

It is the middle of July here at Taproot and I have been eating fresh lettuce, peas, and black raspberries. Now the tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers are here and they are so good!! One forgets how good really fresh vegetables are!

It is also time to begin planning for the fall, whether you are homeschooling or living your life in other ways!! So I am including an article here about organization and planning for a rhythm in the home. I hope it will be helpful to everyone. If you are not homeschooling, you can just leave those steps out!

Before I get started, I would just like to remind you that there are still spaces in the Taproot Waldorf Teacher Training August 14-17. For more information and registration:

<http://www.waldorfwitoutwalls.com/seminars/2008/08-14-teacher-training/>

Our Taproot Harvest Family Weekend will be October 10-13. Save the date, more details to follow!

Also I refer you to a great article link sent to me by Eric Fairman, about less time for students on computers!!

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1034714/Pupils-need-spend-time-computers-art-craft-improve-brainpower.html#comments>

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Planning your daily life involves the organization of space and time, two things which exist only on earth. One of the goals of Waldorf education is the celebration of life on earth, with all of its seasonal rhythms, on a yearly, monthly, weekly and daily basis. We honor time and space. We breathe in and out, just as the earth does.

I have forms for doing the following steps which I can email to you as attachments at no charge. Please write and ask for them and I will send them right out.

With each of the following steps, make a quick draft. Then wait a few days for more ideas to come before you finalize it. It is important that you include as many festivals, chores, etc., as you can think of so that it is more likely that you will be able to keep to this plan during the year.

STEP 1 - Take a few minutes to write down your family goals and ideals: physical, mental, spiritual. What qualities do you wish to instill?

STEP 2 - Now, get a big piece of paper, or put some smaller ones together so that you can see all the months and weeks of the year. Block in any vacation or travel time, and festivals or celebrations.

Here, if you are homeschooling you will need a list of main lesson blocks to be covered at your child's Waldorf grade level. (See list below) Block these main lessons into your year, keeping in mind the appropriateness of the seasons.

STEP 3 - Now think about your week. Get a piece of paper to block out a weekly schedule. Do you want to have a formal lesson time 4 days a week? or 5? Allow one day for socializing or field trips?

STEP 4 - What chores do YOU have to do each week? List them.

Don't forget to give yourself some time to meditate and grow spiritually yourself. A large part of the effectiveness of a teacher is the example set. Are you a growing, learning, human being? And, you will need the stamina that daily meditation provides, to stay strong in your purpose.

Be thorough with your list. (laundry, bill paying, cleaning, cooking, baking, gardening, cleaning, LESSON PLANNING, etc.). You may want to sleep on this list before you move on to the next step. Can your child be included in some of these?

STEP 5 - Put these chores on the weekly schedule. Choose which days you want to have formal lessons and which days are days off or social/field trip days.

STEP 6 - Think about your child(ren). When is she at her best? When are you at your best? When is Dad at his best? When is Dad gone? When do you need to be away? When do each of you waken? Go to bed? When do you plan best? When do each of you need to be available to the telephone? When can you turn off the telephone and the doorbell. (There is nothing that will destroy the magic of a good lesson quicker than the interruption of a telephone or doorbell!)

STEP 7 - Now, based on your findings to the above questions, make a daily schedule for your school days starting when the first one of you gets up and ending when the last one goes to bed. Don't forget to refer to your weekly schedule as you do this!

Your formal lesson time will look something like this:

## BASIC WALDORF 'SCHOOLTIME' SCHEDULE

(Time is indicated from 0 so you can see how long each activity should take)

0:00 – Light candle

Morning Verse (Grades 1-4):

The Sun with loving light

Makes bright for me each day.

The Soul with spirit power

Gives strength unto my limbs.

In Sunlight shining clear,

I reverence, O God,

The strength of humankind,

Which Thou so graciously

Has planted in my soul,

That I, with all my might,

May love to work and learn.

From Thee come light and strength.

To Thee rise love and thanks.

Morning Verse for grades 5-8:

I look out into the world

Wherein there shines the Sun

Where glimmer all the stars,

Where lie the silent stones

The plants that live and grow

The beasts that feel and move

Where man in soul creates

A dwelling for the spirit.

