SPEECH AND SPEAKING IN THE CLASSROOM

(for English-speaking Teachers)

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make the speech organs elastic. They are a sort of gymnastics. They also regulate the breath and voice production; they strengthen the feeling for language.

Recommendations of material for use in single classes cannot be definitive; nevertheless, it needs to be graded according to ability and understanding. This is particularly the case with regard to poetry.

Poems may have certain qualities to which the teacher might want to refer at different ages, but certain poems or types of poetry do seem to accord with different age groups. I make no claim to authority or to universal knowledge but hope that this selection will at least provide some sort of guide.

It must be stated that the choice of poems is a purely personal one. When this book is published, I expect a deluge of letters asking why this particular poem is included and that omitted. The answer must be that tastes vary, that the field is wide and every teacher is welcome to do his or her own research.

Since a great deal of what is recommended can be found in anthologies or in collected works, these are not quoted here. Only the title or first line (or both) and the name of the author, if known, are given. Material which is not so readily available, or which I include for some special reason, I quote in full.

I have made great efforts to include the names of all relevant authors and apologise in advance if there are omissions or errors. I would be grateful for corrections.

It is not suggested that all the poems and excerpts be learnt by heart, but I do recommend that pupils make acquaintance with them and learn the best, – as many as possible.

Just as a piece of music must be practised over and over again, so practised speaking of both poetry and well-formed prose will bring out the full artistic grandeur. Not only will such learning contribute considerably to an aesthetic appreciation of the Eng'ish language, but it will provide a fund of joy and sustenance in old age.

I speak from experience, having attended a school in my late teens where the word was cherished and having graduated at the Goetheanum School of Speech in Dornach (with a diploma signed by Frau Dr. Steiner) – and having long overstepped my three score years and ten.

Roy Wilkinson
Forest Row, E. Sussex
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Chapter One

The importance of speech and speaking

Speaking is essentially a human activity. Although human beings are related in various ways to the other kingdoms of nature, they are unique in possessing the faculty of speech.

In common with the physical world, human beings have a physical body. They possess a life force related to the plants. They have emotions, as the animals do, but they have the possibility of directing these. Animals may make noises and express themselves in diverse ways, but only human beings have the ability to form speech consciously in order to express their needs and thoughts. The special attribute which distinguishes them from the other kingdoms of nature is the possession of individuality, known in spiritual scientific parlance as the ego. In speech is expressed the individual power of the ego.

This power is not immediately present when the child is born but it becomes evident in the process of growth. The baby gurgles and makes sounds but does not utter articulated speech. The reason is that although the ego is present, it is, so to speak, working from outside, and is not yet incarnated. At about the age of twelve months, children can begin to walk. They assume the position of the conscious upright human being. That is a sign that the forces of the ego are taking possession of the physical organism. When this is accomplished, the child can begin to speak.

No-one can remember a time when he or she could not speak and although the faculty is inborn, the skill is not. This is acquired through contact with other human beings through hearing their speech.

As the ego in the child awakens, so does the command of language. Conversely, through the command of language the feeling for the ego, the self, arises.

In the present age, and in most schools, little thought is given to the cultivation of speech. It is simply a means of communication. But speech is far more than a utilitarian instrument. It has an aesthetic quality in its sounds; it has rhythm, melody, form, gesture, the ability to call up pictures in the mind. It has an artistic, poetic element. Its origin is divine. It is not the purpose here to enter into esoteric studies, but one might well ponder the significance of the opening words of St. John's gospel, 'In the beginning was the word'. When Homer says, in the first few words of the Iliad, 'Sing to me, Muse', it represents a real experience, i.e. he is being inspired by a higher power. With our present consciousness we may not have the same relationship to supersensible beings but we do speak of a poet's 'inspiration'. The word has become an abstraction, but, in less material ages than our own, its meaning was exactly in accordance with Homer's request. There was an awareness of higher beings who 'breathed into' humans the divine impulse of creative power.

There is another Biblical reference of some significance which is connected with speech. In Genesis we read that the Lord God breathed into man and he became a living soul. Thus we can think of breath as a life force.

Speech and breath are intimately connected. Speech is carried on the breath, vibrating and forming the air. It is the audible expression of gesture. The larynx shapes the moving air and brings forth sounds which, modified by other organs of speech, have varying qualities.

It is not difficult to imagine that in past ages, when the human being was less engrossed in this 'muddy vesture of decay' (borrowed from Shakespeare), speech was imbued with formative forces. Orpheus had this gift.

Art in general is a great provider of spiritual sustenance. Speech, as an art, is stimulating whether we are listening to artistic speaking or practising it. Even today, good, well-formed speech can be felt as uplifting, even creative. The opposite is also true; slovenly speech has a negative effect.

I would like to cite a personal experience. At the grammar school I attended I remember certain teachers who stood before the class with their hands in their pockets while they pontificated about this or that. 'The effect was soporific, but we pupils got blamed for not showing interest. A little more life and colour in speaking would undoubtedly have raised the class from its torpor.

A further case in point is that, with notable exceptions, I have endured agonies watching Shakespearean plays in which the actors seem to think that bawling and screeching are a substitute for proper speaking. Sometimes it seems that the cast consider words as a stumbling block to be got over as quickly as possible. Bringing the sounds to consciousness, savouring them, treating them with respect and giving them their just due, would prove to be far more effective and enjoyable.

Another unexplored aspect of speaking is health. Speaking is connected with breathing, and correct breathing is essential for good health. Speaking in the manner advocated in the following chapters promotes proper breathing and can be effective as a prophylactic against catarrh and colds and is a way of oxygenation of the whole body. The asthma sufferer is unable to breathe out properly. Practising the breathing-out exercise as detailed in Chapter 4 will help; and blessed is the class whose teacher has a sense of humour – laughing empties the lungs.

That there has been a general deterioration in the sphere of speaking is obvious. If we compare spoken English of the present day, even well spoken English, with that of Chaucer or Shakespeare, we can see how the language has become impoverished. The second part of a word tends to be cast aside, e.g. words ending in e – date, fate, note – have lost the intonation of the e. When Chaucer says 'Aprille', there are three syllables. Nowadays April has two, but in pronouncing it the two have become one, and we say Aprl. The word 'drogte' in the Canterbury Tales has two syllables and all six letters are pronounced: D R O G T E. In modern English the word has become drought, but with only one syllable and four sounds pronounced. The experts tell us that Shakespearean English was also spoken far differently from that of modern times, with more pronounced syllables and intonations.

A further loss is that certain sounds have been dropped from many words tom*b*, *k*nee, *g*nome. Shortening words, or not pronouncing some of the sounds, undercuts the experience. Gardener becomes gādna; knight becomes nyt; knowledge, nolej. A good example is provided by the aristocratic name of Cholmondeley which becomes Chumley. The loss of case endings is also an impoverishment. It is not being suggested that we return to ancient pronunciations but we can at least treat what remains with proper respect.

It is not unthinkable that a higher level of culture might be achieved if more attention were paid to cultivated speech.

As far as the teacher is concerned, it may well be a matter for sober reflection to consider how much he or she imparts to the children by way of the spoken word, and from that may follow the will to improve the manner of speaking. It is true that some educationalists – and not only educationalists – think that teachers talk too much. Maybe, in some cases, they do. For good or bad, it is a fact that speaking is a potent educational factor.

Here I would like to offer another personal experience. I was teaching at a secondary modern school when it was being subjected to inspection. The inspectors were very kindly disposed and appreciative of my good relationship with the pupils, but they suggested that the modern method was for the teacher to do less talking and 'let the children find out'. In deference to superior wisdom, I changed tactics, and a few weeks later a deputation of sorrowful children came to me with the complaint 'Why don't you talk to us any more?'

It is particularly important that children between the ages of seven and fourteen be addressed in language which stimulates the imagination. Thus, in speaking of animals, the teacher might characterize the horse as a dancer; the cow as a walking stomach. He might describe the birch as a dainty lady, an ancient oak as a strong old man. The butterfly is a flower released from the ground. The teacher might be saying something about a sea voyage. Rather than 'There was a storm at sea', a description would be more effective: 'Thick black clouds billowed over the water. The wind howled. The waves ran mountain high, scattering sheets of foam. From the depths came a roar like that of an angry dragon.'

If original inspiration flags, there is abundant literature to stimulate the imagination and support the lesson.

In geology, earthquakes and volcanoes might be the order of the day, and the talk may be of pressure and tectonics, which is correct and justified if given at the right stage of adolescence, but a poetic reference will greatly add to the picture. The following is from Goethe's *Faust*, Part 2, Act 2, Scene 3, translated by Bayard Taylor. It describes the formation of mountains.

The sphinxes speak: (referring to Seismos – the earthquake personified)

> What a most repulsive shaking
> Terrible and hideous quaking
> What a quivering and shocking
> Hither rolling, thither rocking.
>
> Now behold a dome upwelling,
> Wonderful. 'Tis he, compelling...
> He, with all his force expended
> Rigid arms and shoulders bended.
>
> Like an Atlas in his gesture
> Pushes up the earth's green vesture,
> Loam and grit, and sand and shingle
> Where the shore and river mingle.
>
> (abridged)

Seismos. The work alone I've undertaken
The credit will be given to me.
Had I not jolted, shoved and shaken
How should this world so beauteous be?
How stood aloft your mountains ever
In pure and splendid blue of air
Had I not heaved with huge endeavour
Till they, like pictures, charm you there?

This introduces a living element into what is otherwise a very materialistic study.

To enliven history teaching endless references are to be found among the poets – Shakespeare, Lord Macaulay, Lord Tennyson. A wonderful example is Byron's 'Destruction of Sennacherib'.

But there are many other aspects of speaking which the teacher must take into account. Obviously, a teacher should be able to speak grammatically, but formed thoughts must also be expressed in good and relevant language.

Tone and rhythm are important. Let the teacher also be aware of the effect of using a variety of adjectives, which will give his language colour, and a string of verbs that give it vitality and movement. Let him also consider whether, within the context of the sentence, a particular word fits rhythmically and euphonically.

Long monotonous monologues will send the children to sleep. Language that is lively and picturesque will stimulate interest. Descriptions must evoke pictures in the mind. English is so rich – there are various ways to say the same thing. Take a simple sentence like 'A cat crossed the road'. It could also be 'A small feline traversed the highway'. The meaning is the same, the flavour is different and this is one of the beauties of the English language.

Children should never be addressed in banal, trite, stereotyped language, either in class or out. Humour, warmth of heart and sincerity are paramount requirements.

At the beginning of school a teacher might invite his or her pupils to sit down and get out their homework but if he were in a Shakespearean mood he might say:

Be seated then I pray you and produce
Your work for which you yestereve
Did burn the midnight oil and rack your brains;
Or, if for any reason, one or all
Have not completed your appointed tasks,
Then pour excuses in mine ear while I
Mine anger and my rage most justified
Will seek with iron hand to hold
In that I think out punishment to meet
Such dire offence.

The point is to find the appropriate mode of expression.

English is blessed with an enormous vocabulary and, as an exercise the teacher might well form a sentence, then pick a word and try to substitute it by

another with even closer meaning to what he wants to convey. Should he use *nice, pleasant, agreeable, enjoyable, pleasing,* or what? What is the best word with the opposite meaning – *nasty, offensive, unpleasant, horrible???* There are many possibilities. Does a man *work, labour, toil*? The different shades of meaning give us a multicoloured language.

And there is also the matter of delivery. Tone can rise and fall even if we are not Welsh. Speed of delivery must be varied, subordinate clauses can be spoken somewhat faster than main clauses. Pauses are important. Like music, speech can be forte or pianissimo.

If a class is noisy or restless, the teacher might sit down and begin to speak quietly. Curiosity will lead the children to be quiet and listen.

Last, but not least, is the matter of articulation – the ability to pronounce words clearly and distinctly. This needs an enhanced consciousness for the sounds of speech, and an effort of will. Teachers must develop an ear for the sounds spoken around them and for those they speak themselves. The exercises suggested here will further these capacities.

