



*Please note that this is a broad overview and not meant to be a specific picture of exactly what students in any given class will receive. Teachers' expertise in child development, and Waldorf education modify aspects of the curriculum and tailor it to the specific needs of his class as a whole, and of each student.*

### 1st Grade

The morning begins for the first graders with the **group recitation of a poem and morning song**. After the morning exercises of movement, singing, and flute playing, the children go on to what is known as the main lesson period, which occupies the first two hours of the morning, and is devoted to a single subject for two to four weeks. The first main lesson subject is **form drawing** which allows the children to gain confidence working in the two dimensional plane handling crayons, pencils and paper.

**Letter writing** is presented in a lively, pictorial way with the help of fairytales. "S": may be a fairy tale snake sinuously slithering through the grass on some secret errand; the letter sound is revealed in speech, the foundation of language arts. The teacher shows on the blackboard drawing how the letter is embedded in the picture, how perhaps the W is hiding in the drawing of the waves. The children draw the letter in the air with their hands and on the floor as a large pattern to move on with their feet; their whole being participates in the writing experience. Then the children make their own pictures of waves, and then W's, creating an illustrated book as each letter is presented. When the children have mastered the sounds and can name and write them, they are ready for their first **reading experience**. The episodes of a story are illustrated by a series of pictures drawn on the blackboard by the teacher and in notebooks by the children. The class composes short descriptive sentences to accompany each picture. The wording is then copied from the teacher's model. Through these activities the children learn word and sentence structure without conscious effort and have the joy of creating their own illustrated books for reading material.

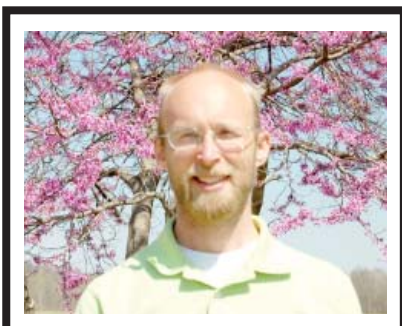


The "W" is hiding in the drawing of the waves.

**Exploration of numbers (arithmetic)** begins with finding the qualities of numbers such as in the riddle, "What is one thing in the world that there can never be more than one of?" (Me!) So the characteristics of one, two, three, etc. are explored in the children's inner experience and in nature. Children take delight in counting, especially when the strong, rhythmic choral-speaking of the numbers is accompanied by stepping and clapping. Through activities the children befriend themselves with the form and movement of the number element, and then begin to practice the four arithmetic processes, always proceeding from the whole to the parts.

**Nature study (science)** takes the form of experiencing the outdoors firsthand in building off the natural sense of wonder inherent in every child's interaction with Mother Nature. Through vivid, imaginative stories children are also drawn into the natural world and recounting the signs and changes of the seasons.

The class teacher weekly guides lessons in **modeling** with beeswax and clay and **painting** with watercolors. In addition, there are weekly specialty subjects taught by specialty teachers: **music, handwork, foreign language and games/movement**. For 2011-2012, there will be one 3-week block of Eurythmy (artistic movement to gestures, music, poetry and sound).



#### MR. BRET SCHACHT

Bret Schacht was born and raised in Nebraska. He earned his masters degree in Education and Waldorf certification by attending Antioch New England Graduate School in Keene, NH. After a practicum at Christchurch Steiner School in New Zealand, Mr. Schacht taught second grade at White Mountain Waldorf School in North Conway, NH before returning to the midwest to teach at Prairie Moon Waldorf School in 2006. Mr. Schacht has taken one class from 1st-2nd grade through 5th-6th grade, at Prairie Moon and, in 2011, he will be returning to take the incoming 1st grade class.

## 2nd-3rd Grade

At Prairie Moon Waldorf School, grades are combined due to small class sizes, allowing for a healthy social experience. They receive separate activities during individual work sessions, to maintain developmentally appropriate academic curriculum for students. When working together, a greater sense of community is built as older students help the younger students in learning concepts and skills.

