



## **Waldorf Homeschool U Module 2: Transcript**

### **Getting It All Done Without Exhaustion: Daily and Weekly Rhythm**

Hi! This is Donna with The Waldorf Connection and welcome to my grade-2 tutorial and I'm really excited about doing this, the second grade tutorial. I did the kindergarten and the grade-1 previously this year and I had a lot of request for grade-2 so glad I can go ahead and do that. I was just saying I've been going through and reviewing what we did for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade this past week to get ready for the call and it really was an exceptionally fun year. I guess sometimes when you're in the middle of it, it seems hard or it seems there's a lot of stuff that doesn't seem to fit together or whatever, especially those early years when you're just kind of getting with homeschooling then you start to kind of get in to your rhythm.

I feels that 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to me is that time where you've kind of gone through the 1<sup>st</sup> grade if you homeschooled before you got it down pad, you understand a lot of the basic concepts so you can really dig in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and really hone in and that's really what I see here and as I go through and talk about 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, it really does seem to be a year of digging in, honing in on some skills that we introduced in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and then really getting and using this as a lot of things that are introduced and brought in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade that are really building blocks to the rest of the school year. To me it's a very important grade and kind of a place where you can really get in and work on a lot of these main skills.

I want to go ahead and give a quote from Steiner and you may have heard this one before. I tried to pick one for each of the tutorials that I've done and this one says "to receive the children in reverence, educate them in love and send them forth in freedom" and to me this 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, it kind of struck me for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade as this age group of children who are 7, for some of the grade maybe but probably 8 for most of the grade, they're really going into that next 7 year cycle. If you know anything about Steiner's 7-year cycle, it's birth -7 and then 7 - 14 and 14 - 21.

You've got a 7 year old who's maybe just getting ready to turn 8 or will be turning 8 shortly. They're really moving into that second 7-year cycle and they really are starting to awaken and lot of the things are becoming...they're becoming a lot of things and we're going to go through a lot of that here and you'll see that and this 2<sup>nd</sup> grade curriculum really meets them. The curriculum was setup for every grade, that's what's so amazing about this whole Waldorf method is that it meets the child where they

are for that grade and we'll talk about some of the things that are happening to them developmentally and why the stories and the things that we're doing with them in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade really meets them.

I'm just going to go through my thoughts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade which is pretty much that. A lot of the stuff that we did in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade, we're doing it again in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade especially working on reading and writing and the four processes. To me it was a little bit easier. Like I was saying, the first grade you're working on your kinks and then 2<sup>nd</sup> grade you can coast along a little bit and really get into it and really enjoy what you're doing because you feel a little more confident, perhaps your child is starting to really getting into reading, putting things together and you're like over that hump, at least as you start to move into 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. It's like that first big milestone of teaching your child to read because I know that was an issue for me and it probably is for everybody with this homeschooling. Will I be able to teach my child to read and all of that and I'll talk about where my children were, I have twin. Even though they are twins they were at 2 different levels when we started the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. I'll be going into that as we come up on it.

Let's talk about where they are developmentally. At this age, as I was saying we're just kind of getting into that second year cycle. Most children are around 8 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Mine were, their birthday is on October, the end of October so they were just 7, just about to turn 8 as we begin the year. They're really a solid 8 in that 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and I found some information online about the 2<sup>nd</sup> grader is really likened to a butterfly and that's a really good way to look at who's just emerged from this chrysalis who is now spreading their wings and is just waiting for the wings to dry and to strengthen so they can get ready to fly. That's kind of where they are. They're sort of on this cusp.

They have entered now into that 2<sup>nd</sup> year cycle of imagination and wonder and this is sort of the heart of childhood, this age, this 8 year old. They begin to awaken to a gradual realization that they are separate from the world and this is what we will start to talk about when I talk about the 9 year change and the reason I'm bringing this up, you may be like "why is she bringing up the 9 year change in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade" because it really starts to happen in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade but I kind of want to give you a heads up as to what's going to be happening down the line and for me, one of my girls really started in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, not long after she was 8. I won't even say 8 ½, it was even before that. Even though it's called the 9 year change, it can really happen anywhere between 8 and 10. That's why I decided to put that talk in here so that you'll be aware. You may not think "oh it can't be the 9 year change" but it very well could be. We're going to talk a little bit more about that.

They're starting to wake up a little more. They're starting to see things. They start to experience a sense of freedom and also a sense of uncertainty and really you as their guide becomes very crucial at this stage that they've got someone who's strong and somebody who's kind of guiding them there as they are starting to really move out of that dreamy state of consciousness they have been in all their lives and start to cross that threshold into more awareness and that's why this year's stories really do help, these noble characters that we talk about with the saints, they really do help the child with their freewill and 1<sup>st</sup> grade, it was more of a time of creating a rhythm and a sense of oneness and then in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade it's a time to explore the dualities that human nature has as these feelings are awakening within your

child and this could be very strong feelings of sympathy and antipathy and it could be really upsetting as we start to see things happen.

It's this whole good and bad and I hate to phrase it that way but that's the way you'll probably understand it and the way they could be looking at it – the good behavior versus the bad, the good people versus the bad and that is what a lot of the stories that you'll be bringing to your child in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade deal with. They have both sides and that's really what this is about because you're 2<sup>nd</sup> grader really needs to live through that. By telling stories from all different cultures that portray these kinds of emotions and this kind of behavior, we let the stories do the teaching and you can pick from multicultural animal fables like Aesop, an African Jataka tales and Native American lore, anything that shows the human's animal characteristic, where they're pitted one against the other, sort of those lower emotions and these stories really speak to your child's imaginations and allow them to form their own inner pictures of right and wrong and I want to put a big asterisk right here. It's not your job to point the moral of the story. It's about them.

