

# Foundations



~The Outline Guide for Early School~

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# Program



*A Mind in the Light -Program 1*

*3 Terms; Early School*

## ~Foundations~

Children in Pre-Preparatory, Preparatory and Year One will begin the Early School level in Foundations and will remain at this level for three years or until each student has been deemed ready to move on to Lower School B. This foundation level does not fit within the historical divisions laid out for the remaining levels. Only when your student has moved to Lower School B, will students begin to work through the programs according to historical time period divisions.

There are a number of books listed for these years, but please do not read them all. Picture book access varies from library to library, so multiple titles are included to better meet the needs of every family.

*Foundations Lesson Guide –Year One* is a separate guide and will need to be additionally purchased when your student is ready for Year One. This guide will be all that is needed for Pre-Preparatory and Preparatory.

## History

**Note: Children in the Pre-Preparatory level will not study history with this curriculum. Children in the Preparatory level will not study world history with this curriculum.**

**KEY: PP=Pre-Preparatory; P=Preparatory and Y1=Year One**

## ~American History~

P –First US Holidays and History –See the list which follows.

**Portions of the program are missing, since this is a sample only!**

### Native American Picture Book Collection

Read 9 and favorites more than once. Break longer books into two readings, as needed.

*Corn is Maize: The Gift of the Indians* by Aliko

*Rainbow Crow* by Nancy Van Laan

*The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush* by Tomie dePaola

*Turquoise Boy: A Navajo Legend* by Terri Cohlene

**Portions of the program are missing, since this is a sample only!**

## **Natural History**

PP -First Look at Natural History –Students should begin to connect animals and other natural objects to their names. Consider using one or more of the following books: *Crinkleroot's Guide to Knowing Animal Habitats* by Jim Arnosky, *Crinkleroot's 25 Birds Every Child Should Know* by Jim Arnosky, *Crinkleroot's 25 Mammals Every Child Should Know* by Jim Arnosky, *The Berenstain Bears' Big Book of Science and Nature* by Stan and Jan Berenstain and *Animals Every Child Should Know* by Dene Humphreys. Read other books by Jim Arnosky, as you wish: *Raccoon on His Own*, *Rabbits & Raindrops*; *Otters under Water*; *Babies in the Bayou*; *Little Lions*, etc. Feel free to simply strew these about and allow children to look through them as they wish. There will be no set structure or schedule for these.

P –Read Around the Seasons -Choose books as they fit your family's needs and interests and relate them back to your daily calendar work. Read a few suggestions for each season over the course of a full calendar year. Feel free to read favorites more than once. See the list which follows.

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## **The Children's Hour**

These books can be read whenever it is most convenient for reading aloud. You may wish to read these during the Children's Hour (typically between 3-4 PM), in the evening before bedtime or in the mornings with breakfast. Many families like to combine the Children's Hour with Tea Time or Snack Time.

~Fables, Tales, and Stories~

PP -Read -*Mother Goose: One Hundred Best-Loved Verses* by Mary Engelbreit and *Make Way for McCloskey: A Robert McCloskey Treasury* by Robert McCloskey

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## **Early School -All**

All children in Early School can learn together in these areas, as it best fits your family.

Picture Study –See the following list for options. This study can be included during The Children’s Hour. Further details are included in this section: Teaching Notes.

Music Appreciation –This study can be included during The Children’s Hour and during Quiet Time. Children in Year One will be introduced to music using the Classics for Children audio CD and various supporting picture books.

Religion –Add books as it best fits your family.

Nature Experiences and Natural History –Further details are included in this section: Teaching Notes.

Handcrafts –See the following list for options; The Handcrafts for Small Hands list may be better suited for many Early School students.

Art and Music Technique –Further details are included in this section: Teaching Notes. Songs can be included with Music Technique; see the following list for song suggestions.

Foreign Language Study –See the website for suggestions. Choose the Resources tab on the menu bar and then scroll down to “Skill Subjects and Foreign Languages”. Also, consider reading the blog article at the website titled: “Learning Languages”.



# Teaching Notes



# Renovating the Routine

## Morning Lessons

I've made adjustments to the typical daily routine of a PNEU student. Each adjustment is meant to help this newly renovated schedule fit a modern family's habits and routines and to allow teachers to bring their students together more often.

