

Rudolf Steiner High School Class Trips

Real-world experience is an important feature of the Rudolf Steiner High School curriculum. We believe that High School students benefit tremendously from practical experience outside their classrooms. In the final two weeks of each school year, every ninth, tenth and eleventh grader participates in working at an off-campus location. The twelfth grade remains at the school preparing and rehearsing a Shakespeare play to be performed the two evenings before graduation.

Ninth graders work, camp and play at a local biodynamic farm and CSA. For seven days, they help with all aspects of farm work including planting, mulching, weeding, picking potato beetles, barn cleaning, care of the animals, carpentry tasks, baking bread, taming baby chicks, bundling vegetables for the farm's bi-weekly distributions to CSA members, mending fences and completing other projects as guided by the farmers. They also help with meal preparation and cleanup. This course offers a unique opportunity for students to have an experience of farming that is all but forgotten in modern life. This has unique connections to other aspects of our curriculum in history, mathematics, and science. This trip is a journey, both outer and inner. It is an opportunity for the class as a whole to grow in relationship to each other. By accomplishing difficult tasks together, the group does what an individual working alone could not. The work the students do is much needed and much appreciated by the farmers.

Tenth graders learn surveying skills at Camp Lookout in Northern Michigan. With precision and care, they learn how to set up and operate an optical theodolite, including turning horizontal and measuring vertical angles. They work in groups of two to four and each group surveys a portion of the camp. Using trigonometry and standard surveying practices, the coordinates of all the points are calculated. When good closure is obtained, the positions of all relevant objects (buildings, trails, stairs, etc.) are measured relative to these control points and plotted on a large-scale map. The students are responsible for all the cooking and cleaning during their stay at the camp.

In the eleventh grade, each student participates in a workplace internship designed to give him or her insight into the working world, ideally in a field that they are considering pursuing in college. During the internship students participate in as much of the working day and activities as possible, depending on individual placement. They keep a journal of their activities and present at the end of year school assembly. Eleventh-graders have worked with architects, engineers, bakers, physical therapists, jewelers, home-based entrepreneurs, politicians, astronomers, florists, social workers, veterinarians, museums, small media companies, not-for-profits, libraries and midwives. The program continues to expand to meet the interests of the students.

During the senior year, students participate in two significant school trips. In September, they join a number of other Waldorf High Schools from across the eastern US and Canada at Hermit Island in Maine for a Zoology block. During this week they study the tidal environment, its flora and fauna, receive daily Main Lessons, and complete artistic assignments. In April of twelfth grade the class takes a two-week academic study trip to Italy. During the trip students visit Venice, Florence and Rome and study the history, art, architecture and culture of Italy.