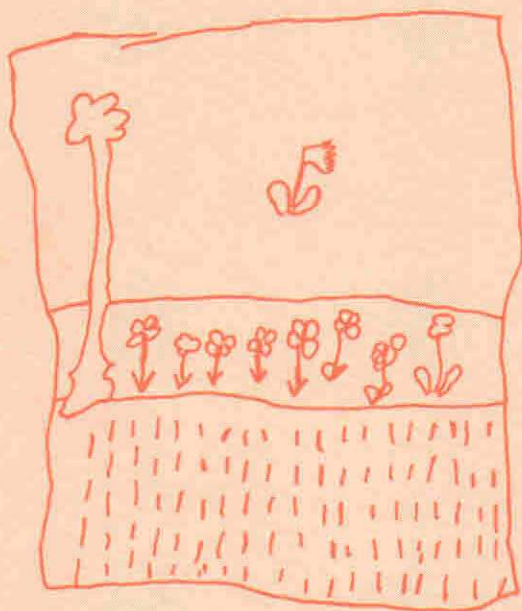
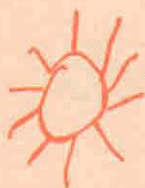


Education Other wise Newsletter

June 1988

No 60



CONTENTS

Editorial	(i)
Officers & Co-ordinators info.	1
News from the Treasurer	2
Educating Archie.	3
Education Through the Press	4/5
News From the Regions	6/7
Letters Page	8/9
Pen Pal Page	10/11
In My Own Experience	12/13
Tintin Quiz	13
Science '88	26
Electronics Corner	14/15
Autonomous Learning & Primary Maths	16-19
Book Reviews.	20-25
The Young National Trust Theatre.	27
Tintin Answers	27
Development Education information	28
Small Ads	29
Watch Information	29
A.G.M. at Featherstone.	30
Useful Information.	31

EDITOR FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER '88

- Diane Greenwell, 10 Vernon Place, Canterbury, CT1 3HG. TEL: 0227 456115.

NEXT ISSUE - SUPPLEMENT SUBJECT - CRAFTS -

SUPPLEMENT EDITOR - Millie Stevens, Pegasus, Castle Road,
Ventnor, Isle of Wight. Tel: 0983 854107.

DEADLINE: 1st July '88.

CONTRIBUTIONS for the next edition should be sent to the editor by the deadline date and all material intended as such should be marked 'For Publication'. Contributors are asked to be sure they include their name and address, legibly.

The opinions expressed in this publication, are those of the contributors, not necessarily those of the editor, or of Education Otherwise Limited as a whole.

Education Otherwise is a company limited by guarantee and is a Charitable Trust...Charity No. 292029.

Editorial

...editing has been a new experience for us, interesting, yet rather rushed as it does not quite seem to go hand in hand with several young children in our small house! I hope that you will enjoy the final product - the letters and articles from member's own experiences made compelling reading here; however, should any of you feel that they are being overrun by the book review section, it is purely because of lack of any other material. So apart from reading books are there any E.O.ers who have any other interests - it would be nice to hear from you - surely not everyone sits around reading all day? So to prove that we don't - here's a bit about us.

Firstly, there's seven of ^{us} dog (& wildlife in garden). Rupert spends nearly all of the time being an organic landscape gardener, self-employed, as many E.O.ers must know, means quite often all the hours of most days, until something like editing a newsletter comes along - when it's a must to be home for a while with the children - a lovely old play/grow/greenhouse has appeared in the garden while I have been typing.

Cassie (10½) is our eldest, being our primary reason, to pick up on, by chance, a T.V. programme about E.O. that ended her misery, by swift deregistration. That was over three years ago. We all took a year to unwind, Cassie to recover (from going into school at 5, literate & numerate, she came out two years later having been physically bullied constantly, no longer able to spell or read fluently at any level).

During that first year as E.O. members, Vin & Jo West, our co-ordinators, left to live in Wales; leaving us novices, with no telephone at that time, the only E.O.ers willing to take over from them. With no car either, Rupert was often to be seen cycling all over the county, with Storm, our eldest son aged 3, on the crossbar seat, delivering E.O. posters to libraries, and visiting the half a dozen or so members that Bedfordshire had then.

We pursued our many interests - taking on an extremely overgrown allotment with mature orchard mainly as a retreat, secondly to grow vegetables, enjoying arts, crafts such as spinning, sewing, knitting, basket-making, current affairs projects and organising local E.O. get togethers whenever we could. We found that formal 'Work times' just didn't fit in with us at all, all 'subjects' were completely catered for naturally in everything that we chose to do.

By the time we moved to Ampthill, a small country town, in April of last year, we had two more members in the family, Gaye having been born in April '85 and Cuthbert in September '86. Storm had just turned 5 with no interest in going to school, we were doing so much at home.

Our house is just a minute's walk away from Bedfordshire's largest remaining area of natural heathland (about 3 acres in all...) in which the local schools are situated. With renewed confidence, wishing to make new friends in a new community, Cassie decided that she would like to try the school. Knowing for herself that she could come out if things went wrong being an important factor. Storm decided, too, early this year that he would like to experience school for himself.

Much as Rupert and I have our own opinions, personally disliking the school system, we definitely feel it valid that the children have the option for themselves, to choose school or otherwise to suit their own educational progress, without fear or repression, as they did whilst at home. Thus making school akin to college, our children becoming students as opposed to pupils, bringing about a deeper trust and respect for each other, giving us a wider understanding of the meaning of education otherwise.

Teresa Baines,
59 The Crescent,
Ampthill,
Bedfordshire.

Officers and Co-ordinators

For the audited accounts to be an accurate statement of E.O.'s financial position they must indicate any expenses incurred by officers and co-ordinators for which they have not yet been re-imbursed up the end of E.O.'s financial year on June 30th.

Therefore I would be very grateful if all officers and co-ordinators could complete the form below and return it to me by the end of the first week in July.

It is also important to return the form even if your outstanding expenses to June 30th are nil.

Only in this way will the auditors be certain that all debts will have been counted. Thanks for your help. David Bettie.

----- CUT-----ALONG-----HERE-----

Statement of Expenses incurred before, but not settled by,
July 1st 1988 by:

Name;.....

Address:.....
.....

Office held within E.O.....

Date (approx) on which last claim for expenses was submitted:
.....

Expenses incurred since that date but before July 1st for:

Postage:.....

Printing/Photocopying, etc.:.....

Phone Calls:.....

Other (please specify):.....

TOTAL:.....

Signature:

Date:.....

