



WALDORF  
SCHOOL  
of GARDEN CITY



*Lower School  
Curriculum Guide*



## Our Mission Statement

The Waldorf School of Garden City educates children to meet the world with purpose, gratitude and respect. Our curriculum, inspired by Rudolf Steiner, progresses in accordance with child development, awakening students to the experience of knowledge, strengthening their sense of moral responsibility, and empowering them to act with courage and conviction. The School's aim is to graduate a diverse group of young men and women distinguished by the scope and acuity of their minds as well as the depth and integrity of their character.





## First Grade

The First Grade is a transitional year that both supports the needs of young, playful children and commences their journey into the realm of academic learning and social responsibility. As new skills are being developed, the children are introduced to all the wonders of mathematics, writing, and reading. The students, brought together from different kindergarten experiences, are encouraged to work together and depend on each other as a unified class unit. Good habits are developed when caring for personal and class belongings, individual schoolwork, and their classroom. Respect and kindness in word and deed are expected.

### LANGUAGE ARTS

The Language Arts curriculum is formulated to give the child an imaginative understanding of the letters of the alphabet. Just as in the distant past, mankind communicated through pictures, then symbols, and eventually through abstract letters that formed words; students too progress this way in the first grade.

Through the use of storytelling and picture-making, the children develop a relationship to each of the letters. The foundation for reading is built through exercises in story comprehension, long- and short-term memory development, symbol recognition, phonemic awareness, and proper diction. As the year progresses, the letters and sounds are joined to make words and sentences. It is from these sentences that the students begin to read. Additional exercises in identifying short and long vowel sounds support their developing reading abilities.

### HANDWRITING

Handwriting is the mark that we make in the world to communicate with others. At the Waldorf School of Garden City, beautiful and careful handwriting is encouraged. A great deal of time is spent in the practice of this art. In first grade, students will practice the capital letter forms and use them throughout the year to write in their main lesson books.

### MATH

Mathematics begins right away with lots of counting. Through rhythmic exercises such as clapping, stepping, marching, and jumping, students make their way from 0 to 100 and back again on a regular basis. The multiplication tables are introduced in this way and together the class can “count by” 2, 3, 5 and 10 with ease. Students also play games that help them identify what comes before and after different numbers, and the difference between even and odd. Students may encounter the characters of King Peter Plus, Queen Mary Minus, and their advisors Martha Multiplier and Duke Divide. The qualities of these characters root the four processes (+, -, x, ÷) in students’ memories in an imaginative and colorful way. Stories about these characters and their work in the kingdom of numbers give students plenty of opportunities to write number sentences and practice math computation skills.

## FRENCH

The first grade French lesson starts with a verse followed by a song and rhythmic exercises. Recitation and listening activities are balanced with movement and games. Some basic conversational vocabulary is introduced to the class including body parts, actions, numbers, colors, adjectives and prepositions, fruits, days of the week and months, and animals. Moreover, the students hear and act out stories, such as Boucles D’Or (Goldilocks), Le Bonhomme De Neige (The Snowman), and La Galette (a story similar to The Pancake That Rolled).

## GERMAN

The children are introduced to German by playing circle games, singing songs, and reciting short poems. The vocabulary includes objects in the classroom, animals, toys, fruits, vegetables, clothing items, colors, and numbers. Simple conversational exchanges are practiced. Every lesson begins with a verse and ends with a song or poem.

## PERFORMING ARTS

In the Waldorf School of Garden City, the class play is a yearly event that the class looks forward to with great anticipation. Costumes are simple and archetypal, allowing for the children’s personal expressions to shine through. This intense social exercise allows the students to develop additional skills and capacities not stressed in academic learning such as teamwork, physical self-expression, speech formation, and timing.

## MUSIC

In their first year of music instruction, the students are taught to enjoy and treasure musical sounds. Circle games and seasonal songs prepare the children in a playful way for rules and routines that will be necessary for musical ensemble work in the coming years. Much time and effort are spent on cultivating patience and good listening habits, qualities that are essential for studying an instrument. Songs are mostly taught with simultaneous movements, either indicating pitch or phrasing. The children get to know many verses and rhymes accompanied by gestures or body percussion, as well as games and dances. All movement activities aim to exercise the students’ dexterity and rhythmical ability. Students work with brass tone bars, and master playing the entire range of the pentatonic recorder in a soft, beautiful tone.

