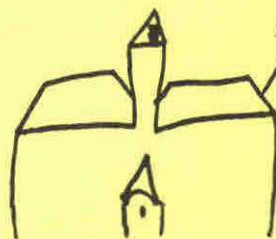


EDUCATION

OTHERWISE

NEWSLETTER, JUNE 1986



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THE NEXT EDITORS ARE: JIM AND LORRAINE BREFFNI  
37 PARKHEAD CRESCENT  
NEWRY COUNTY DOWN  
NORTHERN IRELAND

to whom all contributions  
for the next edition should be sent by JULY 1st. All material  
intended as such should be clearly marked 'FOR PUBLICATION'.  
Contributors are asked to ensure they include their name and  
address.

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THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS PUBLICATION ARE THOSE OF THE  
CONTRIBUTORS AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR, OR OF  
EDUCATION OTHERWISE AS A WHOLE

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We are the Archietypal one-parent E.O.ing family as depicted by SEG. We've been home-educating for just over a year. Though I've been interested in the idea for a long time, Erlend was emphatic that he wanted to go to school (he liked playgroup), and since I was rather worried anyway about the possible strains of E.O.ing on my own, I found the one I thought he'd be happiest in and off he went. He enjoyed his first term, going mornings only, but by the end of the next year both he and I had had enough of it. (I'd been helping with reading further up the school). One of the more horrific aspects of the reception class teaching, and there were several, was putting red felt tip dots on the noses of children who couldn't read a word the teacher thought they ought to know. Quite apart from the total lack of feeling for children which this practice reveals, one would have expected her child psychology course at college to have taught her enough to realise what damage she could do (and indeed did) to a fragile developing confidence in reading.

From many points of view I regret sending him to school at all but at least we have the advantage now of knowing that conventional schooling is definitely not for us. Our home-based education consists of an hour or so most days of formal work; a lot of informal science; riding, gym, swimming, pottery, violin and Woodcraft Folk, all with other kids; and helping at an adventure playground with handicapped young adults (some of the time he helps and some of the time he wanders round talking to people, watching them work, or plays on the equipment.) His great enthusiasms, which he now has lots of time to indulge (though it may not sound like it!), are gardening, carpentry and different sorts of theatre. Recently, when the adventure playground had a grand re-opening, he was able to take part in a children's circus which was rehearsed and organised by a most impressive professional circus skills teacher. Apart from having a whale of a time, he learnt a lot about the gentle arts of co-operation and self-discipline and the sheer hard work that goes into making a public performance.

However, back to reality, in the shape of our divisional Senior Adviser, who paid us a first visit in March. He seemed to feel he would like Erlend to do more written work, follow a maths. scheme etc. (this last suggestion was probably sparked off by Erlend telling him "I love maths.", an unnatural attitude about which something must be done immediately!) We're doing our best to oblige, but it's disconcerting to have to deal with someone who does not accept that there are other ways of educating a person than those employed in Bucks. schools, and frustrating when you consider that three miles down the road in Oxfordshire they know what you're talking about.

So, that's an outline of our home education so far. Those of you with long memories may be wondering what's happened to my research. I'm writing it up at the moment and it should be in a readable form by this time next year at the latest. I shall probably have one copy travelling round the country to all those of you who wanted to see it—each person can post it on to the next on the list.

Finally, thank you to all those who have contributed. I'm sorry my rather unhappy encounter with the E.O. typewriter's automatic correction facility hasn't always done you justice. Thank you also to all those who provided illustrations: Amy Cook, Ben Fawsitt, Bunyip (Fey West), Grey Owl (Cara West), Robin and Erlend.

Julie Webb The Thatches 28 Churchway Haddenham Bucks.



# SPRING QUIZ

Name the Spring flowers

Answers on page 6

# Education Through The Press

Edited by Steve Morris with contributions from Sarah Guthrie, Cathy Fox, Peter Williams and Brenda Holliday

## SCHOOLS

- Truancy rates at Inner London schools are currently running at more than 19,000 a day. (Telegraph 4.3.86)
- Sir Keith Joseph's 'Parent Power' Education Bill could end up as little more than a public relations exercise, giving parents more power in theory but not in reality, the national body representing school governors stated. (Telegraph 24.2.86)
- The teachers' pay dispute, which has lasted more than 12 months approaches its acrimonious end. Although the long-term repercussions will be difficult to determine at this stage, certainly from an academic point of view, it is clear that relationships between teachers and children have been sorely affected. (Telegraph 1.3.86)
- Pupil assaults on teachers are rising, while violence in some schools has almost become gang warfare, a survey by the NAS/UWT claimed. One in four of the 4,000 teachers answering a questionnaire had been threatened and one in ten had been the target of an attempted assault. (Guardian 27.3.86)
- Since our schools fail such a high proportion of children, more leaving without any kind of qualification than in any other Western country, the wonder is that most of them do continue to clock in day after day. (Guardian 31.3.86)
- Schools are facing a worsening crisis over textbooks and the lack of funds to buy them is widening the divide between affluent and poorer areas of the country, the Educational Publishers' Council said. (Guardian 31.3.86)
- Mr. Mike Inman of the NAS/UWT said "Parents were raising well over £50 million a year for often essential school materials." (Telegraph 1.4.86)
- The Children's Legal Centre has described the plan to exclude pupils from governing bodies as 'an insult to school students'. The Government sees its reforms as 'consumer-orientated', yet young people at school-the real consumers-are entirely excluded, it says. (T.E.S. 28.2.86)
- Thousands of children were locked out of schools on 13.3.86 as the National Association of Head Teachers took industrial action in pursuit of its demands for £8 an hour for lunchtime supervision. (Telegraph 14.3.86)
- Fiona Saunders, an unemployed graduate, writes '....I, like many thousands of other ex-students, discovered half-way through my course that I disliked what I was doing-....I think one of my main problems is that at school I was expected to define my future course by choosing 'O' grade subjects as a 14 year old. What does anyone know about life at 14? Is it any wonder there is so little job satisfaction nowadays when we are expected to map out our future at such a tender age straight off?' (Glasgow Herald 20.2.86)

## SCHOOL SPORTS

- Most of the pupils interviewed in a survey funded by the Health Education Council preferred an alternative to team games as a means of keeping fit at school. (T.E.S. 21.2.86)
- Winchester has dropped boxing from its long list of sporting lessons. Homefield, an independent school at Christchurch, Dorset, has been provided with a £42,000 rifle range by the Ministry of Defence...

(Telegraph 17.3.86)

### EXAMS

-Marie Payne, a 16 year old about to take exams, says as they approach "Teachers are beginning to panic. They are now trying to make us work harder and harder. They say that the strikes won't affect our exams. Maybe they won't if I burn the midnight oil. But if my results are affected by the strikes, how will I ever get a decent job? Who is going to remember, when I go for a job interview, that 1986 was the year of the teachers' strike? They'll just think I'm dumb." (Telegraph 1.4.86)

-Head teachers have issued another plea to the Government to postpone for a year the introduction of the new 16-plus examination-the GCSE-due to enter the school curriculum next Autumn. (Telegraph 24.3.86)

-The Schoolmasters' and Women Teachers' Association has followed the National Union of Teachers by deciding to boycott development of the new 16-plus examination due to replace O-levels and CSEs in September. Mr. Graham Terrell, speaking for the union's national executive, said "The Government is ready to take the risk of making teachers muddle through the GCSE. But the real risk is to the nation's 13 year olds who are being used as guinea pigs." (Telegraph 2.4.86)

-An A-level in sport studies is to be introduced in September by popular demand. The pilot group of 300 students will have to 'describe the biomechanical principles which determine the results of impact situations between sports balls and fixed surfaces,' and judge whether a headspring is good or bad 'using the pathway of gravity as the parameter of interest'. (Guardian 17.3.86)

### TEACHERS

-An HMI study of mathematics teaching in a group of Welsh schools revealed that only 3 out of 114 staff had studied the subject beyond O-level. HMI said that too much time was spent on pencil and paper exercises and not enough used to develop mental arithmetic skills and use of calculators. The most able children suffered from this laborious approach. For example, one 8 year old who took 15 minutes to write down his answers to half the questions in the exercise gave instant correct answers to all the questions in one minute when questioned orally. (T.E.S. 21.2.86)

-Legal history was made when a school boy was awarded £200 by the Criminal Injuries Board for injuries inflicted by a teacher. The award was an interim payment and the final damages may run into thousands of pounds. (Telegraph 12.3.86)

-There has been a drastic drop in the number of graduates applying to become teachers. Applications in January were almost 18% down on average. However, applicants for modern languages were down 40%, maths. down 33% and physics down 30%. (Telegraph 1.4.86)

### ODDS AND ENDS

-A warning of the dangers of careers advice was given to a surprised Industrial Society conference. Mr. Bradley, schools and industry liaison officer for Norfolk, said "How can we start pushing them down tunnels when we are at best telling them about today's or yesterday's jobs? The education system delivers people who are very competent but not confident. They have the whole package in their hand which they cannot use."

-The High Court in Tokyo ruled that the State may vet Japanese school textbooks, reviving fears of censorship and possible whitewashing of Japanese actions in the 1939-45 war. It upheld the Education

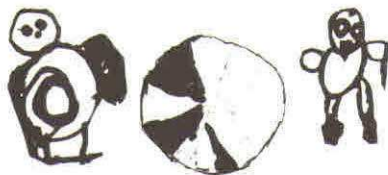
Ministry's order for numerous revisions and deletions in a 1962 high-school history text, including references to the last World War. (Telegraph 20.3.86)

#### HOME EDUCATION

-An article in the Keighly News (10.1.86) featured two families educating their children at home, the Lightens and the Goads. The Halifax Evening Courier (8.11.85) had an article about the Cullinan family and their approach to education at home. Peter Williams, the West Yorkshire co-ordinator, was interviewed for an article in the Yorkshire Evening Post (16.1.86) in which he described the rights of parents to educate at home and the general reasons for doing so. Also featured were the Dewar family who described their fight for home education and the help and support they had received from Education Otherwise. The Sunday Tribune (2.3.86) ran a feature entitled 'Campaign steps up for home education for children', in which it reported on the challenging of the School Attendance Act in Eire by parents fighting for the right to educate at home. Also, a description of Carmel Duffy's approach to home education asked 'Are schools relevant?'

#### FINALLY

-An article in the Daily Telegraph (15.3.86) gave an account of a debate on the introduction of a system of vouchers for education, in the Commons on 14.3.86. Mr. Christopher Patten, Education Minister, was quoted as saying "Customers could not refuse to consume; schools would remain compulsory..." Perhaps someone would like to inform him of the rights given to parents under the 1944 Education Act: it appears that the Education Minister is in need of a little education himself!



#### CHILD BENEFIT

The 'Guardian', 19th. April, 1986:

"Mother wins Benefit case. A woman who fought for her right to teach her daughters at home has persuaded Mr. Norman Fowler, the Social Services Secretary, to change the law so her children can receive Child Benefit now they are 16."

The DHSS Press Office telephoned David Hencke of the 'Guardian' and gave him this information. They telephoned no other newspaper. They refused to give the name of 'the woman'. He printed this information in good faith. It is a lie.

It is true that the Government have announced in Parliament (17th. April) that they are introducing an amendment to the Child Benefit Act-new Clause 10-which will allow payment of Child Benefit to children educated at home before the 16th. birthday with LEA approval, to

continue until the 19th birthday. BUT if the child's birthday falls before the Bill becomes law, Child Benefit will still be refused. That is the situation of 'the woman' and her daughters-the Cameron family! It is the situation of many other EOers and I shall continue to fight.

Moreover, New Clause 10 contains another section: it has taken a lot of unwinding but it says: There are some children who have been allowed Child Benefit by the DHSS by putting them under Section 56 (Special Education) without telling their parents. We declare ourselves (the DHSS) to have made valid decisions in these cases although we had no legal power to do so. We shall not in future do so and we will now demand the money back from those whom we have treated in this way. This is the situation in which the Mansons (Berwickshire) find themselves and presumably the Theobalds (Devon) who have not heard, and the Carters (Derbyshire). As I wrote in the last NL, "discretionary decisions cannot be relied upon."

