



Class 4: Planning

Weekly Agenda:

Notebook- You may find it easier to print the PDF lessons and house them in a 3-ring binder or notebook for easy reference and highlighting.

Lesson Availability- You can download your weekly lessons by accessing the webpage above. The material will be available up to 60 days after the end of the course to make sure you have had time to get everything. I recommend downloading as we go and participating to get the most from this class.

Participate- Ask questions, share ideas and make friends with the others in the course for best experience. You can ask questions under comments on each weekly lesson. I will try to answer as specific as I can, but since this is a group class we may not be able to cover specifics to every situation. If you need further help, email me for private guidance at donnaashton@thewaldorfconnection.com.

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Week 4 Overview :

This week we will delve into planning out your lessons. Whether you use a “done-for-you” curriculum or create your own lessons, you will still need a plan (and a planner) to keep yourself on track.



Class 4: Planning ***

Planning is the foundation to your homeschooling. It is a vital piece that will make or break your school year. Having a solid plan is a lot like having your pillars of rhythm in place. You may not always follow it exactly, but it will be the backbone of your teaching.

It gives you the confidence that you are covering the material and an accountability of what has been learned.

It is important to have flexibility to change the plan if you need to slow down or speed up based on your child, but having that plan in place will be the springboard for that.

Goals for your Homeschool & Child

Do you have ideas, dreams and goals what you want your homeschool to be?

Each year as I begin my planning, I write down some general homeschool goals, and what would like to bring to each one of my girls in the upcoming year.

I find it helps me focus and plants the seeds when I am planning to make sure I add the extra spelling practice one may require or whatever.

I attached a copy of my goals sheet at the end of this summary in the resource section. Feel free to use or modify this for yourself.



Getting Familiar with the Material

Before you even to being to plan, you need to know what the upcoming year's material is all about. I recommend starting in the spring if possible. You can find a list of recommended [subjects/lessons per grade here](#).

Start collecting books, checking them out from the library, or if you have a curriculum you have purchased, begin reading through the stories. This is to give you an idea of what is to come, the “feeling” of what these stories will bring to your child, and what is actually going to be taught. We will get more into this during the “Presenting the Material” class, but to have an idea how to plan the year, it is extremely helpful to know what you will be teaching.

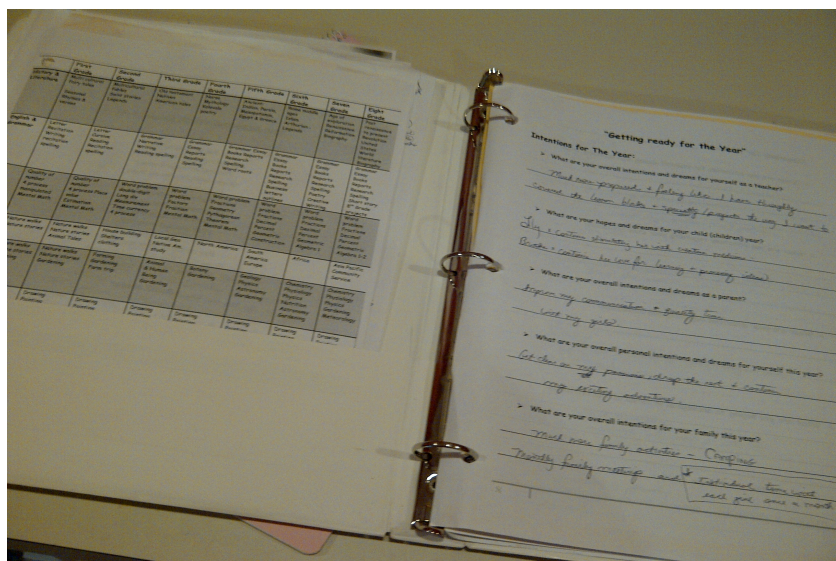
Make an online folder called “grade 1” (or whatever) and start bookmarking resources you find while searching the internet. You can find *a lot* of great free stories, verses, songs, pictures and inspiration online. Just make sure you bookmark so you don't have to re-find that great verse you wanted for circle time!

I also have a 3-ring binder for my planner, I use the front and back pockets to house all the loose notes and things I may print out to use for planning purposes. As I find something that will go with the main lesson blocks, I put it in the notebook for future use when I plan. It could be a recipe, song, verse, website, picture or list of books from the library.

By understanding what you will be teaching, you can keep an eye out for these resources as you view blogs, books or other resources. This will save much planning time later.

Make a list of supplies you will need that go along with the materials. If you are teaching first grade, you will need knitting needles and yarn (for you and your child).

Start compiling now, so when its time to plan you will have a lot of what you need to put it all together.



Planning Your Year

When beginning to plan, think of it as “whole to parts”. Start with the big picture, a bird's eye view, then move to smaller and smaller pieces and details.

You may use an online calendar, physical calendar, planner, or even a large sheet of paper labeled with the months.

