



A Day in a One-Room Schoolhouse  
Marathon County Historical Society Living History Learning Project

# Reading Lesson

## Activity Packet For Virtual Visits



Project Coordinators: Anna Chilsen Straub & Sandy Block  
Mary Forer: Executive Director

# Note to Students, Parents, and Teachers

*This packet contains information students can use to prepare for an off-site experience of a one-room school. They may be used by classroom teachers to approximate the experience without traveling to the Little Red Schoolhouse. They are available here for students who might be unable to attend in person for any reason. In addition, these materials may be used by anyone interested in remembering or exploring educational experiences from more than a century ago.*

*The usual lessons at the Little Red Schoolhouse in Marathon Park are taught by retired local school teachers and employees of the Marathon County Historical Society in Wausau, Wisconsin. A full set of lessons has been video-recorded and posted to our YouTube channel, which you can access along with PDFs of accompanying materials through the Little Red Schoolhouse page on our website. These PDFs may be printed for personal or classroom educational purposes only.*

- ♦ *If you have any questions, please call the Marathon County Historical Society office at 715-842-5750 and leave a message for Anna or Sandy, or email Sandy at [sblock@marathoncountyhistory.org](mailto:sblock@marathoncountyhistory.org)*

## On-Site Schoolhouse Daily Schedule

9:00 am	<b>Arrival Time.</b> If you attended the Schoolhouse in person, the teacher would ring the bell to signal children to line up in two lines, boys and girls, in front of the door. Everyone would recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Students would then file into school, girls first. They would take their places in rows of desks, girls on one side, boys on the other side.
9:30 am	<b>Reading and Recitation</b> using McGuffey's Eclectic Readers.
10:00 am	<b>Arithmetic</b> problems using lap slates.
10:30 am	<b>Recess</b> with turn-of-the-century games and bathroom break.
11:00 am	<b>Penmanship</b> exercises using dip pens and ink.
11:45 am	<b>Lunch</b> with free play and bathroom break.
12:30 am	<b>Geography and Current Events</b> using a turn-of-the-century map.
1:00 pm	<b>Old-fashioned Spelling Bee.</b>
1:45 pm	<b>Chores</b> including re-stocking of wood stove and general clean-up of the classroom and schoolhouse grounds.
2:00 pm	<b>School Dismissed.</b>

# POETRY SUGGESTIONS FOR MEMORIZATION & CHORAL READING

## The Children's Hour

By Henry W. Longfellow

Between the dark and daylight,  
When the night is beginning to lower,  
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,  
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me,  
The patter of little feet,  
The sound of a door that is opened,  
And voices soft and sweet.

## The Barefoot Boy

By John Greenleaf Whittier

Blessings on thee, little man,  
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!  
With thy turned-up platoon,  
Any thy merry whistled tunes;  
With thy red lips, redder still  
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;  
With the sunshine on thy face,  
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;  
From my heart I give thee joy—  
I was once a barefoot boy.

## Try, Try Again

By T. H. Palmer

'Tis a lesson you should heed,  
Try, try again;  
If at first you don't succeed,  
Try, try again;  
Then your courage should appear,  
For, if you will persevere,  
You will conquer, never fear;  
Try, try again.

## The First Snow-Fall

By James Russell Lowell

The snow had begun in the gloaming,  
And busily all the night,  
Had been heaping field and highway,  
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock  
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,  
And the poorest twig on the elm tree  
Was rigged inch deep with pearl.

## June

By James Russell Lowell

And what is so rare as a day in June  
Then if ever, come perfect days;  
Then heaven tries earth if it be in tune  
And over it softly her warm ears lay,  
Whether we look, or whether we list,  
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten.

## The Arrow and the Song

By Henry W. Longfellow

I shot an arrow into the air;  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For who has sight so keen and strong  
That it can follow the flight of song.