In ancient civilisations words had a different significance. They were more powerful. The teacher of the present day can no longer hope to exercise this power, but in so far as he has cultivated his speech, he will have a great asset which will also give him authority with his pupils. Ideally the teacher needs to be both orator and actor.

Chapter Two

The origin and development of language

It was already stated that it is not the intention of this book to enter into deep considerations of the nature of speech. Those who are interested in such matters are referred to the author's book with the same title as that of this chapter. Nevertheless a few indications are given here appropriate to the present subject.

Language did not originate as a result of an intellectual exercise but from real experience. Only in modern expressions do we have thought-out words such as Ufo, Nato, Unesco.

The adepts tell us that a long way back in time the constitution of the human being was very different from that of the present. He, and she, lived much more within nature and they were more influenced by it, whereas the modern ego-conscious person stands over against nature and observes it although still remaining a part of it. The physical body was more flexible and had the propensity to react quite strongly to outer influences. Nowadays we shiver when it is cold or we feel our soul expanding in the gentle warmth of the summer sun. In pre-historic periods such influences were felt much stronger and had greater results. Thus, when the wind blew, the body swayed with it. When a feeling arose within the soul, it called forth a movement. The movements gradually became concentrated in one part of the anatomy and transposed into the sounds we make when speaking. The sounds of speech are a direct result of experience which was twofold: one, of the outer world; two, of the inner. In this way consonants and vowels developed respectively. The consonant is an expression of something experienced in the outer world; the vowel, of the inner. Thus each sound has a certain, definite and individual significance.

Because at the time people had the faculty of understanding the 'sound' element there was a universal language. This faculty faded with the event about which we can read in the Bible, namely, the building of the Tower of Babel and the confusion of the tongues.

In short, the explanation is this: Since language is the expression of experience and experiences vary according to soul constitution, topographical and geographical features etc., there may well have been different languages but the 'sound' element was common and therefore understood by all. The building of the tower marks a point in evolution when the earth's crust became more solid and parallel with that, humanity lost a certain faculty.

Obviously in 10,000 years there have been changes and developments but it is still possible to detect a significance in the sound element and this is reinforced by reference to other languages. For instance, in the sound B we have a sort of feeling of enclosure, being enclosed or wanting to be enclosed. In the L is the opposite, an unfolding gesture. R and F have characteristically a strong element of movement; K has a hardness; M, an interpenetrating feeling.

It is interesting to note the number of words beginning with SN which have an unpleasant connotation: snarl, snap, snake, sneer, snoop etc.

The vowels, as we said, are an expression of the soul. In English, of course, the orthography creates problems. Nevertheless, taken purely as sound one can experience the A (AH) as an opening out, as an expression of wonder, amazement or astonishment; the U (OO) as the opposite, a closing-in, retraction, fear.

There is then a relationship between sound which becomes words, the human being and objects. When Adam named things, it was not a matter of arbitrarily putting a number of sounds together but of expressing an experience of the object or of his inner self, or both.

In the Rudolf Steiner schools one of the curriculum studies is Eurythmy, an art of movement related to the sounds of speech. It is not possible to give details of this art here. A brief note on its relation to speech must suffice.

As explained above, each sound of speech has special significance and in eurythmy this significance is translated into a bodily gesture. The experience of this gesture leads to a greater appreciation and understanding of the sounds.

Chapter Three

Teaching children to speak

In the course of growth a child learns first to walk, then speak, then think. It can be observed how a child's speech is related to its walking. Some children walk with heels firmly on the ground; others trip along. These movements are an expression of the child's being and are reflected in its speech. Those who walk with a balanced gait will develop a good flow of speech. If a child does not walk properly, or even if it does, practice in rhythmic walking is beneficial. To that can be added running, jumping, skipping. The modulation of words is connected with finger movements – arm and finger exercises will help articulation.

The child learns to speak by hearing others; hence the importance of the role of parents and teachers in this respect. Small children are imitative creatures and their speech will reflect that of the adults around them.

In the normal course of teaching a great deal of speaking is involved, and there is no substitute for direct communication between teacher and child. In the child's early years at school the teacher will be telling stories, giving instructions and, in the course of time, imparting information of all sorts. Pupils should be encouraged to give a résumé of the stories, or part of them, or make some observation with regard to them. They should also be encouraged to make some original contribution from their own experiences. (It can be revealing. A few years back this was the way the school ma'am learned all about the goings-on in the village.) Maybe at first only a sentence or two will be forthcoming, but the teacher must insist on proper enunciation and the formation of proper sentences, grammatically correct. Up to the age of nine children should not be required to learn formal grammar but they will pick up correct grammatical usage by hearing it. (This assumes expertise on the part of the teacher.) Correction or guidance can be given where necessary, kindly, with a touch of humour if possible, and without making the pupils feel embarrassed.

A few words might be in place here on teaching by radio, by television or by other wonders of modern technology. One side of teaching is to dispense information, but to be informed is not necessarily to be educated. As far as education is concerned giving information is to arouse interest, to open the mind, to develop faculties. In other words, it is food for spiritual digestion to nourish soul and spirit. Education must seek to develop the whole human being and this is of special significance if we can think of the human being as a partaker of eternity.

A machine may instruct, may impart facts, but it has no mind or soul. It is objective and impartial but education requires a human relationship between teacher and child. Listening to a discarnate voice or looking at a reproduction is not the same thing. It does not allow the necessary interplay. The mechanical contraption will dispense its wisdom to all and sundry, but can it take into consideration those whom it is addressing? Can it arouse feelings of awe and reverence? Can it react intelligently and give immediate response as and when necessary?

The machine may be excellent at dispensing facts; it may be very efficient in instilling them. It may provide programmes of greater accuracy and perfection

than the individual teacher can, but it is still a machine. It cannot gauge the child's need or respond to it. It cannot enter into the subtleties which play between pupil and teacher.

This is not an outright condemnation of the media. It may, on occasion, provide something useful. For adolescents whose powers of independence and judgement are developing, it may well provide acceptable offerings but by and large, teaching, or rather educating, remains a matter of direct human relationships.

Reading practice, with due regard to clarity and articulation, grouping of words, pauses etc. is an obvious necessity. In producing plays there is also scope for instruction in speaking. In large classes there is naturally a difficulty in giving individual attention but it becomes a matter of organisation.

However, there is one area which provides a wonderful and natural means for practising speech and that is POETRY. Poetry can be recited in all the classes. Choral recitation provides an excellent start to the day. Since poetry is concerned with all sorts of rhythms, a prelude to speaking is to clap or step the rhythm, an activity which is extremely effective in getting a class to settle down.

Choral speaking is also recommended as a social activity.

In practising recitation with children the teacher's enthusiasm is a sine qua non. There is no point in **telling** children to show interest or enthusiasm in this matter or any other. Teachers have to demonstrate interest and enthusiasm, – that means, experience them personally and genuinely. There is no point in pretending. Teachers who are lacking in this respect should be exercising their talents elsewhere.

Poetry is **poetry** and it is spoken for artistic appreciation and experience. Any interruption of the artistic flow with explanations must be considered anathema. If necessary, a few words about a poem or its contents might be said beforehand. In the actual recitation, to emphasize the meaning is to lose the artistic. Poetry is form, not content. It grips the feelings, not the intellect.

For the most part there is no problem in getting children to recite in chorus. Individually there may be difficulties in the early years and again at the beginning of adolescence owing to shyness or self-consciousness. There is no point in the teacher being forceful or insistent. Patience and encouragement are the watchwords.

The teacher must also be aware of a certain danger when children are reciting in chorus. The chorus can act as a sort of drug and carry the individual with it. To a certain extent this is acceptable but not if the speaking becomes mechanical and an individual member becomes, so to speak, absent, opening and shutting his mouth and emitting sounds but with his spirit far away. The antidote is to mix individual with choral speaking or switch attention for a moment. Particularly at about the ages of eight or nine, choral speaking can degenerate into a sort of sing-song or gabble. Children get carried away on the wings of enthusiasm – intoxicated by the exuberance of their own verbosity – as was said of an aspiring prime minister. Then the teacher needs to slow them down, to insist on slower delivery and adequate pauses, consciously held. This is also an exercise for the will.

See that syllables are not swallowed, that the ends of words and the ends of lines are not neglected; in choral speaking, see that all participants grasp the

opening sound together and finish together on the last.

In the course of time greater awareness will enter into all aspects of speaking.

First comes consciousness of the sounds of speech, then breath, rhythms, tone, direction, presentation. We said earlier that consonants came into existence as a result of human experience of the outer world; vowels, of the inner. It follows that some poems will have more consonantal sounds than others and vice-versa. A good speaker will take this into consideration and use sounds accordingly. Vowels give colour; consonants, form.

In teaching poems to children – at least in the younger years – learning should be through listening. The teacher recites, hopefully after having received adequate training, and the children repeat. This applies also to learning the speech exercises. In fact there is no need for pupils to see these written at all.

In his educational works, Rudolf Steiner describes the various stages of childhood and adolescence. He explains what is appropriate in the way of subjects and method of presentation at each stage. The small child lives in movement and rhythm. After seven the child needs pictorial imagery and authority. Around fourteen the intellect and a feeling for independence develop. The material suggested in the following pages has been chosen to parallel this development.

In his discussions with teachers Rudolf Steiner gave many speech exercises which are included here in an adapted form for English speakers. It is a matter of interest that these same exercises (in the German or adapted) have become standard for training in Rudolf Steiner Speech and Drama schools. The particular sequence of sounds trains the speech organs.

Few children enunciate properly – hence the need for speech exercises, but very often the teacher needs them as well. From the beginning teachers should encourage clear speaking on every occasion.

Chapter Four

Speech exercises

As both spelling and pronunciation of English are somewhat illogical, it would seem essential to give some guide lines as standards. Thus:

a represents the short vowel as in Cat. At the end of a word it is the dropped syllable as in Flora or as the last syllable is pronounced in a word like Reader
ah is the long a as in Father
ay is the vowel sound as in Mate
oo as in Fool
g is always hard as in Goat
ir represents the vowel sound as in Girl
ow as in Cow
oy as in Boy
kn both sounds should be pronounced
s is the light s as in Son
y as in By, except at the beginning of a word or in combination as Yolk, Beyond
r should be rolled
ing and ang in combination as in Sing and Sang, likewise eng

There is a problem with the German ch which has no equivalent pronunciation in English. It is spoken something like sh but with less pressure and sometimes (guttural) like the ch in the Scottish word Loch. Here, where the sh appears with an accent over it, s'h, it is to be pronounced as a soft sh. Without the accent it is a full-blooded shsh. The ch represents the guttural sound.

Another little difficulty is with the ü, represented here as near as possible by eu as in Deuce.

In English, as in German, a final d is often pronounced t (jumped = jumpt) and where the sound t is spoken, it is written as such.

With regard to the practising of the exercises, this is a matter of organisation. Regularity is important. A few might be practised one day and a few another, or several could be practised over a period of time. Teachers should know them all by heart and practise a few daily. For use in class I have suggested a sequence for introduction at different ages but obviously what has been learnt should continue to be practised.

Children should learn the exercises by hearing them spoken by the teacher They should not learn them from the script.

