

Classical Education

Classical education is a proven method of teaching which structures learning in accordance with the God-given stages of child development. This approach enables students to gain knowledge, understanding, and wisdom at an age when subjects are most easily mastered. At Cornerstone Classical Christian Academy, curriculum is taught in a three-part educational process termed "The Trivium." Each phase is dependent upon and builds upon the others.

The first phase is called the **Grammar Stage** (grades K-5), which provides students with the necessary tools and facts of learning in a variety of subjects such as history, science, Latin, math, grammar, and reading. The goal is to equip students with the foundational building blocks of education in life while their minds are most receptive to memorization and observation.

The **Logic Stage** (grades 6-8), takes the mastered information from the Grammar Stage and brings it into ordered relationships. Students begin to apply logic to assess the validity of arguments and learn to view information critically with a more discerning mind.

In the **Rhetoric Stage** (grades 9-12), students learn to articulate eloquently and persuasively, and to use the tools of knowledge and understanding acquired in the earlier stages. This is the point at which the strength of a classical education is made fully visible.

The following chart, drawn from the essay *The Lost Tools of Learning* by Dorothy Sayers illustrates the application of the classical Trivium at Cornerstone Classical Christian Academy.

GRAMMAR		LOGIC	RHETORIC
Beginning Grammar (Pre-Polly)	Advanced Grammar (Poll-Parrot)	(Pert)	(Poetic)
Grades K-2	Grades 3-6	Grades 7-8	Grades 9-12
Approx. ages 4-8	Approx. ages 9-11	Approx. ages 12-14	Approx. ages 15-18
Student Characteristics	Student Characteristics	Student Characteristics	Student Characteristics
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obviously excited about learning 2. Enjoys games, stories, songs, projects 3. Short attention span 4. Wants to touch, taste, feel, smell, see 5. Imaginative, creative 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Excited about new, interesting facts 2. Likes to explain, figure out, talk 3. Wants to relate own experiences to topic, or just to tell a story 4. Likes collections, organizing items 5. Likes chants, clever, repetitious word sounds 6. Easily memorizes 7. Can assimilate another language well 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Still excitable, but needs challenges 2. Judges, critiques, debates, critical 3. Likes to organize items, others 4. Shows off knowledge 5. Wants to know "behind the scenes" facts 6. Curious about Why? for most things 7. Thinks, acts as though more knowledgeable than adults 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concerned with present events, especially in own life 2. Interested in justice, fairness 3. Moving toward special interests, topics 4. Can take on responsibility, independent work 5. Can do synthesis 6. Desires to express feelings, own ideas 7. Generally idealistic
Teaching Methods	Teaching Methods	Teaching Methods	Teaching Methods

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guide discovering 2. Explore, find things 3. Use lots of tactile items to illustrate point 4. Sing, play games, chant, recite, color, draw, paint, build 5. Use body movements 6. Short, creative projects 7. Show and Tell, drama, hear/read/tell stories 8. Field trips 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lots of hands-on work, projects 2. Field trips, drama 3. Make collections, displays, models 4. Integrate subjects through above means 5. Teach and assign research project 6. Recitations, memorizations 7. Drills, games 8. Oral/written presentations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time lines, charts, maps (visual materials) 2. Debates, persuasive reports 3. Drama, reenactments, role-playing 4. Evaluate, critique (with guidelines) 5. Formal logic 6. Research projects 7. Oral/written presentations 8. Guest speakers, trips 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drama, oral presentations 2. Guide research in major areas with goal of synthesis of ideas 3. Many papers, speeches, debates 4. Give responsibilities, e.g. working with younger students, organize activities 5. In-depth field trips, even overnight 6. World view discussion/written papers
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