COVENANT
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

GRADE 3 CURRICULUM

BIBLE

The primary goal of the curriculum is to equip students with Biblical understanding in order to intentionally nurture real-life application of Biblical truth. Our Bible curriculum is Calling of God's Tribe (The Story of God and His People) published by Christian Schools International. Students will study the Creation story, the lives of Abraham and Joseph, the Exodus of God's people from Egypt, God's Law (The Ten Commandments) and Daniel's exile to Babylon. Lessons trace God's loving message of salvation through portraits of Christ as He is foreshadowed in the Old Testament. Prayer, songs, discussion, morning devotions, weekly Chapels, and memorization of scripture passages, including the first chapter of Philippians, empower the students to share and demonstrate their growing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language Arts embraces Reading, Writing and English (spelling, grammar, penmanship and vocabulary). A love for reading is nurtured through author studies, partner reading, group reading, read-alouds, and discussion. Our core language arts program is a literature-rich curriculum that encompasses the five essential reading components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The literature selections represent a diversity of genres, organized around unit themes; each story connects and expands literacy concepts to foster deeper meaning and understanding. Students apply reading strategies as they make the transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." Chapter books such as Charlotte's Web, Stone Fox, and Who Was King Tut, in addition to Aesop's classic fables, are enrichment components of the reading curriculum. Students study characterization, predict outcomes, and discuss the nature of the conflicts the characters face along with possible solutions. Students continue to apply decoding skills and phonetic rules to new words and are encouraged to read with expression, to read for meaning, and to increase the fluency. Students continue to be assessed in the development of their reading skills through DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills).

Shurley English 3 is a grammar and writing program designed specifically for third grade. Shurley is a proven, research based method for instructing students in the principles of correct grammar and oral and written language skills. Grammar is fundamental to speaking, reading, and writing. The essential components of this program include grammar question and answer flows, jingles, practicing and revising sentences and paragraphs, and writing effectively for all purposes. Daily instruction provides constant review, immediate feedback and utilizes all learning styles. It is our goal to prepare our students to carefully interpret the mechanics of written English when reading and effectively and skillfully communicate their knowledge, ideas, and most importantly their faith to others.

Cursive writing is taught and reviewed weekly. Weekly spelling lessons are comprised of phonics-based word lists integrated from the Reading Street curriculum, supplemented by challenge words.

Our writing curriculum is designed so students experience writing as a process, utilizing the steps of writing: pre-writing, writing a draft, revising and editing, and publishing to polish writing skills such as clarity, empowering personal voice, choosing effective topics, etc. Students write in diverse genres: poetry, narratives, fables, persuasive and expository pieces, including summaries and reports. Daily review of basic writing mechanics improves sentence and paragraph structure, and applies the correct use of capital letters, punctuation, etc.

Students will also participate in the beginning levels of the Progymnasmata, a classical approach to writing instruction in which students study, analyze and imitate high quality narrative selections.

MATHEMATICS

Primary Mathematics (Standards Edition) is a complete program based on the highly successful Primary Mathematics series from Singapore. Designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics, topics are covered in depth and taught to mastery. By focusing on mathematical understanding, the program aims to help students develop logical thinking and critical lifelong problem-solving skills.

The Primary Mathematics (Standards Edition) program calls for direct instruction and focuses on mathematical

thinking with immediate application of new skills to problem solving. By encouraging students to solve problems in a variety of ways, this program stretches the mind and promotes an understanding of the way mathematical processes work.

Pedagogical Approach and Methodology
The Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract approach enables students to encounter math in a meaningful way through concrete activities before progressing to pictorial and abstract representations. This allows students to understand mathematical concepts before learning the "rules" or formulaic expressions:

- Students first encounter the mathematical concepts through the use of manipulatives.
- Students then move on to the pictorial stage in which pictures are used to model problems.
- When students are familiar with the ideas taught, they progress to a more advanced or abstract stage in which only numbers, notation and symbols are used.

Model Drawing
Model-drawing is an ingenious problem-solving strategy built into the Primary Mathematics curriculum. Students are taught to visualize and construct concrete pictures to help them make sense of word problems. The model-drawing method requires students to understand the mathematical concepts underlying word problems and equips them with a strong conceptual foundation in mathematics to solve even the most challenging problems. The model-drawing technique not only provides a powerful method for solving problems, but also serves as a link to algebra. Symbolic representation of problems, the mainstay of algebra, emerges as a logical extension of the model-drawing technique.

Teaching to Mastery
Each topic is covered in detail and taught to mastery. Immediately after new concepts are taught, students are engaged with a variety of mathematically rich problems. This ensures that the focus is on the student's deep understanding of each topic. Singapore math is geared towards producing mathematical thinkers, and it does this by walking children through all the component parts of a problem before presenting them with the whole problem to solve.

Spiral Progression
Topics covered previously are reviewed at higher grades and with increasing difficulty. The introduction of new concepts is built upon the mathematical concepts students have learned previously. Spiral progression also allows for a review of important math concepts while expanding on that foundation.

Metacognition
Metacognition refers to the ability to monitor one's own thought processes. In teaching students to be conscious of the strategies they use to accomplish a task, this strategy encourages students to think of alternative means of solving problems and promotes logical thinking. Students are encouraged to be aware of how they arrive at their solutions. Alternative ways of solving the problem are provided as a form of guidance for students to check their thought processes. This is opposed to rote learning and application of formulaic strategies.