When completed please return this form to:
David Bettie, 56 Goodwin Road, Ramsgate, KENT, CT11 0JJ.

~~~~~

Another bit from your Treasurer

It was agreed at the A.G.M. at Featherstone Castle last year not to increase the Membership Subscriptions from their current level for the year. Since then matters have aggravated somewhat with regards to finance.

I have been studying the books recently in terms of the funds we had available at Audit date June 30 '87. According to my calculations, and the latest information from the various Membership Secretaries who collect the non-Standing Order subscriptions, so far this year we have used approximately £2,000 of our reserves. These stood at around £8000 at the start of E.O.'s financial year.

The deficit probably does not sound particularly worrying, but if you count depreciation of assets, etc. on top you can see this cannot go on forever.

No-one has any intention whatsoever that co-ordinators and officers should not rightly claim their incurred expenses. However, in the light of current circumstances and pending any future measures to improve matters the Steering Committee would like to remind all officers and co-ordinators of the need for care, at all times, in expenditure.

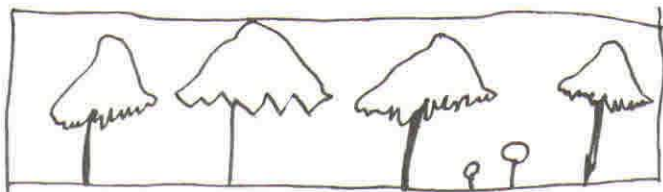
Such expensive items as telephone calls, unless absolutely essential, (such as business hours calls) can often be made during the Cheap rate or better still put in a letter. It's surprising how much you can still say for just 13p on paper, and aren't we always going on at our children to get them to write more?

Seriously, few things can really be that urgent they cannot wait a couple of days for the post. Sticky labels to allow the re-use of some envelopes are available from Joan Hoare.

Sorry to be the bringer of Doom and Gloom, but I'm sure you will agree it's better to have some warning of going off-course financially sooner rather than later.

David Bettie.

Inkcap fungi.



# EDUCATING ARCHIE BY SEG



Mrs G and Archie hitch a ride to the Annual Meeting



6/88

## EDUCATION THROUGH THE PRESS.

Edited by David Grant with help from all those who sent in cuttings.

The campaign for Educational Choice is trying to win parents and teachers the right to set up schools with state funding (Observer - 17.4.88.). The campaign is being led in the House of Lords by the originator of the Open University and the Open College of the Arts, Lord Young of Dartington. In Denmark, any group of parents with more than 27 children can start a school of their choice and have it paid for by the state. In Holland, 75% of schools are run by independent associations but funded by the state.

Meanwhile, parents in Scoraig, Wester Ross, have won the right to do just this. They have signed an agreement with Highland Regional Council's educational department and will get an £8,000 grant towards the cost of a teacher's salary. For nearly a year the nine pupils have been taught by a rota of parents. (Scotsman, 28.3.88.)

"Where Are the Parents to Wield Parent Power?" asks the Daily Telegraph (7.3.88.). A parent-originated questionnaire on aspects of the Government's Education Reform Bill elicited less than 22% response from parents of pupils at Hinchingsbrooke School, Huntingdon. In Scotland, the Government's proposals for "parent power" attracted only 1% support from those responding to the consultation exercise last autumn. (Glasgow Herald, 7.3.88.). 88% were completely opposed and the rest had reservations.

One is driven to wonder whether parents simply do not care, as in the first case above, or expect the teachers as professionals just to get on with the job, as in the second case.

A disturbing item from the Suffolk Free Press (24.3.88.) concerns the showing of violent videos to 11-13 year olds during an English class. One of the children involved was that of a member who has consequently withdrawn both their children from this school. Even as part of a creative writing class it is difficult to know how screening a PG - (Parental Guidance) category film - in this case "Rocky" - can possibly be necessary or justified.

A Daily Telegraph item on 3.3.88. was headlined "Britain to Lead in Satellite Education" and after I had realised we were not about to hold classes for aspiring sputniks, discovered that the U.K. is to get 1150 of the 3000 hours total time each year on a new educational satellite project. As the largest use is expected to be for educational film and videos, it seemed this might be of use to E.O.ers - till I saw the cost was to be £55 an hour after the first two free years.

Testing testing testing times are ahead with the G.C.S.E. so it was interesting to learn that the U.S.A. already goes in for testing in a big way. A teacher comments tellingly: "In the British system the teacher is coach....the enemy to be overcome is the 'A' level. In our system the end of year (teacher's) assessment is so important the teacher can be the enemy." Disquietingly, the article goes on "... the multiple choice test can be the enemy of real learning, the technique being how to spot the 'right' answer...." Another quote: "'I tell my students to look for stupid answers to stupid questions written by stupid people' one cynic said." (Guardian, 12.4.88.). Yet all this testing has not prevented 68% of U.S. 17 year olds being ignorant of the date of the American Civil War. The prestigious National Geographic Society is so alarmed it is promoting a major new commitment to geography education (National Geographic, January 1988).

Some brief items to end with: "IBA Calls Last Orders for Drinks Ads" especially the cartoon-type ones and others appealing to the young has to be good news (Observer 1.5.88.). The Guardian 26.4.88. reports equally cheerfully that there are improving alternatives to experiments on animals in teaching. The Observer's "Candidate Column" of 17.4.88. carries two advertisements from teachers looking for work

EDUCATION THROUGH THE PRESS contd.

outside schools - including an ex-headmaster "believing schools now in insult the young."

There is so much about education in the press just now the selection has to be rigorous and inevitably reflects both available cuttings and some degree of personal choice. Items from the Independent, TES, Glasgow Herald and others would be welcome, The Guardian Daily Telegraph, Observer and Sunday Times are well-represented meantime. Anyway, please send what you can to me c/o 15 St. Mary's Parade, Castle Hill, Lancaster, LA1 1YX.



NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

ESSEX

Summer dates:-

- June 15th - Chelmsford Museum at 11a.m.
- June 29th - Science at the Roberts Family 11a.m. - 3p.m.
- July 20th - Colchester by the elephants at 11a.m.
- Aug. 10th - to be arranged.

For more details, directions, etc. please call Sandie Cottee on 0268 733259.

\*\*\*\*\*

more overleaf.

## NEWS FROM THE REGIONS.

### BEDFORDSHIRE:

We now have a new Coordinator - Trixie Macaree-Dyson, 8 Oatfield Close, Leseay Farm, Luton. (No 'phone number at present).

### NORTH LONDON PARENTS & CHILDREN'S GROUP.

The next meetings of the group will be as follows:

- |                              |                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sunday June 5th 11.30a.m. -  | Swiss Cottage Community Centre,<br>19 Winchester Road, NW3.                                                                 |
| Sunday June 19th 2p.m.       | Burghley Road Childrens Centre,<br>23 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Burghley Road, N.8.<br>(Near Turnpike Lane tube station). |
| Sunday July 17th 2p.m.       | Burghley Road Childrens Centre.                                                                                             |
| Sunday August 7th 11.30a.m.  | Swiss Cottage Community Centre.                                                                                             |
| Sunday October 2nd 11.30a.m. | Swiss Cottage Community Centre.                                                                                             |

All parents and children of ALL AGES are welcome to the meetings. There will be a small charge of 45p per family for the meetings at Swiss Cottage to cover the hire of the hall. Could people also bring food and drink for everyone to share. If anyone has any enquiries about the meetings could they please contact me - Jeffrey Benge, 17 Nelson Mandela Close, Coppetts Road, Muswell Hill, London N10 1LA (Tel. 01 883 7906)

### SOUTH LONDON

Stained Glass Workshop - Once again our South London E.O. group has had a marvelous and productive Stained Glass Workshop given by June Standing, an Arts and Crafts teacher specializing in stained glass.

June has such enthusiasm and skill that everyone, even rather young children get alot out of it.

Do contact her on 01 435 8029 and arrange a workshop in your area. (June is willing to travel) you won't regret it! Maria Parnell, Warlingham.

Education Otherwise members in South London are meeting regularly, please contact me for details: Rachel Sanger, 32 Doddington Grove, London SE7 3PT. phone 01 582 3949. All EO members with children of any age are welcome.

### SUSSEX

Despite rain being forecast, the meeting in Ditching was the hottest day of the year to date. We lunched lazily on the delightful village green and chatted happily. The children amused themselves exploring the surrounding area and inventing interesting games. Everyone enjoyed themselves so much we left visiting the museum for another time!

The monthly meeting at Drusillas, Alfriston, (1st Monday each month) offers alot to occupy the children and a chance to socialise with other E.O.ers.

Access to the playground, train ride, butterfly house, shops etc. can avoid entrance to the zoo and save money for those who wish. Do ring if you want more details or to rendez-vous we'd love to meet you there.

As the new joint co-ordinator I have offered to do a local newsletter if any of you are interested - views, news, meetings etc. Do write or ring if you'd be interested to receive it or contribute ideas.

This is my second year involved in home education and for our family we were pleased E.O. was available to help give us the courage to opt out of school. Our 12 year old daughter benefitted from a year out and is happy with her choice to return to the system. Our 9 & 3 year old sons are enjoying education at home. I am keen to promote good communication and support at a local level because it can be a lonely business and feel we can benefit so much from each others experience and encouragement. I do hope to hear from you.

Erica Richardson, Highlands Farm Cottage, Arlington Road West, Hailsham, East Sussex. BN3RD. - Hailsham 846409. (Joint Co-ordinator East Sussex).

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS contd.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE

At our last meeting at Terri and Alan Shoosmith's house we agreed to try and stick to monthly meetings every second Saturday of the month at 2o'clock.  
In June this will be on the 11th at the house of Steve Baker and Pip Smith. Their address is 153 Albert Road, Heeley, Sheffield (it's off Chester Road). Tel 552763.  
For future meetings, please ring me to find out the venue.  
Dineke de Jong, 91 Osborne Road, Sheffield. Tel. 553836.

GLOUCESTERshire

- Sorry Your entry hasn't arrived yet - ed.

\*\*\*\*\*



with loving congratulations to Anne, Stuart, Patrick and Christopher on the birth of their baby.  
All our love from Tyneside, Northumberland and Durham E.O.

\*\*\*\*\*

A new alternative school is opening up in BLACKPOOL. People from Lancashire who are interested in taking their children for a morning/afternoon and helping out in return are asked to phone Carol Yarwood on Blackpool (0253) 68947 for details.

..... Since there now seems to be a dribble of interest in a single parents' E.O. group I'm willing to circulate a contact list if 10 or more people write asking to be included on it. Please send names and addresses to: Julie Webb, 28 Church Way, Haddenham, Bucks. HP17 8AA. or ring (0844) 290773.

UNSTONE GRANGE

Would anyone like to attend a workshop to discuss 'The Magical Child' by Joseph Chilton Pearce. It is now out of print but probably available through your library. I will try to write some notes on the book for people to read but there are many complex ideas in the book and so it would be a good idea for people to read it before coming. Sue Petschaft.

Dear E.O.,

We are new members of E.O. - fumbling our way along. We are a bi-lingual family and hoping to rear our next junior entirely bi-lingually (English/German). We would be grateful to hear from any members who have done this as part of home education, or anyone who can tell us of books, pamphlets, articles on the subject. Judy and Les Stockdale, Penrhiwolau Farm, Cenarth, Newcastle Emlyn, Dyfed SA38 9LE.

Dear E.O.,

We are an English family living in a pretty village in the foothills of the Beaujolais region, near Lyon. Tasmin, Jo-Lind & Theo did go to school (to an école nouvelle (a system where the school's programme is followed approximately, with more consideration for and of the children) but the constraints of even this type of school made us all choose home education. Luckily we have one other family living nearby with whom we can exchange and socialise during the week. Unfortunately it is only one family, and I would like us to be more numerous, to exchange not only ideas but also aptitudes. I find it important not to be totally isolated in a way of living, and I do find that moral support helps!

We are trying to get together to create a French "E.O." on "Growing without Schooling", but there are so few children out of school and, France being a bigger country, they are more dispersed, and also, if they get to allowing the children not to go to school, they are not always the best of pragmatists! which certainly makes creating an association a big task. I feel it is so important to respect how other people live, think and feel.

One thing all the family would like to do is to welcome E.O. families who wish to come to France into our home; perhaps even organise exchanges for our children, either with families in Britain or further afield. The children love receiving postcards & will answer all letters. So anyone wishing for a pied-a-terre in France please drop us a line and note You're welcome here! Meantime, I'd like to thank all the organisers and also everyone who writes in, for the continuing encouragement and support I get from the E.O. Newsletter.  