## WATERCOLOR PAINTING

In the first grade, the children are introduced to the colors of the rainbow and their different qualities. Students do not paint pictures of things, but rather of activities. Playful color stories describe relationships between the colors and simple compositions help the children develop control in brush and paint handling. Basic principles of color mixing and color theory are taught as well.

## FORM DRAWING

Form drawing is often called “motion come to rest.” The process of form drawing begins with children outlining an image in the air. It then moves to paper where they recreate the shape with the finger on the page. Finally they use a crayon to replicate the form. Rather than accentuating the final form that is created on the page, the teacher stresses the physical or mental movement and activity that occurs prior to when the actual drawing is made. In the first grade these drawings come in two types: geometric and running forms. The geometric forms are static forms such as circles, concentric circles, lemniscates, squares, and star forms. Running forms move across the page in a horizontal or vertical way. Rhythmical stopping and starting and changing directions develop capacities of self control and forethought within the child. These forms might include the path of a falling leaf, the movement of the water as the wind gradually becomes stronger, or an ant walking across a farmer’s field.

## FIBER ARTS

In the beginning of the year, first graders are introduced to the art of European knitting. The main objective is to introduce skills needed for the children to complete a variety of projects. First, the children listen to a complex story about the wool process. By using combinations of imagery and tactile experience, the children discover the woolly coats of sheep; cutting, washing and dyeing of the wool; carting and spinning; and making their own knitting needles. The skills that they learned include: making a slip knot, rolling a ball, casting on and off, knitting the knit stitch and adding a new color. All children will complete a knitted ball. Other projects include hats, water bottle holders, bags, bunnies, and guinea pigs. Knitting is introduced to first graders for several reasons. By developing fine motor skills in the hand it strengthens development in the brain. The action of knitting establishes the eye’s control over the hand and arouses the power of concentration.

It helps the child to strengthen numerical skills by counting the number of stitches and rows. Lastly the child feels a sense of self-esteem and joy through making something both beautiful and practical.

## MOVEMENT

First Grade is a time of building good movement habits and learning how to move together in a group. Group goals include focus and participation, taking turns, moving with control and rhythm, building strength, and joyful expression. The students work with enthusiasm to master challenging locomotion patterns and use a variety of props to develop dexterity.

## EURYTHMY

Eurythmy routines are choreographed to stories and include large solemn gestures as well as small distinctive ones. Fast, rhythmical exercises are also incorporated to develop agility and coordination. The students practice synchronization, as movements done in unison enhances and heightens the effort of the individual.





## Second Grade

Skills and methods of learning that were cultivated in the first year of school are nurtured and developed to a greater degree in the second year. These abilities slowly transform into good habits that are depended upon when the curriculum becomes more demanding. Responsibility for one's belongings becomes responsibility for one's learning. Respect for each classmate and waiting turns to speak or to participate plants the seeds for respect of knowledge and different points of view.

### LANGUAGE ARTS

Much of the Language Arts work follows the same rhythm as first grade with storytelling, picture drawing, and composition writing. Stories of saintly people and animal fables serve as the vehicle for skill development in reading, writing, spelling, speaking, and penmanship. Each story is accompanied by colorful illustrations of events or characters in the stories. The work is continued with a desire to refine handwriting skills and develop new consciousness of sentence structure, summarizing, and finding main themes in the stories. In picturemaking, students continue to think about the elements of a picture and how to best tell the story. Color usage, composition, and proportions are main topics of the curriculum.

### HANDWRITING

In second grade students focus mainly on the upper and lower case letters. The children have the opportunity to write in practice books as well as in their main lesson books. The students are given “liners” to support careful formation of their letters. In time they will write beautifully in their books without the support of the liner.

### MATH

Mathematics classes primarily review the four processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Additional work is completed to lay the foundations of the multiplication tables. The second half of the year is filled with arithmetic of increasing difficulty — place value in addition and subtraction and the algorithms for multiplication and division. Children solve word problems, both as “number sentences” and in written English. Care in writing problems is emphasized in all written work, and careful computation is stressed over speed of calculation. Support for mathematical thinking can come from cooking lessons and crafts projects.

### FRENCH

In the second grade French class, students act out short stories and produce sentences of their own using previously introduced vocabulary. They also recognize patterns in the use of gender (feminine and masculine) and number (singular and plural), as well as the sounds of the French alphabet. As in first grade, lessons are a balance of listening, speaking activities, and games.

