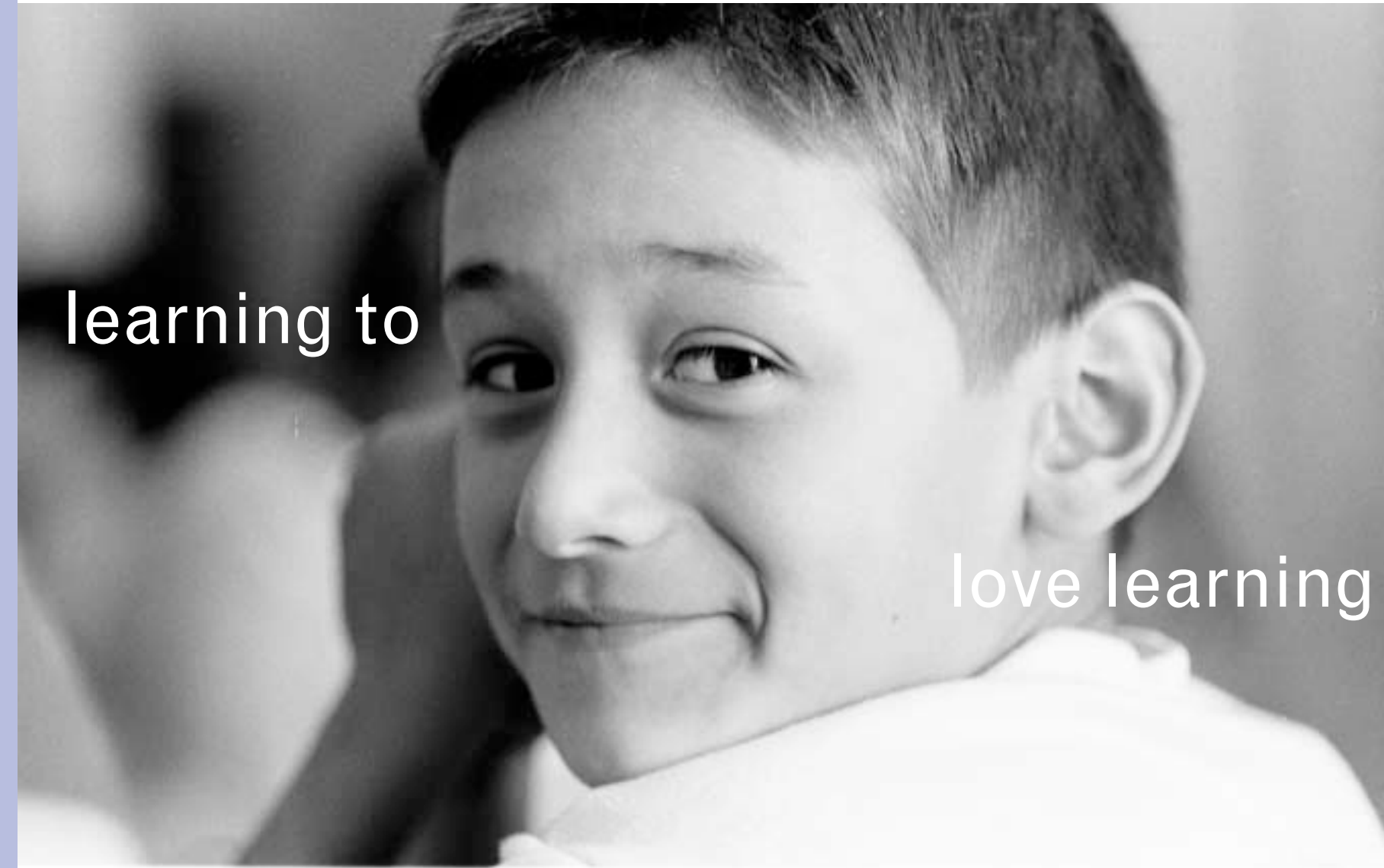


The Rudolf Steiner Lower School  
15 East 79th Street  
Next Door to our extended campus—Central Park  
and the Metropolitan Museum of Art  
15 East 79th Street  
New York, NY 10021  
Telephone: 212-535-2130  
Fax: ??????????  
www. ??????????