Skills and concepts covered in grade three include:
Numbers to 10,000: comparing, place value, rounding
Addition and subtraction
Measuring length, weight and capacity
Multiplication and division
Money
Fractions
Time
Tables and graphs
Geometry: angles, plane figures, solid figures
Area, perimeter and volume

LATIN

Latin is introduced in grade three to teach a language that forms the basis for more than 60% of our English words. Latin is a very useful, interesting, and challenging language to study. Studying Latin strengthens a student's ability to decipher a complex grammar system and an extensive vocabulary. In addition, Latin helps to develop a student's English and provides a solid foundation for the study of other languages. The goals for Latin in the Grammar School are twofold. Firstly, Latin vocabulary will be increased through short stories, theme-based lessons, and even Latin conversation. Secondly, repetition will be used to memorize basic Latin paradigms to prepare students to master the increasingly more difficult grammar of middle and high school Latin courses. Our Latin instructors strive to create a fun and interactive environment where students can develop a true enthusiasm for learning a new language, complete with its rich culture and history.

SOCIAL STUDIES / HISTORY

Third grade history focuses on the story of the ancient world and the major civilizations that inhabited it. Students enjoy a curriculum full of interesting stories and factual information about these civilizations, with studies focusing on the main people, events, cultural beliefs, challenges, and accomplishments of each civilization.

Students first learn about how civilizations began by examining the Stone Ages and the accomplishments (like farming) that allowed people to begin settling in permanent homes. From this foundation, students will then examine some of the first civilizations, beginning with the region of
Mesopotamia. From Mesopotamia, students will move to studies of Egypt, India, and China. In each of these units, students will study the achievements that made these civilizations renowned. Students will learn about the different types of leaders and cultures that these civilizations have, and students will learn from comparing and contrasting the civilizations to one another. Finally, students will engage in fun projects in each of these units like creating an Egyptian mask or making Chinese paper.

By the end of the year, students will be prepared to delve into the studies of Greece, Rome, and the Middle Ages.

SCIENCE

The grade three Science curriculum highlights the steps of the scientific process: forming a hypothesis, conducting an experiment, observations, recording data, drawing conclusions, and presenting results. These principles are applied by means of hands-on curriculum kits designed by the National Sciences Resources Center.

Students engage in an in-depth study of chemical properties by utilizing common household substances to explore physical properties, solubility, crystallization, and evaporation. Students discover the unifying concept that materials may be ordered into groups or systems that display common chemicals and physical behaviors. Students also identify properties of materials by the use of physical and chemical tests.

A unit on Sound builds upon the foundation that sound is generated by a kinetic disturbance and that sound varies in frequency and pitch. Students engage in using sound-producing objects to investigate the characteristics of sound. Students study the nature of vibrations, explore how sound travels, and learn the relationship of pitch and volume to the frequency and amplitude of vibrations. Students also investigate the characteristics of the human vocal chords by building model vocal chords and exploring the anatomy and function of the human ear. Knowledge is applied in a practical manner by designing and building musical instruments and other sound-producing devices.

A comprehensive unit based on the study of weather is a major theme of grade three's science curriculum. Students study the basics of weather and its impact upon their environment through demonstrations, projects, and experiments. As students study the elements that control our weather, they develop weather instruments to observe, measure, and analyze conditions of the earth's atmosphere.

An introduction to the fascinating world of animals takes the form of studying the major classifications in the animal kingdom and studying animal life cycles, and creating an animal scrapbook as a culminating project.

All students participate in preparation for CCA's bi-yearly Science Fair, in which a thematic unit of the science curriculum is explored in depth. Experiments are conducted according to the scientific method, reports are written, and presentations are exhibited to the CCA constituency.

ENRICHMENT CLASSES

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The creative goals for the third grade physical education curriculum stress creative play and strength/flexibility building. Manipulative skill development, manipulative skill integration (hitting, throwing, and catching), motor ability development, and creative movement performance (creative and folk dance) are components of creative play. Our primary decisional goals are to share, to care, and to play fair. Good sportsmanship is developed through activities such as volleyball, basketball, touch football, soccer, movement based games, and creative dance.

MUSIC

Music is a multi-faceted curriculum that is based upon the premise that music is a gift from God enabling students to bring glory to God. Students continue to develop their musical knowledge through singing, playing rhythm instruments, improvising, and listening, while focusing on the fundamentals of music theory. In addition to singing rounds, folk songs, and American

music, students sing in two-parts. Students learn to play the recorder, thereby developing the fine motor skills necessary for playing all wind instruments, and learn to read musical notation in the treble clef.

Students make important connections between melody, rhythm, and phrase, and develop these elements by improvising their own musical melodies. Performing and listening skills are facilitated through ongoing participation in classroom and concert activities.

ART

Children of younger ages develop art skills largely by experimentation based on their love of art activities and a natural sense of color and design. The goal of art activities is to teach skills in a logical way, to allow experimentation with various media, and to enable individual development. Students will be taught basic drawing skills based on seeing shapes in the forms around them. Art history will be introduced by observing examples of artwork, exploring the biographical information of artists, and discovering their inspiration for ideas. Students will be taught shading and basic color theory as they work on paintings, crayon drawings, colored pencil drawings, and pastel drawings.

LIBRARY

Students visit the library weekly and discover the wonderful books at their disposal. Over the course of the year, the library skills are introduced and reinforced through the incorporation of reading aloud, book discussions, scheduled library games and activities. Our primary goal is to pique and expand students' interest in reading for pleasure and for information, and to help them explore the library's resources. Students are introduced to a variety of genres and authors, including both fiction and non-fiction. Students also learn the skills necessary for independent selection and evaluation of appropriate reading material. During their visits, students select and borrow books, learning how to care for them responsibly and return them on time.

For more information regarding our Grammar School Program
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