Susan Thompson (Berkshire) lost her Appeal on the basis of the "piece of paper" but she was judged "honest" and the DHSS' demand for £505 over-payment was dismissed. Months of worry were not compensated for. My own Hearing was adjourned again because "the DHSS had mislaid some of the papers". More about that in the next NL.

What can you do? Write to Bob Dunn, Minister for Education, at the House of Commons, London SW1 0AA, and ask:

1) Why is the D.E.S. allowing the DHSS to make educational decisions?

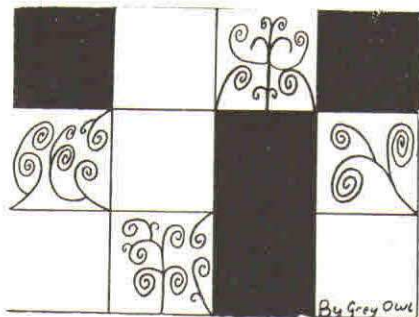
2) Why is the Education Act, 1944, not referred to in Child Benefit Act, 1975, Section 24(1) where a "recognised educational establishment" is interpreted?

Then send a copy of your letter to your local M.P., your Director of Education at the L.E.A., and your local newspaper. If the Secretary of State for Education and the D.E.S. faced these questions squarely, much of the present difficulty would be solved. Please help; it is your child's rights that are at risk.

Lynette Cameron, 79 Whiteknights Road, Reading, BERKS.

RG6 2BB

ANSWERS TO SPRING QUIZ



1. Violet
2. Primrose
3. Celandine
4. Pussy willow
5. Flowering currant
6. Bluebell

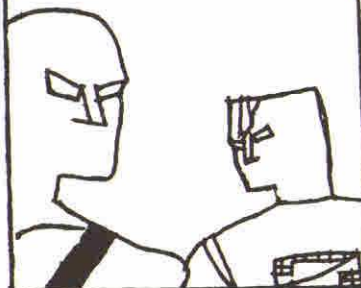


# SHARK

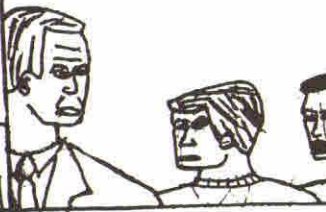
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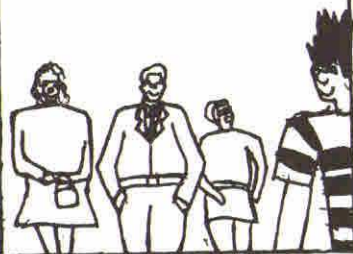
SUPER TEAM



UNDERCOVER COPS



THE AGGYS



SEND FORM TO:  
Robin Hodre  
25 Moor Oaks RD  
Broomhill  
SHEFFIELD  
S10 1BX

PLEASE SEND ME 6 COPIES OF SHARK.  
ENCLOSE £4.20 AS MY ANNUAL  
SUBSCRIPTION  
NAME .....

✂ POSTCODE .....

PLEASE SEND ME 1 COPY OF SHARK.  
ENCLOSE 70p  
NAME .....

✂ POSTCODE .....

A NATIONAL SUMMER CAMP FOR EO CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 8 AND 14

PLACE: Thornham Field Centre, near Diss in north Suffolk. The Centre is fully equipped for the study of plants and animals of the park and woodland which surrounds it. The Centre is one of a group of converted buildings mostly used as craft workshops. It has been used for some time by a local EO group with the support of Andrea Hanks, the warden, who will also be involved in organising activities during the week of the camp.

TIME: 12.00 noon Monday 21st July to 4.00pm Friday 25th July

WHO IS IT FOR? Unaccompanied children between 8 years and 14 years who do not go to school.

COST: £27 per child, including food (basic vegetarian) and hire of tent. £22 if you bring your own tent.

ACTIVITIES: We will spend the week studying the countryside, working at conservation, walking, playing and swimming. There may also be opportunities for art and drama. To some degree plans can be tailored to suit those who are coming.

ORGANISER: Bruce Cox  
Grey Row, St. Margaret's, South Elham, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0PL

ENQUIRIES: Write to Bruce enclosing SAE or phone <sup>098 682</sup> St. Cross 315

BOOKING: Send deposit (non-returnable) of £5.00 for each child, or the full fee, to Bruce (address above), cheques made payable to 'Education Otherwise'. Early booking will help us to plan the week. We are hoping that at least 25 children will come. When bookings are in we should be able to make shared travel arrangements.

AND ANOTHER ONE, FOR 12 TO 17 YEAR OLDS

WHEN? 25th. to 30th. July inclusive

WHERE? Near Cardigan, West Wales, 15 acres of a beautiful little wooded valley, 3 miles from the sea.

WHAT'S ON? Facilities for: Walking; Sea-fishing; Camp fires; Motor mechanics Wood carving and turning; Welding; Alternative energy; Music-piano and guitar; Drama; Contemporary dance; Drawing and sketching; Gardening; Cookery (wholefood and vegetarian); Spinning; Weaving; Dyeing; Knitting; Crochet; Dressmaking; Animal husbandry; Badminton; Opportunities for studying wild life-animals and birds. Actual projects to be decided according to applicants' wishes.

HOW MUCH? £22. PLEASE bring own tents and sleeping bags. Barn accommodation if weather is too unkind.

Send SAE for further enquiries and details to:

(tel. 023 986 227)

Edward and Ruth Stobbs  
Rhyd-y-Fantwn  
Moylegrove  
Cardigan DYFED Wales SA43 3BL

JOE O'CONNOR thought readers might be interested in the following quotation from R.D.LAING's book 'THE POLITICS OF EXPERIENCE' (a book which, he says, has "some devastating criticisms of normal schooling").

"A child born today in the United Kingdom stands a ten times greater chance of being admitted to a mental hospital than to a university, and about one fifth of mental hospital admissions are diagnosed schizophrenic. This can be taken as an indication that we are driving our children mad more effectively than we are genuinely educating them. Perhaps it is our way of educating them that is driving them mad." (1967)

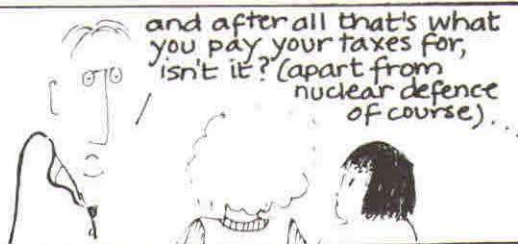
Still on the subject of our children's futures comes this message from KEN and JILL BEAGLEY in Devon:

"A group of us feel so disturbed by the recent disaster at a nuclear power station that we have chosen to be with friends and family on Sunday evenings to experience the quality of life enjoyed using a minimum of electricity. We are not so dependent on an unlimited supply of electricity that we are prepared to threaten the future of the world. Send a friend a candle and please pass this message on."

# EDUCATING ARCHIE

by SEG

IF YOU CAN READ THIS  
you're no longer entitled to child benefit



## OUR STORY FROM WOLVERHAMPTON

After taking our children out of school last October, and sending off our letters to the headteachers of their schools plus copies to the Director of Education we waited with baited breath.

The letters were similar to the examples in 'School is not Compulsory'-a book which we have found invaluable. We used the Contact List to phone and arrange visits to other E.O. practitioners and we found this very useful and confidence boosting. Following the arrival of a letter arranging an appointment, we duly met our Inspector/Advisers; we have two as our children are different age ranges. They asked us the obvious questions, why, would we consider another school etc. etc. - were we sure we could cope with four lively children (including a toddler) at home all day. We were then asked to go to their offices, without the children, to give them a plan-based over six weeks-of our intended education for the children. We agreed. Upon phoning our E.O. friends, in other L.E.A. areas, we sent our plan in by post-as in 'School is not Compulsory'-explaining 'Autonomous Education'. This was after cancelling our appointment by phone on the advice of another E.O. er, and we also enclosed a letter offering them another appointment at our home. We felt it was important that we met on our territory, not theirs, where they could call upon anyone at a minute's notice to be there to reinforce their arguments.

We made it plain that only the two Inspector/Advisers we had seen so far would be admitted to our home, and that nobody (including them) would be seen without a written appointment. (We refused to give our phone number.)

We visited other EO families-spending most of the day with them-we seemed to have so much in common as we swapped stories and gained moral courage and different arguments to present to the L.E.A.

Our second visit in January made it plain that the Inspector/Advisers had either not read or not understood our letter about Autonomous Education so we tried to explain by using examples of what the children were involved in e.g. Jason, our nine year old, was growing a crystal in a jar. He read what to do in a book, followed the instructions and was writing down what happened, when it happened and what he thought about it. They seemed impressed but still wanted this six week plan, plus a list of resources. A further visit was arranged for four weeks' time.

Two weeks later an E.W.O. arrived on our doorstep, unannounced!! She had been sent by the Headteacher of the boys' school, because they were not attending. The date was the 6th. of February; fifteen weeks had elapsed. After some hesitation we invited her in and told her about our two inspectors, what we were doing and why. We let the children carry on with what they were doing-watching 'Music Time' on the television and joining in with the songs. We gave her a cup of tea and spent one and a half hours talking to her, explaining being in EO, showing her the children's work and letting her see that the children were really happy. We pointedly showed her the Section 36 of the 1944 Act in 'School is not Compulsory'. She went away pleased and impressed.

After some conversation we decided to write and complain about the visit. This we did. We wrote to the Director of Education complaining that we had been visited but praised the EWO. We suggested to him that his departments were not liaising with each other, or that our Inspectors had lied to us because they had stated at our first visit that no-one else would come to see us, or that they had said this in good faith but that someone superior to them was undermining their authority to make such statements. Strong stuff we thought! On top of the letter we put 'Copies to: EO, our solicitor and file' and stated we would be writing a report on our experience with our LEA. to EO. Within a week we received a courteous letter back

from the Director trying to explain the EWO's visit. (She was new to the job??)

On February 24th. the Inspectors came for their arranged four weekly visit. They were very conciliatory about the EWO and apologised, stating that it would not happen again. We had drawn a diagram of our plan of education-for life, which we chose to present to them on this visit. We expected fireworks but were rather taken aback when they said it was 'brilliant'. We also gave them a list of skills we wish the children to acquire while following this plan. They took away the diagram and lists to photocopy.

We brought up the subject of deregistration and frequency of visits, suggesting that deregistration should now take place and the visits be booked at every half term instead of every four weeks. At this visit we were lent some reading scheme books and allowed access to the LEA resource centres for reading and maths. skills. They gave us the names and phone numbers of the people in charge. When we phoned them they were very helpful, and had been instructed to be so by the inspectors.

On the 24th. March they arrived again! We stated that since visiting the maths. centre we had taken Jason off a planned maths. scheme e.g. Peak, Nuffield etc. due to his extreme dislike to a scheme method of learning. Jason was busy building a radio set at this time and baffled the Inspector at his second sentence of explaining what he was doing. We said that Jason would get all the maths. he needed through practical experience-the Inspector agreed! They stated that they felt that four weekly visits were in order at that time. We felt that they were ordered to come every four weeks and duly booked another visit. They gave all four children an Easter egg as a present and left.