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Photography: Lionel Delevingne  
Design: Roberta Hillenberg-Gang  
Text: Steve Turner  
Project management: Neta Bolozky  
www.delevingne.com

# Rudolf Steiner School



learning to

love learning

“Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings, who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives.”

Rudolf Steiner



## Who

**Stein · er, Ru · dolf:** Visionary philosopher and teacher who conceived the Waldorf education.

## What

**Wal · dorf Meth · od:** A program that addresses students’ intellectual, physical, and emotional capacities in harmony. The Waldorf curriculum integrates movement, fine arts, and practical arts into the study of humanities, science, math, and technology. The program aims to educate the whole human being in a healthy and balanced manner—and does so in a unique way that cultivates analytical thinking while expanding students’ creative potentials. The program’s close teacher-student-parent relationships involve the whole family. Cooperation is encouraged as a model for other social relationships. Students also are introduced to a non-religious spirituality—a reverence for nature and universal humanity—as an intrinsic value in their progress toward successful futures.

## Where

The Rudolf Steiner Lower School in New York City, next door to our extended campus—Central Park and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, offering Waldorf education from preschool through eighth grade. We are proud to say that our graduates all go to secondary schools of their choice—mainly the Steiner High School, but others to specialized high schools, or schools in other parts of the country when families have to relocate. Waldorf elementary instruction prepares students exceptionally well for secondary education in any venue.

# Preschool

“I watch my daughter playing with a neighbor’s child from another school. They both have the same materials, but my daughter is spreading paint, talking about what it means. The other girl is drawing a house, chimney, etc., and I’m suddenly aware that she’s worrying about getting everything right, whereas my daughter has been freed to see whatever she wants to see in her work.”

Preschool Parent



**“MOM! WE DUG WORMS IN THE PARK!”**

Five-year-old Preschooler





# Preschool

## The Nurturing Start

In the warm, protective environment of the Preschool, Waldorf education nurtures the basic ingredients of imagination and creativity, and provides a structure of enjoyment within which to develop them. Fresh flowers and tinted classroom walls add color for inspiration in every grade. Preschool's warm hues (cooler tones await later years) are reflected also in vivid water paints, crayons, and beeswax for modeling. Our preschoolers learn to sing, to freely put brush to paper, to

perform dramatically as a group. Days begin with free play, priming children for cooperation in Circle Time: games, songs, stories, group recitations. Daily activities: painting today, baking tomorrow, crayon work next, and—always—cleaning on Friday, evolve into weekly rhythms.

In Preschool, there is no formal study of reading and writing, but children who seek these skills are guided and supported. Teachers'



telling aloud, and class repetition of stories introduces the uses of language, and enriches vocabulary. Counting games awaken number skills. Trips next door to Central Park for nature lessons and supervised romping are a prelude to the biology and physical education classes of later years.

These earliest aspects of the integrative Waldorf approach are side benefits to the basic purpose: bringing children to the love of learning. Invoking enjoyment of the simplest activities of daily existence. Generating a reverence for the underlying spirit in all patterns of life.

Eurythmy, an artform that combines language, music and movement, is taught from preschool through twelfth grade. It enables growing children to develop a conscious relationship with the world around them.

# First Grade

“It used to be said that a child is ready for first grade when the baby teeth fall out. Or when the child can reach all the way over the head to touch the other ear. True? Whatever the benchmark, physical development has a strong impact on education. Children in our pre-school never use pencils, for instance, until their hands are ready—maybe not until first grade.”

Administrator

**Q:** Can a child flourish in the early grades at Rudolf Steiner without first attending the Preschool?

**A:** Yes. Specialized postgraduate training prepares our teachers to adapt instruction to the intellectual, physical, and emotional readiness of each student. Our program is tuned to the stages of child development, rather than assumptions of previous learning.





# First Grade

## The Foundation Grows



The Waldorf curriculum in First Grade focuses on 6-7 year olds' growing abilities to engage in formal learning. Our time-tested teaching innovations evolve and flow forward from this threshold through the elementary grades.

