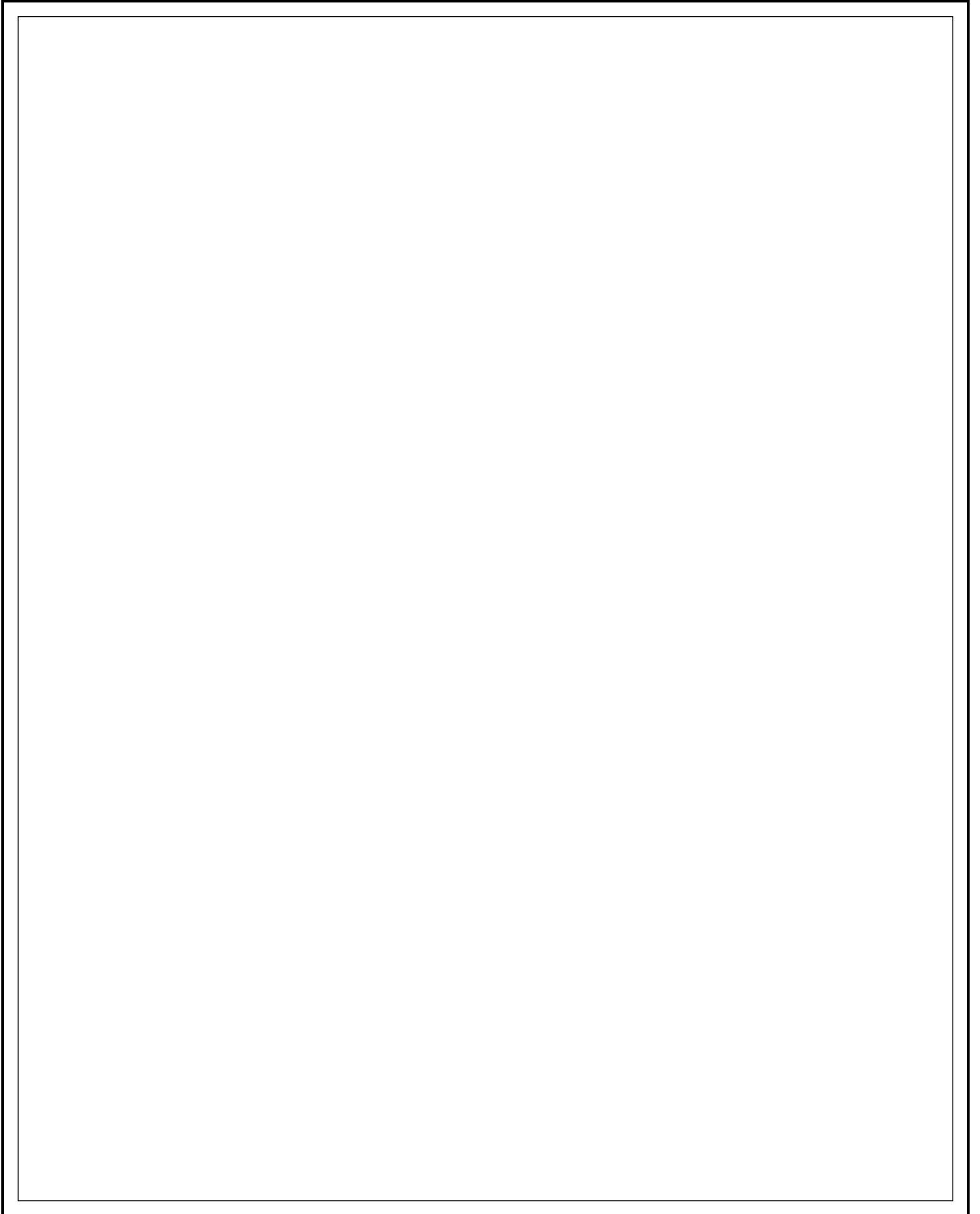




2:30pm - 3:15pm.