Andrew & Andree Roberts, La Radissonne, MORANCE, 69480 ANSE, FRANCE. Tel. 7 843 08 57.

Dear Editor,

I would like to add to the encouraging contributions on music making as I agree that all children should be offered music at the earliest age. Just as we show them pictures & give them the where withall to make their own; not waiting for them to ask for paper, nor expecting them to show artistic ability before offering paints. Time is at the disposal of many E.O. families, time in which to experiment & to practice without pressure, time to go to lunch time concerts - not too expensive nor too long, nor too late - or to seek out buskers and other street musicians, time in which to be flexible & able to take advantage of any musical opportunity that comes along. Money may well be in shorter supply, but, as most children manage to have bikes, surely they could equally have an instrument, as the costs of second hand sales are similar.

I have experience of learning with strings. These instruments are well suited to shared lessons & learning in small groups. The advantages of this are fun, friendship, shared cost & less pressure on each individual. Tiny violins from 1/16 (of full size) are obtainable for 2-3 year olds. Although it is more usual to start with  $\frac{1}{8}$  or  $\frac{1}{4}$  sizes. These are generally available as they are outgrown. Music teachers will advise on their purchase & can often obtain them too.

I took up the violin (abandoned by my 17 year old in favour of the guitar) & have been learning too, lessons shared with 2 other parents. My skill is rudimentary, but the insight I've gained has transformed the "efforts" of my 6&9 year olds into something much more satisfying. In my experience children find no difficulty in reading & writing the notes they can play. George at 4, easily & naturally learned to read & write his simple music, long before he was ready to read words - in fact he learned his first letters from his music. I learned to read music in the same

way, with the instrument, at the age of 48! With difficulty but with what a sense of achievement. I still can't play by ear or compose, all children can & do, if they are not prevented.

We have been fortunate in learning with some very imaginative teachers who have, by grouping together, created an unusual musical experience on Saturday mornings. As well as lessons there are 3 orchestras - beginners, junior & senior - children and adults play together in each, according to their standard. The organisation is flexible, one can move from one orchestra to another - perhaps playing third violin in one & first in another. The standard is high, the atmosphere very balanced and new people are continuing to join. So for my out of school children it is a valuable social experience & a source of new friendships. Some people are learning from scratch, others are taking up an instrument they put down in their teens. Whole families are involved & it is a special pleasure for adults & children to play and learn side by side. We are also experiencing the co-operation and discipline required by participating in an orchestra.

We give concerts for families & friends, play in local churches at Christmas, enter Music festivals & our latest event was a Red Nose concert for Comic Relief. Everyone can experience the pleasure of listening to music, I only wish that everyone could also know the joy of making their own.

Jane Woolfe, 13 Western Drive, Liverpool. L19 0LX. Tel. 051 427 3212.

Dear Ed,

In his letter about education vouchers T. Murphy also makes use of a loaded question. The question facing everyone, not just those who have children of "school" age, is not "would you like a cheque for what the State would spend on your Child's education, to spend on his education however you please?" It is "Should every child have a roughly equal education, or should the quality of his education be determined by his parents' ability to pay?"

There are many, including the present government, who would chose the second alternative. I disagree with them, but I doubt if I could present an argument with which they would be forced to agree.

Where I will argue, however, is with their representing schemes such as education vouchers and opting out as some form of freedom. What such "reforms" are about is oppression. They are trying to create a situation where they can use their accumulated wealth and power in order to disadvantage any children of poorer parents who may want a share.

This has got nothing to do with the aims and objectives of EO.

I would like to add that T Murphy is being very naive in thinking that there is any chance of home education benefitting from vouchers. Anyone who has ever tried to get a grant for a DIY home improvement will know the score: there are so many restrictions and requirements that it ends up being cheaper to do without. One thing we can be sure of: "full-time" education will mean full time, and no messing. Is £1500 a year really enough reward for turning one's home into the very sort of institution we wanted to take our children out of?

Dick Salisbury.

Berthlwyd, Tynyngogl, Gwynedd.

PEN PALS...be in touch....PEN PALS...get together....PENPALS...nice to hear from

Dear E.O. pen pal page,

My name is Angela Robertson, my interests are reading, writing, baking and rollerbooting. I am 9 years old. I would like a pen pal that is going to reply and who is about my age. I have one cat and one terrapin. I have just started getting home education. Please write to me at: 22 Nethergate, Crail, Anstruther, Fife, or telephone: Crail 50368. From Angela.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.O.,

I would like a Pen-Pal. I am 11 years old, and I play Electric and Acoustic Guitar. I also play Mandolin.

I ride racing bikes and I go to judo. My name is Nicholas svarc Ive always been educated at home. 43 Meadow Lane, North Hykeham, Lincoln. LN6 9XQ.  
Tel: (0522) 682201.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.O.,

My name is DANIEL and I'm 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

I'm interested in animals and birds, & I have a goldfish.

I have never been to school. I live in the countryside and I like drawing.

DANIEL B. WHITMORE, BRAMBLE COTTAGE, ELDERSFIELD MARSH, GLOUCESTER. GL19 4PQ.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.Oers,

My name is Vivienne Renee Bonham-Noyle (Vivi for short), and I am 10 years old. I have started learning Esperanto, and I would like a pen-friend who is al also learning Esperanto. I will reply to all letters I receive. Please write to me at 75 Ynys-las, Cefncaeau, Llanelli, Dyfed, SA14 9BU.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.O.,

We have just become members of E.O.

My name is Jessica Wells and I would like a penpal and my interests are reading, animals, music, cooking and playing with my big brothers computer and I will write back to any letters I receive.

from Jessica Wells.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E. O.,

I love getting your newsletter, it helps me keep in touch with "home".

I would love to be put on your pen pal list, or am I too old at 39?

Although we live in the State Capital we are in a rural area, so I love to get letters, especially from home.

We have tried to adapt to make friends here, but most people are just too busy.

We have made a few friends within the homeschooling movement in Sacramento and they have really helped alot with the cultural shock, but would love to correspond with homeschoolers from England, they may talk the same language.

There are good and bad points about living here and the main one is that we live on a smallholding, we grow lots of vegetables. We are  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the road and very private, yet we have very good facilities within 10 - 12 miles, such as Ballet, Symphony, free Library Programmes, and a lot of childrens concerts, plays, etc. So in many ways it couldn't be better, but the people generally are not as friendly in a deep way, everything is so fast here that a lot of things are superficial, and in that respect I miss home deeply.

We used to live in Bicester, Oxfordshire, and I was born and lived for the first 20 years of my life in Portsmouth, Hampshire, where my mother still lives.

PEN PALS contd...

My interests are:- learning violin, hand knitting, reading, library technology degree.

My husband, Roy's interests:- fishing, organic gardening, reading, education. I look forward to hearing from anyone interested in corresponding.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Taniguchi, 9391 Florin Road, SACRAMENTO, CA 95829, USA; (916) 381-2167.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.O.,

I would like a pen-pal. My name is Emma Macflale. I'm 14 years old.

I enjoy swimming, cycling, studying dinosaurs, writing stories and looking after the many pets we have.

I have one sister who is 11. We have never been to school, and love home education.

Please write to me at... 32 Grove Street, LEAMINGTON SPA, Warks. CV32 5AJ.

\*\*\*\*\*

Gloria Harrison a Portuguese home educating parent of 4 daughters is interested in making contact with E.O.ers in this country. Her interests are:- homeschooling, health & nutrition, Montessori, child development, religion, history, needlepoint, reading, cats, archeology. Would also be interested in mutual visits. Please write to: Gloria Harrison, c/o Mrs. A. Potier, Praga Dr. Sá Carneiro 4-2E7-1, Cascais 2750, PORTUGAL.

\*\*\*\*\*

DON'T FORGET THE WILLOWS!

Through a series of unfortunate errors our names have been omitted from the new Contact List. Here are our details - we love to meet other E.O. families, living as we do in a fairly isolated (in terms of EO families) part of Essex. David & Vicki Willow, 37 Merton Place, Littlebury, Saffron Waldon, Essex CB111 4TE. Note our new 'phone number - 0799 22114.

During the summer months we travel around fairs and festivals with an E.O. stall. Watch out for us in your area!

Our children are Jack age 9, Grace age 6 and Alice, nearly 3.

\*\*\*\*\*

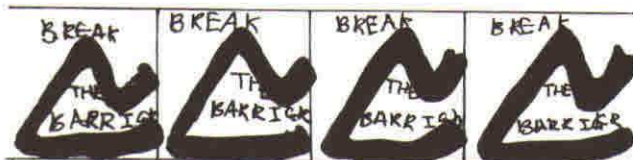
Would anyone interested in Dungeons and Dragons please contact Jimmy Millman, 155 Castle Way, Dale, Haverford West. SA62 3SN.

\*\*\*\*\*

Due to another mistake some where along the line Genevieve Bridgeman's name has also been omitted from the new Contact List. Please note her details as follows: London - North and Enfield

BRIDGEMAN Genevieve; \*\*HELEN\*\* 12/74;  
25 Rathsoole Avenue, N8 9LY. 01 341 0751

Q T S H



IN MY OWN EXPERIENCE.....

Dear EO,

There have been quite a few letters recently asking for accounts of people's actual experiences of teaching their kids. When our kids were born, we had no thought that one day they would be home-educated. We have now been homeschooiers for 9 months, so here are our thoughts and feelings so far.

It's very easy to look through the newsletter and read about other people's ideals and form, perhaps, the view that everyone else is endlessly patient, inventive understanding, respectful and knowledgeable about their children and their needs. When the South Yorkshire EO group began to meet about 6 months ago it was easy, to an extent, to get that impression about each other; naturally, we all wanted to give a good impression! As time's gone on we've got to know a group of people who care deeply about their kids and respect them as individuals. But we're all human too; we all talk of yelling at our children, feeling frustration with them and ourselves, and falling short of our ideals.

We took our sons Jonathan and Graham, aged 8 and 6 out of school last July, after a fruitless 2 year struggle, first to get Jo to conform to the school, then to get the school to compromise with Jo. Neither side would budge, and in the end our intelligent, resourceful, co-operative son spent all his school life staring out of the window. Eventually our indignation got the better of our cowardice, as it became obvious that if we couldn't do better, we could hardly do worse.

As the parent doing the teaching, I was tremendously conscious of having to compete with the school. They described Jo as being unco-operative, and almost unteachable. I knew that they were wrong, but I felt that the onus was on me to prove it, partly to prove to Jo that his failure at school was not his fault, but partly to show "them" that they were wrong and I was right, and I told you so, so there! I also wanted as much evidence as possible to prove our case to Barnsley LEA, who despite knowing that we were right legally, we were convinced we were one step away from the Spanish Inquisition.

I had absolutely no idea how to teach. I had no training or qualifications. I didn't know where to start or what the boys were capable of, so I began with the 3Rs. Both children read well, and for pleasure, so I didn't bother with reading schemes. I did buy a maths scheme, the Scottish Primary Maths course, a and several reading and writing workbooks from Smiths. Some were too hard, some too easy and some plain boring. They both like the parent theory, been trained to sit and study, I had (and still do) a degree of consumer resistance. Some days it was just hopeless, others they worked really hard. I varied it with radio programmes, stories, games, pretend shops, libraries art projects and so on. Jo prefers to work standing on one leg, the other draped over the back of a chair, humming a tune. Was this considered bad behaviour in class? Graham kneels or sprawls on the table and talks non-stop. School-time lasted for 1 - 4 hours, 3 or 4 days a week. (This is the sitting down and doing lessons time as opposed to "Learning" time, which is anywhere, anyhow and anytime. On a train- "Why do sheep have blue patches on their backs?" "Well the ram makes marks on them when he mates with them so that the farmer knows when the lambs will be due." "But how does the ram make the marks?")

By Christmas we were feeling very pleased. Both children had acquired a reasonable pile of work (written), we had one brief, hassle-free session with the EWOs, and we were all settling down and gaining confidence. One of my worries, the constant pressure of having the children around, proving largely groundless; the loss of my freedom during their school hours was balanced by a great deal of pleasure in their company. It was soon obvious that I'd missed a lot while they were at school. We learned a lot about each other in those first months, and it was an exhausting, exciting time. I was so buoyed up with success that I fell into the same trap as the school, that of judging their learning by only one criteria, that of visible progress. School-time until then had been a loose, flexible structure, even - dare I say it - a timetable. Work promptly became a chore, and boring, and was resisted, and by the half-term I was getting very frustrated. One day it blew up into a row where I threatened them both with school.. We all lost trust in each other and school dissolved into tears. Obviously, I had taken a wrong turning.