Nature stories and fairy tales, told and retold, spark the imagination while developing the use of English. Spanish and German languages

are introduced via songs and verses. Children learn that writing evolves naturally from drawing. Just so, reading comes along without pressure. Math games aid the introduction of simple arithmetic. Students start making their own music by singing and by playing the recorder—an easy and basic competency in Waldorf schools. Rhythmic movement exercises aid the understanding of music as well as numbers. And knitting begins the Waldorf emphasis on handcrafts that produce useful products and—later—physically illustrate concepts of design and geometry.



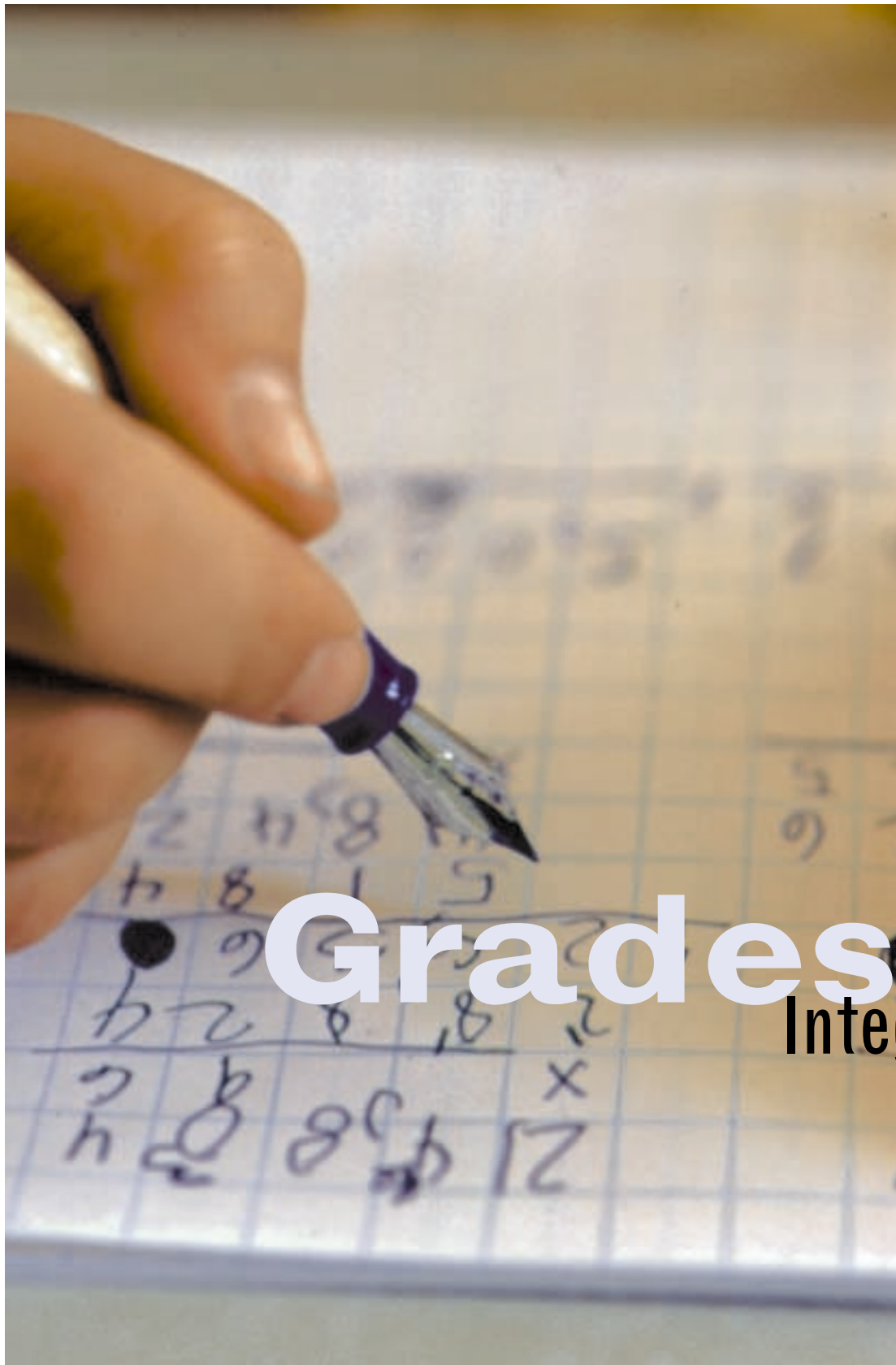
# Grades 1-3

“Myths, fables, legends, fairy tales—we use them from many cultures to teach because they invite depth in feeling and thinking. They convey morality, responsibility, spirituality, cause-and-effect, in an appealing mode. Without preaching. And they are rich in the uses of language.”

