



### Imagination 3

Play generates a creative energy that purls through the child's being and the child seeds in play future potentials: independence, resourcefulness, responsibility, creativity, initiative, trust, kindness, tolerance.

? What happens when this creative energy dries up and the child no longer plays imaginatively/creatively.

In Steiner Education this faculty is nourished by a curriculum that is broad and deep, and by living teaching that fosters the child's inner participation, requires him to think pictorially.

Story has a seminal role in the curriculum. Each class cohort dwells in a cultural epoch and enjoys a wide field of Literature from it. This Literature provides a wonderful backdrop for the development of Literacy skills and artistic work.

Story fires the imagination and when we open a many-layered tale the child enters and blends with the people there. He inhabits story places in the same sort of way he did, when in play, when he created his own kingdoms and roamed within them.

He moves around freely with the chosen story and joins himself to many characters in a multi-faceted way. He flows along with the shifting scenes and in some deep inner place his feelings are stirred by the events that seem to weave around him. Serenity, vulnerability, satisfaction, consternation and joy rise up one by one and take the stage within.

So, once more he is a play-er – this time in story. Once again imagination is his means of transport.

This new found "play" also works from the inside to the outside.

Rudolf Steiner tagged the nourishment of the imagination as a primary task in the formative years of schooling.

*"The primary task through these years is to educate and nourish the imaginative powers of the child. It is this vital picture-making capacity that gives life and insight to logical and conceptual thinking."*

As the child roves in the fairy tales and myths he explores many kingdoms. He travels on the back of a free-ranging imagination that knows no limits; and it is this far reaching imaginative capacity that provides a sturdy foundation for expansive learning.

Story-listeners become adults who are skilled imaginers: people able to harness imagination and therewith solve problems. People who use imagination to weave between disparate fields of knowledge and find connections. Imagination is the wellspring of creativity; it is the seminal power that quickens innovation.

Fullness of imagination expands our field of existence. It creates a bridge toward The Other and seeds compassion. Imagination carries us beyond the confines of our self and allows us to stand for a moment in our neighbour's shoes and envision his needs – and the fruit of this heightened awareness is often a deed of loving kindness.

Moral imagination has germinal power and the deeds that grow from it have the capacity to change society. We see the fruits in co-working, equality, justice, conflict resolution, humanitarian aid and peace initiatives.

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