images, gestures which capture the essence of the characters in the story, and for the English speaking world, a rhythmical speech that flows off the tongue, are necessary. Music, if at all possible, should permeate our tales, accenting the natural musicality of our language.

There are a number of ways to approach eurythmy tales for the young ones, but within all of them one principle is always present—the Staff of Mercury. For the very youngest, simple nature tales are avidly absorbed. An example of a nature tale follows below. Naturally, the reader must make allowances for the story being told in a form suitable for print. Many of the activities described are rhythmically repeated—such as when Jeremy Mouse brushes his fur down to this toes. Likewise, when the sun comes through the window, the reader must imagine the interval of the fifth being played on a lyre.

Jeremy Mouse lives in his house, underneath the roots of a Great Oak Tree. He's fast asleep in bed, with his tail curled round his head. In the morning, the sun comes shining through his window—but Jeremy Mouse stays fast asleep. The sun shines even stronger—but he still stays fast asleep. Then the sun shines even brighter, and says: "Wake up, Sleepy Head! It's time to rise and get out of bed."

Jeremy Mouse rubs this eyes, and yawns and stretches and gets out of bed. Then he picks up his brush, and brushes his fur all the way down to his toes. He brushes his tail, too, and brushes his ears, and combs his whiskers till they are straight and smooth.

J*eremy Mouse runs out of his house and scampers up the Oak Tree. He scurries up the Oak Tree with his tail whisking behind him. He scurries to the very top. And who's still fast asleep in bed, with her*

wings wrapped around her head? It's Tiptoes. She lives at the top of the Great Oak Tree, inside an acorn as small as can be.

"Wake, wake!" says Jeremy Mouse. "Wake, wake!"

Tiptoes rubs her eyes. She yawns and stretches and gets out of bed. And the very first thing she does is say her prayers. She says:

Angel of God who is guarding me;
Be thou a bright flame before me,
Be thou a shining star above me,
Be thou a smooth path below me,
Be thou a kind shepherd behind me,
Today, tonight and forever.[14]

Then off they go into the forest …….. and so the story continues. Over the course of the term, or even year, they meet many characters on their journey: Crow, Frog, Snail, Kangaroo, even the gnome brothers Pine Cone and Pepper Pot (a definite favorite because he loves pepper on this food so much that some gets into his beard. When you hug Pepper Pot, you sneeze!).

Sometimes they help folks in distress—such as the Bee who lost his buzz. (Mr. Cactus, being *very* grumpy that day, had caught Bee's buzz on one of his thorns and would not give it back. Luckily, Tiptoes sorted things out.) Then, their wandering done, they return to the Great Oak Tree. The sun goes down, the silvery moon sails into the sky, and Tiptoes and Jeremy Mouse go to bed and fall fast asleep.

This storyline forms the Staff. We always follow the broad order indicated above: Jeremy Mouse always wakes up; Tiptoes always says her prayers; they always go a-wandering. The Serpent, on the other hand, plays her part through variations: perhaps Jeremy Mouse overslept and Tiptoes had to wake him up; now and then Jeremy Mouse brushes his teeth as well as his fur; sometimes Tiptoes washes her hands; sometimes they are so glad to see each other they both cry out: "Here we are! Here we are!" And on their journey they meet different characters, or, if the same character turns up, he is doing something different.

[14]Author unknown.

In this way we obey the rule of the Staff and satisfy the Serpent.

Before going into the kindergarten or grade one, it is vital to wander out into nature and absorb what is happening. If it is windy, then the wind plays into the story. If it is raining, then it rains in the story. If it is spring, or sunny, or a humming bird bumbles by, then these play into the story. It is not enough to look out the window and take in relevant meteorological data. This is not what I am pointing to; go outside and absorb what is happening, soak it in through your pores.

Right through grade one we continue with this format—altered and made age-appropriate for sure, but recognizably similar. Tom Nutcracker and June Berry turn up. They are the son and niece of Farmer John. The Wise Old Owl appears and teaches them the alphabet, while Old Mrs. Teller tells eurythmy tales demanding greater group working—two of which are outlined below. These tall tales and fairy tales are worked out in great detail. The words used, the order in which events happen, the gestures, the music composed, all elements are thoroughly worked through and considered. Here we also find the Staff of Mercury, but it is secreted more into the structure as opposed to the process (although this should also play a part). I have found that we should tell this kind of story verbally the week before we begin it in eurythmy. This allows us to build up a full picture for the children and gives them a chance to digest its contents. Then, when we actually do the story in eurythmy, we need only indicate which part of the story we are doing, and the children will carry the full picture inwardly.

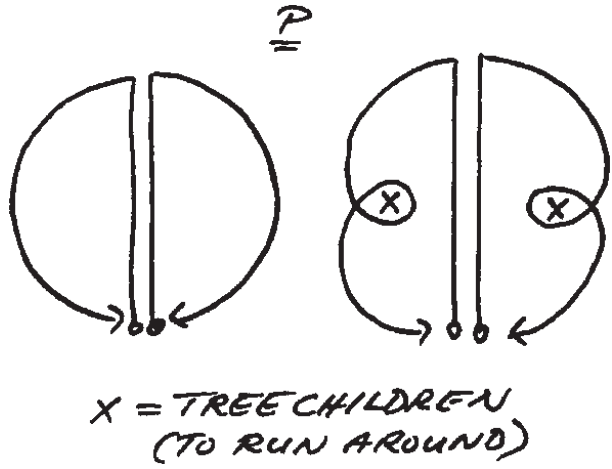
Grade One (and Two)

As stated, we continue a story-imbued format in grade one–and even into grade two. More formal elements enter into the lesson in the form of geometry or mirror forms—though these, too, are embedded into the "story" of the lesson. It is amazing how the children live within this story mood even if we provide only the most tenuous of connections. Mrs. Teller once led a grade one up a golden stairway (rods on floor plus music) to Mirror Land. We did this for a while in the first term, but then moved onto other things. Nevertheless, the children would refer to Mrs. Teller and the golden stairs when doing anything geometric or mirror-like months after the fact. The children are so filled with

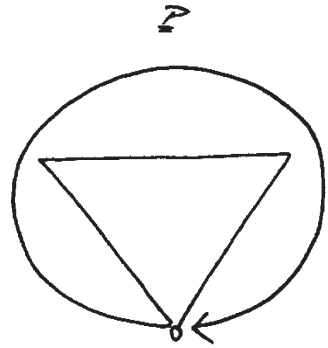
imagination at this age that it is not necessary for us to be giving full-blown story details of everything we do with them. We show the way, lay out the path, and the children will take it up into their inner life.

One example of approaching the grade one lesson:

- greet each child as they enter;
- walk into the circle with music (following a gentle, ingoing path);
- begin the tale of Jeremy Mouse and Tiptoes, or Tom Nutcracker and June Berry (as per above);
- eventually we come to the Wise Old Owl or Mrs. Teller. They tell a eurythmy tale (as per below), or do an alphabet rhyme (see below).
- lay the rods ladder-wise on the floor, and skip up to The Kingdom of Straights and Curves. After skipping, a quieter activity is needed, and we ask the children to sit.
- spend ten minutes or so moving mirror forms such as the ones below. The first few weeks (or months) we only do the one on the left—they recognize it immediately as they have learnt this form from their class teacher in form drawing. Later we can add two trees around which the children run.



Or we can move geometrical forms such as the triangle and circle (and later the square).



- to begin the triangle and circle, tell an appropriate story while laying out six eurythmy rods in a triangle. Then move each side of the triangle (to music) while gesturing I-E-U (German pronunciation); then skip round the circle. The children need the rods to begin with, but they are removed later in the year. Then individual children move what I have just demonstrated. (In grade two we can let three or four children follow each other around the triangle.)
- practice making a circle from their sitting places. Once they have formed the circle, we can allow the children to skip around the circle to skipping music. We call out their names one after the other, and off they go with their hands held lightly above their heads. This sounds very simple, and it is, but the children love to do it.
- a simple fairy or gnome dance;
- sitting quietly;
- saying goodbye to each child as they leave

There are many variations to the lesson plan outlined above, but is a good overall structure to begin with for the novice teacher until they find their own way. Note, however, that during the first weeks of grade one we might want to use an abbreviated version of the above. It is better to have short, but successful, lessons at first, and gradually build towards a longer lesson over the first month or six weeks.

Later in grade one, reflecting what they are learning in the main lesson, we can begin to do the eurythmy alphabet with the children—being careful, however, to create the gestures out of living pictures. In addition, we only bring two or three new sounds per lesson, reviewing beforehand those already learnt via clear, brief characterizations. Later, we can periodically do an alphabet verse. The children quickly realize that what initially appears to be something unknown is, in fact, already known—to their delight!

ALPHABET VERSES

Reg Down

The st**a**rs a**b**ove
Dan**c**e and **d**ip
And s**ee** the **f**arthest
Gods in **h**eaven
Sh**i**ning with **j**oy
And **c**reating **l**ight.
Mighty they are,
Never ending
And **O**,
How **p**erfect
In **q**uiet, **r**adiant
Streams of **t**ime,
And, m**o**ving through **v**eils
Of **w**armth are weaving
Si**x** of **Y**ahweh's
Zigzag rays.

***

A f**a**ther **b**ear
Dan**c**ed and **d**ug
D**ee**p within the **f**orest
For **g**olden **h**oney.
"**I j**olly well **c**an
co**ll**ect as much
melliferous **n**ectar

as these **o**ld **p**aws
will **q**uickly **r**un with.
It **s**mells so **t**asty,
Sm**oo**th and **v**elvety,
But I **w**ish
Those ve**x**ing **y**ellow bees
Would bu**zz** away!"

Note: personally I begin the eurythmy alphabet with both the "eh" and "ah" sounds as the same letter makes both sounds—thus, the bear verse begins "***A*** f***a***ther ***b***ear …" The star verse can also begin "The ***a***ncient st***a***rs a***b***ove…" One can include or ignore this element.

THE SUN-CHILD AND THE BIRDS
Text: Reg Down. Music: Traudi Schneider

I needed a eurythmy tale, so I sat down and wrote this story in minutes. It simply flowed out onto the page. I remember thinking, "This is easy. Now I know how to write fairy tales." Of course, despite sincere efforts, the phenomenon has not repeated itself. The tale somehow hovers between Christmas and Easter. It can be done freely with the younger children, or as a more structured story for grade three or four. The choreography that arises is simple, but somehow archetypal. On stage, with costumes, it is very beautiful.

****

Once upon a time, in a far away land, there lived a Hill. This Hill was the King of Hills; a crown of trees stood on his brow, and the trees swayed in the wind. (1) The birds flew in and out between the trees, (2) and, when night came, they would circle the trees three times, (3) then fold their wings and sleep in the branches.

One day a blue horse came galloping from the North (4). A yellow horse came galloping from the South (5). A purple horse came galloping from the East (6). And a red horse came galloping from the West (7).

They stood in the center of the crown of trees, and said: "Twelve days have we traveled, from the North, the South, the East and the West, and our sorrow hangs like a stone around our necks. O King, send forth the birds – for our Mother, the Earth, is dying."

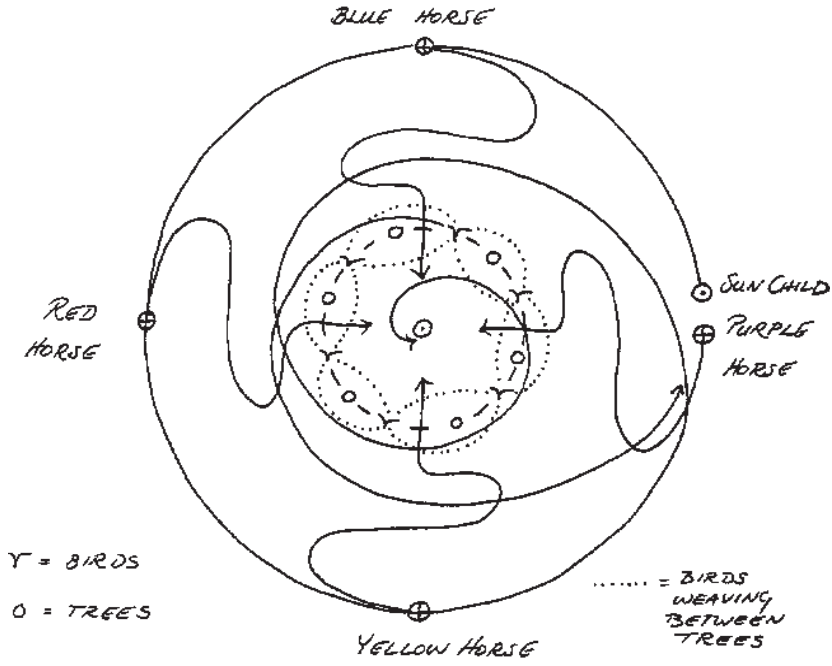
The trees, struck to the heart with sorrow, shed their leaves like tears, and their tears fell upon the earth, and the earth shook with trembling.

Then the birds rose up in the air, and like a spear they flew to the sun. (8) There they gathered the Sun-Child, and carrying Him on their wings, brought him down to the Mother Earth. (8)

Then the Earth ceased trembling. The leaves and blossoms came forth on the trees, and the red horse (7), the purple horse (6), the yellow horse (5), and the blue horse (4), returned to stand guardian upon the four corners of the earth.

(1) Lyre strumming music—children sway in the wind
(2) Birds flying music—children fly
(3) Lyre music as the children fold their wings
(4) Blue horse music—children gallop as per a blue horse
(5) Yellow horse music—children gallop as per a yellow horse
(6) Purple horse music—children gallop as per a purple horse
(7) Red horse music—stand still for first four "drum beats"; then red horse galloping
(8) Birds flying to and from the sun music


TRAUDI SCHNEIDER
BLUE HORSE – STATELY
YELLOW HORSE – BRIGHT
PURPLE HORSE – MYSTERIOUS
RED HORSE – VIGOROUS
BIRDS FLYING TO THE SUN
8
16
BIRDS FLYING BACK TO THE EARTH



The Sun-Child does a slow, full circuit. He is then gathered by the birds and brought into the center.

****

The Bubble, the Straw and the Shoe is a piece of silliness which the children adore. As noted above, it should be verbally told in full the week before doing it in eurythmy. Because the children now have a full picture, this allows us to abbreviate, and merely say, for instance: "They came to a river …" without having to go into details about how they could not get across.

THE BUBBLE, THE STRAW, AND THE SHOE
A Russian Tall Tale

Arranged by Reg Down. Music by Traudi Schneider.

Once upon a time a Bubble, a Straw and a Shoe set out one day to cut wood in the forest. [Bubble music (1); Straw music (20; Shoe music (3)]

They came to a river; a river long and broad. [River music—any flowing music will do. (4)]

The Shoe said to the Bubble: "I know what to do. The two of us can climb on you and float merrily, merrily across."

"Oh, no!" said the Bubble, "I have a much better idea. (5) *The Straw can stretch out from bank to bank, and we can march across—linkety-lank."* (Shoe music; first line only; children march.)

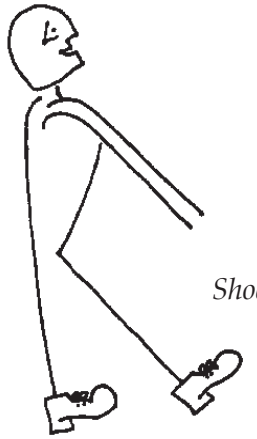
So the Straw stretched, and stretched, and stretched himself long, and the Shoe marched across singing a song. (Marching shoe music – slows down – pause……)

SNAP! – the Straw broke in two, and the Shoe fell in the water KERSPLASH!

And the Bubble laughed, and laughed, and laughed until he BURST! (6)

(1) A big, very phlegmatic "B" floating through the air.
(2) Vowel "Aw" with the hands and feet. Chaplinesque walk.
(3) Stiff arms in vowel "oo." Stiff, marching legs.

Straw



Shoe

(4) River music—any flowing music will do. Move with consonant "V" around room.
(5) Finger on nose with clever expression at end.
(6) Skip and finger-laugh the class spiral-wise into a contracted ball; then burst with "BURST." Spin around on the spot with the music while forming an "O" with the hands above the head. On the last chord let the "O" gesture pop—as per a bubble popping.

Geometrical Forms and Auftakts

Geometry plays a central role in pedagogical eurythmy. It is impossible to imagine a lesson without it in one form or other. From forming a beautiful, round circle in the younger grades to principles of projective geometry in high school, its presence brings about a wisdom-filled ordering of the children. It bestows fruits according to its nature—ordered thinking, harmonious feeling, purposeful willing.

Below are a number of geometrical forms and auftakts which we regularly use in our teaching. They are presented in some detail in order to outline the process through which we bring them to the students.

The Pentagram
Before and after the Nine-year Change

Before the nine-year change we never ask the children to move a form while always facing the front of the room. It is not that we cannot train them to do this, but simply that this activity is meaningless to their state of consciousness. After the nine-year change we develop exercises that require facing the front the whole time. This demand now has inner substance for the children, and they thrive on the challenge of finding themselves in space.

From a strictly logical point of view one might conclude that moving a square would be the best form to bring at this time. Naturally, the square should be moved, but it also has the quality of being somewhat dry and unyielding. The pentagram, on the other hand, has a living, mobile quality that does not allow for fixity. For this reason the pentagram is an excellent form to bring both before, and after, the nine-year change.

Before the Nine-year Change
Class Three

The class is sitting on their benches. I crook my finger silently at one child, indicating that they must stand directly in front of me facing the class.

"Dear children," I say, *"there was once a star. It was a beautiful star. It lived high up in the heavens with all the other stars."*

This star, with all his star friends, glittered and shone and played all night. But this one star shone brighter than all the rest. It sent out rays in all directions. It sent out a ray in this direction (with my foot I indicate that the child must open his right leg), *and then in this direction* (I hold out his left arm), *and a ray shone in this direction* (I hold out his right arm), *and also in this direction* (I indicate he must move out his left leg), *and finally, to crown everything, it sent*

The child is now standing in a pentagram stance, and I am lightly holding his arms so that they do not tire.

"One night, when it was very clear, the stars heard voices calling from the earth. All these voices were calling for the star children. Then they turned and began to float gently down to the earth. But our one particular star was in a real hurry and leapt from heaven, and fell, and fell, till he landed, bump, on the earth."

As the star is falling, I gradually lower the child onto the floor, carefully maintaining his star shape and adjusting him so that he is a perfect star.

"In fact, he landed so hard, that it quite knocked the wind out of him. He was a little dazed and completely forgot that he had fallen from heaven. But his star friends, who were not quite so silly about jumping down from heaven, found him, and one came and stood at his head." (I crook my finger at one child to come and stand at the head – but not too close, or the pentagram will be too small in the end.) *"And another star friend stood at this right leg,* (I get a child to stand at this right leg) *and another came and stood at his left hand,* (ditto) *another stood at his right hand,* (ditto) *and another came and stood at his left leg,* (ditto). *All his friends now stood in a star shape around the poor little star, and as soon as they did this, he was able to get up on his own two feet."* (I have the child get up and stand at the head position.)

"First, he thanked the head star; then he went and thanked the right foot star; then he thanked the left hand star; and he thanked the right hand star; and he thanked the left foot star, and, lastly, he went back to

the head star and thanked him again, because the head star is the one who starts everything." (While thanking each star friend, I lead the child from place to place so that he moves the pentagram.)

I ask the child to repeat the pentagram movement without my leading him—following his nose, of course. Then I ask one or two children to come and move the same path. Leaving well enough alone I continue with the lesson.

In subsequent lessons we do not have to repeat the story—though sometimes the children ask you to tell it again. This can be done—but not over-done—perhaps altering the story slightly to suit the nature of each child. As an aside, I have seen that this story is healing for difficult children, especially boys.

This simple exercise, of allowing children to move the pentagram from person to person, can be carried for a whole term or longer. When the children are clear about the path of the pentagram, we can ask the moving child to skip all the way round the other five until he or she is back at the head again.

A further step is to have five children move the pentagram on the same path as the single child, but this time in sequence. Starting at the top, the head child moves to the right leg, then the right leg child runs to the left, and so forth. After the fifth child moves to the head position they all skip a complete circle together. Eventually we add the five vowels to this exercise, each child holding their vowel until the star is complete. Then all move the circle together.

As a further step, we can tell the children to directly repeat the pentagram after they have finished circling. Of course, after moving their part of the star and running the full circle, the children will be in new beginning places! This will catch them out, and it becomes quite a game if we slowly speed up the tempo so that they really have to be on the ball to get both their new direction and their new vowel correct as they move through all five possibilities.

Another variation which the children love is to have them move from place to place with a drum beat count of six. Then, the next time thorough, we only give them a count of five; then a count of four; then three; then two, and finally, the fastest of all, a count of one.

Naturally, it is wonderful to add a poem or music to any of the above. We can also periodically ask the children if anyone

wishes to move the whole thing alone. There are always children who want to go solo, and they take the challenge with the utmost seriousness.

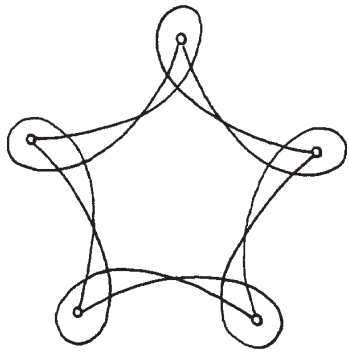
After the Nine-year Change
Grades Four and Five

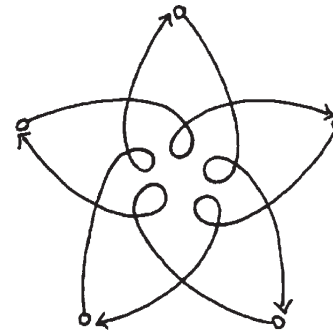
In grades four and five the children generally are familiar with the pentagram and how to draw it—if not from our teaching, then certainly from their class teacher or older siblings. Begin by asking who knows how to draw a five-pointed star. A forest of hands will rise up, and little comments like, "That's easy," will go through the class. Have one child draw the form on the board. Then ask: "Who can move this star?" Again a forest of hands will go up, but, pausing for an instant, we add: "Facing the blackboard the whole time." There might be a slight hesitation in the class; things are now not so certain. Choose a few children to move the star. Chances are some will move it quite well, but—and this depends on the age and ability of the children—some will not have the star balanced in space, or will twist around as they move through the form.

Have individual children practice the star over the next few lessons. Make a point of asking them not to turn their heads to look where they are going when they move sideways or backwards, as we want the children to practice sensing the space around them. When they know the form well, we can blindfold a child and let them try to move a perfect pentagram. The only disadvantage with this exercise is that all the children will insist on having their fair and proper turn being blindfolded, which, with a large class, might take a number of lessons to complete.

