

PROVENCAL ONE ROOM SCHOOL EXPERIENCE FOR FOURTH GRADERS

At the Provençal-Weir House circa 1823

376 Kercheval Avenue
Grosse Pointe Farms, MI
48236

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Compiled for the Grosse Pointe Public Schools

And the

Grosse Pointe Historical Society



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Provencal One Room School Experience For Fourth Graders

State Standards

Historical Perspective

I:1:2 Later Elementary; Place major events in the development of their local community, the state of Michigan, and early history of the United States in chronological order.

1:2:2 LE; Use narratives and graphic data to compare the past of their local community, the state of Michigan and other parts of the United States with present day life in those places.

1:2:4 LE; Identify and explain how individuals in history demonstrated good character and personal virtue.

1:3:1 LE; Use primary sources to reconstruct past events in their local community.

Objectives

After experiencing the Provencal One Room School, the students will be able to:

Recognize and verbalize the similarities and differences between schools, pupils and teachers in the 1880s and today's schools.

Recognize and verbalize the similarities and differences of technology, transportation, and communication between the 1880s and today's date.

Recognize and verbalize the similarities and differences in societal and family roles and responsibilities of children, comparing the 1880s and today's date.

ELA Standards Addressed

Reading: Word Recognition and Word Study R.WS.04.03

Automatically recognize frequently encountered words in print, with the number of words that can be read fluently increasing steadily across the school year.

R.WS.04.04

Know the meanings of words encountered frequently in grade level reading and oral reading contexts.

Narrative Text R.N. T. 04.02

Identify and describe a variety of narrative genre (e.g. poetry, myths, legends, fables)

Informational Text R.IT.04.02

Identify and describe informational text patterns (e.g., compare/contrast)

Spelling W.SP.04.01

Spell frequently encountered words.

Handwriting W.H.W.04.01

Students will begin to write nearly and legibly

Listening and Viewing Conventions L.Cn.04.01

Respond to questions asked of them, providing appropriate elaboration and details.

Response

Students will select listen to, view and respond thoughtfully to both classic and contemporary texts recognized for quality and merit.

Dear Fourth Grade Teachers,

This reenactment at the Provencal One Room School may become one of your favorite experiences with your fourth graders. It is a day of drama where you go back to another era in Grosse Pointe History, 1880. You and your students will pretend that you are living in a former historical era. No one has even heard of an airplane, a cell phone, a computer, a television set, etc. There is no electricity, no cars, no trucks. Transportation is by foot, boat, train, wagon, carriage and horseback. All letters must be hand delivered. The telephone was becoming commonplace on the walls of people's homes.

TEACHER INFORMATION

To Share with Your Students Before You Go to the Provencal School

In the Year 1880...

Manufacturing was increasing until the 1890's when Detroit was a leading manufacturing city.

Rutherford B. Hayes was president.

The United States flag had 38 stars.

It was a period of unprecedented railroad construction.

Clothing was still being sewn by hand.

Michigan cut 4,172,572,000 board feet of lumber.

Dr. Upjohn of Kalamazoo developed a new method of manufacturing pills using a coating on the outside that made them easier to swallow.

Michigan became one of the leading salt producers of the nation because of the salt mines under Detroit.

In 1881, The first professional baseball was played in Detroit.

In 1883, Life on the Mississippi by Mark Twain was published.

In 1884, Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain was published.

Joseph L. Hudson opened his famous clothing store.

The American Red Cross was organized.

President James Garfield was assassinated.

In 1882 A meal in Detroit costs \$00.30.

There were only a few telephones in Michigan. Bell invented the telephone in 1876.

In 1886 the Statue of Liberty was dedicated.

In 1889 Detroit teachers earned \$30.00 per month.

Kerosene lamps were used for light.

Cooking was done on wood burning ranges.

Michigan ranked in fourth place as a wheat producer.

Most houses were made of pine lumber.⁴

Use the above information as you wish. Also, here are several activities that you could do to prepare the students for the one room school experience.

