

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 11:57:51 AM EDT] earthschooling : We are all going to be on phone chat from 11:00am - 11:30 am. At 11:30 am I will start the live chat from this platform here - online. Ok...going to make the phone call right now. You can find the call in number and code at the top of the screen in the middle of this page.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:01:53 PM EDT] earthschooling : I am on the phone now...is anyone else able to call in? All I have is music right now which I assume means there is nobody else online?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:12:32 PM EDT] earthschooling : Is anyone else going to join the phone chat?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:25:52 PM EDT] Elizabeth : Hey Everyone

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:25:59 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I hope I haven't missed much

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:26:58 PM EDT] Elizabeth : hello? :(

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:27:05 PM EDT] earthschooling : We are here!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:27:10 PM EDT] Elizabeth : yay!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:27:33 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Hello Elizabeth!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:27:38 PM EDT] Sarah : I need to go feed my children and will be back in a little bit to catch up

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:27:48 PM EDT] earthschooling : We were just on the phone for the first half hour. Just introductions mostly.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:27:49 PM EDT] Elizabeth : Hi Jennifer!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:28:07 PM EDT] Elizabeth : Sorry I couldn't call in.. I think next time I'll get a calling card so I can

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:29:38 PM EDT] Elizabeth : actually, I think you can call with Skype for free? I'll investigate that

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:30:55 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : I would love to know if any of you have blogs...it would be great if we can follow each others' blogs to learn and stay connected. Mine is www.syrendell.blogspot.com.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:31:03 PM EDT] earthschooling : Sorry...I am still here. I was just experimenting with the "share a webpage" aspect of this chat thing. I just posted a webpage with some of Steiner's writings on it. Can you all see it? If you scroll down about the middle of the page there is a link to a PDF on the Genius of Language which is an amazing read and great for a foundation in the "why" behind Waldorf reading and writing methodology.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:32:30 PM EDT] Elizabeth : Jennifer, I love your blog! We're friends on Flickr. I am planning on starting a blog very soon. I'll send you mine when it is up and running :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:32:45 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Neat! I'm loving this online conference idea. I will check out that book, Kristie. Thank you for mentioning it.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:32:56 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Sounds great, Elizabeth! :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:32:56 PM EDT] Elizabeth : The page loaded up good for me

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:33:09 PM EDT] earthschooling : Now there are 2 pages I am sharing on the screen. You can go to the left hand side of the screen and choose which one you want to see. Do you all have something on the left that says "Show Items" like I do? Right below it is a list of conference attendees. Does your screen look like mine?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:33:16 PM EDT] SarahOR : I got the link long enough to see it but I didn't see the book.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:33:42 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : I saw the book, and now my blog is up.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:34:00 PM EDT] Elizabeth : The only option I have is show all participants

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:34:06 PM EDT] Elizabeth : maybe I am not looking in the right spot?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:34:09 PM EDT] earthschooling : SarahOR - you can just go to the left column and click on "webpages" and choose the other book. You can choose which screen you want to view so everything I put up is always up there but you choose which one you want displayed on top.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:34:55 PM EDT] earthschooling : Hmm...OK...so I am the only one with the option to choose the website that shows? Sorry - just still getting the feel of this.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:35:24 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I can't find it.. but I may just be oblivious to it lol

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:35:29 PM EDT] SarahOR : I have been looking for a book about his theories that's easily digestible... sometimes his writings are really hard for me to grok.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:35:35 PM EDT] earthschooling : Anyone have any specific questions on language they are wanting to ask? Or any other topics?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:35:40 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : I'm not sure. It showed the book, then my blog, and now it's the book again. I don't see a place where I can choose.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:36:05 PM EDT] earthschooling : OK, I guess only I can choose. Hmm...OK. I know that for the future now.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:36:06 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I have too.. It's hard to understand the theories sometimes. I've had good luck looking up websites and videos that have it in simpler terms