You can do Sept- thru May or whatever months you will be schooling. Some families school year 'round with vacations sprinkled in.

Step 1: Mark on the calendar days you *won't* be homeschooling.

This includes holidays, vacations, spring break, summer vacation, etc.

Check your local laws for homeschooling regulations so you know how many days of the week/month/year are required.

You may not know exactly when you will be taking vacation, but if you know that you do take a week every February, you can guess and mark it the best you can, it can always be tweaked. Now you can see what you have left to work with.

If you are new to homeschooling, you may wonder when to homeschool.

Many use the traditional Sept-May (northern hemisphere) time table.

But, I encourage to play around with this and think what would really work for your family.

I know a mom who schools 3 weeks on, 1 week off year-round.

I tend to take some time off for our beautiful spring, and start light lessons in August when it is too hot here to do much outside. Look at the weather, your rhythm and family schedules to decide. You can always change it, another beauty of homeschooling.

Step 2: Label each month with a Main Lesson Block.

If you have purchased a curriculum that lays out your year, you can just copy over onto your planner.

Example: Sept: Form Drawing

Oct.: Fairy Tales

Nov. Quality of Numbers

Your curriculum may have the Main Lesson blocks, but not in any particular order. Or if you are creating your own lessons, you will have to determine the order.

There are no hard and fast rules here, but I encourage you to again look through the material and see if there are obvious choices.

A farming or botany block would best be done during nice weather. Nature stories, Man and Animal and Native American blocks as well.

Math is frequently scheduled during winter or inside months.

Saint stories would be excellent to do during holidays like St. Nicholas, St. Valentine's Day, etc..

I suggest putting these obvious blocks in place on your calendar and then filling in the rest. Use pencil, as you will most likely change things around once you get more detailed.

Step 3: Fill in with Weekly Topics

Now its time to fill in the weeks of your monthly plan.

Example: October
 week 1: fairy tales: Mother Holle & King Thrushbeard
 week 2: fairy tales: The Golden Goose & Rapunzel
 week 3: fairy tales: The Glass Mountain & The Queen Bee
 week 4: fairy tales: Fisherman's Wife & The Three Brothers

Here you want to get into some detail of what you will be teaching each week.

If you have a curriculum with this info, then just transfer it over.

If not, then time to dig into your collection of notes and bookmarks you have been collecting and start filling in.

This can actually take some time. It is hard to decide which stories to chose, as there are so many in the fairy tale and fable category.

Choose those which may speak to your child or ones you enjoyed reading. Again, you can erase and replace if need be, but this is the time to narrow it done and make your plans real.

If you are planning a Math block write down which story you will tell along with what math component.

Example: week 1: Quality of Numbers 1 & 2 Story of a sun and story of 2 eyes.

 week 1: Adding. Gnome story about adventures with plus gnome & kingdom.

This weekly plan doesn't need all the details, but a general idea of topic & resource.

Step 4: Detailed daily plans

It's time to give create the details of your daily lessons.

I use a weekly sheet with a summary at the top of what I will cover during the week, a place for notes and thoughts

and then a 5 day plan where I list out the details for each day.

Example:

**Main Lesson: Fairy Tales: King Thrushbeard- Letter K
The Glass Mountain- Letter M**

**Monday: Tell story of King Thrushbeard and draw picture p. 35
New recorder song: three blind mice**

Tuesday: Re-call/tell story and write summary sentence

**Wednesday: Tell story The Glass Mountain and draw picture p. 47
Homeschool co-op**

Thursday: Re-call/tell story and write summary sentence

**Friday: Paint from The Glass Mountain
Bake mountain muffins**

I use a weekly sheet where I detail everything. It helps to keep the flow and if we don't get to an activity, I can do it the next day.

This weekly sheet is the place to add in all the other activities you want to go along with your Main Lesson. Recipes, songs, handwork, crafts, stories, foreign language, etc..

This will also be the record of what you are teaching.

Adjustments & Check-ups

Do a quarterly and/or semester check-up on your progress. Are you behind?
Right where you should be? Do you need to modify your plan?

This is an organic plan that should have some flexibility and “breathing room”. Don't try to schedule so much that you can't possibly get it all done (a very common tendency, as there is so much great material we want to share!).

Be kind to yourself if things haven't gone exactly as you hoped. Homeschooling is a process and takes time to get into its rhythm.

I do an end-of-semester summary as well (One in January, one in May)
This I keep for my records and for my own knowledge on where we still need practice or how far we have come this year.

Monthly Re-Alignments

Before the start of each block, I take a look at what I will be covering and make sure I have all the supplies needed. Do I need to check out a book from the library? Get some yarn or special clay from the craft store?
I mentally review what is coming and get prepared to bring that to my children.

This is a great time to re-read stories you will be telling, draw out the pictures you will be using for chalkboard drawings or main lesson books, practice recorder songs or new verses, etc.

Weekly Regimen

Each Sunday, I glance at the upcoming week and refresh myself on what is coming. I may read the stories again, or practice my songs or new circle time movements, get baking ingredients ready or craft items prepped.