PRE-VISIT EXPERIENCE

Make a copy of the timeline and cut the events apart so that each group of two or three can be responsible for teaching one of them. So the students will understand the late 1800s place in Michigan's history, have the class help you make a timeline of what has already happened in U.S./Michigan history. Put this timeline up in your room or in the hallway to be added to and used throughout the school year. One or two students can take each date, research it on the internet, put the date at the top, illustrate the event and at the bottom, put a one line explanation of what happened. Have the students creatively teach about their event to the other students.

Presentation Team _____

TIMELINE RUBRIC

- ___ Date is large and clear at the top.
- ___ One sentence explanation of the event is at the bottom.
- ___ Colorful picture illustrates the event.
- ___ Presentation was clearly given and accurate.
- ___ There was evidence of research done and the source of information was shared.

Evaluation: By Teacher:

By Presentation Partners:

Michigan's Historical Timeline

- 1,000 B.C.** Mound Builders (Hopewell Indians) make permanent communities in Michigan.
- 1492** Columbus lands on North America.
- 1620** Etienne Brule, the first European, sets foot in Michigan.
- 1668** Marquette, a missionary, founds Sault Ste. Marie, the first European Settlement.
- 1679** La Salle and his men build Fort Miami on the shore of Lake Michigan.
- 1701** Cadillac establishes Fort Ponchartrain in Detroit.
- 1754-1763** France and the Native Americans fight against Great Britain in the French And Indian War. Britain won.
- 1763** Pontiac leads the Indians against the English in Pontiac's Rebellion.
- 1776-1783** The American Revolution brings independence from Britain to the colonies.
- 1795** Native Americans sign the Treaty of Greenville giving up large areas of land in Michigan.
- 1805** William Hull becomes the first governor of the Michigan Territory.
- 1812-1814** The United States and Britain fight the War of 1812. U.S. wins.
- 1837-1814** Michigan becomes the 26th state in the United States.
- 1841** The copper boom begins in the upper peninsula.
- 1850's** Sojourner Truth gives speeches about the abolition of slavery. Underground RR is active.
- 1860** About 700,000 people immigrate to Michigan before 1900.
- 1860-1865** Michigan contributes 90,000 soldiers and many tons of wood, iron, and copper to help the union win the Civil War. Slavery is abolished by the Emancipation Proclamation signed by Abraham Lincoln.⁴

Other Pre-visit Activities

Read aloud or as a class: Farmer Boy by Laura Ingalls Wilder or Caddie Woodlawn.

If you don't have time to read the whole book, read aloud excerpts that tell the role of children and what kind of work they did on a farm. One or several of your students can put a marker on pages that give the information that you're seeking. They could read it for Guided Reading or Partner Reading. It's always good to read the first couple of chapters aloud so that the setting and vocabulary becomes familiar to the students.

- Make copies of the article, When I Was Eight⁹ by Loverne Morris and use it for a Guided Reading Class.
- Using the information from the above article and the novel, Farmer Boy, run copies of the compare/contrast chart for each student and have them complete it comparing **Children in the Late 1800s to Children of Today**.

Tentative Schedule for a Day in the Old Fashioned School

9:30	Leave your elementary school.
9:50	Arrive at the Provencal School and play outside. If it's rainy the teacher must provide an activity inside. Example: Math Fact Race. Divide into two teams. Which one can give the answer first?
10:00	Ring the bell and enter schoolroom, hang up your wraps and put lunches in the correct place.
10:05	Opening Ceremony; Say "Pledge of Allegiance" and sing "The Star Spangled Banner" or "America." Discuss rules, restroom and water procedures.
10:10	Memory Verse and Penmanship
10:30	Reading Recitation begins. Grade 1, then 2, then 3, then 4, etc.
10:50-11:05	Recess and drink of water
11:10	Read aloud Fable
11:40	History Lesson
12:00-12:35	Lunch and Recess
12:40	Read aloud poetry
1:00	Math - This would be a good time to finish Reading Recitation.
1:30	English Grammar
1:45	Spelling and Spelling Bee
2:10	Geography
2:20	Review what was learned for the day.
2:30	Dismissal... Return to today's Date

Classroom Discipline:

It was thought that the most important skill that a teacher possessed in the 1880s was the ability to control the class. Some students were 16, 17, or 18 years old and still in the fourth grade because they came to school so seldom. Handling the older children could be a challenge.