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:36:23 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : I think I am mostly stuck with how to begin the year...sounds silly, but I really want to provide a Waldorf approach to my 1st grader. I have the LMNOP book and cards and Famke's book on the alphabet.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:36:29 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I am interested in how the alphabet is traditionally taught

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:37:10 PM EDT] Sarah : Yes same here. Specifically since I have done the capital letters with them now and need to move on to the next stage.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:37:17 PM EDT] earthschooling : Sometimes I also just skim his books or writings to start with. There are usually a few paragraphs that are easy to understand and often they represent most of the rest of what he says - only he spends a lot of time saying it.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:37:54 PM EDT] Elizabeth : It's always amazing when it clicks and you can finally understand his theories. This happened to me this week and I was so excited I finally got it

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:38:00 PM EDT] earthschooling : To begin the year I would recommend starting with teaching the letters using the Sixth Sense Language book I have on the website.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:38:07 PM EDT] Elizabeth : may sound silly, but it was like an awakening lol

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:38:17 PM EDT] earthschooling : This will take you through the letters in all sorts of ways including verses and movement and drawing.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:38:27 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I really like your Sixth Sense Language curriculum. Very helpful

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:38:35 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Oh, I think I have that book. I need to review it.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:39:04 PM EDT] earthschooling : It takes you through each letter step by step. You just start with the first letter and go at your own pace.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:39:37 PM EDT] earthschooling : Some children will want to spend a week or two on each letter or certain letters may captivate them. Other children may want to work more quickly. It depends on their temperament.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:39:43 PM EDT] SarahOR : what if your kids already know their letters but they need more practice writing... how to make it not so rote and boring.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:40:04 PM EDT] SarahOR : (i haven't looked at 6th sense language yet)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:40:07 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Great question, Sarah. My son already reads a bit.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:40:11 PM EDT] Elizabeth : How does Waldorf feel about incorporating crafts with a letter? For example, I was thinking about doing one letter for a week or two. Doing crafts with the letter and things that start with the letter

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:40:21 PM EDT] earthschooling : It depends on how they learned their letters.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:40:50 PM EDT] earthschooling : Elizabeth - those are great ideas and completely "in sync" with Waldorf methods.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:40:50 PM EDT] Elizabeth : Maybe have their practice writing it in sand? I think this is a montessori technique

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:41:13 PM EDT] Elizabeth : them*

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:41:28 PM EDT] earthschooling : Writing the letters in sand is wonderful - Waldorf does that too, but Montessori incorporates it as a requirement, along with those "sandpaper" letters that the children trace.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:41:50 PM EDT] earthschooling : SarahOR - so how did your son learn his letters?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:42:04 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I think it would good to use that.. It changes things up and makes it fun. Good for sensory too!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:42:50 PM EDT] SarahOR : My son went to waldorf 1st grade, and learned capitals well.. but i think the whole experience sort of turned him off on writing. He says he learned lower case too. We have gone through the letters again with the girls and done some bread baking and crafty things making letters, but still writing is something that he (who would be a 4th grader) struggles with.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:42:56 PM EDT] earthschooling : One thing to remember about Waldorf, however, is that it is the creation of the pictures IN FRONT OF THE CHILD that is important so writing in sand would be a Waldorf technique but using pre-created sandpaper letters would not.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:43:48 PM EDT] earthschooling : So your son did not find the Waldorf approach with the pictures to his liking? Is he more of a mathematical child? Like phlegmatic or melancholic child?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:44:03 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : I want to do more form drawing this year, and I thought that this might help the 1st grader with letters, and the older kids with their handwriting skills.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:44:06 PM EDT] earthschooling : Sounds like my son :) That's why I am asking...