It's about you telling the story and letting them come to the conclusion of what happened here or how they interpret these fables and some of these trickster tales. Let me work inertly with that. The trickster tales are great and Nancy the spider and I've got a lot of resources here on different things I'm going to go through.

In contrast to these animal fables and these trickster tales which you could characterize as the bad but it was really not but it was testing different emotions and different behaviors. Then we have the stories of the saints and great heroes and legends, heroines who have overcome these animalistic tendencies and are out there serving others with good intentions and all of that. You got the good and the bad and they're getting both sides.

Let's talk a little bit about the 9 year change and how that could really come into play. Again like I said between 8 and 10 years old, your child will start to question some things and instead of just believing everything that you have to say they really start to question authority and again their awareness starts to emerge and they see things that they never notice before. I remember thinking to myself all of a sudden they were telling me things about whatever, especially a lot of it was about me. I think things that they were very familiar with seeing everyday like "oh you have a little bump in your nose", "I never noticed before, your eyes are kind of wide" it could be just things about me or about things that I think they've been there all along but it's like the awareness for them was not there and then suddenly it's almost like the light goes on and suddenly they can see everything really clear where before it was hazy and I'm just using that sort of as a metaphor. I'm not saying everything was hazy but if you get what I'm saying, they just weren't consciously aware of what some of that and what was happening there.

A really, really great resource and I highly recommend you get a copy of this book and I got one well before we were going into the 9 year change and I was glad because I was ready and I was aware and ready to see the signs and that book is *Encountering the Self: Transformation and Destiny in the Ninth Year* by Herman Koepke, and you can find that online, Amazon and some of the used Waldorf and I recommend getting that book and just read through it and highlight some things and I remember even

typing out a couple of the things and keeping it by and talking with my husband because we have some things going on and he was getting very annoyed with what was happening and I was trying to explain why it was happening and all of that and I think that really is the key, at least it does for me. At least if you know what's happening and why, you can say "okay they're not just being rude, they're not just being critical. They're going through something here and they're working through it the best they can."

They may have these painful feelings of becoming separate. Your child may no longer feel harmonious and this oneness that they've had with the world and it really depends on the child, it could depend on the temperament of what their temper is, how they go through the 9 year change, a child may feel she doesn't belong to her parents and they ask them if they're adopted. This is that time where a lot of the fantasy starts to slip away and is replaced by more things that are faults in the world. They may not believe in fairies and things anymore. It's sort of the beginning of this emerging individuality and at first I didn't really think it was a 9 year change with one of my girls because she was barely 8 like I was saying and all of a sudden it was this very critical about everything, like you're not doing this right and why aren't you doing this? Questioning and just being very critical is really the best what I can come up with.

There was fault finding, she was on me if I was 5 minutes late for our school lesson, she was like "9:05 and where is this 9 o'clock" it felt like she was constantly on top of me there, doing whatever that was just very bossy and very whatever and that she's very choleric temperament. I started seeing that come out and it lasted a few months and then sort of waned down and then she got a little more balanced and then this was probably in the early winter I'd say and then about late spring I started seeing my other girl who's like pragmatic and usually and has been very easy going, very go with the flow and sweet and kind of happy personality and suddenly it was very doom and gloom and everything was boring. She was being rude to everyone, just making rude comment and just being rude and didn't want to go along with anything.

I remember a big meltdown on father's day where we were all going to go to a restaurant and she did not want to go to the restaurant and I've never seen anything like it because it had never happened before. It felt like it was a different child I've never seen before who had a meltdown and was carrying on crying and wasn't going to leave and wore these really odd clothes because she didn't want to go to this restaurant and it just wasn't her. It started to grate on everyone's nerve because it lasted a while, 3 or 4 months but at least I was understanding what was happening and not that we were saying it was alright to do all of that but we were trying to look at it as that's her way of working things out and kind of going through and it kind of wane and then it kind of reared its head again maybe in another 4 or 6 months and we had another little bout of it and again I said it's not like it will just happen overnight and that's it.

I think it's sort of a process and maybe it depends on the child and how they can see it. I think like I said the main thing is to be aware, suddenly you're saying "I don't know what's going on. This child is turned into someone I don't recognize anymore" that could be a big heads up that something's happening. You start to see behavior changing and behavior that's different and it's not the usual or it's very intense from what maybe they were melancholic already and now super duper, very exaggerated behavior. I totally recommend getting that book. It's a great book about a Waldorf teacher who talks about his class

and talks with the parents and gives lots of ideas and things to make the parents aware. It's a great book.

Something to keep that out there as a heads up for what's coming and to look and be prepared, that'd be the best thing I could say. Be prepared and then you can look at, okay I understand what's happening. How can I support my child through this? What can I do to help them transition over. It's a big time in their life and how can I be there for them rather than just to be angry at them for acting different. It's all about that perspective and when you understand that, you can look at them in a different way and what's happening a different way. It's not them being bad or being rude, it's them trying to work through this awakening and how can you best support them through this.