Long, long afterward, in an oak  
I found the arrow, still unbroke;  
And the song, from beginning to end  
I found again in the heart of a friend.

### **October's Bright Blue Weather**

By Helen Hunt Jackson

O sun and skies and clouds of June,  
And flowers of June together,  
Ye cannot rival for one hour  
October's bright blue weather

When loud the bumblebee makes haste,  
Belated, thriftless vagrant,  
And goldenrod is dying fast,  
And lanes with grapes are fragrant.

### **Trees**

By Joyce Kilmer

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,  
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in Summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.

### **Sayings of Abraham Lincoln**

You can fool some of the people  
all of the time and all of the people  
some of the time; but you can't fool  
all of the people all of the time.

### **The Landing of the Pilgrim Father**

By Felicia Dorothea Hemans

The breaking waves dashed high  
On a stern and rock-bound coast;  
And the woods, against a stormy sky,  
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark  
The hills and waters o'er,  
When a band of exiles moored their bark  
On a wild New England shore.

### **The Village Blacksmith**

By Henry W. Longfellow

Under a spreading chestnut-tree  
The village smithy stands;  
The smith, a mighty man is he,  
With large and sinewy hands;  
And the muscles of his brawny arms  
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,  
His face is like the tan;  
His brow is wet with honest sweat,  
He earns whate'er he can,  
And looks the whole world in the face  
For he owes not any man.

### **It Couldn't Be Done**

By Edgar A. Guest

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,  
But he with a chuckle replied  
That "maybe" it couldn't, but he would be one  
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.  
So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin  
On his face. If he worried he hid it.  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

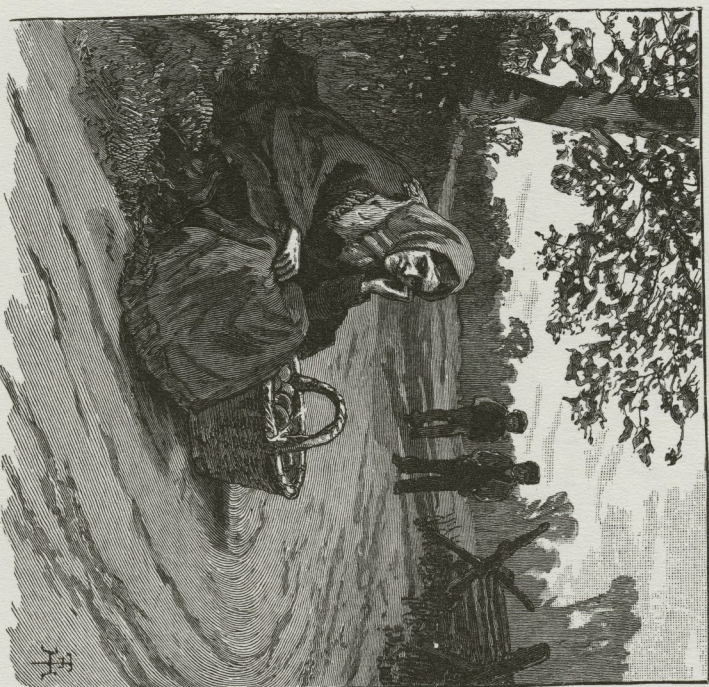
## LESSON XLIX.

## DEEDS OF KINDNESS.

1. One day, as two little boys were walking along the road, they overtook a woman carrying a large basket of apples.
2. The boys thought the woman looked very pale and tired; so they said, "Are you going to town? If you are, we will carry your basket."
3. "Thank you," replied the woman, "you are very kind: you see I am weak and ill." Then she told them that she was a widow, and had a lame son to support.
4. She lived in a cottage three miles away, and was now going to market to sell the apples which grew on the only tree in her little garden. She wanted the money to pay her rent.
5. "We are going the same way you are," said the boys. "Let us have the basket;" and they took hold of it, one on each side, and trudged along with merry hearts.
6. The poor widow looked glad, and said that she hoped their mother would not be angry with them. "Oh, no," they replied;

"our mother has taught us to be kind to everybody, and to be useful in any way that we can."