### GERMAN

The students focus on identifying and naming familiar objects such as pets, toys, and clothing. Family members, ordinal numbers, and counting to 100 are new topics. The students practice answering short questions in complete sentences. Listening to and acting out several stories and children's books allow the students to improve listening comprehension skills. The lessons incorporate lively games, songs, and recitations.

### DRAMATIC ARTS

Typically the second grade stages a dramatic play for which they practice memorization, fluency, inflection, articulation, and projection. Speech work is enhanced through recitation of seasonal poems and verses.

### MUSIC

During the second year of music instruction, a positive and joyful music experience is cultivated through seasonal songs, games, and various movement activities. While the students learn to listen, observe and participate within the group, they practice many skills that will contribute to harmonious and cooperative music making. Students move from melody to simple harmony in singing, as their repertoire increasingly includes partner songs and simple rounds. Tone and dexterity exercises help the students achieve harmony and fluency on the

recorder. Students start to build and modify their own melodies, recording them on the board as an introduction to music notation. Rhythmical games, partner dances, and various movement exercises are a regular part of class, helping to develop a solid feeling for rhythm.

### PAINTING

Painting subjects in the second grade continues to live in the imaginary realm. Stories about the colors and how they behave with each other help the children enter the world of colors. Students begin to expand their palette to include many more colors in each composition, while still bringing attention to technique and care for materials.

### FORM DRAWING

Form drawing is a process beginning with the students outlining an image in the air and then recreating the shape with the finger on the page. This exercise is meant to stress the physical or mental movement and activity that occurs prior to when the actual drawing is made. In second grade, forms that emphasize symmetry on an axis, mirroring exercises, and above-below exercises along with “running forms” that move across the page horizontally or vertically create the basis for cursive writing and fluidity of thinking.

### FIBER ARTS

Second graders continue to work with the knit stitch while learning the purl stitch, a variation on the knitted stitch that requires increased attentiveness to their work. Children also learn to shape their projects by increasing and decreasing stitches, therefore reinforcing their mathematical and concentration skills. The students also sew and stuff their flat pieces of knitting, and their creation of something three-dimensional expands their ability to think logically.

### MOVEMENT

Rhythmic leaping and coordination exercises are the main focus of movement class in the second grade. These elements increase stamina, grace and body awareness. Students work on group cooperation, focus, and fairness during games and activities aimed to balance speed with control. Coordination combinations, balances and body geography games are used to supplement the running and jumping activities.

### EURYTHMY

The second grade curriculum builds on and strengthens the first year’s foundation. All forms experienced are based on the straight line and curve. In the first grade, the circle and the square are highlighted. In second grade, a more complicated form, the curve of Cassini, is introduced. The children learn the movements for the consonants and vowels more consciously.



## Third Grade

Third graders begin to apply the creativity and imagination from their storybooks into their lessons in woodworking and gardening. Children build playhouses, tree houses, and toy sheds to inspire the dreams and enliven the adventures of future Waldorf students. In our garden, they plant the trees and flowers that will accompany them in their journey through the School. Students are also initiated into the Glen Brook community, as they venture to our extended farm campus for the very first time.

### LANGUAGE ARTS

Once they were merely listeners, using their imaginations to bring others’ words to life. Now they are storytellers themselves, using those same imaginations to set their pencils on fire. Third graders begin to write independently and collaboratively, breaking up the steps of the writing process into gathering and organizing ideas, developing a rough draft, making edits, and publishing. Pieces range from descriptive narratives to objective reporting to lyrical poetry, many inspired by similar compositions that are first read aloud to the students.



## HANDWRITING

Third graders take their first steps into the world of cursive writing.

## OLD TESTAMENT

Third graders begin their study of the Old Testament through stories of the book of Genesis in the Christian Bible, such as the Seven Days of Creation, life in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve's fall from grace, the Ten Commandments, the sibling rivalry of Cain and Abel, and Noah's Flood. Children continue with tales of Moses in Egypt and the flight of the Israelites from the Pharaoh through the Red Sea. Students recreate images from the stories into main lesson books and write short excerpts describing each scene. The third grade also reads plays based on Noah's Ark, and perform *By the Water of Babylon* by Roberto Trostli.