I have a lot here on main lessons; I'm going to go through all the things that we have to teach. Let me go back just a little sec here, if there's any questions go ahead and put them in here. I'll just keep checking now and then for any questions that have come through. I don't see anything right now so I'm going to keep going.

I went into more detail about rhythm and my schedule and that kind of thing in the first grade and also in the kindergarten tutorial. I'm not going to go through a ton of that but I'm just going to briefly touch here about how our day schedule looks like. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade looks very similar to 1<sup>st</sup> grade as far as the times and the days that we did school. We would get up in the morning and do the morning routine. Get the house in order, have breakfast and take our walk and our walk was that transition from home to school even though we're in the home then we would do some circle time that could last anywhere from 10 minutes to could be 20 minutes if we did recorder because we started recorder in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and continued in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and we would do recorder lessons within circle time. I know you can do them in the afternoon, do a separate music class. I chose to do it in the morning.

For some days we would do recorder so our circle time was a little bit longer and we also added some more games and things in the circle time and I'm going to go through it in a minute, I'm just going to stay on my schedule and we would do main lesson which could last an hour then it was pretty much over. We would do other things throughout the day like baking. If we have painting or something like that, then the main lesson would be longer of course or sculpting, modeling or something. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade we didn't do a lot of that. We just started to get in a little bit of beeswax and of course painting. In the afternoon you could do something like a handwork or we try to do some kind of craft, maybe foreign language, something in the afternoon, comeback together so it could be considered an afternoon class but we were just reading something, we could come back together maybe around 3 and do an hour or something of another activity and you can schedule that when you're doing your planning.

There's not a lot, you're not spending all day and then we were still on a 4-day a week schedule with schooling where we did Monday to Thursday and then our Friday were our co-op where we would go to classes here with our local homeschool group. That was kind of considered, we would take other classes like art or whatever could be going on, some little elective type classes there.

That was basically our school year, very similar to the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. It was just we were doing a little bit more in that hour or two of main lesson. The main lesson, if you're not familiar with that, hopefully you

are because I'm not going to go into a lot of that but a main lesson could be anywhere from 4 -8 weeks. I like to break mine up in 4 weeks to go along with the month but that's not always the case, sometimes there's a 2-week block, that's a short block or something. It could be something where there's an 8-week block. I don't prefer to do that.

The only time I did that was in the first grade when we were getting through the letters and then we did do longer block to try to get through the alphabet. I think a 4-week is good and I know there's a lot you can read about the main lesson block and why they set them up that way, instead of everyday doing math, everyday doing language arts, everyday doing science or history, they're done in blocks. You'll do a 4-week block on language arts and then you're working all on language arts.

As you start to get into the grades, you are doing other little things like math, just here and there some mental math every day, working on some other little skills but the main meat of your lessons would be the language arts and then when that main lessons block is done, you close the door on that and you let that sleep and you start working maybe in math block for 4 weeks, we're going through math through stories and you're working on the four processes or whatever. Again that closes and you let it sleep and then when you bring the language arts back, it's supposed to have a deeper, the child is able to take it into their body and they're able to bring it back up, remember it and then live with that in a deeper way. That's what the whole main lesson block cycle was setup for.

As far as materials and things for the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade versus 1<sup>st</sup> grade, everything is basically the same. You still use your block crayons, 3 primary colors are great. You're using stick crayons especially in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade you'll be doing a lot more writing. We didn't introduce pencils until 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. I've heard those in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade where you can introduce the Lyra pencils, they're just a little bit thinner to write with. I'm looking through our main lesson book now and it was all done, I can tell with crayons. I'm just looking through here, I can see, looks like it's all done with crayon. There could have been some Lyra pencils at the end but I think it's all stick crayons.

You can do some of the Lyra pencils in the second half. Basically you don't need anything special more than you already had for your 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Beeswax was a big thing that my girls started to do in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. They didn't have much interest before and I had that beeswax sitting around my house for years and I thought why did I buy this, I never did anything with it and then suddenly in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade they loved it. We'll get into that some more. That's just a few little notes about the materials.

Let's just go into the main blocks because we've got a lot to cover here. The main blocks, we're going to start with the saint stories, let's just start there. The saints, again I talked before how we're doing these trickster and fable, sort of good versus bad. The saints, it's really great to bring some of these saints' stories especially around the time of all the festivals, which there are a lot of festivals in the fall and early winter.

If you are looking at planning out your main lesson blocks, you can take a look at that and see how you can fit that in because there are quite a lot especially in December. There are a lot; you can do St. Nicholas, St. Lucia, St. Martin for Martinmas in November and St. Francis, St. Patrick, St. Valentine; there are a lot that you can do and it's really nice to tie them in if you can with the festival because that just

makes it. They get it and you're doing other things besides just reading the story and making a picture in the main lesson book and writing, you're actually participating in something.

Like in Martinmas you make the lantern and go on the lantern walk, tell the stories, sing song about St. Martin. It's a very living experience to do that and there's a lot to do and St. Francis is great with the animals and there's a lot of things you can do plus you're doing animal stories anyway. It all ties together. Then the fables and the thing I love about this, I want to say most of the second grade is that all of these resources for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade you can get at the library or online for free.

There are of course books you can buy and you'll probably have a curriculum but all these things like Aesop fables and a lot of these stories about the saints and everything, you can find all that stuff in the library. All the Jataka tales, Nancy spider, coyote and all that stuff which is great especially if you're on a budget, you can just keep checking out these fable books. I think we did 2 blocks of fables, we did one in the fall and then we did one again sometime in the mid winter and we did a lot of these different multicultural stories and I'm going to go through what we did in a few minutes, I'm just telling you the basics here.