The first exercise is concerned with the sequence of vowels. Let the breath stream out in a steady flow, articulate clearly and note how the mouth gradually closes:

Dass ayr deer loge oons darf ess nis ït loben

Speaking m and n in various combinations is a particularly good gymnastic

exercise for the speech organs. It will develop clarity. Where double letters appear the sound is also to be doubled:

Nimm nis'ht nonnen in nimmer meuda meulen

Rolling the r activates the tongue:

Rahta meer mayrera raitsel noor ris'htis'h

The following are exercises for articulation. The speaker should be conscious of each sound and this also means becoming conscious of the instruments of speech. Rolling the r also means developing flexibility:

raydlis'h rahtsam
reustet reumlis'h
reezig res'hent
roohig rollent
roy-igga rossa

Special awareness of the b and p is required for the next exercise:

protsis'h pryst
baider breunstis'h
polternt pootsig
beeder bastelnt
pooder patsent
bergis'h breustent

We have become very lazy in articulating our words, to such an extent that if effort is required, we simply drop sounds, as for example in knee, night, knight. It is therefore an extremely good exercise to practise saying both the p and the f in phrases such as the following although they are such close neighbours. The sequence also promotes fluency:

pfiffis'h pfyffen
pfeffisha pfayrda
pflaygent pfleuga
pfayrs'hent pfeerzis'ha

pfiffis'h pfyffen ows naipfen
pfeffisha pfayrda shleupfent
pfaygent pfleuga heupfent
pfayrs'hent pfeerzis'ha kneupfent

konf pfiffis'h pfyffen ows naipfen
napf pfeffisha pfayrda shleupfent
vipfent pfaygent pfleuga heupfent
tipfent pfayrs'hent pfeerzis'ha kneupfent

The following have similar objectives:

ketser petsten yetst klaiglis'h
letstlis'h lys'ht skeptis'h

ketser krais'htser yetst klaiglis'h
letstlis'h plirtslis'h lys'ht skeptis'h

tsooveeder tsvingen tsvahr
tsvy tsveckiga tsvacker tsoo vaynis'h
tsvantsis'h tsvayrga
dee zayniga kraybza
zis'her zoochent shmowzen
dass shmatzenda shmachter
shmeegsam shnellstens
shnoorig shnaltsen

After practising these for a while the speaker will soon notice a greater flexibility in the speech organs.

The following are especially beneficial in stimulating sluggish speech organs or helping stutterers:

isst shtrowchelnder shtayrn
myster meustisher shtoofen
shtell shtayts ayrnsten shtraybens
shtayrnshrahza shtandhaft
shtill shtreng shtaytent
for shtoofen shtayten shtraybens
in shtendiger shtimmung

hitsiga shtrahliga shtachliga
shtoorts-shtrenga shteutsen
shtraff netsa neutslis'h als
shtramma tatsen shtreng
gefaltst

Besides the gymnastic element, the following will help to develop presence of mind in speaking:

klip plap plick glick
klingt klapper ris'htis'h
knatternt trappent
rossa getripple

shlinga shlanga geshvinda
gevundena funda vekken vek

gevundena funda vekken
geshvinda shlinga shlange vek

Sometimes it is necessary to express one's wrath, i.e. to speak effectively:

marsh shmachtender
klapprigger racker
krackla plappernt linkish
flink fon forna fort

flink fon forna fort
krackla plappernt linkish
marsh shmachtender
klapprigger racker

Four short phrases provide an excellent multum-in-parvo exercise, very useful when time is limited. For distinctness and clarity:

moyza messen mine essen

For flow, fluidity:

lemmer lysten lyzes loyten

For form:

by beedern bowern blibe brahv (ow as in cow)

For individualizing:

komm koortser kreftigger kayrl

All sounds have their own individual quality but some are more capable of expressing different nuances than others. The L sound, for instance has a special plasticity. It should be felt and carefully given shape. In this exercise the first line can be spoken with affection. The sentiment is not returned and the second line expresses indignation. The next two become progressively abusive:

lalla leeder leeblis'h
lipplis'her laffa
lappigger lumpigger
lys'higger loors'h

Exercises with different types of sounds provide practice in contrasts:

ach forsher rash
ess shoss so sharf
auf shussvyza
dreuk dee dinga
dee by dayn narrenkappen
tahg oom tahg

grow greece granaht growpa
groylish isst dass

rowshenda rayden (ow as in cow)
rollten im rowma

valla vella villis'h
lyza lispeln lumpigga loors'he lustis'h

Advisable for use in the Upper School only:

hallt hayba hoortis'h hoha humpen
hola hynris'h heer hayr hoha hallma

Articulation, flow, flexibility are of course all connected with the breath. All sounds should be spoken on the outflowing breath, but a special exercise in this respect is the following:

Note: Take a deep breath and exhale the whole breath on each line. Keep a steady tone and listen to the sound of your own voice. Do not start with physiological adjustments of the organs. Breathing is learnt through speaking. This exercise should be practised in moderation since it can prove exhausting.

The first part of the original contains a sort of homily. It is therefore translated according to sense. The rest is a transposition to English spelling:

Fulfilment comes
Through hoping,
Comes through longing,
Through willing.

vollen vayt
im vaybenden
vayt im baybenden
vaybtbaybent
vaybentbindent
im finden
findent vindent
keundent

The continuous stream of the breath passes through the sounds like the wind through the trees. It carries the voice outward. This is another breath exercise, using a whole breath for each line:

shtoormvort roomort oom tor unt toorm
mols'hvoorm bort doors'h tor unt toorm
oum tobt mols'hvoorm doors'h tor unt toorm

In the two exercises above the words are breathed out and fall. It is necessary

to learn to direct the breath. The following verse is for practising direction. The first line describes a great arc over the dome of heaven; the second takes in the sweep of the horizon; the third, the depths; the fourth, the great cosmic circle; the fifth, a straight line forward. The first four lines have a ring of expectation. The fifth brings fulfilment.

Since there is meaning in the verse, this is a translation:

In the wide immeasurable spaces,
In the endless stream of time,
In the depths of human soul,
In the world's great revelation,
Seek answer to the riddles of existence.

Similarly:

You find your own self:	forward
Seeking in world distances,	horizontal
Striving to world heights,	upward
Struggling in world depths.	downward

A good exercise is to speak short sentences clearly, imaginatively and expressively:

As long as I live I will defend my right to speak.
Oh, that this too solid flesh would melt.
Oh, to be in England now that April's there.
The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.
I must go down to the seas again.
Fair is foul and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

A sentence for practising emphasis is:

George gave Edward five pounds.

Practise by first emphasising **George**, then **gave** etc.

Dr. Steiner gave a few special exercises to meet special needs: For making pinched voices more expressive:

I isst vyslis'h
vyslis'h isst I
bly isst noy im shtroy
noy im shtroy isst bly
dee myd isst bloylis'h
bloylis'h mydlis'h

To release tone trapped in the nose:

dayr bahza nahza ahss mayl
rahzen massa kratsa kahl

For stammerers:

nimm meer nimmer
vass sis'h vesseris'h
mit tylen mit-tylt

nimmer nimm meer
vesserigga vickle
vass sis'h shles'ht mit-tylt
mit tylen dyner rayda

We have said that each sound has its own particular significance. We could also say that each sound has its own flavour, and teachers might like to exercise their own ingenuity in forming sentences or phrases where the content matches the quality of the sound. Practising these the speaker might not only savour the sound but become a little more conscious of their types and the relationship with the speech organs. For example, some consonants are formed on the lips, others on the teeth and some in the throat. The tongue is very active in the R and the L.

Vowels flow without being especially formed by the physical organs. The sounds represented by AH AY EE OH OO are the pure vowel sounds. The following verse (written for children for Eurythmy practice) characterizes the vowel sounds:

Ah, father sun, a marvel thou art, to banish darkness and
gladden the heart.
Dazed by thy rays, our eyes we wend away, yet unafraid we
stay.
We see thee in the east. We reach to greet thee. Our strength
increases.
Oh, in our own souls we would enfold thy gifts of gold.
Thou movest through the blue. The earth soon cools. The moon
then rules.

For practising the individual consonant and its physiological base, the following phrases might be useful:

B Bitter blasts bend bough and bush
C The cry of the corncrake came from the cornfield
D The day was dark and dank and dreary
F Fire and flames through the forest flew
G Get thee gone, thou grasping gambler
H Henry worked with head and hand and heart
J Jack and Jill jumped for joy

L Lively lambs leap lightly
M On the magic mountain lay morning mist
N Now the night is near its noon
P Proud as a peacock in perfect plumage
R Around the rugged rocks the ragged rascal ran
S See silvery sails on the silvery sea
T Moonlight tipped the tops of the trees
V Here are valleys vast and verdant vales
W (Actually a vowel sound)
The wind was whistling through the willows
Y (A half vowel)
Yon youthful yokel yodels
Z A zestful zebra from Zambia sneezed
SH She shooed the sheep into the shed
TH In the thick and thorny bush nests the thrush
CH The children in church sang a charming chant

The combinations of sounds should also be experienced, i.e. brought to consciousness through words which will readily come to mind:

bl, cl, br, cr, fl, fr, gl, gr, pl, pr, sl, st, str, dr, spl, tw (as in twice)

To help the flow of speech generally, practice in speaking rhythmical verse is recommended.

The common metrical feet are the Iamb (∪ —) Trochee (— ∪) Anapaest (∪ ∪ —) and Dactyl (— ∪ ∪). Practising dactyls and anapaests can bring about specific results. The dactylic hexameter is the classical medium for epics and to practise speaking them is to learn to speak epics properly. It is also a good preparation for speaking prose. Practising the light, rising rhythm of the anapaest will further the speaking of lyrical poetry.

Chapter Five

Class work, ages six to fourteen

The following are suggestions for material to be used at different ages.
The designation of Class refers to the arrangement in the Rudolf Steiner school.

Class One: Age six/seven

Children at this age are still living in a semi-dream world. They have little intellectual understanding but live in feelings and respond to pictorial imagery. The hard material world is not yet a reality. The world is still a unity and children do not feel themselves as separate entities. They want to learn about the world, but in their own way – pictorially. They have a natural instinctive feeling for rhyme and rhythm and a natural grace and balance in walking. Since they are still in the imitative stage, it is extremely important that they hear clearly articulated speech, proper sentences and speech with an artistic flow.

Main lesson activities will centre round the three Rs and nature study, and include fairy stories. There is no need for dramatic presentation of any of these. In nature study it is a matter of allowing flowers, trees, plants, sun, moon and stars etc. to hold converse with one another in normal human tones. The pictures evoked work by themselves. Fairy tales are a spiritual food and should also be told in a quiet unsentimental way, allowing the children's minds to absorb the pictures without undue interference. A slight air of magic should hang over them.

Bearing in mind that bodily movement and speaking are intimately connected – walking, running, jumping, stepping and clapping in rhythm, arm, hand and finger movements are all helpful in promoting speech. (Note how a lecturer may have to walk a few steps to get his sentences out, or how, to help with verbal expression, he gesticulates with his arms, hands or fingers.) Walking, with heels down and properly balanced steps, will help the articulation and the formation of proper sentences. Running will help the flow; jumping, the emphasis. Arm and hand movements help to clarify the sound. Finger movements will help precision in speaking.

At this early stage the practice of actual speech exercises is not necessary, but there is an abundance of verses and jingles which can be used in their place and which will be greeted and recited by the children with great enthusiasm. It then behoves the teacher to see that the words are properly spoken, noting particularly that the final sounds are articulated.

(Using the word 'proper' in relation to speaking is not to be equated with developing any particular accent. Whatever the regional dialect, the aim is to encourage clarity and the use of correct grammar.)

In the Kindergarten children will have learnt to recite the well-known nursery rhymes such as Pat-a-cake, Hey diddle diddle, Two little dicky birds etc., also action rhymes like Mix a pancake; Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe, and so on:

(Authors' names are given where they are known.)

Mix a pancake
Stir a pancake,
Put it in the pan.
Fry the pancake,
Toss the pancake,
Catch it if you can.

Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe.
Have it done by half-past two.
If by half-past two it can't be done,
Have it done by half-past one.

Polly, put the kettle on,
Polly, put the kettle on,
Polly, put the kettle on,
We'll all have tea.

Sukey, take it off again,
Sukey, take it off again,
Sukey, take it off again,
They've all gone away.

"Where are you going, my little kittens?"
"We're going to town to get us some mittens."
"What? mittens for kittens; do kittens wear mittens?
"Whoever saw little kittens with mittens?"

One, two, three, four,
Mary at the cottage door.
Five, six, seven, eight,
Eating cherries off a plate.

One, two, buckle my shoe.
Three, four, knock at the door.
Five, six, chopping sticks.
Seven, eight, lay them straight.
Nine, ten, a big fat hen.