The next stage is to have five children move the star at the same time. Build this up by putting one child at the head and another at the right foot, and have these two move together. This is quite easy, of course, but the students immediately anticipate when five people will all move together. Then add the third child . . . and the fourth, etc. The reason for taking it step by step is to make the principle of interlocking as they approach the center of the pentagon patently obvious. Building it up in this way does not take long, but it is a step which lays things bare for the children to see and precludes difficulties which can arise.

When all five are moving the pentagram smoothly together, we can add music, poetry, vowels, and so forth. For the older children—class six and up—we can add a whole host of ways to get from one point of the star to another. In addition, we can introduce "breaths" or "schwungs" to different points on the star during the pauses within the music or poetry.





Reading Forms

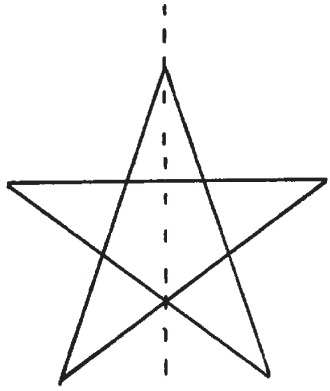
Early in the process of bringing the pentagram, or any form for that matter, we can make the children aware of the undrawn lines of symmetry and orderliness needed to move it properly. Some children seem to be aware of them from the beginning, but others not, and this makes forms far more difficult for them to move.

Reading the underlying structures of a form is one of the options we may choose to exercise from time to time. In my experience these principles are not generally brought to the children by the class teacher, yet they are vital for grasping geometrical or formal graphic forms. Some children see the underlying principles instantly, almost instinctively, while others need to be taught how to look for them. This gives them the necessary

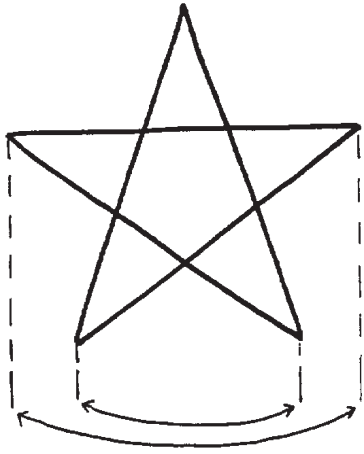
reference points needed to grasp, and move, a form competently. The principles outlined below are also useful when drawing irregular forms —such as in geography.

What we need to bring forth from the children, in a language and manner suited to their age, are the following points with respect to the pentagram.

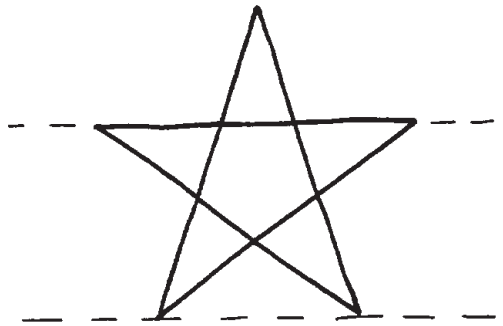
The pentagram has a central line of symmetry. Thus, left and right should always be balanced and equidistant from the center line.



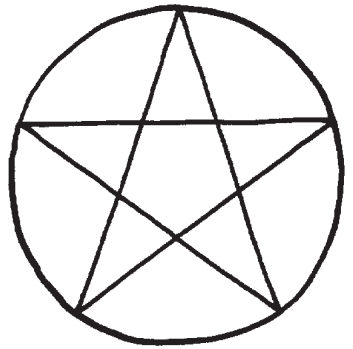
The feet are closer together than the hands. This is a visual clue which is often missed by the younger children.



The feet and hands are level—another clue often missed.



The pentagram lies in a circle and the distances between the points are the same.



Bringing these things so directly definitely applies to those who have passed the nine-year change, though I have observed children as young as seven being aware of the unseen principles behind a geometrical form. In grade four it should be treated very lightly and more as mystery game. Or, if you feel the children are still too young, simply take the opportunity to point out to them that the feet are always level, ditto the hands, and so forth. In grade five, and definitely by grade six, we can be quite direct about asking where they can find the underlying lines of symmetry and structure in geometrical forms. Pointing out these principles assists those who cannot read a form. These children are often the ones who fail to perceive the interconnectedness of things, and, therefore, cannot grasp totalities. They are often also the ones with poor spatial awareness and who have difficulty in

other lessons. From this point of view, eurythmy, when rightly cultivated, helps to lay the foundation for an imaginative grasp of totalities within the thought life of the children.

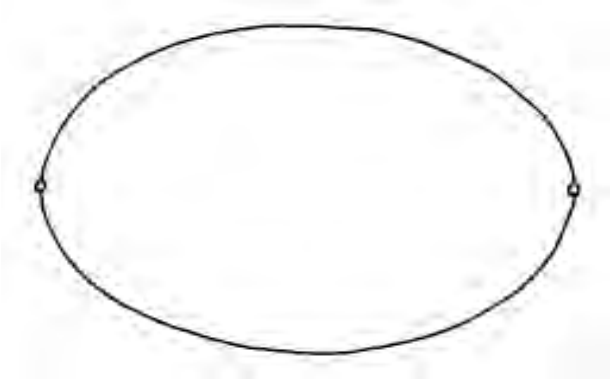
Curve of Cassini

Classes Two, Three and Up

The mathematical *Curve of Cassini* is a staple for all pedagogical eurythmists. It is easy to teach, the children delight in moving the form, and it lends itself easily to both poetry and music. For the students it is an imaginative picture of the developmental process they are going through—namely, from out of the "we" into the "I." The Cassini form reflects the process of moving out of the family or group sheath, and finally standing upon one's own two feet. This form is all the more potent because, like music, it does not descend as far as words but remains universal.

Below is one example of the process gone through when teaching the *Curve of Cassini* to grades three, four, or five. As always, only the teacher in the classroom can judge how fast or slow to proceed.

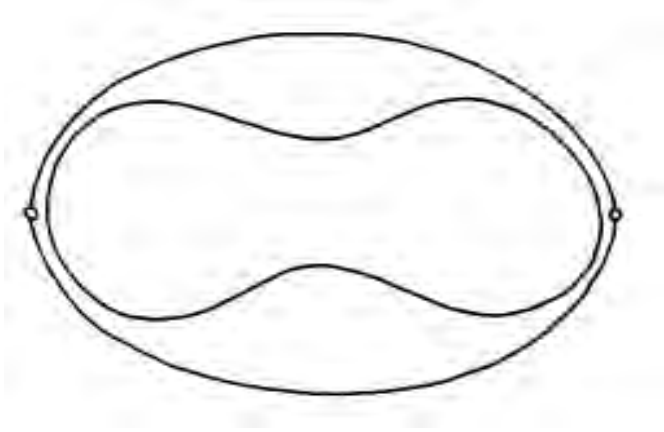
Step One: Draw a large beautiful oval on the board and place two points on either end of the oval. Ask who would like to move this oval form with you. Stand at one of the points on the oval and tell the volunteer child to stand at the other point. Move the oval together, making sure that you are always opposite one another. Repeat this process with a number of children.



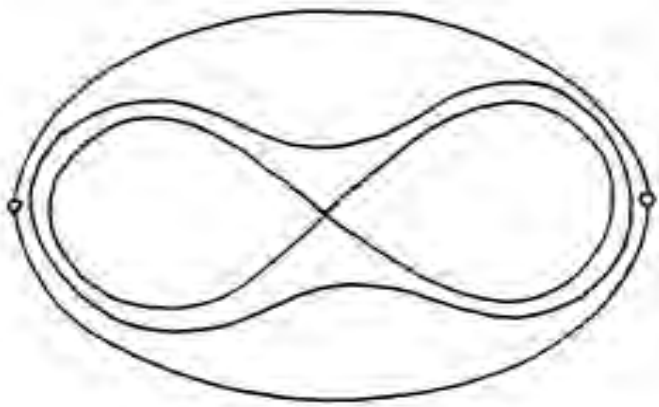
Step Two: During the next lesson draw the oval again and move around the form with a child. Then step out and allow two children to try it by themselves. Allow perhaps three more pairs. Do not extend this initial work too long, and do not allow those sitting out to become bored.

Step Three: In the next few lessons the children practice staying opposite each other as they move around the curve. You can add the element of speeding up the moving of the form, but do not allow them to run too fast or get silly. Keep them in check.

Step Four: Each day we have been drawing the beautiful oval. Now draw the oval with a dip inwards at the center—the children call this the "peanut form." Have them move first the oval, and then the peanut form with one or two children. Then let pairs of children move the form by themselves.

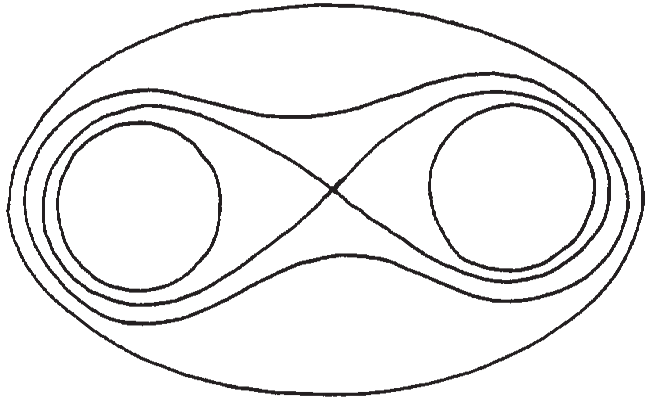


Step Five: When the children are familiar with these two forms, review by drawing both on the board. Then ask the children what form comes next. When they have found the solution, add a beautiful figure eight to the drawing on the board. Move all three forms—oval, peanut, and figure eight—with a child, stressing that when meeting at the crossing of the eight, we pass left shoulder to left shoulder (or right to right, if you prefer—either way, be consistent). Let a few pairs try this new sequence of forms.



Step Six: Only pairs of children do the three forms until the whole class is quite at home with them. Periodically, have the children draw the forms on the board before beginning the exercise. Remember to show the children how to really move their whole body when doing the drawings.

Step Seven: Next, draw the three forms beautifully and ask what form comes next. When the children have worked it out, draw the two circles on the board. Move this with a child, and then allow pairs try by themselves. Having the younger ones skip the circles is delightful.



For children past the nine-year change, let pairs practice moving the circles facing one another as an element in itself. They find maintaining a perfect circle quite difficult, and continually cut tangents off it. If need be, stand in one of the centers and humorously poke at them to make them keep them equidistant from center.

Step Eight: Quite soon after step seven, add music or a poem so that they become familiar with integrating the tempo of the music/poem with the form.

Step Nine: Without music or poetry, build up a train of followers behind the two leaders. You can do this over a few lessons. The children especially need to practice not crowding each other by cutting corners. For the older ones, moving as a group in two circles while facing each other is not easy to accomplish smoothly.

With older children we can telescope the process above into three to four lessons before adding music or poetry. Then keep juggling poetry/music work and precise form work.

With younger children (grade three), have two students stand where the middle of the circles will be, and contract the Curve of Cassini into three steps, leaving out the oval with the dip. Move the circles at the end *not* facing one another, but simply following the form "with their noses."

A beautiful poem for the fourfold Curve of Cassini is one Molly von Heider gave to us in my training. She told us that it was written by an English poet tramp, though I cannot remember his name.

O, I was once young upon a day	Move half the oval – leaping on the "y" of "young."
I was once young upon a day	Second half of oval is moved.
I was wandering all alone	First half of "peanut"
I was wandering all alone	Second half of "peanut"
Glad was I when I met another	First half of eight
Glad was I when I met another	Second half of eight
For man is the joy of man	Moved freely around the circles
For man is the joy of man	

When the students know the poem well and have learnt the sound gestures you have chosen, ask what color "Oh, I was once young upon a day" is. They will always tell you it is yellow. Then ask what color "I was wandering all alone" is, and they will say blue. "Glad was I when I met another" they will recognize as green. The fourth line, "For man is the joy of man," throws the children for a loop as they cannot quite describe the color. It is peach-blossom – in my opinion – and if we bring a color sample for them to look at they will agree (at least for the most part!).

Having brought these underlying color experiences into consciousness, you can ask the children to color their gestures as they move through the poem. The children delight in this little artistic revelation and often will make great efforts to permeate their gestures with the colors.

The Harmonious Eight

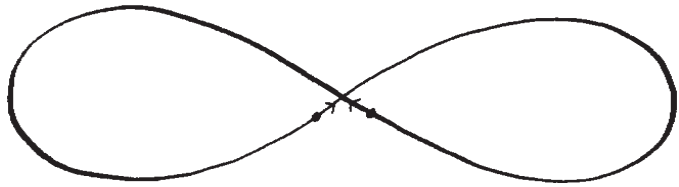
Class Five through High School

The Harmonious Eight is a favorite form with eurythmists regardless of whether they teach children or not. There is something so archetypal, and indeed harmonious, about this form that it immediately speaks to our feeling and imagination. It is easy to introduce to children, and yet may be made more and more challenging. The steps outlined below are a long version, suitable for grade five or six, but they can be adapted for different skill levels by abbreviating or accelerating the process. As will be apparent, with just a little imagination, the process given below is capable of many variations.

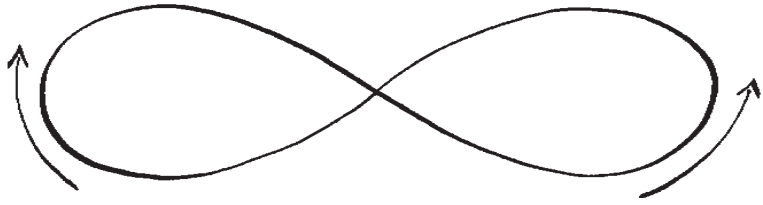
The only cautionary note I need to sound is that a significant number of students who have joined my lessons from other Waldorf schools, have commented on doing the Harmonious Eight to the point of nausea. Clearly, even with such a wonderful form, it is possible to have too much of a good thing.

Step One. Take a piece of (red) chalk about one inch long, and using it sideways, vigorously draw a large, clear figure eight on the lower middle part of the board. Place two small dots on

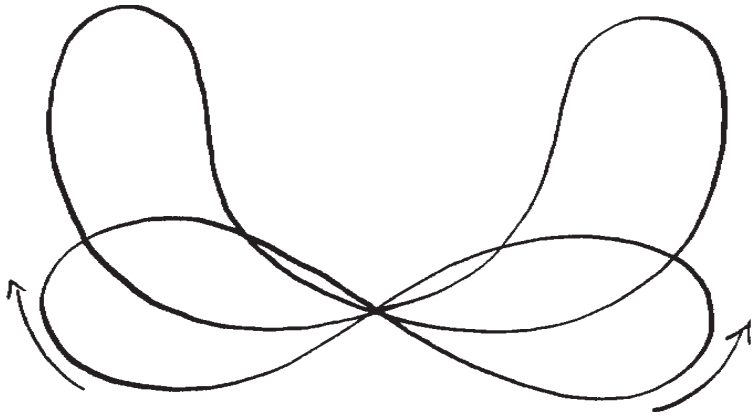
the form just before the crossing. Ask two children to move the figure eight, noting that the person coming from the right always crosses in front. By grade five this will be no big deal, just ensure the students mirror each other and let them go through the figure once or twice. Have them follow their noses; facing frontal is only introduced after they have adequately grasped the total Harmonious Eight.



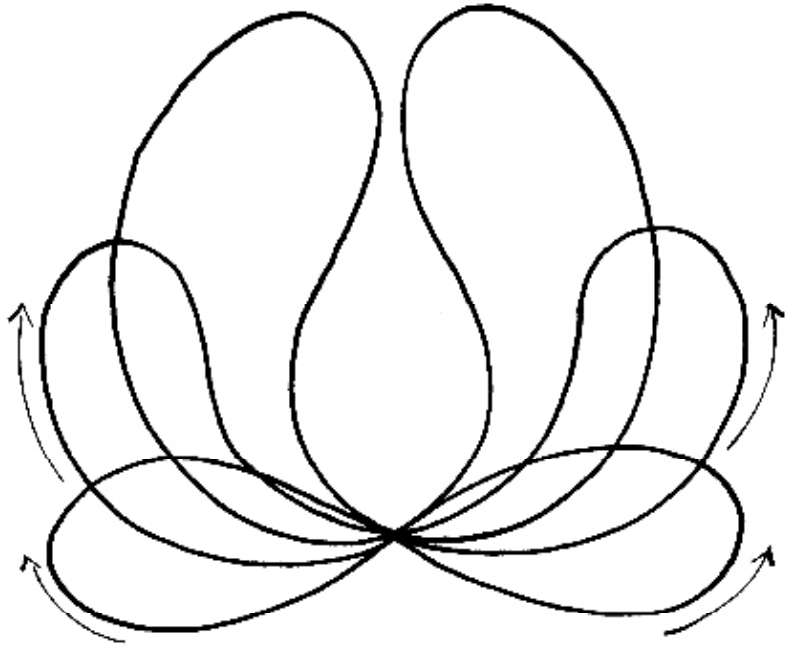
Return to the blackboard and tell the students that the figure eight is made of something like a rubber band, and that the crossing point is fixed so that it cannot move. Ask them what happens to the form if we push upwards on the two wings of the figure eight? When we speak of "pushing upwards," we draw the two lines of force on the board.



While the children rarely give a clear verbal picture, they will gesture something like an upward-curving movement. Confirm this and draw with (orange) chalk a figure eight, half-way between the first drawn eight and a Harmonious Eight.



Have two children move both the first and the second eight. Then ask what happens if we apply more pressure to the figure eight? Take a piece of bright yellow chalk, and clearly and beautifully draw the Harmonious Eight proper. If you have done your drawing well, and with three consecutive colors, you will always hear comments as to its beauty coming from the children. Have two children move the first, second, and third figures.



Through simple straightforward means, you have called forth both a sense for the beauty of the Harmonious Eight and a desire to move the form. You have also allowed the children to enter into a process which is really quite magical and which always engages their feelings. You may actually feel sympathy for those children who cannot be chosen to be the first pair to try to move all three forms one after the other!

Step Two. During the next few lessons, go through the process of drawing the three forms on the board. There is not much need to say anything. If we remain silent as we draw the forms, it often has the effect of engaging the children more than if we speak. When we have finished, point out especially the central part of the Harmonious eight, telling the students really to sculpt it (they have a tendency to straighten out the curving lines). Also note that the outer part of the Harmonious Eight lies for the most part on a circle.

Step Three. At this point, you need to choose between remaining with the three-phase Harmonious Eight and making an exercise of it, or continuing with the Harmonious Eight alone. What comes below is for the Harmonious Eight proper.

Now you can introduce flowing music—a Bach prelude is excellent—and let the children practice in pairs. Do not overdo things by letting the music go on forever, or spending most of the lesson moving the form. Remember that eurythmy is a sweet thing: too much of it and the children feel jaded, a smidgen too little leaves them longing for more.

Step Four. When everybody has had a turn being part of a pair, add a second pair following the first, and then a third behind them, and so fourth. This can be built up slowly over two or three lessons until the whole class is moving the Harmonious Eight. How long you spend building up to the point where the whole class is moving the form depends on class size and ability. As a rule, choose as leaders a strong pair who move a clear, well defined form. Having built up to the whole class moving with everyone equally spaced, you can ask who the leaders now

are? The children quickly realize that everyone, and no one, is the leader.

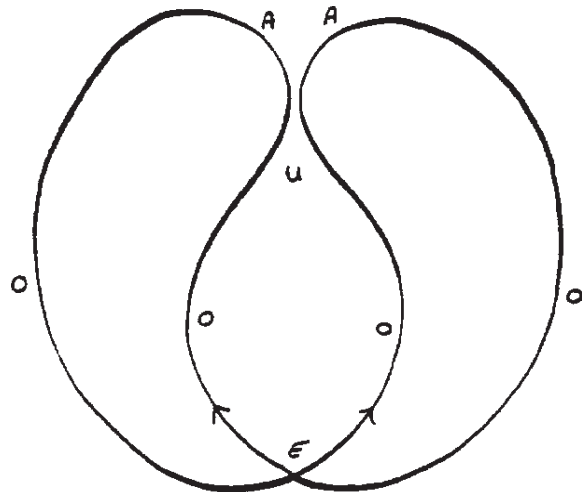
Step Five. There are a number of options at your disposal at this point:

• introduce the hexameter rhythm and lead this over into the Harmonious Eight form. The rhythm can first be stepped simply to a drum beat and then led over into a poem. The poem can be developed to the point where it may be shown to the parent or student body. If you go this route, it is wonderful to have the children enter the stage or auditorium stepping to the hexameter with a drum beat. The leader(s) can be given a mark of distinction in their attire. When they have arrived in their places on stage, the poem is spoken and done in eurythmy. When they are finished, the performers exit to the voice of the drum.

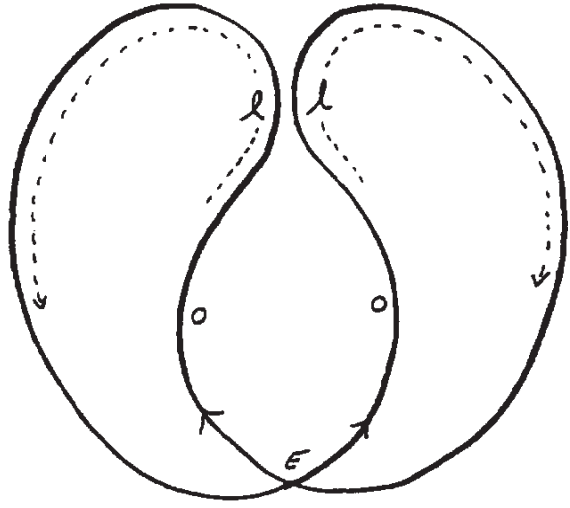
• an exciting exercise also includes the drum. This exercise should also be built up step-wise from single pairs to the whole class, as it takes some skill. Beginning *very* slowly, the children step one step, and one step only, for each beat of the drum. Build the speed up until the students move with a rhythmical, elastic gait while maintaining their proper spacing and crossings. To conclude the exercise increase the speed to full tilt, and then quickly phase down to a very slow beat.

If there is a problem with this exercise, it is that it can be too much fun, and some children get silly. To get a jump on this potential problem, simply tell the children that this may happen, and that if you point to someone, or call their name, it means that they, and their partner, have to leave the form.

