

**Interview Questions for Alan Cockerill,
translator of Vasily Sukhomlinsky's *My Heart I Give to Children***

My Heart I Give to Children is an inspiring account of a Ukrainian teacher's holistic approach to the education of thirty-one young children in a rural community recovering from the trauma of war. The book describes extracurricular work during a preschool year and the following four years of primary education.

1. You are a school teacher. What drove you to spend your spare time translating a book written in Russian 50 years ago?
2. What sort of man was Sukhomlinsky? And how should we say his name?
3. One of the people who inspired Sukhomlinsky was the Polish educator Janusz Korczak. Tell us about that.
4. Sukhomlinsky was a communist working 50 years ago, in very different social conditions to those in western democracies. Do you think his work is relevant to teachers in Australia, America or the UK today?
5. In the book, Sukhomlinsky writes 'The great writer and educator Leo Tolstoy was profoundly right when he asserted that that from birth to the age of five, children acquire much more for the development of their intellect, feelings, will and character, than they do from the age of five to the end of their lives.' What did he and Tolstoy mean by that?
6. What is the most important thing readers will learn from *My Heart I Give to Children*?
7. Teachers have a very demanding job and their spare time is precious. Why should they spend time reading this book?
8. When do you find the time to translate?
9. What other educators have inspired you?
10. Who do you think this book will appeal to?
11. Where can people buy the book?

For more information on Sukhomlinsky and *My Heart I Give to Children*, visit the following web pages:

<http://www.ejr.com.au/sukhomlinsky>

<http://www.ejr.com.au/publications>

<http://theholisticeducator.com/sukhomlinsky/>