On April 29th. one inspector arrived instead of two. He said that they were satisfied with our children's education and having discussed it with his colleagues he was going to recommend deregistration when he returned to the office. He asked us if we would still allow them to visit although deregistration was not conditional on our reply. We replied that we had no objection if people were as friendly as he was. He gave us more 'long term loans' in the form of more books, both reading and maths., and could the next visit be in six weeks time? (half term)

Our visits from the Inspector/Advisers (they have a dual title in Wolverhampton) always took the same format. We welcomed them in, plied them with tea and cakes, and let the children talk to them. One inspector talked to us and looked at any work we showed him-with the children's permission-while the other (a lady inspector) played and talked with the children, or watched what they were doing, even playing Dominic at a computer game he was 'into' at the time. We feel our experience has been a fairly good one with our LEA, mainly because of our Inspector/Adviser primary (early) and primary (early and middle). At the time we were the only family in Wolverhampton to have removed our children from school. We were firm but always, polite and honest with our inspectors, and so far have found them to be honest and helpful with us. At no stage did they make any threats of any description. Our reasons for taking the children (Jason, 8, Dominic, 7 and Danielle, 5 at the time) out of school were various and the newsletter too short to detail them in, but were as valid to us as other practising EOers' reasons are to them. We found the Contact List invaluable and the friends we have made by using it priceless, and we wish to thank them all. After all, our success in dealing with our LEA is partly due to their friendship, support and advice.

We wish to thank all the people who put together 'School is not

Compulsory' and other publications e.g. 'Early Years'. Our message is one of encouragement to other people who wish to educate their children at home.

We do not regret taking the children out of school, and many of our friends and relatives can see a distinct change in the children. We hope our experience will be an encouragement to others, and anyone who wishes to contact us is welcome.

The Adams Family-Michael, Carol, Jason, Dominic, Danielle and Samantha  
14 The Grove Wednesfield Wolverhampton WV11 1RW

(The Adams' list and diagram are reproduced below)

Skills for the job

from 'Ideas for Selfemployment and Part Time Work' by Tony Crowley

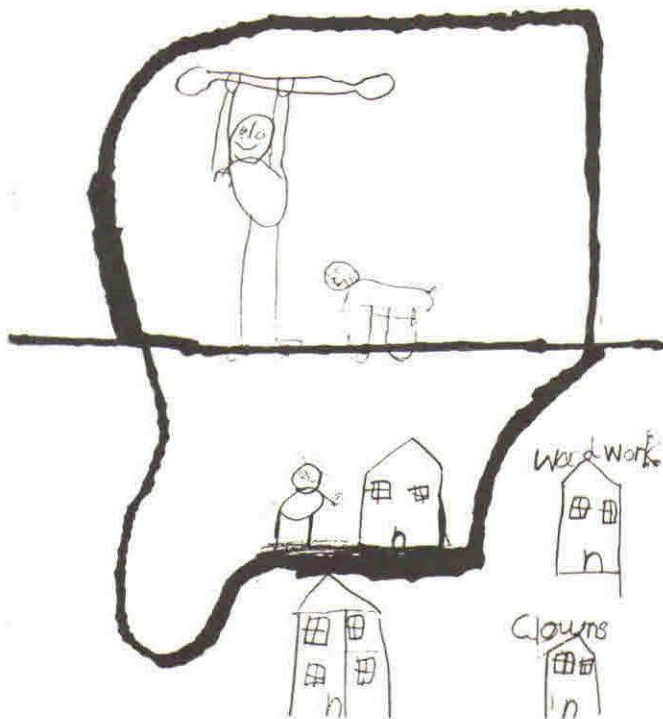
You should be able to use:

a pair of scissors  
a hand-held saw  
a spanner  
a hammer  
a screwdriver  
a file or emerycloth  
a paintbrush  
a hand-held drill  
a spade  
a vice  
a typewriter (2 fingers)

You should be able to:

work in a team  
work alone occasionally  
ask people for help  
listen carefully to others  
offer help to strangers  
follow spoken instructions  
ask questions  
answer questions confidently  
add, multiply, subtract, divide  
work with decimals and fractions  
work out percentages  
work simple figures in your head  
use an electric calculator  
measure in metric and imperial  
use a stop watch  
tell time accurately  
read a bus/train timetable  
find way with map  
spell reasonably well  
write messages clearly  
write instructions accurately  
complete forms carefully  
use a dictionary  
file things alphabetically  
use a telephone directory  
follow written instructions





### 1.362 CHEERS FOR SCHOOL

I have seen in recent issues of the Newsletter a certain number of complaints about 'anti-school' articles. I can understand the feelings which prompt them. Our schools have come to be thought of in a semi-religious way as the source of our national consciousness, the guarantee of our intellectual and cultural continuance and the proof of our status as a civilized nation. It is entirely honourable to want to preserve something which everyone recognises as noble and generous. The difficulty, in my view, comes from the fact that schools in 1870, when the Education Act was passed, were a radical improvement on what had gone before. In an authoritarian, rather brutal age, they were evidence that the Government was taking responsibility for all its subjects. Compared with the factory and the mine they were a revolution in humanity towards children. If society today were anything like society then I should probably defend schools, or at least only criticise them in a muted way. However, we are 115 years on from that troubled time, and our schools have not kept pace with the changes which have marked the rest of our national life.

In short, I can see no alternative to the complete eradication of compulsory school attendance if we are to save the very aspects of our civilization which schools were created to preserve. This is because they have shown themselves unable to change. They were established to bring a half-brutalised generation to literacy. Their character—compulsory, prescriptive and authoritarian—reflected both the convictions of the ruling class about what the children of the labouring classes 'needed' in order to become effective subordinates, and a reasonable understanding of what had to be done to make them work, with a teacher-pupil ratio of 60-70:1. Those conditions no longer exist, but schools continue to work as if they did.

If you find this point of view extreme, if you doubt the truth of it, spend a week-a day in a Comprehensive School. Listen to the teachers and observe the pupils. Find out how the place really works by sniffing the emotional atmosphere and paying attention to the code-words which give expression to the school's real purposes. Without much effort you could well begin to hear, across a hundred years, the voice of the mill-manager or the elementary school teacher. There are exceptions, schools where children have their present needs properly met; but I suspect that they are rare, and benefit from exceptionally gifted teachers, a high level of social cohesion, and very devoted parents. The average school is probably closer to its original than almost any other single social organisation.

For these reasons, which, regrettably, there is insufficient space to do more than outline, I claim the right to take a radical stance in the debate about schooling. I want to see schools, as places of compulsory instruction, disappear. I believe that they cannot be made effective as long as they are compulsory, and if they ceased to be compulsory they would change so much that they would not be recognisable any more as what we understand by the word 'school'. I hold this view not because I enjoy opposing common opinions but because, as a teacher in a Comprehensive School, I am unable to see what happens around me as anything more than a breach of the children's human rights and nothing to do with education as I understand that word. Worse, my school is provably involved in a sort of innocent conspiracy to hold back the children's personal and social development, by giving them no opportunity to discover how adult human beings work and live together and shoulder responsibility. It is so much easier to try to run things with an iron rod; because although the children largely ignore it, such an organisation is easy to work and it makes the fixing of blame so very simple: whatever doesn't work is the fault of the children. All of them are guilty. It only remains to find out what they are guilty of.

I hope that both sides of this argument will contend. Education can only advance when its practitioners speak together and analyse each others' views. EO is one of the foremost contributors to the growth of better education. I hope it will always tolerate radical views. Experience shows that it is often the radicals who turn out to have got it right.

C.R.SHUTE 7 KILN WAY POLESWORTH Nr.TAMWORTH STAFFORDSHIRE B78 1JF

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#### ANOTHER VIEW OF STEINER

"If the blonds and blue-eyed people die out, the human race will become increasingly dense; if men do not arrive at a form of intelligence that is independent of blondness. Blond hair actually bestows intelligence."

(Rudolf Steiner: Health and Illness: Vol. 1: Lectures to the workmen (1922) Anthroposophical Press 1981)

Steiner schools are attempting to reach a holistic educational understanding catering for the growth requirements of the whole child based upon the philosophical premises of Rudolf Steiner. Some of their concepts are useful, such as teaching a unified approach to science rather than the usual Western way of mechanism, materialism and

dichotomy. They have a movement form, eurhythm, which is to help grow and develop a person's etheric life force, alter, culturally known as chi, prana, ka, mana, maya, spirit etc.

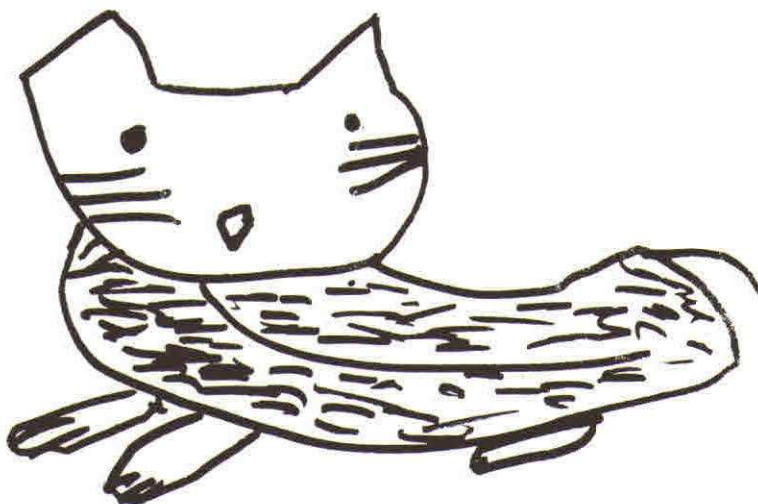
There is however a predominance of white European mythic imagery and fable, for example the use of the brothers Grimm' rather barbaric fairy tales, folk tales politically doctored and rewritten to assist in the cultural revival necessary for the rise of the Germanic empire.

This semi-romantic search for a Caucasian cultural/spiritual identity contains within it elements of crypto/pure Fascism as evidenced above. This creates a subconscious undertone which can almost be mistaken for a Caucasian spirituality.

The book from which the above extract was taken is available for parents to read at Steiner schools. If Steiner/Waldorf schools and Anthroposophy are in any way serious it is time they abandoned such Fascist nonsense; searched through their libraries, consciousnesses and subconsciousnesses and removed all such damaging material; questioned the almost messianic status attributed to Steiner and, given such questionable authorship, re-examined their whole direction.

(THIS ARRIVED ANONYMOUSLY FROM: 20 MACKIE HOUSE, MACKIE ROAD, LONDON SW2)

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# BOOK REVIEWS

PLEASE SEND REVIEWS OF ANY BOOKS WHICH YOU HAVE READ TO THE EDITOR, OR WRITE TO HELEN HOLLAND REQUESTING A COPY OF ANY BOOK COMING OUT. HELEN WILL TRY TO OBTAIN THE BOOK FOR YOU, BUT PLEASE WRITE A REVIEW IF YOU RECEIVE ANY SUCH BOOK...

## TEACHING CHILDREN THROUGH THE ENVIRONMENT

Pamela Mays Hodder and Stoughton (£6.50 paperback)

This interesting book considers what exactly the environment is, how children perceive the world around them and how they use language. The author then shows how mathematics, history, geography, science and creativity can be approached through the environment in a very practical and helpful way. There is a useful appendix of addresses. A rich and stimulating handbook, this will offer plenty of advice and ideas to home-schooling parents.

## PICTURE BOOKS

### THE STORY OF THE THREE WISE KINGS

Tomie de Paola Methuen Children's Books (£4.50 paperback)

This is a simple retelling of the Epiphany story made special by Tomie de Paola's beautiful soft colours and lovely Byzantine drawings.

### I WANT TO SEE THE MOON

Louis Baum Magnet (£1.50 paperback)

An appealing bedtime story of father trying to settle small son in very realistic reassuring manner. Niki Daly's illustrations add charm and colour.

### MABEL'S STORY

Jenny Koralek Picture Puffin (illustrated by John Lawrence) (£1.75)

A whimsical fantasy told by a child to her grandfather that somehow seems very credible.

### ANGELINA BALLERINA

Katharine Holabird Picture Puffin (illustrated by Helen Craig) (£1.75)

A small mouse wants to become a ballet dancer and eventually succeeds. Quaint pictures add to the absurdity of the story.

### EARLY MORNING IN THE BARN

Nancy Tafuri Picture Puffin (£1.50)

Only some farmyard sounds to accompany these farmyard pictures for very small children. A simple and attractive idea.

### POEMS, PRAYERS AND GRACES

Sally Gregory (illustrator) Picture Puffin (£1.75)

An old fashioned collection with appropriately charming pictures.