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:44:14 PM EDT] SarahOR : it seems like he's less willing to experiment around with letters than the girls are who learned through a combo of waldorf style and just trying it out... it makes me wonder if others with boys and girls have this.. if it's a boy thing, or what.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:45:01 PM EDT] earthschooling : I think the form drawing helps, like Jennifer mentioned. Doing the form drawing is not really "writing" and yet it offers the child practice in the control of creating forms that then shows up in their writing later.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:45:39 PM EDT] SarahOR : Oh he LOVED the stories, I almost think it's a large motor issue... since he can do all this fine motor stuff like violin/cello/origami but he loves to build stuff.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:46:59 PM EDT] earthschooling : Another thing about form drawing is that it often appeals more to some children who are like our sons (SarahOR and me) - the form drawing gives them a chance to really create something different and perhaps even more organized. My son loves creating organized forms and repetitive forms. His writing is gorgeous right now (he is 12). I often wonder if it is because of all the time he spent form drawing and copying numbers - he loves math and once spent a few days writing all the numbers from one to 400,000!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:47:02 PM EDT] Sarah : my son loved doing the letter pictures, listening to the stories, we can't do bread so every few days both of them made their letters out of playdoh. Son loved it and instigated it several times. Made a factory to create them with his sister also.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:48:14 PM EDT] earthschooling : Before I forget - Sarah from UK asked about lower case letters...

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:48:30 PM EDT] SarahOR : thanks everyone.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:48:55 PM EDT] Sarah : well what we do now after learning the capitals. Then what we do to learn the lower case and when.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:48:57 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Thanks for the insight, Kristie. My 12-year old still has poor handwriting. We did Writing Without Tears and it helped a bit, but this is an area we still need to work on. I'm doing the form drawing more for the 1st grader, but hoping that it will help the 12 year old, too!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:49:45 PM EDT] earthschooling : With the lower case letters I introduced them using the same methods as with the upper case, but I would often link them together so I would create a picture scene with the lower case and upper case letters together so, for example, for the letter M I might draw a mountain and a hill - the Mountain with the upper case and the hill for the lower case m.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:50:16 PM EDT] earthschooling : Linking the upper and lower case together in one picture helps.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:50:28 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Wonderful idea, regarding the lower case letters. I love this.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:50:45 PM EDT] Elizabeth : One thing I would try is to work on some fine motor activities. This will help make it easier for them to write and draw. Some fine motor activities are placing an object into a hole (such as a toothpick into a Parmesan container whole) or putting pegs into a peg board.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:50:59 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I really like that idea too

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:51:00 PM EDT] Sarah : I had thought about that with doing both in one letter drawing. Just wondered if you had any stories or other bits to work with introducing the lower case ?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:51:22 PM EDT] Elizabeth : an*

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:53:10 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I'm sorry if I keep interrupting. I talk too much sometimes lol :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:53:56 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : lol! Elizabeth, don't worry...this type of seminar always feels like interrupting. I teach online for Kaplan University and I do this with students every week. You just have to type when you can. :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:54:43 PM EDT] earthschooling : SarahOR - so does your son just need some more practice writing in general? I will give an idea and see if this fits. If not, just ask more questions or send more info...when the children start to write in Waldorf education we have to remember that Waldorf puts a great emphasis on the process rather than the actual outcome of the lesson so with the 2nd graders I usually provide (either from you own choice or the lesson plans I have) some small part of poetry or something they are interested in to copy. There is a lot of copy work in the beginning - but not "boring" copy work. The child is encouraged to make their copy work a "work of art" and it does not need to be perfect. So you might start with some simple sayings or things he wants to put on his wall. The child writes these things and

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:54:50 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : A question I have is about phonics. I always took such a strong phonics approach with my children, because that is the training I had from being in the public school system. Where does that fall in...or does it?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:55:03 PM EDT] Elizabeth : That's interesting Jennifer. I attend school online through Argosy University.. They don't hold chats like this.. so it always feels like your talking to yourself on the discussion board haha.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:55:55 PM EDT] earthschooling : Elizabeth - don't worry! It is actually normal and encouraged to have more than one conversation going on at the same time. Right now we have about 2 or 3. That is fine!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:56:06 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Elizabeth, your take on Argosy is interesting. I also teach for Concordia which doesn't do this, either. It's a different feel. I have to say that I'm impressed with Kaplan...feels like you are in a classroom with people, just like we all are now. But, I digress... sorry!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:56:30 PM EDT] SarahOR : I have started reading poems to them, the last thing before they go to bed, so maybe, when one strikes him as interesting I could have him copy it out.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:57:45 PM EDT] SarahOR : I don't know if anyone else has kids that like to add a lot of embellishments to their letters, like curliques and swirlies. i have not been discouraging this because--at least they are writing and it gives them great pleasure to look at their 'fancy writing'

