

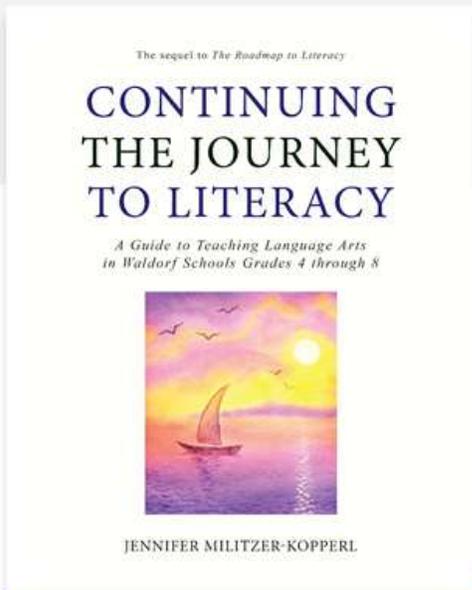


# *Official Newsletter*

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## Announcing *Continuing the Journey to Literacy*



The Sequel to *The Roadmap to Literacy*

Now available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and select bookstores.

by Jennifer Miltzer-Kopperl on September 10, 2020

The sequel to *The Roadmap to Literacy* (Langley and Miltzer-Kopperl, 2018) is here! After five months of delay, *Continuing the Journey to Literacy* was published July 2020.

*Continuing the Journey to Literacy* covers grades 4-8. It picks up where *Roadmap* leaves off and includes:

- How to teach literacy skills, such as grammar and spelling.
- How to teach subjects, such as English, history, geography, and natural science.
- Rudolf Steiner's indications for the Waldorf/Steiner School curriculum, methodology, and subject blocks.

At 950 pages, *Continuing the Journey to Literacy* is a true instruction manual for the Waldorf teacher and homeschool parent.

*Roadmap* and *Continuing the Journey to Literacy* comprise the Renewal of Literacy. *Renewal of Literacy* is both the books and the support website of the same name.

The goal for *Roadmap* and *Continuing the Journey to Literacy* is the renewal of language arts instruction in Waldorf schools--and by extension, the entire Waldorf curriculum. It has been 101 years since the founding of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart. It is time to renew the curriculum and bring Waldorf education into the twenty-first century.

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THIS WEEK'S  
TOP STORY

## Save Steiner Education in England

by Jennifer Miltzer-Kopperl on September 10, 2020

It is a dangerous time for Waldorf education in England—half of the 26 English Steiner schools failed their initial inspections in 2018-2019, and six schools have closed. Teachers face a devil's choice: be true to Steiner's philosophy or compromise to pass academic inspections. There is a third way: Renewal of Literacy. It is a language arts program for Steiner schools 1-8 that is in alignment with Steiner's indications and the objectives of regulatory institutions such as Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills).

Steiner schools know that literacy is so much more than literacy skills (i.e., reading, writing, and spelling). True literacy also includes knowledge of the world (Book of Nature) and human knowledge (Book of Man/Book of Human Beings). The curriculum of the Steiner schools is built around this larger definition of literacy. Literacy *skills* are taught in classes

1–3, but the curriculum expands to include literacy in the Book of Nature and Man in classes 4–8.

However, Steiner schools have not been able to fully embody this expanded definition of literacy because too many have done an inadequate job of teaching literacy skills in years 1–3. Students' poor literacy skills undermine the rest of the Steiner School curriculum. Now Ofsted is taking corrective measures, and Steiner schools are closing in England. These poor academic showings are an invitation to Steiner schools and teachers to do things differently.

### **Summary of Steiner's Advice to Teachers: Balance Two Contradictory Impulses**

Teachers fear that teaching an academically robust curriculum that includes direct instruction in literacy skills would harm the students' health and future development. Steiner has words for teachers who hold this view—as well as some advice:

During the first three years the students in our school are to be educated, stage by stage and wherever possible, according to what is considered relevant to their inner needs. At the same time, the standards generally achieved in other schools are to be respected to the extent that, after completion of the first three years, the students of the Waldorf school should be able to fulfill the necessary requirements for entering corresponding classes in other schools, if desired. Such an offer, for our teachers, amounted to an “ingratiating compromise”—forgive this term, I cannot express it otherwise. A realistic mind has to take such a course, for discretion is essential in everything one does. A fanatic would have responded differently. Naturally, many difficulties have to be ironed out when such a policy is chosen, and many of our teachers would find it preferable to steer a straight course toward our aims and ideals. Lengthy and minutely detailed discussions occurred before a passage was found through these two conflicting approaches (Steiner 1996, 147).

Steiner would be in favor of compromising with educational authorities such as Ofsted. He reminds teachers not to take the objective to provide a healthy education to extreme measures. The objectives stated by Ofsted (i.e., proficiency in academic skills) are just as valid as vouchsafing the students' health. Both need to be respected.

### **A Call to Action**

Steiner schools know that literacy is more than being able to read, write, and spell—it includes literacy in the Book of Man and the Book of Nature—including literacy in the following subjects: natural science, geography, history, art, literature, mathematics, science, etc. This is where Steiner schools should excel. However, the Steiner School curriculum is often hobbled because too many Steiner school students possess inadequate literacy skills—including reading, writing, spelling, and grammar. The solution is simple:

- o Improve the teaching of literacy skills in classes 1–3.
- o Expand the definition of literacy to include subjects in classes 4–8.

This solution is both the foundation of Steiner’s curriculum as well as the basis for the Renewal of Literacy approach to literacy. *The Roadmap to Literacy* provides the foundation in literacy skills in classes 1–3, and *Continuing the Journey to Literacy* provides the foundation for literacy in subject matter in classes 4–8. Between these two books, teachers have everything they need to teach language arts in classes 1–8. Steiner schools that adopt the Renewal of Literacy books can realize the promise of Steiner education: They can demonstrate to the world that literacy is more than just proficiency in skills, and they can show Ofsted that there is no conflict between a healthy education and an academically rigorous one. In so doing, they can save Steiner education in England—and possibly provide a model for the Steiner school movement in the rest of the English-speaking world as well.

### **Bibliography**

Steiner, Rudolf. 1996. *The Child’s Changing Consciousness as the Basis of Pedagogical Practice*. Translated by Roland Everett. Anthroposophic Press.

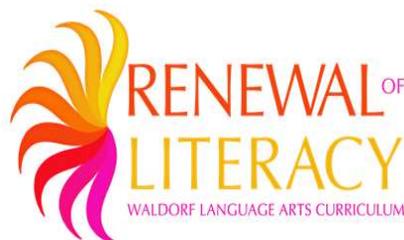
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## **Quiz: How Well Do You Know**

### **Steiner’s Indications?**

Would Rudolf Steiner support the curriculum in *The Roadmap to Literacy* (Langley and Militzer-Kopperl, 2018)? Visit the website *Renewal of Literacy* at the address below to find out!

<https://renewalofliteracy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Would-Steiner-Support-The-Roadmap-to-Literacy-Curriculum-3.0.pdf>



<https://renewalofliteracy.com/>