## MATH

Third graders learn to take measures into their own hands and bring King Peter Plus, Queen Mary Minus, Martha Multiplier, and Duke Divide into the practical world. Topics of exploration include linear distances, through the use of rulers and measuring tapes, mass, by way of scale balances, volume, through simple kitchen accessories such as teaspoons and cups, and time, from the seconds, minutes, and hours of clockwork to the days, weeks, months, years, and millennia of calendar work. Third graders also practice the art of bartering by calculating change to make-believe purchases. Regrouping (borrowing), multi-digit multipliers, and long-division are practiced throughout these exercises.

## FRENCH

Third graders continue their study of French through creatively adapted games such as bingo, finger twister, dialogues, and flip-through picture books. Each exercise contains a fun yet effective way of reviewing basic vocabulary include numbers, colors, family members, common adjectives and activities. Oral skills are strongly emphasized and precise pronunciation is cultivated through conversational exercises. Third graders also expand on their vocabulary with the introduction of new adjectives, objects, fruits, vegetables, clothing, family members, verbs and their proper conjugations.

## GERMAN

Students review previously learned vocabulary and grammar as well as learn new vocabulary related to farms, fairy tales, and the months of the year. The class concentrates on several recitations of poems, songs, and stories, as well as conversational exchanges in order to sharpen their oral skills. Songs, poems, movement activities, and recitation are an integral part of the experience.

## MUSIC

Third graders expand on their knowledge of music theory with a practical edge. The C and G scales are introduced through story and image, which also begin to expose the children to whole and half steps and the concepts of tonality, and

sharps and flats. At this point, students have graduated from the pentatonic reorder as they practice harmony and articulation on the diatonic recorder. New finger positions such as B flat and F sharp are also introduced. Music classes often feature singing while tone and pitch exercises are often accompanied and embellished by a variety of wind and percussion instruments.

## FORM DRAWING

In the third grade, form drawing lessons are designed to support penmanship and aid in the harmonizing of the right- and left-brain capacities in each child.

## DRAWING AND PAINTING

In drawing and painting, students bring form out of moods represented through color. Themes draw from other portions of the curriculum including the Old Testament, nature study, and house building seminars. Students also create guided drawings of human and animal forms using block crayons.

## FIBER ARTS

As the third graders enter a new developmental stage, the handwork curriculum supports their inner need for challenge and awakening. Children begin the year by painting silks for Michaelmas flags. From there, they move on to felting wool fleece for cloth to turn into felt pictures. Other projects include creating hats and recorder cases, socks, mittens, and stuffed animals, tasks that are not only extremely applicable, but also allows for a different method of experiencing different geometric forms and bringing them to three dimensions. Students also learn to crochet, beginning with the chain stitch and the single crochet stitch.

## HOUSE BUILDING

The House Building curriculum offers a dual theoretical and practical component. Students discuss the different types of dwellings across history, from pioneers to 21st century human beings, while building the most primitive dwellings, such as log cabins, sod, hay bale, and adobe brick houses. Children then study different structures in the world and learn about the crucial role



the environment plays in determining structural integrity. This unit culminates in an individual and a group project. Individually, each child is responsible for designing and building a smallscale home or house. The group project is comprised of the class coming together to build a piece of their own choosing. Past projects include equipment sheds and playhouses.

### **EURHYTHMY**

The third grade eurythmy curriculum focuses on imbuing students with a capacity for group work and social grace. Musical pieces are selected from the Baroque and Classical periods, with careful attention to mood as it shifts between the major and minor keys, and the loud and soft tones. Children also begin to practice more complicated spatial forms within the circle including spirals, triangles and squares. Common themes are inspired from main lesson topics such as the Old Testament.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Third graders participate in a variety of games and activities including Caterpillar ball, a spinoff of Kickball, obstacle challenges that incorporates cartwheels, rolls, and trampolines. Students also learn Native American games such as Dragons, Sky wolves, and Indian Hunter. As children are encouraged to make up their own games or request favorites as they go, practices have included Blizzard, Count the Catches, and Newcomb, as well as traditional offerings such as whiffle ball and sack races.