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:58:01 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I like Argosy, I've been with them since 06' and I finally graduate this year. But it is very different from a traditional classroom. It's difficult to form any real friendships with classmates or even the professor (completely different topic, but I had to comment.. Sorry!)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:58:46 PM EDT] earthschooling : BTW I do like the fine motor activities. Working in the Montessori classroom for a year really made me adore the "works" they have in the preschool classroom. What I like to do is take the Montessori "works" and put them into a Waldorf classroom - this means letting the child do what they want with the materials. So in a Montessori classroom you have a "work" that would be putting toothpicks in a container with holes. You have to take the work off the shelf and do it in a certain way and then put it back. To use Montessori tools in the Waldorf method you just need to set the "works" out and let the child discover how they want to do them. I almost gave my lead teacher at the Montessori school a "heart attack" when I let the kids do this one day. LOL.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:59:02 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Sorry Kristie...don't you love it when people get off-topic? :) It is nice to bond and chat with each other. Feels like we don't live so far away.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:59:14 PM EDT] earthschooling : YES! SarahOR...and even a favorite line of the poem - it does not have to be the whole poem.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:59:50 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : SarahOR, I like your idea about the poem. I think I'll try this with my older kids, and then eventually, with the youngest.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 12:59:56 PM EDT] earthschooling : Jennifer? That's OK. I was just finding your side convo interesting and wanting to scroll up and see what was happening...

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:00:39 PM EDT] Elizabeth : These fine motor activities are actually done with my daughter through her occupational therapist. This was to work on her delays. But I do understand that it is mostly a montessori method. I don't really like the idea of having one activity for each "task" and not exploring with it

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:01:15 PM EDT] earthschooling : Hmmm...Jennifer and Elizabeth you seem to have a lot of experience with online education! Concordia like the language schools or another Concordia?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:02:24 PM EDT] SarahOR : My daughter who is 8 has a pack of cards called 'Sweet Dreams' cards with beautiful old fashioned children's illustrations and a poem on each one. We have been reading them for probably 2 years. I just realized that the other two might like a little poem before bed too. So we are just reading sweet simple ones like Robert Louis Stevenson.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:02:41 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I'm not too familiar with Concordia. I spent one semester at Univ. of Phoenix and didn't like their format online. Argosy has been great though. You don't get very much support though