7. She then offered to give them a few of the ripest apples for their trouble. "No,



thank you," said they; "we do not want any pay for what we have done."

8. When the widow got home, she told her lame son what had happened on the road,

and they were both made happier that day by the kindness of the two boys.

9. The other day, I saw a little girl stop and pick up a piece of orange peel, which she threw into the gutter. "I wish the boys would not throw orange peel on the sidewalk," said she. "Some one may tread upon it, and fall."

10. "That is right, my dear," I said. "It is a little thing for you to do what you have done, but it shows that you have a thoughtful mind and a feeling heart."

11. Perhaps some may say that these are little things. So they are; but we must not wait for occasions to do great things. We must begin with little labors of love.

DEFINITIONS.—3. *Wid'ow*, a woman whose husband is dead.  
5. *Tridged*, walked. 9. *Git'ter*, the lower ground or channel along the side of a road. *Trëad*, step. 11. *Oe eã'sions*, chances, opportunities.

## Reading and Oral Recitation

All readings are from the McGuffey's Reader. Normally, each student would have a copy of this book in his or her desk. The McGuffey's Reader was considered the best reading text of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The stories in the reader were intended to teach not only language skills but also morals. Each story features a lesson to teach the student the difference between right and wrong. NOTE: Some of the stories may have religious elements. If you are teaching a class that is not from a parochial school, please explain to the students that there may be religious references and that this was common in 1904.

You may choose any of the stories from the reader. Before the students begin reading, discuss the vocabulary words printed above each story. The stories in the reader are divided into sections. Each student should stand and read a section aloud. After the students finish a story, ask them discussion questions about the story, to reinforce comprehension.

LESSON XIII.

wolf	grieved	sleeve	neighbor	ear'nest
ks'ez	el'hs	ór'der	sin'gle	de'stroi'

THE WOLF.

1. A boy was once taking care of some sheep, not far from a forest. Near by was a village, and he was told to call for help if there was any danger.
2. One day, in order to have some fun, he cried out, with all his might, "The wolf is coming! the wolf is coming!"
3. The men came running with clubs and axes to destroy the wolf. As they saw nothing they went home again, and left John laughing in his sleeve.
4. As he had had so much fun this time, John cried out again, the next day, "The wolf! the wolf!"
5. The men came again, but not so many as the first time. Again they saw no trace of the wolf; so they shook their heads, and went back.
6. On the third day, the wolf came in earnest. John cried in dismay, "Help! help!

- the wolf! the wolf!" But not a single man came to help him.
7. The wolf broke into the flock, and killed



- a great many sheep. Among them was a beautiful lamb, which belonged to John.
  8. Then he felt very sorry that he had deceived his friends and neighbors, and grieved over the loss of his pet lamb.
- The truth itself is not believed,  
From one who often has deceived.

## LESSON VII.

falsely	at tēnd'	trɪ'vānt	ēdn'duet	thēn'fōrē
guilt'y	hāstē	rēg'ulār	strūg'glēd	īg'nōrānt

## THE TRUANT.

1. James Brown was ten years old when his parents sent him to school. It was not far from his home, and therefore they sent him by himself.

2. But, instead of going to school, he was in the habit of playing truant. He would go into the fields, or spend his time with idle boys.

3. But this was not all. When he went home, he would falsely tell his mother that he had been to school, and had said his lessons very well.