The fables are great, the Jataka tales and Nancy spider coyote. What we did and this is a suggestion from Carrie at Parenting Passageway is we also included tall tales, the American tall tales. We did a block of this, I think it was really early on in the fall and what I mean by that is Johnny Appleseed, Paul Bunion, John Henry and we found a great book at the library, Dona Flor about a woman who lives in the American Southwest, a big giant woman and there was a few other ones I think.

We did a small block on them to bring that American and it depends where you are and what you want to bring to your child as far as cultural, we wanted to bring a little of that which was really fun and we were doing like campfire songs and Oh My Darling Clementine and the old railroad songs and they love that. We even played Oh My Darling Clementine on the recorder. That was really a fun way to bring that whole experience and kind of do some other things along with the story.

While we're doing all of these stories and these fables, you're not telling the moral of the story or saying "oh wasn't Nancy a real trickster and he deserved what he got" kind of thing. You're just giving the information and kind of letting them digest it. While all of this is going on, you're working with writing. Now when you're telling the story and then you're drawing the picture in your main lesson book, the next day your child is telling you the story and they are writing a sentence and also you're introducing the lowercase letters. In the 1<sup>st</sup> grade you did uppercase and so you're introducing the lowercase letters and again they're just really working on their writing. I'm looking through my book right now as I'm talking here.

I'm looking here like for John Henry, I got a picture of him and then our sentence "John Henry cut through the mountain first" it's very small sentences, and 'Paul Bunion was a big lumberjack who had an ox named Babe.' It's starting to work a little bit on punctuation. You're working on capitalization a little bit. You're mostly just making sure they're getting their letters and you're starting to work on word families and reading; all that's kind of going on in the background of writing sentence structure, punctuation and lowercase letters. With the sentence structure I got a great tip from, I think it was Eric

Fairman's Pathway of Discovery where he started writing the sentences on the board; he would put the nouns in one color and the verbs in a different color. It's thinking forward to "okay next year we're really going to get in to the parts of speech and all of that." It's starting to kind of give them a head start about that.

Now for the math main lessons, I was looking through and I noticed wow we really did a lot of math. A lot of different math was brought in. a lot of difference math were brought in here in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. of course your four process that was introduced in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade and now it's really just getting into those a little bit more and making sure that they understand all of that, nothing really hard but you're really getting into a little bit of maybe carrying, borrowing a little bit in addition and subtraction.

Again you're doing it all through stories, we used the gnome stories. We love those gnomes before, we did number patterns and this is really great especially early in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade we started these number patterns which are really the precursor to the times tables and you can put these right into your circle time with having them clap or do this, we did this movement game. I can't remember where we got this, if it was in a book or I heard it somewhere but 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and all of that, learning to count by 2s, learning to count by 3s, 1,2,3; 4,5,6; 7,8,9; 10, 11, 12. There was one thing that told us how to do that and then a 4, 1, 2 and then you would swing your arms 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Learning to count is learning that. 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, learning to count by 5; the earliest time tables that you introduce at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade are the 2s, 3s and the 5s because they're the easiest.

If you've been doing a lot of these, counting by 2s and 3s then you could games outside. We took a ball, we would bounce on the driveway back and forth, 2, 4, 6, 8, just getting that and the 3s and then it made those times table so easy. I don't even have to teach them, they know them. I would definitely recommend working on that. Place value is another thing that you learn. We used pickle math from Miss Marsha, if you go on Miss Marsha's Yahoo group, Marsha Johnson. She's got some great lesson plans on her in her files that are all free to download and I really like her pickle place math and we use that to try to understand the ones, the tens and the hundreds and all of that. We got jars out when we did the whole thing. It was really fun.

Money is also introduced and I think if you have a homeschooler, for us money seems to be really easy because they were already out with me all the time, shopping and buying groceries and things and they were already used to or maybe they're already started doing like looking at prices of things and they were already aware and had some where they would earn some money here or there. That could be a time for that. Starting to introduce counting the money and seeing how much is a quarter worth and how that all kind of relates to real life which I think is a perfect opportunity for homeschoolers.

Working a little bit with word problems, doing that mental math and we introduced some mental math a little bit in 2<sup>nd</sup> a lot more in 3<sup>rd</sup>. I wish I had done more of that earlier on where you're just giving them a problem. You could do it even during circle time where you say  $3 + 1 + 2$  or something and then they have to come up with the answer. They're doing it in their head and you can use any of the four processes or any of the things you've already gone over and do a couple of those especially when you're

not doing a math block, you could put a couple of those in to your circle time to just keep their mind sharp on their math.

We also did the drawing geometric shapes like drawing geometric math which is like drawing a square inside of a circle and then adding a triangle inside of a circle. We did this little thing with the wood, maybe that wasn't very good for the times table but I think it was. We did the little nail all around the circle and we did the patterns, now I think they're great and we did the patterns. We do the numbers 1 to 10 and then you went around and it made, I think that was their break.

We did times tables with that. Also writing 1 to 1000, being able to write those numbers and we broke that down. 1 week we might write 1 to 50, it depends only when we're doing math. We just have them write it in the main lesson books and again later on in the year the 2s, the 5s, the 3s times table if you feel they're ready and if you've been working on the counting, you'll see how easily it will fall together.