According to several sources, including the PNEU article "The Work and Aims of the Parents' Union School" by Miss O' Ferrall, children spent the morning in lessons and this was when most of the "bookwork" was completed. She writes:

And now we will take a look at the carefully arranged time-tables. Practically all the bookwork is done in the morning when the children are fresh and ready to tackle the more arduous part of their work. The hours are not long—two and a half for the first form, four for the Vth and VIth; an hour more later in the day for II, III, and IV and a couple for the Vth and VIth. This is exclusive of practising, dancing, sewing and a certain amount of reading. The lessons are carefully arranged for the various days, no lesson is longer than twenty minutes in the first form whilst in the Vth and VIth the average length is about forty minutes. (pp. 777-787)

**Portions of this article are missing, since this is a sample only!**

## Sample Schedule

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
Math -Y1	Math -Y1	Math -Y1	Math -Y1	Math -Y1
*Natural History 1 <sup>st</sup> Year -P 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year -Y1	Natural History 1 <sup>st</sup> Year -P 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year -Y1	Natural History Investigations - P/Y1	Geography -P World History - Y1/OPT	American History -P/Y1
Literacy -PP Math -P Handwriting -Y1	Numeracy -PP/P Copywork -Y1 When Ready	Literacy -PP Math -P Handwriting -Y1	Numeracy -PP/P Copywork -Y1 When Ready	Literacy -PP Math -P Handwriting -Y1
Free Play	Free Play	Free Play	Free Play	Free Play

**Portions of this sample schedule are missing, since this is a sample only!**

# Narration and the Very Young

## First Stones in the Foundation

Early school in this curriculum includes Pre-Preparatory, Preparatory and Year One students and these years are foundational years. Narration, like reading and writing, is an ever-evolving skill that further develops as children grow. There are many key components to this development, but the groundwork begun in the early years is certainly one of them, playing a central role in the narrator a child becomes.

Early habits and attitudes, both in children and in parents, are the first stones to be placed in this foundation. Parents and teachers, the forefront of this entire endeavor, need to examine their own attitude and goals in order to best begin the habits and methods needed for narrating. It must be understood that reading aloud quality literature, listening and engaging children in conversations, respecting children as individuals and teaching the habit of attention all contribute significantly to how well children narrate later.

**Portions of this article are missing, since this is a sample only!**

# Nature Experiences

The schedule is designed so that a longer nature experience can take place on Day 5, with shorter nature experiences to be included into your weekly schedule as it best fits your family. A good nature experience involves some planning because what is really needed is a window of time allotted to it. The planning aspect revolves more around allowing for the time than what is to be done during that time. In other words, as long as your child is on task about living, observing and experiencing nature, then there is no need to structure what will be studied or not, as the natural world will offer up its surprises as it will. Nature is studied as it presents itself. The guide will offer a general structure, but it is important to always follow your child's interests and what is readily available to be studied at the moment.

**Portions of this article are missing, since this is a sample only!**

## Object Lessons

**The emphasis for the object lesson is in modeling, encouraging and supporting close observation.** The included lessons come from a variety of sources, correlating the objects studied to those specimens most accessible. The lessons are meant as a framework from which to work and the teacher/parent should not feel compelled to follow them exactly or completely. Please feel free to adapt these as best fits your family.

At this level, it is not necessary for your child to draw the object and include it into his notebook, but it is an option. A slightly older child or one who is both proficient in writing and drawing and also highly interested would benefit from adding object drawings to their notebooks. If your child does include them, please be sure that they label their work, including a date, the name of the object and, when needed, labels for the parts of the object.

## Concluding Notes

**The emphasis for the nature notebook is on the child's development of observing and recording what they see; it is not on art work.** Your student's notebook will be as it should be if it is filled with only a dozen or so well-done brush-work drawings for the entire year, the remaining entries consisting of a few extra sketches and a great deal more notes. The notebooks are meant to be as each individual child means it to be and are not to be overly-corrected by the teacher.

## Overview of Natural History for the Early School

Multiple short nature experiences with free use of nature notebooks or family calendar notebooks over the course of the week. The entries for the Calendar of Firsts will be made during the Children's Hour.



Days One-Two: Typically, these days are set aside for listening to books read aloud.

Day Three: Object Lessons are sometimes scheduled and these most often take place on this day. Other activities and demonstrations which support the topics will also be scheduled on Day Three. Drawing is additionally scheduled to further strengthen fine motor and observation skills.

Day Four: Art technique work should include attention to drawing, watercolor painting and dry-brush work, sometimes focusing on natural objects.

Day Five: One long nature experience is scheduled along with time allotted for work in the nature notebook. In *Foundations Lesson Guide –Year One*, the “Find and Describe” work is scheduled for this day as well and can be incorporated with the long nature experience. Younger children can follow their siblings with the “Find and Describe” work or may use the suggestions from the Natural History Observations list.