*The sun says, "I glow," The wind says, "I blow," The stream, says,
"I flow," The tree says, "I grow," And Plato says, "Know thyself."*

During the next few weeks, this block will combine writing, reading, and vowel sounds with the winter festival preparation and experience of our community Lantern Walk. The children will first experience the vowels (A, E, I, O, U) through poems, verses, and gestures. Each vowel engenders a feeling, which will be paired with an activity during Morning Circle. From the various activities, first graders will experience the varied feelings from each vowel. The children will also experience the mood of each vowel through the re-telling of the opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* as well as through a number of paintings that emphasize each vowel as a color.

Oh (orange and gold) — The feeling of surprise and sympathy:

*Oh, the soft wool of my cloak warms me so.
Soon we will eat roast goose and sweet chamomile, I know.
The king will go by in the cold and throw to us pieces of gold.*

Ah (white/yellow) — The feeling of wonder, reverence, and awe:

*Radiant star, far, far away,
Warm my heart as your may
From far away we come and
Farther we must go.
How far, how far, my crystal star?*

Ee (green) — The feeling of self-awareness, meeting of above and below:

*The Eastern star leads regal kings, I see.
Not one, but three.
Amahl's mother reached for her shawl.
"I shall go and gather wood for the fire.
I've nothing in the house."*

U (oo) (blue) — The feeling of mystery, intrigue, calming, and possibly fear:

*Amahl's mother said, "In the light of the blue moon,
Soothing music, for you and me."*

Ay (red) — The feeling of separation, anger, antipathy, and boundary:

*"Shame, shame!" shouts the page, as he awakes.
"Our gold! How dare you do take?!"*

I (purple) — The feeling of regal, pride, decisiveness, and independence:

*I, strong and upright,
Ride to see the child,
Piping in the light
Of the night sky.*

There will be a focus on crafts, cooking, and holiday preparations to deepen the connection between our class community and vowel sounds, for example, making walnut candles, snowflakes, and Gingerbread cookies.

In conclusion, the writing curriculum will introduce and focus on the mood of the vowels in addition to learning more word families and sight words. The children will also be writing a short poem or song by the end of this block. We will be continuing to develop a sense of spacing, appropriate letter size and formation as well as an awareness of writing straight across a page.

- Ms. Besh



Second grade is at the tale end of their language arts block. The momentum is building for our Santa Lucia celebration on the 15th of December. In the last week of the semester we will be making candles, star wands, spruce crowns and Lucia buns. Our circle is quite festive with Deck the Halls and Jingle Bells accompanying some of our singing games. Our flute work is expanding and we've begun to play Glimmer Lantern Glimmer with more than a glimmer of confidence. We're chatty, we're cheeky, we're jolly and rowdy! It's a fun time to be at school!

- Ms. Susanne Drinen



I can hardly believe that we are halfway through 4th Grade. Our current work has focused on the creation of the 9 Norse worlds and other Norse Myths. It has been a great change of pace, as so much of our year has been focused in the areas of history and science. This week the children are cracking the code of the alphabet of Runes.

Our bunnies now have names and are enjoying living in their new bunny castle! Skipper and Midnight are well cared for and are well adjusted to classroom life!

Last Friday was such a special day. I am personally very impressed with the flexibility in our whole community to find a way to create the Lantern Walk in such tricky conditions. After the festival, 4th Grade was treated to Evan's performance as Tootles in "Peter Pan". It was a lively and entertaining version. Evan was anxious for his classmates to see this one because Peter Pan and Captain Hook used real swords on stage. I was way more impressed with Tootle's ability to shoot the arrow that brings down the Wendybird! A huge thanks goes out to Evan, Cheryl and Ed Silcox for the gift of theater to our class. To top off those events, the children focused on last minute rehearsal for our assembly and off we went to the 3

In November fifth grade brought our North American Geography block to a close with an end-of-block celebration. Congratulations to the children for the hard work they put into their presentations! The students have been really enjoying showing off their talent and knowledge in our end-of-block celebrations. We love inviting our families into our classroom! During our North American Geography block we learned geography through Native American stories from around the continent. We connected images from the story to images relating to geography concepts and vocabulary. The students memorized poems authored by different peoples of North America that spoke about the land and water of this beautiful continent. During that block we took a trip to the Loussac Public Library. Many thanks to our chaperones for making it happen! I'm looking forward to our next library trip!

