

Spring 2012 Schedule

Jan. 2-4 Registration for Teachers
Jan. 5-7 Registration opens for returning coop members
Jan. 8-10 Registration for EXCEL members
Jan. 11 Registration opens for general public
Feb. 2 First day of classes **Mandatory Orientation at 9:30 a.m.**

Week of March 12--Spring Break

April 19 Last day of classes
April 26 World's Fair--Semester-end celebration

*****Field Trips to be set (3), dates TBA*****

Registration

1) Our coop is using skill and behavioral guidelines more than strictly age for classes this semester. **Read all class descriptions and requirements carefully to make sure classes you and your child choose are a good fit; this ensures a pleasant experience for all involved.** Below are some rough age guidelines, but parents know their children best. Honor their desire to truly participate in classes as a way to honor our volunteer teachers' time and efforts.

Group A	Ages 4-7
Group B	Ages 6-9
Group C	Ages 6-9
Group D	Ages 10-13
Teens	Ages 13 +

2) Look over the class schedule and class descriptions on the following pages and figure out which classes your kids want to take.

3) Follow registration and payment instructions on our website at www.homeschoolersexcel.com

4) All coop registrants are required to attend orientation on Feb. 2. Parents will be required to sign the Guidelines showing that they and their children agree to uphold them.

Coop Theme

This semester our theme is the **Global Community**. You will notice that many of the classes and field trips are oriented around this theme as will our semester-end celebration.

Class Schedule for Coop Spring 2012

We will begin with a social gathering time from 9:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. This will allow teachers ample time to set up their classrooms, families to have a few minutes to settle in before class, and 1st period to start on time.

1st Period 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Group A	(Open For Yoga)	
Group B	Environmental Science	Teri Eaton
Group C	Ethics For Kids	Juli Davidson
Group D	Material World	Isabel Ibarra
Teens	Beyond Differences	Corey Brunson
All Ages	Yoga	Elizabeth Holman

2nd Period 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Group A	Putumayo	Kirsten Robertson
Group B	Environmental Science	Teri Eaton
Group C	Connected Cultures	Holly Dalton
Group D	Model UN	Tracy Wallace
Teens	Global Village Art	Alena Veteto
All Ages	Sign Language	Sarah Crouch

3rd Period 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Group A	Story Stretchers	Sarah Crouch
Group B	Folktales of World	Leslie Allsopp
Group C	Music of World	Dave Davidson
Group D	Computers: Personal	Steven Merritt
Teens	Meditation/Visualization	Marian Wiseman
Teens	Teen Writers' Group	Melinda Baucom
All Ages	Roots & Shoots	Tracy Wallace

4th Period 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Group A	Story Stretchers	(continued)
Group B	Global Village Art	Alena Veteto
Group C	Send Me A Letter	Tracy Wallace
Group D	Quest for Peace	Scott Dalton
Teens	Philosophy	Matt Crouch
All Ages	Celebrate!	Teri Davis

Classroom Expectations

EXCEL makes every effort to be an inclusive group in every way. At the same time, each individual with his/her own needs and personalities should make adjustments to work well with other students in the classes. We also want to recognize the time, effort, and care our teachers, as volunteers, put into teaching. The Co-op Committee believes a statement of expectations is the best way to make sure that all have a good experience at co-op. This is the reason for requirements being listed with each class description. Please carefully consider whether or not your child meets these requirements before enrolling in the class.

As parents, we want our kids to fit in and we worry about how they may behave. We worry how they will treat others and how others will treat them. We ask our children to learn to include everyone, and we, as adults, strive to help each child fit in. Behavior that may not endear one person to another needs to be considered from both perspectives so that we may meet each other halfway.

Class Descriptions

Classes for All Ages

Yoga

Come explore yoga and be a bridge, tree, frog and lots more! We will strengthen and stretch, balance and breathe, get limber and lively, and meditate and relax. We will also explore some Brain Gym and Yoga games and stories. Wear comfy, loose clothing.

Instructor: Elizabeth Holman

Class Fee: None

Maximum number of students: 16

Requirements: Child has a desire to learn yoga (be sure to ask).

Sign Language

We will study American Sign Language. We will discuss and learn the history of the language, parts of speech, spelling, and how ASL word order differs from English. The final project will be a performance of a memorized poem/song/piece of writing, based on our theme of Global Community.

Instructor: Sarah Crouch

Class Fee: \$5

Maximum number of students: 12

Requirements: Anyone interested in learning a new language

Roots & Shoots

Roots & Shoots is a youth service organization that completes projects that support the human community, the animal community and the environment. Guided by the founding principles and extraordinary vision of Dr. Jane Goodall, renowned primatologist, environmentalist and humanitarian, Roots & Shoots follows the model— Knowledge, Compassion, Action. Her firm belief that young people, when informed and empowered, can indeed change the world.