The teacher was strict in the one room school. The rules were well known to everyone and enforcement of the rules was fair and firm. Even a slight breaking of a rule like, "Sit up straight, etc." would be immediately dealt with. Punishment included criticizing a student, whipping with a hickory stick, or having the student sit on the dunce chair wearing a dunce hat. Of course, we can't reenact corporal punishment, but if the students are prepared ahead of time, perhaps the teacher can make sure that everyone has a chance to sit in the dunce stool. Mary, you forgot to say, "Yes Ma'am." "No slumping." One punishment was to have the student stand with his or her face toward the corner. If arranged ahead of time, sometimes a student can role play the ornery student. If a student received a whipping at school, the parents would often repeat the punishment at home.⁴

Students would not be allowed to take drinks during class. Since there is a sink, in the kitchen, they could pretend that they're going out to the pump to get water for the whole class. There should be a bucket and dipper. Everyone would have drunk from the same dipper without washing it. For now, the students can drink from the paper cups furnished by the historical society. Back in the 1880s, there wasn't much awareness of germs.

An Elaborated Lesson Plan for The Provencal One Room School

9:30 Leave your regular elementary school:

On the way, count back in time starting at the current year.

9:50 Arrive at the Provencal-Weir House:

Have the children play outside until you are ready for them to enter. During this time write the memory verse on the board. Write it in your best penmanship, using the form included in the teacher's packet. Familiarize yourself with the materials and where they are located.

10:00 Go to the door and ring the bell:

The students should line up in two straight lines with girls on one side and boys on the other side.

Hang up their wraps. Boys' wraps on one side and girls' wraps on the other. Quietly and orderly, they enter the room and take a seat on a bench. making sure that **the front bench is empty for Recitation of individuals and groups.**⁵

10:05 **Opening Ceremony:**

Say the Pledge of Allegiance. You could sing "The Star Spangled Banner" or "America." You might want to explain this detail about the term "under God" to your students the day before. Every morning should begin with a good lecture of how important school and education is to each student's success. Go over where the restrooms are and how different they would have been. A one room school thought they were lucky to have an outdoor toilet. An indoor restroom was unheard of. Also, discuss how you will handle drinks.

10:10 **Memory Verse and Penmanship:**

The teacher should read the memory verse, aloud, several times that is written on the chalkboard. Then have the students read it out loud several times. The teacher should lecture about the meaning of the memory verse. Emphasize sitting up straight and the importance of good posture so that the mind and body are developed to their fullest potential. Next, have the students write the memory verse on their slate. When they are finished, they should repeat it over and over until they've memorized it.^{2 p.14}

Since this includes penmanship, have the students write a whole page of circles as you find on the handwriting example. Those who are ready should have a chance to say the memory verse out loud without looking. They could face away from the chalkboard where the memory verse is written. They should stand for recitation and say, "Yes Ma'am" or "Yes Sir." Then they should repeat the memory verse. The teacher should praise the student if it is said correctly with excellent posture and correct pronunciation, which is called elocution. A little correction is ok, but your students will be very sensitive, and they might cry if you become too heavy handed. Use every opportunity to moralize and lecture about good posture and good habits, manners, politeness, etc. Be sure to mention the meaning of the memory verse several times during the day.

The Memory Verse could be: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Or...Children are to be seen and not heard.