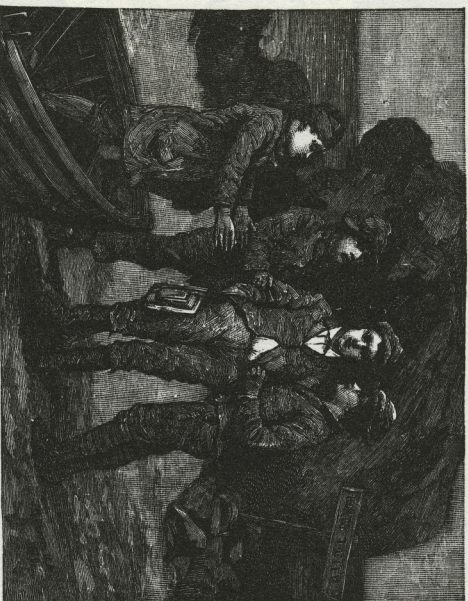
4. One fine morning, his mother told James to make haste home from school, for she wished, after he had come back, to take him to his aunt's.

5. But, instead of minding her, he went off to the water, where there were some boats. There he met plenty of idle boys.

6. Some of these boys found that James

had money, which his aunt had given him; and he was led by them to hire a boat, and to go with them upon the water.

7. Little did James think of the danger into which he was running. Soon the wind began to blow, and none of them knew how to manage the boat.



8. For some time, they struggled against the wind and the tide. At last, they became so tired that they could row no longer.

9. A large wave upset the boat, and they were all thrown into the water. Think of James Brown, the truant, at this time!

10. He was far from home, known by no one. His parents were ignorant of his danger.



## LESSON XLIII.

## SPEAK GENTLY.

1. Speak gently; it is better far  
To rule by love than fear:  
Speak gently; let no harsh words mar  
The good we might do here.
2. Speak gently to the little child;  
Its love be sure to gain;  
Teach it in accents soft and mild;  
It may not long remain.
3. Speak gently to the aged one;  
Grieve not the careworn heart:  
The sands of life are nearly run;  
Let such in peace depart.
4. Speak gently, kindly, to the poor;  
Let no harsh tone be heard;  
They have enough they must endure,  
Without an unkind word.
5. Speak gently to the erring; know  
They must have toiled in vain;  
Perhaps unkindness made them so;  
Oh, win them back again.

## 6. Speak gently: 't is a little thing

Dropped in the heart's deep well;  
The good, the joy, which it may bring,  
Eternity shall tell.

*George Washington Langford.*

DEFINITIONS.—1. Mär, injure, hurt. 2. Ae'cents, language, tones. 4. En düre', bear, suffer. 5. Err'ing (ēr'-), sinning. 6. E tēr'ni ty, the endless hereafter, the future.

He was struggling in the water, on the point of being drowned.

11. Some men, however, saw the boys, and went out to them in a boat. They reached them just in time to save them from a watery grave.

12. They were taken into a house, where their clothes were dried. After a while, they were sent home to their parents.

13. James was very sorry for his conduct, and he was never known to be guilty of the same thing again.

14. He became regular at school, learned to attend to his books, and, above all, to obey his parents perfectly.

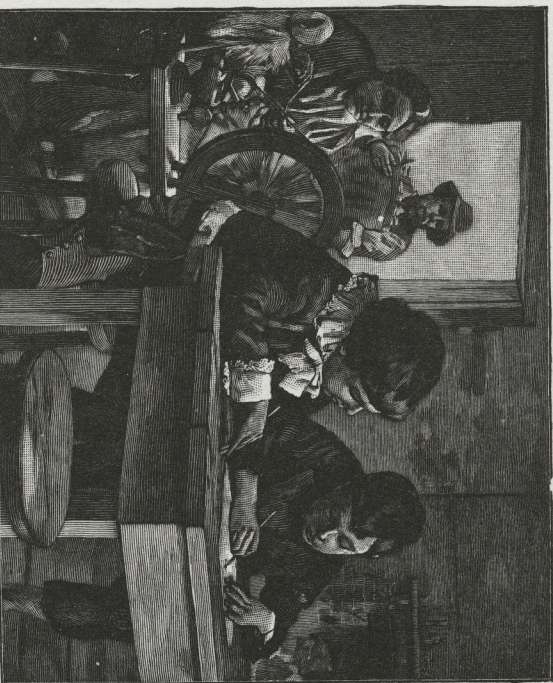
## LESSON X.