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:03:13 PM EDT] Elizabeth : it has good and bad aspects of it, I guess :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:03:17 PM EDT] earthschooling : Oh but I LOVE these fine motor skill "works" and they are Waldorf as long as the child is allowed to explore on their own - even after the activity. There is nothing wrong with showing them "how" to do it and then just leaving it out on the table for them to "play" with (although don't tell a Montessori teacher that). There is an amazing sensual experience with all these little "works" - little rocks, beads, pieces of wood...and the child can pour and put things into other things - I have to admit I had fun with the items too. I especially liked the sorting items with cute little wooden birds and pretty gems to sort into boxes.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:03:27 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Concordia University. They are based in Irvine. I used to teach MA classes to teachers who wanted to become administrators. In-person classes, but then when we moved up here, I started teaching online. Smaller universities do the online learning thing a little differently. Kaplan really has it dialed in.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:03:50 PM EDT] Sarah : Kristie.. in case you missed this question as I know can happen in live chat I had thought about that with doing both (upper and lower case) in one letter drawing. Just wondered if you had any stories or other bits to work with introducing the lower case ?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:04:13 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Great question, Sarah...I would love to have stories.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:04:29 PM EDT] SarahOR : These are the reasons I didn't put my kids in Montessori, I couldn't imagine just playing with something in ONE way. I'm sure it works well for some kids, even maybe mine. but, not me!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:05:13 PM EDT] earthschooling : SarahOH - A lot of the monthly verses in the lesson plans are also suitable for nighttime poems. You can find some in there too. I love your daughter's cards! How wonderful. I just had an idea...how about having your son create some "new" cards for her? Kids LOVE making "playing or collectors" cards - all my kids - all three different temperaments - loved that activity and actually still do it whenever they feel like it. My daughter's most recent activity was to create ID cards for everyone. LOL.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:05:50 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : I love the idea of making playing or collector's cards!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:06:41 PM EDT] earthschooling : SarahUK - I do not have any of those written out yet, but I can look for them and try to put them together. I do need to include some of these in the lesson plans. This is a wonderful thing about these live chats - all the ideas! I already have five ideas from the last live chat - some of which are things I already have in my files I just didn't think to upload them until the last live chat. I will upload these things to the new website.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:07:38 PM EDT] SarahOR : SarahUK when we did lower case letters through oak meadow there was a different story.. or sometimes the same one. I think the hard thing for my kids, since they learned all capitals first was to integrate using capitals and lowercase... they are still getting used to it.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:08:05 PM EDT] earthschooling : SarahOR - I know! It almost killed me being in the classroom and having to follow the Montessori rules. But I learned a lot that year about the difference between the two systems and I do love that age (3-6) so I loved the kids. And they "allowed me" to introduce bread on Fridays and finger-knitting so that was fun :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:08:59 PM EDT] Sarah : that is the transition that I needed to know about. From All capitals to lower case. I followed the steiner approach with some understanding why and prayed I wasn't going to have problems getting her over to lower case !

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:09:33 PM EDT] SarahOR : I remember the story of a was one with a girl named claire and her hair.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:09:36 PM EDT] earthschooling : SarahUK and SarahOR - sometimes I have the children create stories too. Sometimes these stories can be as simple as something they saw that day or that week. Like how about a worm climbing over some hills for the small letter m taken from an experience your child had in the garden finding earthworms? The letter stories can come from real life too.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:09:49 PM EDT] SarahOR : that was curled up on the end like mary tyler moore.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:10:01 PM EDT] SarahOR : a flip.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:10:19 PM EDT] earthschooling : Hi! Who is attendee6?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:11:31 PM EDT] earthschooling : This session will be fun to read through later...

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:11:33 PM EDT] Attendee6 : sorry we were having problems with the connection. This is Cindy.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:12:06 PM EDT] earthschooling : Hi Cindy! Cindy Law?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:12:58 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I have one question about the alphabet, whenever there is a free moment. Don't want to interrupt :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:13:00 PM EDT] Attendee6 : That is me!!! I am trying to see were we are.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:13:37 PM EDT] earthschooling : I think I've replied to everything so far...what was your question Elizabeth? We are all caught up now :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:14:58 PM EDT] earthschooling : BTW if anyone else wants to repeat a question or go into more depth or anything please post...I am not sure how well I am doing with multi-tasking so I might not be answering things completely and think I am...

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:15:23 PM EDT] Elizabeth : My daughter is almost 3 and has been diagnosed with Sensory Integration Disorder and is very likely to be on the Autism spectrum. They will not officially diagnose her until she turns 3. But one thing we are having issues with is that she is extremely eager to learn everything about colors, numbers, shapes and letters. Almost like an obsession. Which they say is normal with kids who have autism. Should I discourage it? I haven't because she is just so eager. But I don't really teach her either

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:16:29 PM EDT] Elizabeth : She is very bright for her age.. But I don't want her to learn everything too quickly