### BATH BUNS AND CHEDDAR CHEESE-SKETCHBOOK OF A WEST COUNTRY CHILDHOOD

Diana John Methuen (£4.95 hardback)

My own children loved this account of a child growing up in the countryside between 1915 and 1930. There are so many differences from today's world to be remarked upon in both pictures and text.

## " YOUNG PUFFINS "

Watch out for the "Story Books", 'for those who have developed reading stamina'. There are several new titles in this series with large print and short chapters as well as plenty of illustrations to encourage young readers.

FOR OLDER CHILDREN

THE FAR SIDE OF THE LOUGH

Polly Devlin Magnet (£1.75 paperback)

These stories of an Irish childhood are both strangely remote and memorably realistic. Small everyday dramas of a backward country community are brought vividly to life by the rich language which lends a fairytale quality to the book.

MAMA'S GOING TO BUY YOU A MOCKINGBIRD

Jean Little Puffin (£1.95)

This Canadian story deals sensitively and sympathetically with a boy's response to the illness and death of his father. There is no sentiment but a great deal of feeling for Jeremy's predicament and all the characters are very well drawn.

CLOUDY BRIGHT

John Rowe Townsend Puffin Plus (£1.75)

Jenny and Sam become involved through their interest in photography and take turns telling this story of a quest for a prize. Their contrasting backgrounds and attitudes enrich an amusing account of a deepening relationship.

THE QUEEN'S NOSE

Dick King-Smith Puffin (£1.50)

A really amusing story about a girl who thinks animals are nicer than humans. It's also a very exciting hunt for an unusual treasure.

THE YEAR OF THE WORM

Ann Pilling Puffin (£1.50)

A boy nicknamed 'worm' doesn't seem likely to have adventures but Peter's holiday in the Lake District turns out to be very exciting indeed and people's opinions of him have to change.

A CHANCE CHILD

Jill Paton Walsh Puffin (£1.50)

A haunting story of the ill-treated children of yesterday by a mistress of historical fiction. It's made the more mysterious by the weaving back and forwards in time.

A PARCEL OF PATTERNS

Jill Paton Walsh Puffin Plus (£1.75)

A dramatic and moving story of the Plague, that lives on in the mind long after it is read. Many of the events are based on what actually happened in a Derbyshire village three hundred years ago. The story is told by a young girl, Mall, whose emotions are brought powerfully to life. A very fine book indeed.

Helen Holland  
Inholmes Farm  
Plumpton Green  
Sussex BN7 3DE



## E.O. AND CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Invalid Children's Aid Association's advertisements state that "one in every 30 children born in Britain will be handicapped."

The Warnock Committee (on whose recommendations the 1981 Ed. Act was based) employed a new, wider concept of special education, and foresaw "that perhaps as many as one child in five might need special educational help at some stage in his school career".

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In the December 1984 magazine there was a request for "anyone interested in carrying on the good work of Julie Duff, with regard to 'special needs' to contact the Grants or Wallaces".

For a long time I didn't phone, thinking I hadn't much to offer....I didn't 'know' anyone..... I was going through difficult times myself over David's Statement of Special Educational Needs... .. But the thought nagged as I remembered the help and support I had received when I joined EO (in a frantic hurry because of imminent 'statementing' and certain conflict) - so eventually I did phone "to check whether they'd been inundated with offers?.....

..... Here I am eighteen months later compiling the first of what I hope will be a regular series (hopefully 6-monthly?) of 'special needs' supplements. The frequency will of course depend on YOUR response.

During these past months there has been an ever-growing number of requests for help from parents who either : a) wish to home educate their 'special' children

are being badly treated by their LEA.

or, whether wishing to home educate or not: c) are in disagreement with their LEA as to whether their child should be regarded as having special educational needs-or whether a formal Statement should be made.

b) are doing so but

d) are unhappy with

the provision being made.

In attempting to provide the best advice, support and comfort, I have come to regard my function (as I understand Julie did also) as enquiries secretary for 'special' children and their families. I am compiling lists of people (and organisations) who can give specialist or general advice and/or practical help, and would be grateful to hear from anyone who is willing to be available for consultation. I apologise to anyone who offered their help to the original support group and now feels overlooked - but unfortunately for various reasons my only knowledge of that group is from reading contributions to old newsletters.

Talking of advice, I did actually intend to offer some in this \* supplement! But instead, some contributions from others:

Edna and Vic Edwards (Merseyside) were part of EO's original 'special children' support group. Their son, like mine, has Down's Syndrome. Several people have told me how grateful they have been for Edna and Vic's warm friendship and support.

\* See "Advice in brief" on last page of supplement - or I can be contacted at 16, St. Bernard's Rd. Solihull, West Midlands.B92 7BB.(021 706 6460)

Here is a poem which Edna has found helpful and wants us to share :-

A meeting was held quite far from earth  
"It's time again for another birth"  
Said the angels to the Lord above,  
"This special child will need much love  
He may not run or laugh or play,  
His thoughts may seem quite far away  
In many ways he won't adapt,  
And he'll be known as handicapped.  
So let's be careful where he's sent  
We want his life to be content.  
Please, Lord, find parents who will do  
A very special job for you,  
They will not realise right away  
The leading role they're asked to play"  
But with this child, sent from above,  
Comes stronger faith and richer love.

Cheryl and Mick Lawrie (West Midlands) have different problems, but - unusually - no problem so far with their relationship with their LEA :-

\* Our child has Cystic Fibrosis. To the layman it is not outwardly obvious he has the disease and we have not, therefore, informed the LEA of his illness - although I don't know how long this will remain a secret. Nicky is 6 and has never been to school. He did, at the age of  $4\frac{1}{2}$ , start visiting a school once a week and it was then he became ill. So we decided against doctor's advice, to keep him away from these germ-breeding places!

Nicky needs physiotherapy 3 times a day, medicine and an inhaler. His diet needs a lot of attention. All of these he would have missed at school. The school he was visiting, with a view to starting the following term, refused to give him medicine and seemed completely disinterested in CF, or what it was.

We find when Nicky is on a lot of drugs it makes him very aggressive, fidgety and lacking in concentration and he needs a different education i.e. mainly doing things out of doors. When he becomes ill his 'education' takes a different form - stories on the settee all day. Home education means we can take advantage of his well periods and pack as much into a day as possible regardless of school holidays and hours! I can give him a continuity that he would not get at school. He would probably be too ill to attend school 3 weeks out of every 4.

We have only had one visit from the LEA. He came just after Nicky's 5th birthday and was very pleasant and reasonable. We have only contacted them once since then, concerning the hospital education facilities. The LEA was very happy to foot the bill for Nicky's tuition during his hospital stay (The hospital was in his home borough)

They do have a school at the hospital and I am horrified at the lengths that are taken to get children to go. Often parents are asked not to visit in school hours, even if they have to come

from miles away. It seems that school is the most important thing no matter how ill or miserable the children are. They feel I am spoiling him because I am soft with him when I don't insist that he goes. Children who are unable to go to the school have a teacher on the ward. The great attraction for Nicky is the fact that she has a computer. We don't even have a television so a computer is a real novelty. I am very glad to be merely using the facilities and that my child amidst so many other problems does not have to do his reading everyday. I find Nicky does not want to settle to anything and he hates to be tied to a bed for 2-4 weeks. I am sure producing reading books, etc. at this time would put him off for life.

Once EO was in motion our specialist changed his mind and said it was probably a good thing! So we feel that in the end the parents are the best people to decide the child's special needs. We would love to hear from people in similar situations."

I know that there are now very many members whose children are dyslexic. Or are they? Keith Miller (Wiltshire) deals with the question :-

#### DYSLEXIA.....MYTH..MAGIC..OR..REALITY..?

Many words have been expended concerning Dyslexia and considerable emotion generated. Indeed, it would appear that there is almost a socio-educational war being waged between those on the one hand, who claim that there is no such thing and those who claim that there is. These debates are usually carried on in circles to which parents have little access. For such parents, those whose children are dyslexic, there is absolutely no doubt about the fact that their children are experiencing real difficulties, that their difficulties are precise and definable and most regrettable of all that the child's difficulties are almost invariably exacerbated by the "experts" within the schools and the education system.

There is a feeling in some parts that Dyslexia is a new phenomena, largely confined to the "middle classes", however they are defined, - and that as a term, it is a euphemism, for lazy, difficult, or just plain thick, - which is used by defensive or over anxious parents, because it is an almost fashionable let out, which enables them to face the harsh reality that their offspring are just plain useless.

Those of us whose children are dyslexic and who work with dyslexic children are well used to receiving brickbats, but what is the reality?

Firstly, the multiplicity of terms. The phenomena is referred to variously as Dyslexia, Specific Learning Difficulty, S.L.D., or Specific Reading Difficulty, S.R.D.. The latter definition is the most inadequate of the three, because it infers that the child's or indeed the adult's difficulty is purely confined to reading, which in the first place it most certainly is not and in the second place in no way distinguishes this cause of reading difficulty from the numerous other causes. Indeed I am currently working with children who are dyslexic, but, whose reading appears, at least superficially to be adequate, in comparison with that of their peer group. But,

even a cursory examination of the child's written work displays characteristic spelling errors, problems in the mechanics of writing and difficulty in learning multiplication tables, whilst even a short discussion with parents will usually reveal considerable left/right confusion problems e.g. in the tying of shoe laces, laying of tables, which hand do I hold my pen in? and in most sequential activities and functions etc.

Specific Learning Difficulty is a term which is much favoured by those Local Education Authorities who are, to a degree, willing to recognise the phenomena, because it enables them surreptitiously to drop the word "Specific", usually in the second paragraph of any articles or reports they are writing, in keeping with much current educational thought, and then, having delabelled the difficulty, the dyslexic child can be thoroughly integrated with the former E.S.N. or Maladjusted groups and written off as hopeless or "to be amused" or "spoken down to" by his long suffering teachers who will, before too long, apply the usual accolades of idle, lazy, stupid, difficult or disruptive. De-labelling is a current socio-educational fashion. I often wonder what would happen if the same policy was adopted by the hospitals, so that all the admissions could just be labelled "sick" as happened in the 18th century and surgery could be conducted in the same sort of hit and miss manner as that employed by the schools. I would contend that in the same way that one would expect a hospital to diagnose speedily and accurately in organic matters, it is not unreasonable to expect the schools, who after all claim to be highly professional, to be able to do the same educationally. Indeed The 1981 Act is, in theory, supposed to ensure just that, i.e. to define the special education needs of up to 20% of the school population and then to require the LEAs by law to meet them. Unfortunately, however, the reality is almost invariably, very different and there are those who would claim that The 1981 Act is an outright denial of the very rights it purports to safeguard, with inappropriate Statements to be avoided at all costs, whilst adequate provision appears to be almost non-existent over large areas of the country.

The term "Dyslexia" is not a new term, it was first used by James Hinshelwood around the turn of the century prior to his publication of a volume on "Word Blindness" in 1917 and it has been defined as a disorder manifested by difficulty in learning to read despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence and socio-cultural opportunity. It is dependent on fundamental cognitive disabilities which are frequently constitutional in origin. Thus, the dyslexic person has related organisational weaknesses which have effects on laterality and hand skill development, short term memory and perception, so causing interference in the ordered development of language: that is talk, reading, spelling, number and essay writing. I feel that this is a useful, no-nonsense definition, which will stand up to examination and is not so easily disposed of as are SLD. or SRD., and hence, I stick firmly behind the term Dyslexia.

What does this mean as far as the child and the family are concerned? Both of our children are dyslexic, William, now 12 and Sarah, 10. Both of them are well above average intelligence, both of them have lively minds and well developed senses of humour. They are very fluent verbally, sensitive and are very good indeed

at understanding concepts and unravelling situations. Both of them have come home from school on occasions in very distressed states, both of them have shown reluctance to go to school at one time or another. As a result of our total dissatisfaction with the local primary school both of our children were withdrawn from school in December 1984, and have been educated at home ever since. I have a background in education and social work and having trained at The Dyslexia Institute, am an Associate Member of the British Dyslexia Association. Because it seemed to us to somewhat ridiculous that I should be attempting to sort out other children's problems, whilst those of our own were multiplying, when we withdrew our children from school, I resigned from my job. So now whilst my wife maintains our Bread supply, William, Sarah and I remain at home educating each other, whilst, during the course of the week, independently and out of school hours, I, also spend time working with about 20 other Dyslexic children.