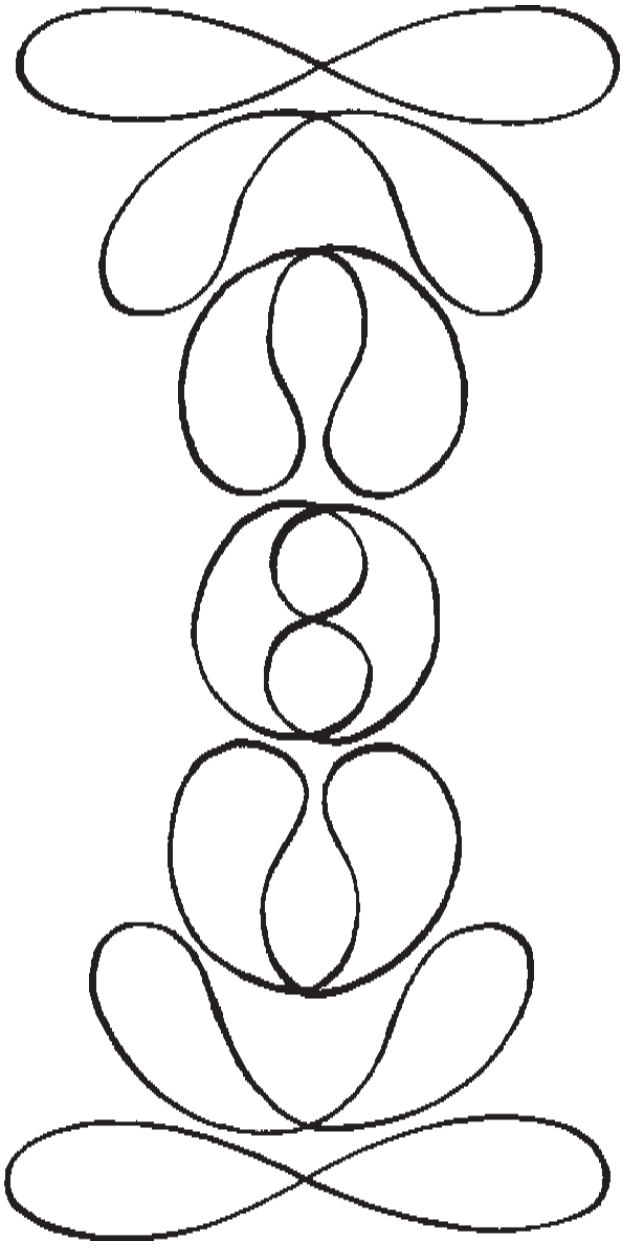
• At this stage we can also introduce the sounds that arise naturally out of the Harmonious Eight. The students enjoy working these out for themselves. (German pronunciation)



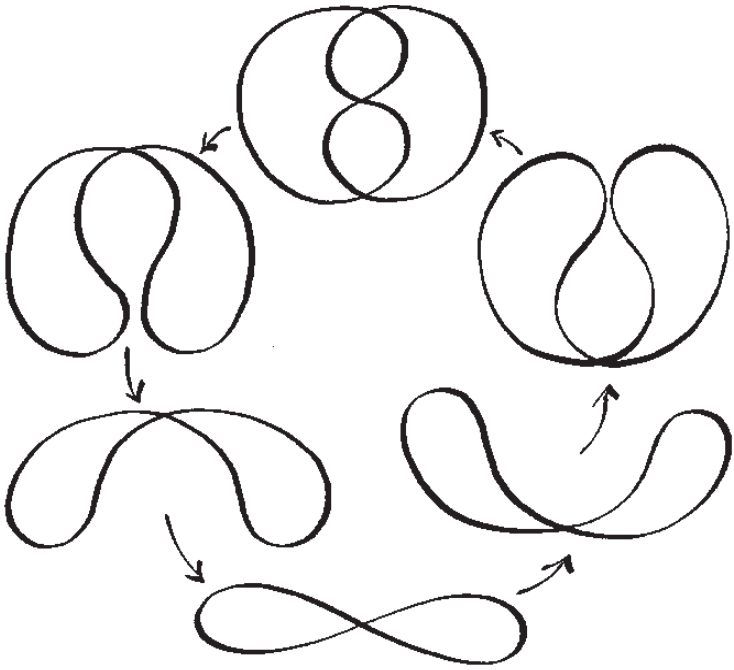
A variation is -



It is possible to bring a more complex version of the three step process described at the beginning of the chapter. By continuing logically and proceeding *through* the Harmonious Eight form, it reappears inverted on the other side.



This makes a beautiful sight on the blackboard when laid out in a circle.



The inversion through the mid-point has a curious effect on our thinking and perception when we actually move the form. While I have done this version of the exercise with a whole class in grade six, it is not something I would necessarily recommend unless the class is gifted and patient. It is harder than it looks when a whole class is moving at the same time. It is far easier when only one pair moves through the forms, as something done occasionally just for the fun of it. Obviously this sequence lends itself to the high school grades.

Diamond Auftakt

A Class Six Classic

The Diamond Auftakt is custom-made for the sixth grade. At this age the children enter Rome, the age of the awakening, social human being. They love law and order; that is, they love law and order of a beautiful and purposeful kind, a kind that orders the class into a meaningful whole.

The first time I taught this auftakt, while not totally disastrous, it was certainly not smooth sailing. Once the class got hold of the principles, things began to go better. I realized that if I could bring the auftakt in such a way that my teaching was a help, and not a hindrance, then this exercise was sound for this age. Since then it has become a grade six staple for me, and I have never had a class that has not enjoyed it tremendously. I have especially noted that the children really drink in the vowels when they are done in conjunction with the exercise. A classic simplicity and directness comes through when it is done in this way. I often use the Leopold van der Pals music (*Auftakte zu eurythmischen Darstellungen*) as it lends itself to the clear stepping and sense of order needed for the small internal diamonds. The only alteration I have found necessary is slowing down the transition music to accommodate the long route taken by those moving the outer circle. At the end of the transition, the pianist brings the music back up to speed for the small diamonds again. It sounds strange in print, but when artistically handled, it works just fine.

It need hardly be said that there are some dangers in tackling this exercise. We must have the class in hand as a teacher. Another danger is flogging the thing to death. Longer periods of concentration and patience are sometimes demanded of the students. To counteract the hazard of trying the students patience, teach efficiently. Do not spend too long on the auftakt in any one lesson, and bring contrasting exercises during the rest of the period.

What follows is a long version of teaching the auftakt. Classes vary so greatly that some need a long, slow process, while others grasp the totality as quickly as it is taught. A few of the stages can, therefore, be compressed, sometimes considerably, but overall our Golden Rule is: *Go slow—make sure they know.* Naturally, there are different ways to move this auftakt, so I will try to ensure clarity on details.

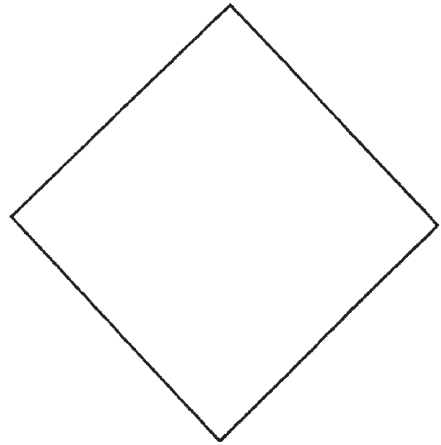
Day One. The children are sitting on their benches. It is the end of the lesson. Tell them to repeat after you: ***The Golden Rule is: Never cross our own diamond.*** "Louder," you demand, and they repeat the rule louder. By this time the student's curiosity, and

sense of humor, is thoroughly perked. You continue: ***The Silver Rule is: Diamonds go widdershins.*** Naturally the children will want to know what "widdershins" means, so tell them that it is only to be found in the biggest of dictionaries (which they will be learning to use by this time). Chances are good that a few children will not wait until the next lesson to tell you what they have discovered, and to spread the news that "widdershins" means counterclockwise. Then add the third rule: ***The Bronze Rule is: The big circle goes the big way and the little circle goes the little way.*** Lastly, we add: ***The Iron Rule is: There are many other rules.*** To end, test some students on the rules and leave well enough alone.

Day Two. Test the students by asking what the Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Iron Rules are—both as a class and by asking individuals.

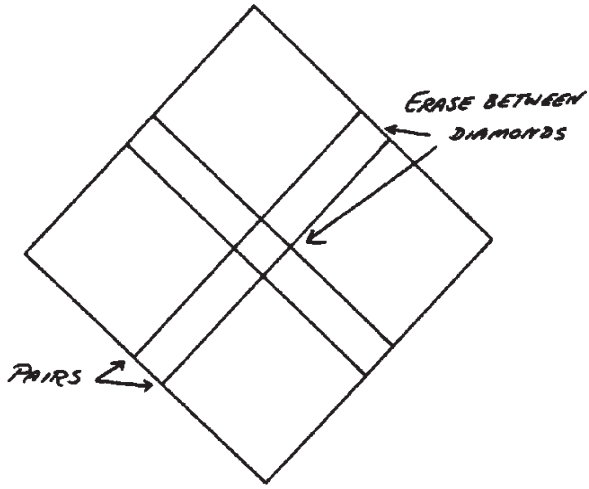
Day Three. Review the rules quickly, making sure that all the children know what widdershins means. Draw construction lines *lightly*, in white chalk, on the board in this order:

1) a large diamond. Ask the students to name the shape, so that you are certain everybody recognizes it as a diamond.



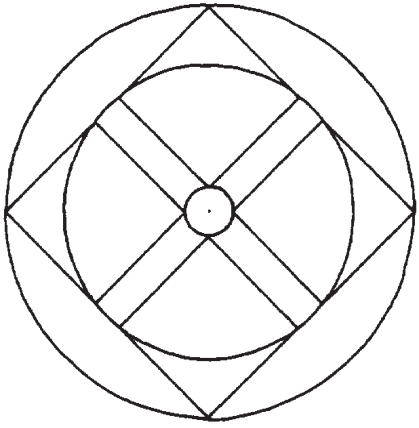
2) draw in the lines that delineate the four small diamonds. Point out to the students that there are now four smaller

diamonds within the larger diamond. Also note that between the four outer points there are pairs of points close together. Pointing this out will help later when everyone is settling into their positions after the transition.

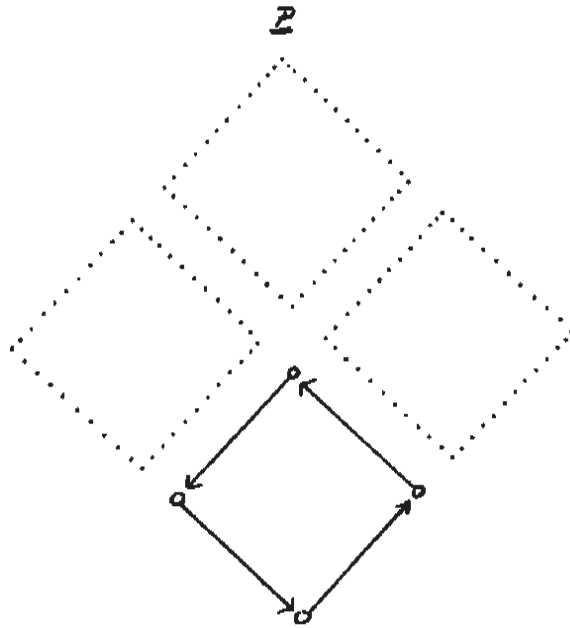


3) place a dot at the center, and say: "This is center. Who can find circles?" The students will find the three circles that correspond to the inner, middle, and outer corners of the diamonds. Lightly draw in these circles.

What you now have on the board are all the construction lines needed to show how the auftakt works.



4) place the letter "P" for "public" at the top of the board. Using only the bottom diamond to demonstrate, place four differently colored dots on the four points of this small diamond. Explain that the back people of the small diamonds are always the first to move. Write this on the board as one of the Iron Rules. Ask: "In what direction must this back person move?" The students soon work out that the back person must move according to the Silver Rule, widdershins, to the next person's place. The person they have arrived at then takes up the movement, and moves widdershins to the top of the small diamond. The top person then moves to the left-hand place, and the fourth person moves back into the first person's position at the rear.

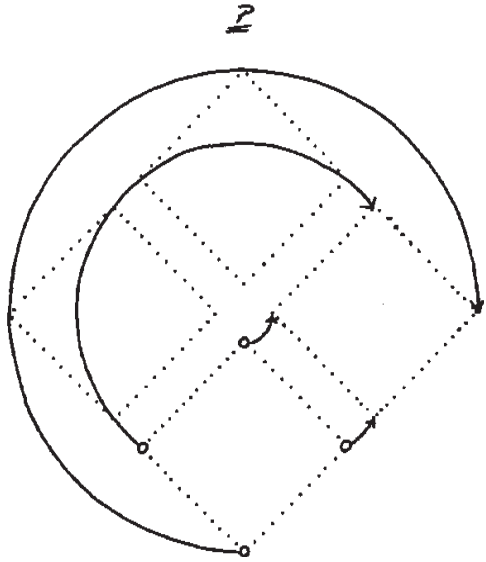


5) explain that the four people in the bottom diamond are now going to move to another small diamond, and ask the students which one it must be. Again they will quickly figure out that, because "diamonds go widdershins," the next diamond must be the one on the right. Lights begin to go on in the children's eyes

"But how are we going to get there?" you ask. Place your chalk on the back position of the small diamond, and ask: "What is the Bronze Rule?" The students repeat that, according to the Bronze Rule "the big circle goes big way," and, therefore, this person goes the long way to his next place. Following the existing construction lines, draw this transition movement with the appropriate color. Likewise, "the small circle goes the small way", so you draw the top person's path to his next place.

Now comes the most difficult: "What about the two people on the left and right sides? How do they get to the next small diamond?" Following the Golden Rule of "never cross your own diamond," they must work out first one person's path, and then the other person's path. Draw these two transition paths in. You will need to point out that each group of four has *two* "own diamonds"—the one they are leaving, and the one they are going to.

This is a good time to write on the board two other Iron Rules: ***Always stay on your transition circle,*** and ***Always face front.*** Some students have a tendency to wander off their circle and to get mixed up in other people's transitions; likewise, they tend to twist away from facing front as they move around the circle.



Now have four competent children get into place and actually move what has been drawn on the board. Count four beats for each way on the small diamond, and twelve for the transition. Establish this pattern from the beginning as it corresponds to the Van der Pals music. Just before they are about to start the transition (you will have already asked each child if he knows where he is going), tell them that you will count twelve beats, giving an example of the speed. On the twelfth beat they are all to arrive at their new diamond *at the same time*. Point out how two people only have a transition of two or three steps, whereas the other two have a longer way to go.

When these four have successfully completed their transition, send the students back to the very beginning to repeat the whole process. Because they will now move with certainty, doing this will help to fix the operative principles clearly in everyone's mind.

Day Four. Draw the construction lines and review the movements of the bottom diamond on the board. A good alternative is to have a student draw the movements, while the others have to correct them if anything is amiss. Then get the original four students and place them on the small back diamond. Tell four others which person's place they will be taking, because they will be moving it next. Have the original students move the form, and then let the new ones try. Depending on how well these two groups do the form, there may be time for another set of four.

From here on, factors such as class size and ability will play into how long you spend in each stage. Therefore, I will simply number the following steps.

Step Five. Step five should follow step four fairly quickly, as the students do not need to perform each stage perfectly before moving to the next.

Have a foursome repeat the first stage to the small diamond on their right. When they arrive at the new diamond, ask them to sit on the floor in place. On the blackboard illustrate how they repeat the movement around the small diamond, move the transition, and arrive at the top diamond. Have them move what has just been demonstrated on the board, and again have

the students sit on the floor in place. An alternate possibility is to let the students work it out for themselves.

Then, repeat this process to the left-hand diamond, and then once again, so that the students arrive back in their original places on the bottom diamond. Remember, you have chosen the four moving children for their ability to provide a good first example, and the chances are good that they will have a sure grasp of what they are doing. Therefore, engage those sitting on the benches by asking where certain children need to go to next.

Do not include the coda at this point, unless it is obvious that the class is ready for a new element.

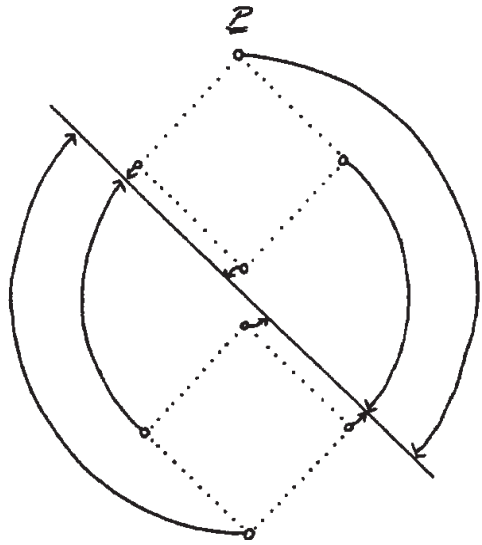
Step Six. As the children need to get used to orienting themselves in space, and not to a blackboard, phase out its use as quickly as possible, using it only to illustrate something that is not clear. As a rule, the quicker we eliminate the blackboard as a visual prop, the quicker the students know a form for themselves.

It is also excellent to have the children take turns being "teacher" and leading a group through the four diamonds. This turnabout engages the whole class and prevents spoon-feeding.

When the children are familiar with the principles of the auftakt, add the music. This will necessitate adding the coda. In the coda, each set of four students move, twice as fast as normal, completely around their small diamond *simultaneously*.

Step Seven. Place a group at the bottom diamond, and a group at the top diamond, and move them simultaneously.

At this time you can show them that if they all move the transition exactly, a perfectly straight diagonal line arises for an instant when they pass through the half-way point. They will find this phenomenon easier to grasp as a whole if you draw it for them on the blackboard first. Of course, with sixteen people on the form, a large "X" appears at the half-way point.



Step Eight. Add the vowels. In sequence, beginning from the back of each small diamond, first "AH," then "EH," then "OH," then "OO." Each holds their vowel until the small diamond movement is complete.

If only two diamonds are doing the exercise, the transition can be done with consonant "L" to begin; then shining out in vowel "EE" at exactly half-way when the single diagonal line momentarily appears; then return to "L" for the remainder of the transition.

If four diamonds are moving at the same time, the students can do "L" (or "EE") to begin the transition: an above-the-head vowel "Eh" at the half-way point to correspond with the intersecting diagonals which appear.

During the coda, when the children move all the way around their small diamond quickly, *all* do the vowels in sequence: "AH," "EH," "OH," OO." When they arrive back in their beginning places, they stand in "EE"—corresponding with the final chord of the music. To facilitate clarity of form in this quickly-moved coda, tell the children to move quickly from place to place, but to bring their feet together for an instant at each corner.

Step Nine. Practice the two horizontal diamonds. As a rule this is easily grasped by the students.

Step Ten. Give all the students fixed places on the complete form. If problems arise in one diamond, let them first do it alone, then add its opposite diamond, and then go back to the full group.

Transition problems can arise when we using all four diamonds as pairs of children meet on the circle, but going in opposite directions. Make a rule of the road that those moving the longer path pass on the outside of those moving the short path.

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The children love doing this auftakt to the beat of a drum. No cues are given except the rhythmical beats and pauses of the drum—*one*, two, three, four—*one*, two, three, four, etc. Give slight pauses both before and after the transitions.

A more difficult version of the above is to begin with a very slow drum beat and increase the speed till the children fairly fly. The people on the outside big-transition circle are given special permission to not always face front, as they truly need to move at full speed to be on time for the next diamond.

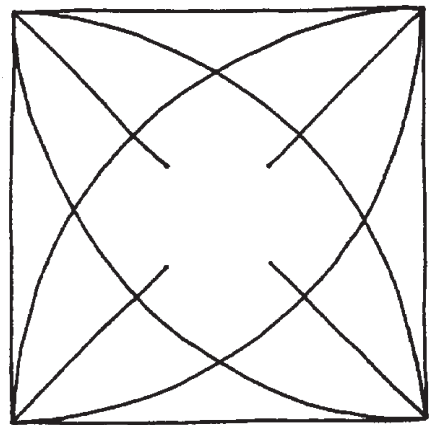
A quieter exercise is for a single person to move their form alone to the beat of the drum. The degree to which the whole class engages in this exercise has astonished me on many occasions.

The next stage of difficulty involves assigning a single person a position other than his usual one. This is a real challenge, as the child needs to be very ordered in space and know the rules well to accomplish it successfully. The solo exercises are voluntary. The more gifted children will volunteer first, as usual, so keep an eye out for interest from the shy and not-so-capable ones. If you sense that they are ready and willing, ask if they would like to try.

To really bring forth precision and polish, have the class perform this exercise for the whole student or parent body.

Wir Suchen Uns / We Seek One Another

Children consistently love this ditty, and the form is very easy to teach. The nods are nodded to the partner across the diagonal. Grieg's *Little Birds* music, first nine bars, works *excellently* with the form as well—nods and all.



The Owl and I
R. Down

I saw an owl	- straight side
Within a tree.	- curve across
He stared at me	- in / out
He did! He did!	- nod nod! nod nod!
I stared at him,	- straight side
He stared at me,	- curve across
We spent the day in disagree	- in / out
We did! We did!	- nod nod! nod nod!
"To stare is rude	- straight side
You owly bird!"	- curve across
"Too-whit-to-YOU," said he	- in / out
He did! He did!	- nod nod! nod nod!

The Spiral Measure

I am following Molly von Heider's lead in using the word "measure" as opposed to "auftakt" in naming this spiral form. I created it for a grade five class—though "discovered" would perhaps be a better word to use than "created" as a real auftakt reveals an archetype, or true principle, which is already existent. I believe the Spiral Measure follows that rule. My grade five children performed it at a teachers conference to a three verse poem (with musical transition)—Seosamh Maccathmhaoil's "I will go with my father a-ploughing."[15] While we happened to use this particular poem, the structure of the "measure" is suited to many poems or pieces of music. It is suitable for a gifted grade five through high school and beyond.

The text path is moved by the eight students one after the other, beginning with the person on the outermost part of the spiral. Each person moves and gestures one line of text, then the next person takes over. Note the single straight line at the end; it is crucial that this be moved with utmost straightness. It is the yang that balances the yin.

The transition is moved first by the four "ones" together; then the three "twos," and lastly, solo, number "three." We used the vowels (German pronunciation) "O" for the "ones," "A" for the "twos," "I" for number "three" at the end.

After the transition is complete, turn the book ninety degrees clockwise so that "Public #2" is in the direction of the audience. This gives the form for the next verse and transition. Then turn the book a further ninety degrees so that "Public #3" is towards the audience for the next verse and transition . . . and so forth. To teach this form I drew it on a large piece of paper and simply turned it ninety degrees as needed. It only took one lesson for the children to grasp the form.

If you move the form for long enough, eventually all the children pass through the center. This they really want to do, and it seems very important to them.