There's a really good resource called games for math, it's a book. There's a lot of good ideas for bringing math fun games and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade is a really good time for that because they kind of have the basics and you can really start to expand that and they're really into playing all those fun things. It's a really good time to add a lot more math games to your circle time or just in the afternoon or whatever. We still do it on walks. We would take a walk or a bike ride and we're doing times tables and things, I guess that's a little bit later on.

On to some more here, we also did the days of the week, the months of the year, seasons, calendar and time and a block and I don't know what you want to call it, seasons and time but it is really, really fun and it was great for us to go through the days of the week even though they're kind of new, it was like writing them out and then the months of the year, how many months in a year and all the months and we did this great thing in their main lesson book. You can find this, the verse of the month. There's one for every month and we would draw a picture of that seen or whatever and then write the name of the month and then write the verse. It was really beautiful.

The seasons we did this amazing, like a season wheel or wheel of seasons. What I was trying to do is to see, we made a big giant school of paper and we have it divided up by the seasons so you could see every three months was a different season and then we took, I have a picture of it somewhere. I'll have to show you guys where you can see that we had summer and we would decorate that section with shells or something for summer. We had a sun, sunflower. We just let everybody do their own thing and then fall we had some wheat, we had pressed that we put under the fall months. We kept those hanging up; I think we had those up for a couple of years even. The girls would say "what season is this in?" and I say "look on the chart because you could see, oh it's in the spring" or whatever. That was really fun. We talk about time which was great.

We have a sun dial out in the yard and we did our own sun dials with the shadow and everything that's really fun to do that outside and talk about old fashion clock. We made our own clock out of a little paper plate. You could get those little hand things, I don't know what they're called that poke through and you can move them. We did that and it was really fun and was really important. Heed my warning here, make sure that your child can read an old analog clock in this day of digital clocks because we have

this baby sitter who comes over here and we only have all analog clocks in our home, there are some here on the computers but all the hanging clocks and everything are old with the hands and the number and it took us a while to realize she does not know how to read those clocks because she was supposed to be putting the girls on bed at a certain time.

She had to get her phone to check the time because she did not know. It was really odd but again it's like people not learning to write cursive these days because they're typing on a computer, it's the same thing as not being able to tell time because they can look over at the digital clock, it's 4:40 pm. That was really fun and that's a process as well with that. One of my girls picked it up really fast and could tell the time right away. She was always asking me what time it was from real early on so she got it really fast. My other one it took her a little longer to work it all out and that's fine. It's a process. It's not like you're going to do it in the block and they have it. It's introducing and keeping at it.

We also made a weather calendar. We picked a month, I think it was February or something when every day we write down, we made our own calendar on a piece of paper and then we write down what the weather was for that day. We also marked the moon phases right on that calendar and then we just put it in to our main lesson book. That was fun to do and to kind of see the difference in the temperature and the fluctuation. If it was a sunny day or a rainy day, we would make a note of all of that and kind of drew a little picture if it was cloudy or sunny. That was really fun, that was a really fun block that we did.

Then there are the nature stories and this is another extension of 1<sup>st</sup> grade where you did some nature stories there. These are some of the ones that we did and they're just grade. That's Thornton Burgess books and you can get most of them at the libraries, there must be like 10 or 15 books all about...each one is a different character in nature, a different kind of bird or animal and it's interesting because it talks about their personality. Within the story you learn how they live and how that bird makes a nest and where they nest and what they eat. You're getting the story, getting the characteristics of that animal and also learning about where they live and how they live and how they interact with other animals.

They're really nice and the other thing I really love was this Clara Dillingham's Among the Pond People, Among the Meadow People, Among the Night People, Among the Forest People, Among the Meadow People and those are all available, I think all of them are at mainlesson.com for free, which is also The Baldwin Project. You can buy the books. I started to buy the books and then I run in and they're all online for free, I was like "oh okay" and there are other nature stories on mainlesson.com plus you can get them at a library but if you see these types then you kind of see what we're trying to get when we say nature stories. These are really good examples and we did different types of birds.

I was looking through here we had a whole thing about what birds are in our neighborhood and what kind of birds we see. We drew little pictures of them and label them on a tree. There's lots you can do with nature. We did a nature notebook where we would just have a special little, it could be a main lesson type book or it could be a little pad or sketchpad and we would walk down the street or go somewhere that I thought we would see some nature and we would draw a picture of what we saw and we saw some really interesting things. It was just about observing, looking at the animal. What kind of

things are they doing, drawing a picture of it and you can label it or whatever. Again, just observing and really getting into those feelings of birds or whatever it is you're looking at. Here I'm looking at birds we saw and then there's a tree with some birds and all the different ones that's around.

We also did an elements main lesson block – the air, fire, water, earth. This is just a small block that we talked about. That was really fun and then again of course I was saying we were reviewing your uppercase letters and introducing lowercase and then form drawings. Form drawing, the way we did form drawing, some people you could do like 2 week block at the beginning of the year and then do some throughout the year.

We just sort of did ours, in the curriculum that I had I think on Monday there was one and we did it not every week. I think it was just during the language arts block it would be introduced. We would do every Monday, that would be when we do our main lesson, a form drawing would be in there and then we were able to use those form drawings throughout the book to decorate all around the outside of the pages and really feel into that. We would still do a lot of using other ways to bring form drawings through – chalk on the driveway, drawing with sticks in mud and sand, walking the form, drawing it on the blackboard. Just trying to do it other than just drawing it, trying to use some other ways to feel into the form drawings because I think they said the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade are the most important years for that form drawing and it is really also a precursor into cursive writing. You might think “why are we doing this?” there are a lot of reasons for form drawings you may not see and they're sort of there, working on many, many things in the background. Form drawing is important so don't skip it.