### 2nd Grade

**English** now becomes a special subject assigned its share of main lesson periods. Based again on the spoken languages, fables satisfy the children's deep interest in the animal kingdom while legends offer lofty striving and highlight the noblest human qualities. These fables and legends now become the focus of writing material. The children learn **ursive** writing by joining up the printed letters of last year. The flowing script illustrations, far more truly than printing, the movement of the breath as it streams through sound after sound and links them together in smooth continuity.

In **arithmetic**, the children carry out more complicated operations with the four processes. Imaginative stories still form the basis of these problems. Through rhythmic counting accompanied by accented clapping and movement of the whole body, they learn to count by twos, threes, fours and fives and can begin learning the multiplication tables.

**Nature study** continues in connection with poetry, legends and imaginative descriptions of natural processes.

**Knitting** is continued and small projects of the children's own creation always observe an important principle: that handwork products can be useful and functional as well as beautiful.

### 3rd Grade

Quickened physical growth takes place during this transition period in which the age of dream is passing and a new age is beginning to dawn. Now there is shifting emphasis as the child's relation to the world around him changes: to the extent to which the child feels separate from the world he seeks knowledge of it and his studies will now have a more realistic, practical character.

In the transition to realism, **social studies** are now introduced into the main lesson. The children learn how the **kingdoms of nature** mutually support and complete one another. They visit the farm for concrete experience of the interdependence, contrasting their homes with those of other times, people and climates. All teaching is done through the teacher's spoken word and direct experience from excursions, thus keeping the learning warm and human.

**Arithmetic** becomes practical, applied to "real life situations" such as measuring, cooking and money. Rhythmic reciting and stepping of tables continues with added mental gymnastics.

Stories and poems of the Old Testament dealing largely with real persons and happenings whose drama parallel the 8-year-old's own experiences are the children's first introduction to **history**. Their own illustrated book soon emerges from the Old Testament drama with stories retold in the children's own words.

**Grammar** is introduced with liveliness and humor by acting out stories in which the children can experience the contrast between doing words, naming words and describing words. **Spelling** receives much attention.

**ALL STUDENTS: Painting, drawing, and modeling** continue in connection with all main lessons rather than as a separate period. In music they begin to learn notation. **Foreign language, singing and flute lessons** continue to be taught for all students in the class unifying these first three years is the child's need for living pictures requiring the teacher to become an artist-educator, developing in the child the capacity for inward picturing out of which a thought is born. Stories are the teacher's chief means of keeping learning alive and engaging. For 2011-2012, there will be one 3-week block of Eurythmy.



### MR. JIM ROME

A master teacher with over 30 years of teaching experience in both public and private school settings, Jim's most recent work has been at New York Elementary, in Lawrence, Kansas. He has been teaching First Grade for the past seven years at New York Elementary, and Second and Third Grade there for the seven years before that. Jim is retiring from public school this year and is excited to begin his new journey in education as a Waldorf School teacher: "I've had a career-long belief that each child is unique and should be taught at his or her developmental level. This can often mean that it is better to wait for the child to be ready than to push the child into a preconceived mold. I see this respect for the child as a strong current at Prairie Moon." He began playing the banjo while still in college and has brought his banjo into the classroom, integrating it into the daily rhythm of his class. Jim has a natural affinity with the Waldorf model and will begin his Waldorf training this summer in preparation for taking the class in the fall.



## 4th-5th Grade

The **4th grade students** are more self-confident as their perception of world sharpens, but the experience of separation from their surroundings can be painful. They begin to form their own personalities in response to their experience to the world, choosing qualities that go into their characters.

**History:** The study of the state's history focuses on the people who created the culture. The study starts with the first Kansans, Native Americans and includes field trips. Study continues with early settlers, emphasizing the importance of human deeds. Also covered are local and natural resources.

