the whole picture.

As Staley explains in her book "Between Form and Freedom: A Practical Guide to the Teenage Years," there is no good or bad temperament. Each temperament has its positives and negatives, and each individual has aspects of all the temperaments, although one tends to dominate. Childhood temperaments begin to emerge around age 5 and can be clearly seen between ages 7 and 14. "The childhood personality reflected in the temperament is the foundation of the individual's behavior for all later years," Staley says.

Clearly, each child is unique, and it is a mistake to rely on the use of stereotypes to classify children while failing to recognize that the child's individuality is indeed more complicated than any classification scheme could encompass. However, as a teacher endeavors to understand a child, the temperament can provide clues that are helpful in assembling the whole picture.

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THE FOUR TEMPERAMENTS

Which temperament is your...only child? Eldest daughter? Youngest son? Waldorf teachers use the temperaments to help them better understand and serve the needs of each student’s personality and learning type. Below is a short synopsis of the main characteristics of each of the temperaments. Check out next month’s Awareness for tips on how to raise your children with each of the dominant temperament types.

**Characteristics of the Four Temperaments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanguine</th>
<th>Melancholic</th>
<th>Choleric</th>
<th>Phlegmatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical traits: slender with a springy step, alert, coordinated, chatters, bubs, talks and talks b/c brings them joy to do so.</td>
<td>Physical traits: lean, soft voice, steady gait, sensitive to how clothes feel on their body—e.g. scratchy fabrics, tight necklines</td>
<td>Physical traits: muscular, stocky, firm, restless energy, stomping gait, feels caged when has to sit for too long, generally healthy.</td>
<td>Physical traits: heavily built, unhurried walk, tends to be clumsy, calm, aloof, moves slowly and meaningfully.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick to grasp and quick to forget new information; flits from idea to idea making it hard for adults to follow train of thought.</td>
<td>Takes impressions deeply into self—so much so that s/he can suffer from aches and pains.</td>
<td>Not a picky eater, eats heartily, likes crunchy and spicy foods.</td>
<td>Sensible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social butterfly, lots of friends, likes to be the center of attention.</td>
<td>Sensitive to others’ comments while also being insensitive when commenting on others.</td>
<td>Easily commands and fills a room with his/her presence, doesn’t show weakness, wants to appear tough and independent, can be bossy</td>
<td>Believes that there is an infinite amount of time to do anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big exaggerator, can confuse fantasy with reality.</td>
<td>Prefers the familiar and afraid of new experiences.</td>
<td>Not easily distracted, likely to start work that’s needed, and has confidence and determination to see it through.</td>
<td>Careful worker, organized, neat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play-life usually includes several games at once.</td>
<td>Slow to respond to situations. Decision-making can be painful, but thoughtfully considers issues that interest him/her.</td>
<td>Difficult to accept blame, abhors criticism, challenges what others say</td>
<td>Easy to raise because just wants basic needs met, well behaved, pleasant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embraces life, looks for adventure, adaptable to changes in routine.</td>
<td>Can be sympathetic and spend hours caring for animals or friends who are sick or injured.</td>
<td>Enjoys school, can be the power in the classroom (for good or bad!)</td>
<td>Dependable in friendships, loyal, honest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick to start new things, but has a hard time seeing them through, ideas come and go with little depth.</td>
<td>Can be a perfectionist with high standards and will make sure something is perfect so s/he doesn’t feel s/he is doing well.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Modest, not very self-confident, doesn’t want to stand out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loves to please, enthusiasm contagious; can neglect responsibilities, hard to be serious at times.</td>
<td>Slow to make new friends, but will become a best friend to a similar child;</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoys following orders, customs, traditions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The above information was taken from Betty Staley’s *Between Form and Freedom.*
A Seasonal Review, from 2nd grade teacher, Ms. Spencer

“Steiner believed that if gratitude and love have been unfolded in the child before the age of ten, then the foundations have been laid for the development of a true sense and understanding of duty in later life. Such feelings of responsibility obviously carry implications for the social life, and lead to attitudes of caring and fellow-feeling concerning people and property. This is one of the main goals for our class. We not only study math, reading and spelling, but how to treat our fellow man.”

The Practice of Reading and the Craft of Writing in 2nd Grade

“Reading skills are being practiced in the writing and reading of the students’ own Main Lesson Books. When we read aloud, great attention is paid to the clarity of articulation and enunciation. The class and I began to re-tell the fables from our Language Arts Block. Each fable had a powerful message that was never directly expressed to the children. The students found these stories thrilling and discussed various aspects of the animals and how they could relate to the actions of these animals in their daily lives. The students created sentences to represent the story. Once all sentences were discussed, the class chose one to write in their MLBs. Having each child contribute to the group “essay” was a fantastic process for this paragraph writing exercise!”