Or...Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

Or...Remember that, valuable as is the gift of speech, silence is often more valuable.¹²

10:30 Reading Recitation:

While the students are finishing writing their penmanship, you could start bringing up one grade level at a time for Reading Recitation. The students in one grade level can sit on the front bench. As they come up, give them the appropriate McGuffey Reader. Start with the first grade. It's ok to start with the first lesson. It's pretty clear what they're trying to get across. Sometimes, it's grammar rules, phonics or just plain moralization.

Give each student a chance to read at least one line, orally. Talk about expression and observing punctuation marks, etc. Try not to take too long. Give the students an assignment to study at their seat, after they complete their penmanship practice and memorize the memory verse. The McGuffey Reader can be read when they're at their seat.

10:50-11:10 Recess:

Teachers would go out with the students and lead in games. Look at the games suggestions.

11:10 Read Aloud Fable:

Next, the teacher can read a story. Since fables are a part of the fourth grade curriculum, today, it would be good if you brought one along. If you forget, there will be a book of Fables at the school. Be sure to emphasize the moral of the story and the characteristics of a fable. The characteristics of a fable are: Animals talk and there is a moral at the end. You could write the moral on the board for further penmanship practice. Back then, as now, good teachers used every opportunity for students to learn the basics.

Continue with the reading groups until all classes have had their recitation. Remember to stress elocution (proper pronunciation and public speaking techniques), posture, and manners at all times. If someone slumps in their seat they should be criticized, or perhaps put on the dunce stool, and be sure to praise those who are sitting up straight with their hands folded on their desk. "Look at Mary. She remembers her posture. She will grow up to be healthier and her mind will work better."

11:40 History:

Today, for our history lesson, we are studying Time and Chronology. What is Chronological Order?

Goal: All students will memorize the following era of American History:

Era II Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1783)

- A. 1754-1767 French and Indian War where the French and Indians fought against the British and the colonists over land usage and control. The British and colonists won.
- B. Because this war costs so much, the British thought it was fair to tax the colonists to pay for the war. The colonists disagreed because they had no representation in the English government. The colonists declared, "Taxation without Representation is Tyranny."
- C. July 4, 1776, The colonists declared their independence from Great Britain in The Declaration of Independence and started revolting against the British in the Revolutionary War.
- D. The thirteen colonies won this war and became the United States of America.
- E. The new government composed a Constitution which is the document which establishes the three branches of government, the Executive, the Legislative and the Judicial that are still used today.

If this lesson seems too complicated, you might teach the poem on footnote 15 that gives the presidents up to Garfield. They would learn a timeline and they would learn some of the presidents in order.

12:00-12:35 Lunch/Dinner and Recess:

Students will bring their lunches and their glass of water back into the school room.. The students can sit at the benches and eat their lunch. It seems crowded doesn't it?

If it's a clear day, the teacher might suggest that they go outside and eat. The teacher could wander around and notice what the students brought for their lunch. Emphasize those who brought authentic types of food and what the parents would have had to do in order to make it. After they finish eating they should go out to play. They could play the game/s that you taught them during the first recess, TAG or Hide and Go Seek.

After Lunch/Dinner

12:40 Poetry Read Aloud:

Read the students a poem or sing a song together. James Whitcomb Riley, from Indiana, was popular as a poet. You could read "Little Orphan Annie" or "The Raggedy Man."¹³ Memorizing poetry was important. There are repeated lines in each of these poems, where the students can repeat it with you. It makes it more fun. Use dialect if possible. Remember, there were no copy machines back then. So don't hand out multiple copies.

1:00 **Math:** Being able to figure problems in your head was an admired and desired skill. Having your math facts memorized was also required so those are two things that they will practice, today. Write 4 math facts on the board and ask them to write each of them 20 times with the answer. Example: $6 \times 8 = 48$ 7×8 $8 \times 8 = 64$ $9 \times 6 = 54$ Tell them to be ready to stand and recite the answer. You may use the story problems on the sheet from the Teacher's Packet from Ray's Practical Arithmetic.¹⁰ Or, you may make up your own problems.

Remember, teachers did not use slang. No yeah or nope, just yes or no.