### **CAMP GLEN BROOK**

The third graders make their first trip to Camp Glen Brook, an exciting week that promises to deepen their connection and sense of responsibility to the earth. The children learn about composting: the act of transforming food waste into healthy soil for future use. Students also harvest fruits and vegetables, prepare apple cider and maple syrup, and grind wheat. They enjoy the fruits of their labor by transforming the foodstuffs into breads, pies, vegetable soups, and salads. Additionally, these children also participate in wool shearing, lambing, and planting seedlings for the greenhouse. Through immersion in the farm life, students learn the importance of sustainable farming in our everyday lives.

### **GARDENING**

Third graders are given the privilege of experiencing a unique farm and gardening curriculum that combines class work as well as hands-on gardening to immerse children, mind and body, into this fundamental topic. In the classroom, students learn of the progression from nomadic hunting and gathering to the first crops, from early hand tools to the machines used on small farms. Different types of soils, grasses, and grains are identified and characterized.

Children work in our garden one period per week, contributing to tasks such as growing seedlings in greenhouses and transplanting them into soil, mulching and composting, weeding, and harvesting. Third graders make bread from scratch, threshing and grinding the grains they harvest to prepare dough.



## **Fourth Grade**

The fourth grade curriculum paves the way for students to develop a strong sense of social, political, and historical awareness as citizens of the world, starting with the history and geography of their backyard of Long Island. Several field trips enable students to see how the Native Americans who dwelled here long before us worked and lived. Students also experience first-hand the rocky beaches of the North Shore where they look for crabs and other interesting things. Viewing the Long Island Sound students see ships docked in the harbor and imagine Henry Hudson as he explored the waterways of Long Island, their neighborhood away from home.

### **LANGUAGE ARTS**

The fourth grade language arts classes reflect the philosophy that only through constant reading can students develop an intuitive sense for grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and style. Students complete weekly reading exercises in one of three or four reading groups separated based on level, each led by a language arts teacher. From adventure tales to short stories, students are encouraged to read to their interests. Class work ranges from quiet reading hours, recitation exercises, compositions, and discussions.

### **NORSE MYTHOLOGY**

Students read and write summaries for seminal works in Norse Mythology. In order to accomplish this goal, students review grammar, including sentence structure and punctuation, and practice editing.



## LOCAL GEOGRAPHY

Fourth graders start to develop a greater consciousness for their local community in their Local Geography class. This unit first aims to improve spatial consciousness by first creating floor plans of their homes and their school and then constructing a map of their route to school and later, the entirety of Long Island, including its geographic land formations. Students then study the history of Long Island, ranging back to the time period before the European settlement.

## MATH

Fourth grade core math lessons focus on reviewing and expanding long multiplication and division, as well as an introduction to fractions and factoring. Children learn to change mixed numbers into improper fractions, and vice versa, as well as add, subtract, multiply, and divide with fractions of like and unlike denominators. Skills are reinforced with exercises that feature sliced cake, fruit, and pizza.

## SCIENCE

Students learn the primary similarities and differences between the physiology and mental capacity of human beings and animals. Additionally, children study the eating habits, physical characteristics, and natural habitats of different animals. This class culminates in individual research projects based on animals of students' own choosing. Projects can be completed through a number of media, such as compositions, paintings, sculptures, and skits.

## FRENCH

The fourth grade is an exciting time for French students, the first year students write in French. Children begin compiling vocabulary, recitations, and songs from the previous years into their French notebooks. New vocabulary is also introduced through stories such as *La Galette*. Students also continue their oral skills through tongue twisters, practiced conversation, and poem recitations and writing skills through various compositions.

## GERMAN

German lessons in the fourth grade focus on reading and writing exercises, as well as the introduction of basic grammatical concepts. Students' vocabulary and oral skills are enriched through storybooks and conversational exchanges in the classroom. Games, movement activities, and recitations remain integral components of the class.

## MUSIC

In their fourth year of music instruction, the students are presented with many opportunities to discover new musical territory, including complex rounds and part-songs. Students begin to use printed music material, mainly scores to folksongs and animal songs that utilize the C major scale, known in class as the rainbow scale. Our fledgling musicians begin to sight-read on the recorder, as well as continue to practice beat, tempo, and rhythm. Rhythmic movement exercises, clapping games, and body percussion intended to relax the mind and body begins and ends each lesson.

## ORCHESTRA

Fourth graders have the option of studying the violin or cello in once weekly group classes, and the ensemble comes together to play at the annual Spring Concert. Aspiring violinists and cellists learn the foundations of their instruments, exploring posture and grip. The goal of the fourth grade curriculum is for the students to develop a sense of familiarity and fluency with their instruments.