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:19:35 PM EDT] earthschooling : Elizabeth - I would never discourage a child from following their own path to learning - I think a lot of people think that because Waldorf does not start to teach a child the alphabet until they are 7 that they hide the alphabet from them until they are that age LOL :) It is OK for the child to be curious and want to learn. You can answer her questions, give her a block crayon and big paper and let her write what she wants to her hearts content. I would just recommend not starting the formal abstract learning process until later. Right now it may look to you like she is writing and learning the ABCs but what most children are doing when they start early is they are just exploring with shapes and the letters don't really have a deep meaning for them yet. They may even "know" all their let

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:20:27 PM EDT] earthschooling : If she finds this process comforting it would be even more encouraged. Sometimes children in the Autism spectrum find organizing things very comforting.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:20:46 PM EDT] earthschooling : I can see now why she would enjoy some of the Montessori works!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:22:05 PM EDT] Elizabeth : She hasn't started writing. But she recognizes several uppercase letters. She knows all her shapes and colors too. She absolutely loves to learn about those things

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:22:11 PM EDT] Elizabeth : it makes her giddy lol

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:22:18 PM EDT] earthschooling : Hmmm...somehow what I wrote above got cut off. What I mean to say was "sometimes they may even "know" their letters before they are 7 but they are not ready to really "know" them in a deep sense until that 7 year change...and that change may happen at a different time for your daughter.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:23:08 PM EDT] Elizabeth : thank you so much for your advice. I felt like I was doing something wrong because she had learned so much. She just absorbs everything

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:24:28 PM EDT] earthschooling : This is fine. Let her have fun! In this case the Waldorf method would encourage her to continue having fun with it and encourage you to listen to her and be with her and watch how she is experiencing the world. Someone teaching outside the Waldorf method, on the other hand, would see their child pointing out a letter and instead of listening and letting the child explore and experience that joy they would say "Good job DD! Now do you know how to say that letter? Can you tell me three things that start with that letter?"

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:25:55 PM EDT] earthschooling : There is a difference between sharing your child's experience and leading it. I guess that is what I am trying to say. When the child is in the early childhood years it is all about them working with us (like cooking with us, copying

what we are doing) and us "being" with them and letting them "be" without imposing a lot of outside formal education.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:26:32 PM EDT] Elizabeth : that makes perfect sense. Thank you for helping me with that.. I was concerned about it. I feel better now :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:27:07 PM EDT] earthschooling : Yay!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:27:14 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Kristie, thank you for reminding us about this. It's important for us to relax a bit, and realize that the child is learning when they are doing things alongside with us. It's not so much teaching them, as doing with them in the early years. I transitioned in this with my youngest this past year and it was wonderful! Now, with 1st grade, I'm feeling like it's time to start going back to more of a teaching mode.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:28:21 PM EDT] earthschooling : I remember this being the most "aha" moment for me in Waldorf education. I was so busy and overworked and overwhelmed as a new mama I was thrilled to discover that just letting my child do things with me was education LOL :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:28:42 PM EDT] earthschooling : I think that one change changed our lives.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:29:37 PM EDT] earthschooling : BTW I am trying to figure out a way to make the chat box bigger for next time.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:29:49 PM EDT] Sarah : "Can you tell me three things that start with that letter?" OPPPSS still obviously still have lots of "state school" in me to undo ! Thanks Kristie for sharing. I am still getting my head around Waldorf / Steiner.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:29:51 PM EDT] earthschooling : I think it would be easier to read if it was full screen.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:30:16 PM EDT] Sarah : Chat box.. oh that would be great if it could be the main box when you are not using it to show us something.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:30:23 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Full screen would be great.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:30:28 PM EDT] earthschooling : LOL! I know! My mom was big on pushing me early and it took me a long time to get out of that way of thinking.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:30:58 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Sarah, your comment made me laugh! Yes, we do tend to "teach" our children the way that we were taught. It's a bit of a detox process to let some of that go.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:32:00 PM EDT] Sarah : I was very academic and competitive. I started school young and was reading really early. Gifted classes etc.. OH it is SO HARD to do it any other way. My mother things I am ruining my children. As they are 8 and 7 and my 8 year old only started reading about 6 months ago.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:32:09 PM EDT] earthschooling : Now I more follow my child's lead on some things. Of course as they grow older there is more formal teaching...but in the early childhood I would follow more of their lead and even now if my youngest daughter wants to write a book and publish it (yah...you're talking to the editor that is way behind deadline here LOL) then I am happy to let formal schooling go for a bit...but then that is more of an Earthschooling or Waldorf Unschooling method...