The story problems are on the attached sheet in the Teacher's Packet. Choose one or two that you wish to use or make up similar problems. You could vary the work according to the grade levels of your students, if you like.

1:30 **English Grammar:** This is a good time to teach word usage. Use your own name last, or some other grammar error that your students might be making. Have each student one by one stand and make up a sentence telling about something that they and someone else did together. Here is another time that they could tell about chores that they do at home.

Example: Last night, my brother, John and I milked eight cows.

1:45 **Spelling:**

Write several words on the board. These could be words from the Nifty Thrifty List from today's curriculum or words they would need to spell like because. etc. How about going over one of the problem homophones like the three there's. When the lesson is over, have the students think of a sentence using each word and write it on their slate.

1:55 **Spelling Bee:**

Students line up along the wall. Teacher pronounces a word to the first speller and uses it in a sentence. Give easier words to your spellers who have trouble, since they have not experienced a spelling bee. The speller must pronounce the word and then spell it. If any part is incorrect, even though they correct it, they must sit down. If the first person missed the word, give the word to the next speller to spell. If all the spellers go down with the word, then all that missed it come back up. When you are down to two students, whoever spells the last word correctly is the winner. On the spelling list paper, there are the numbers first, second, and so on. These are the words you would use in the first, second, and third Spelling Bee contest. This is a good time to review the homophones with which the students have been having trouble.

2:15 **Geography:**

Teach the students the directions, North, South, East and West, and methods to remember them. Make a Compass Rose on the chalkboard. Students will be assigned to make a compass rose and decorate it as beautifully as they can.

A **Compass Rose** is the design on the map that shows where North, South, East and West is on the map. It was called the compass rose because sometimes the cartographer made it so fancy that it looked like a flower.

Teach students a saying to help remember the order. Never Eat Sour Wildberries. North always points to the top of the paper. Have the students stand and face North, South, East and West at your command. For variety, have a student call out the direction. This could be the student that you noticed who is always correct. Praise them and tell the other students why you have chosen this person.

Help students who are having trouble. Teach them that a mapmaker (cartographer) always puts North at the top of the paper. Talk about the importance of accuracy for mapmakers and discuss how the mapmakers did their work when exploring a new area. The importance of Lewis and Clark's work could be mentioned, here. Maps were valued because few people had their own. Give each student a sheet of paper to design a compass rose. Encourage creativity along with accuracy. On the way back to the school, ask students which direction they are going and apply what you learned in the classroom.

2:20 **Ending of the Day:**

The teacher should review what was learned in each subject and the students would tidy up the school to make sure that it's ready for the next day.

2:30 **It is time to go back to the future.** They will start counting at 1880 and continue until they reach today's year.

Post Experience at your Regular School:

Students can compare their school to the Old Fashioned School. This would be another time to use the Compare/Contrast Sheet entitled Schools of the Late 1800s Compared to Today. Points of Comparison could be: the teacher, the classroom; rules, learning activities, students, discipline, subjects, etc.

Write an essay addressing the following subjects:

What will you remember about your day in a one room school in the 1800s? What did you like? What didn't you like? Which is better and why?

Songs Sung during the Late 1800 Era

Yankee Doodle	1754
The Star Spangled Banner	1812
America	1832
Long, Long Ago	1843
Oh Susanna	1849
Pop Goes the Weasel	1853
Polly Wolly Doodle	1855
When Johnny Comes Marching Home	1866
She'll Be Coming Around the Mountain	1870
Grandfather's Clock	1876

Games

Drop the Handkerchief

You'll need a handkerchief for this game. First, the players stand in a circle facing in. One student walks around the outside of the circle and drops a handkerchief behind another player who instantly picks it up and pursues the person who dropped the handkerchief. When he catches him, the two change places and the game continues.^{2 p.15}