IN MY OWN EXPERIENCE contd.

Next day I apologised, we talked it over, and decided we needed to have more discussion and less grindstone. That week we baked, played shops, scrabble and trivial pursuit, made a world map project, and got on with the gardening. Once we were equals again and the pressure was off their enthusiasm came back. They began to think of projects to do themselves; we made a model farm, a dinosaurs graph, and a book on the life in our garden pond. We still get the workbooks out but less often and with less hassle. I try to remember that Jo doesn't have to finish his year's maths course this year as long as he understands what he's doing. That Graham doesn't have to like the same books Jo did. If I talk to them it's obvious that their understanding is growing all the time, even if it's not written down. If I trust them, the ideas so come; they learn best when we share their learning together and they are free to explore at will.

All this is idealism again; some days it's great, some days it's a mental and physical drain. I hover between discipline and freedom, trying to compromise. Mercifully, they seem quite happy to accept the imperfections of their copupil. We all try to listen to each other's point of view, and accept that ideas may have to be changed and changed again. Despite my glaring errors, we are closer and happier than we were. Being is not for any parent who likes to be on a pedestal!

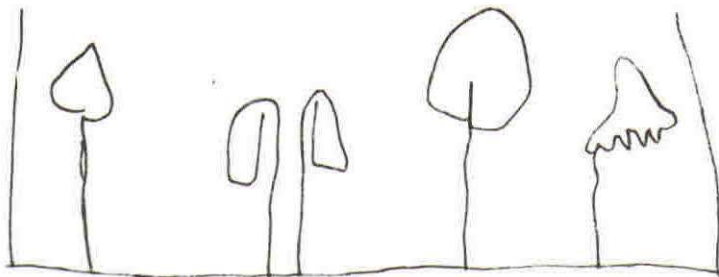
Terri Shoosmith, Lower Stainborough Fold Cottage, Hood Green, Barnsley.

\* \* \* \* \*

## TINTIN QUIZ

- 1 Where does Captain Haddock live?
- 2 Where does Tintin find the Castiafore Emerald?
- 3 What is Professor Calculus's first name?
- 4 What does Captain Haddock shout when he's angry?
- 5 In "Explorers on the Moon" how many people are in the rocket?
- 6 After it has been stolen where does Tintin find King Ottokar's Sceptre?
- 7 Do you know the name of the two bungling C.I.D. officers?
- 8 Who does Captain Haddock refer to as "the dear old milanese nightingale"?
- 9 In which story does Tintin search for his injured friend Chang?
- 10 What is the name of Captain Haddock's butler?
- 11 Complete the story title "The Crab \_\_\_\_\_".
- 12 Where is the Blue Lotus Club?

[Answers on Page 28 →]



# ELECTRONICS CORNER...

FILE + COLLECT

NUMBER 2<sup>a</sup> IN A SERIES

## YOUR FIRST TRANSISTOR CIRCUIT...

**ABOUT THE TRANSISTOR ...**

PICTURE → **BC 108**

SYMBOL → **BASE (B)**, **COLLECTOR (C)**, **EMITTER (E)**

WHICH LEG IS WHICH TAG → **VIEWED FROM BELOW**

INVENTED 1947

THE TRANSISTOR IS USUALLY USED AS A KIND OF ELECTRONIC SWITCH, TO TURN A FLOW OF CURRENT ON OR OFF.

A SMALL CURRENT IN AT 'B' CAUSES A MUCH LARGER CURRENT TO FLOW 'C' TO 'E', — STOP THE CURRENT AT 'B' AND THE MAIN FLOW WILL ALSO STOP.

## WHAT YOU NEED...

- (a) WOOD BOARD AS DESCRIBED IN NUMBER 1 (SEE LAST NEWSLETTER)
- (b) RESISTORS (AT LEAST 1/3 WATT)
  - 220 Ω — x 1
  - 10 KΩ — x 1

NOTE: Ω MEANS OHM (i.e. THE UNIT OF RESISTANCE) KΩ = 1000 OHMS

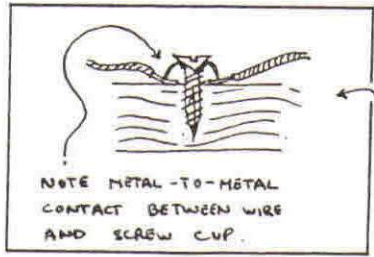
CLOUR CODE → RED RED BROWN (for 220 Ω), BROWN-BLACK-ORANGE (for 10 KΩ)
- (c) 100 mm LENGTH OF WIRE (REMOVE INSULATION FROM BOTH ENDS) — x 1
- (d) [ 4 SIZE 'AA' BATTERIES (1.2 - 1.5 V EACH) BATTERY HOLDER CONNECTOR CLIP WITH LEADS ] — GIVES 4.8 - 6 VOLTS
- (e) TRANSISTOR (TYPE BC 108) — x 1
- (f) LIGHT EMITTING DIODE (L.E.D.) (SEE NEXT PAGE) — x 1

EXTEND THE LEGS OF THESE COMPONENTS BY SOLDERING 100 mm LENGTHS OF INSULATED WIRE TO THEM (5 LEGS IN TOTAL).

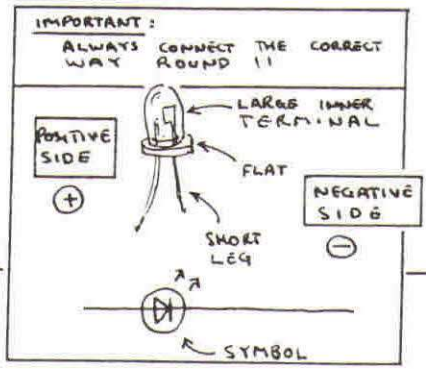
EVERYTHING (EXCEPT BATTERIES) IN (b) TO (f) CAN BE OBTAINED FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMPSON, BY SENDING HIM A CHEQUE FOR £1.25p.

ADDRESS... N° 6, PARKDALE ROAD, PLUMSTEAD LONDON SE18 1RS

# CONNECTIONS ...



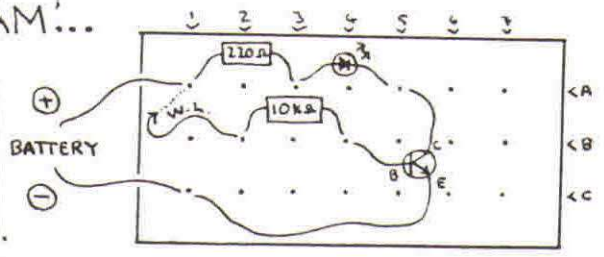
ATTACH THE WIRES / COMPONENT LEGS IN THIS WAY.



## THE 'L.E.D.'...

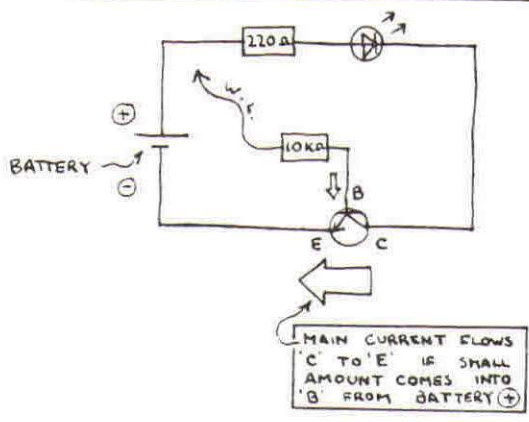
PUT ALL THE BITS TOGETHER AS SHOWN ON THIS 'LAYOUT DIAGRAM'...

USE THE WANDER LEAD (W.L.) TO PICK UP A SMALL AMOUNT OF CURRENT FROM 'A1' TO TURN THE TRANSISTOR, AND THUS THE L.E.D. ON. REMOVE W.L. FROM A1 AND THE TRANSISTOR + LED. GO OFF.



NOTE... DO CONNECT BATTERY, L.E.D., AND TRANSISTOR THE CORRECT WAY AROUND.  
DONT SCREW W.L. TO A1, - IT SHOULD BE FREE TO 'WANDER'.

FOLLOW WHAT HAPPENS ON THE 'CIRCUIT DIAGRAM'...



NEXT TIME ...  
HOW TO MAKE YOUR L.E.D. FLASH !!

E.O. AND CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (No.4 June 1988)

I ended my last special needs supplement with a promise -that I would publish booklists 'next time'. I'm afraid I must begin this one with an apology - for not having done so. I'd hoped to update, expand and improve my lists but it has been impossible to find time.

However, the old version is still available for the cost of a S.A.E. and an extra stamp, and I will do my best to update it in the ensuing months....

Grateful thanks to those people who have given details of the books, equipment, resources and methods which they have found most useful. Because there is such a diverse range of abilities, ages and handicaps involved, it would be very helpful if many more people could let me have this information, so that between us we can provide the best possible help, advice and support for new and intending E.Oers of 'special' children.

Many parents are desperate for legal and practical advice of all kinds, so that they can give their children an alternative to the system which has harmed them. But most are also in need of contact with other families who have similar handicaps and/or problems.

I intend, therefore, to compile a contact list from my notes and correspondence. If you prefer not to be listed, or DO want to be listed but know I am unaware of your circumstances, or if you want to comment on the idea, please let me know.

There is also an organisation called 'In Touch Trust' which publishes a newsletter devoted to contact and the exchange of information in respect of all types of handicaps, disorders and syndromes

For membership details contact:

ANN WORTHINGTON MBE, 10 Norman Rd., Sale, Cheshire M33 3DF.

Tel: 061 962 4441

Can you help either of the two families mentioned below? If so please phone or write to me and I'll pass it on.

An Essex family want contact with anyone who has a child who suffers from autism and cerebral palsy.

The young son of a Warwickshire family has Noonan's syndrome - a rare genetic disorder which involves physical and mental problems. Has anyone any information for them? Among the many unhelpful and distressing pieces of 'advice' they have been given is this shocker:

Unlike his older brother, this one "MUST go to school because he will never adjust socially, must be pushed to independence, and needs to get used to ridicule!"

So THAT'S what school is for!

My LEA's educational psychologist gave me a very different

reason:

ED PSYCH: "I see that we can't offer him much in what you might call the academic sense, but school would be useful..."

ME: "Oh no! Not social contact again...."

ED PSYCH: "No..no.. But I thought..They get pushed around such a lot at school, I thought it was a good way to learn that life is unfair!"

\*\*\*\*\*

### Educating Anthony

We decided on home education for our son Anthony after viewing two Special Schools that had been suggested by an Educational Psychologist who had labelled Anthony as having moderate learning difficulties.

I contacted EO and spoke to Hazel Clawley of our dilemma. She put me in touch with Sylvia Jeffs, 'Special Needs Co-ordinator' (Heaven sent!) I was in terrible emotional turmoil, knowing that I had every intention of educating Anthony at home, but feeling very uncertain of my legal rights. Sylvia quoted the law to me - S.36 of the 1944 Education Act and the relevant parts of the 1981 Education Act - and sent me various pieces of information including the A.C.E. Special Education handbook. This settled my mind. We continued to gather information on our right to educate at home, to be prepared - and have our ammunition ready if needed.

We wrote the standard letter.....

"We write to inform you that after careful consideration we have decided to take responsibility for the education of our son Anthony, aged eight years, in accordance with our duty under S 36 of the 1944 Education Act, otherwise than through attendance at school...etc...etc...."

We settled down to teaching him, but still felt anxious about the reaction we would receive from the L.E.A.

As the weeks passed and we heard nothing, the postman stopped being such an awesome figure in our lives. Believing that no news is good news, we began to relax more, and the formal teaching diminished slowly. Anthony, Tony, Gemma and I began to unwind and get back into our normal family situation.

Already we could see changes in Anthony's behaviour. He loved being at home. He still avoided book work as much as he could - so we stopped using books until he felt ready or felt a need for them. We made up our own stories about actual experiences - it was much more fun! We learned to change course when he feels under pressure. Anthony became the decision maker regarding his work, and we began to do lots of project work which arose from his own interests, and to supply him with as many opportunities as possible for him to feel real involvement in whatever he did.

On returning from a visit to the Art Gallery one Friday afternoon, we opened the door to find a scrappy bit of paper bearing a message from the EWO - she had called and would return at precisely 3 o'clock the following Friday... At 3o'clock precisely the following Friday she arrived! Our eyes met... and I knew instantly we were going into battle! I had been armed with a copy of their internal 'Notes for Guidance'. So I had prepared myself for her questions.

She promptly asked me the reason for my 'request' to home educate, and before I had finished speaking she was also answering the question for me.....

Battle had commenced....!

She insisted that:

1. Anthony should have lessons lasting for at least 40 minutes 'as they do in school'.
2. There was to be no running to the shops in the middle of the day to get something for dinner.
3. On NO account should Anthony's lessons be disturbed by the unexpected return home of his father or sister.
4. NO social calls from family or friends during the hours between 9am - 3pm.
5. He should have a 15 minute break morning and afternoon and an hour's break for lunch.
6. He must have a room for study away from the influences of home life. On no account could that room be the kitchen, and certainly no work must be attempted at the kitchen table.

She asked to see the room that Anthony would be using for his studies. Anthony has his desk, books, computer and all his learning equipment stored in his bedroom. But we very rarely work in there. Most work is carried out at the kitchen table. The kitchen is the hub of our home. Most things begin and end here, most of our decisions are made here and most of our ideas are born here. So I led the EWO into my kitchen and showed her my dreaded *kitchen table* which at the time was covered with works of art which Anthony and his friend Lisa had produced while she took my attention. She was not pleased!

She scribbled notes about my kitchen table... and about the amount of light entering the kitchen! We made our way back to the sitting room followed by two curious eight year olds. I was asked if I understood the responsibility to ensure that my child was being educated properly. I said I fully understood - that I was doing a grand job of educating my son and would continue to do so. I was then asked to submit a detailed curriculum, and a timetable of activities - on a daily, weekly, monthly and long term basis. I agreed to the curriculum but told her we had no need for a timetable as we worked alone and had no restrictions or time limits to concern ourselves with. She insisted - I must supply one!

I was then asked what qualifications I possessed for me to teach... Well... I had three 'O' levels and I had taught Anthony before he started school. Not suitable she said. I told her that I am his mother; I know his capabilities; I know when to start doing things with him, and I know when to stop. I know what he enjoys and what he fears. I know his dreams, his hopes and his wishes. No reply! She got up to go informing me that she'd be back in two weeks to collect the curriculum...and timetable.

Thank goodness she'd gone! I was in pieces again. She was so intimidating. I hoped she had not seen through the front I was putting up...

I could hardly breathe through my anxiety. Straight to 'the telephone to Sylvia for moral support. I blurted out the whole dreadful experience, and felt a lot better having someone who was on my side to tell it to. Sylvia reassured me... EWOs were nothing to worry about and this woman had had no right to speak as she did.

I prepared a programme of work stating various reading materials and maths books that we had been using. Also other activities and ideas for the future. I included a letter telling the Inspector I would not be submitting a timetable, as for our situation it was totally unnecessary.

The EWO called at her stated time two weeks later and was presented with an envelope, sealed and addressed to "The Inspector of Education", which my husband (politely) asked her to pass on for him.

Having cleared our first hurdle we settled down once more, awaiting a visit from an Inspector. A few weeks later a letter arrived saying one would call the following week, and again the feeling of dread entered my mind and body. But this time it seemed easier to shrug it off and get on with educating Anthony.

Instead of an Inspector, an Educational Psychologist arrived: a lady we had met briefly a few years earlier. She was really nice, and listened to our reasons for wanting home education for Anthony. She looked through some of his work, listened to our ideas for current and future projects and made suggestions about reading matter from her experiences with her own children. We drank coffee and chatted together like old friends. Anthony even read to her willingly - a rare privilege!