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:32:21 PM EDT] Sarah : things ---- THINKS I meant

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:34:57 PM EDT] Elizabeth : Jennifer, I completely agree with you. Especially when you start to feel in competition with other mothers. It's just been the norm to push children earlier. Which is sad

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:35:04 PM EDT] earthschooling : This reminds me of something that is part of my history. One reason I was so drawn to Waldorf was that it was a healing for the way I was educated. I was pushed through "gifted" classes my entire life and always got "A"s but do you know what? I never really felt I knew anything until I was allowed to go off on my own and really experience things. THAT was when my real education started. So I had these large gaps in learning - everything I know came from being re-taught so many things. And despite everyone's efforts to get me to complete worksheets I really learned most of my math from board games. To this day I still can see those Quinto tiles in my head when I add anything that ends in a 5!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:35:15 PM EDT] Elizabeth : It takes some getting used to in order to change that idea in your head

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:35:32 PM EDT] earthschooling : This competition aspect is so difficult.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:35:51 PM EDT] earthschooling : This is why it is so refreshing and important to make connections with other moms on the same path

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:36:17 PM EDT] SarahOR : I learned in kids yoga teacher training that kids with SID like body oriented stuff she might like to 'make the letters' with her body or run them or pat them on to your back, again without pressure to 'know what they mean' if she likes letters.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:36:34 PM EDT] earthschooling : And this competition feeling never seems to stop pressing upon us. When they were little it was "does your child sleep through the night"

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:36:34 PM EDT] Elizabeth : it really is. I am so thankful to have found other like-minded parents

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:36:50 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : So, if my youngest already reads, and I'm going to start the year off with just the letters...at what point would it be fine for him to start reading words, sentences, etc.? He does it on his own without prompting, but I still want to do the Waldorf letter approach with him.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:37:15 PM EDT] Elizabeth : Sarah, that makes perfect sense.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:37:52 PM EDT] earthschooling : And then it was "do they know how to read?" and now (mine are 10, 12 and 14) it is "So what activities is your child in?" Someone I know just took her daughter to NY for a summer camp in Broadway and posted to her FB about her daughter getting a "call back" for a Broadway show. She is 8. Ok, now I felt a tinge of competition there...LOL.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:37:56 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Oh, don't get me started on the sleeping through the night thing! So silly. My kids slept with us and woke up every couple of hours to breastfeed all night. I got wonderful sleep this way. :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:39:16 PM EDT] earthschooling : The only reason I felt a twinge of guilt was b/c my daughter wants to be an actress/model so for a few moments there I felt like a failure. Then, all it took was me seeing my daughter again to remind myself that that is sooooo far from true. She is an amazing person of course and will accomplish whatever she wants at the right time.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:39:17 PM EDT] SarahOR : I don't sleep through the night!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:39:34 PM EDT] earthschooling : SarahOR - LOL! Me Neither :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:41:18 PM EDT] Elizabeth : I wish I did

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:41:29 PM EDT] SarahOR : I think the competition pressure has started to feel more heavy for me now that my kids are ALL beyond early childhood stuff (okay all but baby in the belly) I mean, when your 4th grader just doesn't like to write but does all this

amazing other stuff and Grandparents (or whoever) seem to be asking and urging and wondering it is really hard to stay with that, 'when he finds something interesting to write about, he will write' notion.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:41:57 PM EDT] SarahOR : my dad always says, 'Don't should on yourself

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:42:09 PM EDT] earthschooling : Jennifer...it would be best to have him just work with the letters this year. If he wants to start reading and picks up a book and starts reading that is fine, but I would not encourage starting any formal education in it by giving him "reading assignments" each week or anything. Although since you are doing "year round" education you might find towards the end of the year or somewhere in the middle he may be begging for that...when it gets to that point ask me again. There are always the "guidelines" and then there are those children who don't fit into the "guidelines".