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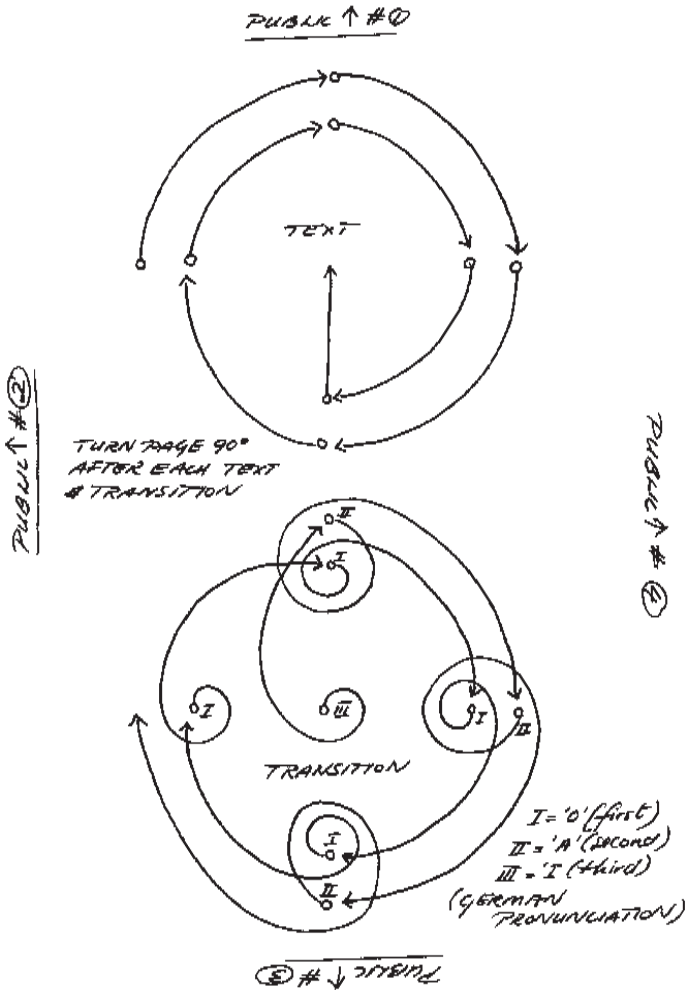
[15]The text, along with the transition music we used—my pianist added harmony to the melody—is available in "Rhythms, Rhymes, Games and Songs for the Lower School", selected and arranged by Christoph Jaffke, Paedagogische Forschungsstelle beim Bund der Freien Waldorf-schulen, Stuttgart, 1982.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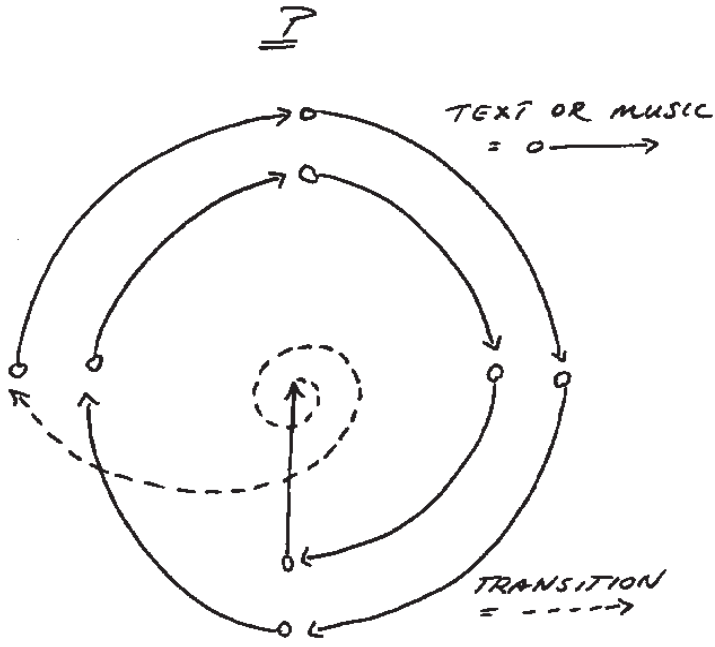
TURN PAGE 90°
AFTER EACH TEXT
TRANSITION
PUBLIC ↑ #②
PUBLIC ↑ #④
TRANSITION
I = 'O' (first)
II = 'A' (second)
III = 'I' (third)
(GERMAN PRONUNCIATION)
PUBLIC ↓ #③

A simple version of the Spiral Measure is the one below. It could easily be done by a grade four.



Saint Bridget's Cross

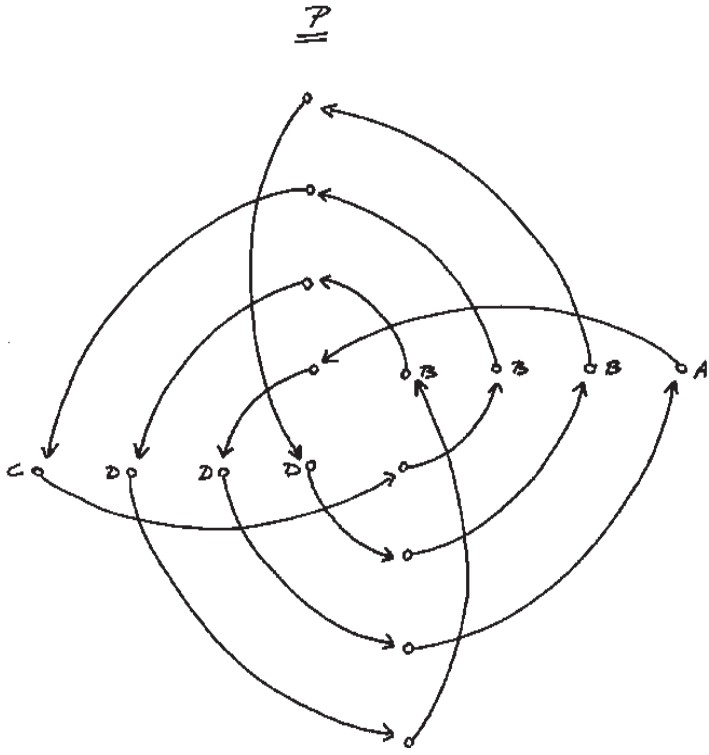
This form is wonderful for grades four and up and looks beautiful on stage. I have also used it very successfully with adults. Begin with the positions "A" and the three "B's": "A" moves his path; then the "B's" move their path (pivoting on "A's" new position) to end up in a straight line again. This pattern repeats until everybody is back where they started.

A second line of four can be added where the "C" and three "D's" are marked, and the movements done simultaneously with the first group.

Adding further groups on the arms of the cross does not work very well as it calls for two people to stand on the same position at certain times.

Instead of four people per arm, it is possible to have five or six people per arm. This creates different path patterns.

The well known, anonymous, spring poem below fits perfectly. A moves line one; the B's line two … and so forth. The music, while simple, is effective.



In May I go a-walking
To hear the linnet sing
The blackbird and the throstle
A-praising God the King
It cheers the heart to hear them
To see the leaves unfold
And the meadows covered over
With buttercups of gold.


SAINT BRIDGET'S CROSS
PHAELA EISENMANN
REPEAT AS NEEDED

Questing, Questions, Mysteries

Up until grade six or seven the students do not ask many questions about eurythmy; they are content to accept it as given by the teacher. It is a different matter in high school. The students ask why we do things in a certain way, or challenge us outright as to why they should do eurythmy at all. If there is no satisfactory answer forthcoming, we can even find ourselves in potential difficulty. Once, when new to a school, I was confronted by a high school student as to why she had to do eurythmy. Not only that, she demanded *three* good answers; anything less than three would not be sufficient to be convincing. Luckily, I was on the ball that day, and answered: "Through the geometry, choreography, and all you have to memorize, you strengthen your thinking; through the poems and music, the gestures for the vowels, and so forth, you cultivate your feeling; through having to actually move these things, you develop your will. In this way all of you is enlivened and integrated." Happily this answer met with her satisfaction, and she became one of my best students.

It is *their* task to ask questions and challenge us. Likewise, however, it is also *our* task to ask them questions and challenge them. We must not to allow our students to sleep through their education, but must also engender a sense of quest. Indeed, it might even be said that for both students and teachers the inner gesture of questioning is far more important than the answers.

There is a danger inherent in asking questions to which the answer is already known. If we merely ask a class a question, fully knowing the answer, then the students tend to react with quick answers without really listening. The question we have put is not true. If, however, we approach the phenomenon we are presenting as if it were the first day of creation, entering fully into it with a sense of wonder and newness, then the students follow our inner gesture. As teachers we should never forget that

we are first and foremost artists, and approaching phenomenon with child-like wonder combined with adult intensity is an artistic activity. All creation springs out of new-nothingness, out of living within the phenomenon with no preconceptions. If we already "know" something, and merely approach the students out of our heads, without first drawing the students into the phenomenon, then this approach will be tinged with the quality of antipathy. If we penetrate the things we are listening to with our whole being, with our will, then, through the will's power of sympathy, the question is re-created.

What follows below is of necessity written for a book. It might be possible to think that we merely enter the lesson and proceed through the trains of thought outlined. The reality of the classroom is very different. Many of the indications outlined below arose though questions that came from the students, being inspired while working on a particular exercise, or realizing that a golden thread was at work in the students around some particular subject and following it through. Occasionally I would choose a viewpoint I wished to present, and for the following term or two, "stalk" the students in the manner outlined in the sections on the hunter and huntress. In this way I was able to bring an aspect of eurythmy to their awareness over a period of time, summarizing it at the end as a total picture.

In this sense, these viewpoints are a composite picture. I present them here only as a guide and encouragement to those who wish to bring the deeper aspects of eurythmy to their older students.

Pitch

After the students have moved the pitch of a piece of music, we can ask what direction the pitch goes in. Naturally, they will answer that the pitch goes upwards and downwards. If we ask, "Are you sure?" they will reply, with slight exasperation, that, of course, the pitch goes up and down. After a thoughtful pause, ask what they mean by the pitch going up and down. Usually the students reply by pointing and saying that the high tones are up and the low tones down. Tell the pianist to play a high note, and gazing at the ceiling, ask if they mean that this note is up near the ceiling. The students will laugh and tell us that that

is not what they meant. Lie down on the floor and ask, after the pianist has played the same note, if the note is now lower down in the room. The students think this is a little funny, and reply that of course the note does not lower itself when we physically lower ourselves, but at this point they are getting the message that perhaps there are a few mysteries hidden inside the phenomenon of pitch.

Continue to press the point: "Why do you say up and down for pitch? Why not to the left and right? The pianist plays the higher notes to the right, and the lower notes to the left. Why don't you do the same thing with your arms? For that matter, why not move your hands towards the front and the back for pitch?" By now the students are often both a bit puzzled and exasperated. Someone usually exclaims, "We *experience* the pitch as rising and falling!" To which we reply that of course we experience the notes as rising and falling—but *why*?

Leave the question for the day, asking the students to sleep on the question. During the next lesson we return to the quest by reiterating that we know that pitch is experienced as rising and falling, but the question is *why*? Tell the students to concentrate on *what* they actually experience as the pianist plays a piece of music. Usually the answers are: "a rising and a falling" or "getting lighter and getting heavier," or something similar. Query whether there is a correlation of the tones to the body, and they will note that the high tones seem to lie higher in the body, and the low tones lower in the body. Do they experience the pitch *only* in the body, however, or can they also experience it as being outside the body? Inevitably their answer is that they also experience the pitch as being somehow free of the body, that in some cases they experience the tones quite far above them.

The question then is what part of us experiences pitch outside the body? What part of us rises and falls, separates from and penetrates into the body, when we experience pitch? By this time the students easily reply that it is their soul which rises and falls with the pitch. We confirm this experience; the soul does undergo a slight loosening and binding from and to the body in a vertical direction as it follows the pitch of the music, and that this is why we experience pitch as moving up and down on a vertical axis.

When we have practiced experiencing this, we can ask why music has such a powerful an effect on our souls. Why is it that it is almost impossible to shut out the effects of music? Often very beautiful answers come forth, such as: "Our soul *is* music."

Rhythm

In the same vein as with pitch, we can go through a series of questions regarding rhythm. As will have been made clear in the first section, the best way to get the students to come to realizations regarding elements in eurythmy is not always in a straight line. By asking questions and pointing out phenomenon from different points of view, we engender a broader understanding of the issue.

Get the students to step the rhythm to a piece of music which has contrasting shorts and longs, and ask what differences in quality are experienced between the short and long tones. They easily come to experience the short tones as being contractive and more awake, and the long tones as being expansive and dreamy. If we ask whether the shorts and longs are experienced above and below, or right and left, or in front and back, they again quickly come to see that the short notes are experienced in the front-space, and the long dreamy notes in the back-space.

Our question to the students is *why* this is experienced. If they have recently gone through our series of questions regarding pitch, they will quickly answer that it is due to our soul. This answer is somewhat pat if simply left as is; therefore, ask what is it about the soul's experience of short and long tones that leads us to say front-space and back-space. Is there something about our soul-body organization which leads us to this experience?

If this question stumps the students, which it is liable to, ask which tones are more related to hearing, and which to seeing. It does not take long to perceive that the short tones are related to seeing, and the long tones to hearing. This allows us to lead them into seeing how the contractive, awake "shorts" are concentrations of the soul toward something definite, and that this is exactly what the soul does when gazing into the physical world full of concrete objects lying in the front-space. The "longs," on the other hand, correspond to a listening activity which has a more dissolving, sympathetic quality. We listen more out of the

periphery behind us, out of our back-space where the physical world is not in view.

Beat and Bar-line

Have the students clap the beat to slow 4/4 music—but do not participate yourself. (The opening section to Chopin's "Funeral March" is a good choice.) Invariably, the students clap with no regard to the different stress values of the beat. Tell them to listen carefully and try again, because they have missed something important. Understanding what they are missing usually takes a while, and the students might even get frustrated. Humorously insist on alternately listening and clapping until they realize that the first beat is the strongest, the second beat the third strongest, the third beat the second strongest, and the fourth beat the weakest.

When the students have achieved the proper clapping of the beat, ask how they might step the beat in such a way that its essential quality is brought out. Let them experiment with stepping to the music; some will stamp hard while standing in place, others will simply walk forward, yet others might do a humorous rock-and-roll dance. When they are finished, examine the various ways the students moved: by simply walking forwards we show the time element of the beat, in the sense that time flows, but somehow doing it this way misses the stress qualities of the beat; by standing in place and stamping, provided we give the stamps the correct stresses, we show how the stress values are brought out, but this lacks the flowing element of time; by doing a rock-and-roll dance, the right and left rocking quality is brought out, but the sensuous qualities of rock dancing are not really found in the beat itself. Ask how all the correct aspects might be brought together, and let the students try to step the beat again. We do not have to wait until the whole class has achieved the beat movement before we continue, but as soon as one student is moving more or less correctly we can point this out, and after showing them how the beat can be artistically stepped, let the whole class practice. Encourage them to really experience their left and right sides, to step strongly to the dominant right side, and more gently to the inward left side. For the moment leave out the bar-line as this is dealt with later.

cannot grasp this answer, point out (actually the students who do grasp the point will usually do the explaining) that there is no time interval between the end of the fourth beat and the renewed first beat. This brings the interesting realization that time, marked in the form of beat, is regularly interspersed with something that falls out of time, where time "collapses" so to speak, and yet out of which the beat renews itself. This principle forms a sister-concept to the one in which the line of symmetry exists in the human body, yet does not exist in physical space.

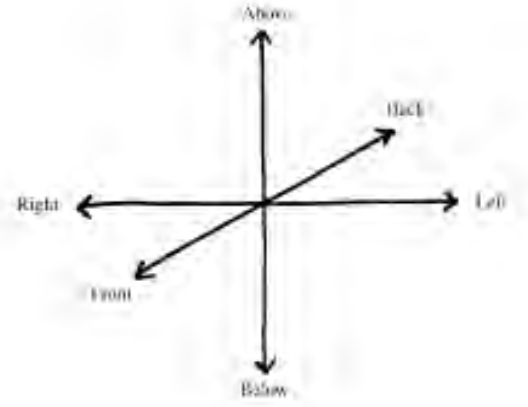
With the bar-line we drop out of space and time as we know it in our daily lives. This, for me, is a mystery. Where does the principle of the bar-line really exist? Can we truly experience the bar-line? I once asked a grade ten student what would happen if we were able to penetrate the bar-line with our consciousness *and remain there.* We both came to the conclusion that we would die! These are powerful questions which lead to a sense of wonder in whoever grapples with them.

Another question we can ask is whether we hear the beat. Again there is often an initial reply in the affirmative. This answer is easily shown to be incorrect by asking the pianist to play a piece of music in which there are pauses of a whole bar or more; here the beat is experienced inaudibly. The audible aspect of music allows us to experience something which remains non-earthly, non-sensory. Again, the mystery question arises: where, if not in the senses, do we really experience the beat? Or the music for that matter!

Rhythm, Beat, and Pitch in Relation
To the Directions of Space

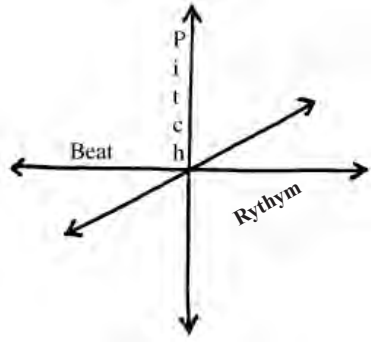
If we have covered the single elements of rhythm, beat, and pitch, we might wish to cover another mystery, namely, the relationship of these three musical elements to the directions of space.

We can tackle this by first bringing the students through the six qualities of the dimensions of space. The qualities of left and right, of front and back, of above and below. These qualities are well known to eurythmists and I need not elaborate further. We can sum up these qualities on the backboard with the traditional drawing of the three directions of space.



The most important consideration is to relate these directions to the *soul qualities* we actually experience, and to point out how the human body also reflects these spatial principles.

Next, we draw the students attention to the parallel between the directions of space and the directions in which rhythm, beat, and pitch lie.



Point out the beautiful consonance between the qualities of the directions of space and these three musical elements. Generally, the students do not see anything too remarkable about this parallel until we begin to question why we should find spatial qualities in music, which clearly exists in time. Why is this so? Is there not something incongruent about this? Why should we experience pitch, for instance, as existing spatially above and below us? When we ask these kinds of questions the beehive is stirred for those students who have not lost a sense of wonder. How can we begin to understand this?

When, after a couple of lessons, the beat movement is established in the class, ask why the beat goes 1,2,3,4 / 1,2,3,4 etc., and not 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11, . . . ad infinitum? This question generally takes a while to digest and all sorts of wild and wonderful answers are forthcoming. We can phrase the question in different ways, such as; what difference is there between the first "one," and the second "one," and the third "one," and so forth? Naturally, there is no difference between all the first beats of the bars, they are all the same, which begs the question *why* they are the same? Why is each first beat "new" and just as strong as all those which came before? What causes this renewal of all the first beats, after gradually getting weaker as they move through the bar? Clearly, the renewal must happen between one set of beats and the next.

If the students have not found the answer, ask what is found on written music between one bar and the next. At last the penny drops for someone. "The bar-line!" they exclaim. We confirm this and ask how we might indicate the bar-line when moving the beat. Generally this question brings a pregnant silence, so we ask another question: where do we find the bar-line in the human being? This is usually followed by an even more pregnant silence. Rephrase the question: if the beat is found in the human being in so far as we have a left side and a right side, where then is the bar-line? Put this way, someone always indicates the line of symmetry dividing our left and right halves.

If we are teaching a grade seven or eight, we can leave the matter of the bar-line to rest at this point. Show the students how to indicate the bar-line by drawing together for an instant into the center-line, and then "reappearing" for a renewed first beat.

For grades ten and up, we take the mystery of the bar-line further by asking the students if our central line of symmetry exists physically in space. Often there is a quick "yes" answer, to which we reply: "If it exists physically in space, why do we not see it?" The students then realize that our line of symmetry is a non-physical principle which reveals its existence through our physical body having a left and a right side.

Turning to the musical aspect, we can ask if the bar-line exists in time. Usually there is a contemplative pause, and then a reply that the bar-line does not exist in time. For those who

The answer to this question is definitely only suited to an intelligent grade eleven or twelve. In addition, the reader should remember that the answer is my opinion, and therefore subject to scrutiny. Remind the students how, when examining the phenomenon of pitch, I lay on the floor and asked if the tones "lowered" themselves when we lowered ourselves. The tones are still "up there," even despite the fact that our physical body is now horizontal and not vertical. If we repeat the experiment with the whole class, they will realize that the tones do not lower themselves when the physical body is lowered. Does this not beg a question? Clearly, part of us experiences pitch as a spatial phenomenon in the sense of above and below, but likewise, part of us experiences pitch us being free from space in the sense that

This is a more difficult question and might take some clarification from different points of view. A clue we can give is by asking whether pitch is only a single experience, or can we say that there is a bodily aspect and a soul aspect? We begin to realize that the situation is twofold, that there is part of the soul which is bound to the body and gives rise to the spatial experience of pitch. On the other hand, there is part of the soul which is body-free, and this gives rise to the non-spatial aspect of pitch. To put this another way we can say: Pitch is non-spatial in a concrete (measurable) sense because it is a phenomenon of the soul; pitch is spatial in a qualitative sense because the soul has a relation to the physical body which resides in space.

The principle that the soul is both bound and free of the physical body is likewise applicable to beat and rhythm, and leads to an understanding of why we experience these musical elements in a spatial manner.

The Scale as Plant-like Imagination

While the chapter is intended for the older students, this part, if done age-appropriately, can be brought to grades four and up.

We repeatedly bring the C major scale to the students. It forms the basis for all the tone gestures, and the more one works with it the greater our appreciation of its depths and positive effects on the students. We come to perceive how simply doing the scale while standing in place acts formatively on their souls and introduces an element of light and clarity to their personal

space. It also has a calming effect on the children—a handy piece of knowledge for eurythmists to have in their back pocket.

How one brings the C scale to the students in the younger grades is a matter of personal preference, and many eurythmists bring various imaginations, stories, and creation myths. Personally, I find the C scale to be a wordless imagination in itself, and thus teach it directly by having the children imitate my gestures. It is such a beautiful musical journey that the students' eyes light up as it unfolds.

When the children know the gestures well, and can do them both upwards and downwards, we can pass the tones around the circle from child to child, each child holding their tone gesture until the scale is complete. When the scale is visibly laid out in space before the children it brings them great satisfaction.

As a next step, choose eight children and line them up in the room one behind the other. Each child again has their own note which they hold until the scale is complete. When familiar with the exercise the children can execute the scale with great speed and precision.

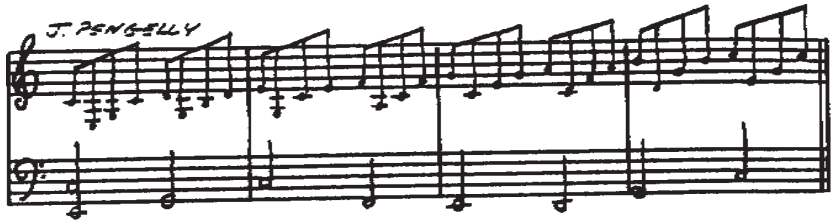
Now have the children who are not doing the exercise stand directly in front of the eight doing the scale. From this vantage point the tones unfold in a beautiful manner. Point out to the students that a picture arises within them when they watch the scale unfolding from this vantage point. Often they give the answer themselves: "It's like a growing plant!"Indeed, there is something wonderfully plant-like to the scale when it unfolds in this way, and the children often make a point of standing in front to admire its beauty.