I look inward to the soul

That lives within my being

The spirit of God is weaving

In sunlight and in soul-life

In heights of world without

In depths of soul within.

Spirit of God to thee

I turn myself in seeking

That strength and grace and skill

For learning and for work

May live and grow in me.

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Sing

Play recorder

0:20 – Form Drawing (once a week)

0:50 – Movement games, just for fun or for math reinforcement, using beanbags, rhythm sticks, jump rope, etc.

1:10 – Main lesson (lasts two to four weeks)

Day one – present story and paint or draw picture for main lesson book (or make a model, or cook or do a project of something in the story. A photo may be included in the main lesson book.)

Day two – review the story and summarize it with your child, so that he/she can copy it into the main lesson book (for grade 1 a dramatization of the story is in order, since they are not writing yet)(older children will not need to copy yours, but should make a rough draft first, and then copy that into their books.) They read aloud what they have written for this lesson and the previous one. Clean up.

(Repeat days one and two with other stories in the lesson.)

2:40 – Closing verse: There lives in me an image of all that I can be.

Until I have become it, my heart is never free.

Take a break

3:00 – Handwork

3:30 - Finish for the day

If you have several children of different ages, you may want to do the opening and some of the singing together and then divide up, letting one child play or do handwork while you tell the story to the other one, and vice versa.

Of course at home you may want your bedtime reading to be something to do with what is being studied as well. This schedule is not written in stone, but includes what should be included each day. Remember that a daily rhythm should be a help, not a hindrance, so be a little flexible, but not too flexible!

## Curriculum Summaries by Grade

### Grade 1

Fairy tales (2 main lesson blocks)

Introduction of letters through fairy tales (2 main lesson blocks)

Math (3 or 4 main lesson blocks): quality of numbers, whole numbers, counting to 144, the four

processes using numbers 0-24, symbols of four processes, cardinal numbers to 100, ordinal numbers to 20, odd and even numbers, addition and subtraction facts to 20, multiplication tables 2x, 3x, 10x, Roman numerals, in all math using as much movement and rhythm as possible.

Handwork: ongoing throughout year: Make knitting needles and simple project

Form drawing – once a week

Pentatonic recorder as a part of circle time

Foreign language, but only if you can teach it through games, songs and food. No grammar and NO

TAPES!

### Grade 2

Fables, Aesop's, Celtic, and others, Legends of Saints, local folklore. Three or four main lesson blocks.

Math: whole numbers, times tables through 12, number patterns, column adding, situation problems, time, money. Four main lesson blocks

Handwork: ongoing throughout year, Knitting and crochet

Form Drawing – once a week

Pentatonic recorder as a part of circle time

Foreign language, but only if you can teach it through games, songs and food. No grammar and NO TAPES!

### Grade 3

Old Testament stories

Native Americans

Homes and shelter

Clothing, fabric and fiber

house building

farming

Math (3 main lesson blocks spread over the year)- whole numbers,

carrying and borrowing, times table

practice, long division, number patterns, weights and measures, telling

time, problems in time, money calculations, prime numbers

Handwork – (ongoing throughout year) crochet: animals, purses, shaping

Form Drawing – once a week

Diatonic recorder should be started during this year as part of opening circle time

Foreign language but only if you can do it through games, songs and food. No grammar and NO TAPES

### Grade 4

Man and Animal

Norse Myths

Local Geography

Grammar (included in main lesson work)

Math (three or four blocks)- Review arithmetical operations, free hand geometric drawing, times tables,

averages, long division, factoring, proofs, word problems, mental arithmetic.

Handwork -(ongoing throughout year) creative counted cross stitch embroidery

Form Drawing – once a week

Diatonic recorder at opening circle time. It is nice to begin playing duets.

Foreign language – at this point some simple grammar may be introduced: parts of speech

## Grade 5:

Ancient History (two or three blocks)

Botany (could tie in with third grade farming or fabric and fiber if you are working with third grade as well.)

Zoology – (two blocks) lesser known animals, adaptation of animal to environment

Geography of the US

Math – (3 main

lesson blocks) decimals,

fractions, mixed numbers, reciprocals, metric system, map

references, meter reading, thinking backwards mentally with math

operations, finding simple laws and patterns in math. Many of these topics may be covered within the farming and building blocks.