Projects may include: letter-writing campaigns, exchanging letters with pen-pals in the Democratic Republic of Congo, making blankets for the Linus project, studying the monarch life-cycle and migration, learning about Congo Restoration and Working To Empower (groups active in Africa with refugees), projects for local no-kill animal shelters, making goodie bags for the homeless.

Instructor: Tracy Wallace

Class fee: \$5 for new registrants only (not registrants from fall)

Maximum number of students: 12

Requirements: Child wants to be involved in the group (self-motivated, not parent-motivated), is able to follow instructions and be respectful to other members.

Celebrate!

Join us as we see how kids around the world enjoy festivals as bright and magical as our own. We will visit every corner of the world and experience celebrations from the first half of the year (spring and summer). From Holi to Carnival, it is sure to be a fun trip!

Instructor: Teri Davis

Class Fee: \$20 (partying is pricey)

Maximum number of students: 20

Requirements: Must be open to experiencing different beliefs from your own with a positive attitude! Open to all ages.

Group A Classes

Putumayo's World Playground

A Musical Adventure for Kids. We'll be taking the children on a musical journey to faraway places where they can be introduced to other people and places around the world. A trip to the World Playground makes exploring other cultures a fun adventure for music fans of all ages.

Instructor: Kirsten Robertson

Class Fee: \$22 (this will include a CD for each child)

Maximum number of students: 7 (minimum 4)

Requirements: Ages 4-7 crowd, able to follow directions, listen to short stories about the region were visiting, participate in simple art projects, sing, dance, and have a general good time.

Story Stretchers

We will be reading the following masterpieces: The Snowy Day by Keats, White Snow, Bright Snow By Tresselt, Owl Moon by Yolen, The Three Snow Bears by Brett, The Story of the Root-Children By Olfers, Plants that never ever bloom by Heller, The empty Pot by Demi, Quick as a Cricket by Wood. We will read the story of the day a couple times and S-T-R-E-T-C-H into art, math, and science projects. This class will begin 3rd period and continue into 4th period.

Instructor: Sarah Crouch

Class Fee: \$5

Maximum number of students: 8

Requirements: For ages 2-5

Group B Classes

Environmental Science

An introductory to the Environmental Sciences. In this class, we will be learning about clean energy, clean water, clean air, waste management (including reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting), and other steps to "green living" (including different types of green gardening, rainwater collection, personal usage management and reduction). Together we will gain a better understanding of how these things work, and their importance to the world as a whole.

Instructor: Teri Eaton

Class Fee: \$9

Maximum number of students: 12

Requirements: None.

Folktales from Around the World

In this class we will explore the wisdom and humor of folk tales from around the world. We will extend our experience of the tales with a variety of activities such as crafts, games, cooking, and acting out stories

Instructor: Leslie Allsopp

Class Fee: \$12

Maximum number of students: 10

Requirements: Children registering for this class should enjoy respectfully listening to a story for 15-20 minutes, participating in independent and group activities, and exploring crafts, cooking and games from other cultures.

Global Village Art

This will be a hands on art class. We will talk about and see examples of different kinds of art from around the world. Then, we will make our own. We will most likely work with paint, clay, crayons, colored pencils, found objects, and other various materials.

Instructor: Alena Veteto

Class Fee: \$20

Maximum number of students: 12

Requirements: Mature enough to participate in class constructively.

Group C Classes

Ethics for Kids

This class will be an introductory ethics class for elementary-aged students. We will take a philosophical approach to ethics, covering what it means to have good character and why building good character is a worthwhile endeavor. Our topics will include conflict resolution, empathy, responsibility, respect, trustworthiness, prejudice, dealing with disappointment, and citizenship. Classes will usually begin with short, open-ended, hypothetical readings that prompt questions about doing the right thing. The students will then be free to share ideas and beliefs and to "debate" the topic. In this class, there are no right or wrong answers...only thoughtful discussion!

Instructor: Juli Davidson

Class fee: none

Maximum number of students: 12

Requirements: The child must be interested in the subject matter and happy to engage in discussion.

Connected Cultures

Connected cultures will explore how culture relates to community. How community members contribute to culture. It will specifically look at how three cultures (Indian, Mexican, and Chinese) are connected to and influence US culture. We will touch on the idea of the US being a melting pot or a patchwork of cultures. We will look at trade, immigration, foods, art, music, etc. The class is based on a unit in the Moving Beyond the Page Curriculum. I will provide a complete syllabus to anyone interested. This class will have the opportunity to explore the tastes of the three cultures. Please let me know if there are allergy concerns.