Teacher

and onward





# Grades 1-3

## Integrating Basic Ingredients

THE MAIN LESSON: That's the Waldorf term for the two-hour seminar that begins each class day in every grade. A variety of approaches and topics related to one specific subject are introduced and explored for several weeks. Students' Main Lesson workbooks show parents their progress, and give reference baselines to the students themselves.

“Computers? TV? We urge students and their parents to limit home access to these media in the early grades. We believe it is vital for children to first find the world of imagination and analysis within themselves in order to balance the assaults of popular culture. Toward that end, we do not use formatted workbooks. Students create their own with art and language in the daily main lesson seminars. But the Steiner School is tuned to the world: upper grades have weekly visits to our computerized library, where children learn how to search for information. Active work with keyboarding and software begins in 7th grade, and our graduates are highly computer literate.”

Administrator





## Grades 2 & 3

**“Students recite a contemplative verse at the beginning of each day, and again before the noontime meal— served hot from our renowned kitchen, including vegetarian alternatives. We have no religious rituals, but we do teach children to understand a spiritual connection with the beneficent nature that yields our food.”**

Administrator

**“The teachers are really very attentive to evaluating each child. And if the child is having problems, they contact the parents immediately.”**

Parent

# Grades 2 & 3

## Broadening and Deepening

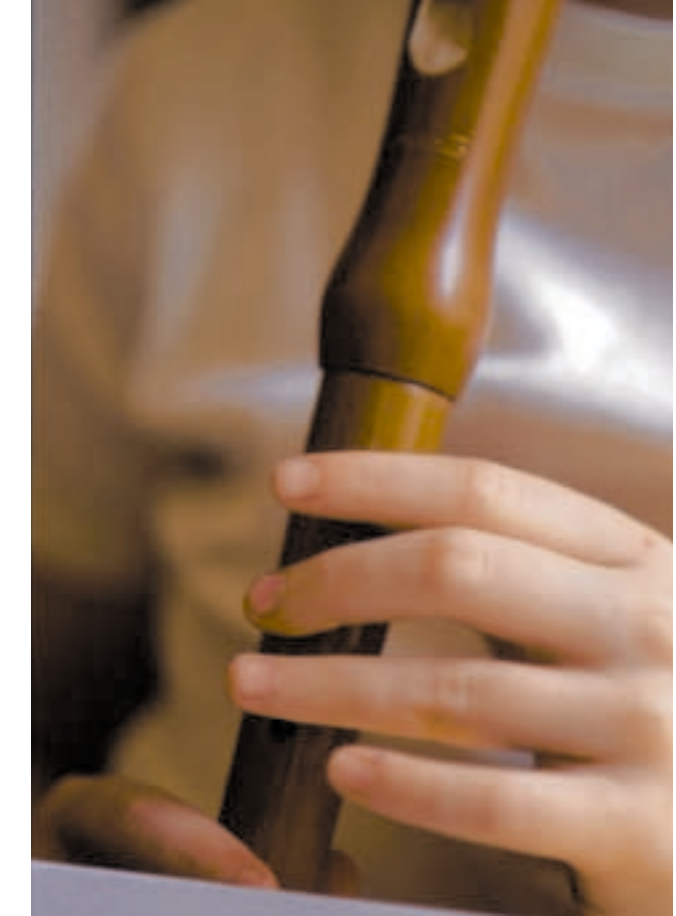


The fundamental Waldorf approach builds second and third grade curriculum directly on earlier lessons. Children convert legends and fables into their own stories, which they write and read to the class. Arithmetic games grow more complex. Foreign language vocabulary expands along with English, and grammar gently emerges. In Central Park, simple nature observation tips into biological study, while supervised romping becomes organized physical education. Students combine their proficiencies in class recorder concerts and

dramatic productions. In handwork, skills escalate: crocheting supplants knitting. Then comes sewing, with woodwork to follow in later grades. But always, the designs and uses of the products created by this harmony of brain and fingers connect back to aspects of the evolving curriculum.