Learning Parts of Speech in 3rd Grade, from Ms. Lucas

Using characters, like the one pictured above, engaing otherwise reluctant students into lessons about grammar and parts of speech. Ms. Lucas told her students stories about King Noun the Namers, whose job it was to name things in his kingdom. His wife, Queen Adjective, was responsible for describing the things King Noun named. The energetic Sir Verb is always doing things, running or walking from one activity to the next. He constantly commands his sidekick, Squire Adverb to do things, as well—e.g. “Go and fetch my horse, Squire Adverb!” To which his sidekick responds, “How shall I fetch him?” or “When should I fetch him?” Ms. Lucas then incorporated the “doing” part of the Main Lesson period, putting what the children had learned into action. Standing at the front of the room, she would say a word, and the children would have to decide what part of speech it was. At their desks, the students would either sit with imaginary scepters like King Noun, or make a blessing motion for Queen Adjective, brandishing an imaginary sword on behalf of Sir Verb, and eagerly running in place for the helpful Squire Adverb. Engaging the physical life of the child (through this movement game) along with the feeling life of the child (through the artistic activity of illustrating the stories) and the intellectual, academic task of recording the lesson in writing in their Main Lesson Books are good examples of how Waldorf education strives provide the student with a comprehensive education of the curriculum.”

Playing for the Future!

Waldorf Kindergartens (still) practicing what Education Reformists are finally figuring out...

On January 5th, the New York Times published an article about the disappearance of play in America’s kindergarten classrooms*, and how this has made a negative impact in the creative problem-solving and social life skills of the child, not only while she is in Kindergarten, but for many years thereafter. Since their emergence in 1920, Waldorf schools have hailed the importance of play as a learning tool for the young child. When AWS first opened its doors in 1987 (then named The Redmont School), founder Sheila Rubin did so because she couldn’t find a program for her own children that allowed them to be children. Twenty-three years later, teachers and parents that have attended Alabama’s only Waldorf school here in Birmingham have attested to the positive effects a play-based social preschool program has had on the students. Recently a former parent (and current college professor in Education) called the school to schedule a tour for her Education students. After relating updates in the school’s status — how we had grown the grades program to 8 grades and had graduated four classes, as well as changed our name to Alabama Waldorf School — she conveyed her great pleasure in the school’s integration of elementary grades with preschool, and her wish that her own child could have had the Waldorf grades experience. “We were worried about our daughter not being able to read after playing all those years in Kindergarten!” she said. “But she was fine when she went on to public school. In the end we were so glad she had those years to be a kid and play. I wish we could have let her stay with Waldorf longer.”


“...An important part of the movement is teaching children themselves how to play. The average 3-year-old can pick up an iPhone and expertly scroll through the menu of apps, but how many 7-year-olds can organize a kickball game with the neighborhood kids?”

“...‘When I was growing up, there was a culture of childhood that children maintained,’ said Jim Hunn, vice president for mass action at KaBOOM, a nonprofit group that is a leading voice in reducing what it terms the “play deficit.” He noted that he learned games like Capture the Flag from other children. To revive that culture, he said, ‘Parents have to reassert themselves in this process and teach them how to play. It’s critical that parents take some ownership and get out and play with their children.”
January is a busy time for us in the office, with re-enrollment right around the corner and related marketing events swirling on the horizon. Last year we sent out a survey for current AWS parents to complete; from the feedback (approx. 50% of parents responded) we were able, not only to estimate how many families would be returning in the fall, but also to see where we as a school needed to focus our parent education efforts. Rising Kindergarten parents wanted to know how their nursery children would be better served continuing at AWS than transferring to a more traditional Kindergarten setting. Some of the rising 1st grade parents were under the impression that if their children continued into the grades at AWS, they wouldn’t be learning the basics of reading and writing until well after their public school peers. This year, in an effort to clear up these common misconceptions about Waldorf curriculum, and to give parents a peek at the joyful trajectory their children (and they!) can look forward to if they continue at AWS, our Why Waldorf Works presentation series is back! Join us on Monday, Jan. 24th for the first event, and find out just how prepared your Waldorf Kindergartners will be for an elementary curriculum. Both preschool and grades teachers will be present to answer your questions and to talk about how a grades Waldorf education transforms the imaginative capacities of the pre-school child into problem-solving and critical thinking skills necessary for the successful acquisition of reading and math. By the time an AWS student is ready to choose a high school—whether they decide on a rigorous academic path like those offered at Jefferson County International Baccalaureate or Altamont or Indian Springs, or arts-based, expression-driven programs like the Visual Arts and Theater programs at Shades Valley and ASFA—Waldorf students are equipped with self-confidence, intellectual ability, and, most importantly, an eagerness to go forth in their learning about the great wide world.***

IN THE SPIRIT OF GRATITUDE...

