



With more than 150 years of tradition and culture, it can be difficult for new members and new Granges to acclimate and truly become part of the organization. While our ritual and language are beautiful, they are often cited as unattractive or barriers to entry for those without a deep Grange background – yet without them, we lose our identity and the thing that bonds us as a fraternity. Change is a constant aspect of life, as our ritual tells us, but retaining what makes us Grange is essential to fulfilling the charge from our founders – for the Grange to be perpetual.

For us, the Grange traditions and values are our heirlooms – inseparable pieces of the Grange that are passed down through our membership over generations. These valuable cornerstones of what it is to be a Grange and Grangers are part of our identity and tie us to our roots while preparing us for success in the future.

### **Imparting Lessons through Values Readings**

One of the biggest disconnects with new members – especially members of younger generations with less of an orientation toward formal ritual work – is the sometimes obscure language and archaic presentation of these foundational lessons during Degree Days or Installations. Many new members are never given or read the Declaration of Purposes or see degrees because we infrequently hold exemplifications, and as such our Grange heritage and identity becomes compromised.

This program is designed to impart these lessons to new Grange members in a way that meets them at a modern level of comfort and attention span while creating meaningful connection to the lessons themselves that are the most important piece of the ritual work. Values readings are just that – short one or two sentence snippets that communicate a lesson or a value. As attention spans wane, even in older adults, they offer a new way to incorporate our most basic and fundamental lessons to new and seasoned Grangers to encourage thought and reflection and application to daily life, no matter your age or occupation.

Including these readings as part of your work does not change the way in which a Grange functions, the formalities of a Grange meeting or any other part of the work of an active Grange. These suggested readings come from our degree work and other ritual and foundational documents. They fit easily into the order of business of a Grange meeting in the Good of the Order section or can be used to inspire the occasional Lecturer's program or at another appropriate time during the course of your meeting.

Change is inevitable, as our founders told us through the ritual work they left us. Even as we change, evolve and grow, it is essential that we retain and impart upon new members our most sacredly held values – not only those of faith, hope, charity and fidelity, but also of civility, respect for others, nonpartisanship, lifelong education, the reverence for those who allow us to meet our most basic of needs (agriculturalists and others that produce our food and shelter), and more.

By providing direct quotes from these ritual and essential documents as part of our meetings, all members are part of the journey and new members become more familiar with our culture and traditions and form a deeper bond with the organization as a whole. Having heard several of the phrases from the degrees and installation as well as the Declaration of Purposes over the course of a year or more prior to seeing the degrees or installation in full form, members are much more likely to be more attentive, better understand the teachings and welcome the experience to see Grange heritage on display. This focus on a slow introduction to the lessons is key to connecting them with the Grange of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

The program provides one reading for each monthly meeting<sup>1</sup>. These readings are on a five-year schedule and allow Granges to pick up at any time in the schedule. You will see these lessons, distributed as bite-sized phrases, used in various publications and social channels from National Grange each month. Often, but not always, they correspond to the season of the year.

This handbook introduces each of the lessons by the month and year, starting with Spring 2022 as "Year A." Each subsequent year is labeled as B, C, D and E. With this model, Year A would be repeated in 2027; Year B in 2028 and so on unless new yearly reading plans are released through that time. In addition, you will find sample social media posts or traditional print ads that your Grange, Pomona or State may use to encourage members to reflect on these lessons.

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<sup>1</sup> If you have two meetings a month, you may add further discussion on the topic, use one of the supplementary materials to impress again the lesson or not hold a reading that session.

## Preparing for Work

Here are a few recommendations when working with new members:

- Provide them a Grange mentor who is positive and encouraging, but who does not force them to learn all things about Grange all at once. Use the time to reflect on the lessons already before them and share positive experiences about the Grange, as well as history of the organization as a whole and the Grange they have joined.
- Learn why they joined Grange and “take their temperature” throughout the first few months and beyond about their Grange experience. Most new members will have questions they are uncomfortable asking in a large group or they do not find an appropriate time during our meetings. See if there are ways you can enhance their experience and make sure your Grange is fulfilling the needs of the member and the opportunities as advertised in your recruitment documents or pitch.
- Encourage them to see or take part in the First Four Degrees and beyond but consider waiting to recommend this until they have been part of Grange for at least a year, or until they have attended at least a dozen meetings where they can be exposed to the lessons through track one of this program. While this is not our tradition, through this program new members are still learning about our values and the lessons of the Grange, and when they see the full exemplification are more likely to feel comfortable and be more receptive.
- Consider helping them find their personal motto from the work of the Grange. Ask them after some time with the Grange what phrase from the readings they connect most with, which motivates them most or what summarizes their reason to be part of the Grange. Consider providing them a personalized gift with this phrase to connect them with the Grange and take it with them in their daily lives.
- Encourage them to take part in opportunities that broaden their Grange world – from State contests to reading the National Grange magazine. Allow them to see the connection they have with other members from outside their Grange thanks to the shared values and fraternal experiences.
- Some individuals who join find they are not a good fit after learning the Grange’s central tenets. While the Grange should be and is flexible about the “how’s,” we should not be flexible as to who we are (nonpartisan; charitable; law-abiding; etc.). Encourage the new member to examine if they can respect the differences between their values and those the Grange holds. If they can – for example, if they accept that a prayer is said and faith is a key component but they do not practice a faith of their own – continue to encourage them on their Grange journey. If they cannot and would demand all references to faith and a higher power be removed, accept that this may not be a good fit.
- Others find the Grange they are in does not fit them well. If this is the case, consider introducing the regional deputy or State membership director to them to encourage a demit to a nearby Grange or to help establish a new Grange that provides programming and outreach more in line with what the new member is looking to accomplish as part of the Grange.

## Jump Right In

In this section you will find the five-year schedule of readings that your Grange can use to introduce new members and encourage reflection by seasoned members on the essential lessons of the Grange. This program is meant to begin in March 2022, however any Grange can pick this up at any time thereafter. The program aligns with seasons rather than the annual calendar.

These readings may be used anywhere in your Grange meeting. Two suggestions are to use a few moments (5 or less) during the “Conferring of degrees” period in the traditional Grange meeting agenda. While this is clearly not a full conferral of a degree or degrees, we know this current agenda item is not used during Grange meetings. Further, the reading is imparting a small piece of the wisdom found in the degrees. Another is to place this near the end of the meeting during the Good of the Order period.

Behind the reading is the reference, showing where this appears and if applicable, who says it during our ritual work. You may choose to assign these pieces to the corresponding officer of your Grange or designate someone else to read and present this short program. You are encouraged to provide this to the designated reader in advance so they can prepare as necessary. You may also choose to provide the reading to your members in advance so they reflect and come prepared to give an example of its application.

To the reader: Use a few minutes of your meeting not just to read the statement, but to reflect on its application to your life or to ask others to reflect on it. You will find application of these lessons no matter your occupation or background. Encourage your members to truly connect these with their lives.

Here are a few examples inspired by the presentation of these readings at two Granges where this program was piloted:

**Example 1. Reader (President):** “This month’s reading comes from the Second Degree. The President says: Let ‘no fear ... deter you from doing that which is right.’ “When I read this, I thought of exactly what I was facing that day. A job opened in my company on first shift. I was on third shift for the past several years and I was trying to decide if I wanted to apply for the transfer. I was a little scared, to be honest. I don’t know anyone on the day shift and I don’t know the manager. I know my current manager well and my coworkers and we all get along. But I have been missing out on a lot of my kids’ activities now that they’re getting older and on things with my wife, and I think it would make me healthier if I had a better sleep pattern and worked days. I thought that while I was afraid of change, I know it’s right for me, so I shouldn’t let fear deter me.”

**Example 2. Reader (Community Service Chairperson):** “I’d like to read this month’s lesson and use it to have a discussion about some new ideas for service projects. The lesson comes from Installation of Officers and reminds us all that service is a big part of the Grange. It says, ‘Let us work hand in hand for the good of our neighbors. Let us remember that those with trials and tribulations need our help most of all.’ So, we’ve been talking about finding different ways to connect with our community and that our

current projects have kind of run their course. Let's remember that we are supposed to help those especially facing trials and tribulations and come up with some ideas tonight that we can consider and think about between now and next meeting. Then we can choose one or a few and decide how we can make an impact here."

**Example 3. Reader (Lady Assistant Steward/Junior Director):** "Prior to the meeting, I sent out a request to each of you asking if you could give me an example of something learned at home, not at school. I got a bunch of examples from each of the five people who responded (so thank you for giving me a few each to pick up the slack!). This activity was inspired by the reading for this month, which is from the Grange Declaration of Purposes: 'Influenced by our strong beliefs in the institution of the family, we are convinced that education begins in the family circle.' Some of the responses included 'Right from wrong,' 'Prayer,' 'My mother taught me how to count long before I entered school,' (more examples) ... Tonight, I just wanted you to think for a minute about what our Juniors and even younger kids here in the room are learning and will take with them for life that they are getting here but won't get in school and how great it is that the Grange gives us an opportunity to pass on knowledge and values to them in a safe environment."