These may still be found to be useful and the children may be glad to show off what they know in a new class, but actual finger exercises should now be practised to lead to enhanced articulate speaking;

Dance, thumbkin, dance	(Waggling the thumb)
Dance, thumbkin, dance.	
Dance, you merry men all around	(Waggling the fingers)
But thumbkin, he can dance alone,	(Thumb)
Dance, thumbkin, dance.	
Dance, foreman, dance	(First finger) etc.

Dance, middleman, dance

Dance, lazyman, dance

Dance, cheekyman, dance

Incy wincy spider
Climbing up the spout
Down came the raindrops
And washed poor Incy out.
Out came the sunshine,
Dried up all the rain.
Incy wincy spider
Climbed up the spout again.

Here's the church
Here's the steeple.
Open the church
And here are the people.

Children enjoy onomatopoeia and the following provides an excellent exercise for certain sounds even if its content is not spiritually enlightening; it also has the advantage of being repetitive:

Ten fat sausages, sizzling in the pan.
One went pop and then went bang.
Nine fat sausages etc. etc.

They will take joy in making sounds and twisting the tongue in many nonsense rhymes:

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck
If a woodchuck could chuck wood?

She sells sea shells on the sea shore.
If she sells sea shells on the sea shore,
Then the shells she sells are sea-shore shells.

Pease porridge hot, pease porridge cold,
Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old,
Some like it hot, some like it cold,
Some like it in the pot, nine days old.

Stepping, clapping or skipping to the rhythms is an excellent preliminary to reciting the poems containing them. The following verses from the author's book *Miscellany* have the added advantage of referring to the elemental world in which children of this age are at home. The extracts are from the play *The Golden Key* (reproduced with the permission of the publisher, Rudolf Steiner College Press, Fair Oaks, California, U.S.A.):

The Moonbeams

Do you know who we are?
We are moonbeams from afar.
Do you know whence we come?
From the radiant Mother Moon.
Do you know where we're bound?
For the fairies' playing ground.
There to light a glad expanse
For the fairies' festive dance.
Fairy folk, come out to play;
Cast your tasks and cares away.
Elves and pixies, all draw near;
We, the moonbeams, are now here.

Gnomes

We carve the hills
And dales below.
We gnomes hack holes
For springs to flow.

In the dark
We work and toil,
Grinding rocks
And making soil.

Firm yet fine
The soil must be
To bear a flower
Or a tree.

We help to bring
The seeds to birth
And guide the roots
Through the earth.

Water Fairies

In the splashing, in the dashing
Of the waters which are flashing
In the sunlight's golden gleams;
In the pushing, in the rushing
Of the fountains which are gushing
In ascending streams;

In the ocean's bosom wide
In tiny rivulets which hide,
You will find us everywhere.
In the brook now gently calling
In the mist so softly falling
All that's watery is our care.

If the grass is parched and dry
And earth folk begin to sigh,
Praying for the gentle rain,
To the trees and plants and flowers

With our love we send the showers,
And the earth grows green again.

Air Fairies

We sprites of air
Dart here and there.
We guide the breeze
Through the trees.

Each blade that shivers,
Each stalk that quivers,
Shows where we pass
Across the grass.

Sometimes we sail
On the wings of a gale,
Make breakers roar
Along the shore.

The breadths of air
Are in our care.
To all we give
That all may live.

We foot it lightly,
Gay and sprightly,
Fine and free.
Air fairies, we.

Fire Fairies

In the fire, in the flame
Where the sparks red hot reign
We're at home.
Over snow, over ice,
We can breathe. In a trice
They are gone.

In volcanoes' deep-voiced rumbling,
In the groans, in the grumbling,
We delight.
Where the heated rocks are splitting
Are the fire fairies flitting
To the light.

To the fields in the spring
The first warmth do we bring
From the sun;
And the flowers at our meeting
Stand up straight to give us greeting,
Everyone.

Fleeing here, flying there,
Flames and fire everywhere,
Let us bring.

For a space we are free
For a while merrily
We will sing. etc.

Other poems dealing with elementals:

Sing a song of winter,
Streams all hard as stone
Not a flower showing
All the green leaves gone,
All the fairies hidden;
Ah, where did they go?
Sing a song of secrets
That the spring will show.

Sing a song of springtime
And gay flower beds.
From the happy flowers
Fairies poke their heads.
"Yes, you thought you'd lost us",
So the fairies smile –
"But we've just been hiding
For a little while."

"The Fairies" William Allingham

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men:
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping altogether:
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather.

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home.
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain-lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

"The Urchins' Dance" John Lyly

By the moon we sport and play,
With the night begins our day:

As we dance the dew doth fall:
Trip it, little urchins all.
Lightly as the little bee,
Two by two and three by three,
And about go we, about go we.

"Colour Fairies" Roy Wilkinson

On a sunbeam riding,
A fairy came down
To a flower hiding
In a little green gown.
"Wake", said the fairy,
"Here's your mantle of blue",
And kissing her lightly,
Off she flew.

On a sunbeam riding,
A fairy came down,
To a flower hiding
In a little green gown.
"Wake", said the fairy,
"Here's your mantle of red",
And kissing her lightly,
Off she fled.

On a sunbeam riding,
A fairy came down,
To a flower hiding
In a little green gown.
"Wake", said the fairy,
"Here's your mantle of white",
And kissing her lightly,
She took her flight.

A wonderful poem which can be introduced by skipping the rhythm is: "The Light-hearted Fairy"

Oh, who is so merry, so merry, heigh-ho!
As the light-hearted fairy? Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!
He dances and sings
To the sound of his wings
With a hey and a heigh and a ho!

Oh, who is so merry, so airy, heigh-ho!
As the light-headed fairy? Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!
His nectar he sips
From the primroses' lips,

With a hey and a heigh and a ho!

Oh, who is so merry, so merry, heigh-ho!
As the light-footed fairy? Heigh-ho, heigh-ho!
The night is his noon
And his sun is his moon,
With a hey and a heigh and a ho!

In the same category are two verses from Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream":

Over hill, over dale,
Through bush, through briar...

The second one is especially suitable as a speech exercise:

Ye spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen ...

And "Song of the Fairy Shoemaker" William Allingham

Tip-tap, rip-rap,
Tick-a-tack-too.
Scarlet leather, sewn together,
This will make a shoe.
Left, right, pull it tight,
Summer days are warm:
Underground in winter,
Laughing at the storm.

Big boots a-hunting,
Sandals in the hall,
White for a wedding feast,
Pink for a ball.
This way, that way,
So we make a shoe;
Getting rich, every stitch,
Tick-tack-too.

Nature is still animate and full of living things:

"Outside" Hugh Chesterman
King Winter sat in his Hall one day ...

"Windy nights" R. L. Stevenson
Whenever the moon and stars are set ...

Small children have a particularly close relationship with the natural world:

"The Butterfly" Margaret Rose
I know a little butterfly ...

"Duck's Ditty"' Kenneth Grahame
All along the backwater ...

"Grasshopper Green"
Grasshopper Green is a comical chap ...

"Who has seen the wind" Christina Rossetti
Who, has seen the wind ...

"The Tadpole" E. E. Gould
Underneath the water-weeds ...

Also:

There was an old owl who lived in an oak,
The more he heard, the less he spoke,
The less he spoke, the more he heard, –
O, if men were like that wise old bird.

Little Robin Redbreast sat upon a tree;
He sang merrily, as merrily as could be.
He nodded his head and his tail waggled he,
As little Robin Redbreast sat upon a tree.

With their feet in the earth
And their heads in the sky
The tall trees watch
The clouds go by.

A little brown bulb
Went to sleep in the ground.
In his little brown nightie
He slept very sound.
Old winter he roared and he raged overhead
But the bulb didn't even turn over in bed.
When spring came dancing over the lea
With finger to lip – just as soft as can be
The little brown bulb – he lifted his head
Split open his nightie and jumped out of bed.

A useful verse, of different character, is:

"The Light of the Sun" Rudolf Steiner (Translation)

The light of the sun is flooding

The breadths of space,
The song of the birds resounds
Through realms of air,
The friendly plants spring forth
From Mother Earth
And human souls, in reverent gratitude
Rise to the spirits of the world.

Children have a liking for verses with a repetitive element:

"Where are you going to, my pretty maid?" etc.

This is the house that Jack built.
This is the malt that lay in the house that Jack built.
This is the rat that ate the malt that lay in the house that Jack built,
etc.

"The Key of the Kingdom"

This is the Key of the Kingdom:
In that Kingdom is a city:
In that city is a town:
In that town there is a street;
In that street there winds a lane:
In that lane there is a yard:
In that yard there is a house;
In that house there waits a room;
In that room an empty bed:
On that bed a basket –
A basket of sweet Flowers;
Of Flowers, of Flowers;
A Basket of Sweet Flowers.

Flowers in a Basket;
Basket on the bed;
Bed in the room;
Room in the house;
House in the weedy yard;
Yard in the winding lane;
Lane in the broad street;
Street in the high town;
Town in the city;
City in the Kingdom –
This is the Key of the Kingdom.
Of the Kingdom this is the key.

When writing is being taught, the teacher might make up little verses or rhymes with characteristic sounds so that each sound is brought a little more into

consciousness. My own effort produced two verses for this purpose but I do not claim that they have any particular poetic merit:

Consonants

Let us bravely now build with fine bricks
Both a high and a handsome new house.
That it first may be firm and well founded,
We will dig a good depth for foundations.
On the clay we will cast moulds of concrete,
Then we'll make and we'll mix a good mortar
And bricks layer upon layer we will lay
Till the top is as tall as the trees.
As it grows we leave gaps for some glass
That the sunlight in splendour may stream in.
It has views o'er the vale and the valley –
With its polish and paint it looks proud,
And we know we have nothing neglected.

Vowels

Ah father sun, a marvel thou art etc.

(See Chapter Four, page 19)
(See also the exercises in Chapter Four for practising individual consonants.)

Class Two: Age seven/eight

The characteristics of the child at this age are similar to those of the previous year with obvious growth, development and increasing ability. The child is 'in itself' a little more but still not yet cognisant of a separate world.

Class One children will have learnt to write and now they can begin to read. Obviously clarity is called for when reading aloud. Children who have already learnt to speak properly will have an advantage in that they will find it easier to grasp the words. The right grouping of words should be encouraged as well as the right intonation to accord with punctuation.

It is still too early to practise speech exercises as such, but not too soon for jingles, as mentioned for the previous year and such verses as:

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper:
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper,
Where is the peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper picked?

Betty Botter bought some butter,
"But", she said, 'This butter's bitter;
If I put it in my batter,
It will make my batter bitter,
[illegible]
It will make my batter better"
So she bought a bit of butter,

Better than her bitter butter
And she put it in her batter.
And it made her batter better.
So it was better that Betty Botter
Bought a bit of better butter.

Whether the weather be fine, or whether the weather be not,
Whether the weather be cold, or whether the weather be hot,
We'll weather the weather, whatever the weather,
Whether we like it or not.

A centipede was happy quite
Until a frog in fun
Said, "Pray which leg follows which?"
This raised her mind to such a pitch
She lay distracted in a ditch,
Not knowing how to run.

Fables are main lesson material and fable in verse form could be useful:

"Mountain and the Squirrel" R. W. Emerson
The mountain and the squirrel ...

In French perhaps – La Fontaine:

"Le Renard et le Corbeau"
"La Cigale et la Fourmi"

Verses and poems already mentioned can still be practised:

This is the house that Jack built ...

is not only an excellent piece with repetitive value but it also provides a good exercise for the breath. To the list can be added:

"Spring" William Shakespeare
Now daisies pied and violets blue ...

"The Piper" William Blake
There piped a piper in the wood ...

"Jack Frost" Cecily E. Pike
Look out, Look out ...