## CLASS PLAY

Each year, the fourth grade presents a play inspired by a piece of literature from their Language Arts class. Students partake in all aspects of production including creating sets, costumes, and props, composing and playing original score, and acting out their respective double or triple roles. Reenacted works in the past have included *The Death of Baldur* and *The Theft of Iduna's Apples*.

## PAINTING

Students paint nature scenes inspired by the four seasons.

## HANDWORK

Students learn embroidery, cross-stitch, knotting, and braiding, skills that support strong communication between the left and right hemispheres of the brain, and require precision, fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and patience. Students are also introduced to basic color theory. Over the course of the year, students design several pieces using mirror images and colors schemes. After the pieces have been made, students often hand-sew them onto pillow coverings or pencil cases.

## CLAY MODELING

Fourth graders continue their work with clay and sculpt an animal of choice for their final projects.

## EURHYTHMY

Children practice new spatial orientations through the frontal position, and other forms such as spirals, triangles, and squares. Children also explore alliteration within a four beat line through the original *Beowulf*. Dexterity and rhythm exercises are set to pieces such as *The Danse Russe* by Tansman and the *6 Ecossaises* by Beethoven. Through these tasks, children gradually cultivate presence of mind, focus, listening, and conscious action.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Fourth graders practice rapid-fire, on-court decision making, stamina, and breath control through new field games such as Capture the Flag, Buzz Tag, and Breath Runs. Students also practice soccer, basketball, kickball, and whiffle ball, cultivating ball-handling skills for both hands and feet. The obstacle course unit included tumbling and rolling, scooter boards, balance activities, and the mini trampoline.



## Fifth Grade

The fifth grade curriculum is one of great majesty. In the fall students complete main lesson blocks of ancient cultures in which they meditate in India, cultivate land in Persia and build the first cities in Mesopotamia. They gradually travel westward to discover the roots of civilization. In Egypt they study pharaohs and pyramids. In Greece, the cradle of democracy, they see the birth of an extraordinary culture and listen to the much anticipated Greek myths with rapt attention. Fifth graders learn about the ancient Greek Olympics and organize their own festivities. Most of the events in the fifth grade Greek Olympics—the javelin, discus, long jump, wrestling, and running events are individual sports. It is about cultivating one's personal best and taking risks—supporting each athlete to try new things and find their strengths.

### LANGUAGE ARTS

The fifth grade language arts core curriculum includes daily reading assignments to expand the student's active and passive vocabulary, refine reading comprehension skills, and improve oral summaries. Class reading list includes *The Golden Goblet*, *Gilgamesh*, *The Golden Fleece* by Padraic Colum, and *My Side of the Mountain*. Certain classes are dedicated to poetry sessions, where students read and write haikus and sonnets about topics such as the seasons. Students also receive a thorough review of grammar, kick starting their experience in more sophisticated writing.

### ANCIENT EGYPT

Fifth graders begin their study of ancient Egypt by analyzing this civilization in relation to its geographical location on the Nile. From there they progress to topics of ancient Egyptian culture such as the gods, belief systems, myths and main temples, paintings, sculptures, and hieroglyphs. Aspects of everyday life, such as food and occupations are also explored. Students build clay models of common structures and write their own stories and compositions inspired by their studies.

### ANCIENT GREECE

Lessons on ancient Greece focus on Greek history and mythology. Students follow the development of the civilization from nomadic tribes to clans to kingdom. The structure and inner-workings of city-states are deconstructed, and dichotomies between city-states such as Sparta and Athens, Lycurgus and Solon are established. Students learn aspects of Greek culture including poems, drawings, watercolor paintings, songs, and impromptu dramatic presentations, as well as the Greek alphabet. They also hear the stories of Philip of Macedonia and his son Alexander, philosophers Plato and Socrates, and the heroes Hercules and Odysseus. Students also explore the idea of Greece as the cradle of democracy.

### VIRTUES

The goal of the Virtues Project is to foster a more responsive classroom climate and to build communication skills. The students listen, read and respond to the different qualities within the virtues of responsibility, orderliness, compassion, unity, cooperation, forgiveness, honor, peacefulness, consideration and empathy.