Staff of Mercury

A further step is to have a child move alongside the eight standing children. The moving child, however, does all the tones as they move up the room. This is an easily grasped exercise, and the children begin to move the scale upwards and downwards with ease. It also allows those who have more difficulty remembering the scale to check their gestures as they go.

When the class has had some practice with this exercise, have the pianist play a flowing scale. By playing the scale in

this way the music carries the children more than merely playing individual notes.



Now eliminate the eight standing ones and allow children to move the scale solo up and down the room. When this has been done for a few lessons, we can say to the class: "We can see the scale very nicely when we do it this way, but is there another quality which is to be found? The scale moves from note to note, but it does not just plod along as if everything were the same; what else can we experience as we move up the scale?" When the children listen, they will hear how the scale begins slowly, picks up speed towards the upper half, and then slows quickly as it achieves the octave. If we ask if this quality is best shown by moving a straight line, or is there something better, they make a curving, S-like movement with their hands. We confirm this, and draw the step-wise manner of moving the scale on the black board as a vertical line, and the swinging, striving quality, what we can call the "dynamic" of the scale, as an S-line.[16] We draw this on the blackboard thus:

[16] This description is naturally more suited to upper grade school and high school. For the younger ones we present the phenomena through the feelings, and through showing it directly.

By actually demonstrating the S-form for the children they can best see how the dynamic quality of the scale can be brought out.

Now have a single child move the straight line while another moves the curving line. When pairs of children have practiced this form, add a second curving line to the first and demonstrate how two people can move the S-line, bringing out the dynamic of the scale even more.

If we ask the children where the crossing point in the form corresponds to in the scale, they will quickly discern that it occurs on the tone G.

If the students have not already mentioned it themselves, ask what the form on the blackboard is called, or where they have seen it before. They usually remember seeing similar signs on medicines or in hospitals, and we give the form its proper name: the Caduceus, or Staff of Mercury. They recognize it better if we sketch in the serpent heads and the wings at the top of the staff.

This series of exercises, normally begun in grade four, are entirely applicable all the way to grade twelve. With the older students, ask where else the twin principles contained in the Staff of Mercury is found. If they get stuck, ask what they see when they stand underneath a tall fir tree and look up? They realize that the Staff of Mercury is also found in the world of plants. Remind them how some plants carry their own "staff," while others, such as vines, twist and twirl and need an outside "staff" up which to climb. As a parting question, ask if there is

not a bit of a mystery in the fact that the Staff of Mercury is found in both the C scale and the world of plants. Why is this? What connection is there between the two? Is it possible that there is a hidden music in plants, or a hidden plant-force in music? The link via the etheric world is possibly too advanced for the students, but there is no harm whatsoever in posing a mystery for them to ponder.

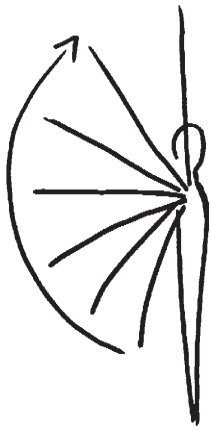
The Tone Gestures

One of the fascinating challenges of music eurythmy is the tone gestures. They are like bones, dead from one point of view, and teeming with life from another. Sooner or later, if our students are worth their salt, we will be asked why the tone gestures are the way they are. At first, and even second, glance, the connection between the tone and the gesture is a difficult one to make.

The first question we need to address is why the gesture for a single tone is an arm, or both arms, held out radially. For the moment we will disregard the question of the positions of the tone gestures and apply ourselves only to the question of how we can arrive at a gesture for a note in the first place. Initially, there is something incongruous about a single note being given a gesture at all, for, if we listen to a tone, to the *sound* of a note, there is, in my opinion, nothing which indicates a fixed gesture. For the astute student this question will arise in one form or the other, and, if we cannot lead them to an experience of the tone gestures, telling them that it simply is so will not make the grade. How can we find a way into this mystery?

The Basic Tone Gesture

Have the pianist run her fingers smoothly up the keyboard from lowest to highest note, and tell the students to find a gesture with the arms which corresponds to the 'tone-wash' they have just heard. Without difficulty they will show a rising, sweeping gesture with the arm such as the one in the figure below.



Note that the low notes are darker and the high notes lighter—a point easily grasped by the students. Allow the students to practice this gesture a few times, encouraging them to inwardly follow the experience of darker to lighter.

Now we pose the question: "What are you looking at?" This question might stump them, and so we repeat the exercise of raising the arms with the rising tones, and phrase the question in a slightly different form: "The low tones were darker, and the high tones lighter; so what are we looking at?" It does not take long for them to realize that what they are looking at is *light!* This realization often brings a genuine sense of astonishment. The curious thing is that, even though we can openly speak of notes being "bright" or "dark," this is effectively taken as a metaphor (by adults as well as youth), yet it is a constant inner experience once we are attentive to it. We then immediately strengthen this experience of light accompanying tones by having them practice the exercise. It is important to put the realization they have just had into practice so that a feeling for the lightness and darkness of tones is established.

The question now is what does only a single part of the total tone-wash sound like? This "single part" is, of course, the single tone. And what is only a single part, or small section, of the total tone-wash with respect to the light we experience? It is a degree light shining in only a single place out of the total possibilities encompassed by the dark below and light above. It is a pulse of light at a certain "place." And what gesture arises when only a small part of this total tone-wash is sounded? How could this

little piece of light be indicated in gesture? We ask the pianist to play a single note and the students now realize that, in order to show this single part of the total wash of light, they must raise their arms in a shining out, radial gesture, and hold it in a particular place.

This, then, is the basis for the single tone gesture, namely, that single tones are light streaming from one particular "place." Contrary to expectation, the tone gestures do not arise out of sound, but out of the experience of light accompanying the sound. *This is an ur-principle of tone eurythmy.*

We again have the students immediately practice what they have realized. We can ask the pianist to play single tones randomly — giving ample time between each note—and have the students experience the tone and allow the gesture to arise from there. At this point we are completely unconcerned with the name (or any supposed position) of any note and remain entirely within the experience. Our only concern is to bring our experience of the degree of lightness or darkness of a tone to expression. We will find that the pitch of a tone will determine the height the arm is raised, and that the degree of lightness or darkness will also be brought to expression via the hand, in as much as it is relaxed and slightly rounded, or gently stretched and radial.

A similar, extremely simple, yet effective exercise, is to begin with the hands held lightly at the heart, and then, in conjunction with the pianist, give expression to a single tone by expanding out into a radial, ringing, sounding gesture. Let the tone sound until no longer heard, but keep the gesture alive even past where the tone is audible. In this way we experience, and give expression to, the tone ringing out and singing from the heart.

We can also note that we experience deep tones as moving *inwards* from the periphery below, while high tones we feel to be radiating *outwards* from us. This realization leads further into a deepened relationship to tone and tone eurythmy, but for high school students it is sufficient to point out the phenomena as it is easily experienced.

This gesture is what we can call the basic tone gesture. It is completely unspecialized and undifferentiated. It arises out of the interplay of dark and light, as one degree of dark and light

between the lower pole of darkness and the upper pole of lightness which surrounds the human being. It will, hopefully, be obvious to my eurythmy colleagues that this exercise, and the principles behind it, lead much further into tone eurythmy. This is not the place to go into these questions, however, as we are concerned with answering queries from high school students to the extent they will be able to follow.

Sharps and Flats

Out of the basic tone gesture we then tackle the question of sharps and flats. While this exercise is extremely simple, it is very fruitful, especially if we ever find ourselves struggling with making our tone gestures alive—provided we practice and apply it, that is. It is a fundamental exercise for tone eurythmy.

Have the pianist play a note, and, without worrying about any particular position, have the students raise, or "sing," their arms into the basic tone gesture. Repeat this three times or so in order to "tune" the students. Then, have the pianist play the note, sharpen it, return to the natural, flatten it, and again return to the natural. By asking about the quality of the light as the tone is raised or lowered, we see that sharps are a heightening of the light activity, and flats a withdrawal of the light activity. In this simple sharp/flat exercise we find, in small, the same principles of darkening and lightening we found in the previous exercise. Guide them into discovering how the gesture for the sharps arises due to an increase of the light from outside, while the gesture for the flat is a decrease, or consuming, of the light from within.

Then explore how this increase and decrease of light might be shown with the arm and hand, and they quickly see how the hand and lower arm are raised so that they shine outwards with the sharps, and how the hand and lower arm curl inwards as the light activity is withdrawn in the flats. Moving through the sharp/flat exercise of the previous paragraph, we see how a wonderful turning point occurs when we gently increase the light and move from the flat back to the natural. Here we experience clearly not only how the arms brighten, but how the whole surrounding space lights up. The arms give expression to something that exists all around us. This exercise, with only

a little practice, leads to experiencing an out-flowing and in-flowing from the heart.

We bring the sharp/flat exercise a step further by allowing the circle of students as a whole to breath with the lightening and darkening. We do this by taking a step or two outwards and expanding the circle when the natural is sharpened; returning to the original circle for the natural; contracting the circle when the tone is flattened, and expanding the circle to the original size when we return to the natural again. In this way we show that the sharp/flat exercise has to do with breathing, light-breathing.

Now, if we return to standing still for the sharp/flat exercise, we can more easily notice how the same in- and out-breathing is followed by the soul even if we do not move in space. Initially, this is most obviously experienced as a tide of light streaming in and out of the eyes. Its source, however, lies in the heart, and it is from, and to, the heart that the "light-tide" flows, via the arms, in the tone gestures. *This is an ur-phenomenon of tone eurythmy.*

We only have to formalize this experience to arrive at the traditional gestures for sharps and flats. After this, have the pianist play specific notes and allow the students to practice sharpening and flattening specific notes.

This exercise demands the conjunction of inner attention and outer gesture. As stated, it is so simple, yet highly effective in showing how the tones are not merely positions, but the result of paying attention to the activity of the inner light, that our arms and hands are, in a very real sense, instruments of the light, and expressions of the heart, in eurythmy.

Of course, it is difficult, if not impossible, for students to carry this forming of the tones out of the activity of the light throughout a whole music piece. It is difficult enough for professional eurythmists for that matter, but it shows the students the basis out of which we work, and what we are striving for in our art form.

The Structure of the C Major Scale

If the students ask about the structure of the C major scale, we are presented with a problem that is not always easily tackled. We can, however, lead them into a feeling for its structure, for why we take it as an archetype, and why it unfolds in the way it does. What follows below is definitely for grades eleven and twelve, with grade ten as a question mark. As stated earlier, it might not be possible to bring what follows in one or two lessons. Take it step by step over a longer period of time, allowing the students to digest each stage before moving on to the next.

Have the pianist play the C scale upwards and ask where the turning point is found. The students easily hear how the tone G forms a turning point. Now, if tone G is a turning point, there must be a lower and an upper part to the scale; what are the qualities of the lower part of the scale (tones C, D, E, F), as opposed to the qualities of the upper part (tones G, A, B, C)? This question might take a little longer to answer, but eventually they perceive that the notes of the lower part of the scale are *coming from prime C*, and the notes of the upper part are *going towards octave C*. Thus, the scale falls into two halves with opposite qualities which, nevertheless, depart and arrive at the same tone. Point out how the lower part of the scale has the quality of "building upon," of coming from *the past*, and how the upper half is best characterized as "striving," of being drawn to *the future*. Let the students actually move the scale, paying especial attention to the qualities of the two halves. For the moment we gesture the pitch scale, that is, prime C below and octave C above.

What about the qualities of tone F? If tone G has the quality of being the first to strive towards the future, tone F must have a complementary quality? We can soon experience that tone F has the quality of "arrival"; it has the quality of being the note of *the present*. Thus, the students can now practice the scale while paying attention to how one is sunk into oneself in the "past" of prime C, then unfolding towards the present with F, a turning point towards the future with G, and fulfillment with octave C.

Now we can tackle the problem of why the gesture for C, archetypal prime and octave, is done with parallel arms. Here

we must find a gesture which has opposing qualities of primal beginning and future fulfillment, a future fulfillment which also acts as seed for the new stage of development in the new scale above it. The gesture of the parallel arms has both these polar opposite qualities, of being firmly sunk in oneself, grounded in our origins, and of striving for a seed-future. There is no other gesture which contains these two qualities, and we can confidently invite the students not to accept this statement, but to search for a truer gesture; needless to say, they will not find one. It can help to remind them of the vowel "OO" (U) in this connection, as it is easy to experience how it has these opposite, yet complimentary, qualities.

Another approach to the prime and octave tone gesture is to ask the class to find the gesture for the highest tone they can imagine. The only way to do this is to reach upwards with the arms in a parallel gesture. If the arms are even a small degree off parallel, then there will still be room to reach higher. Likewise, tell them to find a gesture with the arms for the lowest possible tone. Similarly, we can only indicate this by extending downwards with parallel arms. In both cases we arrive at the same gesture, and that it is the gesture's orientation that makes the difference. In this way we establish *the principle of lowest and highest tone gesture irrespective of any particular tone*. All we have to do is point out that this principle also applies, in small, to any scale extending from prime to octave. Since we are, in this particular instance, working with the C scale, we see that prime and octave C are the highest and lowest tones, are the same gesture, only they are oppositely positioned.

As an aside for eurythmists interested in such things, it is worth noting that the highest possible tone and the lowest possible tone are no *particular* tones. Just as prime and octave encompass any diatonic scale beginning with any tone, so, too, does highest possible tone and lowest possible tone encompass *all possible* tones. What is being pointed to here is that *this parallel gesture is the ur-principle for all tones*. When the arms are held in the "U" (OO) position, we have the open secret of the archetypal tone before us.

As a next step, deal with the scale as an unfolding of light. Starting with prime C, point out how its seed qualities also have

something dark about it, as if everything is withdrawn into itself.

Then, moving to the tone D, we see how, by opening the arms, light broadens and brightens around us. Tone D is a first awakening out of the sleep of prime C.

With tone E, there is again an increase of light around us, but it does not as yet have the quality of having fully arrived into the present. We feel how tone E is a further step in awakening, and yet we sense there is still more to come.

With tone F, we arrive fully in the present, and stand firmly within the cross of space in full daylight. The F gesture also has something very human about it, in the sense of being a citizen of the earth. With tone F we have gone as far as we can go from Prime C before we become newly oriented towards Octave C in the upper half of the scale. There is *only* one position for this tone gesture relative to prime C, and this is at 90 degrees to it. Ninety degrees is the maximum angle from tone C. Any angle less than, or greater than, 90 degrees will already be a returning towards the parallel gesture of prime or octave C.

With tone G, and its first jump towards the future, there is another increase of light. While it holds the same gesture position as tone F, its whole orientation has turned 180 degrees towards the future. Again we can experience this tone as being "human," but this time the human being standing in a different light, one we might describe as the light of the spiritual world. It holds the same position as tone F because it too is as great an angle away from the upright parallel of octave C as possible—its inner orientation, however, as already noted, is the opposite to that of tone F. *Here we have an ur-principle in the tone gestures, that of the 90 degree angle.* The principle of the 90 degree angle applies to both the fourth and fifth degree of the scale.

With tone A, we really begin to strive towards the future, and we can say, in a feeling-artistic way, that we live in an element of feeling-permeated soul-light. Again, as with the next tone, we are lifted upward, or drawn towards octave C, and we jump lightly.

With tone B, we experience how the light becomes full of tension, even painful tension, as it strives mightily for the fulfillment of octave C.

With octave C we arrive transformed, fulfilled as fruit from the past, and simultaneously as seed for the future; striving for

the future, because octave C is a stage of development we have not yet achieved.

Note that by taking this route, if we pay attention to our consciousness, we move from the deep sleep of prime C, through stages of awakening until, in octave C, we can experience ourselves quite transformed and outside ourselves. We see how going through the scale from prime to octave is a process *of turning inside out*, and we can now concentrate on this aspect of the experience of the scale as we move it. For the professional eurythmist this phenomena can be pursued further, but here it suffices to point out the experience.

Now have the pianist play the C major scale and condense it into a major chord. Then have her play the A minor scale and condense it into its minor chord. Ask what areas around the human being, what "zones," best express major and minor, and the students quickly see that major is above the shoulders, and minor below the shoulders. This point clarifies why the C major scale is generally done completely above the shoulders—a question the students often ask. Naturally, we can also do the scale following the pitch, as we have just done, but in this case we are ignoring the fact that it is a major scale.

The principles outlined above apply to any major scale. While the C major scale was taken for convenience, as the students are very familiar with it, we could just as well have used numbers corresponding to the degrees of the scale instead of using letters for the notes.

While bringing the scale in this way does not necessarily answer all its mysteries, it does demonstrate to the students that there are deep reasons behind its structure, and it is by no means randomly thought out. In fact, if pondered deeply enough, the scale gives enough food for thought to last a life time.

Major And Minor

Another good questíoning exercise is to bring the underlying experiences of major and minor to the students. What is beautiful about this exercise is not its complexity, but how it engages the

students in their feeling life, and it can be quite a potent experience for them.

Have the pianist play a major and a minor chord a few times, asking the students to listen carefully to their respective qualities. Now have the students imagine a sphere of light surrounding them, mobile light, that is at the same time a feeling-light, and that their arms are imbedded in this light; in fact, they may even imagine that their arms are also light, although more condensed than the light which surrounds them. When the pianist plays a chord they are to allow their arms to follow the feeling-light in whatever direction it leads. Then, when a major chord is played, the students naturally raise their arms into the upper zone; and when a minor chord is played, their arms gently sink into the lower zone.

Having done this a few times, ask in which direction the major and minor stream as regards the body, and they delicately add to the major a gently-moving-away-from-the-body quality, and to the minor, a gently-coming-towards-the-body quality. While many students have been naturally doing it, ask them also to allow the head to follow the tendency of the direction of the light, not that the head leads, but so that all of them becomes a visible expression of the feeling-light. Likewise, tell them to pay attention to the light active in their eyes: how does it stream, where does it come from, in which direction does the tide of light in their eyes flow with major and minor?

Now have the students refine the gestures even more—they will tend to merely let the arms float somewhat listlessly—by showing how the hands and lower arm can bring out the qualities of out-flowing and in-flowing? Now, when they do the movements for major and minor, the arm gesture for major is shown by the hand shining gently outwards, and the minor chord with the arm and hand curling over and drawing the gesture inwards.

Here we have a wonderful fact which, though it seems so simple, forms the basis of tone eurythmy, namely that our arms are capable of *turning*. Because of this, we are able to use our arms as delicate instruments of the light, capable of showing infinite variations of darkness and light—and all the colors in between.

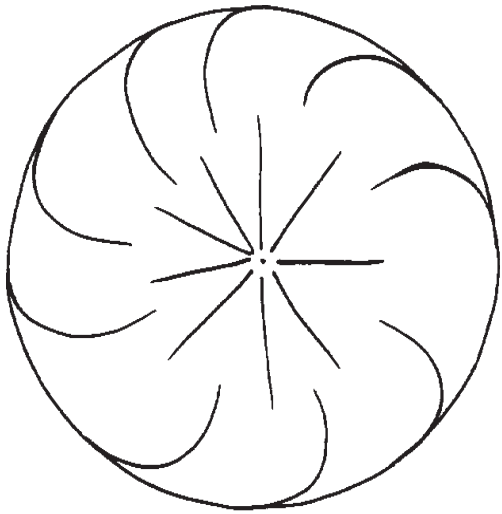
The Correspondence Between the Tone and Color Gestures

Bringing the understanding to the students that the tones arise out of the experience of light can be further developed to the point where they can see that the principles underlying the tone gestures are the same as those underlying the color gestures. Bringing such correspondences leads the students to a feeling for the interrelatedness of elements within eurythmy, that eurythmy gestures are not random, but have definite laws which can be understood as much by artistic thinking as by artistic feeling. In the high school years, especially in grades eleven and twelve, this understanding leads to an appreciation of eurythmy in a way which corresponds with the maturing of the students' life of thinking.

Have the pianist play a high tone and a low tone and lead the students to experience the qualities of the gestures accompanying the two notes. Have them pay attention to the delicate in-streaming and out-streaming experienced in the arms with the two gestures. With the high note the gesture moves outwards from the body, the arm radiating and stretching, introducing an element of delicate tension in the muscles. With the low note the gesture has an inward-moving quality of coming towards the body: the gesture relaxes and the hand gains a delicate inward-curving nuance.[17]

Now ask where the high tone gesture is streaming *from*, and where it is streaming *to*, and they will indicate from themselves to the outside. Likewise, ask where the low tone streams from and to, and they give the opposite picture of the low tone streaming from the outside towards themselves. We call these two places the center and the periphery, and drawing a circle on the blackboard, we draw lines radiating out from the center to the periphery (use yellow chalk) for the high tones, and lines radiating in from the periphery to center (use blue chalk) for the low tone.

[17] Note that I am only speaking of the *gesture* and not the light that accompanies the gesture, as we need to differentiate these two elements. For instance, the high tone gesture radiates outwards; however, the light accompanying the high tone arises in the periphery and calls forth the radiating gesture from the center. Likewise, the low notes, being more "central," call forth the gesture from out of the periphery and thus are more rounded.



Point out to the students how in one gesture, because we are streaming from center to periphery, the gesture lies in a straight line, and how in the other gesture, because it is moving in from the periphery, from all around us, the gesture naturally assumes a rounded quality.

As an aside, the concept of center and periphery as regards the tone gestures can, if you wish, be used to extend their understanding of sharps and flats. In this context the gesture for the flat tone is easily understood as drawing inwards from the periphery towards the center; the gesture for the sharp tone, however, calls for greater understanding. Here we are dealing with a heightened, or raised, tone, and the inner experience needed to create the gesture is likewise one of "heightened," or "raised," consciousness. With the sharp tone, the experience of light is heightened in such a way that the intensity of the focal point at "center" is increased—but out of an increased brightness in the surrounding periphery. Thus, the lower arm and hand pull back towards the center, allowing the intensity of light from the periphery to be reflected back to the periphery.

Point out the remarkable parallel between the gesture for the sharp tones, and the gestures people instinctively make when

suddenly confronted by bright light, such as when they emerge from a darkened room into full sunlight. At such times, if we pay attention to ourselves, there is an increase in self ("centered") awareness due to the "pressure" of the light coming from outside (periphery). The experience of the sharps, with their heightened activity of both periphery and center, is one and the same.

Now bring the students through the colors blue and yellow, bringing to their awareness how the gesture for blue curls inwards, and the gesture for the yellow radiates outwards, and noting where blue is moving *from* and coming *to*, and likewise with yellow. Returning to the blackboard, take the blue and yellow chalk, and add the principles arrived at from blue and yellow exercise by merely drawing over our first diagram derived from the tone gestures.

At this point we can invite discussion as to the inter-relatedness of sound and color. We can ask questions such as: Who has had color experiences when listening to music? Has anyone heard the sound of colors? Who has listened to the notes of flowers? If we pay attention, we can sometimes experience certain pieces of music having a definite color accompanying the piece as a whole—who has experienced this? The point here is not to present dogmatic positions about any one particular thing, but to engage the students in the wonders in the world, to keep alive their artistic imagination and invite discussion.