"Spring has come" 17th Century song
Hark, the tiny cowslip bell ...
Spring is coming
Full early in the morning

"Spring Prayer" Ralph Waldo Emerson

For flowers that bloom about our feet,
For tender grass, so fresh and sweet,
For song of bird and hum of bee;
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

For blue of stream and blue of sky,
For pleasant shade of branches high,
For fragrant air and cooling breeze,
For beauty of the blossoming trees,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

There is no poet to equal Shelley. Some of his poems may be a little too difficult at this age but a verse or two of the following should certainly be included:

"The Cloud"
I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers ...

"The Fugitive"
The waters are flashing

Class Three: Age eight/nine

The age of nine brings a turning point. Children gradually turn towards the outer world. They become more conscious of themselves as distinct from the rest of the world. Uncertainties creep into their minds. Questions arise in the subconscious such as "Who am I"', "Are these my real parents?". The childish chatter gives way to hesitation and to a search for the right expression.

With greater consciousness of the outer world the ear is more aware of sound and hence more receptive. Children may now appreciate the fact that we have two sorts of sounds in our language – vowels and consonants. They will appreciate onomatopoeic words – moo, buzz, twitter, flutter, sizzle.

In main lessons they will have a period on farming and gardening, on house building, and they will hear the Old Testament stories. Plenty of material for recitation can be found within these subjects but ideally one needs also to find poetry which combines rhyme and rhythm with aesthetic language.

Remembering that the child is coming down to earth a little more, Longfellow's "Hiawatha" provides some good passages: for example, from Canto 3 "Hiawatha's Childhood"

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,

How they built their nests in summer,
Where they hid themselves in winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's chickens".

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's brothers'.

This is such a long poem that the teacher is advised to make his or her own selection according to personal taste.

The following is from Rune 2, "Väinämöinen's Sowing", from the *Kalevala*, the national epic of the Finns, translated by W. F. Kirby. (This is only a short extract. There is much more for the teacher who would like to use it.)

Then he went to sow the country
And to scatter seeds around him
And he spoke the words which follow:
"Now I stoop the seeds to scatter,
As from the creator's fingers,
From the hand of Him Almighty,
That the country may be fertile,
And the corn may grow and flourish.

Patroness of lowland country,
Old one of the plains; Earth-Mother,
Let the tender blade spring upward,
Let the earth support and cherish.
Might of earth will never fail us,
Never while the earth existeth,
When the givers are propitious,
And Creation's daughters aid us.

Rise, O earth, from out thy slumber,
Field of the Creator, rouse thee,
Make the blade arise and flourish,
Let the stalks grow up and lengthen,
That the ears may grow by thousands,
Yet a hundred fold increasing,
By my ploughing and my sowing,
In return for all my labour."

Note: The *Kalevala*, or the "Land of Heroes", as the word may be translated, is a series of stories which the Finnish farmers would recite in the long dark winter nights. Two men would sit opposite one another holding hands and rocking back and forth. One would speak the first line on moving forwards, and the other the next line as he rocked backwards. The second line is in most cases a repetition of the sense of the first.

The following verses are useful in connection with Farming and Gardening period:

"The Ploughman's Charm" from Anglo-Saxon:

Erce, Erce, Erce, Mother of Earth!
May the Almighty Lord Everlasting
Grant thee fields, green and fertile,
Grant thee fields, fruitful and growing,
Hosts of spear shafts, shining harvests,
Harvest of barley the broad,
Harvest of wheat the white,
All the heaping harvests of earth.

May the Almighty Lord Everlasting
And his holy saints in heaven above,
From friend and foe defend this land,
Keep it from blight and coming of harm,
From spell of witches, wickedly spread.
Now I pray the Almighty who made this work
That malice of man, or mouth of woman
Never may weaken the words I have spoken.

When the first furrow has been turned, say:

Hail to thee, Earth, Mother of Men.
Grow and be great in God's embrace,
Filled with fruit for the food of men.

(Knead a loaf of bread with milk and holy water and lay it under the first furrow.)

Field, be full of food for men,
Blossom bright, for blessed thou art.
In the name of the Holy who made the heavens,
Created the earth whereon we live,
God who gavest this ground,
Grant us growth and increase,
Let each seed that is sown, sprout and be useful.

This effort from Yorkshire adds a little spice:

Turmut Hoeing (Turnip)

'Twas on a jolly summer's morn, the twenty-first of May,
Giles Scroggins took his turmut hoe, with which he trudged away;
For some delights in hay making, and some they fancies mowin',
But of all the trades that I like best, give I the turmut hoein'.
For the fly, the fly, the fly is on the turmut,
And it's all my eye for we to try to keep fly off the turmut.

Now the first place as I went to work, it were at Farmer Towers.
He vowed and sweared, and then declared, I was a first rate hoe-er.
Now the next place as I went to work, I took it by the job;
But if I'd knowed it a little afore, I'd sooner ha' been in quod.
For the fly etc.

When I was over at yonder farm, they sent for I a-mowin',
But I sent back word: I'd sooner be sacked than lose my turmut hoein'.
Now all you jolly farming lads as bides at home so warm,
I now concludes my ditty with wishing you no harm.
For the fly etc.

This is the age when children become acquainted with the Old Testament, hence:

Genesis 1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth ...

Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd

Psalm 19.

The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world, etc.

Isaiah 40. v. 3-5

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

v. 28-31

Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the

Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall be faint and weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Also appropriate:

"Creation" Old English

This I learned among men
As the greatest wonder:
That there was once no earth
Nor the heavens above,
Neither mountain nor tree;
That the sun did not shine
And the moon gave no light,
Nor was there the sea;
In the depths there was darkness
And the vast spaces were void;
But there was God the Father,
Of all beings the mightiest,
And with him were spirits divine.

From "The Opening of the Gates" James Macbeth

Through the boundless universe
Thou art moving, Thou art dwelling;
Through its circuit life is sounding
Unto Thee and joy is welling
Evermore within Thy Course.

Floods are bounding, winds are rounding
In the ether of Thy presence;
Sun and moon and earth are coursing
On Thy Spirit, stars are speeding;
Life and death and birth are forcing
All within Thy power leading.

Mighty Godhead dwelling round us,
Thou art one and Thou dost bound us;
We are even living in Thee,
Breathing in Thee, moving in Thee,
Thou one soul of majesty.

Thou unnamed, how may we name Thee,

Though our love were fain to word Thee?
By our tongue we may not frame Thee,
Though all-uttered, who hath heard Thee?

All-contained and all-container,
Thou art one and all is in Thee,
Self-sustained and all-sustainer,
Self-constrained and all-constrainer;
Thou Outgoer, Thou Upholder
Thou Returner, Thou Unfolder,
All Thy paths are mystery.

Quotations from John Milton

God with all-commanding might
Filled the new-made world with light.
He the golden tresséd sun
Caused all day his course to run,
And the moon to shine by night
With her spangled sisters bright.
In His hand

He took the golden compasses, prepared
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe and all created things.
One foot He centred and the other turned
Round through the vast profundity obscure
And said, "Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O World."

With greater development of consciousness children can now be stepping or clapping rhythms with greater awareness of what they are doing. They can begin a few elementary speech exercises and, as ever, the teacher must encourage the speaking of whole words, e.g. the complete pronunciation of words such as tact, fact, act.

Class Four: Age nine/ten

Children are now more incarnated, more confident and self-assured. They want to know more of the outer world. They show enthusiasm for speaking and can cope with a wide range of poems.

The main lesson work now includes the study of Home Surroundings, Man and Animal, Norse stories, business letters, as well as the routine subjects.

At this stage children will now appreciate certain differences in sounds consciously, e.g. the light and heavy S, the difference between S and SH; they will feel the wave in W and the outflowing impulse in L; they will begin to appreciate the difference between declamation and recitation, the one governed more by the metre, the other by high and low tone. Proper speech exercises can

now be given.

To acclimatize the children to the strange sounds that they will eventually be asked to make, it might be a good idea to lead over from something with which they are already familiar. They will already be conversant with tongue twisters and nonsense rhymes so one could easily challenge them to repeat sounds uttered by the teacher such as pfiffis'h pfyffen, pfiffish pfyffen, or ketser petsten yetst – exercises which will be more diligently practised in later classes.

Since in Class Four they will be learning alliterations, one could also begin with the four phrases which have the alliterative element:

moyzer messen mine essen
lemmer lysten lyzes loyten
by beedern bowern blibe brahv
komm koortser kreftigger kayrl

Movement or gesture always helps speech and, in introducing these exercises, the teacher should speak the words while the children step or clap on the accented sound. An extension of this would be to make a gesture which has a correspondence with the nature of the sound; i.e. on the M-sound the children might imitate the action of stirring, giving the movement an extra impulse on the repeated sound. The L could be characterized by a gesture of the arm illustrating waves breaking on the shore. For B a gesture clasping something with both hands would be appropriate, while K is obviously best served by digging the heels into the ground.

After these preliminaries the children will be invited to speak the words together with the teacher. They will probably already know them by heart. If not, they are repeated after the teacher. At this stage pupils should learn by listening only.

Every sound must be clearly articulated and eventually each child can be brought to speak individually.

An alternative start would be to take the three first exercises mentioned in the previous chapter. In each case they could be introduced by taking a step forward on each syllable – dass ayr deer loge, nimm nicht nonnen, rahte meer...

With regard to suitable poems, there is an abundance available. Particularly at this age the practice of alliterations is useful. They express a will element.

It is still better for the children to learn poems by listening rather than by study of the script. It is assumed that the teacher's technique and artistic understanding will have been cultivated.

"The Blacksmiths" English, 15th century (adapted)

Swart smirched smiths smattered with smoke
Drive me to death with din of their dents.
Such noise on nights men ne'er heard never,
Such clashing of cries and clattering of knocks.
The craftsmen clamour for coal, coal, coal
And blow their bellows their brains to burst.

'Huf, puf' saith one. 'Haf, paf', another.
They spit and sprawl and spill their spells.
They groove and they grind; they grumble together,
Hot with heaving their heavy hammers
Of thick bull's hide are their branded aprons
Their shanks are shod 'gainst shooting sparks.
Huge hammers they have and hard to handle.
Stark strokes strike they on the steeléd stock.
Lus, bus, las, das. They rage and they roar.
Such doleful a dream is the devil's doing.
May heaven help us. May they go to hell.
For on nights rest is none near such noisy knaves.

from "Beowulf" Old English, 8th century

From the misty moorlands and misty hollows
Grendel came creeping, accursed of God,
A monstrous ravager minded to murder
Sleeping heroes in their high hall.
Under clouded heavens he held his way
Till there rose before him the high-roofed house,
The wine-hall of warriors, gleaming with gold.

from "The Vision of Piers Plowman" William Langland

On a May morning, on a Malvern hillside,
I saw strange sights, like scenes of Faerie.
I was weary with wandering and went for to rest
By the bank of a brook in a broad meadow.
As I lay at length and looked on the waters,
I slumbered and slept, so sweet was their sway.

from "Tristram of Lyonesse" Swinburne (adapted)

And the night spake, descending on the sea,
Ravening aloud for ruin of lives; and all
The bastions of the bold cliffs blasted wall
Rang out response from all their rugged length,
As the e. st wind girded up his god-like strength
And hurled in hard against that high-towered hold
The fleeces of the flock that knows no fold,
The rent white shreds of shattering storm; but she
Heard not nor heeded wind nor howling sea,
Knew not if night were mild or mad with wind.

In connection with the Norse stories is the alliterative poem "Thor's journey to Giantland", found in my book on Norse Stories and in *Miscellany*.

One morning the mighty Mjølnir was missing.
Wild on waking was Thunderer Thor.
He bristled his beard, his breast was bursting,
And his face a fierce frown wore.
(First verse)

The will element in alliterations can be enhanced by moving. Holding a rod and moving around in a circle, the children take a firm step and reach forward with the rod on each alliterated sound. The teacher recites.

In thinking of poems in connection with a greater understanding of the outer world, the selection is endless.' Much of what was mentioned for Class Three will still be appropriate, plus Poems touching on the seasons:

"The Echoing Green" William Blake
The sun doth arise,...