“Make it a habit to tell people thank you. To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you’ll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you’ll find that you have more of it.”

-Ralph Marston

AWS Faculty and Staff (including custodians Jimmy & Marie) would like to sincerely thank the AWSome parent body for the generous holiday monetary gifts they bestowed. What a wonderful show of appreciation! *****

In the past, Family Association fundraising proceeds have supported:

* Graduation gifts to 8th graders
* AWS operating expenses
* Childcare for FA meetings
* Radio advertising on NPR
* Rental of the pavilion at the FA summer picnic
* Teacher training costs
* Supplies for upkeep of playgrounds

NEW AWS WEBSITE!

If you haven’t yet, check out Alabama Waldorf School’s new website...

ALABAMAWALDORF.ORG

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Brian Mixon (Family Association Treasurer, husband of Senora Mixon, and dad to 3rd grader Emmett) the school’s virtual home on the world wide web is better than ever!

We’ve been updating the online calendar so that parents will have a universal and convenient go-to tool for the latest dates for school events, inclement weather closings, parent evenings, and FA and Board Meetings. In the coming weeks you’ll be able to access past issues of the Awareness, too!

So make it your homepage and spread the word to friends & family! ***
HOLIDAY FAIRE 2011…
LOOKING BACK AT THE FUN AND FESTIVITIES!

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU…
for making this Holiday Faire one of the most beautifully-decorated ever! Vendors’ goods were perfect for Christmas shopping, the bake sale and lunch buffet were delectable nourishment for body and soul, and the music was entertaining (to say the least)!***

Photos courtesy of Michael Mills.

Above: Chris Prichard gives a warm welcome to attendees. Right: Spring Fundraiser Co-Chair, Keri-Lane Hontzas, gives us a hint of the Wonka-inspired Golden Ticket Event and Auction taking place in March. Thanks to all who bought Golden Tix in advance!! Call 592-0541 to reserve your tickets today.

Gym décor headed up by Ducky Zellers, Michael Mills, and Jennifer Cripps, along with the help of numerous parents and students!!

Above: Ms. Gurganus leads the Middle School Chorus in a round of carols!

Nursery teacher Ms. Ashley (right) and AWS Foundress Sheila Rubin (left) share their joyful smiles with the camera.

Below: Ms. Powell takes up her shift at the 5th/6th grade vendor table. Students made cards and wrote poems to raise money for their 8th grade class trip.

Right: 7th/8th grade teacher Mr. Lucas accompanies the karaoke portion of the entertainment; AWS students always jump at a chance to perform!

Who says Holiday Faire is just for kids?? Parent Lisa Gibbs shows off her mad skills on the climbing wall.

Below: Ms. Beth takes a moment out of her busy tasks in the Elf Shoppe to say hello!

Above: 7th/8th grade teacher Mr. Lucas accompanies the karaoke portion of the entertainment; AWS students always jump at a chance to perform!
GOLDEN TICKET EVENT PROMISES TO PUT THE FUN BACK IN FUNDRAISING!

Mark your calendars now — AWS’ big spring fundraiser has been scheduled for Sunday evening, March 27th. Join us at the Rogue Tavern for a live and silent auction, raffle prizes, music, awesome food and drinks, and chocolate! That’s right, chocolate!! It’s a Willy Waldorf-themed Golden Ticket party. If you’re interested in donating a service or item to our silent or live auctions, contact the Office and we can put you in touch with the event co-chairs, Terra Mortensen (mother of Nursery student, River) and Keri-Lane Hontzas (mother of Kindergartner, Cali).

Call 592-0541 to purchase your tickets today!

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN THE FUN...

- Purchase two $100 Golden Tickets and double your chance of winning the grand prize!
- Sell two $100 tickets—remember, you can encourage people to split the tix into as many as four parts.
- Donate an AWeSome vacation destination to the live auction. These are always popular and extra festive if you win!
- Donate a service to the Parent Service Auction. (This is also a great way to get to know talents of fellow parents!)

And the way adults react to a child’s temperament has a strong influence on the child’s self-image and way of approaching people and situations. While the child simply experiences the temperament, the child relies on the adult to understand them and bring out the best in them. In knowing the temperament of a child, the teacher can nurture the positive qualities of that temperament. This can help the child have a solid foundation for healthy development into adolescence and adulthood.

In working with the temperaments, the rule is to go with the temperament, not against it. This gives the child the opportunity to experience the world through the temperament and, through that, to find balance.