## Calendar of Firsts

The Calendar of Firsts is a record of natural history when it is first seen, such as the “first cardinal”, “first tadpole”, or “first fallen maple leaf”. Your record will show where and when you saw it, making it easier to know where and when you might see it again the following year. Each subsequent season, children will have something to look for when going out into the world –something they know about and something they can anticipate. Each year they can also add to their knowledge of these “firsts”, noting any changes or details not previously noticed.

While a class can keep a Calendar of Firsts, in this circumstance, this record will be a family record. Families can keep their calendar in a variety of ways –there is no wrong way to keep it. If you search online, you will find a few free Calendar of Firsts download files, a few you can purchase or you can create your own.

This activity ties in beautifully with the calendar focus of the early years, reinforcing the theme of time. This activity would take place during The Children’s Hour, allowing for experiences in nature to have already occurred for the day.

### Option 1

**Portions of this article are missing, since this is a sample only!**

# Natural History for Early School

## Purposes of Nature Study

- reverence for life
- connection with nature
- builds the skill of attention
- attends to the skill of patience
- continues work in classification and discrimination
- builds a sense of beauty and truth

## Natural History Observations

Give children a lot of room to fit their thoughts and ideas inside each category, since the idea is to allow them to describe it in such a way as to show how it fits without discouragement. Also, children can draw any of these vs. telling about them as they wish.

These suggestions work well on any day, but especially on Day Five or during your longer nature experience. If one of your students is completing the work from *Foundations Lesson Guide –Year One*, then you may wish to have younger siblings follow the “Find and Describe” suggestions, so that they are all working on the same ideas at the same time.

The following suggestions are included for the many families who do not have children working in Year One yet. These have been adapted to better fit younger children as well. You might also choose to omit the “Find and Describe” prompts in exchange for these. Certainly, follow the needs of your family in this regard.

*See the section: Planners and Printables at the end of this guide for a printable copy of the following suggestions.*

- Tell all that you see under this oak tree. (Substitute any other type of tree, as needed.)
- Tell all that you see on this side of the pond.
- Tell all that you see by this fallen tree trunk.

**Portions of this article are missing, since this is a sample only!**

# Notes for Natural History Activities

It is not necessary to complete all of these activities –it is expected that you would only do some and particularly those in which interest is shown. For example, all children of a group or family can observe a caterpillar turn into a butterfly, make leaf and bark rubbings and observe a plant or pet. However, one child may decide to keep a shell collection while another decides to make a flower study. Choose activities as they best fit your family.

## Leaf Collection

You will need something to contain your leaves, so a bucket, basket or bag for each child would be needed –labeled with child's name.

When hunting for leaves, go for a walk in your neighborhood, in a park or somewhere else where you can find many different kinds of fallen leaves from trees. Collect as many leaves of different colors and shapes as you can find and put them into a bag or container.

**Portions of this article are missing, since this is a sample only!**

# Prepared Object Lessons

It is not necessary to complete all of these lessons –it is expected that you would only do some and particularly those in which interest is shown or in which the objects are most accessible.

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## Violet

*Each violet flower has a well of nectar, with lines pointing to it. Violets have also down near their roots flowers that never open, which are self-pollinated and develop seeds.*

*Have a complete violet plant on hand-roots and all.*

## Observations

*Violets live in the woods, meadows and dry fields, in damp, marshy ground or near a stream.*

Notice the shape of the leaf, paying particular attention to its margin and noting whether it is rolled toward the stem at its base.

What is the color of the leaf? Are the leaves and stems downy and velvety, or smooth and glossy?

How many sepals has the violet? Are they long or short, pointed or rounded?

How many petals has the violet? How are they arranged? Is the lower petal shaped like the others? What is the use of this broad lower petal? Are there any marks upon it? If you should follow one of these lines, where would it lead?

What colors are the petals? Are they the same on both sides? How are they marked and veined?

Are the flowers fragrant?

Look at the base of the violet and find the little flowers there which never open. Examine one of these flowers and find if it has sepals, petals, anthers, and pistil. Are these closed flowers on upright stems or do the stems lie flat on the earth? Of what use to the plant are these little closed flowers?

*Teachers can make these drawings on a large sheet of paper or board, having the children help as they wish.*

## Drawings

- Draw the violet and sketch one of its leaves.



-Adapted from *The Handbook of Nature Study* by Anna Botsford Comstock