"Lines written in March" William Wordsworth
The cock is crowing ...

"Song" William Watson
April, April,

"Autumn" Florence Hoatson
Yellow the bracken

In connection with study of nature:

"The Brook" Lord Tennyson
I come from haunts of coot and hern...

"The Daffodils" William Wordsworth
I wandered lonely as a cloud ...

"The Wind" Dorothy Wordsworth
What way does the wind come? What way does he go?...

"From a Railway Carriage" R. L. Stevenson
Faster than fairies, faster than witches ...

A marvellous poem with plenty of swing is
"The Cataract of Lodore" Robert Southey

Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping and clapping and slapping,
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,

And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing,
And so never ending but always descending,
Sounds and motions for ever are blending
All at once with a might uproar –
And this way the water comes down at Lodore.

The following little known poem will be spoken with great exuberance:

"The Pennines" Ammon Wrigley

In the Pennine dales in springtime,
Oh, who would not be there?
When the thrush is in the hedgerow
And the lark is in the air,
When the frolic winds come shouting
With a hey and a hoy,
And the heart is like a blossom
That's just found light and joy.

On the Pennine moors in summer
I want no scene more fair
Nor a joy more sweet than roaming
With the grouse and with the hare:
When the bees are in the heather
Lip deep in purple wine,
Then the life they lived in Eden
On Pennine moors is mine.

On the Pennine hills in autumn
When harvest winds are spent,
When the gold is on the bracken
And silver on the bent,
When the fields grow honey yellow
In days of dreamy ease;
Then to me they are the gardens
Of my Hesperides.

On the Pennine hills in winter
With a nip in the wind,
There's a red cheek and a bracing
For body and for mind.
Then away from streeted houses
As far as bird can fly
To the hills God made for roaming
And health and joy, say I.

(Permission to include the above poem was kindly given by Mrs. Ruth E. Underwood and Mrs. Christine Seville who hold the copyright.)

A "Man and Animal" main lesson would profit from poems such as:

"The Eagle" Lord Tennyson
He clasps the crag with crooked hands ...

"Silver" Walter de la Mare
Slowly, silently, now the moon ...

"To the Cuckoo" William Wordsworth
O blithe new-comer, I have heard ...

"Unstooping" Walter de la Mare
Low on his fours the Lion

"The Tiger" William Blake
Tiger, Tiger, burning bright...

Extracts from
"The Pied Piper of Hamelin" Robert Browning
Rats. They fought the dogs ...

Although they can hardly be classed as great poetry, riddles can be introduced. They have the effect of awakening the mind.

As I was going to St. Ives
I met a man with seven wives.
Every wife had seven sacks,
Every sack had seven cats,
Every cat had seven kits,
Kits, cats, sacks and wives
How many were going to St. Ives? (One)

Two brothers are we,
Great burdens we bear
On which we are bitterly pressed;
The truth is to say
We are full all the day
And empty when we go to rest. (Shoes)

Runs all day and never walks,
Often murmurs, never talks,
It has a bed but never sleeps,
It has a mouth but never eats. (The river)

In spring I look gay,
[illegible]
In summer more clothing I wear.
When colder it grows,

I fling off my clothes
And in winter quite naked appear. (A tree)

Class Five: Age ten/eleven

From ten to twelve children experience in a general way ever widening horizons. They develop a sense of time. They become more and more conscious of the external world and of themselves as separate entities within it. Their inner needs are met in part by the subjects of the main lesson. Geography and history meet the need of the expanding mind, also plant study.

Specifically in main lesson periods the study of home surroundings is extended to the whole of the country and history begins with stories from ancient cultures, i.e. Ancient India, Persia, Egypt. This leads to more historical concepts as history becomes recorded.

With regard to speaking – the retelling of stories in clearly spoken, grammatically correct sentences is to be encouraged as routine practice.

For speech exercises the *moyzer messen* is still recommended. (This particular exercise gets rid of speaking through the nose). Then come:

raydlis'h rahtsam
protsis'h pryst

To these can be added

pfiffis'h pfyffen etc.

and other articulation exercises.

Poems which contain aesthetic value with content appropriate for main lesson work on the ancient civilisations will be found in the author's book *Teaching History*, Volume 1, or in the combined version, Volumes 1 and 2.

Coming towards Greece we meet the classical hexameter. For speakers and speaking this is particularly valuable. The child's rhythmic system is becoming more consolidated. The speaking of hexameters is an invaluable ingredient for health as it regulates the breathing system. The hexameter has three beats and the caesura = four pulse beats to one breath, the human rhythm. It is the measure, bar none, for giving information, i.e. epic poetry. Hence the great Greek epics appear in this form.

Relating to the Greek period is the following near-perfect hexameter, the last foot being the spondee, alternative to the dactyl.

"To Prometheus" Roy Wilkinson

Hail to Prometheus, the Titan, the helper of man and creator.
Clay was the substance he used and in likeness of gods then he shaped it.
Goodness and evil from hearts of the beasts in man's breast he enfolded;
Fire he brought down from the realm of the skies to perfect his creation;
Movement of stars he explained to the wondering earth-dwelling people;
Numbers he taught them to use and the plants which heal sickness he showed them;

Symbols he taught them to write, representing the sounds of their speaking;
Building of ships he did teach and the training of beasts to man's service;
Into the depths of the earth did he guide men to find precious metals.
Zeus he defied and brought fire down again when the god would deny men.
Torment and anguish he suffered for harsh was the fate decreed for him:
Bound to a cliff and tormented and tortured by day by a vulture,
Bravely the Titan endured and at length one arrived to release him.

Other poems with hexameters:

from "Hymn to the Earth" Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Earth! Thou mother of numberless children, the nurse and the mother,
Sister, thou of the stars and beloved by the Sun, the rejoicer!
Guardian and friend of the Moon, O Earth, whom the comets forget not,
Yea, in the measureless distance wheel round and again they behold thee!

from "Andromeda" Charles Kingsley

Over the mountain aloft ran a rush and a roll and a roaring;
Downward the breeze came indignant, and leapt with a howl to the water,
Roaring in cranny and crag, till the pillars and clefts of the basalt
Rang like a god-swept lyre, and her brain grew mad with the noises;
Crashing and lapping of waters, and sighing and tossing of weed beds,
Gurgle and whisper and hiss of the foam, while thundering surges
Boomed in the wave-worn halls, as they champed at the roots of the mountain.

from Evangeline" Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks.
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like the Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighbouring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

A poem with a lovely swing for choral recitation and one which also contains a little 'message' is the following:

"The Wind and the Moon" George Macdonald

Said the Wind to the Moon,
"I will blow you out:
You stare
In the air
Like a ghost in a chair
Always looking what I am about.
I hate to be watched – I'll blow you out."

The Wind blew hard,
And out went the Moon;
So deep
On a heap
Of clouds to sleep.
Down lay the Wind and slumbered soon,
Muttering low, "I've done for that Moon."

He turned in his bed,
She was there again;
On high
In the sky
With her one great eye.
The Moon shone white and alive and plain,
Said the Wind, "I will blow you out again."

He blew and he blew,
And she thinned to a thread:
"One puff
More's enough
To blow her to snuff.
One good puff more where the last was bred,
And glimmer, glimmer glum will go that thread."

He blew a great blast
And the thread was gone;
In the air
Nowhere
Was a moonbeam bare.
Larger and nearer the shy stars shone,
Sure and certain, the Moon was gone.

The Wind he took
To his revels once more;
On down
And in town
A merry mad clown.
He leaped and halloed with whistle and roar,
When, – there was that glimmering thread once more.

He flew in a rage,
He danced and blew,
But in vain
Was the pain
Of his bursting brain,
For still the moon-scrap broader grew
The more that he swelled his big cheeks and blew.

Slowly she grew till
She filled the night
And shone
On her throne
In the sky alone,
A matchless, wonderful, silvery light,
Radiant and lovely, the queen of the night.

Said the Wind, "What a
Marvel of power am I,
With my breath
In good faith
I blew her to death;
First blew her away, right out of the sky,
Then blew her in, what strength have I."

But the Moon she knew nothing
About the affair,
For high
In the sky
With her one white eye,
Motionless, miles above air
She never had heard the great Wind blare.

Other useful poems for this age are:

"The Destruction of Sennacherib" Lord Byron
The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold ...

"Lochinvar" Walter Scott
O young Lochinvar is come out of the west ...

"War Song of the Saracens" James Elroy Flecker

We are they who come faster than fate,
We are they who ride early or late,
We storm at your ivory gate,
Pale kings of the sunset, beware!
Not in silk nor in samet we lie,
Not in curtained solemnity die
Among women who chatter and cry,
And children who mumble a prayer.
But we sleep by the ropes of the camp,
And we rise with a shout, and we tramp
With the sun or the moon for a lamp.
And the spray of the wind in our hair.

The above are in anapaests and so provide a good contrast to the dactyls.

A verse which is an invocation to a higher power is:

"Michael the Victorious" Old Gaelic

Thou Michael the victorious,
I make my circuit under thy shield.
Thou Michael of the white steed
And of the bright, brilliant blade!
Conqueror of the dragon,
Be thou at my back,
Thou ranger of the heavens!
Thou warrior of the King of all!
Thou Michael the victorious,
My pride and my guide!
Thou Michael the victorious,
The glory of mine eye.

Class Six: Age eleven/twelve

There is a pronounced 'skeletal' development at this stage. The being of the child is grasping, so to speak, the bones. Questions persist as to the relationship of self to the world. Who am I? What am I? The mind is expanding rapidly.

In the main lesson pupils will be learning, inter alia, folk lore, physics, history of Greece and Rome, more geography and making acquaintance with the New Testament.

It is time for speech exercises demanding precision, and time to give an abundance of experience in the field of poetry. More practice should be given as necessary in the formation and manner of speaking sentences. A sentence can be looked upon as a sort of melody. It has its variations – subject, predicate, object, subordinate clauses – each forms a distinctive part of the tune.

At this age there is a great feeling for the aesthetics of language and a choice of poems to enhance this is essential.

With regard to speech exercises – the advice is to continue with what is already known and to add a few more as opportunity occurs:

tsooveeder ...
ketser ...
isst shtrowchelnder ...
noor renn...
klip plap ...

not forgetting those most useful phrases

moyser messen etc.

Speaking poetry is, of course, in itself a speech exercise but some of the poems mentioned have particular characteristics which should be practised, e.g. alliterations and hexameters, remembering the ever-present need for proper articulation.

As the understanding for differentiation develops, epic and dramatic poetry can be considered. Dr. Steiner himself recommends studying an excerpt from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book 7, in which Raphael, at the request of Adam, relates how and why this world was first created.

It is too long to quote anything more than a short extract here, which is concerned with the creation of the sixth day.

Now heaven in all her glory shone, and roll'd
Her motions, as the first great Mover's hand
First wheeled their course; earth in her rich attire,
Consummate lovely, smiled; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walked,
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remained:
There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone
And brute, as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright, with front serene,
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence
Magnanimous, to correspond with heaven;
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends; thither with heart, and voice, and eyes,
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God Supreme, who make him chief
Of all his works, therefore the Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present) thus to his Son audibly spake:

Let us now make man in our image, man
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
This said, he formed thee, Adam, thee, O, man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed
The breath of life; in his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express; and thou becamest a living soul.

Many poems will flow over from previous classes.

When it comes to dealing with Roman history, an obvious choice is:

"Lays of Ancient Rome" Lord Macaulay

Then out spake brave Horatius ...

Poems dealing with nature and the moods of nature will be appreciated:

"The Night" William Blake

The sun descending in the west ...

"Sea Fever" John Masefield

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky ...

"Crossing the Bar" Lord Tennyson

Sunset and evening star ...

"Home thoughts from Abroad" Robert Browning

Oh, to be in England ...

"A Green Cornfield" Christina Rossetti

The earth was green, the sky was blue ...