Music recorder, again we're doing recorder, continuing on recorder. It's fun because the children have probably gotten the hang of it by now from first grade. You can move up into your next book of recorder, introducing a few more notes. Like I was saying, we did Oh My Darling Clementine. We would do some seasonal songs, easy ones of course. Around the festival time they were able to learn a few songs that would go along with what was going on, besides the regular ones, we could do a couple special one that they could learn to go along with something for main lesson or a festival or a time of year that we were doing and we would continue those in our circle time, probably once or twice a week we would do our recorder and I know that if you don't know how to play a recorder yourself it could seem a little daunting.

I wanted to give you, there's a website and a resource, [homemusicmaking.com](http://homemusicmaking.com). Jodie, she has a great program where you watch her video and learn the stuff and then go back and teach your child so you can see what to do and how to do it if you don't know how to play an instrument or never played. It's really not hard but it's just something else to learn to teach your child. That's a great resource. She has a whole year of lessons all planned for you as well in the book so you just follow along and it's all done for you.

Let's take a breather here for a minute, check for any questions. You guys are quite. Alright, I will continue along here. Circle time, I talked a little bit about circle time here and there. I'm not going to go through a ton. I do talk about that in some of the earlier ones. I also have whole 7 successful tips for circle time or something, there's available in my store where it's all about circle time but here, I just

want to give you some things that you can add to your circle time for your 2<sup>nd</sup> grader that they really love and like I gave you some idea already where you can bring in recorder and you can do some of these math games and things like that.

Some of the other things that are really fun that they love at this age are riddles, tongue twisters, they love that. My girls started with the riddles and they just love riddles. You can get riddles, there are books available online. There are all kinds of things. The seasonal songs and festival songs are really important especially when you're doing the saints and if you're talking about seasons and everything, it's really perfect to celebrate these festivals and embrace the seasons and what's happening. This year's curriculum just really lends itself to bringing all of this and really celebrating.

Take time, if you have a week, we used to do like a whole Michaelmas week, dragon bread. Not doing a lot of school but doing things that all had to do around this; reading the story of George and the Dragon, Michael and the Dragon. Making a shield or making a dragon. We did the beeswax; we made a dragon out of the beeswax and put it on a candle, whatever. You could spend a couple of days working on your celebration for your festival.

The other thing that's important about the circle time I wanted to bring up, you can also do beanbag games, dice games, this is working on the polarities. As I was talking about the development of where your child is, the sort of good and bad and waking up and all of that; polarities are really important right now that they get both sides. You could bring that into circle by bringing in movement that is up and down, left and right, back and front, things where you're doing that and the time where they're still maybe deciding if they're left hand, right hand. Usually it's first grade but they could still be kind of back and forth with that, learning which is left and which is right and they're learning all of this up, down; hot, cold. It's a perfect time to bring all of that into circle time.

The art, you're continuing your wet and wet painting. We're doing the block crayon; all that stuff is sort of is very similar to what you did in the first grade. They're able to do a little bit more. Their hand and their gross and fine motor skills are more so they're able to draw the pictures and go a little bit more detail and then the beeswax modeling; my kids just really went all in with the beeswax modeling in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. They loved it. We did it with fables where they would make the animal themes like the fox, a dog, different things. We used the beeswax for and then we would set them up in our nature table and they really got into it at this age where before it seemed to be they couldn't do it or just weren't interested in doing it but it really came out in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. I highly recommend getting some beeswax and do that modeling for your 2<sup>nd</sup> grader.

For handwork, they learned to knit in the first grade then you're just bringing that. We started doing the recorder case in the very beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and we worked on those for a while, kind of just solidifying those knitting skills. I know some people say you could introducing a pearling, we did not do that but we did introduce crocheting the second half of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and that was very well received. They picked it up in minutes. I was shock how great they did with the crocheting. It seemed very easy for them. It's just working from there on little projects to keep that going. They could knit and crochet, they

did all stuffs. They crochet little dog beds and cat beds for their animals, belts and pot holder and washcloth and all kinds of stuff. Again, that's for handwork.

Of course you could still be doing other things like the wet salting. They were doing a little bit of sewing on the site. We hand make a lot of gifts for the holidays and so a lot of things come into play around that time where they would start helping me hand sew things and started getting some real basic sewing things. I think definitely at this point they could be doing that as well.

I did the nature notebooks and taking nature hike. Nature notebooks go right along with the nature stories. That's basically it for your main lesson and that's a lot. That is a lot there to cover and I remember having people say that they thought it was kind of just bobby-weighted. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade just didn't seem like it had a whole lot of different things to hold it together but now looking back I can see how it does have those polarities, the good, the bad; the trickster and the saint, kind of bringing in a lot of that practical math, learning about time, the seasons, the days, the weeks, the time, the money and then introducing the times tables at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Some of the early, the 5s, the 2s, the 1s, the 3s and just getting that started because it really get into that in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, the times table. If you set it up right, you can work on those things early in the year. Like I was saying the counting by 2s and 3s and then it moves right into having that. Knowing where you're going is really important and looking ahead to the year ahead so that you can say "we need to have this in place here so that we can take to the next year" it will just flow together and you won't be caught off guard or "oh we didn't really do that. We don't have that solid and now we've got to backtrack." Always good to look ahead a little bit to see what's coming up and knowing what you have to make sure you got covered in the grade you're in.