### MATH

The core math curriculum focuses on temperature, measurements, decimals, time, and long division. Additionally, students study statistics and data analysis, including mean, median and mode. The geometry unit introduces the creation of curves using straight lines (enveloping) and the use of compass and straightedge.

### BOTANY

Lessons in botany explore the kingdom of plants from fungi to the conifer. Students learn to characterize plants and understand their growth cycles. They identify the root, stem, leaves, flowers, and fruit and their different manifestations depending on climate and soil. Weekly tree observation sessions help students become attuned to plants' different physical characteristics through the seasons.

### GEOGRAPHY

Fifth graders study the North American Continent, identifying its bodies of water and five major regions: the Coastal Plain and the Appalachian Plateau



in the east, the Great Interior Plains, the Western Highlands and the Canadian Shield. Students analyze each area with respect to its topography, climate, wildlife, history of settlement. Poems, American folksongs, drawings, watercolor paintings, drawing maps to scale and writing summaries and descriptions accompany their studies. Each student writes and reports on a state of their choice at the end of the unit.

### FRENCH

Fifth graders read a book together as a class. Selections in the past have included *Poulerousse* the story of a little red hen and *La Ferme de M. Pradel*. Students study relevant vocabulary from those works, focusing on words associated with the house, time, daily activities, and animals. Grammar review contains short units on pronouns and verbs, with an emphasis on irregular conjugations.

### GERMAN

German lessons focus on enriching students' vocabulary and comprehension skills by presenting short stories for children to read. Students are also afforded a taste of grammar as they are introduced to verb conjugation and prepositions.

### MUSIC

Students continue their vocal exercises during music lessons to develop their choral sound. Movement activities and body percussion help children practice rhythm, physical coordination and team work, and are incorporated seamlessly into each class. Fifth graders also take music theory to the next step, writing and playing scales in G, F and D, and building harmonies with soprano, alto, and tenor recorders inspired by the triad.

### ORCHESTRA

The fifth grade orchestra rehearses compositions such as *Noble Dance* and *Canyon Sunset*, challenging pieces that require precise transitions between arco (bowed) and pizzicato (plucked) sections. In this way, students develop a basic foundation based on impeccable technique.

### PAINTING

Students continue with the wet-on-wet technique. They also experimented with Lifting off pigment with a dry brush to create a special, rustic effect.

### FORM DRAWING

Fifth graders focus on the freehand geometric drawing of the circle, ellipse, square, rectangle, triangle, rhombus, parallelogram and trapezoid. Concepts such as angle, tangent, diagonal, parallel, and axis of symmetry are introduced through this work.

### HANDWORK

Students apply the entire range of handwork skills they have cultivated over

the years to knit a complex mitten pattern that requires them to first shape and size the mitten to their own hands, and then use different kinds of needles and stitches to implement their design.

### WOODWORKING

This introduction woodworking class emphasizes shop protocol: proper care for the tools and their safe and effective use. Students practice with carving knives and rasps to shape animals out of wood blocks, a task that requires focus, attention, strength, and skill to achieve the ideal symmetry and detail.

### EURYTHMY

Fifth graders expand their knowledge of eurhythm through work with spatial and rhythmical elements in speech and music. Awareness of orientation in space, social connection, presence of mind, and self control is stimulated through work with geometrical forms, musical phrasing, dexterity, and rhythm exercises. Accompanying verses and music are selected in conjunction to themes from main lessons.

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Classes are designed to foster group cooperation and listening skills. Activities include Chariot Ride, a game where the class lifts one rider into the air supported on a small tire (the chariot) lifted by ropes. Students move on to play field games such as Capture the Flag, European handball, soccer, football, and basketball. With the arrival of spring comes time to train for the annual fifth grade Greek





Olympics. The five field events of the Greek Olympics comprise of running, Greek wrestling, long jump, javelin, and discus, each demanding poise and control. Each student looks forward to proudly exhibiting their skills at the Olympics, a day of intense games and cheerful camaraderie.

## FARM

Every year, fifth graders foray into the outdoors of Northern New England for a week-long stay. The wilderness of Glen Brook is their botanical classroom as students learn about soils, compost, and plant identification. They will also take this opportunity to explore the woods, animals, and open fields.







WALDORF  
SCHOOL  
*of GARDEN CITY*

225 Cambridge Avenue  
Garden City, New York 11530  
516.742.3434 Ext 302  
[www.waldorfgarden.org](http://www.waldorfgarden.org)