Handwork – 4 needle knitting, socks

Form Drawing - once a week - freehand geometric drawing

Diatonic recorder at opening circle time

Foreign language – more grammar may be introduced at this time.

## Grade 6:

History - The fall of Troy through Roman history, The life of Christ, Crusades, life of Mohammed,

Islamic people, Medieval life: the Cloister, the castle, the city. Three main lesson blocks.

Grammar and spelling - integrated within other main lessons.

Geography - The Americas and the World. Two main lesson blocks

Science - Physics, Geology, Astronomy (geocentric). Three main lesson blocks.

Math - Percentage, ratio, proportion, profit and loss, simple interest, introduce algebraic equations,

estimation, geometric drawing with ruler and compass, string designs, visual discovery of geometric properties to be proven later.

Art - black and white drawing, shadows, painting landscapes, color contrasts, spectrum.

Handwork - sewing stuffed animals, work aprons, etc. and wood carving.

Recorder

Foreign language – speaking, reading and grammar

## Grade 7

History and Literature - 3-4 main lesson blocks - 1400-1700 - The Age of Exploration, The Age of

Discovery, Reformation, Renaissance. Biographies, Arthurian Legends, Poetry: all forms and their names (write some).

Geography of the World, especially Africa and Europe. Study of tides, weather, map reading,

terminology of geography.

Science - four blocks

Physics

Chemistry of Combustion

Astronomy (heliocentric)

Health and Nutrition

Math - three main lesson blocks

Geometric, two dimensional drawing up to the Pythagorean theorem and the derivation of

formulae for the area of squares, circles and triangles.

Perspective drawing.

General math - Business math, graphing, Roots, Powers, Introduction of Algebra

Art, music, language, handwork, woodwork

## Grade 8

History - two blocks - 1700 to the present: industrial revolution, colonialism, American

History emphasizing the life of people, including lots of biography: Shakespeare,

Napoleon, Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, inventors, etc.

Literature - two blocks – The short story, a study of the form elements (plot, character,

mood, scene and setting) and many good examples, culminating with the writing of an original story by the student. Study of a Shakespeare play with a presentation.

Science – three blocks - Physics, Chemistry, Physiology

Geography of the world – one block - continents, be sure you've covered them all. This could be

integrated with the studies of history and might be more meaningful that way

Math – two blocks - Practical mathematics, mensuration, set theory, percent, signed

numbers, equations, number bases, 3-dimensional geometric drawing, solid geometry, volumes of solids, theorems.

Art, music, language, handwork, woodwork

## RESOURCES

You can google ANY SUBJECT!!

Your local library is part of a large system. You can find almost any book you want online, in the middle of the night if you want, and then pick it up at your local library.

Rudolf Steiner Archive <http://www.rsarchive.org/> Many of Steiner's books are online in their entirety

Many Waldorf books are now to be found used on Amazon.com, sometimes very cheaply

Out of print books can be found at the Baldwin Project. They are organized by Waldorf main lessons at [mainlesson.com](http://mainlesson.com) Many are free and many more can be downloaded inexpensively as ebooks.

Another source of newly printed books is Bethlehem books [bethlehembooks.com](http://bethlehembooks.com)

And another: Whole Spirit Press: [wholespiritpress.com](http://wholespiritpress.com)

Rudolf Steiner Library, R.D. 2, Box 215, Ghent, NY 12075. 518-672-7690.

Waldorf Without Walls online at [www.waldorfwithoutwalls.com](http://www.waldorfwithoutwalls.com)

Bob and Nancy's Services online at [www.bobnancy.com](http://www.bobnancy.com)

Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) at 916-961-0927 for an annotated bibliography (They also have an individual membership for which one receives their excellent journal, Renewal.)

