



## Parent Fact Sheet

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Dear Parents,

Your child will be traveling to the Reed School Historic Site for a field trip. Located just east of Neillsville in Clark County on US-10, the Reed School offers a half-day educational program for fourth-grade students centered on the spring of 1939. Students will learn about life in rural Wisconsin at this time, and experience school life as it was taught in a multi-grade (grades first through eighth) one-room schoolhouse. The Reed School, owned and operated by the Wisconsin Historical Society, is a one-room rural school that operated in Wisconsin from 1915-1951 and is typical of the more than 6,000 schools that once dotted Wisconsin's countryside. One-room schoolhouses formed the basis of this nation's educational system for rural children in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century.

To enhance the experience, **students are encouraged to come dressed in clothing like that worn by rural students in the 1930s.** Girls wore short or long-sleeve dresses, usually with collars, socks, and lace-up or buckle shoes that did not cover the ankle. Boys wore long-sleeve button shirts with collars, overalls or blue jeans (with or without suspenders), socks and tie shoes, which sometimes covered the ankle. Keep in mind that money was very tight during this decade, as Americans still had not fully recovered from the Great Depression. Few farm families could afford to purchase new clothes at a store. Mothers sewed patches over holes in clothes, mended socks, and "recycled" and reused clothing whenever possible.

To further add to the day's authenticity, **we suggest that your child pack a 1930s-style lunch.** Farm families ate what they themselves produced. Their food was homemade rather than store bought. Here are a few suggestions for your child's lunch:

- sandwiches on homemade bread with meat (not deli), cheese or jelly
- hard-boiled eggs
- locally-grown fruits and vegetables (fresh, if in season, or dried or canned)

Items such as peanut butter, oranges and bananas were rare. Food should be wrapped in brown paper or butcher paper since plastic food wrap, sandwich bags, and aluminum foil were not available in the 1930s. Students can place their lunches in either a brown paper bag or a lunch pail, which they may have made at school.

Historically, the Reed School did not have water on the property. A local farmer brought in water to the school each day. Drinking water will be provided, but **students need to bring an unbreakable cup from home**, such as a tin cup. Do not bring breakable glasses or mugs!

Also please be aware that the Reed School does not have indoor plumbing. Students will use a new "outhouse," which is a building with a compost toilet (wheelchair accessible).

Thank you for your assistance in making this a fun, educational experience for your child.