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:42:41 PM EDT] SarahOR : sometimes it's hard not to 'should' on our kids or listen to the 'shoulds' of others.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:43:13 PM EDT] SarahOR : Jennifer my six year old really wanted to read last year

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:43:18 PM EDT] earthschooling : My roommate always says "Don't say SHOULD - say COULD" - that way you feel like you have all these options, you are in control - you are making the choices. I like that.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:43:49 PM EDT] SarahOR : she already knew her letters just from hanging out around with the older two. but we started doing the letter stories

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:43:57 PM EDT] SarahOR : and moved on into the lower case when we finished those

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:44:15 PM EDT] SarahOR : and she's reading all sorts of stuff now. She just wishes there were more Little Bear books.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:45:01 PM EDT] earthschooling : The other problem we all encounter is that it is becoming more and more rare that a child is not exposed to so many things that encourage early learning. In Steiner's time books were a luxury and a person owned a few. Now, we all have bookcases full of books.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:45:14 PM EDT] earthschooling : Love little bear!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:46:02 PM EDT] Elizabeth : In regards to reading, while we're on the subject.. My daughter always begs for more stories at bedtime. I have read in many places to only focus on one story. But she always wants 3 or 4 books. She has always loved books. Is it best to just stick to one?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:46:16 PM EDT] SarahOR : Even though we have bookcases full of books and read a lot and she knew all the letters she still loved being 'taught' through those stories. We're only about half way through the lower cases.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:49:51 PM EDT] earthschooling : Of course with books laying around all over our children are going to want to read early. I have to go a little outside of Waldorf here and say that you will have to take each child and decide what is best for them. On one hand it is almost like teasing them to show them 100 books and then say "you can't read yet". If you really don't want them to read then you have to keep them in an environment without books...but few people do that. So some children who want to read early will want to read. But at the same time reading is a process. Once again, there is a difference between "reading" and "Waldorf reading". A child can pick up books and read the words and the letters but there is a deeper part of reading that they may not be ready for until later. So a child could start reading early, b

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:50:20 PM EDT] earthschooling : Hmm...got cut off again...I will retype...

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:51:56 PM EDT] earthschooling : So a child could start reading early but they will just be exploring and discovering on their own. It will be YOU, the teacher, that LATER brings in concepts of "so what was that book about?", comprehension, grammar (G3) and the deeper aspects of reading. So there is "reading the words" and then there is "READING" with full comprehension and awareness. The second is what you are teaching - I would wait until later in 1st grade or 2nd grade for that later part.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:52:42 PM EDT] earthschooling : Just realized the meeting ends in 5 minutes...I could keep chatting all day but I have another meeting at 1:30 ;(

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:53:02 PM EDT] earthschooling : And then of course...more work on the website :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:53:21 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Thank you for everything...this has been wonderful! :)

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:53:25 PM EDT] earthschooling : Anyone have some last questions? Or good-byes?

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:53:32 PM EDT] Sarah : Thanks Kristie for the insight and suggestions.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:53:39 PM EDT] SarahOR : thanks everyone!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:53:42 PM EDT] Elizabeth : no problem Kristie! Thank you so much for organizing these conferences

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:53:47 PM EDT] Jennifer Tan : Good-bye everyone, and thank you for the chatting, info and insight.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:53:54 PM EDT] Elizabeth : It was wonderful to talk to all of you

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:54:02 PM EDT] earthschooling : Bye Jennifer! It is always amazing to me how I think I am going to end up leading some chat or teaching something but I end up learning and enjoying and be inspired so much myself.

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:54:38 PM EDT] earthschooling : I will post this chat as a PDF now if I have some time...great talking to all of you!

[Mon 03 Aug 2009 01:54:40 PM EDT] Elizabeth : Have a wonderful day everyone :)