As children move toward adolescence, they experience many changes, among them a change in temperament. As their individuality exerts itself more and more, the temperament shifts until it finds a balance in adulthood. Adults are capable of consciously working on their temperaments, cultivating one and minimizing another to arrive at balance.

So, what are the descriptors of the temperaments? The melancholic and phlegmatic temperaments are more inward and self-oriented while the choleric and sanguine temperaments are extroverted and outward-oriented. Staley’s book examines them in relation to attention. It is easy to get the attention of a child with a sanguine temperament, but it has little strength and disappears quickly. It is difficult to get the attention of a child with a melancholic temperament, but once gained, it’s very strong. It’s again easy to get the attention of a child with a choleric temperament, but complete attention is given to the situation. It is hard to draw in a child with a phlegmatic temperament, and the attention is weak and unfocused.

It is easy to see how a teacher (or parent) could use this information to craft a balanced main lesson, aid a student’s learning, or assist a child’s social development. Stay tuned to the Awareness for future columns on each of the four temperaments. And consult the chart on page 2 for basic characteristics of each.***

“The idea is not to transform the child, but to ennoble the temperament.”
—Rene M. Querido, the late director of Waldorf teacher training in Sacramento, California

ADMINISTRATOR’S AD LIB (CONT’D FROM P.1)

Thanks to our fabulous event co-chairs, we’ve already sold 26 Golden Tickets! Getting into the spirit of the Wonka theme, Terra and Keri donned costumes and raffled an AWeSome incentive basket which Lise Van Winkle happily won!***
The L.O.V.E Approach to Child Discipline, Part 4 of 4: On Energy & Enthusiasm

Brought to you by Kindergarten Teacher, Sadhna Udharam*

The article below is a continuation from the previous three months. To summarize the introduction on discipline...

Discipline comes from the word *disciple*. Children disciple themselves to their teachers. When teachers must discipline a child, it is essential that they do so with the utmost love and respect.

But, many times we adults are overwhelmed and over-tired by life’s daily stressors. Effective, good discipline is the result of inner work, warm, objective observation, and keen interest.

When you’ve practiced these behaviors enough, they become second nature. It’s the same way with discipline—you have to practice the inner work in order for it to become second nature.

The L.O.V.E. approach is a tool to help you with child guidance/discipline, but it can only work if you practice it.

The First “E” — Energy

It takes a healthy, etheric (or life) force to take care of young children, therefore we must take care of our own etheric body. Take care of ourselves, drink water, get enough sleep, meditate, breathing exercises, all those things that can help replenish us and fill us with energy. We work out of our etheric because the young child is till birthing her etheric. So make yourself strong. Use Nature, Art, Music, Yoga, etc. Practice a healthy lifestyle every day so that it becomes habit. Fill tasks with positive energy. Give attention to the positive -- if something is going well, focus on what is right about it. If something is not going well, focus on how it could be changed to go right. Energy doesn’t have to come from movement – it can come from stillness, as well. Focusing our energies into a calm presence can be our gift to the children. When we are still and present, we can trust that there is a higher being that can work through us.

The Second “E” — Enthusiasm

“En Theos” means to be “in God.” When we are around the children, our inner attitude should be reverent. A simple meditation is: “Be still and know that I am God.” We can do this meditation for 5 minutes in the morning, taking it apart, one word at a time and then meditating on each word. We need to become centered through sleep, rest and meditation. Ask for spiritual help and help from the family and friends who surround you. Enthusiasm can warm difficult situations. If, for example, a situation arises where a child is resistant to something, one can create an enthusiastic environment, which will help the child warm up to the idea.

In conclusion...through using all the elements of the L.O.V.E. Method of Discipline, AWS teachers strive to create an atmosphere where children feel their basic need for safety has been met so they can focus on their primary development tasks such as making friends, practicing their balance and coordination, building up the imaginative capacities which are the foundation for future problem-solving skills, reading comprehension, and joyful learning!***

“Love has the power to give in a moment what Toil can scarcely reach in an age.” -Goethe

L.O.V.E. stands for:

L = Listening, Laughter
O = Order/Clarity, Objectivity
V = Vulnerability, Versatility
E = Energy, Enthusiasm

*Sadhu Udharam, a 7th-year AWS Preschool Teacher attended Rudolf Steiner College this past summer as part of her coursework for the Early Childhood Waldorf Certification. This article series is based on “The L.O.V.E. approach to Child Guidance,” by Susan Silverio (presented at the 2010 WECAN conference) and Cynthia Aldinger’s “Discipline” (presented at RSC as a workshop for Early Childhood teachers).
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