She thought we were achieving quite a lot... and in view of the comments on the last Review, could see what good progress he had made. We were promised a favourable report.

We soon received a copy of the report and were really pleased with it. The last paragraph reads:

"I feel Anthony's education at home has been a very positive experience. He has gained not only basic educational skills, but also confidence in learning and in social situations. His parents still feel very strongly that placement in a special school is not correct for Anthony. They are currently providing an education which contains many elements of good practice in teaching appropriate for a child experiencing learning difficulties."

Anthony has been out of school now for six months. All of our self-doubts (whether we can provide a sound education for him) are disappearing as we see the vast improvements in him. He is a much happier person, as are all the members of our family.

Thanks EO for being there when we needed you. Special thanks to my dear friend Sylvia Jeffs for all the support and help she has given to Anthony and myself.

CAROL MILLS  
Sheldon  
Birmingham.

(Editor's Note: Carol was quite worried that I'd be too embarrassed to publish the bits about me... But if I don't, who will?)

Sue Brown has also written of the relief and new-found happiness after removing her son from school. She said "I sat down intending to write an amusing in-depth article about Jamie and this came out":

I have watched you struggle endlessly,  
I have seen you fight for breath.  
I have known you suffer needlessly  
In your efforts to conform.  
I have cried with you and for you  
In your struggle to be the 'norm'.

Now I have released you  
From the effort and the strife.  
Now I see you flourish  
As you follow this new life.  
Now I watch you laugh and learn-  
Each day is not a fight.  
Now I know this must be right.

SUE BROWN  
Harborne  
Birmingham.

\*\*+++++

The author of the last contribution is connected with 'The Potential Trust'. This aims to help children whose special needs "arise from a high degree of unfulfilled potential in one or more areas- intellectual, practical, aesthetic, creative, social personal...-by complementing the provision already made for such children by parents and schools, in co-operation with other individuals and organisations working in the same field."

For details contact NICK ROSSITER-STEAD, The Potential Trust, Shepherd's Close, Kingston Stort, Nr. Chinnor, Oxon OX9 4NL.

Some thoughts on the lack of self-confidence often found in bright children

A great many young people who are extremely bright exhibit a surprising lack of self-confidence and this often leads to them becoming very withdrawn, easily dominated and, in a worrying number of cases, suicidal. Sometimes they receive sufficient help while still relatively young, to enable them to "grow out of it" as they approach adulthood. This help is usually just one person who takes a liking to the child and is genuinely interested in them as a person, not as a "very intelligent child who could do well if he/she really worked at it". For this reason, the person is most likely to be somebody who is outside of their immediate family and who does not teach them academically. They could be an uncle, friend of the family, the physics teacher who also runs the school choir, the teacher who organises trips to the local theatre or the coach at the local tennis club...

For a lot of children, one rewarding relationship with an interesting and interested adult is often enough to help them help themselves. There doesn't have to be a great number of hours spent together; often the knowledge that someone values

them as a person is sufficient to give the bright child some much-needed security. A good self-image, coupled with the desire to relate to and trust other people is what the child ultimately needs to bring them through, but without a starting point in the form of one good relationship, there is no external force to break the vicious circle of either:

...no friends...no social contact...no confidence...no friends..

or:

...no confidence...can't work properly...no achievement...

...criticism...no confidence...

Not everybody gets such an opportunity or, more likely, is able to take advantage of it. This could be because they do not recognise it as such, or because any trust they ever had in the rest of the human race has been completely destroyed by a series of bad experiences. You can only be let down so many times before you give up and stop trying. Why risk further emotional pain by trusting someone else? Children who carry this kind of problem into adulthood usually lead particularly unfulfilled lives. Those who survive sufficiently unscathed to use their talents well in their careers, often escape into their work, which consciously or unconsciously creates for them a situation which allows them to "opt out". When you are always working, you are far too busy to have anything like a healthy degree of social contact with your fellow man. Another offshoot of this situation is that you can use your work as a way of defending your actions. It becomes all too easy to adopt the attitude that: "I may not be able to bring myself to mix with people more than necessary, but at least I've got my work and nobody can touch me in that respect".

Not everybody, however, manages to achieve anything at all, because their personal problems have taken too great a toll on their general state of mind. As adults, they are often dependent on drink or drugs for the "stimulation" they should be getting from a constructive use of their talent. Frequently they resort to the dole or to doing menial work, because it is "easier" than showing the world who you really are. A lack of self-belief goes a long way to explaining why so many bright children opt out. They have been put under so much pressure in the past to achieve, they develop a fear of failure. You can't really fail in a job that anyone can do, can you? the real failure is the lack of motivation which develops from a low self-image.

So what causes this lack of self-confidence? I can only refer to my experiences and to those of people I have known, and the consensus of opinion within this group is that the problem can usually be traced back to early relationships with adults with whom the child had a lot of contact. Inevitably this is most likely to include both teachers and parents.

Some teachers take an instant dislike to the lively, enthusiastic bright youngster - a typical child of high potential. They see the child as a threat rather than as a challenge. We all experience personality clashes with a teacher at some time during the course of our school careers, but when a child who is particularly bright comes across this, the whole problem is compounded by a deep sense of frustration. It is quite common for a teacher to "ban" such a child from answering any further questions because they are being a "know-all", "a nuisance" or just plain "selfish". What more frustrating experience can there be for the child?

Bright children are often turned into the joker of the class by a teacher who feels either resentful or threatened or both. By poking fun at a such a child for being late or wanting to go to the toilet or answering a question incorrectly ("I thought you were supposed to be clever"), a teacher not only creates an unpleasant feeling for the child in the classroom but out of it as well. Children, especially adolescents, are only too willing to ridicule their classmates in order to distract attention from themselves. So the teacher who uses the "clown of the class" label, does a great deal of damage as the effects are often much more far reaching than could be envisaged.

Obviously, it is difficult for a teacher to strike the correct balance between paying one child too much attention and deliberately ignoring that one in order to help those not as talented. Personal feelings do, inevitably, have to be taken into account: teachers are only human after all. If you don't like a particular child for whatever reason - be it because they are too similar to yourself or remind you of parts of your childhood which are painful to recollect - then it becomes a constant struggle to treat him/her fairly. It may be hard for a teacher to leave prejudice at home, but the effort must still be made. If it is obvious to the pupils who are the teacher's favourites, then the situation becomes unhealthy for all concerned.

However it would be unfair to dismiss the teaching profession as uncaring, as the majority do at least try to be understanding of the needs of very able children. Unfortunately, it is often with the best interests of the children in mind that a lot of harm is done, usually by teachers who are very keen for their bright pupils to achieve academically, and therefore put unreasonable amounts of pressure on them.

The pressure to succeed is most often applied by parents who, as most parents do, "want the best for their children". The most damaging factor can often simply be being told you have a high I.Q. and, as a result, being told what is expected of you - achievement. The emphasis should be placed on fulfilment: that way the achievement often comes anyway, possibly even *because* the pressure has not been applied. Bright children want to be valued for something other than their intellect. A great many children are hounded by comments from their parents such as: "I'd rather have a child who worked hard than one who is clever and lazy". and, "I wasn't particularly bright, but I did well because I worked hard". What hope is there for a child under this sort of pressure?

By placing the emphasis on achievement, many bright children become frightened of failure, and therefore cannot cope with it when sooner or later it comes. Failure in something like a driving test, for example, can have a devastating effect on a child for whom success has been frequent and valued above all. I have known people who found it very difficult to comprehend failure in something which is not necessarily "effort based". It is possible - at some stage even likely - that a person can have their confidence completely shattered because throughout their life the only thing which really mattered was measurable success.

Fear of failure can also breed an inability to relax. Just sitting in a chair reflecting, looking, listening, appreciating your surroundings, can often bring with it deep feelings of guilt because you're not really "doing" anything. Competitive education encourages rivalry, and many bright children work obsessively and miss out on other things in life which are frowned upon by parents as "a waste of time": things like parties, pop music and ordinary social contact. The lack of confidence in later life which results from this has already been mentioned: some people end up leading very deprived, narrow lives because they were not told that sometimes it is a very good idea not to be "doing" anything. Bright children frequently don't socialise, not because they don't want to, but because they don't know where to start. By not socialising at school, such children may be able to achieve more than their contemporaries, but may well be scarred for the rest of their lives.

Whilst on the subject of relaxation, many children with a lot of ability, do not have an art form to use as an outlet for their feelings. In fact, feelings are often ignored completely, which in turn creates its own problems as feelings do not "go away if left alone". A parent can do irreparable harm by adopting the attitude that: "you ought to give up art/the piano/drama because you'll never be any good at it". They are missing the point. Everybody needs an outlet of one form or another. One of the saddest cases that I have come across was a particularly talented pianist. His teacher was extremely encouraging and told him that he was his most promising pupil; his mother, on the other hand, said: "well he's bound to say that, we're paying him to teach you, and in any case his other pupils are pretty awful". This boy no longer enjoys the piano as he used to, thinks he's "pretty average" at playing, and has had his emotional outlet tarnished, probably for ever.

In conclusion, I would say that the problem of bright children with no self-confidence stems from two things. Firstly a desire for your child/pupil to use their ability to the full, which often suffocates the child and can result in them becoming withdrawn or disruptive because the pressure which is brought to bear is too great. Secondly there is often a basic resentment of a lively, enthusiastic child who may have far more ability than their parent/teacher has ever had or ever will have. The problem is far greater than most people appreciate and is a difficult one to tackle. The only real "solution" that I can offer, is that more adults make more of an effort to understand the needs of bright children, and try to stimulate and motivate them by offering genuine opportunities for fulfilment instead of bombarding them with achievement-orientated exercises which are, in the end, counter-productive.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next Special Needs supplement will be in the February '89 newsletter. Therefore the deadline will be Jan. 1st. New Year's Day. (Guess what I think your early new year's resolution should be?) Don't wait 'til then - send your comments and contributions as soon as possible to: Sylvia Jeffs, 16 St. Bernard's Road, Solihull, West Midlands B92 7BB  
Telephone: 021 706 6460

People ask how children can learn maths if you don't make them. This is what has happened with us.

In the first place we're not mathematicians but we do like maths. How you feel about a subject has a lot of effect on how your child learns it, though not in totally predictable ways. Within that, we have different strengths and interests, so we offer different aspects and approaches. Felix sometimes sees one of us learn something new from the other, or get excited over a fresh way of looking at something. We may become absorbed in a discussion which is beyond him but which he makes us explain. Sometimes no maths occurs for long periods because we're equally absorbed in something else.