The dilemma and at the same time one of the strongest signs of dyslexia lies in its contradictory nature. On the one hand, Dyslexic children often appear to be quite bright, verbally fluent and altogether "with it", whilst on the other hand their general school work is frequently appalling, whilst the child can often be seen to be getting more and more ill at ease at school, as he slides further and further behind his peer group in his academic work, quite commonly, being subjected to all sorts of appalling pressures. This is an insidious situation because dyslexic children usually start school with great enthusiasm. By the time they are 7 or 8, this is declining, acquiring all sorts of negative feelings, which start to become apparent, about school and learning, by the time they reach the secondary stage. About 4% of the population are dyslexic of whom  $\frac{2}{3}$  are boys. There is very often a clearly traceable family history of this, and related difficulties such as hyperactivity and allergy problems.

Can dyslexic children be helped? The answer is very positively "Yes". Two areas of help are vital, but both of them are intertwined. First and foremost, it is essential to boost the child's confidence in himself, both at home and at school. It is futile dwelling on the Child's mistakes, he is already well aware of his difficulties anyway. The more intelligent he is, the more likely he is to suffer from frustrations and in younger children temper tantrums, especially when his imaginative ideas don't work out as planned. He is likely to be forgetful, to be unable to remember addresses, telephone numbers, to tell the time from a standard clock face or to remember instructions, however carefully given. All demands made on the child should be carefully measured so as to allow him to grow and extend, but not be swamped.

The second area of help lies in exposure to multisensory teaching especially geared to dyslexia by a teacher who is properly trained and qualified in these skills. Ordinary remedial or extra English teaching in itself is just not good enough and will not normally produce the desired results. Many schools have "Special needs" units under one name or another but by and large and with no doubt the odd exception, these are not at all capable of meeting the needs of dyslexic children. It is most valuable, whether statutory pressures exist or not, to have an independent full scale assessment of the child made, because this will set out in detail a very full profile of the child and spell out his strengths and

his areas of difficulty. Such an independent assessment can be submitted as a part of a statutory statementing procedure to strengthen the child's position, especially if the authority is not altogether enthusiastic about dyslexia, whilst at the same time it allows his teaching to be more effectively directed.

Much has been said and written about the social value of going to school, but I cannot for the life of me see the value of being constantly informed that you are stupid by your peer group and your teachers either directly or by inference. It seems to me therefore that the dyslexic child can very often thrive best in home education when they can receive tremendous support from their family especially if this can be linked to some professional sessions with a specially trained teacher on a personal basis. The Dyslexia Institute maintains a chain of establishments throughout the country, where children can receive specialist teaching and be assessed. In addition to that there are a number of us who independently can give specialist tuition, to children on an individual basis. It is usually recommended that children receive two, one-hour sessions of specialist teaching per week. For this service, a fee is usually charged which varies from tutor to tutor, from virtually nothing up to a maximum of about £9 per one-hour session. Many teachers will offer extra tuition but most of this is not relevant to the needs of dyslexic children, it is important, therefore to check the teacher's qualifications and training before commencing a programme of work. It is thus possible to cater very well indeed for dyslexic children in home education, especially when this is coupled to specialist input, and I would suggest that this arrangement would be far superior to the average provision of the average school.

For parents working with dyslexic children at home, "Alpha to Omega" by Dr. Bevé Hornsby is a very useful publication on which work can be based. Whilst "Overcoming Dyslexia" again by Dr. Bevé Hornsby published by Martin Dunitz price £3.50 is a very readable and valuable book, giving a very good, easy to understand, but comprehensive account of dyslexia containing much practical advice.

Having experienced the real anguish of undiagnosed dyslexia within our own family and, also, the all round relief of positive diagnosis, education and intervention, we would be pleased to pass on our experience to others, who may feel that they are in a similar position.

.....

If you are not convinced of the advantages of home education for your 'special' child, read what Maggie Swatridge (Cornwall) has to say :-

#### EO FOR THE HANDICAPPED CHILD

Our handicapped children have the same needs, educational and otherwise, as any other children. We parents experience similar benefits and encounter similar problems to other practising EO parents. We need John Holt (eg. 'How Children Learn') to keep our heads when all about have lost theirs (apologies to Rudyard Kipling) as we give our children invigorating challenge and opportunity to develop the full potential of their lives.

To stand firm in our intent it may be helpful to remind

ourselves that we are the only people really concerned and responsible for our particular child's present and future, stability and continuity, our child's link with life and the world. WE are the experts when it comes to our own child, because we need to observe and understand only one unique combination of being, personality, interests, abilities and disabilities. There are many sources of knowledge available to us parents, especially other parent groups. We can all study Peto and Dolman, etc. and abstract the philosophies and techniques relevant to our particular child. This positive, active role is far healthier for us, too, - not allowing denigration as neurotic caretakers just filling in those pressure times at breakfast, teatime and weekends whilst strangers execute their take-overs and segregate children from real life, perhaps from 2 or 3 years old right up to 19 in the same place.

Look at the areas of Special needs and see how much wider and meaningful they can be when home-based and individual!

Sensory stimulation - sight, sound, touch, smell, taste...all plus body awareness, including movement - especially stretch to counteract tendency to spasm and centralness, and physical touch, eg. to legs or hands to increase awareness of their being activated and so improve performance; holding our child so body and limbs are stimulated to move correctly, to assist neural paths to develop, eg. posture, creeping, clapping to music, using scissors...

Attention/concentration/eye-fixing and movement - a problem with nearly all 'special needs' children, often not recognised; physical contact, movement, sound and interesting items may all be necessary, also minimising distraction; so vital, we need to take every opportunity for a child to exercise this skill.

Language development - our language can be honest, interested in child and activity; based on visual clues or action - clear, slow with pauses to facilitate assimilation, unfussy and NON-DEMANDING (see John Holt).

We can introduce pictures, picture symbols and the written word in similar manner-but early (visual perception is often far in advance of auditory perception even if hearing is OK); We can offer input, with air of quiet wonder and enthusiasm, even if output APPEARS negligible - acquisition of a language-form is more important than speech (and we know a visual language will help the acquisition of an aural one, and vice-versa).

Diet - most of today's handicaps are compounded from micro-nutrient abnormality patterns and different types show their own characteristic profiles so it's well worth parental investigation in every case. Besides all our children will benefit from whole food, additive-free.

(..Good, easy reference paperback book is 'The Hyperactive Child-What The Family Can Do' by Belinda Barnes and Irene Colquhoun, Thorsons Publishers.)

Living Priorities - MOTIVATION into self-effort; only such equipment that promotes (NOT TAKES OVER) child's independence in communication, playing, feeding, dressing, mobility, etc., doing with proper technique 'sets' the pattern in the brain, along alternative undamaged pathways if necessary, in time.

So we CAN provide for our child and allow him/her to learn meaningfully and gradually gain understanding of the world. Most of our effort must be directed to nurturing the confidence and will

to develop. Real-life tasks have a morereadily recognisable purpose. Unrelated 'tests' and 'exercises' often hinder and mar true potential. (Be aware that these form the 'Bible' of Paediatricians and Educational Psychologists - which is probably why they have such poor opinions of each child's prognosis even in the face of so much evidence to the contrary! We can have more faith and hope in our kids,-and must.) As other EOers say time is needed to allow a 'deschooling' process to take place so we may have to strive to repair the damage done to our child by these misguided forms of 'early intervention'. We, too, should be able to consider but discard and protect our child from the unhelpful.

Confidence comes by experience - we must not withhold a suitable 'experience' because our child is not able to 'do' it alone. Input must not be restricted because of output 'lack'. (Remember those social occasions - get him/her invited to the Birthday Party by going yourself and assisting. Take the special food if necessary. Why should one child never be invited?) Our child needs to participate in life, and life's decisions, fully, receiving the physical attention and support to do it. All situations can be educating; different from doing everything for him as if he would vegetate without adult supervision.

As parents we find ourselves under pressure that our handicapped child must always behave as he/she is expected (by Paediatrician and Educational Psychologist) to respond: never allowed to feel tired, 'fed-up', mischievous or rebellious like ordinary kids nor have different interests,-else the label 'abnormal' is given. Let's not be deceived or bullied - we know our children, and EO does allow our children more freedom from such prejudiced views. The EO approach is anyway more likely to avert situations leading to stress, bad behaviour or obstructive habits. Also, there is no pressure to show end-results all the time, either in objects produced or performance tests.

Another chestnut is the need for continuous, multiple peer contact - vastly overrated nonsense! Peers en masse often subject each other to most undesirable attitudes, and their pressure can be of frightful potential - why should our children have to 'conform'. Far better a few meaningful relationships of quality and shared purposefulness.

Handicap is not a matter for external (often 'medical') dictate - it needs internal, family purpose to ensure social, educational and cultural development. EOers - let's be ourselves and let our children be themselves.

(Dear Maggie - sorry I had to 'cut it'. Still, at least I'm sure of some material for next supplement!)

ADVICE IN BRIEF: 1) Children not registered at school 'owing' to a mental/physical disability may be entitled to welfare milk. Get Form FW 20. I wrote on it: "He is taught at home by our choice" - but I got my milk tokens!

2) Remember - a decision to home educate can be revoked, but you cannot de-register from special school without LEA consent. Don't register if doubtful. Try to avoid 'statementing'. If you can't, and you want to/are home educating - be firm - insist that home education is 'written-in'.

3) Know your rights (and obligations!). Learn them from '81 Act in library, or "Special Education Handbook" from ACE (£3).

4) Get support - contact families in similar situations - contact me! Lots of us are doing it!

The friendly giant called the BFG.

He 2+ feet high



## PHOBIA OR REFUSAL?

'School phobia' is a term which was invented by psychiatrists in 1941. The term 'separation anxiety' was invented in 1956. This is now considered by psychiatrists to underlie all cases of school phobia. According to this theory, which is now commonly held by psychologists and GPs in addition to psychiatrists, the child becomes afraid of parting from mum; mother is similarly afraid of parting from her child. The negative aspects of school:bullying, intimidation and ridicule etc. are dismissed as irrelevant.

In view of the fact that there is a dramatic increase in the incidence of school phobia at ages 12 and 13, at the age of transfer to enormous, depersonalized schools, this is a ridiculous theory. Why should a child of this age suddenly become afraid of parting from mother? Even more surprising, why should mother suddenly become afraid of parting from her child? The literature on the subject is full of allusions to 'over-protective mother', 'manipulative child and colluding mother', 'pathological dysfunction of the family' etc.

Because of the above theory, any means, however inhumane or however costly, may be used to remove children from the 'pathological' environment of their homes and get them to school. Care orders are often used as threats and sometimes get carried out. (The book on school phobia says that these children should NEVER be taught at home.)

I know very little about the situation in other countries, but there are school phobic children in psychiatric hospitals in Australia; and there is a book written in 1975 which tells of over a million children in America drugged to make them behave in school.

Christopher Shute is quite right in saying that 'school phobia' is a bad term since it implies an irrational fear. 'School refusal' might be better, but refusal carries connotations of 'being naughty', to many people. Also 'refusal' is a term unlikely to be associated with nervous breakdown, suicidal depression or very acute anxiety. Shall we invent a term: acute school induced anxiety?

I would favour sticking to the term 'school phobia', not because it is a good term, but it is used by psychiatrists and psychologists and we must fight them on their own ground.

I want to spearhead an attack on the psychiatrists' theory and will be glad of any information about school refusal, the circumstances which led up to the school crisis and on the treatment you or your children may have had at the hands of the authorities. I have letters from about 30 families with this sort of trouble and will welcome more. I would also like to hear from any parents who were themselves school phobic.