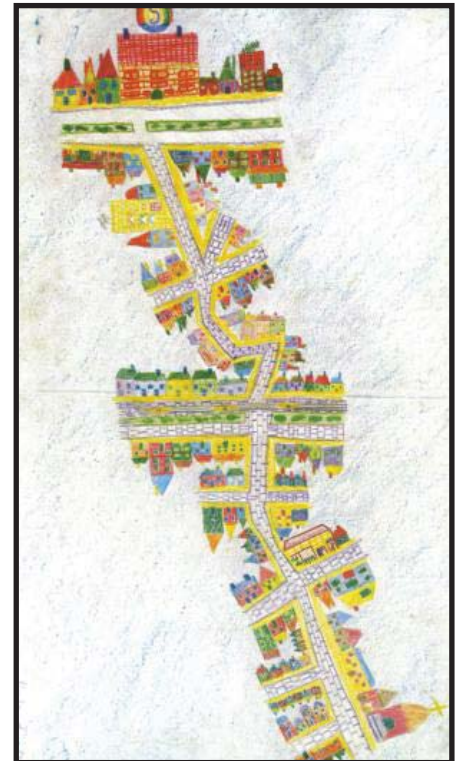
**Literature:** Norse myths contain conscious choice. Gods are portrayed as individuals with distinct personalities: Loki showing the consequences of amoral cleverness; Siguna's compassion; Odin giving an eye to drink from Mimir's well to gain wisdom and spiritual vision. These myths give children strength to face challenges that may seem overwhelming.

**Geography:** The study of local geography starts with the students' own bodies and expands to the four points of compass. Students make maps of their classroom, school, neighborhood, city, and state. They may also participate in orienteering.

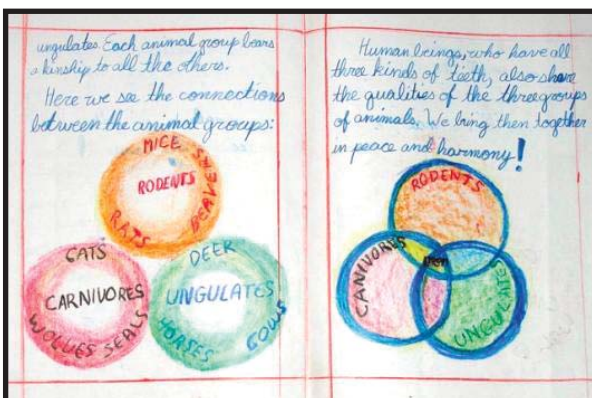
**English and Grammar:** The curriculum concentrates on reading, writing, grammar, spelling, letters (business and personal), poetry, speech, drama, and creative writing. Grammar specifically covers syntax, punctuation, tenses and composition. Students complete written and oral book reports.

**Arithmetic:** Fractions are the primary focus of the 4th grade math curriculum. Cutting up apples, baking and cutting pies, and pizzas, are all ways of creating parts of a whole as a visual experience of fractions before forming mental concepts. Additionally, these concepts are covered in the curriculum: addition, subtraction, multiplication, reduction and expansion of fractions, changing improper fractions into mixed numbers, prime numbers, factoring, long division, weights and measures, and drill work.

**Science:** Students will complete the lesson block on humans and animals, which covers the relationship between the human and animal kingdom. The students find strength and comfort in the comparison of the one-sidedness of various animals with well-roundedness of humans. They create the figure of human form and then follow a detailed study of forms and habitats of animals (beavers, bats, lions, foxes, etc.) through poetry, clay modeling and play-acting to feel fascinating skills and qualities that animals possess. The students see the unique and responsible position humans hold.



Students draw their first maps.



The study of zoology begins.

**Music:** Students continue to improve singing and recorder playing, and will continue their string lessons.

**Artistic work:** Cross stitch is added to the handwork so students can experience wholeness from many crossings. Knotted form drawings, inspired by Nordic and Celtic motifs, are added to drawing. Animal forms and geometric shapes are modeled in clay and/or beeswax. Students begin painting on dry paper. For 2011-2012, there will be one 3-week block of **Eurythmy**.