There's a lot of pressure to make children competent at calculation too early. Calculation is (almost) a necessity for survival as an adult but there's no hurry for children to learn it. The interesting bits are the mathematical concepts, all the ideas and the feel for maths. That's what can turn a child on to maths, often from a preverbal level. As you develop the concepts, you acquire the necessary calculation to go with them, painlessly.

Glenn Doman's methods produce babies who can distinguish between 78 dots and 79, and do sums. I'm not sure whether it's stimulation or pressure. We didn't use his technique, but it made us have more respect for babies' mathematical ability. They seem to have something which is not fully understood and which we have lost. Perhaps the more we play with them mathematically, the less of it they will lose. The more mathematical experience they have at this age, the more their brains will realise this early potential, but not in a narrow mechanical way. Real maths is just as much an activity of the right side of the brain as of the left.

A lot of development at this stage is through shape and pattern. We had materials for free patterning, matching, arranging creatively; and also more rigid apparatus which is self-correcting. I remember a postbox I had as a child: for weeks it was a mystery and then in a blinding flash it was obvious. I puzzled for a long time about why I had not been able to see it, and why I suddenly could. It felt as if something had opened up in my head. There are lots of marvellous toys now which do that in various ways. We managed to borrow the Montessori cylinders for a while - they are still one of the best; and jigsaws now are better than ever. Above all, the most important toy has been Lego, which is still going strong here.

We did a lot with 3D shapes before we went on to 2D. For years we would occasionally come back from shopping with an extravagance just because it was packaged in a mathematical shape we wanted. We picked up display trays from the chemist and the greengrocer's rubbish, and egg trays and cartons. We counted conkers and shells into them and made patterns in them with all sorts of things. We cut them up in different ways (squeals of delight when Felix discovered that two threes and three twos both made six) and stuck them together again on cardboard in other patterns such as a set of squares (1, 4, 9, 16, 25, 36). We've had cupboards emptied while tins are stacked in different types of pyramid. We had a large bag of pennies which made rectangular and triangular patterns (- what pattern can you make with this many?). Another bag of 10p and 11 coins to put with them makes hundreds, tens and units to explain and practise place value and carrying. We saved matchsticks for that too: singles, and groups of ten in rubber bands. You don't have to swap the ten as you do with money - you dismantle it or build it up again when you borrow or carry.

We made a fractions board which was a success: a wooden base with circles and squares drawn on it, divided in different ways into 2, 3 and 4, with just a

circle each for 5 and 6. We cut plastic pieces from old containers to match, with different colours for each one. Felix got wildly excited over negative numbers: "They're going backwards into an endless dark cave, and the positive numbers are out in the sunshine going forwards." He woke us up one day to show us three sums written in Roman numerals. He loves logic puzzles (often no numbers involved, but very mathematical) and we could never make up enough to satisfy him, until he could use books of brain teasers. He had a phase of estimating, and went round with a steel tape measure in his pocket for a few weeks. Everywhere we went we had to guess the length of things, and he would measure them. Once we had to climb back into the park at dusk so he could retrieve the tape from a seat where he knew he'd left it.

Then Felix went to school for a year. It was disastrous, but they didn't spoil maths for him because he refused to accept that what they were doing was really maths. It was both too simple ("colour in the shapes with three sides"; "draw a string from each child to one toy and colour them in") and too adult - all 2D, nothing to feel and play with, just nasty cheap paper and clumsy cheap crayons. He considered it was insulting and said they were trying to make him stupid; and he refused to do most of it. There was apparatus available which the teacher was supposed to let them use, but the information all had to go onto worksheets, and she often found it easier to miss out the experimental stage. The school had a good reputation for maths.

We withdrew him from school and at home we went on as before. Rob played Lego, and chess and wari and other board games with him, and we all played mastermind and yahtzee and backgammon. We got lots of ideas from Betty Ball, in the newsletter and in sessions at EO meetings. We made geometrical models until we had nowhere to put them. Another craze was bubbles - bubbles from all shapes and sizes of materials, and Kubic bubbles, which produce interesting shapes from geometric frames and lead on to some advanced maths which we still haven't investigated (we can't get hold of the book we want). Felix decided to make a base five abacus one day, and counted beads onto it, carrying in base five, for a couple of hours. He was highly delighted with something he sorted out, though he did not tell us what; he never touched it again. We made pin boards for rubber bands. We made grid patterns with tables: 4x superimposed on 2x in different shades of blue produced Grandma's tablecloth. He fell in love with illusions, and Escher's woodcuts and Hofstadter's indescribable books. He labelled two blocks, one with odd and one with even numbers; then he would throw them like dice and add or subtract or multiply them. Once he was a computer inside a "black box" (a clothes horse covered with a sheet). He was "programmed" with a function and then numbers were fed in and the computer had to output the result of the calculation. He had a session with Cuisenaire rods when visiting an EO family, and found all the ways of making ten; he relived a row in school when he was forbidden to complete the pattern - he was told only to do the combinations with two rods, but he included the threes, and wanted to think about other combinations. The teacher (a different one by now) told him how naughty this was, and he explained why it wasn't.

We made a plan of the garden measured in hoop lengths. We made local maps. Felix discovered the ambiguity in "take away half", i.e.  $n - \frac{n}{2}$  or  $n - \frac{1}{2}$ . He sat on Rob's shoulders and gave commands about direction and the number of paces Rob should take, and learned how precise you have to be to program a robot. He realised that if you go north and then southeast it can be the same as going east. He tried to know where north was, wherever he went. He discovered that he could vary the perimeter of a figure while keeping the area constant, and came back to the idea several times, mostly with Lego.

He refused to do anything which seemed to be "sums" when he came out of school, so we left that area alone. Gradually he became more confident again, and was pleased when we got a "Little Professor" electronic sums game. He enjoyed practising in private. He had been embarrassed and shown up so much in the teachers' efforts to break him that he would do nothing that might be labelled

(Continued on page 18 - after Supplement)

"wrong" (i.e. incorrect); and this is still an area of difficulty. A couple of times, after long periods without doing any maths, we have noticed that his ability to manipulate numbers seemed to take a sudden leap forward. Sometimes he would happily do oral arithmetic for hours at a time, as long as he was in control of the situation. He can tolerate being corrected again now, if it is good-humoured and he is spoken to as an equal. For a while, a favourite game was to give the answers by miming a rhyme, which we had to guess. At one point hundreds were giving him some trouble which we did not understand. He worked through it to his satisfaction by dramatic means: first he pretended to be frightened of any calculation with hundreds in it, then he would "lose" the hundreds, with much play-acting, and eventually he would make them come out of hiding and cooperate with him. He is constantly searching for patterns in numbers, and puts a vast amount of effort into finding easier ways of working out calculations.

Felix resisted decimals initially because he felt his loyalty was with ordinary fractions, of which he was very fond. Money and metric weight and length were acceptable, but not pure decimals. After the first discussion we left the subject, as we did not want him to become entrenched in this position. Luckily his favourite maths programme on TV, Maths Counts, did decimals that week. We did not pursue the topic after watching it. He managed to find several examples during the week where fractions were more appropriate or natural than decimals. We watched the repeat of the programme, but still did not discuss it, and a few days later he decided that decimals were quite reasonable and simple.

Since getting a TV some years ago, we have watched quite a lot of school maths programmes. Felix likes the drama type: Maths in a Box (but not Wondermaths), Maths File and Maths Counts. Basic Maths and Mathscore have varied in popularity, and we have seen most of them twice. Johnny Ball is a favourite. The quality of TV maths teaching is much better than that of most teachers, but it is not enough on its own, and doesn't suit everyone. The main consideration is whether the level and the approach suit a particular child at a particular time. If not, you can probably catch it again in a couple of years and see if it does then.

Felix had learned to tell the time before he went to school, though probably not very securely. He unlearned it in school, and refused to have anything to do with it for years. We made light of it, telling him he would find it very easy when he was ready to sort it out again. We told him the time if he ever asked, without comment, and when we got a digital clock he became more independent. Eventually he seemed to let himself think about it more freely - we occasionally saw him comparing the digital clock with the analogue clock, and once or twice he asked a question which we answered without further elaboration. This extended to days of the week, months and seasons, in which his teacher used to drill the class. It is only recently, at eleven, that he has made an effort to keep track and sort them out.

When Felix came out of school he refused to write for a long time. We told the LEA inspectors that we did not want to contaminate things he enjoyed, like maths, with his dislike of writing, and asked them to accept that we did a lot orally. We wrote detailed reports, and they did accept it. We did nothing unless he wanted to, and only used paper ourselves as an adult does when working out something complicated or wanting to illustrate a point. Eventually he would take the pen and use it in the same way, but there were never any formal written sums. He has free use of a calculator. One day a nosey neighbour wrote down  $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{3}$  and some long addition, and asked (to our annoyance) if he could do these sums. She found she couldn't add the fractions herself and dropped the subject, but he came home and asked us to teach him because he didn't want to show EO up! By then he was very secure with fractions and had no trouble transferring them to paper, and he was actually quite delighted with long addition: "It's like turning yourself into a calculator."

Often when Rob was half asleep in the bath, Felix would go in and get him doing maths and talking about all sorts of abstruse ideas. I used to be cynical about how much he understood, but he often surprises us with his insights, and anyway we can always talk something through again. I tend to be less creative, and turn to books for inspiration. We have a varied collection we've been given or picked up at jumble sales or bought because they appealed to him. We may use a workbook for some topic which has come up, but usually only orally, with frequent digressions for discussion - or just digressions. One day he said, "One of the nice things about EO is that if a tune comes into your head when you're doing maths, you can stop and go and play it. In school you couldn't, and it would go round and round in my head and stop me concentrating." We also find books useful for checking that we have covered all the areas appropriate to his stage of development. Felix worked (in writing) through one workbook on tables, which he chose, but has since refused to do any more; he more or less knew his tables by the end. A friend gave him a disco-beat tables tape, but he can't stand disco music and won't listen to it. We had a book of tests and he asked to be tested, and came out three years ahead of his age. What he knew, he was sure of, with very few errors of calculation, and he only got stuck at topics we had not yet done. Just as we do not make him work against his will, we would not test him unless he wanted it, nor allow the LEA to do so.

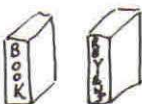
Recently Felix asked to do algebra. He didn't realise he already knew some, and when we did some more he dismissed it as arithmetic disguised as letters. He has, however, got some idea of the power it has in generalising, and he sees Rob use it in brain teasers. He has also done some trigonometry, because there was a good series on TV, but he did not find it satisfactory. He kept asking what the point was, which is not one of his usual concerns. I don't know if it was premature, or if I am reaching the limit of my competence - so that I am no longer far enough ahead of him to be able to explain things flexibly and imaginatively. When we come to a block like this, Rob and I have to take time to sit down and talk it out, and talk to other people and read it up, until we come up with a fresh angle. This has happened regularly. It seems straightforward from this perspective, but it was not so clear at the time. Having written this, I saw Felix using algebra to try and work out a paradigm for long division. It was not a success, so he tried to work out a flow chart. Finally he got Rob involved in a successful computer program to guide the user through the various steps involved in the conventional method.