sign	marks	pär'gels	vén'ture	in quire'
chalk	ryl'ing	dräg'w'ing	plé'tures	eon figed'

## THE YOUNG TEACHER.

1. Charles Rose lived in the country with his father, who taught him to read and to write.
2. Mr. Rose told his son that, when his morning lessons were over, he might amuse himself for one hour as he pleased.
3. There was a river near by. On its bank stood the hut of a poor fisherman, who lived by selling fish.
4. His careful wife kept her wheel going early and late. They both worked very hard to keep themselves above want.
5. But they were greatly troubled lest their only son should never learn to read and to write. They could not teach him themselves, and they were too poor to send him to school.
6. Charles called at the hut of this fisherman one day, to inquire about his dog, which was missing.

7. He found the little boy, whose name was Joe, sitting by the table, on which he was making marks with a piece of chalk.



Charles asked him whether he was drawing pictures.

8. "No, I am trying to write," said little Joe, "but I know only two words. Those I saw upon a sign, and I am trying to write them."

9. "If I could only learn to read and write," said he, "I should be the happiest boy in the world."

10. "Then I will make you happy," said Charles. "I am only a little boy, but I can teach you that.

11. "My father gives me an hour every day for myself. Now, if you will try to learn, you shall soon know how to read and to write."

12. Both Joe and his mother were ready to fall on their knees to thank Charles. They told him it was what they wished above all things.

13. So, on the next day when the hour came, Charles put his book in his pocket, and went to teach Joe. Joe learned very fast, and Charles soon began to teach him how to write.

14. Some time after, a gentleman called on Mr. Rose, and asked him if he knew where Charles was. Mr. Rose said that he was taking a walk, he supposed.

15. "I am afraid," said the gentleman, "that he does not always amuse himself thus. I often see him go to the house of the fisherman. I fear he goes out in their boat."

16. Mr. Rose was much troubled. He had told Charles that he must never venture

on the river, and he thought he could trust him.

17. The moment the gentleman left, Mr. Rose went in search of his son. He went to the river, and walked up and down, in hope of seeing the boat.

18. Not seeing it, he grew uneasy. He thought Charles must have gone a long way off. Unwilling to leave without learning something of him, he went to the hut.

19. He put his head in at the window, which was open. There a pleasant sight met his eyes.

20. Charles was at the table, ruling a copy-book. Joe was reading to him, while his mother was spinning in the corner.

21. Charles was a little confused. He feared his father might not be pleased; but he had no need to be uneasy, for his father was delighted.

22. The next day, his father took him to town, and gave him books for himself and Joe, with writing paper, pens, and ink.

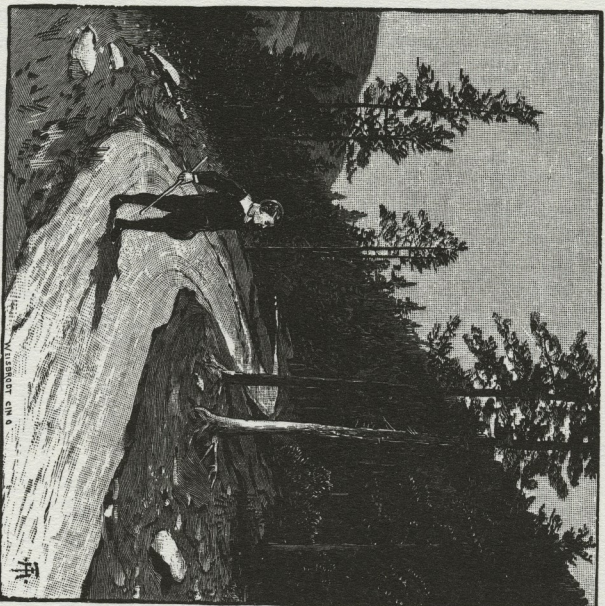
23. Charles was the happiest boy in the world when he came home. He ran to Joe, his hands filled with parcels, and his heart beating with joy.