Gravity and Levity

This next part can be added to the above or done separately. I always brought its contents lightheartedly in order to keep the students' minds open and allow them the possibility of playful speculation.

Have the students work for a while with the color yellow and then pop the question: "How heavy is yellow, what weight is it?" The answer of course is that it is very light. The next question, "Does it have positive weight or a negative weight?" generally brings silence as they try to grapple with these concepts. Rephrase the question: "If you were to put the color yellow onto

a scale, pure color, not colored pigment made from physical substance, and somehow attached it to the pan, would the scale register as a positive weight or a negative weight? Would, in fact, the yellow pan want to rise?" This is a wonderful question calling for all sorts of imaginative abilities, but the students generally get to the point of realizing that yellow must have a negative weight for it flies upwards to the periphery!

Ask what is a better way to describe "negative weight"? With a bit of struggle they arrive at another name—positive levity. Thus, we can say that perhaps the color yellow has positive levity, a great thought for the students to ponder!

Now we ask: "Is levity real, or are we just spinning thoughts?" Chances are there will be a hung jury in the class on this question, so we take out an object from our pocket, such as a bunch of keys, and ask the students to observe carefully as we hold our arm out and let the keys drop to the floor. Ask them to describe what they saw, and they will say that they saw the keys drop to the floor. Ask if the keys are subject to gravity and they will answer that, yes, they are subject to gravity. Ask where the keys are falling *to*, and they will say towards the center of the earth. Ask them again to observe what they saw, telling them to only concentrate on the keys and disregard everything else. Chances are they will say that they saw the keys drop to the floor, so we ask them to again observe very carefully, disregarding everything except the keys. They get the message that they are missing something, and after a few repeats they realize that they saw the keys fall to the floor *and rise up again*.

This is the full answer, and we draw on the blackboard a point representing the center of the earth towards which the keys fall, and a peripheral circle representing where the keys are rising towards. If we have recently brought the students through the correspondence between the color and tone gestures, it can lead to a wonder-filled sense of: "Oh my God, we're back to those principles again!"

Ask again if the keys are subject to gravity and *only* to gravity. After raising the keys and dropping them a couple of times, someone will realize (hopefully) that not only are the keys being subject to gravity, but also to another force which we might call

levity, for they also rise counter to gravity. What agent, we ask, is effecting "levity" on the keys, and they tell us that we are, or that our body is raising the keys counter to gravity. Does this imply, we ask, that our bodily organization has something at work in it which has levity? Look at my arm, if I drop it, it is subject to gravity, but then I raise it again. You can see my arm, and you know that it is subject to gravity because it is physical, but can you see what causes my arm to rise? What does this mean? The penny usually drops for the brighter students, and they say that it means that our material body is permeated with an (invisible) levity principle. Returning to our original question: "Is positive levity real?" we can venture to say that it is indeed something very real, for it is a force which has the power to counteract the force of gravity!

Sum up the discussion by creating a picture of the human being living on the earth, balanced between the twin forces of being dragged down towards the ground and being raised towards the periphery, the heavens. Point out how we can observe young children, say in grade one or two, and see how lightly they carry their bodies, then look at someone in their thirties and how balanced they are, and then again at someone in their old age and how given over to gravity their bodies are.

This is as far as I have taken the subject, but it adds an unexpected twist to the eurythmy lessons, especially for those who are more awake in their thinking. It also brings a real sense of wonder when they realize how the simple act of raising an arm contains untold mysteries.

The Zodiac in Twelfth Grade

The twelfth grade is the time to bring the zodiac gestures to the students for it forms the crown of their whole education. Those who have gone the whole way through Waldorf school find that working with the zodiac sheds a light on many things they experienced in the younger grades—especially in eurythmy. I cannot begin to express the deep earnestness with which many students approach this subject. The zodiac lays before them in concrete form the fact that they are spiritual beings, and that

their teachers have always approached them on this basis. The students realize that what they are learning here is a unique experience and presents a rare opportunity for them.

There are many avenues into the zodiac, and I do not claim mine to be better than others. Nor do I claim to bring anything essentially new. I have taken a number of classes through the process, however, and know that every step we make into the spiritual aspects of the zodiac must be related back into everyday experience. We need to challenge our students not to believe what we are saying, but to test and observe for themselves the veracity of what we are bringing.

Some considerations:

Since teaching the zodiac is a process that will occupy us for much of the year in one form or other, it is necessary to begin immediately in the autumn. We should realize, however, that our teaching time is restricted to a period extending from September to approximately Easter. After this time, the students become preoccupied with preparations for graduation.

Bringing the zodiac is predominantly a spirit activity; therefore, plan to bring it in the first part of the lesson. As it periodically demands that students stand holding a gesture, and/or listen while we outline some aspect of the signs, plan the second part of the lesson to be on the vigorous pole.

Another consideration is to avoid falling into the trap of holding forth with our (undoubted) wisdom while the students feet get increasingly tired—*therefore, teach efficiently*. Teach with strong, clear, brush strokes, and then pass over into movement so they can actually do and absorb what we have just brought. It is very important in eurythmy never to go too far before connecting what we have been speaking about with actual gesture. It is also not necessary to bring everything we know about a sign in one lesson. We should pace ourselves and have our feelers out for when enough is enough.

What follows is given in stages with suggestions as to what route to follow. As a rule, the maximum time to spend on the zodiac is half the lesson. Often the time is much shorter; so much depends on the students' mood—whether they are receptive or not, whether we sense we can lead them into depths on

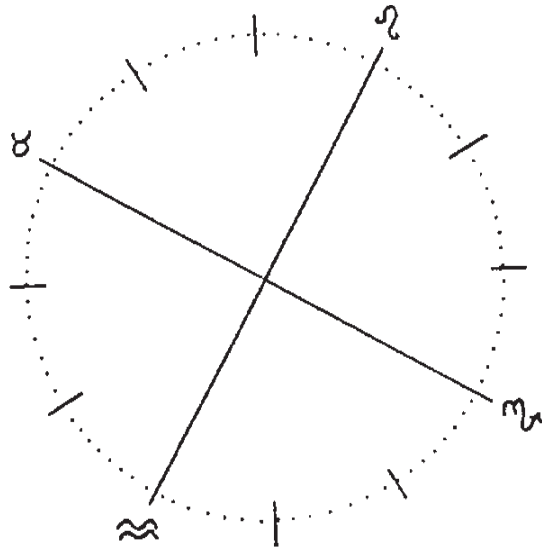
this particular day, or simply review and move on to something else. We need not be afraid of stopping in the middle of what we have planned if we sense they have had enough. In fact, it is often better to stop when they have *not* had enough. This makes them inwardly expectant and anxious to hear what comes next—a prime situation for a teacher—provided we have the goods!

The Four Archetypes

After the opening exercise, outline the phenomenon of the zodiac lying in a circle around the earth. This outline will be a review for the students as they will have already studied astronomy, and so we do not need to go on at any great length. We can bring the imagination of the fixed stars and planets being like a violin with its bow—the zodiac giving the form and the planets the movement, and out of these two elements music arises. The students should have already covered the planetary gestures in the eleventh grade, aiding us in characterizing clearly the difference between planets and zodiac.

By way of introduction we might speak of ancient peoples who did not simply look into the sky and intellectually divide it up into twelve pieces, but beheld different pictures or images arising in their consciousness as they gazed into the different parts of the zodiac. The names and pictures are still in use today, yet we have lost a direct vision into the zodiac. There is something in eurythmy, however, which can provide renewed insight and a direct experience of the zodiac.

We can then speak of the four signs that form a great cross in the zodiac. These lie opposite, and at right angles to, each other—Leo and Aquarius, Scorpio and Taurus. Draw the cross below on the board. Outline how these four signs, from one point of view, are an essence of the whole zodiac, an essence that is nothing other than a picture of the human being. Point out that three are animal signs: for Leo a lion, for Taurus a bull, and a scorpion for Scorpio (which was, and in the German language still is, referred to as an eagle). The fourth sign, Aquarius, is represented by a human being, a person carrying a vessel of water—the Water Bearer. Even today these four signs have their own collective name in modern German—"Die Viergetier."



We can also bring the idea that consciousness of the special nature of these four signs goes quite far back in European culture. We might bring prints of stained glass windows or illuminated manuscripts that have artistic renderings of these four signs—often connected to the four gospels. A beautiful example is to be found in the *Book of Kells*, an illuminated bible from Ireland.

At this point we have been speaking for a while, and it is time to move. I preface this next stage by admitting that the gestures to come are not always easy to understand, and I myself still have as many questions about them as when they were taught to me. I state that I will try to give them the grounds for entry into a meaningful relationship to the gestures, but also that they are in many respects beyond words. Above all, the gestures must be experienced; then things will begin to make themselves clear.

Leo is portrayed by a lion, which, like all the cat family, lives within rhythm. The way the lion moves and breathes, indeed, even its form and whole way of being, bespeaks rhythmic elasticity. Somehow we can experience that the lion is a physical picture of inner mastery, of courage, of living in the dynamic relationship between heart and lung.[18]

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[18] See Rudolf Steiner's *Man as Symphony of the Creative Word* in connection with the Eagle, Lion, and Bull.

The lion also has something sun-like about it, which, especially in its countenance, radiates outwards. We can let this sun-like radiance stream outwards from our heart. If we follow what we have just created inwardly, allowing our arms to follow these lines of force and raising them up and outwards, and even letting this feeling radiate through our hands and fingers, we arrive at the gesture for Leo. When we stand in the gesture for Leo, the whole picture is somehow so leonine that it requires no further explanation.

After we have practiced creating the picture, the inner gesture of Leo, and following these lines of force out into the gesture itself, we move on to the signs which lie on either side: Taurus and Scorpio. While the gesture of Leo is easy to arrive at, I tell the students these next two signs present seeming contradictions that will simply have to be lived with until we have covered the zodiac from other points of view—and even then they might still be scratching their heads!

From our "center" in our rhythmic system, we can move in only two directions, upward toward the head, or downward toward the digestive system. If we move downward, we arrive at Taurus, a part of ourselves that can best be pictured as belonging to the bull or cow. If we take the time to really look at, and live into, cattle grazing in a meadow, we can see how their whole form is given over to the activity of digestion. They chew, and they chew, and they chew, and even when they lie down, they continue to chew their cud. If we make a noise and cause them to break off their ruminating, their gaze seems to say: "Who dares to disturb my digesting?"

Here now is one of our first seeming contradictions. We would expect that Steiner would have given a gesture for Taurus having something to do with the digestive region. But no, just the opposite. We cover our larynx with our left hand and bind our head with our right arm. Clearly, if we only pay attention to the digestive aspect of our being, we are not going to get too far in understanding this gesture. However, if we cover our larynx and bind our head attentively, we can notice that our will is silently activated in the lower regions. It is not so much the digestive aspect to which we must pay attention, but the will connected to the limb/metabolic system. Just as in the Leo gesture where

we live in feeling, in Taurus we live in the will—albeit will that does not manifest itself outwardly as regards the gesture.

At some point we will also need to tackle the relationship between the metabolic system and the limbs. If we make the blunt statement that our limbs are merely extensions of our digestive system, the students will probably look at us askance and challenge us on this point —which gives us the opening we are looking for.

The limbs are doers. They have their essence in movement, in will. The legs are bound to the earth and carry the body from place to place. They are constrained by their form and function into a purely doing/willing activity. Because of the sacrifice of the legs, however, the arms are all the freer in their activity. The arms, and especially the hands, take hold of matter and transform it. In a thousand different ways they mold the outside environment into something suitable for the human being—whether it be clothing, cooking, or shelter. Likewise, our digestion takes hold of matter, and through various movements and processes, transforms the exterior world into something suitable for the human being. The essential activity is the same, only one has been externalized and one internalized. The limbs are externalized digestive activity; the digestion internalized limb activity.

If we move upwards from the heart into the head, we come under the sign of Scorpio, the eagle. Our head and our thinking is "above." It "looks down," so to speak, and objectively observes the goings-on of the world. Likewise, the eagle soars aloft, and with piercing gaze, looks down upon the earth. Our head, precisely because of its static form, is all the more able to soar aloft into heights of thought. In a sense, what our thinking can do spiritually, the eagle does externally. The eagle could be said to be an exterior picture of our head nature.

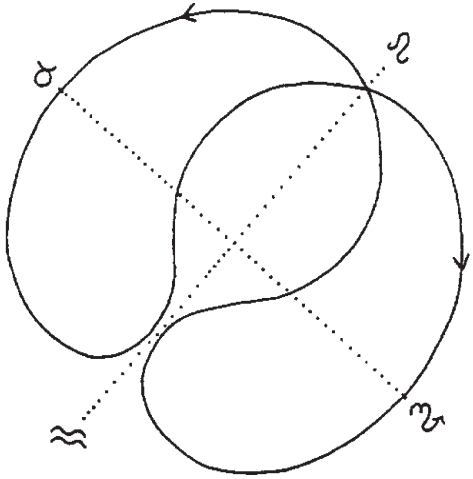
In the gesture for Scorpio, we find a second contradiction, a complementary one to the gesture of Taurus. Instead of a gesture indicating the head, the Scorpio gesture remains in the lower regions. The right hand is by our side, and the left hand sheers off, slanting out of the uprightness. Just as with Taurus, the gesture reaches in the opposite direction from its place in the body. Again, however, by going more deeply into the gesture, we can experience how our thinking becomes subtly awakened.

The question now arises: where is the Water Bearer? If we have covered the head, chest, and limb/metabolic system, where is Aquarius to be found? If the students do not put this question to us, then ask it of them. Whenever we have a question of this nature, one which will bear much fruit in the inner life if pondered upon, try to leave it until the very end of the lesson. Before putting the question, tell the students that you do not want a quick answer, but they are to sleep on the question and see what answers arise. In the next lesson the question can give rise to beautiful conversations with the whole class listening to what their classmates have found.

The Water Bearer is both everywhere and nowhere. Aquarius is the human form as a unity and exists in no one particular place. The picture I bring is that these three "animal" aspects of ourselves would never, of themselves, find harmonious ground together. Individually they would struggle and, artistically speaking, tear the human being apart in three directions. This does not happen, however, because of an invisible fourth element that permeates and ennobles the Eagle, the Lion, and the Bull. This is the Waterman. The human figure representing this sign carries water in a vessel, because water is that which mediates, which allows things to blend, dissolve, and flow together. In itself it has no individualized characteristic, for it is the characteristic of water to be open to all other characteristics. This selflessness indicates higher aspects, both of the sign and of the human being. Aquarius bears our human archetype, an invisible part of us that ensures our humanness. It is also the only zodiac gesture that moves. The constant harmonizing activity between what exists in us as eagle, lion, and bull nature, can only be indicated through a gesture which expresses dynamic equilibrium.

There are many ways to develop these four signs into smaller or larger exercises. Simply having the students move around in a circle, transforming from sign to sign as they pass through the four Zodiac positions can be satisfying. Be sure to go clockwise, as this is the direction they will later move when going through the Zodiac from Aries to Pisces.

As a preparatory exercise for the next view of the Zodiac, we can incorporate the Harmonious Eight and allow the students to pass through the four signs in a different order.



The Two Soul-Paths

Having established a picture of the integrated, threefold human being, we can then throw a different light on the zodiac by following the two soul processes that depart from feeling into the thinking or willing direction. This also allows us to introduce the other signs in a way that can be concretely grasped by the students. Personally, I have found this view of the zodiac to be one that really engages the students in their feeling life.

Starting again in Leo, we recapitulate how this sign forms a kind of center. From this heart center, which we can characterize as "radiant enthusiasm," we can move in only two directions: either towards the will element in Taurus or the thought element in Scorpio. We point out that everything that fully engages the human being has its roots in enthusiasm, in feeling oneself inspired or fired up. Give concrete examples. I usually have had children of pioneer Waldorf parents in my classes, and I say: "For instance, a group of parents gets together, and out of their enthusiasm and love for their children, decide to found a Waldorf school." This draws great groans of anguish, but they do understand what I mean. Any example will do, of course, but the closer to home the better, as this will encourage them to observe their own environment from a new point of view.

Out of this initial enthusiasm, the direction a group or an individual takes - towards Taurus or towards Scorpio – will depend on the temperament of the individual or the group, or on

the task itself. Within a group a conflict might even arise over which path to take.

If we take the path towards Scorpio, we pass out of our initial enthusiasm into a sobering mood. We take a step inward and feel the need to take hold of and dampen our feelings. We do not wish to be overwhelmed by our initial enthusiasm and proceed out of something not grounded in reality. This sobering is really a kind of digesting, of drawing inward, and contemplating the situation. Out of this line of characterization, we arrive at the gesture for Virgo. It can help to connect Virgo with the digestive organs, or speak of the protecting, enveloping, making-inward quality of Virgo's consonants "B" and "P."

Having sobered, we take the next step and begin to judge, to weigh up. We balance the left and right of a situation and place them before us. It is important to assess what is possible and what impossible. It is of no use to have had enthusiasm and then to have sobered up without further activity. We need to weigh things up, which is the essence of Libra, the scales.

Only after weighing the situation do we legitimately arrive at the thought proper, at understanding. Only then can we really confirm: "Yes, we can found a Waldorf school. In our estimation the requisite conditions do exist." Now we have arrived at Scorpio.

The other route that can be taken is towards the will, towards Taurus. Out of our burning enthusiasm, instead of sobering, we experience a direct impulse towards action—Cancer. An impulse can, of course, have two sides; it can be unconsidered and rash, or it can be an initiative flowing out of divine inspiration—a point we can come back to when we bring the sound "F" in connection with Cancer.

In the proper sense, however, an impulse cannot of itself lead to a true, fully conscious deed. Before we can perform a deed, we must have the capacity to carry out our initiative—Gemini. This capacity might already exist and merely need activating, or it may be something that first needs to be developed. Without developing support, understanding, and desire in the larger community of parents, without developing the financial wherewithal, it will not be possible to found a Waldorf school.

There are certain individuals who bear the trait of "capacity." They are generally people of action: warriors and generals are good examples, and we can bring prints or photographs of samurai or others who are often portrayed with a characteristic Gemini stance.

Point out to the students how wonderfully Libra and Gemini complement each other. How Libra brings the left and right together in a weighing up gesture, while Gemini brings the left and right together in order to perform deeds.

Thus, beginning with enthusiasm, moving out of pure feeling into impulse, and from impulse to capacity, we can then truly perform the action, the deed. The will is now externalized into concrete action, something is actually accomplished in the world—Taurus.

Again, give concrete examples to the students. Do not be afraid to be prosaic—especially humorously prosaic. For example, we might tell our students the following story: You are sitting alone in a classroom, bored to tears. Your buddy comes in and says: "Let's go to the store." Immediately, you light up. This is Leo at work. But then you remember you are grounded at lunch time for rubbing chewing gum into Jennifer's hair. This has a sobering effect—you have entered Virgo. But you really want to go with your friend, so you begin to weigh up your chances of getting caught. You know that most of the teachers are at a meeting trying to decide what to do about Linda and Scott's escapade on the camping trip, but Mrs. Bundy is on duty, and even though she is short-sighted, she always hangs out by the front door. Here you are weighing up—Libra in action. Finally, you come to the thought: "If I put on Jennifer's raincoat and hat, Mrs. Bundy will never recognize me." Not such a bright thought considering your already strained relationship with Jennifer, but still, she does have a long coat and a very floppy hat. "I'll risk it. I'll go to the store," you tell your friend. Here we arrive in Scorpio.

With this example we can further follow our hero's path. Having arrived at the thought: "I'll risk it," your initial enthusiasm returns (Leo), and you leap from your desk and run to the cloakroom. Now you are in Cancer, impulse to the deed. In the cloakroom you search for Jennifer's things, but cannot find them.

Someone tells you that Jennifer has gone to the hairdresser. This threatens your capacity for the deed; you will have to develop another plan. Now you are under the sign of Gemini. Quickly you grab Lawrence's leather jacket, scarf, and motorbike helmet. Going to the front entrance, you send someone to chat to Mrs. Bundy about sweet nothing, and with sure confident strides you make your exit—Taurus.

As silly as this story sounds, remember that it refers to the students' own concrete environment. They know who all the characters are, and how likely (or unlikely) they appear. I mean, Jennifer would not be caught dead at a hairdressers, and besides, she just shaved herself bald! This kind of spontaneous tale will both engage your students and bring home the idea that the zodiac is not only to be found in the sky, but also on the earth in everyday life. Challenge them to test what we are bringing, to observe both themselves and their surroundings in detail. This does not mean, however, that we have to be one-sided and earth-bound. Be super-conscious of the rule of polarities; in the case of the zodiac, bring its earthy aspects in a heavenly manner, and its heavenly aspects in an earthly manner.

Having established the two paths to the polar opposites, Scorpio and Taurus, we can now move towards outlining their convergence in Aquarius.

From the understanding achieved in Scorpio, we move into the next phase, where thought becomes resolve, becomes ideal. The arrow of the centaur is aimed heavenward. Here the powerful thrust forwards of the Sagittarius gesture says more than words can tell. Sagittarius is the picture of resolution, of forming an ideal with a strong element of will. It is present whenever we wish to bring something into the world, but which still lies in the future. It can be as lofty as the earnest desire to end racism, or as prosaic as the New Year's resolve to quit smoking.

Having projected our ideal in Sagittarius, our resolve, and the thoughts therein, clash with the actual reality of the world. In Capricorn, what we project into life battles with what constitutes the actual situation. In colloquial language, Capricorn is where the school of hard knocks is taught. The powerful stance of Capricorn bespeaks this attribute. Likewise, the knee, which forms the meeting place of opposing forces, is a perfect picture of this sign.

Our resolve, having been shaped by the forces of actuality in Capricorn, then passes over into harmony with the world, into the domain of Aquarius. Arriving in Aquarius is somewhat of a relief; after the dynamic tensions inherent in Capricorn, we experience a mood akin to the musical octave.

Coming from the other side, once we have arrived in Taurus, we begin a process of separation. The deed, having been performed, now belongs to outer reality, and we suddenly stand outside our action: Aries—reaction to the deed, "event" or "happening."[19] This moment has often been artistically captured and portrayed. It belongs to great moments in history where action has already become an event outside oneself. From the reaction of the scientists who developed the atomic bomb when it was successfully exploded, to our reaction when we do something that has unexpected results, all belong to Aries. It is an awakening to consciousness which can be observed everywhere in life. The actual gesture for Aries can also be observed in these moments— right up to the raising of the hand to the chin. Often this gesture is found on the stage when the players react to the pivotal deeds of the play.

When we move to Pisces, we are even further removed from the deed we have performed. At this stage our deed takes on a life of its own, and its effects may reverberate back to us in both painful and profound ways. Our deed weaves itself into the fabric of life, and even into world destiny. Often the individual who performed a deed is totally astonished with the radical consequences of his action—good or bad. Pisces is the realm where the separation of the personal and the supra-personal occurs. In Pisces the deed becomes destiny, and its gesture expresses this separation in a profoundly artistic way. One part of us falls and dies away, becomes ashes. The other, rising above the purely earthly, strives towards higher realms.