You may also choose to come up with activities to reveal or otherwise engage with the reading in a tactile way, such as providing members a cryptogram or adult coloring page. A few for the Year A (2022) readings are included in this pack and more will be created and available throughout the course of the next few years. We also encourage you to share any creative way you use the readings to engage your members with the National Grange so we may highlight your work at our Regional Conferences, in our magazine, newsletter or social media. You may also choose to tie it occasionally with the Lecturer's program for the meeting. Overall, you are encouraged to find creative ways to engage your new and seasoned members, allowing them to hear, think about and apply the lessons to their lives.

We also recommend you use the posts created by the National Grange to start a discussion about the values of the Grange on your social media channels with your community. These can help to demystify what the Grange is about and may encourage people to visit a meeting or engage with one of your community service projects. You can share the items that appear on our Facebook page or are linked to download in weekly Patrons Chain e-newsletter editions. You may also want to post a printed flyer with lessons in your hall to let guests and individuals visiting during rentals know more about our values. These will be available to download through the Patrons Chain and on our website.

Without further ado, let's dive into the program and find ways to plant and cultivate the essential values of Grange and the fraternal ties that come with those shared values across our entire membership.

## **Year A (2022, 2027, etc.)**

- 📖 Spring A.1. (March) – “History proves that where agriculture has been fostered, that nation has prospered and reached a high degree of perfection; but where it has been neglected degeneracy began.” (*First Degree; Chaplain*)
- 📖 Spring A.2. (April) - “I will not knowingly wrong or defraud a Brother or Sister of the Order or allow it to be done by another if within my power to prevent it.” (*First Degree; President*)
- 📖 Spring A.3. (May) – “Influenced by our strong beliefs in the institution of the family, we are convinced that education begins in the family circle.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Summer A.1 (June) – “Prune idle thoughts and sinful suggestions, and thus keep your passions within due bounds and prevent your fancy from leading you astray after the vanities and vices of the world.” (*Second Degree; President*)
- 📖 Summer A.2 (July) – “Guard against selfishness. If thine enemy hunger, feed him.” (*Second Degree; Chaplain*)
- 📖 Summer A.3 (August) - “It shall be an abiding principle with us to relieve any of our oppressed and suffering members by any reasonable means at our command.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Autumn A.1 (September) – “We recognize that education is a continuing process. We encourage all to continue their education... [...through adult education classes, by continued reading, observation and such other methods as may be available, including radio, television and the internet. We recognize the valuable contribution made to education by the printed word, especially in newspapers, periodicals and books, and will continue to advocate their widespread availability.]” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Autumn A.2 (October) - “While in Faith and in Hope this world may disagree, All mankind is concerned in Charity.” (*Third Degree; Flora*)
- 📖 Autumn A.3 (November) – “We acknowledge the broad principle that difference of opinion is no crime, and hold that ‘progress toward truth is made by differences of opinion,’ while ‘the fault lies in bitterness of controversy.’” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Winter A.1 (December) – “It is in the Home that we enjoy the fruits of our labors in the fields of the farm, and the fields of life.” (*Fourth Degree; Steward*)
- 📖 Winter A.2 (January) – “If we desire to encourage [children] to love rural life, we must make its labors cheerful. What a child *sees* makes the most lasting impression. We may tell them of the pleasures and independence of [rural life]; but if their daily intercourse with us shows it to be tedious, irksome, laborious, without any recreation of body or mind, they will soon lose all interest in it and seek enjoyment elsewhere.” (*Fourth Degree; Vice President*)
- 📖 Winter A.3 (February) – “...may our friendship be as firm as the stone itself.” (*Fourth Degree; President*)

