

Willow Wood Waldorf School



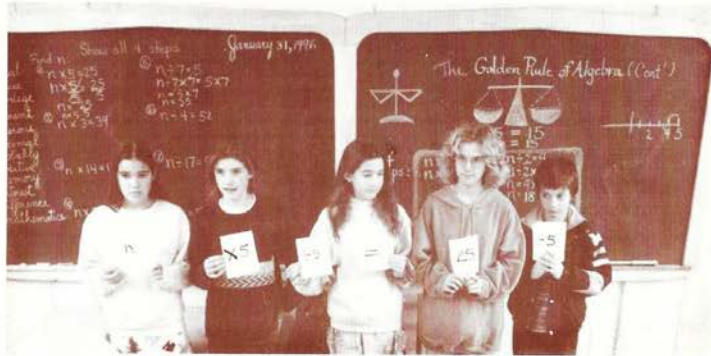
“The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility —These are the three forces which are the very nerve of education.”

— *Rudolf Steiner*

The Essence of Waldorf Education

"Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able to impart purpose and direction to their lives. — Rudolf Steiner"

An Approach to Learning



Students dramatize an equation in a sixth-grade study of algebra.

When Rudolf Steiner founded the first Waldorf school in 1919, he based the curriculum on the then-revolutionary idea that learning is most effective when the whole child — head, heart and hands — is touched by the educational process. Waldorf students are led to *think* through academic challenges, *feel* through the arts, and activate their *will* through physical and hands-on activities.

By integrating these three realms into each lesson, the teacher invites the child to explore the world through imagination, developing the rational, abstract power of the intellect and a real love of learning.



A Waldorf teacher guides one class from first through eighth grade, inspiring trust and allowing authentic teacher-student relationships

"What Steiner recognized about learning in the first part of this century is gradually being substantiated by new discoveries in brain research. The need for each individual to create his own meaning, mind-body relationships, and the involvement of the emotions play a critical role in truly effective learning."

— Gabriele Rico, author of *Writing the Natural Way* & professor of English Literature at San Jose State University

"Being personally acquainted with a number of Waldorf students, I can say that they come closer to realizing their own potential than practically anyone I know."

— Joseph Weizenbaum, professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; author, *Computer Power and Human Reason*

The results of the work of leading educational psychologists and brain researchers point to the importance of an education that includes many of the elements which have been part of the Waldorf curriculum for more than seventy years:

- "hands-on" activities
- an integration of the artistic and academic in each lesson
- an emphasis on "cultural literacy" through knowledge of songs, nursery rhymes and dances
- the presentation of academic material at developmentally-appropriate stages
- the delaying of academics until grade school, keeping the kindergarten free from academic material