My letter on this subject (see Dec.NL) has been sent to ¼ of the MPs, a handful of whom are very concerned about this problem.

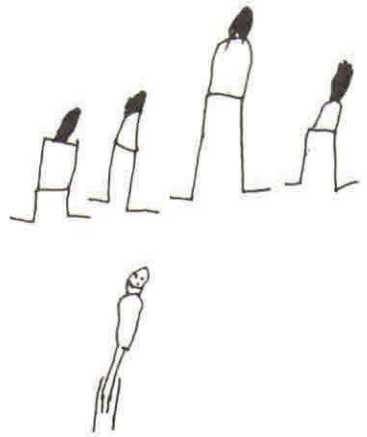
Despite the fact that 60% or 70% or more of the children who have been forced back to school by inhumane methods, grow up to be adults prone to mental illness, the methods are considered to be successful because in the intervening time the majority of children have returned to school.

I am also collecting information for a book on this subject, and trying to get some interest from the media.

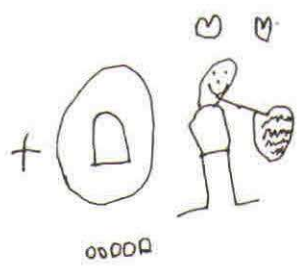
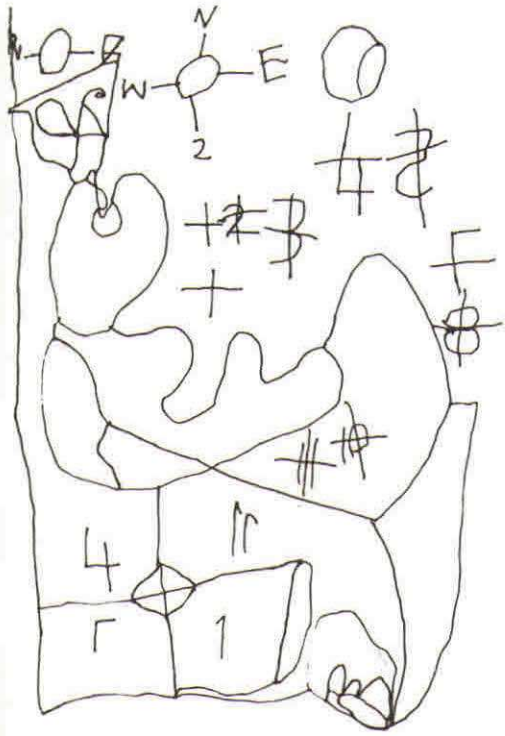
PATRICIA KNOX PEN LLYWENAN BODEDERN HOLYHEAD GWYNEDD LL65 4TS

30<sup>th</sup> APRIL  
1936.

PIRATE  
TREASURE  
BY  
BEN F. WISITT



SPP  
I WILL  
BE 5 IN JULY



I FOUND IT!

FLYSHEET CAMPS AND FINNIEGILL CHILDREN'S FARM

Flysheet traces its origins back through Flysheet Camps in the English Midlands to Forest School Camps based in London, and from there to a 'progressive' school, Forest School, established in 1928 and closed at the beginning of the war in 1940. The camps-called "wilderness camps" in the Scottish version-are for children and grown-ups of all ages, drawn from different social backgrounds, who come together for a week or a fortnight to try to build a temporary community of equals based on meagre resources, primitive conditions, a shortage of money but a wealth of goodwill.

Finniegill was purchased with the idea of exploring extensions of the ethos and philosophy underlying the camps into other areas of work in the community and at other times throughout the year other than school holidays only. The Children's Farm is one such exploration, being a first step towards an eventual wilderness centre rather than a rural zoo or working museum.

I am sure that the camps would be of interest to many parents and children in any event, but until I joined EO recently it had never occurred to me how valuable Finniegill could be to parents and children involved in home education. As properly constituted charities, both Flysheet and Finniegill have boards of management, but essentially these are to facilitate the use of the place by self-help groups and to help bring together people who would otherwise not be in contact with each other (for example, our self-directed workcamps for young adults.) There is no reason why interested home-based parents and children should not come to camps organised outwith the school holiday period, with a view eventually to organising such events themselves. Not only is Finniegill an educational resource in its own right, with its rare breeds of domestic farm species, its wealth of wildlife and its opportunity to experience a wilderness situation, but such camps would give people the opportunity to be part of a temporary community where home-based education was the norm.

I can think of lots of other reasons to explain my enthusiasm about such a prospect but we would like to hear in the first instance how many parents and children would be interested in taking the matter further. We operate on a non-commercial 'at-cost' basis and all the people involved do so on a voluntary basis. If anyone would like to write in to our 'office' address, preferably enclosing an SAE, we can send further information and maybe take things another stage.

Alan Emmerson, Holywood Building, 2 Assembly Street, Dumfries 53370


\*\*\*\*\*

Gossip from London University-external GCSEs may have higher status than internal, as employers and universities will have more faith in exams. than in course work assessment which is so vulnerable to teacher bias-tell that to your inspector when he says your teenager will be at a disadvantage.

Rob and Anne Wade

\*\*\*\*\*

It's Great!



# ★ NEW BRAIN ★

NEW BRAIN is a great new magazine for kids and adults! If you want a copy just fill in this coupon and send it together with 30p to:

↓

New Brain Ed., 35 Habgood Rd., Loughton,  
Essex. IG10 1HE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

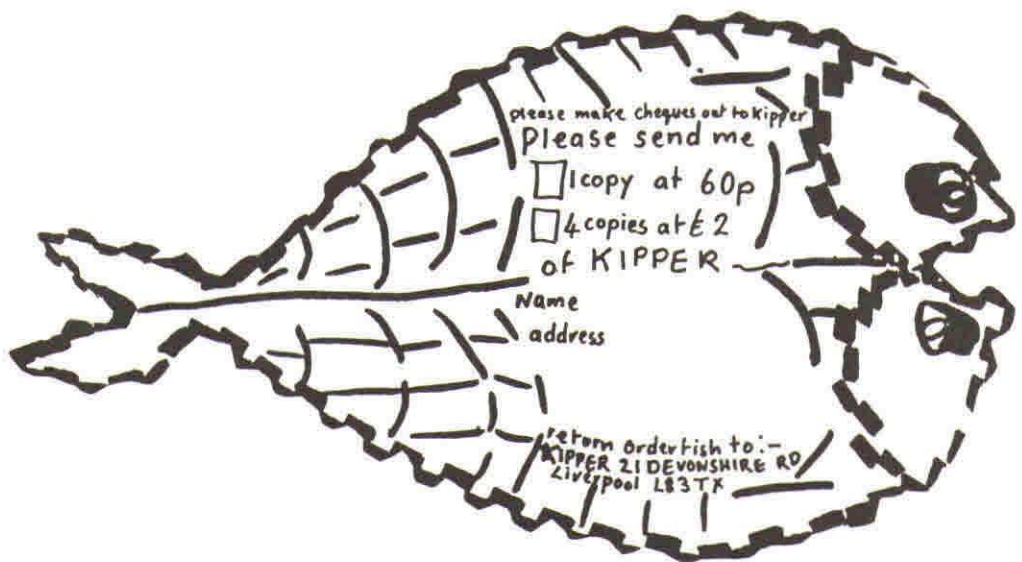
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Thanks!!



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LIVERPOOL L83TX

# NOTICES

Is there anyone out there who would like to edit the AUGUST issue of EDUCATION THROUGH THE PRESS ? Straightforward job, means reading press cuttings (supplied) and then choosing those you think significant. Please let SARAH GUTHRIE know: Field House

Mellis Road  
Thrandeston  
Diss  
NORFOLK IP21 4BU

For the new edition of EARLY YEARS I am reprinting many experiences culled from the newsletters. There are too many to contact personally, but if you have contributed to an EO Newsletter in the past 2 years and object to the idea of it being reprinted, tell me-quick!

SARAH GUTHRIE (address above)

Rental housing in peaceful situation sought by EO family of limited means (DHSS) needing contact with other families and freedom from harassment by the uncomprehending young toughs who roam our otherwise nearly adequate council estate.

MIRYAM, JACOB and JOHANNAH BUSH  
68 MAESGLAS, PONTYATES, LLANELLI,  
DYFED, WALES SA15 5SH  
(Tel: (0269) 861069 )

'The Continuum Concept' by Jean Liedloff is to be reprinted on 29th May '86. Queries regarding the practice of the principles and connected subjects will be covered in CONTINUUM NETWORK NEWSLETTER, Box 663, NW18XQ

CANDIDA FAWSITT

The Potential Trust have sent us this summary of their main QUEST-WEEKS FOR 1986 (see NL 39 for further details of their activities):

27 July-2 August: Nr. Peterborough, Northants., ages 10-15  
2-9 August and 10-17 August: Nr. Ipswich, Suffolk, ages 7-9, 9-12 and 12-15  
Computer Park 86, Grendon Northants., 26 July-2 August, 2-9 August and 9-16 Aug. ages 10 to adult

East Kent Music Trust, Nr. Deal : 17-23 August, ages 8-18

Young Adventurers Camp, Eversley, Hants. 25 July-1 August, 3-10 August and 12-19 August, ages 4-11

Write if interested to:

SHEPHERDS CLOSE  
KINGSTON STERT  
Nr. CHINNOR  
OXON. OX9 4NL (tel. (0844) 51666 )



## INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE

Andy and Diane Anderson, 95 Derrington Avenue, Crewe, CHESHIRE CW2 7JA

AN INFORMATION/ORDER FORM LIST IS AVAILABLE: The list contains used and recommended books and materials and can be used as a guide to assist those seeking suitable educational material for all ages.

MEMBERS ARE OFFERED THE USE OF THE RESOURCE CENTRE- If anyone has any queries or problems with regard to what educational material etc. is available, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time, either by phone, letter or a visit. What we don't know, we will try to find out. Please feel free to use us.

As we get no funding from any source, would you please ALWAYS include SAE for reply.

WHEN RECOMMENDING ANYTHING-PLEASE GIVE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE, and when recommending a book etc., please give title, author, publisher and price if known, and a rough idea of the age group it would be useful to.

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# GO-OPERATIVE PROJECTS IN THE MAKING

## A COMMUNITY SCHOOL?

"We teach best what we most need to learn."

Richard Bach

This simple statement has shattered all my laboured notions of teaching and learning. 'Teachers' work with the humility of knowing that they are learning. 'Learners' are enabled to teach others-to learn.

"...You are all learners, doers, teachers."

We depower adult and teacher status to empower children; we have equal status and can share teaching and learning together... If this strikes a familiar chord in you, perhaps you may have some experiences or ideas to share which could help to set up a small community school for.. children between five and twelve?

At heart is a sense of joy in learning for all involved: we learn from children, they learn from each other, children learn from us. We all have something to give and something we take. We cannot presume (especially in this uncertain world) to know all that is best for our children, but we can together help each other to work out what is best for ourselves.

...The notion behind the school is to bring together a variety of energies and skills to cross-fertilize. As parents we are actively involved, family bonds are strengthened (the root of growing), the wider family of the school enables more stimulation and opportunities for co-operation. Needs which cannot be met in the school spill into the community where more specialised skills and resources can be found. The community also balances idealism with reality, a reality we have to learn to live with even if we choose not to share its values.

On a practical level, we have a place to run such a school in Aylesbury with approximately fifteen children involved. Parents would be heavily involved for part of their time but they need time also for other things. Money will need to be found to buy the skills and materials we cannot find amongst ourselves and possibly a co-ordinator would need to be employed.

This is as yet an idea in the making. It is not an answer, but a

beginning with many questions. We would love to hear from you if you are interested in participating or if you are already involved in a community school project and could share your experience with us.

Please write to: K.Pearson 27 Avenue Road Winslow Bucks.

