

Waldorf Method of Teaching





Definioin

The Waldorf method of teaching is a unique educational strategy which aims to create well-rounded students through a broad curriculum, including academics, art and music education, physical education, and emotional and social education. The stated goal of the Waldorf Method is to produce individuals able to create meaning in their own lives.

The Waldorf educational system was created nearly a hundred years ago by Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian philosopher and scientist. Steiner was familiar with a philosophy known as anthroposophy, the idea that children who consciously cultivate independent thinking will be more ready to handle the important natural and spiritual questions with which philosophers and scientists are concerned. The Waldorf education was devised to be responsive to the needs of childhood, including allowing children to set their own pace and use their imagination and creativity.





The Waldorf method encourages a broad curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to explore new topics and allow themselves to be guided by the exploration of the students. This type of teaching encourages learning for the sake of learning, instead of for the sake of passing an exam or scoring well on grading rubrics. There are no grades given in a Waldorf elementary school.


Difference

There are several other differences between the Waldorf Method and other traditional teaching methodologies. First, academic education is de-emphasized. In fact, the types of education which are routinely cut from public school budgets are often the crux of a Waldorf education. These include education in art, music, and foreign languages. Children are encouraged to learn to play musical instruments, knit, crochet, and draw. Additionally, the Waldorf Method uses no textbooks until sixth grade. Instead, elementary school children keep a journal where they record their experiences and what they have learned.



Is it really a good idea to forgo academic education, like reading, until the second grade? Waldorf educators believe so. Instead of teaching children to read when they are five or six years old, instead, teachers tell fairy tells and read stories to children. This encourages oral mastery before reading education begins. In the Waldorf curriculum, writing is taught before reading. The alphabet is explored as a way to communicate with others through pictures. This allows writing to evolve out of the art and doodles of children, instead of from their ability to read and reproduce written content.





Waldorf schools are safe and nurturing environments where children can enjoy their childhood and be protected from harmful influences of the broader society. Instead of being run by administrators concerned with economic or political motives, Waldorf schools are primarily run democratically by the teachers. Waldorf schools consistently produce strong, independent thinkers, and for this reason, the Waldorf educational model is still used in schools around the world.

Thanks for your
attention