**Language Arts:** Students begin the study of grammar.

## 4th-5th Grade Continued

**Fifth grade students** view the world in a synthesized rather than analytic manner. They show grace and ease in their physical movements. They cognitively approach a problem in a more realistic, reasoning manner as their intellectual faculties emerge. For 2011-2012, there will be one 3-week block of **Eurythmy**.

**History:** Back to the dawn of human civilization, in ancient India, Persia, Greece, and Egypt, through mythology, music, architecture, and art, the students discover the roots of western culture. They gain a sense for the differences between each cultural epoch so they understand how human consciousness has evolved through time.

**Literature:** The literature supports the historical block of ancient history through mythologies and poetry. The students recite and sing sacred and secular texts, using primary source material whenever possible.

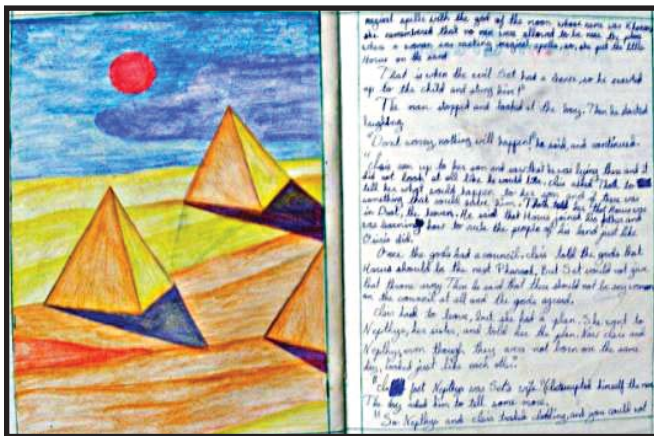
**Geography:** Geography also complements the study of ancient cultures. In addition, students study the geography of the North American continent, cultural and physical, which includes the study of Native Americans. There is a sense of great contrasts: the North American continent from north to south and east to west: human and economic use of resources in contrast. Students gain a feeling of relatedness with fellow human beings living in all other parts of the world.

**English and Grammar:** Students review previous work and add active and passive verbs, subject, predicate, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, parts of speech, syntax, punctuation, phases, direct and indirect objects and compound verb tenses. Word families are emphasized in reading activities. Different writing styles include essays and short stories.

**Science:** Botany, the study of plant life, shows students the order and structure in the natural world.



Students study the Odyssey.



Egyptian Pyramids are studied in Geometry

**Arithmetic:** The focus is on factoring, finding averages, decimals, word problems, and situations involving measurement of time, linear and volumetric measures, and measurements of weight, ratio, calculation of area, and reciprocals.

**Artistic work:** Form drawing is emphasized. In support of the ancient culture study, braided and geometrical forms from Egyptian and Greek artifacts are recreated. Triangles and hexagons are added to drawings. Painting continues. Greek columns, vases, and tablets are sculpted in clay.

**Games:** 5th graders work towards a Greek Pentathlon, which features the javelin, discus, running, long jump and wrestling. In May, they compete against other area Waldorf schools.

### MR. JARED COADY

Jared was born in North Texas, grew up in Oklahoma, and is looking forward to returning to his prairie roots. He has an Associate's degree in Horticulture and a Bachelor's degree in International and Area Studies. Jared has been teaching in Taiwan for the past five years and is in his second year of teaching at the Leichuan Waldorf School in Taichung, Taiwan. Jared is fluent and literate in Mandarin Chinese, and his teaching experience includes Games, English, Gardening, Life and Ethics, and Main Lessons focusing on science and history. Regarding his new position at Prairie Moon, Jared says, "The international exchange of ideas has been an ever-present part of Waldorf education. Until now these innovations have mostly ebbed out from the West, however, it is now time that the tide can flow back. Thus, I look forward to bringing these new methods home to the Great Plains, and to sharing my experiences abroad with the children, parents, and faculty of Prairie Moon." Jared has taken part in a number of Waldorf education workshops and school sponsored teacher trainings while in Taiwan and will begin working toward his Waldorf teacher certification and Master's degree this summer upon returning to the States.