An EO family lent Felix a computer after we helped them with their LEA, and he spends hours on it. We've just had a caterpillar crawling realistically round the screen demolishing cabbages. Another friend lent us some School Mathematics Project booklets which her EO children enjoy, and he likes the tone and style. They produce an "individualised mathematics" series which appealed to him, and at his request we bought a couple of books. He loves hexaflexagons and is showing an interest in topology, and there is still plenty of scope in such off-beat areas of mathematics, even if it entails us researching more in books. We are reluctant to prepare him for GCSE, at least just yet. He could become too narrow and syllabus-orientated, and end up thinking he knew all about maths. We'd rather he explored more widely. He is showing signs of wanting to learn in a more structured, systematic way, but I doubt if that means ploughing straight through workbooks or textbooks. He has no conscious notion of self-discipline and "working hard" (making children work hard is perhaps only to compensate for inadequate teaching) but he has immense concentration and persistence when he wants to do something. I hope that we can find a way to adapt to his changing needs, rather than saying in effect that the good times are over and now he must knuckle down - that real life is a boring slog.

---

Most of the above concerns our own experience of EO maths. In a later newsletter, I hope to conclude in more general terms, together with a list of books.

Anne Wade



## 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 new book coming out. Helen will try to obtain a copy for you, but please WRITE A REVIEW if you receive such a book.

### "OBSERVATIONS ON LOCAL EDUCATION"

"It is said that our schooldays are the happiest days of our lives. I do not know who first said it, but it must have been an adult."

"The question was, 'Do you think that your programme for deschooling society can be carried out without far-reaching social, political, and economic changes?' His answer was, 'Certainly not! Of course not!'"

"Why is it that, in spite of all this, so many people regard progressive education with virulent hostility, and when a progressive school reaches the headlines, as Dartington Hall did last summer, the press so rejoices in its misfortunes? ... Perhaps the reason so many people hate the progressive ideal is that if it is right the whole basis of their lives is false, and they have an uncomfortable feeling that it may be."

"Not surprisingly industry demands of education a concentration on the three 'R's'. There are many, whose time has been spent in the halls of industry and commerce, [who] would argue that its codes of practice, disciplines and systems really demand Rote, Ritual, and Rules."

"It amazed me only recently to see an account of some American professor who is teaching parents that their childrens' minds are like bags (his words) into which from the earliest years information can be poured."

"I did not go to school properly until I was 11 years old. It was wartime and I travelled the length and breadth of England with my mother who took jobs as mothers' helps, mainly. I spent odd weeks in classrooms, here and there, but these are vague memories and left no deep impression."

"Some kids are more intelligent than others, some are stronger, etc. and it is the job of the education system of the country to prepare its future workforce, inculcate the right values and allocate the school leavers to their appropriate station in the economy and society."

These fragments are from an extraordinary collection of essays compiled by the painter R.O. Lenkiewicz. For the last three years he has been painting studies (ranging from huge canvasses to single size portraits) of people associated (loosely sometimes) with education. These people include education committee members, school governors, head teachers, teachers, parents and past and present pupils. Also writers, musicians, visiting striking miners, and many others. (Incidentally, the paintings are on exhibit in his studios on the Barbican.)

The sitters were asked to write something about education, and their contributions (of which one of the most beautiful is actually a poem by a 12 year old) form this book.

The collection is obviously impossible to summarise, so by browsing I tried to choose some of the pieces which would begin to convey its richness and diversity. It will take me a long time to finish reading it - there are over 200 contributions and the book is over 400 pages long (bound in two volumes in card covers.) Furthermore, some of the essays are so sinister and depressing (Lenkiewicz's phrase, and I agree with him) that I need to stop reading and do something else



BOOK REVIEWS contd.

to recover. Fortunately, others (such as the poem I mentioned, or Dora Russell's essay, or Michael Duane's foreword are moving, inspiring and encouraging.

A good medicine for wavering EO members would be (i) buy this book, (ii) read the nasty bits, (iii) decide you could not possibly subject your children to that, (iv) read the inspiring bits, and (v) realise that you do have the strength to defend your children from the horror of it all.

(It is published unconventionally. Send £17.50 to Blackfriars (attention Simon King), Friar Lane, Barbican, Plymouth PL1 2 LH. This price includes postage & packing.

Stephen Huggett.

THE YOUNG GEOGRAPHER INVESTIGATES by T. Jennings Publisher Oxford University Press.

Titles: Deserts, Mountains, Rivers, Tropical Forests, Polar Regions, Temperate Forests.

Price: £2.50 each. (P.b.)

Beautifully produced books, with excellent photographs, maps and illustrations. They provide an excellent introduction to Physical and Human Geography as well as giving a wealth of ideas to follow up each topic. Each book contains a section of questions, things to do and simple experiments, all of which are clearly described and great fun to do. Excellent value and very enjoyable to use.

INTO SCIENCE by Terry Jennings, Publisher Oxford University Press.

Titles: Weather, Seeds, Earthworms, Floating and Sinking, Time, Bouncing Balls.  
Price: For Into Science School Pack £11.00

Colourful picture books to introduce scientific concepts to young children, using simple language, bold illustrations and clear text. Although these books are designed for children of 5 years +, I'm sure that younger children would enjoy these. Plenty of ideas for activities and experiments, as well as a simple glossary.

THE WALDORF SONG BOOK - by Brien Masters, From Floris Books, 21 Napier Rd, Edinburgh.

Price: £3.95 net.

It is still relatively difficult to find good song books to use with children, especially at a reasonable price. The beauty of this one is that the songs range in complexity from those suitable for age 8 up to 12 and onwards, as well as covering the various seasons and festivals. There are folk songs written at various periods, countries and times, from the middle ages onwards as well as more compositions mainly from Waldorf school teachers. Notes at the back give background information and suggestions for simple accompaniments. Of the 108 songs some I knew well, others only in part but about two thirds I did not know at all and needed to learn on the recorder. This could be a problem if you don't read music. But on balance a book with potential for oneself or one's children to learn more is probably a better investment than one with only better-known and more obvious songs.

Dear E.O.,

Firstly I must say how interesting I have found the last two newsletters I have received, October & December 1987.

Living abroad as we do we have a limited choice of books for adults and children but two highly recommended sources have helped tremendously. One is the Red House, Witney-Oxford OX8 6YQ. They require members to buy 3 books only during the first year of membership, there is no automatic selection sent to you and they have just started a baby book selection. Nearly every book offered to members is well below the bookshop price and often around half-price. The main selection of books is for children, divided into various age groups and there is also an "At Home" selection covering topics such as gardening, crafts, child care etc.

The other more general source and chiefly geared towards adults with a selection for children's books and masses of information books, is the Good Book Guide, P.O. Box 400, Havelock Terrace, London SW8 4AV, tel 01 720 8182. The cost of the subscription is £12(UK)(£14 Europe, £16 elsewhere). but one can recoup most of this by means of £12 worth of tokens, one £2 token with each bi monthly issue of the guide. There is no obligation to buy any books at all but it is impossible not to! Reading the guides has become the equivalent of browsing through a bookshop for me, as they say "a timesaving way of keeping up to date with good books". I cannot recommend it enough. One can buy the guides without subscribing or order books through them, but members get preferential postage rates. Periodically they produce a separate children's guide and as with the Red House indicate which age group books should appeal to. This year there is an added incentive for members of £5 worth of books when you introduce a new member, don't lend out your guides, you never get them back! So if any of you do join before June 1st, please mention my name and address-thanks. I assure you that is not the main reason for recommending the Guide. I should also add that through the Good Book Guide Special Ordering Service subscribers can obtain any book in print in Britain, very useful for specialised books.

One of the books I have bought through the Guide is "Listen To Your Child"-David Crystal, Penguin, £3.95. To quote the Guide, "A first-rate introduction to the manner in which very young children acquire a knowledge of language, from the basic cooing stage through the indignant response stage ('snot a choo-choo's a train) to the triumphant time of childish jokes..In dealing with the whole period from (and before) birth to the early school years. He provides invaluable advice for parents, including an appendix of games which help language.

It is a fascinating, highly readable book making one listen to one's own children with renewed admiration for the way they determinedly learn their own language.

Another book is Dorothy Butler's "Five to Eight", pub. Bodley Head £4.95, which is a follow on from her excellent "Babies Need Books"-Pelican, was £1.75, subtitled 'How to share the Joy of Reading with your Child'. Mrs Butler argues very convincingly that books should play a crucial role in children's lives right from the very first months: as a source of fun, as a stimulant to the imagination and as a catalyst in the early forging of relationships. She discusses the choice open to parents and offers her own tried and tested booklists which I have found useful over and over again. "Five to Eight"

covers the early school years and encompasses the potentially hazardous learning-to-read stage. Mrs Butler reassuringly advocates a relaxed approach and emphasises the lifelong enjoyment to be gained from books. His main purpose in writing this second book is to persuade parents to continue to read aloud to their children, since she firmly believes that learning to listen plays a vital part in the learning-to-read process. Again she provides titles and descriptions of several hundred tried and tested books.

Barbara Tizzard and Martin Hughes "Young Children Learning" and Maire Mulloney's "Anything School Can Do You Can Do Better" may have been reviewed before. Both are very positive about the benefit of home-based education. Both are powerful ammunition and support and prove the home to be a powerful learning environment. "Young Children Learning" is a fascinating account of an unusual research project which analysed tape-recordings of four-year olds in conversation with their mothers at home and, for comparison, with their teachers at school. They found that at home the children talked freely about a wide range of topics; they initiated and sustained conversations, argued and endlessly asked questions. The children's talk with teachers lacked such richness, depth and variety. This book raises important issues about the relative contributions of home and school, and it persuades us, above all, to value the parental roles more highly.

Maire Mulloney's book gives a fascinating account of how she taught all eleven of her children at home until they were eight or nine. Neither she nor her husband had any formal teaching experience when they began but they and their children discovered the delights and rewards of learning at home. The book not only records the early learning experiences, achievements and later careers of the children but also gives practical advice on the methods, books and aids which worked for them. Fontana, was £1.95

Liz Ince, PO Box 41968, Nairobi, Kenya, EAfrica.

**"Alex's Bed"** by Mary Dickinson. Pictures by Charlotte Firmin. A Hippo Book. £1.50 (Scholastic Pub.)

This is a simple, realistic and lovely story in which Alex and his mum raise his bed up on 4 legs in order to gain extra space, in order that Alex will be able to keep his room tidier. I haven't seen a fiction book in which the illustrations better fit the text than in this. They must know us! - the drooping flowers in the hall, the one shoe on the chair, the items strewn from the not-closed drawer and the searching for empty patches of floor to stepping stone across the room are there.

Alex's mum could easily be a single parent, although the drawings show a ring on her wedding-ring finger. I get the impression she has an especially close relationship with Alex and has her priorities right.

"Nobody was up there except those flies and that spider". How I recognise us in the pages - when a job needs to be done, Alex's mum makes a cup of tea first. I wonder if they're in E., O.  
From Sue Lewis, c/o 79 Erith Rd., Belvedere, Kent, DA17 6HP

Dear EO,  
thank you for publicising the Publishers Association 1988 Educational Book Exhibitions (December Newsletter). I went along to the Sussex exhibition at Brighton and found it most interesting to see the publications and 'aids' being sold to schools. Highly recommended if it comes to your area.  
Has anyone followed the Ginn Mathematics programmes, and if so,

what do you think of it?

Linda Tyrell, 1 Lovers Meadow, Chawington, Haisham, E. Sussex BN27