"Sunset" Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The summer sun is sinking low;
Only the tree tops redden and glow
Only the weathercock on the spire
Of the village church is a flame of fire,
All is in shadow below.

from "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" Lord Byron

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean, – roll
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin, his control
Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined and unknown.

For its pictorial imagery a piece from "Sohrab and Rustum" by Matthew Arnold may well be learned. (Sohrab, son of the Persian hero, Rustum, has joined the Tartar forces and become their champion. Rustum and Sohrab engage in single combat, neither knowing the identity of the other, and Rustum kills his son.)

He spoke; and Sohrab kindled at his taunts,
And he too drew his sword: at once they rushed
Together, as two eagles on one prey
Come rushing down together from the clouds,
One from the east, one from the west: their shields
Dashed with a clang together, and a din
Rose, such as that the sinewy woodcutters
Make often in the forest's [illegible]
Of hewing axes, crashing trees: such blows
Rustum and Sohrab on each other railed.

And you would say that sun and stars took part
In that unnatural conflict; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in Heaven, and darked the sun
Over the fighters' heads; and a wind rose
Under their feet, and moaning swept the plain,
And in a sandy whirlwind wrapped the pair.

There is a streak of idealism in the adolescent which can be nurtured by the use of the right material, e.g. passages from the Bible. One of the finest in this respect is in St. Paul's letters to the Corinthians (1. Chapter 13):

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love,
I am as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal ...

Also in this respect:

"Jerusalem" William Blake

And did those feet in ancient time ...

Classes Seven/Eight: Age twelve/ thirteen/fourteen

More speech exercises could be introduced, particularly those demanding more vigour:

marsh shmachtender ...

To add a little interest and to develop presence of mind this exercise could be treated as a sort of relay race. The teacher points to one pupil who speaks the first line, then to another to continue and so on.

Further exercises for this age:

hitsigga strahligga

(and those listed on page 15)

The adolescent mind is in a continual process of expansion. The spirit comes more and more to earth. In the soul all sorts of feelings arise. The sense for ideals, for truth and justice awakens. The subconscious demand is for plenty of experience.

In the main English lesson periods the rudiments of metrics and the various verse forms will be studied. With regard to recommending poetry for speaking, one is inclined to suggest as wide a range as possible, but the best. Studies in literature will make the pupils aware of the differences between lyric, dramatic and epic poetry. The nature of the ballad will be studied. Poems may awaken slumbering memories, presentiments, longings, feelings of sympathy or antipathy, ideals.

Among ballads might be mentioned:

"Lochinvar" Walter Scott

O young Lochinvar is come out of the west...

"Try again" Eliza Cook

King Bruce of Scotland flung himself down ...

"Robin Hood and Alan-a-dale" Anon
Come listen to me, you gallants so free ...

"Sir Patrick Spens" Anon
The king sits in Dunfermline town ...

"The Wreck of the Hesperus" Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
It was the schooner Hesperus...

"The diverting history of John Gilpin" William Cowper
John Gilpin was a citizen ...

"Semerwater" William Watson
Deep asleep, deep asleep...

"The Erl King" Goethe
translated by Walter Scott
O who rides by night through the woodland so wild ...

"Paul Revere's Ride" Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
Listen my children, and you shall hear . .

"How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix"
Robert Browning
I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he ...

"The Inchcape Rock" Robert Southey
No stir in the air, no stir in the sea...

"Casabianca" Felicia Hemans
The boy stood on the burning deck...

Epic poetry would include:

Excerpts from "Mort d'Arthur" Lord Tennyson
So all day long the noise of battle rolled...

Then slowly answered Arthur from the barge ...

"Ode to Christ's Nativity" John Milton
This is the month and this the happy morn ...

The following epics have been mentioned: "Paradise Lost", "Sohrab and Rustum", "Kalevala".

Additional suggestions: (miscellaneous)

"The Lady of Shallot" Lord Tennyson
On either side the river lie...

"Sir Galahad" Lord Tennyson
My good blade carves the casques of men ...

"A Song to Mithras" Rudyard Kipling
Mithras, God of the Morning, our trumpets waken the Wall...

"Hie Away" Walter Scott
Hie away! Hie away...

"Ode to the North East Wind" Charles Kingsley
Welcome, wild North-Easter...

In lighter mood and to practise elegant speaking:

"The Rape of the Lock" Alexander Pope
What dire offence from amorous causes springs...

"The Jackdaw of Rheims" Thomas Ingoldsby
The jackdaw sat on the cardinal's chair...
(Practise speaking the curse in this poem for effective speaking.)

Introducing a little humour:

"Father William" Lewis Carroll
You are old, Father William," the young man said...

"Etiquette" W. S. Gilbert
The Ballyshannon foundered off the coast of Cariboo...

Speaking well-constructed artistic prose is also to be commended: e.g. extracts from Oliver Goldsmith, Macaulay, Carlyle, or other famous writers or essayists, but the programme may become overloaded.

In Class Eight and extending into Class Nine and beyond, speeches from Shakespeare provide plenty of adequate and suitable material. (See next chapter.)

Pupils may begin to develop philosophical ideas and hence poetry expressing these is in place:

"Leisure" William Henry Davies
What is this life if, full of care...

"The Higher Pantheism" Lord Tennyson
The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains...

Invictus" William Ernest Henley
Out of the night that covers me...

"A Song of the Plough" Alfred Noyes
Idle, comfortless, bare ...

"All Things are full of God" J. S. Blackie

All things are full of God. Thus spoke
Wise Thales in the days
When subtle Greece to thought awoke
And soared in lofty ways.
And now what wisdom have we more?
No sage divining rod
Hath taught than this a deeper lore
All things are full of God.

The light that gloweth in the sky
And shimmers in the sea
That quivers in the painted fly
And gems the pictured lea,
The million hues of Heaven above
And earth below are one,
And every lightful eye doth love
The primal light, the sun.

Even so, all vital virtue flows
From life's first fountain, God;
And he who feels and he who knows,
Doth feel and know from God.
As fishes swim in briny sea,
As fowl do float in air,
From Thy embrace we cannot flee;
We breathe and Thou art there.

Go, take thy glass, astronomer
And all the girth survey
Of sphere harmonious linked to sphere,
In endless bright array.
All that far reaching science there
Can measure with her rod,
All powers, all laws, are but the fair
Embodied thoughts of God.

from Goethe (translation)

As all nature's myriad changes
Still one changeless power proclaim,
So through thought's wide kingdom ranges
One vast meaning e'er the same:
This is truth – eternal reason –
That in beauty takes its dress,
And, serene through time and season,
Stands complete in righteousness.

Chapter Six
Upper School

Classes Nine, Ten, Eleven, Twelve: Age fifteen/eighteen

As adolescents become more conscious of the world around them, their interests widen and only a wide experience of all aspects of life will meet their needs. Adolescents go through a period of self-consciousness which needs to be dealt with very gently. Humour helps but sarcasm is to be avoided at all costs.

In the Upper School some resistance to choral speaking may be experienced. It can be overcome by a little preliminary work; i.e. by introducing the poet or writer, discussing the piece under consideration and then, only after the necessary explanations have been given, proceeding to the artistic formation A certain amount of intellectual activity precedes the artistic.

The powers of independent thinking and judgement must now be taken into consideration to stimulate the interest. For instance, in studying language one might consider the vowels and try to discover the significance of the vowel element. Is a language richer in the **oo** and **oh** sounds or the **ay** and **ee**? Does language sound plastic, musical or what? What is the difference in experience when the case endings fall away?

Among the general studies at age fifteen – eighteen will be a period on Poetry as an Art; i.e. the rules of metric and rhyme, forms of poetry – epic, dramatic, lyric etc. but to these conventional studies must be added aesthetic values. By that is meant the appreciation of a poem from the point of view of the sound element. Of course, this has been in the background all along but it can now be raised to greater consciousness.

As an example let the students experience the sounds – particularly in the second line of

> Lady, by yonder blessèd moon I swear –
> That tips with silver all these fruit tree tops...

Not only will the significance of sound be increasingly appreciated but a further step in consciousness is to know the actual physical foundation, i.e. in what connection do the sounds stand to the physical organs of teeth, tongue and palate. **B** and **P** are obviously lip sounds; **D** and **T**, dental; **G** and **K**, palate, while **L** and **R** are very connected with the tongue.

Aesthetic experience should also include noting the difference when statements are clothed with poetic expression:

> The witches fly through the air.

> With a whoop and a flutter, they swing and sway
> And surge [illegible]

Walter de la Mare

The skylark flies into the sunset.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

Shelley

The sun is rising.

Hark! Hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies.

Shakespeare

With regard to speech exercises – all those listed can be practised over and over again. Individual practise is now more important than ever, and if pupils could be encouraged to practise in their own time, so much the better.

A few more exercises might find a place now such as those given on pages 17/18. – Fulfilment comes..., shtoormvort, In the wide immeasurable spaces..., You find your own self...

Pupils might be encouraged to search for more short sentences as on page 18 such as:

Music has charms to soothe a savage breast
A thing of beauty is a joy for ever

Of the breath control exercises the 'Fulfilment waits' should perhaps be deferred until pupils reach the age of sixteen/seventeen and then only be used with discretion.

For breath control and articulation, giving particular exercise for the lips, some of Gilbert and Sullivan's patter could prove useful.

From *The Pirates of Penzance* Gilbert and Sullivan

The Major General:

I am the very pattern of a modern Major General
I've information vegetable, animal and mineral;
I know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical,
From Marathon to Waterloo, in order categorical;
I'm very well acquainted too with matters mathematical,
I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical,
About binominal theorem I'm teeming with a lot o' news –

With many cheerful facts about the square on the hypotenuse.
I'm very good at integral and differential calculus,
I know the scientific names of beings animalculous,
In short, in matters vegetable, animal and mineral,
I am the very model of a modern Major General.

Shakespeare provides a plentiful supply of passages to practise effective speaking:

As You Like It Act 3. Scene 2

Touchstone. Truly thou art damned like an ill roasted egg all on one side

Coriolanus Act 2. Scene 3

Coriolanus. Bid them wash their faces. And keep their teeth clean.

Act 3. Scene 3

You common cry of curs whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air. I banish you.

Hamlet Act 2. Scene 2

Hamlet. I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain.
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain.

Act 3. Scene 2

Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Henry 4. Part 2 Act 2. Scene 1

Falstaff. Away you scullion! you rampallion!
You fustilarian! I'll tickle your catastrophe.

Julius Caesar Act 1. Scene 1

Marullus. You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!

The Tempest Act 1. Scene 2

Caliban. As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed
With raven's feather from unwholesome fen
Drop on you both. A south west wind blow on ye
And blister you all o'er.

But Shakespeare also provides us with passages of unsurpassable lyric beauty. Taste the sounds in this passage from *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 5. Scene 2:

Lorenzo. How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank.
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony...

Or from *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 2. Scene 2

Romeo. How silver sweet sound lovers tongues by night,
Like softest music to attending ears.

Or from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act 4. Scene 1

Titania. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy
And stick musk roses in thy sleek smooth head
And kiss thy fair large ears my gentle joy.

In general lyric poetry presents endless possibilities which touch the adolescent. In it is expressed what the young person feels and thinks and he can appreciate the beauty, the moods, descriptions and imaginative pictures. The portrayal of an outer mood stimulates the inner and helps to keep a balance. There are many poems about nature in the English language which serve this end but the following may be particularly useful:

From "Lines Composed above Tintern Abbey" William Wordsworth

I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite, a feeling and a love.

From "Prometheus Unbound" Percy Bysshe Shelley

My soul is an enchanted boat
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing:
And thine doth like an angel sit
Beside a helm, conducting it
Whilst all the winds with melody are ringing.

