

# *SIMMONS SCHOOLHOUSE EXPERIENCE*

*At your local school due to travel restrictions in 2021*

- Resource is Simmons School Teachers' Manual and Resource Guide Available online (includes dress, lunch, teacher rules, student rules, curriculum details, video clips/photos, games)  
<http://www.simmonsschool.com/resources/TeacherManualAndResourceGuide.pdf>
- Start preparations with this site: <http://www.simmonsschool.com/index.html>
- Columbus Area Bicentennial Videos-will be available in 2021. A project through Bartholomew County Historical Society [Welcome to The Bartholomew County Historical Society \(bartholomewhistory.org\)](http://www.bartholomewhistory.org) (specifically It All Began with Bartholomew) [www.columbusarea200](http://www.columbusarea200)
- Bartholomew County Library Video-Simmons Schoolhouse filmed in 2020 (30 minutes) (mybcpl.org)

*Nothing can replace the incredible experience at the authentic Simmons Schoolhouse, but your students deserve an experience to present the information about life during pioneer time.*

*Half day CURRICULUM-ideal for outside the classroom  
A special thank you to Candy Carr who helped write original Simmons Schoolhouse curriculum and provided this guide based on years of Pioneer Days at her elementary school.*

*Information is available in the Teachers' Manual, Simmons Schoolhouse on-line .*

## *HELPFUL HINTS for a successful school day:*

- *Have the students choose a Pioneer first name well before your Simmons School Day, and teach them about subscriptions (fees) and role play so they know what their pioneer parents do for a living and might offer as PAY for the school term.*
- *Pick your dunce privately and give him/her a rubber snake to hide until the appropriate time; make a dunce cap and find a stool for the corner.*
- *Choose some student leaders to help lead the lessons during instruction of recitation/reading, arithmetic, elocution.*
- *Seek help from your music teacher for the play party or Square Dance, and plan your Pioneer Day for your music day and schedule the dance or play*

*party for your music time so the teacher can come during music period to help! (pp. 98-108 Teachers' Manual)*

- *Help students plan costumes ahead of time using the manual or pictures from the website/videos, they do not need to be elaborate, boys can wear jeans and a white t-shirt or plaid shirt, girls a skirt from Mom's closet and blouse, or simply a kerchief. Hats are fun! (p. 17 from Teachers' Manual)*
- *Help students plan their lunches to bring from home IF POSSIBLE; pack in basket, a tin pail or wrap in a bandanna (NO hobo sticks, too dangerous!!!) Work with the cafeteria to pack a special menu sack lunch that day for those who can't bring from home....no chips, prepackaged desserts, etc. Perhaps use wax paper for wrapping sandwiches, backed goods (meat, cheese, bread, carrots, celery, apple, cookie) (p.16 from Teachers' Manual)*
- *A nice touch for lunch is the teacher brings a quilt and/or several table cloths for eating outside or on the floor, boys and girls separate, of course!*
- *Review the Simmons Schoolhouse website and history of the school-  
<http://www.simmonsschool.com/styled/index.html>*
- *Watch videos or read books from Little House on the Prairie series or other books of this time period (late 1880's-early 1900's) for building interest.*
- *To increase the length of the day and if able to be included, consider asking parents to play additional roles with farm animals, dance caller, craft organizer, treat preparations.*
- *Prepare your students for the Schoolhouse day by reading about the time period, reading James Whitcomb Riley poetry, having the students research the late 1800's/early 1900's inventions and customs, and writing in cursive occasionally.*

## *Schedule for your Day at School*

*Teacher has schoolroom ready (bell, board work, chairs in rows like benches, NO desks, teacher desk front and center)*

**8:35** *Teacher lines up students for outside room*

**8:40** *Ring bell for students to enter (teacher inside scolds scholars for being tardy!)*

- *Students sit boys on one side, girls on the other*
- *Smallest in front; take time to align students to minimize behavior issues!*

**8:40 to 8:45** *Welcome!*

- *Review RULES of schoolhouse (p. 15 Teachers' Manual) and short term due to planting, explains subscriptions*

**8:45 to 9:10** *Teacher takes roll call (samples given can be alphabetical or boys then girls)*

- *Call each scholar's pioneer name, students stand, requesting the subscription for the term, comment on scholar, family or past record!*

**9:10-9:30** *History lesson (pp. 69-72 Teachers' Manual and Supplemental Resource)*

- *Use date, president and governor of the time period from the board*
- *Talk briefly about "current events," have a scholar read the proverb, then students stand to recite it in unison, then discuss meaning and application*
- *Discuss cardinal directions, have students stand to face each direction multiple times*
- *Teach geography ditty from board, have a scholar come forward to draw Indiana (maybe a few more students)*
- *All students recite or sing ditty in unison (sung to Pickin' up Paw-Paws tune, p. 101 Teachers' Manual)*

**9:30 to 9:50** *Reading lessons (pp. 46-49 Teachers' Manual and Supplemental Resource)*

- *Recite alphabet; teach vowel ditty to all students (avoid "t" as a beginning consonant). BA-BA, BE-BE*
- *IF a volunteer is available, one adult (or a VERY able student) does 2<sup>nd</sup> grade lesson with the smaller scholars; Other teacher does 4<sup>th</sup> grade lesson with older pupils; Read aloud, discuss pronunciations, meaning of story, answer comprehension questions. Stories are in Teachers' Manual.*

**9:50-10:15** *Ciphering (pp. 65-68 Teachers' Manual)*

- *Teach students to recite times tables, starting with ones, up through fives*

- Use paper provided, making sure students share
- Use oral math problems (p. 69 in Teachers' Manual), start easy get harder
- Read problems orally, after giving time to "cipher" have student explain orally; if time, students can demonstrate some on board
- This is a good spot for the pre-arranged prank & Dunce Stool!

**10:15 to 10:25 Blab School (pp. 59-62 Teachers' Manuals and Supplemental Resource)**

- Choose three activities--geography ditty, vowel ditty and maybe times tables
- You will need to choose an older scholar to lead each group
- Divide the class into three groups, each concentrating and practicing their own "recitation" with their smaller group

**10:25 to 10:45 Elocution contest (Supplemental resource)**

- Choose 6-10 sounds. Give each scholar a DIFFERENT saying; one practice round
- As soon as scholar commits error in pronunciation, they are disqualified and return to seat.
- At the end of each round; students must switch sayings  
Final one or two can be seated until FINAL round  
Repeat two or three times, depending on time allotment  
Complete final round if there is enough time

**10:45 Restrooms and Hand washing**

- Teacher takes those needing a trip to the "outhouse" and all must wash hand with teacher supervising (provide lye soap if available)

**10:50-11:10 Lunch (Suggestions p. 16 Teachers' Manual)**

- Students can sit in small groups outside on the schoolhouse lawn or walk to eat
- Students are to stay seated; teachers will bring around the lemonade OR water after toileting duties are completed

**11:10-11:15 Students clean up**

**11:15-11:45**

- Recess teachers teach large group games, like Andy Over, Duck, Duck Goose, Drop the Hanky, Tug of War (pp. 83-94 in Teachers' Manual)
- Smaller groups can jump rope, learn how to play marbles and jacks

**11:45 to 12:00 Conclusion (pp. 98-107, Teachers' Manual)**

- Teacher teaches whole group a Play party or Square Dance (like Virginia Reel)