## **Year B (2023, 2028, etc.)**

- 📖 Spring B.1. (March) – “The first and highest object of our Order is—to develop a better and higher manhood and womanhood.” (*First Degree; Lecturer*)
- 📖 Spring B.2. (April) - “Those we admit into our circle are not chosen by outward appearance, and ... we are not deceived by display in dress. It is to the mind and heart that we look for all good works; therefore, in your intercourse with the world, remember that a noble mind and generous heart are often concealed beneath the garments of poverty.” (*First Degree; Steward*)
- 📖 Spring B.3. (May) - “The interests, the social relations and the destiny of man and woman are identical. She was intended by our Creator to be the helpmeet, companion, and equal of man—the perfecting half added to his hemisphere—thus completing the fully-globed orb of our common humanity; hence, as one, each shares the glory or the shame of the other.” (*First Degree; Chaplain*)
- 📖 Summer B.1 (June) – “Let us remember that no trees bear fruit in Autumn which do not blossom in the early Summertime. That life may be profitable, laden with good fruits, let all endeavor that youth be studious and virtuous, replete with the blossoms of observation and study—the promise of future wisdom and usefulness.” (*Second Degree; Pomona*)
- 📖 Summer B.2 (July) – “Since God placed man on earth, agriculture has existed. There is no occupation that precedes it. Before literature existed, before governments were known, agriculture was the calling of man. And all the fruits of social progress since then grew from the brown soil.” (*Installation Ceremony; Installing Officer*)
- 📖 Summer B.3 (August) - “In no other occupation does a man’s daily labor bring him into such close companionship with the Great Creator as in the cultivation of the soil.” (*Second Degree; Chaplain*)
- 📖 Autumn B.1 (September) – “Cultivate the habit of looking for better and brighter days, instead of mourning over the past.” (*Third Degree; Vice President*)
- 📖 Autumn B.2 (October) – “Speak good of others, rather than evil. Gather up memories of others' virtues, and pass by their faults in pity.” (*Third Degree, Chaplain*)
- 📖 Autumn B.3 (November) – “We cherish the belief that sectionalism is, and of right should be, dead and buried with the past. Our work is for the present and the future. In our agricultural fraternity we shall recognize no North, no South, no East, no West.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Winter B.1 (December) – “...the welfare of each is bound up in the good of all.” (*Fourth Degree; President*)
- 📖 Winter B.2 (January) – “Encourage improvement; remember that Nature’s motto is onward; she never goes backward.” (*Installation Ceremony; Installing Officer’s charge to President*)
- 📖 Winter B.3 (February) – “In old age we enjoy the fruits of a well-spent life, surrounded by friends, and in a happy Home, noted for fidelity.” (*Fourth Degree; Steward*)

## **Year C (2024, 2029, etc.)**

- 📖 Spring C.1. (March) – “We proclaim it among our purposes to continue our historical appreciation of the abilities and equality of women.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Spring C.2. (April) - “In our fraternity there is work for all and those reap the most abundant harvest of Grange benefits who contribute most liberally of their own time and talent.” (*Official Grange Obligation Ceremony; Secretary*)
- 📖 Spring C.3. (May) – “For in our fraternity there is work for all, and the idler has no place among Patrons of Husbandry.” (*First Degree; Vice President*)
- 📖 Summer C.1 (June) – “Grangers are likened to Shepherds. Our flock is our Grange and our neighbors. We are taught to keep ‘those within the fold, and to reclaim the wandering... Be patient with the wayward, carefully instruct the erring, diligently seek and bring back the straying and those that are cast out.’” (*Second Degree; Chaplain*)
- 📖 Summer C.2 (July) – “Changes and transformations are constantly passing before us.” (*Second Degree; Ceres*)
- 📖 Summer C.3 (August) - “Wherever you go, whatever your calling, aim to do good. Good deeds are ever fruitful of yet more good.” (*Second Degree; Lecturer*)
- 📖 Autumn C.1 (September) – “It is delightful to acquire knowledge, and much more so to diffuse it.” (*Third Degree; Lecturer*)
- 📖 Autumn C.2 (October) – “We desire a proper equality, and fairness; protection for the weak; restraint upon the strong; in short, justly distributed power. These are American ideals, the very essence of American independence, and to advocate the contrary is unworthy of the sons and daughters of our Republic.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Autumn C.3 (November) – “That you may enjoy your rewards dispense Charity, the flowers of brotherly love, as freely as Nature spreads her flowery carpet over all the earth. And let your Charity extend to all humanity.” (*Third Degree; Flora*)
- 📖 Winter C.1 (December) - “Patrons, carry with you a feeling of compassion for those who strive to make the world a better place.” (*Installation Ceremony; Installation Officer*)
- 📖 Winter C.2 (January) - “Be cheerful, be united. “Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” (*Installation Ceremony; Installation Officer*)
- 📖 Winter C.3 (February) – “Hope is the heavenly light that gilds our labors. Were we deprived of that source of consolation, life would indeed be dreary.” (*Fourth Degree; Pomona*)