Waldorf education is a carefully structured system, nurturing creativity within the context of intellectual competence and disciplined exploration. Our flexible program

# exploration



meets the needs of individual students even as they meld into cooperative class groups, advancing together through expanding realms of information and accomplishment. Close observation and evaluation of each child's capacities flow from a highlight of the Waldorf method: specialist instructors handle many aspects of our curriculum, but the primary teacher who greets children in First Grade will most likely lead that class all the way through eighth grade.

# Grades 4-6

**“My parents were looking for a school that would nurture the whole person. They also felt that the Waldorf school would be a far more open environment for African Americans, and that it was focused on bringing up students with values, as well as the academic tools necessary to be constructive and contributing human beings.”**

Graduate

**“There is a wonderful sense of community in the Waldorf schools. We all participated together in so many activities. The plays, celebrations of the festivals, even the parents and friends were involved.”**

Graduate



# and onward





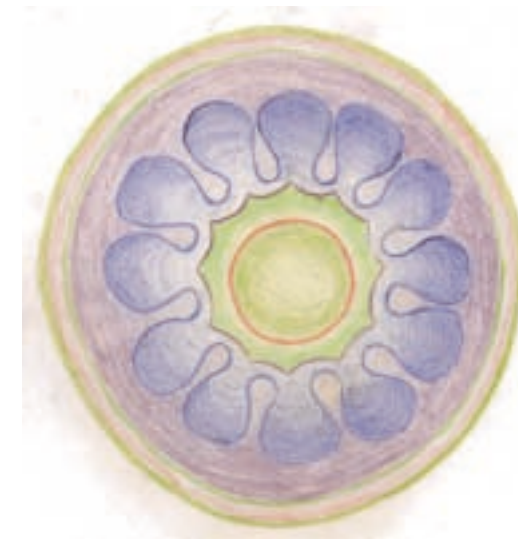
# Grades 4-6

## Curriculum and Community



The children learn to revise and edit their work, with attention to grammar, spelling, handwriting, punctuation, paragraphing. Reading and writing commences in Spanish and German. In Math, fractions come into play.

The interplay of art, handwork and music amplifies the understanding of core subjects, even as students' skills grow independently in these related realms. Children view paintings of early New York by artists of the Hudson School, for instance, next door at the Metropolitan Museum. They interpret their understanding of geography in drawings. Sing in foreign languages as well as in English. Choose an instrument, such as the cello, for continuing study. And learn craft designs that reflect mathematics and esthetics.



Keyed to the child's heightened awareness of the world at this age, the fourth grade introduces geography. Teaching starts with mapping of students' homes, then the school, and expands to the city, and the state. In fifth grade, North America. And in sixth grade, the larger world, in its physical and cultural diversity.

Study of history also begins, with focus first on the ancient lands of India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece.

# Middle Grades

**“Up to sixth grade, students do the work because the teacher asks for it. But around age 12, they begin to challenge the assignments. So in sixth grade, the curriculum shifts toward very finite things—Roman law, structure of the skeleton, geometry—which impose their own order on student research.”**

Teacher

**“She was just elated about the things she got to do here. Everything was so rushed in the other school. Here, there are projects that take time, that you can dig into. She loved that.”**

Parent, speaking about a 6th grade transfer student





# Middle Grades

## Inner Child and Outer World

The intense inner concentration of the ongoing Main Lesson seminars harmonizes with ventures outside the school: physical education, including team sports, moves to the 92nd Street Y.

AND THE FARM! Nature study in Central Park is amplified for third through sixth grade classes by week-long group trips each year to the Hawthorne Valley Farm School. This Columbia County biodynamic facility produces and markets milk, yogurt, and cheeses from the resident cows, which happily coexist with horses and chickens on a variegated acreage of fields, gardens, and woodlands.