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Instructor: Holly Dalton

Class fee: \$20

Maximum number of students: 12

Requirements: The students need to be able to listen and follow multi step directions and read/write at a 2nd-3rd grade level. There will be written components to each class. Much of the information will be generated by the class, but some things like an acrostic poem will require independent work. Kids will be asked to do some outside work - primarily discuss, look in your pantry or grocery at the variety of international foods, etc. Some written assignments may be sent home but will be optional at the parent's discretion. Kids will be asked to explore their ancestry and be prepared to discuss their family heritage on day 1 of the class. This means there is a pre-assignment. It will be sent out via the loop to all registered students. It is important so that the child has an opportunity to share the information and participate.

Music of The World

This class will be an introductory music theory class. We will use a broad spectrum of world music to explore basic music theory concepts such as rhythm, meter, pitch, and scales. Students will learn to identify common instruments by timbre. Additionally we will learn to listen critically and explore the emotions evoked by different music. Class activities will include music listening, singing, playing simple percussion instruments, drawing pictures inspired by the music, and class discussion.

Instructor: Dave Davidson

Class Fee: \$3

Maximum number of students: 12

Requirements: The child must be able to sit quietly and listen to music for short periods of time and be willing to participate in class activities.

Send Me A Letter

Writing activities based on favorite picture books that help kids practice up to 8 real-life writing including postcards, thank you notes, lists, get well note, recipes and more. The books we use will take us on a trip around the world.

Instructor: Tracy Wallace

Class Fee: \$5

Maximum number of students: 12

Requirements: The student must be able to listen attentively to a story for 15 minutes and follow directions for the activity. The student must be interested in learning real-life writing and must be able to do so without disrupting the class inappropriately. S/he should be able to write 3 or 4 sentences at one sitting.

Group D

Material World: A Global Family Portrait

Photographer Peter Menzel traveled to various countries and invited families to be photographed with their possessions in front of the family home. The class will study these photographs and discuss the similarities and differences among the families. We will take a look at how the rest of the world lives and how our lives compare.

Instructor: Isabel Ibarra

Class Size: 12

Class Fee: \$10

Requirements: Participate in a class discussion, compare/contrast how families live, and write down key stats for the countries we visit.

Model United Nations

We in the Dallas area are very lucky to have this unique opportunity so near home! Global Elementary Model United Nations is elementary and middle school students role-playing the assemblies of the United Nations! This enriching, exciting opportunity has been available in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A. since 1990.

GEMUN is an excellent hands-on approach to learning in a global context. By role-playing delegates to the United Nations, young people from varied backgrounds learn about other countries, cultures and international relationships, while developing a global perspective on real issues confronting the world community today, and acquiring many transferable skills.

In this year-long class, students will learn how the United Nations was formed along with its purpose and structure. One African country will be chosen to study--history, culture, current events, geography, and government. Students will be assigned to a Model UN committee, research related topics outside of class each week, learn to write and present resolutions, and attend the Global Model Elementary Model United Nations (GEMUN) conference in May 2012 where he/she will role-play a delegate from the chosen African country. One or two outside workshops in the spring are required to learn parliamentary procedure specific to the UN which will be used throughout the conference. Students will participate in the creation of a country display for the conference. Students will have the opportunity to interact with other students from Texas, Mexico, Russia, Turkey, and other US states.

Instructor: Tracy Wallace

Class Fee: \$3 for the creation of the display this spring. Further expenses may come up in the areas of the costumes.

Maximum number of students: No new students being accepted.

Requirements: Child has an interest in the class, is able to research related topics and follow instructions for creating resolutions, willing to learn public speaking techniques,

creating the country's display for conference and is able to attend the Global Elementary Model United Nations conference in May 2012 at Brookhaven College near LBJ and Midway Rd. Needs to be able to print off things at home to bring to class—even in color this semester.

Computer Hardware II: This Time It's Personal

Due to generous donations, we have enough computer hardware for a large number of students to get what is essentially a full, older, system to tear apart and learn how to work with. This is not intended to produce computers for each student, but to show them how components in the computers work at a hardware level and how they're all connected. We'll be taking apart computers, monitors, keyboards, mice/trackballs, some PDA phones, a laptop or two, and other modern electronics. Each student, or family, will need a toolkit to work with and you should be prepared for them to be bringing hardware home. If time allows we'll also be working with some soldering and de-soldering to show how components can be connected.

Some example toolkits can be found at this page.