### THE POLEBROOK PROJECT

The Polebrook Project is attempting to establish a large-scale community/co-operative for up to 150 people. We are having difficulties in finding a large enough property within our price range-which is about £400,000. The original property which we looked at, Polebrook House, an old children's home near Leicester, has been sold to a higher bidder. At present we are considering bidding for a large hospital in Perthshire, which, with six other houses apart from the main building, numerous workshops, outbuildings and 100 acres of land, is going very cheap at only £300,000.

Among the many plans for the co-op is one to start a Free School, though to begin with we plan to start off with an EO resource centre, with one or two workers, and build up to a Free School if all goes well and if that is what children and adults want. There are numerous children under 5 involved in the project, and 5 or 6 children of school age, from 5-11½ years, most of whom are already de-schooled. We would be especially interested in more people with older children.

The co-op will be divided into separate living groups of 10-20 people, income-sharing and creating as much of our own work as possible through workers' co-ops e.g. there are plans for a builders' co-op, a carpentry workshop, as well as people working in outside jobs.

If the property in Scotland falls through, a few of us are planning to go ahead with a smaller housing co-op immediately, to tide us over till we find a larger property.

If you are interested and would like more information and details of future meetings, please write to:

Jenny Larkir 6a Hartham Road London N7 9JG

Please enclose an SAE if you write. Also, if anyone knows of any large properties for sale near them, we would be very interested to hear about them. Thank you.

James's Rabbit



Called Joseph  
By ANN

From a potted biography of Annabel Farjeon, niece of Eleanor: "As was to be expected as a child of a Farjeon, Annabel's upbringing was unconventional. She was educated for the most part at home and was assured by her parents that the theatre and music were more important than school."

(Hampstead and Highgate Express, 25th. April)



HIS WORLD, AND WELCOME TO IT

Some people say that children are not naturally courteous. I had a friend's 12 year old son staying with me last vacation, and on the face of it he proved the truth of that statement. Like any normal boy of his age he ate like a starving hamster and said exactly what was in his mind. He tended to call me 'Thingy' (but then I often addressed him as 'orrible' !) and if I were so thoughtless as to talk to one of my adult friends when he was in earshot he joined in without so much as a 'by your leave'.

I might have been tempted to do something fairly radical about his general scruffiness-both verbal and vestimentary-if I had not come to realise that far from failing in my task as an educator I was enabling him to find his own motives for treating me with deference or friendliness.

First, he relaxed. His home is tense and competitive, noisy and full of conflict. With me he had no need to scream and fight and he reacted not by 'testing' me but with candour. I allowed him to speak and he spoke. Mostly he talked about war. For nearly a year now he has thought about little apart from guns. I suppose Freud would say that he is symbolically slaughtering his father-figures, or taking revenge on the adult world. I don't think it matters. The important thing is that he drew me into his war-games in a way which was entirely courteous. I found his use of me in his games remarkable. He adored hiding in woods and 'shooting' passers-by with a cap-pistol or a plastic Uzi. I am not, by nature, a war-gamer, still less am I given to plunging through the undergrowth making machine-gun noises, but he didn't know that-or perhaps he suspected it, but took the same view of the matter as a teacher might of some unpopular school subject i.e. that I needed to be exposed to it for my own good. Once I had agreed to play with him he was immensely solicitous towards me. Was I comfortable? Had I enough caps? Did I prefer to use one weapon or another? In many ways I was the weaker brother, constantly needing to be reminded of the current rules which we were playing by, often handicapped by the fact that my back trouble does not allow me to bend down much. Nevertheless, he did not give up on me. I was allowed to follow him for hours at a time, discreetly making machine-gun noises and trying to hide behind trees, keeping a weather-eye open for people whose opinion of me might be damaged by seeing me with a gun in my hand.

Whatever he may have thought of my performance he was very kind about it. I became aware that he saw me as a person who cared about him and he responded by giving me access to his world. It was not much of a world by some standards, and it was not well supplied by adult landmarks, but it was neither vicious nor stupid. It was a fairly kindly world, safe for other people to be in as long as they did not want the boy to recognise their superiority or give them a measure of respect which they would not give him.

It will be clear from this that I do not believe in 'teaching' courtesy. It is difficult-perhaps impossible-for a youngster to understand the need for adults to reinforce continually each others' feeling of worthiness by symbolic acts and words. Most children value friendliness and acceptance. If we take them seriously as human beings we will be humble enough to accept from them openness and solicitude in place of the grab-bag of rituals and conventions which stand between the adult world and mortal chaos.

C.R.Shute 7 Kiln Way Polesworth Nr.Tamworth Staffs. B78 1JF

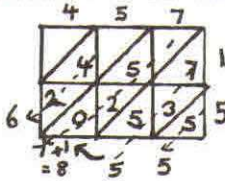
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MATHEMATICAL INTERLUDE

(from Hugh Thomas 58 Colchester Avenue Penylan CARDIFF CF3 7BP)  
 Members may find that the following method of long multiplication as used in Elizabethan England (16th Century) may be of interest:

PROBLEM:  $457 \times 15 = ?$

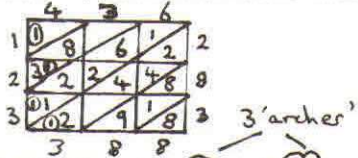
THE 457 IMPLIES 3 COLUMNS AND THE 15 IMPLIES 2 ROWS. THUS, THE LATTICE IS AS BELOW:



Add along the diagonals and 'carry' to the next diagonal

SO, 457 x 15 = 6855

SIMILARLY, USING THE DECIMALS  $43.6 \times 2.83 = ?$ , THE MECHANICS ARE:



THE DECIMAL POINT IS FOUND BY USING 'ARCHES':  $43.6 \times 2.83 =$   
SO, 43.6 x 2.83 = 123.388     123.388

This method of long multiplication seems to be more easily assimilated by the younger child than the 'modern' method:

$$\begin{array}{r} 457 \\ \times 15 \\ \hline 2285 \\ 4570 \\ \hline 6855 \end{array}$$

(To check, use a calculator)

ANOTHER PROBLEM (nothing to do with the above)

I believe this problem was composed by BRAHMAGUPTA in the 7th. Century A.D. :

When eggs in a basket are removed 2,3,4,5,6 at a time there remain, respectively 1,2,3,4,5 eggs. When they are taken out 7 at a time, none are left over. Find the number of eggs that could have been contained in the basket. (Hint: use matchsticks or small pebbles if you don't want to do it in the abstract).

Answer: 119

# LETTERS

Dear Members,

In case there should be any misunderstandings, may I make it clear that the 'Continuum Trust' (address below) has no direct connection with Jean Liedloff, author of "The Continuum Concept". The research into continuum principles as defined in the book is not being carried out by the author herself. Please may I apologise for any confusion this may have caused.

Candida Fawsitt  
The Continuum Trust  
Stone Hall Mill  
Welsh Hook, Wolfscastle,  
Haverfordwest, DYFED

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor,

It is a source of wonder to me that those who worry about the possible social isolation of children educated at home find nothing remarkable, still less worrying, in the certain isolation from their families that so many more children suffer in boarding schools.

It seems far more questionable to send a child out into the world at the tender age of, perhaps, 7, than to keep them at home with their parents for their upbringing, which, considering the dependent nature of the young human animal, one may reasonably suppose was the way it was actually intended to be.

Sue Stephenson  
1 College Road  
Barrow-on-Humber  
South Humberside  
DN19 7ED

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.O.ers,

I would love to hear from any other people educating at home. I'm 15 years old and I have been working at home for about 2 years. At the moment I am studying for 'O' levels and hopefully, after I have done my 'A' levels, I will go on to read architecture at University. There seems to be very little contribution by people working at home in the N.L. I don't think it's a matter of children "competing" to draw "better" pictures etc., but more that it's not totally for parents and that the home educators' views are interesting to other people.

There don't seem to be many people of about my age working at home; so prove me wrong and write to:

Jane Cameron  
79 Whiteknights Road  
Reading, BERKS.  
RG6 2BB

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor,

Following the most helpful supplement in the last Newsletter, I am prompted to write with regard to my own situation. As a single mother of two boys (aged 6 and 2) out of school, I am looking for another similar family with whom to buy jointly a small smallholding in South Wales. I am keen to move to that area, and would particularly like to live in a communal situation for mutual support in family life. I would love to hear from anyone who may be interested.

I should say that I very much appreciate the newsletter, and all the support that EO gives, and feel I must be one of many who never finds time to write and say so.

Wendy Heath  
19 Grasmere Road  
Lancaster LA1 3HE

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear EO,

I have just read Marcelle Papworth's article about 'Comprehensive Collapse'. It really is a pity to allow readers to suppose that all London comprehensives are so appalling. My son, now aged 16, spent three years in a comprehensive school in Newham, which is one of the most deprived Boroughs in the country. The discipline in his school was excellent, the manners of the children very good, and better I should say than those of the pupils in the Public School he now attends - and a traditional curriculum! My son emerged this summer with nine academic 'O' levels. I also taught music in the same Borough, and was extremely happy in these schools.

Please don't spread hate and terror. I am sure that there are some schools such as those described by Marcelle, but I think you (EO) have a duty to present a balanced picture.

Jane Wilkinson  
38 Cleveland Road  
South Woodford  
London E18 2AL

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Friends,

How would you like several hundred pounds per year to help educate each of your children? Well, yet again there are rumours that Sir Keith is contemplating the introduction of a 'voucher' system. One amount quoted was £750.00 per year for a primary school age child. Whether or not we personally believe that this time the plans will actually come to anything, I believe that EO families should make their presence felt. Several hundred pounds in your hands is worth nothing if it can only be spent within the school system. EO families need to be able to exchange their share for equipment, private tuition, night school classes etc.

The administration of the system will be difficult to change in our favour once it has been set up, so we must make our needs known now. Write to Sir Keith pointing out where your financial needs lie. And if, like me, you wrote last time, write again. We must

not be overlooked.

As a final point, may I suggest that pressure to change existing laws and be considered in the implementation of proposed laws would be more effective if organized by the Education Otherwise group. I am sure the Government is not aware of just how many children are being taught outside school and we really should have a voice over such matters as how exams. are structured, the use of our community's resources and so on. Once central machinery is set up it is much easier to carry on pressuring in all areas than for separate individuals to have to rediscover the best way of approaching the media, to find out how and where letters should be written etc. For instance, couldn't standard letters be sent out with each copy of the newsletter, which each parent could then sign and post off to Sir Keith or wherever if they chose. The views of 'Shelter' etc. are always being quoted in the media; why aren't ours? Surely we need a louder voice and more clout!

I look forward to seeing the reactions of parents and the EO Committee to my suggestions; after all, we now seem to have the money to promote our interests in a more professional manner.

Pip Rupik  
17 Westmorland St.  
Balby  
Doncaster  
SOUTH YORKS. DN4 9AQ

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear EO,

I received the following letter referring to my search for evidence that thumbsuckers are less likely to smoke than if encouraged to stop (see 'Education through the Press', NL 45) :

"My brother has sucked his thumb since childhood. He is now a soldier, super-fit, aged 28 years, and pretends not to be a thumb-sucker—he is—but no-one tells him! AND-HE HAS NEVER SMOKED! He has two sisters (one is his twin) and a brother who have never been thumb-suckers: two of them smoke, the other one has been a regular smoker of tobacco but has managed to stop, by extreme will-power (and falling in love with a non-smoker!). I have never been even tempted to do such a thing as smoke." (From Barbara Clohessy, a former thumb-sucker)

My son, now 9 years old, sucks his thumb, pretends to smoke trick cigarettes filled with talcum powder and stoutly states he never wishes to smoke real cigarettes. (He also plays with toy guns and other weapons—will this encourage pacifist feelings I wonder?) Please let me know if anyone else can add to this rather unscientific investigation. I'll publish more evidence to help parents cope with those unhelpful remarks: "Surely not still thumbsucking at your age?"