I wanted to give a couple of verses for circle time here that we used. There's a great resource I'm going to give you as well. There are a lot of resources out there for circle time verses and the seasonal verses and I'm sure I gave it in the first grade but I'll go ahead and tell you that. Child Seasonal Treasury is an amazing one for this early grade, also A Journey through Time poem.

There's a lot of stuff online. Here are a couple of the morning verses that we would use and I was trying to remember. I think this one here is the one we had for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. For some reason, I couldn't find it but I did find the verse and that is "the earth is firm beneath my feet. The sun shines bright above and here stand I so straight and strong, all things to know and love." I believe that was for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. We did that every morning. That was the opening of our circle and then we had one for 3<sup>rd</sup>, I don't think I have these reversed but if I did, well it doesn't really matter. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade we did "the sun is in my heart. It warms me with its power and wakens life and love and bird and bees and flower" there's a website that's got great stuff and has tons of things listed for all different types.

If you want a painting verse or a handwork verse, a cleanup verse, all kinds of stuff and that's [angelfire.com](http://angelfire.com) and I'll put this in the transcript so you can have it. I've got a little link here; [angelfire.com/or/cmccqu...](http://angelfire.com/or/cmccqu...) I'll just put it on there. I'm not going to read all this stuff but at the end it's verses and songs. Anywhere this is where I got a couple of these, I was like "oh those are the ones we did." Here's a really good one too, "hands together, hands apart, hands together now we start" and here's one that kind of goes with the right and left; "I raise my right hand oh so high, I raise my left hand

to the sky. Right hand, left hand, roll them around. Left hand, right hand, pound, pound, pound.” You can see how that goes. These are sort of the things for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and this is a great one “a wise old owl sat on an oak; the more he saw the less he spoke. The less he spoke, the more he heard; let us all be like that wise bird.”

I want to also go through a list of some books and so I’ve got 2 different lists here, one is read aloud that you could be reading to your children and then some early readers. I’ll let somebody to talk about the reading, let’s get to the early readers. I wanted to talk about my 2 girls who are exactly the same age of course, they’re twins. One of them started losing their teeth almost a year ahead of the other one and when she was just about 6, started really losing her teeth and the other one was just about 7 when she started losing hers and as it turns out, Lily who loss her teeth earlier was reading in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, really had no hard.

It was very easy, just started reading by the end of 1<sup>st</sup> grade she was reading very well and the other one had no interest in reading and was really struggling along but I just let it go. I didn’t try to push and then that summer between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, at the end of the summer she started losing more of her teeth and then by then time 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and she started getting into 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, she started getting into reading and it’s funny.

By the time they were in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, she is really my voracious reader, the one who was a little bit behind. I wouldn’t say behind but the other one was reading before her. It makes no difference I think and there’s such a varied skill at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. There could be some that are like “alright, we were ready to rock and roll” and other ones that are still struggling a bit to make all those connections, whether it be math or it be reading. Be really patient and give them time because I think that was the key for me, that I didn’t force it. I didn’t make her feel like she was behind or why was she slow or anything like that. I just let her have her time with it and now I’m so glad because she loves to read and she’s reading out of, I don’t even know what grade level she’s reading. She’s reading humungous 500-page books

Here are some early readers that I didn’t really go over this on first grade because I think that they’re not even really doing much of this yet to the very end. Those Bob books, we got them out the library. You can buy those really early readers book. In my opinion it’s kind of a waste unless you have other younger children because once they read that, it’s done and they are so short and then they’re on to the next thing. To me it seems like a waste of money unless you can’t find anything else but there are a lot in the library that you can get and they’re just fine.

Those Bob books where the first one that we used and Lily went through those pretty fast and then Brooke was still going through those at the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and that was fine. She worked her way through them. There was a whole series. They start off like “Mat” “Mat sat” “Mat sat on cat” it’s very simple and then it gets more and more and more as it goes on. It gets a little bit more descriptive, I can’t remember. They get a little bit more and they’re like this little flip book and most libraries will have them.

After that, they kind of graduate on to the Frog and Toad and they love those, the Frog and Toad and there’s a whole different series of those as well by the same author, Owl at Home, Grasshopper on the

Road, Mouse Soup, Uncle Elephant, they loved those and then there's the Little Bear series, those are really good. The biscuit book, they're very early readers too. The biscuit, the dog, there's a whole bunch of those and also the Francis Series, the little badger, Francis.

Those are some of our early readers. They didn't really do much more than those. It was like once they read those they got it and then we moved up to a little bit harder of a chapter book and they did a lot of those animals, there was sort of animal chapter books. They're just some pretty simple ones after that. That's a good place for you to start and how it all go through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade where they really start to progress and it's like all of a sudden they just get it. It seemed very effortless for us. The reading there was nothing hard. There was never crying and carrying on and sometimes I was shocked at how they made it work before I even taught that but then we're going through talking about the word families and all that you're going over in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

You can see as your child is reading where they need a little more help. If they need more help with vowel sounds, you can go over that stuff as you see it kind of come up and have them read out loud to you. That's the only way you're going to know, is have them read out loud the books. That's what we did. They read out loud. That way you'll know what they're reading and how it's going and then of course once they get going, they can start reading to themselves. It's great, it's a good habit to have them read out loud for a long time because then it helps, you know where they are and it also helps with their speaking.

