



Text study

By Jean-Michel Florin, inspired by the method of the IPMT of the Medical Section at the Goetheanum

We propose to practice a fairly rigorous method of study which can help and can also be used in training (for those who train others or lead reading groups).

Rudolf Steiner's spiritual research is based on supersensible experiences which he transmitted in the form of clear concepts in order to make them accessible to the present-day thinking ability of everyone.

The aim of the text work is to go the other way round: from the written text to the unfolding of the ideas and then to the artistic composition, finally reaching the essence and approaching the authentic experience of what is presented.

Preparation

- 1) Reading the text
- 2) The main parts of the text: find out how the text is constructed: how many main parts?

Study

1) **Detailed study:** study the content without interpreting but to understand, reread passages if necessary, see the structure (number of paragraphs, etc.) the incomprehensible elements or those that invite other questions.

2) **The flow:** Follow the succession of thoughts from the beginning to the end of the text: how does each thought follow on from the previous one, where does the thread of thoughts seem to be broken and where is it picked up again, where do new thoughts appear that seem to have no connection with another one placed next to it? What is the common thread? Do we manage to reconstruct the train of thought?

3) **Discovering the composition:** While the first two steps are more about the content and the way it is presented, in the third step we try to grasp the overall composition of the text: what is the relationship between the beginning and the end of the text? Are there several strong points in the text or does it all come to a climax? Do the thoughts follow one another in a fluid manner or are we dealing with thoughts that illuminate one another without direct connection? In this stage, it is a more artistic approach to the overall composition of the text. This offers the possibility of penetrating more deeply into the text as a work of art in order to grasp elements that are immanent to the text and to the set of thoughts presented.

4) **Getting to the essence:** The last stage of comprehension is to try to get to the essence of what is being said.

5) How does the text affect me personally?