

A Classical Education Focus at Glasgow Christian Academy

At GCA, we have always been influenced by the Classical model of education as expressed in a variety of ways within our classes as we seek to meet the individual learning needs of all of our students. As evidenced over the years with a high percentage of graduates who successfully pursue higher education, many in our community of home educators have found it immensely beneficial to adopt some or most aspects of this model of education.

Classical Education can be summarized with an explanation of the Trivium, a model based on the emerging learning styles of students across grade levels. There are three stages of development, and within each of those stages, subjects are taught in tandem using a four-year historically chronological cycle. A thorough, excellent Classical Education resource is *The Well-Trained Mind* by Jessie Wise and Susan Wise Bauer.

GCA uses Classical-friendly curricula including *Mystery of History*, *Apologia*, *Institute for Excellence in Writing*, *Winston Grammar*, *Latin for Children*, and all genres of great literature. Our history, science, and language arts classes in elementary and middle school follow the four-year cycle as closely as possible.

At-home, parental supervision and involvement is crucial for students to succeed.

The Three Stages of the Classical Trivium in a nutshell: (these are methods our teachers currently employ, and they will intentionally do so even more in the future):

I. The Grammar (or Knowledge) Stage (approximately 1st-4th grades)

Students learn most effectively through memorizing and reciting facts, repetition, and creative hands-on activities that utilize their imagination. Students will memorize and recite together in class a variety of facts including math concepts, grammar parts of speech, Scripture, and science/history/geography facts.

II. The Dialectic (or Logic) State (approximately 5th-8th grades)

Students learn most effectively through assignments and class discussions that require a higher level of reasoning, recognizing cause and effect, and analyzation. Memorization and recitations will continue at this level in some classes.

III. The Rhetoric (or Wisdom) Stage (approximately 9th-12th grades)

Students learn most effectively through research, persuasive communication, and oral presentations; therefore, an in-depth research paper is required each year of high school in English classes, and oral presentations will be added to various classes. In-class discussions at this stage are expected to be in-depth, with students prepared in advance to participate.

Four-Year Chronological Cycle of *Subjects:

1. Approximately 1st, 5th, and 9th grades
Ancient History (Creation through 400 A.D.)
Life Science
Ancient Literature, Art, and Music
2. Approximately 2nd, 6th, and 10th grades
Medieval History (400 A.D. through 1600 A.D.)
Earth Science and Astronomy
Medieval Literature, Art, and Music
3. Approximately 3rd, 7th, and 11th grades
Renaissance History (1600-1850)
Chemistry
Renaissance Literature, Art, and Music
4. Approximately 4th, 8th, and 12th grades
Modern History (1850-Present)
Physics
Modern Literature, Art, and Music

* In addition, spelling, grammar, vocabulary, penmanship, writing, Bible, physical education, logic, and foreign language (Latin in younger years and another language in high school) should also be incorporated for students to obtain a well-rounded education. Vocabulary and writing assignments can be tailored to fit the time period being studied.

Important to Remember: There is room for flexibility--to simplify a homeschool family's schedule, it is recommended siblings in grades K-8th study at least the same Bible, history, and science topics, even if it doesn't all fit perfectly into the four-year cycle.

Fun Tips: go on field trips, visit the library, and have older siblings read historical literature aloud to younger siblings.