From "Ode to a Nightingale" John Keats

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful death,
Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath.
Now more than ever it seems rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain.
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain.
(slightly adapted)

From "The Chemical History of a Candle" Faraday

> Observe that a beautiful cup is formed just under the flame. As the air comes to the candle, it moves upward by the force of the current which the heat of the candle produces, and it so cools all the sides of the wax, tallow or fuel, as to keep the edge much cooler than the part within; the part within melts by the flame that runs down the wick as far as it can go before it is extinguished, but the part on the outside does not melt. If I made a current in one direction, my cup would be lop-sided, and the fluid would constantly run over – for the same force of gravity which holds worlds together holds this fluid in a horizontal position, and if the cup be not horizontal, of course the fluid will run away in guttering. You see, therefore, that the cup is formed by this beautifully regular ascending current of air playing upon all sides, which keeps the exterior of the candle cool.

In the study of poetry the special features of the sonnet will be noted and a few of the best might be chosen to learn by heart and recite:

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Shakespeare

"Upon Westminster Bridge" William Wordsworth
Earth hath not anything to show more fair...

Shakespeare has much to offer in the way of passages for dramatic recitation:

Macbeth, Act 5. Scene 5

> Out, out, brief candle.
> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more; it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

Hamlet, Act 2. Scene 2

> And indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me as sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof, fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man. How noble in reason. How infinite in faculty. In form, in moving, how express and admirable. In action how like an angel. In apprehension how like a god; the beauty of the world; the paragon of animals. And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?

It is not necessary to reproduce the famous speeches here. They are all good for practising dramatic recitation and it is to be hoped that every teacher will know them by heart.

Henry V	Siege of Harfleur.	Act 3. Scene 1
Henry.	Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more...	
	Agincourt.	Act 4. Scene 3
Henry.	No, my fair cousin: If we are marked to die...	
As You Like It.	Seven Ages of Man.	Act 2. Scene 7
Jaques.	All the world's a stage And all the men and women merely players....	
Hamlet.	Soliloquy.	Act 3. Scene 1
Hamlet.	To be, or not to be: that is the question...	
Richard II	Gaunt's Dying Speech.	Act 2. Scene 1
	Methinks I am a prophet new inspired...	
The Tempest	Prospero's Farewell to Magic.	Act 4. Scene 1
Prospero.	Our revels now are ended. These our actors...	
The Merchant of Venice		Act 4. Scene 1
Portia.	The quality of mercy is not strained...	
Julius Caesar	Antony's Oration.	Act 3. Scene 2
	Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears...	

Less known but containing some wonderfully poetic passages is Byron's play *Manfred*. The hero is approaching the end of his life and is contemplating his past:

> The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
> Of the snow-shining mountains. – Beautiful!
> I linger yet with Nature, for the night
> Hath been to me a more familiar face
> Than that of man; and in her starry shade
> Of dim and solitary loveliness,
> I learned the language of another world.

He continues by describing impressions while standing at night in Rome's Colosseum. Then:

> And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
> All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
> Which softened down the hoar austerity
> Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
> As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
> Leaving that beautiful which still was so,

And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old —
The dead, but sceptered sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.
...

An evil spirit – we can assume to be the devil – comes to fetch him. In the course of the scene the devil brings up reinforcements. In his final speech Manfred defies him and banishes the evil hosts, asserting his individuality and self-responsibility:

Back to thy hell.
Thou hast no power upon me, that I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, that I know;
What I have done, is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine;
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thought –
Is its own origin of ill and end –
And its own place and time – its innate sense,
When stripped of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without;
But is absorbed in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou could'st not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey –
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter. – Back, ye baffled fiends.
The hand of death is on me – but not yours.

In Chapter Five mention was made of the adolescents' growing interest in philosophical ideas and several poems or excerpts of poems were suggested. To these might now be added:

"A Creed" John Masefield
I hold that when a person dies...

"The Secret Gate" Fiona Macleod
From out of the dark of sleep I rose, on the wings of desire...

As a challenge to his recitorial artistry the speaker might like to learn and recite in all its poetic grandeur:

"The Rune of the Four Winds" by Fiona Macleod
By the Voice in the corries
When the Polestar danceth:

By the Voice on the summits
The dead feet know:

By the soft wet cry
When the Heat-star troubleth:

By the plaining and moaning
Of the Sigh of the Rainbows:

By the four white winds of the world,
Whose father the golden Sun is,
Whose mother the wheeling Moon is,
The North and the South and the East and the West.
By the four good winds of the world,
That Man knoweth,
That One dreadeth,
That God blesseth –

Be all well
On mountain and moorland and lea,
On loch-face and lochan and river,
On shore and shallow and sea.

By the Voice of the Hollow
Where the worm dwelleth:

By the Voice of the Hollow
Where the sea-wave stirs not:

By the Voice of the Hollow
That sun hath not seen yet:

By the three dark winds of the world;
The chill dull breath of the Grave,
The breath from the depths of the Sea,
The breath of To-morrow:
By the white and dark winds of the world,
The four and the three that are seven,
That Man knoweth,
That One dreadeth,
That God blesseth –

Be all well
On mountain and moorland and lea,
On loch-face and lochan and river,
On shore and shallow and sea.

As material for practising declamation or oratory one could look at the following:

From the Bible, Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, Chapter 6.

> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

(Note: 'Principalities' and 'powers' refers here to higher spiritual beings.)

From the Bible, the Book of Job, Chapter 38.

> Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said,
> 'Who is this that darkeneth counsel
> By words without knowledge?
> Gird up now thy loins like a man:
> For I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.
>
> Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
> Declare, if thou has understanding.
> Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest?
> Or who hath stretched the line upon it?
> Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?
> Or who laid the corner stone thereof
> When the morning stars shone together,
> And all the sons of God shouted for joy?'

(The teacher is recommended to study the whole chapter and make a suitable abbreviation.)

"The Work of Life" Daniel Defoe

> What then is the work of life? What the business of great men that pass the stage of the world in seeming triumph, as these men we call heroes, have done? Is it to grow great in the mouth of fame and take up many

pages in history? Alas! That is no more than making a tale for the reading of posterity till it turns into fable and romance. Is it to furnish subject to the poets, and live in their immortal rhymes, as they call them? Or is their business rather to add virtue and piety to their glory which alone will pass them into eternity and make them truly immortal? What is glory without virtue? A great man without religion is no more than a great beast without a soul. What is honour without merit? And what can be called true merit but that which makes a person be a good man as well as a great man.

"The Gettysburg Address" Abraham Lincoln

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate – we cannot consecrate – we cannot hallow – this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Appendix: The Morning and 'Report' verses

The Morning and the Report verses are special features in a Rudolf Steiner School. Such a school does not usually hold a morning assembly but pupils go straight to their respective classrooms where they are greeted by the teacher in charge. (The author spent some time teaching in a school in Germany where the teacher stood by the door as the children entered and shook hands with each child. The boys stood to attention and bowed their heads; the girls curtsied. This would seem a little quaint in England.) The usual but not mandatory procedure is then for teacher and class to recite the Morning verse together.

Dr. Steiner gave two such verses – one for children up to the age of ten/eleven; the other for pupils eleven/eighteen. Reciting these does not exclude the use of other suitable material, and one could also say the Lord's prayer or some equivalent. After this there may be a few routine matters requiring attention and a few minutes may be spent in social conversation. There follows – at the teacher's discretion – a little music, singing and speech exercises, then recitation, after which the individual Report verses can be spoken.

This, of course, all takes time, probably half an hour of the teacher's two hour main lesson period, and objections might be raised on this account. Quite apart, however, from the benefits acquired through improving speech, there is a bonus.

In modern times few children walk leisurely to school through green and peaceful fields; instead, they are bombarded on all sides by sense impressions. Every gardener knows that proper cultivation of the soil is a prerequisite to sowing seeds. Similarly children need to be in the right frame of mind to receive the seeds of the teacher's wisdom. They need a calming influence and a half hour, spent as described, provides it.

For Classes One – Four, the words of the morning verse are as follows (there are various translations. The following are the author's adaptation):

The loving light of the sun
Brightens each day for me;
The spirit power of the soul
Gives strength unto my limbs.

In the splendour of the sun
I reverence, O God,
The human power which Thou
So graciously hast planted in my soul
That I hard-working be
And eager, too, to learn.

From Thee stem light and strength;
To Thee stream love and thanks.

Children of the first age group [illegible] believing, trusting, innocent. In Class Five there is a change. The world loses its gloss and a personal element enters:

I look into the world
Wherein there shines the sun,
Wherein there gleam the stars,
Wherein there lie the stones;
Where, living, grow the plants,
Where, feeling, live the beasts,
And wherein man, ensouled
Dwelling to spirit gives.

I look into the soul
That dwells within myself.
God's spirit weaves
In light of sun and soul,
In cosmic space without,
In depths of soul within.

To Thee, O Spirit of God,
Beseechingly I turn
That strength and blessing
For learning and for work
May truly grow within me.

Pupils should not be 'taught' these verses. The teacher speaks the words and the children gradually pick them up by hearing them repeated and then join in with speaking them. In the course of time the significance of the words will be brought to consciousness, though not in the sense of giving explanations. In the first verse, for instance, there is the contrast between the outer and inner world. In the second, there is an elaboration of the theme. Here the four kingdoms of nature are mentioned culminating with the divine in man.

With regard to the Report verses, it is necessary to make a little deviation to explain the nature of reports in these schools. There is no listing of A, B, C, D, or 1, 2, 3, 4, for intelligence, application, progress etc., which are pretty meaningless anyway. The aim is to produce something helpful, positive and encouraging. Thus a report contains, or should contain, a characterisation of the child, a description of his or her capabilities, strengths and weaknesses, put forward in a kindly way without negatives. There follows a true assessment of achievement, but no condemnation or judgement. The report should show the way forward and where improvements could be expected. If a little humour can be introduced, so much the better. In the younger classes the report is primarily for the consumption of the parents; later it is addressed to the pupils as well.

In the actual presentation of the report the written text should be preceded by a verse, a sort of motto, which refers to what has been written in a veiled way, pointing to a desirable future development. On no account should there be any sentimental moralizing or preaching. In the younger classes a symbolic approach is best. For example, a poem which calls attention to the beauties and manifold manifestations of nature might help those children who tend to be enclosed in their own little world – simply as a verbal picture. By contrast, fleeting characteristics in a child might be counteracted by referring to something steady

and lasting and pointing to its advantages. Vanity or precociousness might be dampened down by a descriptive verse in which modest plants or flowers are represented as also being created by God. A child who finds it difficult to be orderly might be inspired by something calling attention to the fact that so many things in the world are ordered – sun, moon, day and night, the seasons.

In the younger classes each child recites his or her verse regularly This of course calls for a flexible arrangement to accord with circumstances. In a small class perhaps each child can be accommodated daily, but all should have their turn within the week. Some organisation is necessary; perhaps all the children born on a Monday could say their verse on a Monday etc. but the teacher would have to use his or her genius to fit in the Saturday and Sunday children without hurting their feelings. An alternative would be to let children whose names begin with the first five letters of the alphabet take Monday, the next five, Tuesday etc.

The writing of individual verses is no easy matter. Not only is the content important but also the construction, the rhythm used and the sounds. It is of some significance whether the verse be couched in a rising or a falling rhythm. The sanguines and cholerics need rhythms which lead from movement to rest; i.e. iambs or anapaests. The melancholics and phlegmatics need the opposite: – trochees and dactyls. The different quality of the sounds of speech was referred to earlier. Not every teacher is an outstanding genius as a poet or verse-maker, and not every teacher can devote twenty-four hours of the day to this particular task. Undoubtedly it would be ideal for teachers to create the appropriate verses, but in view of the limitations imposed, and the assumed absence of direct inspiration, they can only do their best. (Although it might be considered heresy in some quarters, the author suggests that many poems which have a 'message' are already in existence and could be used on suitable occasions.)

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The Puffin Book of Nursery Rhymes
The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book
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Volume 2 — *Evolution of the world and humanity. Relationships between the living and the dead. Forces of evil. The modern path of initiation.*

Volume 3 — *Life between death and rebirth. The spiritual hierarchies. The philosophical approach to the spirit. The mission of Christ.*

Translations of some of the above have been made into other languages, e.g. Chinese, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Spanish, Swedish, Thai.

Further information from

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