Fly Away

10 to 30 players: All children place hands down on table or desk. When the leader calls "fly away, dove" or "fly away, eagle, " the players lift hands as if flying like a bird. If the leader says, "fly away, dog," they must not move their fingers. The one who makes a mistake has to pay a forfeit. "Forfeits" were added to many games instead of saying you are "out". Some forfeits were: pay a compliment to someone in rhyme, laugh in a corner, cry in another, recite a poem, or sing part of a song.^{2 p.15}

Fox and Geese

10 to 30 players: One player is the fox and another the gander. The remaining players are the geese: they stand in a line back of the gander, each with his hands resting on the shoulders of the player in front of him. The fox tries to tag the last goose, while the gander, with arms raised to the side, jumps about and tries to protect the geese. The geese assist the gander by twisting their line, going first one way and then the other. If the fox tags the last goose, the fox becomes the gander, and the goose that has been tagged becomes the fox.^{2 p.15}

Hop, Skip and Jump

2 or more players: The winner is the one who can, by a hop, skip, and jump, cover the greatest distance from a given starting point. A running start is permissible, but the hop must start on a line.^{2 p.15}

Sending The Letter To Parents

(as early as possible)

The day you send the letter to parents home, be sure to read the parent letter to the students and make sure that they understand the experience. Attach any required district permission slip along with this note. Also, in preparation for the day, they should practice "The Star Spangled Banner." Perhaps you can ask if the music teacher would be willing to rehearse our national anthem with the students before the trip.

The day before the trip, be sure to highlight important parts of the letter again to the students and answer any questions. The students may choose what grade they would like to be in, or you might wish to assign a grade. McGuffey Readers are tough, so place your less comfortable readers in the lower grades. Explain that the day will begin with the Pledge of Allegiance without the words "under God," since that was added to the Pledge of Allegiance in the 1950's. Or, you might choose to ignore this piece of information rather than bring up something controversial.

Hopefully, the parent letter will encourage the students to come to school with an authentic type lunch and a simple costume that they put together at home using the pictures and suggestions included in the parent letter. Also, you will need to find a school ma'am's dress. If you ask your friends or put together something with a long skirt, long sleeved blouse and a scarf for your shoulders. Of course, if it's cold, coats, gloves, stocking hats, etc. will be worn by all.

Definitely, there will be an atmosphere of excitement. Parents could bring cameras so that the day won't be forgotten. On the way to the school, whether you walk, come by car or take a bus, have the students begin with this year and count backwards until you arrive at the year 1880, (or a year of your choice.) If you don't come as a group. You could do the countdown on the school property. When you reach 1880, talk about what you might see and talk about what life is like.

Each week the teacher would stay with a different family. You could tell about how it was staying at Caroline's home. Mention her cat or her dog. Maybe, the cows got out last night and everyone missed some sleep until they were safely back in their pasture. If this makes you nervous to adlib, write out a script for yourself. Next time you'll be more comfortable.

Students could talk about the chores they do before coming to school. Maybe they had to wash the clothes on a wash board and hang them outside to dry. Perhaps, they helped prepare breakfast of a glass of milk and oatmeal or scrambled eggs and bacon. (No

Kellogg's) Chores could include gathering eggs, milking the cows, feeding the livestock, hauling in the water, carrying in the wood for the fireplace, etc. There were Franklin pop bellied stoves then. Fit the discussion to the weather.

When you and the class arrive at the school, have the students play games outside while you prepare the room for them. Write the memory verse on the chalkboard and make sure you know where the books are and how many you have. The only text that you need is the McGuffey Readers. Check to see how many you have for each grade level. If you didn't, divide the children by grade level, do it now.

Remember, you may use your creativity in designing lessons. Just try to keep them historically accurate.

Discipline Reminder:

Rules to be emphasized are: Stand up straight. Sit up straight. Fold your hands in front of you. Be sure that you've prepared the lesson. Only speak when given permission. Stand and answer, " Yes Ma'am, No Sir."