We are now in the middle of our Ancient Egypt block. The students have been working on an independent research project in which they choose their own topic on Ancient Egypt to study. Most drew inspiration from our Main Lessons from the first week. I have been blown away by the beautiful artwork the children have created for their research project presentation: maps, portraits of the gods, detailed diagrams of pyramids, and more! During our study of Ancient Egypt we have "mummified" apple slices using baking soda and salt...we'll take a look in about a week and see what the apple slices look like! While learning about the Rosetta Stone and hieroglyphs, we experienced writing in hieroglyphs on pieces of real papyrus. The class painted beautiful tall green papyrus reeds growing in the Nile Delta on our painting day. We are enjoying the stories of Ra, Isis, Osiris, and Set in Main Lesson!

On Monday afternoons we have begun meeting with our first grade 'Reading Buddies' which both the fifth and first graders seem to really look forward to each week. We have also been singing with fourth grade in the mornings, which has been exciting. We have begun 'book shares' in our fifth grade morning circles which give the children an opportunity to share a book they recommend to the class, and have the class ask them questions about that book. At the moment we are reading *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell. We just finished *Stickeen* by John Muir at the end of our North American Geography book.

- Ms. Childerley

Seventh grade has worked enthusiastically with two blocks since the quarter. In the first, we investigated, with great enthusiasm, the mechanics behind the six simple machines. These are the lever (three kinds), the pulley, the wheel and axle, the inclined plane, the wedge, and the screw. We studied the basic form of each machine, and discovered how it was useful: how it gave the user extra force to move objects, or additional speed or control (as in the levers that we call our arms and legs), or some other advantage. We learned to calculate this advantage, called the Mechanical advantage, and we learned through our studies how machines lose energy to friction and bending, or flexing. We discussed energy loss in systems, the fact that to gain one thing (force, for example), we must give up another (speed or distance). The social and personal were not lost on our group, either: friendship and cooperation falls under some of these laws as well, and we must all give and take, and make choices as to what is most important to us, to live a healthy life.

In the next block, we revisited geometry, but with a new focus: the numbers and math behind the phenomena previously studied. We picked up our work in the history of Mathematics with Archimedes, and his description of

spirals that move outwards or inwards at a constant rate, like spirals of rope: each new spiral is exactly as far from the last one as the previous, and so on. This gives a number of nice, easy to use equations to calculate a number of variables in these spirals, and was a great introduction to algebraic thinking. We expanded on that with others spirals, most of which do not increase at a steady rate, but instead have a multiplier that increases the amount by which each turn of the spiral gets larger. Sea shells to galaxy spirals exhibit this phenomena, and by graphing these patterns we see a deviation form the straight-line graph, and see something like an exponential

Check out their latest charcoal creations in the 2nd floor hallway! With the help of Ms. Lois and Ms. Mall, they have created an impressive collection of artwork that will be at Snow City Café as they were chosen to have their work displayed for the April 2012 First Friday event! Put in on your calendar!

In the warmth of our little classroom we are now reading Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World about the Shackleton Expedition to Antarctica. Exciting! We are also enjoying Karen Hesse's poetic novel Aleutian Sparrow.

The students continue to work on their creative short stories which will soon be ready for self-publishing in March!

- Ms. Silcox

Students are always curious about comparing holidays and types of celebrations. In the last week of school before break, we'll spend some time in all of the classes on this topic. Many of the traditions we associate with Christmas, such as trees, ornaments and gift giving, come on New Year's Day (January 1st) in Russia. Gifts are brought by ! "# \$%&' , Grandfather Frost, and ()"*+&%, - . , the Snow Maiden. Russians who celebrate Christmas usually do so according to the Orthodox calendar, in which the holiday occurs on January 7th. Russians end up having a public holiday that stretches from January 1st through the 10th. One of the most interesting holidays this time of year is (/ . &O1 2%3O1 4%#, or Old New Year. Old New Year is celebrated on January 13th, and it is a holdover from when Russia still followed the Julian calendar, which differs from Gregorian (the one that America and Russia use today) by thirteen days. Russia didn't switch over to the Gregorian calendar until 1918, and the Russian Orthodox Church still uses the Julian calendar (The thirteen British colonies that were to become the United States switched over in 1752). Old New Year isn't a public holiday anymore, but that doesn't stop many resourceful Russians from ringing in the New Year one more time!