If you have your plan in place, this weekly time shouldn't take very long. You have done all the leg work up till now and basically it is just about presenting the material.

If you haven't prepared, then you could end up spending Sunday nights trying to figure it all out and not having the relaxed prep time to get yourself ready to present.

This will cause you stress and overwhelm that can be avoided with a well-laid out plan.

Closing Notes:

There will always be adjustments to make and new ideas that will spring up when creating the lessons. I let these new inspirations in when it feels right, even if I totally don't use my planned lessons.

If not, I have everything I need to make sure my child is getting what they should from the curriculum.

Plan, plan, plan- then relax and enjoy!

Resources

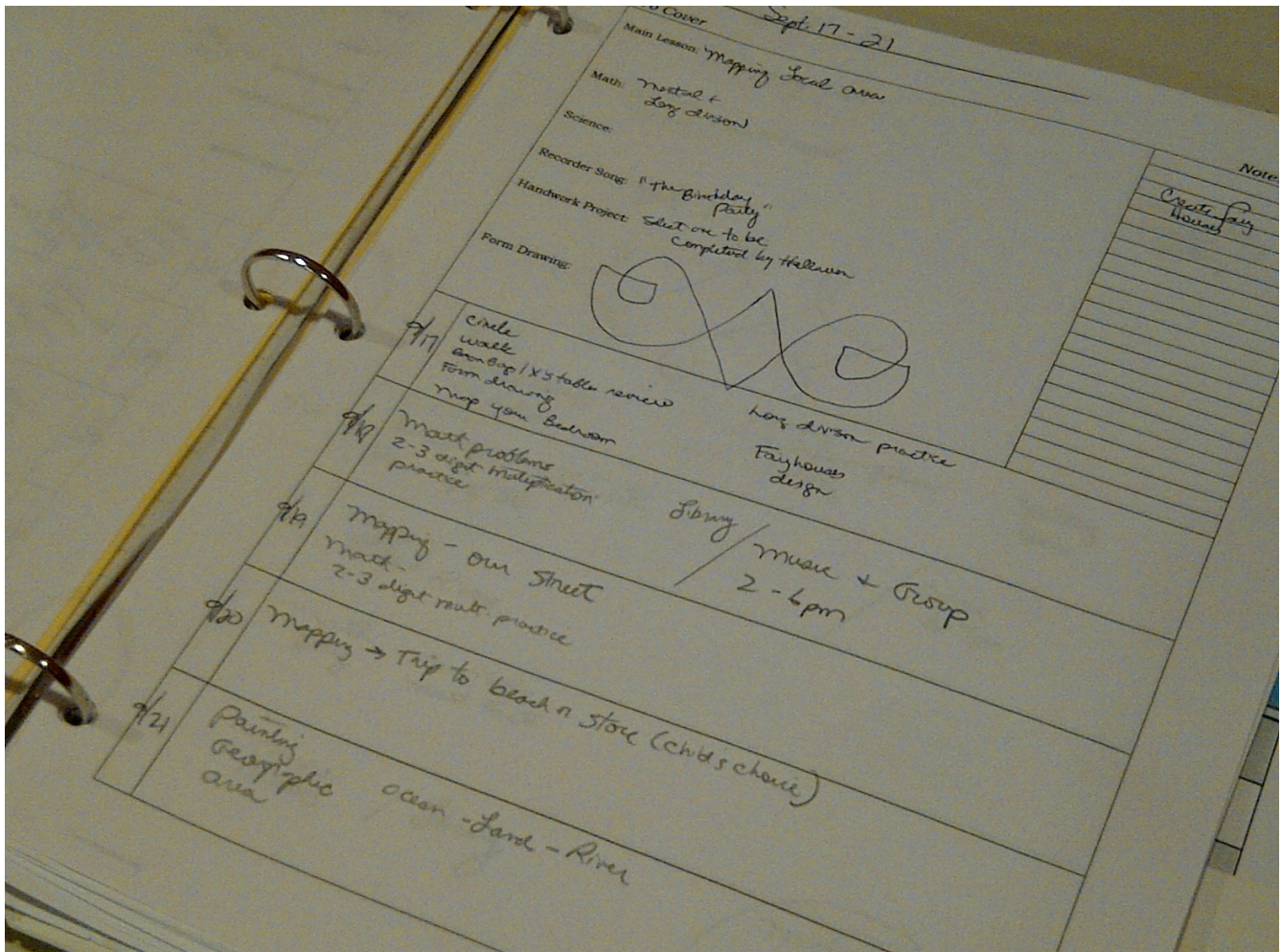
[Ultimate Waldorf Homeschool Planner](#)

Free Stories: [The Baldwin Project](#)

Inspirational Blogs:

Parenting Passageway

The Magic Onions



Week: _____

To Cover

Notes

Story: Main Lesson:	
	Math:
Science:	
Recorder Song:	
Handwork Project:	
Form Drawing:	