Reenacting A Historical Adventure Of A Day In The Late 1800s At The Provencal One Room School

Date:

Dear Parents of Our Fourth Graders,

To enrich our adventure of learning about Michigan History, on _____, our fourth graders have the privilege of reenacting and experiencing a day in the old-fashioned one room school at the Provencal-Weir House. This opportunity is sponsored by the Grosse Pointe Historical Society. There is no charge per student, but of course, donations are always welcome. We will travel back in time by ___mode of transportation___ to the 1880s to the old fashioned Provencal School leaving our school at 9:30 A.M. and returning at 2:45 P.M. Students may bring a camera if they wish. Please dress appropriately for the weather and prepare a costume that somewhat matches the 1880s.

Authentic Outfit

Please help your fourth grader dress as they did in the late 1800s. Girls could wear a long skirt of their mother's with a long sleeved blouse and a shawl. Maybe a neighbor or friend has a bonnet. The attached pictures will give you ideas. Boys could wear long pants stuffed into their socks to look like knickers, a cotton shirt and bow tie or kerchief around the neck would work..^{2 p.12}

If possible, girls and boys should not wear jeans or tennis shoes. If you don't have a bow tie or a handkerchief, don't worry. Please try not to go to too much bother for this outfit. Even a small part of it will help capture the spirit of the occasion.

Lunch/Dinner

Students will need to bring a sack lunch. Some children brought their lunch in a homemade pail. For example, a Maxwell House coffee tin with a wire handle would be great, but if that's not possible, a brown paper bag will do. The food could be wrapped in wax paper. No drinks, please. We will have water and cups for a drink at the school.

Lunch (dinner) should be prepared as if you lived during the late 1800s. Back then, a piece of fried chicken or jelly sandwich was sometimes brought. Peanut butter may have been available. Examples of fresh or dried foods were carrots, apples, peaches, plums, apricots, prunes and pears. Since we are so close to the port of Detroit, we might have had more variety than other students in the state. Usually, at 12:00, school was dismissed for a meal which they called dinner in the rural communities. That was the largest meal of the day. The evening meal was called supper. The break for the noontime meal usually lasted 1 ½ hours so some students went home for the meal. School was dismissed at 3:30.

Homemade baked goods are great; cakes, pies, cookies, etc. You might want to sneak in a cookie that looks homemade if you don't have time to make any. Sandwiches may have been ham and cheese, or bacon and eggs, etc. Crackers may have been included. Kids would not have brought pop to school. We'll drink water.⁴

Chaperones may dress up if they like. Many times there were older students who had not had the privilege of attending school when they were young. The adult chaperones can act as the older students. In the original school, there were several 17 and 18 year olds. The schoolroom is small, so we are **limiting the number of chaperones to two.**

Preparing for the Experience

We will be discussing typical chores that children did at home in the late 1800s. You might have a family discussion of how things were back then. Remind the students that teachers were vastly different, and they should expect to stand when they speak and address adults with "Yes Ma'm," or "Yes Sir." The teacher will spend much time teaching about manners or correct etiquette. Rote learning was respected and repetition and memorization will be the common teaching methods.

A Bit of History about Schools in Grosse Pointe

When Grosse Pointe first had schools, pupils of all ages were grouped together in one room. That is the way it will be at the Provencal School. Our fourth graders will need to role play students at different grade levels.

Many students only attended when they were not working on their parents' farms. In 1869, school became mandatory, but free. Ages 6-14 had to attend for at least 12 weeks per year with at least six of these to be consecutive. This kept increasing until nine months were required as it is today. The students walked to school and were to arrive by 9:00 A.M. for the first bell.

This is interesting information when you compare it to our goals for schools today: "District schools were expected to promote responsible future citizenship and encourage retentive student minds. In 1862, the state superintendent noted that education should also develop "correct elegant speech," refined manners and logical thought." Rote learning and recitation were deemed appropriate for achieving these goals. In the 1890's, finally, teachers permitted students to analyze what they learned in class or in books."⁶

Sincerely,

If you have questions for the Grosse Pointe Historical Society, please call 313-884-7010.



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(corresponds to Footnotes)

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