

First Grade

Grade level Description

First grade is a time to continue the wonder of discovery and to firmly put in place the beginning pegs of learning students will use as they grow.

Bible

Theme/Master Question:

Why do we put God's Word in our hearts?

Description:

This class is not a graded course but is intended to build the students' love of scripture. Emphasis is placed on practical application through teacher-led devotions and memorization of key passages aimed at building character and godliness.

This is done through:

- Bible reading
- Scripture memory
- Story-telling
- Prayer
- Group participation in singing, hymns, and discussion

Grammar

Theme/Master Question:

God is pleased when we use our words to ascribe glory and honor to Him.

Description:

This course begins the early phase of the grammar school study of formal English grammar and the fundamentals of composition. Students learn and apply basic parts of speech and write simple, complete sentences using proper spelling and punctuation. These fundamentals of expression are essential for all future studies in the school.

This is done through:

- Parsing-classifying sentences / grammar
- Repeated chants, jingles, and applications;
- Individual instruction and editing;
- Using imitation of well-written works to teach writing skills;
- Integration with other subjects in writing / oral presentations;
- Dedicated memory work time during the "memory period."

- Keeping a commonplacing journal from 1st to 4th grade, incorporating quotes, handwriting or other nongraded exercises to instill a love for commonplacing and prepare students for logic and rhetoric commonplacing.

Spelling/Penmanship

Theme/Master Question:

God reveals Himself as a God of order.

Description:

This course begins the early phase of the grammar school study of spelling and handwriting. Students refine their handwriting skills in printing, master the phonograms, and memorize important spelling rules. Students are trained to write clearly, concisely, and neatly. These fundamentals of expression are essential for all future study in the school.

This is done through:

- Listening to the sounds in words;
- Marking special sounds and long and short vowels;
- Oral and written practice of spelling words;
- Handwriting exercises and practice;
- Copywork to refine penmanship skills;
- Group games and partner practice to review spelling words

Literature/Reading

Theme Question:

What happens in our minds when we read?

Description:

The aim of this course is to help students adequately improve their reading skills, their understanding of literature, and their application of literary skills. First grade uses a combination of primers and children's literature, as well as stories from a wide array of subjects and interests to help create a love for learning and reading.

This is done through:

- small reading groups where students read orally, listen, and follow along with other students;
- individual oral reading to the class, teacher, teacher's aide, or parent volunteer;
- comprehension questions and discussion about the book in large or small groups;
- time for silent reading and teacher or guest reading to students;
- integration with history and science topics;
- recitation of poetry;
- daily review of phonics rules and sounds from Abeka charts 1–13;

- daily phonics worksheets.

Math

Theme/Master Question:

Do numbers help us to understand things better?

Description:

This course continues the grammar school study of arithmetic. Students should demonstrate an increasing understanding that God gave us numbers and mathematical systems to help us in life and also to help us understand His immutable (unchangeable) and logical character.

This is done through:

- large-group guided practice;
- emphasis is placed on the logical evaluation of how numbers work together and rote memorization of math facts; math is connected as often as possible to real-life situations and challenges;
- use of math drills and games, small group work, flashcards, timed tests, and various worksheets for enhancement;
- demonstrate given objectives with the use of manipulatives, such as measuring tools for length and volume, coins, dice, unifix cubes, student clocks, geoboards, etc.;
- class begins each day with a brief activity, questions to consider, or a math drill to prepare for the lesson or review.

History/Geography

Theme/Master Question:

What is the foundation of early America?
God is sovereign throughout time.

Description:

This course begins the grammar school study of history and geography. Students focus on God's sovereignty and the key figures and events of the founding of America. The year culminates with the annual Pioneer Day reenactment in May. This course is not graded but aims to build a foundational appreciation for God's sovereignty throughout time.

This is done through:

- Group instruction using stories/biographies, coloring pages, maps, pictures, models, reenactments, and other visual helps to illustrate changes over time;
- Mayflower / Pilgrim Activity Day;
- Field trips;
- Pioneer Day;
- Guest speakers.

Science

Theme Question:

How does God take care of the small things in the world?

Description:

This course continues the grammar school science program, emphasizing the skill of observation and developing a sense of wonder in God's creation. Students observe and learn about insects and weather. This course is not graded but aims to build a foundational love for God through observing His work in creation and nature.

This is done through:

- Teaching primarily through observation, lecture, and discussion;
- Laboratory work and experimentation, both individually and in groups;
- Drawings and models (integrating with art);
- Guest speakers and field trips;
- Jingles, chants, and sound-offs;
- Observation inside and outside of the classroom.