## **Year D (2025, 2030, etc.)**

- 📖 Spring D.1. (March) - “An honest man is the noblest work of God.” (*First Degree; Lecturer*)
- 📖 Spring D.2. (April) – “Of all the sweeteners of human toil, of all the motive powers that give alacrity to the hand or foot, readiness to the will, and intelligence to mind and purpose, the quickest and most enduring in results is the kind word spoken in season.” (*Installation Ceremony; Installing Officer to Vice President*)
- 📖 Spring D.3. (May) - “In your intercourse with your fellow beings correct an error kindly, and with the smooth edge of affection, and do not bruise a wound you wish to heal.” (*First Degree; Vice President*)
- 📖 Summer D.1 (June) – “Let ‘no fear ... deter you from doing that which is right.’ (*Second Degree; President*)
- 📖 Summer D.2 (July) – “We must always bear in mind that no one, by becoming a Patron of Husbandry, gives up that inalienable right and duty which belongs to every American citizen, to take a proper interest in the politics of one’s country. On the contrary, it is right for every member to do all in his or her power, legitimately, to influence for good the action of any political party to which he or she belongs. It is reserved by every Patron, as the right of a free citizen to affiliate with any party that will best carry out his or her principles.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Summer D.3 (August) – “Do good, hoping for nothing in return, and your reward shall be great. Love one another.” (*Second Degree; Chaplain*)
- 📖 Autumn D.1 (September) – “We shall advance the cause of education by all just means within our power.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Autumn D.2 (October) – “We emphatically and sincerely assert the oft-repeated truth taught in our Constitutional Law, that the Grange—National, State, Pomona, or Subordinate—is not a partisan or party organization. The principles we teach underlie all true statesmanship, and if properly carried out, will tend to purify the whole political atmosphere of our country; for we seek the greatest good to the greatest number.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Autumn D.3 (November) – “Beware of covetousness; for a man’s life consists not in the abundance of things he possesses, but in the right use of God’s blessings.” (*Third Degree; Chaplain*)
- 📖 Winter D.1 (December) - “...especially adorn the family circle with the noble traits of a kind disposition—fill its atmosphere with affection, and thus induce all to love and not to fear you; for love is the only enduring power.” (*Fourth Degree; Vice President*)
- 📖 Winter D.2 (January) – “For our business interests we desire to bring producer and consumer into the most direct and friendly relations possible, remembering that ‘individual happiness depends upon general prosperity.’” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Winter D.3 (February) – “In kind words and deeds dispense Charity, as freely as flowers do their perfume...” (*Fourth Degree; Flora*)

## **Year E (2026, 2031, etc.)**

- 📖 Spring E.1. (March) - “Courage then, and patience, when gloom broods over your pathway.” (*First Degree; Vice President*)
- 📖 Spring E.2. (April) – “Our Fraternity, being agriculturally based, family oriented and dedicated to the pure principles of equality under Constitutional Law, we appeal to all good citizens for mutual cooperation and assistance toward reform that we may remove from our midst the last vestige of inequity and corruption. We believe that harmony, equitable compromise and earnest cooperation are essential to future success.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Spring E.3. (May) – “Let the modesty and usefulness of the humble grass be to you an object of imitation.” (*First Degree; President*)
- 📖 Summer E.1 (June) - “Behold these inanimate kernels of corn! But the germ has life-- the future plant is there.... There is no object in which, to appearance, life and death border so closely together as in the grains of seed buried in the earth; but when life seems extinct a fuller and richer existence begins anew.” (*Second Degree; President*)
- 📖 Summer E.2 (July) – “We recognize the necessity of experimentation to develop new and better methods of education, but we caution against the widespread adoption of these innovative and experimental methods until they have been proven effective.” (*Grange Declaration of Purposes*)
- 📖 Summer E.3 (August) – “Cultivation of the mind ... destroys error and keeps our thoughts quickened and ready to receive and apply new facts as they appear, thus promoting the growth of knowledge and wisdom.” (*Second Degree; President*)
- 📖 Autumn E.1 (September) – “Gather only the good seed. Our associations in life are the fields in which we reap. Use judgment, and while you glean let your example be such that others may profit by it.” (*Third Degree, President*)
- 📖 Autumn E.2 (October) - “We must reap for the mind as well as for the body, and from the abundance of our harvest, in good deeds and kind words, dispense charity.” (*Third Degree; President*)
- 📖 Autumn E.3 (November) – My Brothers and Sisters, all honest labor is honorable.” (*Third Degree; Vice President*)
- 📖 Winter E.1 (December) – “Let us work hand in hand for the good of our neighbors. Let us remember that those with trials and tribulations need our help most of all.” (*Installation Ceremony; Installation Officer*)
- 📖 Winter E.2 (January) – “You may encounter difficulties. Overcome them, remembering that difficulties are but opportunities to test our abilities.” (*Installation Ceremony; Installing Officer to President*)
- 📖 Winter E.3 (February) – “Let us treasure up the lessons we have learned, both by successes and failures, plan wisely and hopefully for the future, and strive to make our lives as harmoniously beautiful and bountiful as are the works of Nature’s God.” (*Fourth Degree; President*)