Kate Freeman  
Wayside Farm  
Etchilhampton  
Devizes  
WILTS. SN10 3JT

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# NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

## BUCKS. (SOUTH)

We've had two interesting visits so far this year: one to Springhill Bakery in Aylesbury and one to the County Teaching Farm at Stoke Mandeville. The latter was a bit of an eye-opener, for me at any rate, and actually contrasted quite surprisingly with the practice of local farmers. Anyone is welcome to join us at the following events (please note change of date for August - was 17th., is now 10th.):

- Wednesday June 11th. Jonathan Page Adventure Playground, Stocklake, Aylesbury 1.00-3.00  
Small charge. Bring a picnic if you like.
- Sunday July 6th. Picnic with Milton Keynes EO Group at Stockgrove Country Park
- Sunday August 10th. Swimming (covered) and cream tea at Jane and John Burn's smallholding in Bierton (near Aylesbury). Please bring scones - there will be a small contribution asked for towards the jam and cream. Ring Jane to let her know you're coming (Aylesbury 81550)

Julie Webb (Haddenham 290773)

## HERTS.

Herts. members continue to meet fortnightly on Tuesdays, 10-12 at Apsley Community Centre, corner of Durrants Hill, A41, Hemel Hempstead, followed by swimming. Buses and Euston line trains stop within 200 yards. Bring your own lunch and activity. 75p per person including swimming. Please telephone June Grant (Hemel Hempstead 64020) or Mary Read (Berkhamsted 4524) to confirm.

## LINCOLNSHIRE

We had our first get-together of '86 at Rose and Bob Bowe's on 1st. March. It was a chilly day, so we (about 30 of us) stayed indoors most of the day and began to get to know one another. We were all enthusiastic about meeting again and organised a calendar of meetings together. The first of these was a musical day at Carolyn and Karl Svarc's. Five families were there and took along a variety of musical instruments to add to the Svarc family's large collection. We spent some time trying out and listening to familiar and not-so-familiar instruments and then used them together, trying to sing along too when we knew the words, but the children, especially, spent a good deal of time outside, taking the visiting dogs for a walk and playing 'blind man's buff' amongst other things.

On both occasions we had a lovely lunch, made up of contributions from visiting families, but especially due to the efforts of our host families - thank you.

If we haven't met you so far we hope you might join us at one of our meetings whether you live in Lincolnshire or elsewhere. For meetings in homes, please let the host family know that you'll be going and take contributions towards lunch, arriving any time after 11am. For outside meetings, please take your own picnic lunch.

- Saturday June 21st Jan, Steve and Ella Marshall's 24 King Street West Deeping Peterborough (off A16 towards Stamford from Market Deeping) (Market Deeping 347793). Visit to Peakirk Wildfowl Trust Reserve in the afternoon.

- Sunday July 6th. Penny, Henry and William Wright's. 111 Stamford Street, Grantham (0476 77930)
- Sunday July 20th. Meet at North end of Mablethorpe on the beach next to the zoo car park between 11.30 and 12 for a beach picnic.
- Saturday Sept. 20th. Rampton Pets Corner, near Gainsborough. Go in and meet at outside café tables 11.30-12.

Jan Marshall

### LONDON

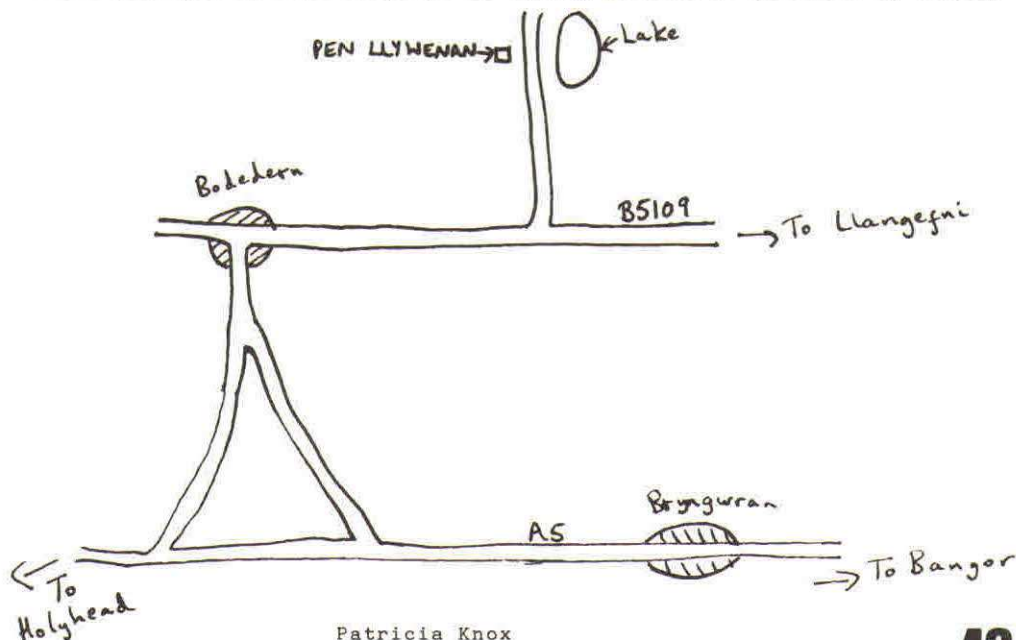
Monthly outings in London on 2nd. Tuesday of each month:

- June 10th Westminster Abbey Brass Rubbing Centre. Meet outside Westminster tube station 11 a.m.
- July 8th. H.M.S. Belfast, Simon's Wharf. Meet outside London Bridge tube station 11 a.m.
- Aug. 12th. London Transport Museum. Meet outside Covent Garden tube station 11 a.m.
- Sept. 9th. Science Museum. Meet outside Knightsbridge tube station 11 a.m.

Any queries contact Sue Petschaft, The Old Squash Court, Bayham Abbey, Lamberhurst, KENT (Lamberhurst 890624)

### NORTH WALES

Picnic at Pen Llywenan. Please join us on June 21st. Bring picnic lunch and tea and join Keith, Patricia and family at Pen Llywenan, Bodedern, Holyhead, Gwynedd (0407 740767). There is plenty of room in the garden for tents if anyone would like to stay for a few days. I can pick you up from Holyhead or Valley station if you come by train.



Patricia Knox

## SCOTLAND

It is hoped to arrange an informal gathering in Central Scotland on Saturday 23rd or 30th August. Please keep these dates free if you are interested, and look out for details in the August newsletter.

Brenda Holliday 10 Chalton Rd. Bridge of Allan Stirlingshire FK9 4DK

## SOUTH YORKSHIRE

There will be a meeting on Saturday June 28th from 10.30 a.m. at 25 Moor Oaks Road, Broomhill, Sheffield, S10 1BX. Please bring something to share for lunch and let Joan Hoare know if you are coming (phone Sheffield 666605). All friends and members welcome.

Joan Hoare

## WEST MIDLANDS

A new co-ordinator will be taking over from the beginning of June this year: Sylvia Jeffs 16 St. Bernard's Road Solihull B92 7BB. (Phone 021 706 6460). Hazel and Alan Clawley have had five very happy years of co-ordinating but feel it's time someone else had a go in a co-operative venture like EO.

Hazel Clawley

And from Sylvia:

Grateful thanks to Hazel from all of us in the West Midlands, especially those of us whom she has helped to fight our battles! We have arranged a programme of 'get-togethers' for the rest of the year. They will all be on the second Saturday of the relevant month. Don't forget—for the meetings at people's homes, bring 'goodies' to share. As usual, members from other areas are very welcome.

June 14th. Helen and John Lockley have invited everyone to their home: Heath Farm House, Bridgenorth. (All day). Phone Bridgenorth 66016 for directions.

July 12th. Birmingham Nature Centre, Pershore Road, Edgbaston. (021 742 7775) 2 p.m. Admission free. Vending machines for drinks in the cafe.

August 9th. 2 p.m. At the home of Carol and Michael Adams. 14 The Grove, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton. Phone (0902) 732958 for directions. They suggest train to Wolverhampton followed by no.568 bus.

September 13th. 2 p.m. At the home of Janet and Tom Dent. 7 Featherston Road, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield. Phone (021) 353 4148 for directions.

October 11th. Museum of Science and Industry. Newhall St. B'ham. (021 236 1022) 2 p.m. (However the museum is open from 9.30 a.m.) Vending machines for drinks and snacks. Admission free.

November 8th. PROVISIONALLY—Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, unless anyone has a better idea! Phone me (021) 706 6460 with ideas, offers, complaints (although you hardly lot always seem to be content to sit outdoors and eat picnics in gales, or huddle in old bandstands eating while watching the rain pelt down!)

December 13th. All day Christmas Party here—16 St. Bernard's Rd., Solihull. (N.B. Our day doesn't start until about 10.30 a.m.) Bring scissors, pinnies etc. for craftwork in the morning—last year we made

crackers-and food to share for party tea. Also your lunch if you come in the morning.

In 1987 we shall re-commence our bi-monthly informal meetings on the second Saturday in February, at 16 St. Bernard's Road, Solihull.

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SMALL AD.

(Small ads may be accepted from members, up to a maximum of 30 words at 10p a word, if relevant to EO)

FARMHOUSE IN FFESTINIOG, in 70 acres of mountain, with swimmable river. Sleeps 8. Children's playroom and toys. EO families only. £100 p.w.

Phone HELEN FORD (Stourbridge 379740) or write to:  
119 HAGLEY ROAD  
STOURBRIDGE  
WEST MIDLANDS

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ALMOST TOO LATE NOTICES

Unfurnished home with garden desperately wanted to rent by single mother with two out-of-school children, ANYWHERE!

Please write to: HALINA McHALE  
32 GROVE STREET  
LEAMINGTON SPA  
WARKS.

!!

Karen (31) and Hannah (2½) want to get together a group of people to rent/buy a large house in South West London. Hannah wants to live with older girl(s); Karen wants to live with people who share her ideals about raising children-broadly libertarian, anti-racist, pro-girl. Mutual support: emotional, financial, practical.

Please write to: 97 DRAKEFIELD ROAD  
LONDON SW17 8RS

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EO OFFICERS

General Secretary	Joan Hoare 25 Moor Oak Road, Sheffield South Yorkshire Tel: 0742 666605
Membership Secretaries	Bruce and Christine Wallace 25 Diabaig, Achnasheen Ross-shire IV22 2HE Tel: 044581 225
Enquiries Secretary	Janet Everdell 25 Common Lane, Hemingford Abbots, Cambs PE18 9AN Tel: 0480 65774 (not after 9pm)
Co-ordinators Secretary	Andy Anderson 95 Derrington Avenue, Crewe Cheshire CW2 7JA Tel: 0270 664060
Public Relations Officer	Joseph O'Connor 4 Coombe Gardens, New Malden Surrey KT3 4AA Tel: 01 942 0286
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Treasurer	Alison Mafham 3 Park Road West, Curzon Park, Chester Tel: 0244 677452
Assistant Treasurer (Renewals)	Bob Emmett 8 Queensway, Liddell Park Llandudno, Gwynedd LL30 IYJ
Reviews Editor	Helen Holland Inholm Farm, Plumpton Green Near Lewes, Sussex Tel: 0273 890405

WHERE TO GET WHAT

Current and Old Newsletters SINC, Early Years, Teach Your Own.	} Membership Secretaries
Stationery, Introductory Literature, Envelope re-use labels (£1.50 per 100), Membership forms, Posters and handbills.	
Growing Without Schooling	} Co-ordinators Secretary
	Jill Gillings, Seacrest, Clayhead, Baldrine, Isle Of Man

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Education Otherwise is a membership organisation whose principle aim is to provide support and an information network for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to support the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of their children.

Our principal aims are as follows:-

- To: Encourage the provision of alternative learning situations outside the school system.
- To: Re-affirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education, and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school.
- To: Establish the primary right of children that full consideration, with due allowance for their age and understanding, shall be given to their wishes and feelings regarding their education.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Send a 9" x 4" s.a.e. to:  
25, COMMON LANE,  
Hemingford Abotts,  
Cambridgeshire,  
PE18 9AH

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