Studies at Hawthorne Valley parallel and supplement the science and social studies curriculum. The third grade learns composting and planting, makes butter, bakes bread. Fourth graders study the animals for zoology, and add to their research on the Hudson River Valley. In connection with botany, fifth graders study plants and local ecology. Sixth grade students identify minerals and geologic formations, while exploring legal caving.





# 7th Grade

“It wasn’t just doing the knitting. It was also finding out where the wool came from, spinning the wool, finding out how the spinning wheel works, how the sheep live. Knitting is also about completing something. That’s part of the Waldorf curriculum, to start something that you yourself make and then to finish it.”

Graduate

“In a Waldorf School, even the athletes learn an instrument and draw in their main lesson books.”

Graduate





# 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

## Got Ready, Now Get Set



With high school in view, emphasis on student initiative and resourcefulness increases. Independent research, writing, and artistic projects add depth to learning. And the curriculum broadens the scope of studies in history, science, and mathematics. Seventh graders examine the past in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Geometry continues, and algebra is introduced. Main Lesson segments include astronomy, physics, chemistry, human physiology and health. Interscholastic basketball, volleyball, soccer and softball augment basic physical education.

And use of computers moves out of the library, into full range. Students learn keyboarding, and how to access information for research.

Other subjects also flourish: work in Spanish and German has readied students to write compositions, read novels, poetry and other texts in those languages. Accomplishment in crafts and studio art, and in music—choral and instrumental—grows apace.



# Go!

“By the time they finish eighth grade, the nurturing of the Waldorf method, the teaching through feelings, imagination, experimentation and intellect, has thoroughly prepared students for the next phase of their education and their lives.”

Teacher

## 8th Grade

“If I had a favorite subject, it was science, particularly in the 7th and 8th grades. We would do experiments. Then at home, we had to write in our main lesson books exactly what we had done, a lab report essentially. I can’t tell you how much joy I had in trying to phrase this clearly and concisely and to illustrate it as artistically as I could. I’ve never lost the pleasure in striving for that. It was a real coming together of art and science and writing.”





# Truly Well Prepped for Our High School—Or Any Other

The final year ties together the strands of curriculum and personal growth, bringing students to a level of preparation and awareness that enables them to proceed with solid confidence. Practice in expository and creative writing comes to a peak. Science focuses on organic chemistry, physiology, and physics. Hands-on work such as building an electric motor enables students to understand the principles underlying basic technology. The political world comes into the classroom via the study of American history, and current events, as well as the cultural geography of China, Africa, Asia, and the former Soviet Union.

Graduates of the Rudolf Steiner Lower School are more than ready to excel in our own high school, or any other they choose. Waldorf education delivers more than a high standard of factual and conceptual information. Our students graduate with an enriched, integrated comprehension of basics that comes from understanding the linkages among art, craft, music, and intellect. They also advance with a true grounding in how to study, how to learn.

And with a spiritual reverence for life on this earth.





## Our Philosophy Regarding Spirituality, Ethnicity, and Religion

The Rudolf Steiner School actively welcomes students, faculty, and staff of all ethnicities and gender preferences, and of all faiths and creeds. We respect and support individuals' spiritual beliefs and practices.

We strive to develop the mind, body and spirit of the child, encouraging, in the process, the child's spiritual freedom and growth. As in every Waldorf school, our teaching works toward this aim by drawing on the insights into human development pioneered by Rudolf Steiner.

The Waldorf curriculum is diverse in nature and rich in the teachings of many great religious traditions. Students develop an understanding and respect for the various cultures of the world through their experience in the classroom and in the celebration of seasonal festivals of the year. Drawing primarily, but not exclusively, on Christian traditions, we celebrate our common humanity, not our separateness in belief or practice.

# Our Mission

The Rudolf Steiner School embraces Waldorf education, a pedagogy derived from the insights of Austrian-born scientist, philosopher, artist, and educator Rudolf Steiner. The program addresses the physical, emotional, and intellectual capacities of the developing child through an age-appropriate curriculum that integrates the disciplines of movement, fine arts, and practical arts into the study of humanities, science, math, and technology. Through the development of these capacities, we strive to educate the whole human being in a healthy and balanced manner.