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Waldorf Puppetry as a Curriculum Modality

The debate around curriculum modalities for young children can leave a person confused. Some studies show that young children learn best by sitting at a desk while completing worksheets. Other studies show that experiential learning is the most effective way for children to learn. One modality that children can benefit from is puppetry. For young children, the sense of wonder surrounding puppetry helps them internalize the lesson provided. Waldorf preschool and kindergarten teachers use puppetry to teach young children how to manage emotions, enjoy a story, or understand a concept. Can puppetry be used in public school classrooms for the same purpose and with the same outcome? Having been a Waldorf school educator for 15+ years I was curious to find the answer to this question.

Recently I shared a puppet show with the children of a local public-school kindergarten. The story was about a mouse that traveled through the cycle of the seasons. The mouse met Mistress Mary who taught him how a seed is planted and grows. After the story, the children were asked questions to test their recall. The children were able to recall fine details with ease.

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