Our deeds work on in the world, and eventually our personal self frees itself its effects. Time passes, and even the big events in our life take on the perspective of seeming to belong to another time and place. Were this not so, we would never have any resolution of destiny. We would be condemned to forever living the consequences of everything we did. Only when we truly have come to terms with our deeds, often not until death's

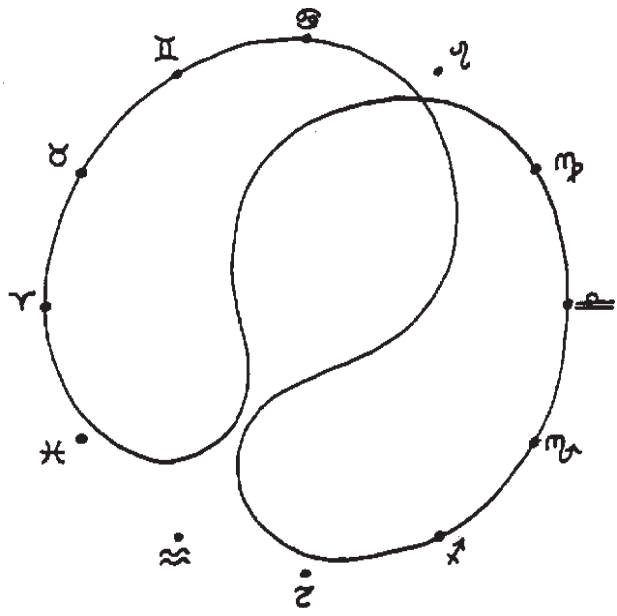
[19] *Eurythmy as Visible Speech*, Rudolf Steiner.

door, is the separation process of Pisces complete, and we move into the harmony and sense of resolution that Aquarius brings.

In a simple exercise, we can make the two soul paths visible by having twelve students stand in the positions of the Zodiac, facing inwards. Leo lights up his gesture, and then one by one we follow the path via Scorpio, carefully observing how these gestures follow an inner logic that defies words. As simple as this seems, it gives great satisfaction to watch this process unfold. Likewise, we follow the steps to Aquarius via Taurus.

Following this, we can have the complementary pairs light up their gestures together—Virgo and Cancer, Libra and Gemini, and so forth. Sometimes we can hear a pin drop when we do this exercise, for there is something so magical about it. Each pair has such opposite qualities, and yet are hand in glove. Point out to the students—if they have not already pointed it out themselves—how the will path assumes a thinking quality after Taurus, while the thinking path is colored by will after Scorpio.

If we brought the students through the Harmonious Eight exercise with the four archetypes, we will have laid the ground for repeating the exercise with all twelve signs. The beauty of this is exercise is that it allows us naturally to go through the two soul paths alternately.



A word of caution. If you bring the students through this exercise, go slow. The students will struggle to take hold of the sequences and remembering the gestures. If you have the numbers, you can take the preliminary step of having twelve students stand in a large circle holding the zodiac gestures, while the remaining students move the Harmonious Eight on the inside. Doing it this way allows them to learn the transitions from sign to sign.

A variation of this method is to have twelve people moving, but instead of a flowing movement, pause briefly after each sign. This will allow time for the students to check out his or her next gesture from the person they follow. Gradually speed up over a few weeks until the whole thing moves smoothly.

Aries to Pisces

Bringing the four archetypal signs and the two soul paths is fairly straightforward. The next viewpoint is not always easily achieved in a concrete manner, but luckily quite a number of reflections of this archetypal path are to be found. When a sign is somewhat obscure from one point of view, from another vantage point it is clear. Working with the zodiac by "entering" through Aries and "exiting" at Pisces is such a huge subject as to warrant a book in itself. What follows below is thus only a brief sketch, and the reader is encouraged to find their own pictures to bring to the students.

Where we begin is a matter of personal choice, but a good starting point is the relationship of the signs to the body.

Beginning with Aries, we move from the head down through the body to Pisces in the feet. It is a path of incarnation, one that the students are in the process of completing. The child grows downwards from the head, which, proportionally speaking, gets smaller as the child "grows up." As we move from sign to sign, we can easily experience the gesture in relationship to the respective parts of the body. We can also complement what we have already brought when moving through the two soul paths, such as the heart being the center of the feeling life, the constant balancing activity of the hips, the feet carrying us to our destiny, and so forth.

We can then fruitfully bring the consonants belonging to the signs, showing their strong relationship to the various parts of the body: how consonant "H" is connected with the shoulders and the innate strength of "capacity," or "G" and "K" living strongly in the upper arms; likewise, the relationship of the qualities of the sounds to the two soul paths; how the "F," in its higher sense, is related to the "impulse to the deed" through being the sound in which divine wisdom is breathed through us; how the "G" can only arise through a will-imbued impulse (or resolve) arising from within; or the "N" relating to the separation of one's personal earthly self from the results of one's deeds when we pass through the gate of death.

From a cosmic-spiritual point of view, we might then turn to Steiner's poem "The Twelve Moods," wherein each of the seven planets speaks a characteristic line as it progresses through the twelve signs. The strength, power, and majesty of this poem is awe-inspiring. In this poem Rudolf Steiner characterizes, in artistic form, the cosmic-qualitative path moving from Aries to Pisces. In a manner of which only an initiate is capable, he captures the essences of all the signs and planets. There is such a richness in this poem that it warrants a lifetime of meditative work, but even on the lowly level that most of us must deal with these things, it is possible to gain wonderful insights into the zodiac and planets.

To tackle the whole poem eurythmically is no easy task; to pull it off would take perfect conditions and the blessing of the gods. This does not mean, however, that we cannot bring important aspects of the poem to the students. One way to do this is to follow the sun's line from sign to sign. The words are so beautiful, so true, that they stamp themselves into our being. If we go this route, we can also take the opportunity to cloth ourselves imaginatively in the respective colors of the zodiac signs.

Having created a framework, we can look at how this urprocess from Aries to Pisces can be followed via the qualities of the seasons: Aries is the birth sign of spring; Taurus comes in the part of the year when, after the first tentative steps of spring, nature surges forth with mighty force; Leo occurs after the solstice and yet is the warmest part of the year; Virgo presages autumn with her cooler evenings and her delicate sense of

turning inward; Scorpio corresponds to the dying of nature into the night of winter.

Likewise, we can point out to the students the various moods of day and night. The most important point to remember is to characterize how we *experience* these things. To simply say that Cancer is midday, and Capricorn midnight, is not good enough. We need to search in our everyday environment for the essential qualities of the zodiac and bring them in picture form.

The passage of the sun through the zodiac is an archetype reflected in all processes taking place in time. By studying various examples drawn from life, the students see that the salient point is not a mathematically divisible period of time, but a series of qualities that bear an inner relationship to one another. The experience of these qualities is fundamentally a musical one, wherein a simultaneous perception of many tones occur. For instance, we might be thirty-five years old (Libra); we have just begun a new business (Aries); it is high summer (Cancer); and we are going through a divorce (Pisces).

Clearly, we are not dealing with a traditional approach to astrology. Eurythmy allows us to experience the qualities of the zodiac in a unique manner. And then we are standing in the street one day, and realize, "Ah, the light is in Libra now. That sports car has much of Scorpio incorporated into its design. Sitting under the boughs of that tree are a mother and her baby shrouded in Aries." In this way the experiences of life, for both the student and teacher, are made richer through the eurythmic study of the zodiac.

The Rods

The rods are used in one form or other from grade one through grade twelve and constitute a vital part of teaching children eurythmy. Rod work helps the children find their way into their bodies in a healthy way, assisting with their posture, coordination, spatial awareness, and dexterity.

Perhaps the only word of caution is to say that too much of a good thing can be bad for the children. This is especially true

of exercises like the seven- or twelvefold, which have an overly strong effect on the children if they are brought too often or too early. In my estimation, rod work proper only begins in grade four; before this the rods are only used for simple exercises such as rolling up and down the arms, finger exercises, jumping over the rods, and so forth. After the nine-year change the students love the challenge of finding themselves in space, and they thrive on the rod exercises if brought in the right way. Later, during puberty, the rod work helps to keep the students upright and within bounds. In the upper highschool the students appreciate how working with the rods refreshes their energy and brings them back into balance.

Calming Sevenfold Rod Exercisee

This simple exercise has a remarkably calming effect on classes. I suspect it is due to the rocking quality of the form combined with the sevenfold's gentle placing of the students in space. When broken up into one's and two's, the dynamic between the two groups is quite beautiful.

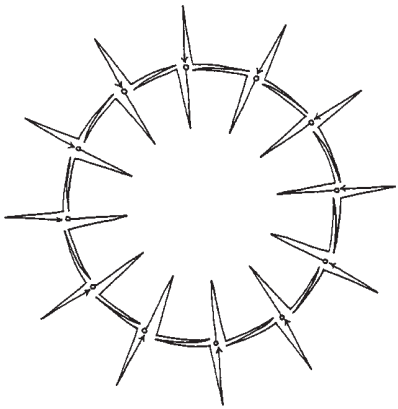
It can be moved accompanied by a drum, or with ¾ music. (Minuet in G Major by Jeremiah Clarke is perfect for this exercise.)

1) Standing in a circle teach the sevenfold with three steps for each direction of the form given above (right foot first). Stand still, with feet together (for the count of three) at the end, when we bring the rod from the down position back to the chest. The exercise then repeats itself. Make sure the students keep their steps rhythmically regular.

2) Add the music. When this step is achieved, split up into ones and twos. The twos begin *two* bars behind the ones.

3) The next step challenges the students' sense of spatial awareness. Do the first sevenfold exercise as described above, but everybody turns 90 degrees clockwise as the rod is brought back to the "rest" position at the chest. The second time through, the *form* remains unchanged, but the rod is now moved in accordance with our new orientation to the form. Thus, the rod

is moved to the *left* first, then right, down, up, down, right, left, and back to the chest. Everybody then turns a further 90 degrees. Now the exercise begins with *up*, then down, left, right, left, down, up, and back to the chest while turning another 90 degrees. The exercise now begins *right*, then left, up, down, up, left, right, and back to the chest while turning another 90 degrees back to the beginning position.



Note that the first and fourth positions begin with the right foot, while the second and third begin with the left foot.

This version of the exercise can also be broken up into ones and twos.

Marching Sevenfold Rod Exercise

Finding music for the sevenfold rod exercise is extremely easy as many pieces of music are divided into eight measures—the eighth acting as pause between the sets of seven. King William's March, an easily acquired piece, has a wonderfully light beat, yet is strong enough to bring the children into their bodies.

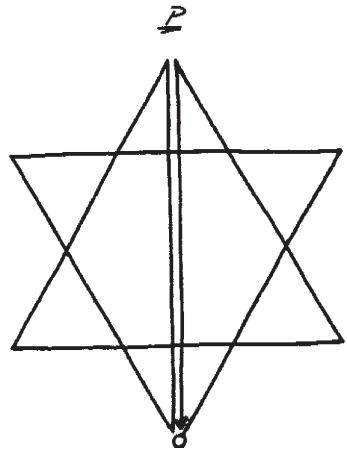
To begin, the rod exercise can be done in standing while the music is being played. If we use King William's March, go twice through the exercise moving with the beat, twice through moving double time, once through with the beat again.

The sevenfold exercise can then be stepped around the circle, beginning with the right leg, taking seven steps, and drawing the feet together on the eighth count. A variation is to move forwards until the last count of eight, at which point the children step the exercise backwards.

A variation for the older children is to step the melody rhythm while keeping the sevenfold rod movements moving smoothly to the beat. This is not as easy as it sounds—but it is fun if your children enjoy a challenge.

The Twelvefold and Hexagram

The basic form of this exercise can be fairly hard for grade four children. Do not let this put you off though, for they do enjoy the challenge of combining stepping the hexagram with the twelvefold rod exercise. In the upper grade school and high school, the students do not find the form very challenging, but they enjoy its rhythmical swing.



Version One

The stepping is done to a 3/4 drum beat or music. Standing in a circle, starting with the hexagram lying in front, and moving forwards to the right (right foot first), take three steps per side of the triangle, three steps for the transition up the middle to the top of the hexagram, then feet together *on the bar line*—so as to be ready to begin the stepping with the left foot as you begin the triangle now lying behind. After moving the second triangle and the transition to the starting position, again pull the feet together on the bar line, ready to begin the form anew.

For grades four and five, until the children know the form well, it is best to break into ones and twos who alternately move the hexagram. This allows the children to see where they began and where they must return.

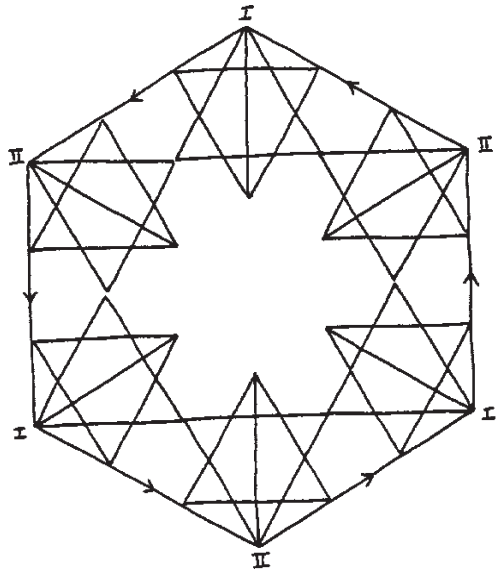
Version Two

After moving the hexagram as a whole class (without ones and twos), the children step around the circle either twelve or

twenty-four steps and then repeat the hexagram. Although this version is simple, it is one I often use because the alternation between concentrating on moving the hexagram, and merely stepping around the circle, has a nice breathing quality.

Version Three

This is a formalized variation of version two (grade 6 and up), using six children broken up into ones and twos. Ones move their hexagram first while the twos stand. Then the ones move two sides around the perimeter of the big hexagon. From here the pattern repeats itself. Twos have the same pattern and begin to move when the ones have completed their first hexagram.

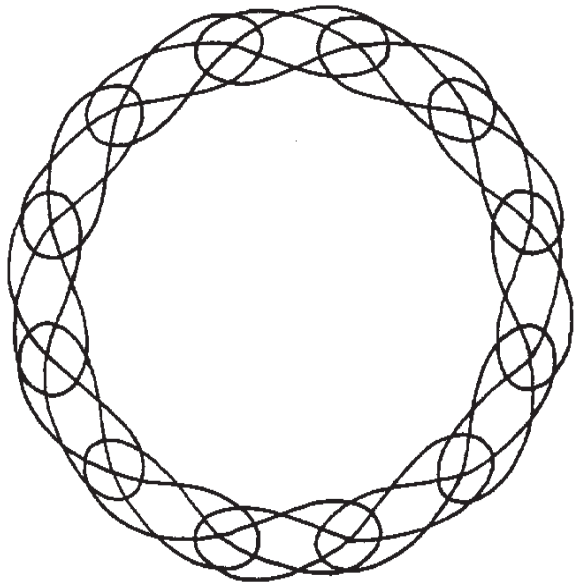


Version Four

Also for older classes. Two groups stand in pairs one behind the other, facing inwards to the center, one person at the top of the hexagram, and the other at the bottom. Both do the hexagram at the same time, the bottom person moving the hexagram as normal, the top person beginning with the triangle lying behind them. This version necessitates a curved transition path, which means taking more than three steps on the transition and therefore stepping out of the beat; thus, treat the transition as a "schwung," or "breath between" movement.

Rod Twirling and Lemniscate

The basic form of this exercise is very simple to teach and is enjoyed by the students from grade six and up. Moving the lemniscate has a harmonizing effect on the students, and the ending, with the extra rod skill required, adds a dash of pepper to the recipe. The music is Leopold van der Pals, *Musik zur Eurythmie*, Op. 36 (No. 7).



Version One

The lemniscate is begun inwards to the right. Ones and twos alternately move the lemniscate (six bars for each figure eight), until the last three bars, at which time everyone stands.

The rod is twirled in the right hand when doing the right half of the lemniscate and in the left hand went doing the left half. At the end, when everyone stands, the rod is brought down on the first beat, ("down" means the same position as "down" of the sevenfold rod exercise), and for the second and third beat, is twirled twice 360 degrees with the right hand. The rod is brought down again on the new first beat, and the motion repeated with the left hand. Again the rod is brought down and held there on the first beat of the last bar. This lightning quick movement calls for considerable skill on the students' part. The

rod cannot be normally twirled as this is too slow. It must be "thrown" outwards into its rotary motion, and the hand merely keeps it from flying away (which it sometimes does). When it has rotated twice, it is brought to a halt by the heel of the hand and brought into the "down" position, ready to repeat the motion with the other hand.

An even more skilled ending was discovered by one of my grade eleven students. Instead of the normal rod twirling motion, again "throw" the rod outwards, but this time allow the rod to rotate on top of the hand held flat. Aside from the skill of letting the rod rotate freely on the flat hand, it calls for perfect timing to regrasp the rod and repeat the motion with the left hand.

Version Two

In this version the ones move as before, beginning their lemniscate inwards to the right. The twos, however, begin their lemniscate outwards to the left. The ones and twos alternate moving their forms a couple of times, and then, on the final section of the music, both groups move together. Moving together takes more skill to execute properly than it sounds on paper, as the person around whom the students normally move is no longer there, and because of the movement happening in the group as a whole. It takes considerable presence of mind (and space) to maintain an exact form, as we feel suddenly at sea with no fixed reference points to aid us.

Rod Throwing and Rod Rhythms

From grade seven onwards, rhythmical rod throwing exercises provide the necessary challenge, precision, and "danger" that students enjoy—especially the boys. By grades eleven and twelve, the students become less interested in the skill element than in the social working together. When these exercises are shown at a school assembly, they have everyone sitting on the edge of their seats.

Be aware that bringing rod throwing exercises too early can lead to problems, such as making children fearful, distrustful of their classmates, as well as the possibility of injury. Although the rods have been thrown to and from the teacher for years, it is an entirely different matter to have children throwing them

rhythmically back and forth to each other. Younger children often lack the throwing skill, or the desire, to catch rods repeatedly thrown at them—especially the girls. For these reasons I only introduce rod throwing lightly and in very controlled small groups in grade six. This way no one is put off. In fact, they long avidly to have their turn, which is precisely what we want going into a lesson.

I am aware that what I said above might be controversial as eurythmists and class teachers often do such exercises in younger grades. Nevertheless, I have observed the effects of doing these kinds of exercise too early, and, at least to date, have never seen a class teacher who has even had the holding and throwing technique correct, let alone the other areas of technique needed to do it properly.

There is no such thing as silent rod throwing—it simply does not exist. They are stimulating exercises, and the children can get quite chatty. Naturally, while the exercise is actually occurring, we aim for disciplined silence, but as soon as it is finished, a hen party breaks out. If silence actually occurs throughout the whole time of working on an exercise, the question we need to ask is what is amiss with the children. If a class is moody and broody and out of sorts, then, at the end of the lesson, get them to do one of these exercises, and ninety-five percent of the time they will leave the lesson in right good cheer. Not only that, we will often be praised for giving a good lesson—even though they have done all the work!

Holding and Throwing the Rod

Throwing the rod properly must be made a matter of habit from the very beginning. Initially, in the younger grades, the rods are thrown back to us when we collect them at the end of the rod session. Later, when they are older, we give out the rods by throwing them to the students.

The following points should be noted:

- The students stand upright with their feet together. This is important, because at a later date, when moving from position to position on a form, they need to bring their feet together for

the sake of precision (and aesthetics). This stance also prevents children from propelling the rod too forcefully towards another child, something that can be done when one foot is placed forward. Another point is that throwing the rod from a feet-together position demands that the back-space must be utilized to a greater degree to project the rod forward.

• To get the children grip the rod properly, they should hold it horizontally with one hand in front of themselves while keeping all fingers on the rod. Then the rod is turned ninety degrees and the hand closed into a light fist. This means that the rod is not held by the finger tips, there are no index fingers pointing upwards, etc. While this grip initially feels awkward to some, when they begin doing rhythms, and are tossing the rod from one hand to the other, there is no time to make extra adjustments. They need to learn to throw the rod as it is actually caught.

• The rod is brought up to the shoulder, ready to throw. This position is cultivated for a number of reasons. First, the students must learn to throw out of the back-space. Second, the rod should fly vertically in the air, which is much harder to achieve if it is thrown from the hip. Third, the rod is much more likely to twist into the horizontal if thrown from the hip, and is thus not only more difficult to catch, but may hit someone in the eye, point first. Fourth, a "short" is done across the shoulders in a light, tossing arc; when the rod is caught, it will then be automatically in position at the shoulder for the "long" throw. An extra movement is required to bring it down to the hips, which we do not want in the first place.

• For the older grades, we can speak directly of the back-space out of which the throwing movement proceeds; for the younger children bring the picture of a rainbow arch. In both cases, the image we cultivate in the students is that only part of the movement is done by us, that the first half of the total movement actually occurs invisibly behind us. This can be demonstrated by standing about seven feet behind a student holding a rod, and then, in one fluid movement, move towards them, take the rod from their hands and carry it in an arc through the air.

• Bring home to the students that they must have eye contact with the person to whom they are throwing. It is the thrower's responsibility to know whether the other person is ready for the catch.

• Accustom the children to always aim for a spot just to the left or right of their partner's shoulder, and *never, ever,* throw the rod towards a person's face. Should their partner not see, or miss the rod for any reason, it will either simply pass them by or glance off their shoulder.

• For a "short," the rod is lightly tossed in an arc, while remaining vertical in the air. It must fly in the air and not be passed directly from hand to hand.

• The rod should be thrown from its center, otherwise it will twist in the air. Many children do this automatically, but not all. When throwing rod rhythms, the rod is often caught off-center; tell the students to make the necessary correction when they throw across their shoulders for the "short."

• When doing more complex rhythms, the rods sometimes clash mid-air; to avoid harm, tell the students to quickly turn their backs and bend over when this happens. You can even practice this movement with them so that it becomes habitual reflex.

Most of these points can be practiced when we collect the rods at the end of doing rod exercises. Without being pedantic, never accept a rod that has been thrown incorrectly. Simply throw it back for the student to try again. It becomes a game when we say nothing, but continue to return the rod when something is not right. The whole class then becomes engaged in trying to sort out what has not met standards.

Introductory Exercises

The following exercises are interrelated, and working with one will assist in doing the others. To begin rod throwing, have single students throw the rods in rhythm with you over a period of a few lessons. While it is helpful to begin with capable students who are going to provide a good example, it is the ones

who are liable to have difficulty who really need attention and building up of confidence. By working with single children the class learns from the corrections we make, enabling the throwing to become skilled and beautiful. The next step is allowing two children to throw to one another; we stand by making corrections in order to instill good habits. Naturally, the children who are sitting out are itching to get their turn, and feel the whole class should simply stand in line and throw to partners. Of course, this is the next stage, but we take advantage of their eagerness to instill good habits.