For more information about Russian at Winterberry, please visit the websites below. I am endeavoring to start updating them regularly with class news, requests and resources to help your child develop their language skills.

<http://winterberryrussian.blogspot.com/> <<http://winterberryrussian.blogspot.com/>>

http://www.asdk12.org/staff/harmon_arthur

Russian Gala

Mary Plumb-Mentjes and the Anchorage Waldorf School are planning a Russian Gala from 6:30=8:30 pm on Friday, January 6th at the AWS campus. For a \$25 suggested donation, you can eat Russian food and see Russian performances from several groups in the community. The proceeds go to support Waldorf Education in Russia. This will be the third time I've been a part of the Gala—it has been great fun every time! If anyone is interested in helping prepare food (usually borsht, a delicious soup), please let me know ASAP.

Students have been diligently preparing for the Solstice Assembly preparing songs to sing, songs to play, and songs to dance to. For our assembly student have been singing songs in Hebrew, Japanese, and Swahili. We have also started to incorporate percussion instruments into our songs. Sight-reading has also become a daily activity for the music classes. We spend a portion of our time after warming our voices and bodies up to focus on how to read musical notation. This skill will serve them in any type of music they wish to pursue be it classical to forming a rock band.

- Mr. V

The upper grades have just finished a week of Prison ball. This game was a success amongst the grades with students working together cooperatively as a team. The students demonstrated such sportsmanship and it was wonderful to see the interactions between students. The lower grades have again been working with parachute games as well as some new tag and chase games such as Fish Gobbler, Enchanted Forest, and Whirlpool Tag.

- Mr V

I am pleased to report that overall students are making good progress in handwork class across the grades. In grade one some students are beginning to recognize, on their own, when a stitch is dropped. Others are still finding their rhythm, which reminds me: we could really use some parent volunteers to come in and help out Tuesdays and Fridays from 12:15-1:00. In grade two there are a good number of students who have already began on their gnomes. It is exciting to see projects that have been underway for weeks, and even months, finally coming to completion. Students in grade three have also been making good progress finishing up projects and becoming more and more proficient at crocheting. A few students have surprised me with their innovative and creative ideas for crochet projects. Students in grade four have been working hard on their cross stitch projects. It is exciting to see how their original designs have turned out. Students in grade five has just recently met their class goal after selling their knitted snow leopards. Students in grade six have been hand-sewing stuffed animals. Students in grade seven have been busy working on a number of projects, including learning to knit, crochet, use Kumuhio braiding disks, and make cards using the relief block-printing method. Students in grade eight are excited to finish sewing their machine sewn garments. Handwork classes at Winterberry have been very busy indeed!

- Ms. Lower



In order to reduce classroom distractions, continue our commitment to upholding Steiner's views on materialism, and respect the needs of all students, families, and staff, we respectfully ask that student attire be comprised of:

- * solid colors,
- * stripes,
- * polka dots,
- * or patterns.

We also ask that all outerwear and accessories (including indoor shoes and lunch boxes) also follow these guidelines. Please choose plain shoes that do not include electronic lights, sounds, wheels, or commercially produced pictures.

When students come to school with items that do not meet these guidelines, school staff may ask them to alter the clothing so it is not distracting (turn a shirt inside-out, for example), give the student an alternative item to wear instead and/or work together with families to find an alternative within a reasonable period.

Our goal is that we can come together on this issue out of respect for all community members knowing that while such items may not distract one, they do distract another. Thank you for your commitment to creating and maintaining the highest quality environment for our children.

As always, thank you for your willingness to grow and work together to create a culture of caring and respect at Winterberry!

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