**"Travel by Road and Rail"; "Travel by Air"; "Travel by Water"; "Finding the Way"** are four books in the "Moving Around the World Series" by Macmillan Education, 48 pages, hardback, £5.95 each.

Each book provides a brief historical survey of its subject and, where applicable, the principles thereof. They are generously illustrated with maps, photographs, diagrams and charts.

Each subject is dealt with comprehensively in scope but of necessity is limited in depth.

As an example., "Travel by Air" tells us (in double page spread) how planes fly; the first people to fly; world flights; the first airlines; modern airliners; planning the flight; airlines of the world; safety; supersonic; the future and, in common with the other books, a very useful glossary and index.

For children who already have an interest in these subjects, the books are useful for widening their understanding and interest. Published in 1986 they are up to date and by virtue of the illustrations and captions, are likely to appeal to children of 8 upwards, although most suitable for age 11 onwards. The wide scope of each book plus the glossary and index means that they're good for project work and as a reference text.

M. Evans, 16 Thistle House, Dee St., London E.14 0PD

**"Lets look at: Dinosaurs."** Pub Wayland. Price £4.95 Hard Back.

A useful picture book for young children, well illustrated with a simple text and glossary of terms. It is printed in large clear type and is easy to read. We liked the colourful illustrations but would have liked more information on each Dinosaur. (There is a useful book list at the end.)

**"Lets look at: The Seasons."** Pub. Wayland, £4.95

This colourful picture book is one of a series 'designed to encourage young children to learn about the world around them'. This book, although full of illustrations, is a little disappointing as some of the diagrams are in need of further labels and explanations to enable young children to understand them. I think that some of the ideas are more easily explained using models rather than diagrams. However, it is a useful picture book to share with young children

**"Can I live with you?"** pub. Macdonald, £4.95 hard back

This is a lovely picture book to share with young children and very special as the child can take part in the story. It's a novelty picture book, that contains six press-out cats that can be slotted into the pages as you read the story.

A small bird falls from its nest and goes in search of a new home, closely watched by a cat. Fortunately the bird escapes to safety. A very popular book in our family, and sellotape reinforcement at the sides of the slots will extend its life!

**"All About Time"**: Pub. Beehive, £4.95

A simple introductory book about time for young children, very colourfully illustrated. Its full of activities to do, and great fun to read, and we all enjoyed the games suggested. Well worth looking out for.

**"Caring for the sick at home"** pub. Floris books. £6.95

A handbook describing basic nursing care and descriptions of herbal remedies for use at home. Sections include pregnancy, birth, sleep, care of the dying. The book helps to understand "illness" not simply as a negative event but as an opportunity for a reflection or change in life! The book also has useful sections on Rudolf Steiner's philosophy and nursing, and his view of the human being.

Hilary Forster, 3 Hendrick Drive, Chepstow.

The following two catalogues we have found useful for choosing books:

Oliver and Boyd, Primary & Middle School Catalogue, Robert Stevenson House, 1-3 Baxters Place, Leith Walk, Edinburgh, EH1 3BB. This has a good choice of books for the 3 Rs, also science, history, geography and religion. Includes readers, workbook/cards, teachers guides and handbooks.

Usborne Books (send 95p): Usborne Publishing Ltd., PO Box 11, Falmouth Cornwall. Amazing choice of books on every subject, craft, interest, hobby you can imagine and lots that we hadn't previously considered. We have found this catalogue invaluable for extending our ideas on things to read and do.

Also enjoyed:

Ronald Rideouts Puzzle Books

Four small books - Scarlet, Gold, Emerald and Violet. at 99p each. Pub. by Belitha Press/Magnet.

Brightly illustrated and amusing word puzzles for 4-7 yr olds. Our child insists she hates writing but happily completed these books.

Kate J. Wilson, Manor Cottage, Walgrave, Northampton, NN6 9PH

**"Troubled Children: A Fresh Look at School Phobia"** by Patricia Knox, £3, available from author for 70p post & packing, Pen Llywenan, Bodedern, Holyhead, Gwynedd.

The main aim of the book is to expose injustice to children. The scope of the book is wide, covering not only the subject of the title, but shedding light on all aspects of childhood and society.

# SCIENCE '88.

For E.O. Scientists!  
(You have to join Bays

Fortress House  
23 Saville Row  
London  
W1X 1AB  
01 734 6010

## A FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

OPEN TO ALL AGES — TO THE SPECIALIST  
AND THE NON-SPECIALIST

Saturday & Sunday **EXCURSIONS** in and around Oxford for anyone wanting a general, geographical or geological look at Oxford.

Monday **FAMILY SCIENCE DAY** — with lectures, a look at careers, egg races, workshops, trails, BAYS, Young Investigators, films and exhibitions. Also synchrotron radiation, science journalism, Inaugural Ceremony, receptions.

Tuesday **EVOLUTION**, catastrophes, and other planets take centre stage. But also the Local Region, robotics, lives of eminent scientists, bioinorganic chemistry, molecular biology and more of the film festival.

Wednesday **MOLECULAR ELECTRONICS** and **EDUCATION POLICY** head a double bill. What are the prospects for full employment or the future of recreation and leisure? Discover the amazing field of medical imaging and more of plate tectonics. What is a 'dangerous' person?

Thursday **THE PARLIAMENT OF SCIENCE** focusing on science and the government, and science and industry: who pays? Plus the physics of the home of the future, the challenge of cancer, children and computers, and a look at where social trends seem to be taking us.

Friday **BIOTECHNOLOGY** in the spotlight: genetic engineering. Also lots for the computer enthusiast and pop music fan. Lasers in chemistry, infectious diseases, industry and the environment, the exclusion of women from science.

This is only a small sample of the outstanding presentations throughout the week. There is also a large number of **VISITS** to choose from: Oxford and the surrounding area, Blenheim Estate, Austin Rover, Greenfield Farm, Harwell, Wytham Woods, Heathrow, ICI, Broughton Castle, Hidcote Manor and Waddesdon among others.

Remember to make time for the film festival, the varied exhibitions, the musical events and social gatherings.

Each of these events is planned to help you **LEARN** more about science, **PARTICIPATE** in the excitement of science and **MEET** other people who share your interests.

I have reserved 12 beds at Oxford Youth Hostel for this years British Association meeting 3-9 September. As you can see the science is great and so is the social life!!

There are too many things to do in a day. You will have to come to your own decisions and look after yourselves. Families or single scientists welcome as long as they are prepared to be independent!

If you want to come first write to Fortress House for information about the meeting and a booking form.

If you like the look of it send me the deposit for the Youth Hostel (£10) by April 30th.

Expenses will be Youth Hostel meeting fee, BAYS membership living. send deposit to 21, Devonshire Rd Liverpool L83TX



# DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION ~ Additional Information.

Since writing the article on Development Education in the last newsletter, I have discovered the following additional addresses for obtaining learning materials:

- 1 CHRISTIAN AID  
P.O. Box 100  
London SE1 7RT
- 2 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION CENTRES (change of address)  
6 Endsleigh Street  
London WC1H 0DX  
Tel: 01 388 2670
- 3 CATHOLIC FUND FOR OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT (CAFOD)  
2 Garden Close  
Stockwell Road  
London SW9 9TY  
Tel: 01 733 7900
- 4 CENTRE FOR WORLD DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION  
Regents College  
London NW1 4NS  
Tel: 01 487 5438
- 5 QUAKER PEACE & SERVICE  
Friends House  
Euston Road  
London NW1 2BJ  
Tel: 01 387 3601
- 6 OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE  
Regents College  
Inner Circle  
London NW1 4NS  
Tel: 01 935 1644
- 7 SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND  
Mary Datchelor House  
17 Grove Lane  
Camberwell  
London SE5 8RD  
Tel: 01 703 5400
- 8 SCOTTISH EDUCATION AND ACTION FOR DEVELOPMENT  
29 Nicolson Square  
Edinburgh EH8 9BX
- 9 THIRD WORLD FIRST  
232 Cowley Road  
Oxford OX4 1UH  
Tel: 0865 245 678
- 10 TROCAIRE  
169 Booterstown Avenue  
Co. Dublin, Eire.  
Tel: (0001) 885 178
- 11 UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CHILDRENS EMERGENCY FUND (UNICEF)  
55 Lincoln's Inn Fields  
London WC2A 3NB  
Tel: 01 405 5592  
(Material on children in developing countries)
- 12 WAR ON WANT  
37 - 39 Great Guildford Street  
London SE1 0ES  
Tel: 01 620 1111

Jan Miller, Holywell.



## WATCH ~

The Junior wing of the local Nature Conservation Trusts. All members of the 47 Trusts throughout the British Isles are associate members of the Royal Society for Nature Conservation.

Many counties have local groups that organise workshops, walks, campaigns, - there is a large re-cycling cans one going on at the moment. Did you know that the number of cans(drinks) thrown away each year would reach the moon if laid end to end.....

In WATCH there are well over 30,000 Watch members in the U.K. Watch members are real enthusiasts like me, so get involved now. If you would like to be a watch member please write to: WATCH, 22, The Green, Nettleha, LINCOLN, LN2 2NR. Telephone (0522) 752326. Sponsored by the Royal Society for Nature Conservation and the Sunday Times. P.S. The Professor David Bellemey is the Watch president. Thankyou. By Cassie Baines.

SMALL ADS.....10p a word.....SMALL ADS.....

WANTED - man or woman to join American homeschooling family (2 children) in London, as mother's help. Own room with colour TV. Mornings & evenings off. 4 weeks paid vacation. Please contact Candis Litsey, 10 Fairfax Rd., Chiswick HA 1EW.

Help needed long or short term in family with several homeeducated children. Baby No. 6 due August. Simple cooking, cleaning, but mainly need enjoyment with children. Time divided between Whitby flat above veg. café near sea & house on N.York moors. Own rooms in each. Free time + small wage. Phone Whitby 820217 or 85507 - Jackie Fearnley.

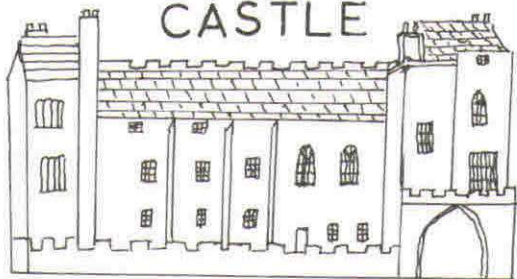
Small ads may be accepted from members, space permitting, if relevant to E.O.

Just a thought - I noticed while editing that I was having to retype material that had been sent in already typed - it seemed rather a shame not to be able to use it as it was - so just to let you know - the typing specifications for the newsletter are as follows:-

- (i) Type with black carbon film ribbon on good quality A.4 paper.
- (ii) Spacing - leave 1/2" minimum each side of the margins, maybe 1" top & bottom. Use (lowest spacing) N<sup>2</sup>M. between the lines.

This in NO WAY means that you have to - any material will be accepted as long as it is legible! Ed.

# FEATHERSTONE CASTLE



EO's AGM 1988  
MON 19<sup>TH</sup> To SUN 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPT  
AGM ON SAT 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPT

Charges for full board per night:-

ADULT £6.50

CHILD 5 - 16 £4.00

UNDER 5 £2.50

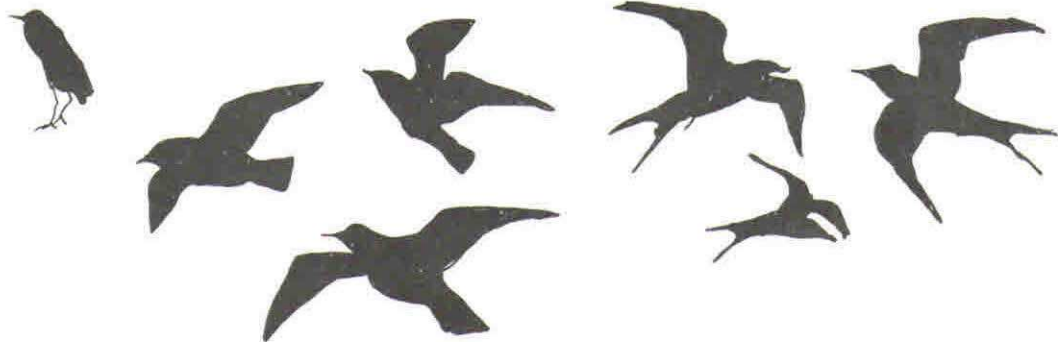
UNDER 2 FREE.

Reductions for those who need to cater for themselves and also in cases of financial hardship.

Further details and booking form from:-

Christine Wallace,  
25 Diabaig,  
Achnasheen,  
Ross-shire IV22 2HE.

\*\* \*\*





EDUCATION OTHERWISE OFFICERS

GENERAL SECRETARY.....Jean Lovius  
21 Devonshire Road  
Liverpool L8 3TX

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARIES.....Christine Wallace  
25 Diablag, Achmasheen  
Ross-shire IV22 2HE  
Tel: 044 581 225  
Valerie Common (SE England)  
19 New Road, Castlethorpe  
Milton Keynes MK19 7EH  
Tel: 0908 511247

ENQUIRIES SECRETARY.....Janet Everdell  
25 Common Lane, Hemingford Abbot  
Cambridgeshire PE18 9AN  
Telephone Helpline: 0480 63130

PRESS SECRETARY.....Joseph O'Connor  
4 Coombe Gardens  
New Malden, Surrey KT3 1AA  
Tel: 01 941 0286

PUBLISHING SECRETARY.....Lesley Kilbride  
Fearnmore by Sheildaig  
Strathcarron, Wester Ross  
IV54 8XX  
Tel: 052 05 278

TREASURER.....David Bettie  
56 Goodwin Road  
Ramsgate, Kent  
CT11 0JJ  
Tel: 0843 583260

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS &  
MEMBERSHIP LIST.....Bob Emmett  
12 Taylor Avenue, Dolgarrog  
Conway, Gwynedd, LL32 8JN  
Tel: 049269 355

REVIEWS SECRETARY.....Helen Holland  
Inholm Farm, Plumpton Green,  
Nr. Lewes, Sussex  
Tel: 0273 890405

SPECIAL NEEDS.....Sylvia Jeffs  
16 St. Bernards Road  
Solihull B92 7BB  
Tel: 021 706 6460

REGIONAL ENQUIRIES SECRETARIES

|             |                     |                            |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| South West  | Meg Robertson       | 022 122 3266               |
| South East  | Jude Ashley-Walker  | 0983 78680                 |
| East Anglia | Sandie Cottee       | 0268 733259                |
| Midlands    | Hazel Clawley       | 021 772 7165               |
| The North   | Mick & Jennie White | 0969 23544                 |
| Scotland    | Brenda Holliday     | 0786 832042                |
| Ireland     | Clare Weber         | Furness, Newport, Co. Mayo |
| Wales       | Miryam Bush         | 0269 861 069               |
| London      | Genevieve Bridgeman | 01 341 0751                |

.....

Education Otherwise is a membership Organisation which provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of their children.

Our principal aims are to:

encourage learning outside the school system

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

establish the primary right of children to have full consideration given to their wishes and feelings about their education

.....

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Send a 9" x 4" s.a.e. to:- 25 Common Lane  
Hemmingford Abbots  
Cambridgeshire  
PE18 9AN

.....

*Di Hooley*  
THE OLD VICARAGE,  
QUEEN CAMEL,  
NR. YEPPEN,  
SOMERSET ✓