When the class is ready, have the children stand in two lines, in pairs facing each other. Twelve students in six pairs is probably the maximum number we can effectively keep an eye on, but it is better to begin with four pairs and build up the numbers as the students get used to working side by side.

Beginning with the anapest rhythm (UU_), have the students throw to one another for a while, then move on to the opposite rhythm, the dactyl (_UU), and then to the more difficult amphibrachus (U_U). Later, get the children used to throwing rhythms to the count of four. They quickly understand that a long is two counts, and the shorts one count. If we draw this principle on the blackboard, it is doubly clear. Then, when we add 4/4 music to the exercise, there is no confusion among the children about what to do.

The next stage is to have the students throw anapest to their partner, and then step anapest to the next place (the end people of each row swing across to the beginning of the opposite row, turning in the process). This pattern is repeated until the music ends. Once they have achieved doing this with anapest, move on to throwing and moving the dactyl, and then the amphibrachus. The students love the music to slowly speed up until they are stretched to their limits.

When single rhythms are mastered, have the students throw sequences of rhythms. A refreshing sequence is: U_ / UU_ / U_U. When this has been achieved, tell the students to reverse or mirror the sequence (U_ / UU_ / U_U // U_U / _UU / _U). It takes a while to work it out for themselves, but they enjoy doing it.

If you intend to have the students work on the hexagram exercise described below (which you will because the students

love it so much), use a sequence of a repeated anapest/amphibrachus/dactyl. Establish this sequence while standing, and then have the students step a dactyl from place to place between the various rhythms as with the simpler version above. (Throw UU_, step _UU, throw U_U, step _UU, throw _UU, etc.) This is not an easy exercise for many students; therefore, expect to spend time working on it.

Another phase is to introduce counter-rhythms with rod passing as they move from place to place in the exercise. Counter-rhythms should be taught as a separate exercise and then integrated into the rod throwing exercises where applicable.

Counter-rhythms

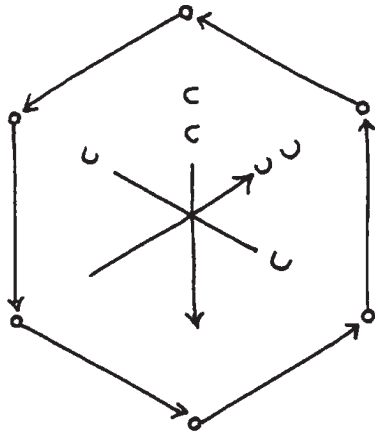
Teach counter-rhythms by standing in a circle and getting the students used to maintaining single rhythms where the rod is passed on the "long" to the person on one side or the other. This takes patience on the teacher's part as a single mistake means beginning all over again. Then step the rhythm with the feet; then include passing the rod with the hands as well as stepping with the feet.

When this is habit, move on to the actual counter-rhythm of dactyl below in the feet, and anapest above with the rod. It takes about three or four lessons for the students to begin to get the feel for doing this, and perhaps longer to achieve as a class, but as the most frustrating part for the students is at the beginning, keep persevering.

I have found that the quickest way to teach counter-rhythms is to break them into two parts. The "long" step below with the two "shorts" above is practiced first. Simply practice taking a single "long" step to the side, and lightly toss the rod from hand to hand. Then practice the other half by taking two steps, and passing the rod to the person next to you on the circle. Then add the two elements together, beginning very slowly. Inevitably, someone still goes wrong, and it is great fun to begin excruciatingly slow, like a slow motion movie, and then building up speed.

The Multi-rhythm Hexagon

Six students stand in a hexagon. One pair does anapest, another dactyl and the other amphibrachus. Initially, we keep the



When the students throw their respective rhythms across the hexagon, it makes a beautiful sight as the rods flash in the air in rapid sequence one after the other. Naturally, any mistake tends to have the rods clashing in the air, which is part of the fun (and "danger"), and the students need to be forewarned to protect themselves by quickly turning their backs and hunching over. If we have done our job in establishing good habits and skills in the children, there is no unreasonable element of risk.

The next stage is for each pair to keep their throwing rhythm, but to step dactyl to the next position on the hexagram between throws. This is easily achieved, but the students will need to keep the hexagon from twisting off its axis. To assist them, place a rod on the floor between the pair parallel to the main axis of the room to act as a reference point.

In the next stage, each diagonal of the hexagon keeps a fixed rhythm; therefore, as the students move around from place to place, they must change their throwing rhythm. If they have practiced sequenced rhythms as described above, this is not very difficult for the students to achieve, even though it may sound difficult.

The next stage is to add counter-rhythms with rod passing as they move from place to place. This is very difficult to sustain as a single mistake brings everything to a halt, but there is such a sense of achievement when the students do succeed that it is well worth the effort. If this version is shown at an eurythmy evening for parents and students, it brings huge applause.

The Eurythmy Stage Troupe[20]

This chapter is very personal as the eurythmy troupe I founded was the first of its kind in Canada, and there was certainly not another one within earshot to act as a model. We performed extensively throughout the Pacific Northwest and the B.C. Interior. This particular group of students was highly gifted, and there clearly existed a deep karmic connection between all of us. This allowed a wealth of possibilities for working together which I have never encountered since. Therefore, the indications and advice which follow, while arising out of four years' experience, is nevertheless one man's view. I am convinced that there are as many forms of working in this field as there are eurythmists. My hope is to encourage eurythmists to create for themselves and their students a living form suited to their own situation.

[20] Rudolf Steiner warned against setting up specialized groups for eurythmy, stressing the social aspects of eurythmy in school life, and thus the very idea of a stage troupe is controversial. My view on this is that he was against *elite* groups comprised only of the most gifted students—a view point I emphatically share. In the case of drama, for instance, my opinion is that it is best that all the students participate in the class play. If the drama teacher wishes to form a drama club comprised of students who wish to explore this art form further, this is fine—*provided there are no auditions.* So, too, in eurythmy. In this case, at the high school meeting we always had with the students at the beginning of the school year, *I expressly stated that talent had nothing to do with joining the stage troupe.* The only conditions I set for joining were that the students attend practice times, that they work hard, and that they remain committed for the duration of the troupe's existence in that school year. As a result, there was a wide range of ability and experience amongst the members. Some new students joined who had never even seen eurythmy before; others were highly gifted individuals who had a genuine love for this art form and took every opportunity to engage themselves in it.

The High School Stage Troupe

Every high school has special interest groups, and eurythmy is no different in this respect. In a eurythmy stage troupe we have students who are genuinely interested and motivated towards eurythmy. The effect such a performing group can have on the whole school is startling. It creates a situation in which eurythmy begins to live in a way that is hardly possible otherwise. For the young ones it is a distant ideal of beauty. The seventh and eighth grade children look longingly to the time when they are old enough to join. The high-school eurythmy program is seen as a bonafide activity that goes out into the world. The performances by these students at festival times is considered a treat by young and old alike.

To start a troupe is easy. Simply announce its formation at the beginning of the year, the conditions for joining, and set a time and date for an initial meeting. Chances are you will only get a small number of students—*this is good.* A small number is easier to work with as we cut our teeth, it costs less for costumes, there is less sewing, whole classes are not disrupted when the troupe goes somewhere to perform, and so forth. Initially, you might want to consider a troupe that appears only at in-school festivals and events. They can then concentrate their energies on two or three items at a time. This is far less demanding than a full program and allows you to see if you wish to develop the range of activity further.

A full-blown troupe is another kettle of fish. Stage groups carry certain realities, which, like all things of this nature, come with the territory. Overall, we should realize that a stage troupe is a stage troupe, regardless of whether it is composed of teens or adults. While it can be exhilarating, it is demanding on time and energy. In fact, a high-school troupe is even more demanding, because the students' abilities are limited in areas such as sewing and driving rented vehicles, to name but two items. The troupe should be recognized by your school as a bonafide aspect to your work, and you must be credited with "X" number of lessons for your efforts. However, be prepared to spend a year establishing the validity of this claim.

Another consideration is the funding necessary for building up a costume wardrobe. This probably means some form of

fundraising in addition to a budget from the school. If possible, enlist help with the sewing, otherwise it becomes a real burden. If you plan to tour other schools, more money—and, thus, additional fundraising—is needed. Just arranging a tour is a job in itself. You can also run into problems if the troupe grows large relative to the school size, as classes can be seriously affected when the troupe is on tour. In this case, it is best to arrange the year's schedule before school begins. Overall, the best advice is to enlist as much help as possible on all fronts. There is no reason for parents not to get involved in their children's activities, and they can be a wonderful resource.

A high school troupe can perform anywhere an adult group can. Our troupe was made especially welcome at Waldorf schools that had no high school as our performances gave their students and parent body a fresh perspective on Waldorf education and its possibilities. If there was no eurythmist on staff, we lent a great boost to those sometimes unheard parents and teachers who realized the importance of eurythmy and had been trying to get it accepted into the school. Another venue for performing (and making money) was at the annual spring or May fairs. We performed to packed houses at these times, with many children insisting on attending all three performances. Other venues are nursing homes, hospitals, and children's festivals, as well as in-school functions.

I knew we would be performing predominantly for younger children when the troupe was formed, and, therefore, I made a fairy tale the backbone of the program. Initially I sensed a quiet resistance to this idea, but when the students realized the complexity of the undertaking, their uneasiness evaporated. The only unspoken question which remained in their minds was whether it would fly. After the first highly successful performance, there was no longer any doubt as to the validity of this art form. From then on, performing a fairy tale was not only expected, but desired.

Producing a fairy tale brings a number of benefits. Everybody in the troupe can be involved, and because the roles vary in complexity, each student can be given their due. It is also possible to add elements that engage students in a number of ways and heighten the richness of the story. For instance, we always

wove speech and music eurythmy alternately throughout the tale. Thus, in Snow White and Rose Red, when the two girls awake in the morning, six students did the opening of Grieg's *Morning Mood* as the stage brightened towards daylight. Our "scenery" also consisted of students doing eurythmy. Stones, rivers, forests, rosebushes, and birds were all portrayed in character. This added an element of visual delight for the audience, as well as corresponding to the little ones' religious relationship to nature where all things are animated and have Being.

Included in the full programs were poetry and music of a more mature content. Classical and modern music pieces, ballads, humoresques, and so forth, address the high school students' stage of development more directly. Every year I had the twelfth grade troupe members work on a Calendar of the Soul verse with its Steiner form. This allowed an opportunity to use the planetary and zodiac gestures. This was the only time I separated one grade out from within the group, but there was never any protest. When the students in grades nine, ten, and eleven asked to join, I explained that these verses had elements for which they were not yet sufficiently mature. They accepted this, but one could sense their longing to "arrive."

We met weekly for two hours in the early evening. Our original meeting time during a double period elective was moved to evenings, because a few students chose the troupe simply because they did not like the other choices for that period. As a result, they did not pull their weight, and I had to let them go. The work load and the cooperation level are very high in a stage troupe, and it was unfair to the other students to carry anyone who was merely along for the ride, or the prospect of a tour. By switching to evenings, we were assured that only those students who were genuinely motivated would attend.

Putting a program together is a lot of work, but we can add easier group forms that engage everybody and look stunning in costume. Included in these were the Energy and Peace Dance, the EVOE, TIAOAIT, Hallelujah with Crown Form, and so forth. Where possible, I integrated stage group material with my regular high school classes. Then a few simple alterations were all that was necessary for the stage troupe members to have things well under way.

The Grade School Stage Troupe

After a two year hiatus, my successor, Renate Lundberg, was requested by the students to revive the stage troupe. This she did with a will, and she extended the concept into the grade school as well. I include a brief section on her work in this area as I believe it worthy of note.

The grade school troupe arose out of questions from parents as to the suitability of certain after-school activities, such as karate and ballet, for their children. This led to eurythmy being offered as an alternative.

The troupe included grades four through eight. They met weekly after school for one hour, and there was a fee to defray costume and travel costs. The children worked exclusively on one fairy tale for the year, and brought it to old folks homes, children's hospitals, and so forth. A buddy system was established between the older and younger children, as the younger ones needed greater repetition to keep the gestures in memory. There were up to eighteen students in the group, but we both agree that after the number twelve, a single eurythmist begins to feel stretched. A grade eight student read the tale, and although this demanded more teaching time, she felt it to be worthwhile. The music was played by students using recorders, flutes, xylophones, etc.—partly for art's sake, but also for the sake of easier transportability (working pianos are not always available).

Many functions, such as costumes and travel arrangements, were handled by the parents—otherwise the work load would become too much. The school credited her with one lesson for this activity— although a fairer number would have been two or three.

Addendum

Musical Rhythms

As outlined in the section on "The Crust," an excellent method of warming the children up is to work with musical rhythms. Below are a list of options open to us. They more or less follow the order in which to bring them to the children, but some steps obviously belong more to the older grades. As a rule, we begin these exercises in late grade three or grade four.

•Learn to clap the melody. If the piece is long, after the children have heard the total piece a few times, build it up by taking smaller sections.

•Learn to accurately step the melody, both forwards and backwards. Occasionally clap and step the melody.

•Periodically have one child step solo while the others clap.

•Standing in a large circle, have one child begin solo, and intermittently point to others to join the first. This becomes a game if you try to catch children out by pointing to those who are being inattentive.

•It the music piece is not too long, have the students clap above their heads while stepping the melody. This has the effect of lightening the children's steps, especially for those boys who are too heavy in their limbs.

•Rub your tummy round and round, and pat the rhythm on your head. Change hands half way through.

•Rub your head round and round and pat the rhythm on your tummy. (If you think these last two are silly and messes up your hair style, you are right.)

• Do either of the above two suggestions and step around the circle as well.

•Hop the rhythm on one leg only. Change legs fairly often or you may cramp. Make sure you (the teacher) are warm before doing this, as it is stressful to old bodies.

•Have the pianist play the first half of the music an octave (or two) below normal, and the second half an octave (or two) above normal. The first half can be stepped heavy and stamping, the second half is stepped light and on tiny tiptoes. This technique may be used for classes who are too heavy.

•Reverse the above item. This technique may be used for classes that need grounding.

•Step the piece much more slowly than normal. Then faster, and again faster, until the children (or the pianist) cannot go any faster. (This is good for a class which enters low on energy.)

•Have the pianist start the piece very slowly, building up speed to very fast, and then quickly tailoring off to slow again.

•Have the pianist play staccato, and then legato. The students must change the quality of their stepping to accommodate.

•Have the pianist play according to the sanguine, melancholic, phlegmatic, and choleric temperaments.

•Clap the bass line.

•Step the bass line forwards and backwards until the students know it well.

•Have one half of the class clap, or step, the upper voice while the other half claps, or steps, the lower voice.

•Have two children, one stepping melody and one stepping bass, move side by side in a large circle. (They adore this one.)

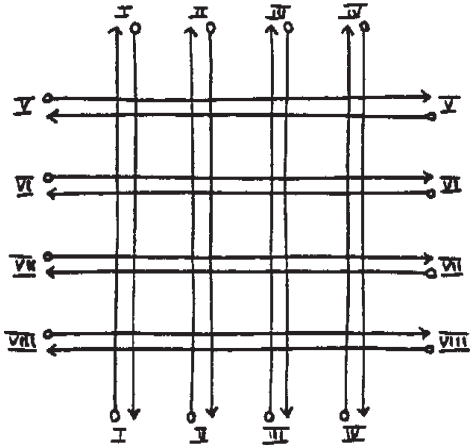
•Make a duet form based on the rhythmical patterns. Two children step the form.

•Teach the children to step the bass and clap the melody at the same time. This takes time and effort to achieve and should be taken section by section.

•When stepping both voices is solidly in the students' limbs, have the pianist leave gaps in the music while the children keep stepping and clapping the rhythm. (This can, of course, be done earlier with the single voices.) Extend the gaps until there is no music being played at all, and the whole thing is being stepped and clapped "silently." (Tell the younger ones a mouse got into the eurythmy room and ate holes in the music, and now the pianist will only be able to play parts of the music.)

The Flying Horsemen

This exercise is a stock favorite item—grade 4 and up. It is very well known, but I include it just in case. The music is Schumann's *Wild Horsemen*.



The children stand in opposite pairs, each pair having a number, in this case 1 - 8. When you call their number, the pair side-steps across the square holding their arms out horizontally (as in tone F). The children pass *back to back*—for two reasons: 1) a face to face collision would be more painful; 2) the children remain more freely upright when keeping an eye on their partner over their shoulder.

The first numbers we call are single numbers, in order to warm the children up and make sure everyone is doing it properly. Then we call double or triple numbers from the same side (1 and 2, etc.). Then we call double numbers from opposite sides (3 and 7, etc.). And so forth. The firm rule is: ***Never crash into someone***.

As a prelude to this exercise (grade 2/3), I sidestep up and down the room with individual children while holding both their hands. Later, they can be knights on horseback sidestepping by themselves.

Skilled "Eh" with Music

This exercise is brief but vigorous. Take a rocking step forward with the left leg, and then a hop with left leg; as we hop, we tap our knee with our right heel, and cross and tap our arms in "Eh." Then the right leg steps forward, hops, and the left leg taps the knee while the arms do "Eh," and so forth. With practice we can move along at quite a tilt.

The music is Kabelevsky's *Five Happy Variations*, No. 2, Op. 51. The stepping to the music is obvious once you hear it. On bars 9, 12, and 14, suddenly stand still and clap twice vigorously. The last bar calls for three quick claps.

This step can also be done backwards, but is harder to achieve.

"Qui"

This is a simple version of this exercise done to the "Qui" music in Leopold van der Pals' *Music zur Eurythmie***.**

Bars 1,2,3—with the low and high trills, the students stand, alternately "Qui-ing" the rod at chest height with the fingers below the rod (palms up and feet on the floor); and above the rod (palms down, arms stretched above the head, standing in tip-toes).

Bars 4/5, 6/7, 10/11—moving a small circle, the students step the melody with tiny tiptoe steps. Half-way round the circle they stop for an instant and "tip-toe stamp" the two staccato notes. Then complete the circle. At the end there is a single "tiptoe stamp" on the staccato note.

Bars 14/15—as above, but because the music is heavier, the stepping is with flatter feet; what was a tiptoe stamp becomes a common stamp.

Bars 8/9—between the circles, simply step bouncingly with springy step, rod held in the hands in front, palms up. On the high triplet, middle of bar 9, leap into the air and do a quick double-step motion with the legs. The rod is tossed lightly upwards and re-caught.

Bars 12/13 as bars 8/9, but no leap in the air.

Bars 16/17—this section begins with heavy bouncy stepping, but when you reach bar 18/19, the children move a figure eight lying sideways on the circumference of the circle, following their noses, then re-entering the circle. As the music speeds up, they move faster and faster until bars 20/21 when they suddenly slow down and re-enter the final circles, *stepping with complete control.*

At the very end, bars 22/23, step the final circle, and an instant before the last note, toss the rod in the air and clap on the last tone. It takes practice for the whole class to clap perfectly in unison. Personally, I never allow even one child to be out of sync, and the students really enjoy practicing this final part until it is perfect.

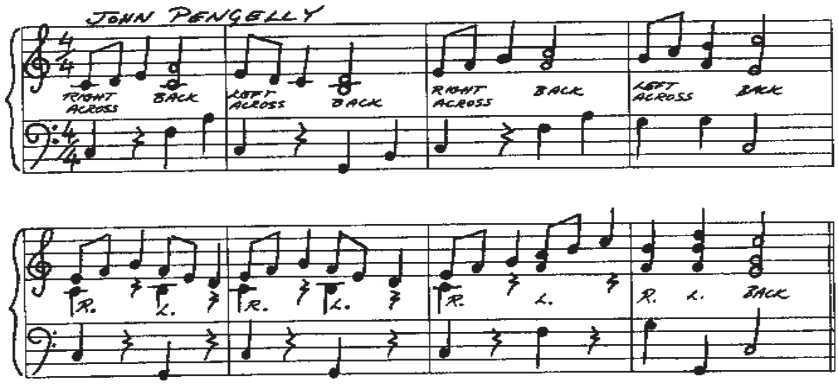
This exercise can be elaborated ad infinitum.

Right Across / Left Across

Hold the rod horizontally in front of you: chest height, arms out, palms down. Lightly tossing the rod upward, cross the right arm over the left, and catch the rod. Repeat the motion back to the beginning position; then toss again and the left arm crosses the right, and back again. (Top line of music.)

Now cross the right and the left arms alternately without returning to the beginning position. (Bottom line of music. On the last bar: double the crossing speed and back to the beginning position.)

Practice ditto with the legs. Then put legs and arms both together.



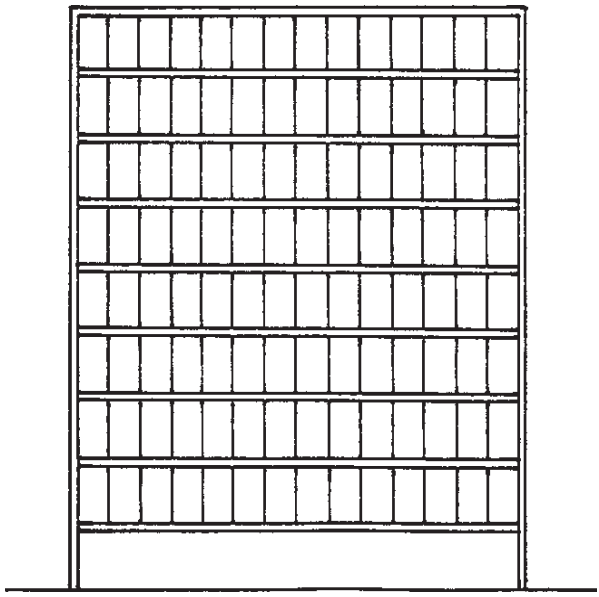
The Eurythmy Shoe Cupboard

Eurythmy shoe management is the bane of eurythmy teachers. With hundreds of pairs of easily lost, damaged, or dirtied slippers to look after—not to speak of handing them out and collecting them with each lesson—any streamlining is a real bonus.

The cupboard has a pigeon-hole design. Name tags are put below each opening. Each child has their own slot—possibly, but not preferably, shared with one other child. As the children enter the room, they merely pluck their shoes from their slot and go to their bench. They pop them back in as they exit—*heels out*.

The shoes are color coded according to grade with a cotton yarn tag on the heels. If a shoe is misplaced, then it is either easily spotted amongst the other grades, or, at worst, we only have to check through a single grade to find them.

At risk of being known as the Shoe Dragon, eurythmy shoes only leave the room with our express permission. Class teachers who request that their children use eurythmy shoes for a play or similar event must replace any lost, damaged, or dirtied shoes out of *their* budget.



Lockable doors are preferable for security and aesthetics' sake. If the cupboard has doors, set back the pigeon-holes by one and a half inches so that heels which stick out slightly do not interfere with the doors closing.

The lower pigeon-holes, arranged according to shoe size, can be used for shoe storage. This arrangement makes it much easier to re-fit the children when they outgrow their shoes.