## LESSON XXXIII.

thicket	hărs'hly	wrăth	whénce	răm'bling
prôv'ing	tôward	êh'ô	môck'ing	hî'grîly
fool'ish	a brôgd'	eröss	Br'ble	înstântly

## THE ECHO.

1. As Robert was one day rambling about, he happened to cry out, "Ho, ho!" He instantly heard coming back from a hill near by, the same words, "Ho, ho!"
2. In great surprise, he said with a loud voice, "Who are you?" Upon this, the same words came back, "Who are you?"
3. Robert now cried out harshly, "You must be a very foolish fellow." "Foolish fellow!" came back from the hill.
4. Robert became angry, and with loud and fierce words went toward the spot whence the sounds came. The words all came back to him in the same angry tone.
5. He then went into the thicket, and looked for the boy who, as he thought, was mocking him; but he could find nobody anywhere.
6. When he went home, he told his moth-



- er that some boy had hid himself in the wood, for the purpose of mocking him.
7. "Robert," said his mother, "you are angry with yourself alone. You heard nothing but your own words."
  8. "Why, mother, how can that be?" said Robert. "Did you never hear an echo?" asked his mother. "An echo, dear mother? No, ma'am. What is it?"
  9. "I will tell you," said his mother. "You know, when you play with your ball,

and throw it against the side of a house, it bounds back to you." "Yes, mother," said he, "and I catch it again."

10. "Well," said his mother, "if I were in the open air, by the side of a hill or a large barn, and should speak very loud, my voice would be sent back, so that I could hear again the very words which I spoke."

11. "That, my son, is an echo. When you thought some one was mocking you, it was only the hill before you, echoing, or sending back, your own voice."

12. "The bad boy, as you thought it was, spoke no more angrily than yourself. If you had spoken kindly, you would have heard a kind reply."

13. "Had you spoken in a low, sweet, gentle tone, the voice that came back would have been as low, sweet, and gentle as your own."

14. "The Bible says, 'A soft answer turneth away wrath.' Remember this when you are at play with your schoolmates."

15. "If any of them should be offended, and speak in a loud, angry tone, remember the echo, and let your words be soft and kind."

16. "When you come home from school, and find your little brother cross and peevish, speak mildly to him. You will soon see a smile on his lips, and find that his tones will become mild and sweet."

17. "Whether you are in the fields or in the woods, at school or at play, at home or abroad, remember,

The good and the kind,  
By kindness their love ever proving,  
Will dwell with the pure and the loving."

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THANK YOU TO THE CHIPPEWA VALLEY MUSEUM OF EAU CLAIRE, WISCONSIN,  
FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE IN PREPARING OUR ACTIVITY PACKET.

# EVALUATION SHEET

Thank you for participating virtually in the One-Room Schoolhouse Learning Program!

Please fill out and return to: Marathon County Historical Society  
Attn: Anna Chilsen-Straub  
410 McIndoe Street  
Wausau WI 54403

DATE PARTICIPATED: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE/GRADE LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check here  if you participated “on your own” and not as a school-related function.

1. Please describe briefly your method using these lessons. For example, did you watch the videos at school or at home? All in one day or over time? In a group or individually?
2. How did you use the activity packets? Please list any comments you may have.
3. Which aspects of the materials provided were the most effective in understanding what it was like in a one-room school environment?
4. Which materials were the least effective, and how do you think they could be improved?
5. What follow-up activities do you plan to use to reinforce or extend this learning experience?
6. How would you rate the overall virtual materials?  
 Excellent  Very Satisfactory  Satisfactory  Fair  Poor
7. Any additional comments?