<http://www.newegg.com/Product/Product.aspx?Item=N82E16899261003>

If you have most of these items in your family tool collection already, feel free to use those. About the only items which will be absolutely necessary is a set of precision screwdrivers, available for less than \$10 at your local hardware store. A photo of an example set can be found at

<http://www.amazon.com/SE-Mini-Screw-Driver-Carrying/dp/B000X1GXFW>

Any hardware is theirs to keep with the understanding that it will not be operable when we're done with the class. Proper disposal and recycling of used electronics will also be covered along with safety procedures due to potentially hazardous materials inside modern electronics.

Instructor: Steven Merritt

Class Fee: \$3

Class size: 20

Requirements: None.

The Quest for Peace

This class will focus on key figures and events in mankind's efforts to find peace—efforts we started a short time after we learned to wage war, and which have so far borne only limited fruit. We will start by exploring the concept of “peace the old-fashioned way”, also known as empire-building, through overviews of the Roman, Mongol, and British empires. We will then explore Western attempts to establish international legal bodies such as the League of Nations and the United Nations. The third section will look at key individuals in the nonviolent movements of the twentieth century, namely Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. The last class session will be an open discussion of current events, such as the Arab Spring movement, and how technology has expanded the quest for peace. The class will follow an interactive lecture format, with a brief teacher introduction and class discussion followed by projects and experiments that support the concepts discussed.

Instructor: Scott Dalton

Class Size: 12

Class Fee: \$25 to cover class supplies and materials

Requirements: The class is offered for tweens and teens; younger students will be considered at the teacher's discretion. All students need to be able to follow multi step directions in order to participate in the activities. The class will require paying attention to a 15-30 minute lecture and follow a 10 minute discussion on the topic. The class will deal with a number of mature subjects such as justice versus retribution, the American civil rights struggle, violent opposition to nonviolent movements, and similar issues.

Teen Classes

Beyond Our Differences

This will be a teen **DISCUSSION** class based on watching segments of the excellent PBS documentary, BEYOND OUR DIFFERENCES. In the film, religious leaders, politicians, and luminaries in their fields give voice to the positive effects of spirituality and morality, focusing on commonalities spanning all faiths. While the negative — even violent — side of religion is widely reported, BEYOND OUR DIFFERENCES documents the hope for positive change and healing universal to so many traditions and explores the common values that people all around the world share.

Instructor: Corey Brunson

Class Fee: none

Class size: unlimited

Requirements: none

Global Village Art

This class will be both discussion and hands on. We will talk about different kinds of art, important artists throughout the world, art in culture, art in daily life and question whether art can be used a tool to help create change. There will also be a hands on component of this class. Each student will come up with a project idea to be completed throughout the semester. Each student will be responsible for concept, design and execution. I will provide guidance and suggestions for execution of the project and help gather materials and resources as needed.

Instructor: Alena Veteto

Class size: 10

Class Fee: \$20

Requirements: Students in this class will need the ability to focus, be engaged and take active part in discussion for longer than 30 minutes. Each week they will be expected to share about the progress of their project. It is suggested, that if possible, during this class each student have use of a camera for documenting their project each step of the way.

Meditation, Visualization, Concentration

Each class will explore ways the ancient tradition of meditation leads to relaxation, enhanced concentration abilities, self-discovery and self-esteem. Each class will combine the history of meditation around the world and exercises exploring the many methods of meditation. The exercises will be age appropriate and occasionally the class will be

divided into groups according to age.

Instructor: Marian Wiseman

Class Size: 8

Class Fee: \$5

Requirements: To participate in class there must be a willingness to sit quietly and still at various times during the hour. Much of the class will be flexible - but no speaking or moving around the room will be permitted during meditation.

Teen Writers' Group

This group is open to young people who would like to share information, ideas and opinions related to their work. Writers of articles, poems, short stories and novels are all welcome. Participants will share portions of their writing and receive respectful but honest feedback.

Please note: This is NOT a writing course.

Facilitator: Melinda Baucom

Fee: None, unless we decide to put together a sampling of the kids' work to share and need a small sum to cover printing.

Maximum students: 6

Requirements: Be able to offer helpful, constructive criticism of others' work as well as accept the same regarding yours.

Local & Global Philosophy

This is a conversation-based course focusing on ethics. Introductory material will be on the domain of philosophy and its place among (above? ;) other disciplines, plus basic techniques of argumentation. Students then practice their new skills on ancient, perennial questions as well as more-recently-arising ones. Advance reading list to be provided separately.

Instructor: Matt Crouch

Class Size: 14

Class Fee: \$5

Requirements: Must be willing to do some outside reading in order to be prepared to discuss in class. This class is open to anyone who likes to think and discuss.