Waldorf Early Childhood Association has an excellent list of publications as well as a list of material suppliers and a twice yearly newsletter. Call them at 301-460-6287, online at [www.waldorfearlychildhood.org](http://www.waldorfearlychildhood.org)

Rudolf Steiner College Bookstore, 916-961-8729, for a Waldorf Education & Curriculum Resource Guide, online at [www.steinercollege.edu](http://www.steinercollege.edu)

Barbara Dewey's Year-Round Consulting Service  
Provides curriculum planning and support  
<http://www.waldorfwithoutwalls.com/consulting/>

Path of Discovery by Eric Fairman

Curriculum guides for each grade, 1-8

To obtain guides for all the grades, contact Nancy Blanning,

[wblanni@comcast.net](mailto:wblanni@comcast.net) or <http://www.bobnancy.com/>

Christopherus Homeschool Resources

consulting, publications, networking, blog

<http://www.christopherushomeschool.org>

A Little Garden Flower

Publications, networking, blog

<http://www.alittlegardenflower.com/>

Live! Education

Waldorf-inspired curriculum

<http://www.live-education.com/>

## SUPPLY LIST

Paper, Scissors, Stone has a wonderful catalog of Waldorf and homeschool supplies. Call toll free 888-644-5843, online at [www.waldorfsupplies.com](http://www.waldorfsupplies.com)

A Child's Dream <http://www.achildsdream.com/>

Mercurius is the main supplier of Waldorf schools [www.mercurius-usa.com/](http://www.mercurius-usa.com/)

Song of the Sea has good quality pentatonic recorders for about \$10.  
Address: 47 West St. Bar Harbor, ME 04609, phone, 207-288-5653, online at <http://www.songsea.com> (Diatonic recorders are available at most music stores.

For painting:

1. Water color concentrate (Stockmar or Stone)  
3 primary colors will, when mixed, give you true secondary colors  
Carmen Red (Stockmar),  
Red rose (Stone)  
Ultramarine blue (Stockmar)  
Phthalo blue (Stone)  
Lemon yellow (Stockmar and Stone)
2. Watercolor paper, good quality
3. #10 brush for each person
4. Paint board (masonite or plexiglass for each person), or a formica tabletop
5. Sponge for each person
6. Quart mayonnaise or canning jars
7. Large, square, paper soaking container at least 15 x 20
8. Baby food jars to store diluted paint

Main lesson books

1. May be purchased or assembled at home.  
If you make your own, buy drawing paper and assemble the pages after you have done  
them with twisty twirlies.  
If you purchase them: get the largest for grades 1-3  
medium, grades 4-5  
small 6-8
2. Block and stick beeswax crayons, 8 colors of each
3. High quality colored pencils for grade 3 and up.
4. Good scissors for each person (I recommend Fiskars for Kids)

### Form Drawing

1. Manila paper 12 x 18 for form drawing (available online from Viking office supply)
2. Chalk board 24" x 48" (You can make one with a piece of masonite and black chalkboard paint)
3. Quality chalk in bright colors (Mercurius or Scissors, Paper, Stone)

### For drama and Dress-up

1. Silks of many colors (Inexpensive silk yardage can be ordered from Sureway Trading Co. 716-282-4887 or Dharma Trading Co. You want pongee, 5 M/M. You can dye it with Procion dyes available from Dharma Trading Co. 800-542-5227 or [catalog@dharmatrading.com](mailto:catalog@dharmatrading.com))
2. Cotton gauze cloths in a rainbow of colors. You can often get this at your local fabric store in the bargain section, especially in the Fall.
3. Beanbags, at least one for each person (these should be handmade by you and the children)

### Math and Handwork

1. Variety of attractive beads or polished rocks to use a "jewels" for math lessons
2. Flattened aquarium marbles for math lessons (pet store or Dollar stores)
3. Varicolored cotton yarn (most craft stores)
4. Wool yarn as needed, not synthetic!
5. Dowels to make knitting needles and crochet hooks
6. Sand paper, coarse, medium, fine
7. Beeswax for polishing knitting needles (see your local beekeeper)

See my book, "Handwork" for more specific project supplies

Keep a box in which you save cardboard, gilded paper, reject paintings, scraps of cloth, thread, needles, buttons, etc., etc....

Barbara S. Dewey, M.S.  
Waldorf Without Walls  
89900 Mill Hill Road, Bowerston OH 44695  
888-269-3038 toll free  
<http://www.waldorfwithoutwalls.com>