Here is a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade reading list, some read aloud. We're going to finish up with this. If anybody has any questions or anything there, go ahead and let me know as I get to the end of this list, I'll answer anything. These again are just some stuff that you can be bringing to them. Of course some of this we talked about which is like Aesop's Fables, The Thornton Burgess Nature Stories, there's a book the Sulky Girl, any of the Tomie dePaola stories, the Crown of God, Big Anthony and Strega Nona, those are some great classics. George MacDonald's The Light Princess and there's a series there The Princess and the Goblin and the Princess and Curdie. Gerald Mcdermott's trickster tales, the Nancy Spider stories, those are great.

Even if you've got some stories picked out for main lesson, because will say you can't read all the fables during your main lesson. You can only be able to pick 10 or 12 or something, maybe a few more than that to bring to your child during main lesson. You pick your favorites but then there are other stuffs. You can still read nighttime stories to them, some more of them or like this trickster and a Nancy; we didn't really do a Nancy during school. I bought a book online of a Nancy and then I would read out loud to them in the afternoon or something and they loved it. It was just more of the same thing that they could listen and it wasn't part of main lesson and that coyote stories as well.

They were Native American type coyote stories, kind of the same type of thing where the coyote is kind of a trickster and gets into trouble and has to get out of trouble. Arthur Ransome's Old Peter's Russian Tales; Winnie the Pooh, if you've not read the real Winnie the Pooh, the Tale of Winnie the Pooh; the big thick book, not those little early reader types. This is like the real book. Isabel Wyatt's The Book of Fairy Princess and I love Isabel Wyatt's The Seven-Year-Old Wonder.

This is perfect for them; maybe it was 1<sup>st</sup> grade when she was just turning 7 I think. If you haven't read them already, have them read the Seven-Year-Old Wonder. It's a great, great book. Any of the Tiptoes Lightly series by Reg Down, those are awesome. There's a whole bunch of them. The Festivals of Stone is a great thing to have because it follows the festivals. There's all stuff about Tiptoes and the Gnomes, they're great books and those can also be readers.

Once they get reading, they're very simple books with very simple language and they're very short chapters. Some of them are a page or two for the chapter. Great as early readers once they're actually reading, you could have been reading the stories to them and then when they can read, they can take one of the books and start reading and that's what mine did. A lot of these they did, some of those early books that you've been reading to them, they can take now and read themselves. Andrew Lang's the Colored Fairy Books, anymore fairy stories, fairytales that you haven't already read, they're great.

I brought a lot more of the Grimm's to my girls in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade because they were really asking for stories that have a little more tragedy in them and they loved the Grimm's Fairy Tales and they love them in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. We did a lot of those that we didn't get to in the 1<sup>st</sup>. The Little House on the Prairie series, they love that. I want to say maybe, yeah that was the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and going into 3<sup>rd</sup> grade that they started reading. I read them to them and then they read on their own. In fact that was one of the early readers then they really started reading that they took over; again pretty simple language and great when they really get the reading and they're past The Frog and Toad and all of that. The Ballet Shoes and all the other shoes, there's a whole series by I think it was Noel Streatfield. The Theater Shoes, there's a whole bunch. Those are really great and one I absolutely, if you can get a hold of this I totally recommend

The Faraway Tree series by Enid Blyton. It's English, published in England. You can get them here sometimes on Amazon. One of those get The Faraway Tree series, they're really great. She has another one too, something chair, I guess the Magic Chair. Also Pippi Longstocking, they love that and Dr. Dolittle, especially when you're starting to talk about nature and animals, so Dr. Dolittle. You're reading Dr. Dolittle right now to them. There are some great suggestions to get you through your 2<sup>nd</sup> grade year. It sounds like a lot but it really does flow nicely and because you kind of have everything hopefully, you kind of learn from 1<sup>st</sup> grade that you can feel a little more comfortable and relaxed and really enjoy 2<sup>nd</sup> grade because it can be a wonderful time.

Like I said, they feeling a little more confident in their skills, when the reading starts coming it's really such a big celebration; your child is reading and what does that do to them, it just opens up a whole new world to celebrate that and celebrate their progress as they go along and with the books they're graduating on and seeing how it's going because suddenly they're just reading everything and you forget, I had to go back and look at all the old books and I'm thinking "gosh I already forgot about Frog and Toad and all these cute books that they read" but they really are growing and these next few years they're going to be changing and going through quite a growing stage. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade is a really great time to just kind of dig in, like I said, honing their skills, honing your skills and just kind of using what you used in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and really building on that and going forward.

I don't see any questions, let me just check here. No, I don't see anything. I hope I answered everything here for you or at least gave you a really good overview of what is going to be taught or what needs to be taught in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Of course there's a lot more involved here and I do have some other programs if you need more information like how to do all of this. you can check my website and some other upcoming programs that we have like the Waldorf Homeschool U that really gives you the nuts and bolts of how to put together your whole homeschool day with your rhythm and really learning what supplies, how to setup your school, how to present the material and do all of that. That's something we're more involved but this is hopefully a good 2<sup>nd</sup> grade overview as far as what's covered during that year and a little bit about where they are developmentally so you can see where they are and where they're going. I guess we'll go ahead and wrap up. Thank you guys for joining me for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and good luck to you and I'll talk to you again soon, bye.

**End of Audio**