

CURRICULUM

Casper Classical Academy follows a classical, college-preparatory curriculum approved by the Governing Council. While district and state standards are adhered to closely, the curriculum is enhanced with additional content that reinforces the classical theme. Every subject area sets high expectations for CCA students. We integrate character development, the Arts and Humanities into each of our core subjects. Our curriculum is rich in Classical Literature. We instruct our students in Latin for at least two years. Math classes are advanced, with 7th graders learning Pre-Algebra, 8th graders learning Algebra, and 9th graders learning Geometry. Technology is an integral piece to our school's curriculum as well. Because the school is limited in the number of students attending, the basic courses offered to the students are limited to a single track for each grade level. In addition to the basic course offerings, students can select from a number of elective courses.

THE TRIVIUM

Casper Classical Academy's curriculum centers around the Trivium. The Trivium is a brain-based human development theory as well as a theory of knowledge. The Trivium can be defined as having three stages of human development and learning: grammar, logical-dialectic, and rhetorical.

The grammar stage involves learning the fundamental skills and knowledge that every student needs to know. This may involve memorization or facts and skills.

The logical-dialectic stage involves analyzation of the basic facts and knowledge learned in the grammar stage. This stage has been implemented into every content area as well as in our 8th grade Logic class.

The last stage of the Trivium is the rhetorical, or communication stage. It involves synthesizing and evaluating the basic facts and knowledge learned in the grammar stage, and analyzed in the logical-dialectic stage. This stage has also been embedded into the curriculum of each content area as well as being taught in our 9th grade Political Discourse class.

WHOLE GROUP INSTRUCTION

At Casper Classical Academy, students are taught by the teacher as a whole group. Whole group instruction can include (but is not limited to) direct instruction, cooperative learning activities, and projects. If a child needs extra help, this may be received before and after school, during free times, practice time in the classroom, or through tutoring when required by the teacher.

6th Grade

Language Arts:

Students will create the following types of writing during 6th grade English: Three-point expository paragraphs and essays in 1st person and 3rd person, descriptive paragraphs in 1st person, five-paragraph expository essays in 3rd person, writing from dictation, friendly letters, persuasive friendly letters, research reports with one to three sources, an essay from notes taken from an oral lecture, an autobiography, poetry, thank-you notes, appreciation letters, and analogies. Students will utilize the writing process including pre-writing, writing first drafts, editing, revising, rewriting, proof reading, and completing final drafts.

We use the Shurley method, Step Up To Writing, and Grammar Punk to learn punctuation, capitalization, and usage skills, and maintain these skills by reinforcing them with daily practice. Students are tested on the concepts that they have practiced, as well as spelling words at the end of each week.

Additionally, students will read and discuss several novels in detail. They will discuss the literary devices that authors use to catch and keep the reader's interest. The lessons are completed together as a group and everyone is responsible for reading the same novel. Usually students will have their own copy of the novels and will be given reading assignments and comprehension questions for homework. Students also complete several individual book reports, and they will present one book talk per quarter to the class. Students will recite one poem every six weeks in front of the class. Some of the writing assignments are shared with a small group or even the entire class.

Math:

We use a mathematics program called *Connected Mathematics 2* in 6th grade at Casper Classical Academy.

Through *Connected Mathematics 2*, Casper Classical Academy middle school students become better thinkers, doers, and communicators. *Connected Mathematics 2* is a complete middle school mathematics curriculum rich in connections among the core ideas of mathematics, between mathematics and other school subjects, among classroom activities and the interests of students, and between mathematics and its applications outside of the classroom.

The overall goal of Connected Mathematics is to help students develop sound mathematical habits. Through their work, students learn important questions to ask themselves about any situation that can be represented and modeled mathematically.

The curriculum is organized by grade level, with eight units for each grade.

Science:

Students will develop an understanding of scientific content through inquiry and will recognize the nature of science, its history, and its connections to personal, social, economic, and political decisions. Students will study the major genre of Earth, Space, and Physical Science through the topics of matter, energy, motions and forces.

Social Studies:

6th graders will see that their social studies class is divided into two distinct, broad units of study: geography of the Western Hemisphere and Ancient History.

Students will begin the year with a study of Latin America and will continue onward North into North America. Basic geography concepts and skills such as making maps, learning about coordinate pairs, the function and purpose of time zones, etc. will be incorporated throughout.

They will also study the geography and history of the Western Hemisphere, starting with the early tribes of the Americas and tracing their development up to the period of Spanish exploration. Students will focus on the cultural and physical aspects of North, South, and Latin America.

During the second semester, focus will turn toward a study of Ancient societies and how they contributed to the development of Western Civilization. Students will engage in an in-depth study of the Egyptian, Greek, and Roman Empires.

The district is currently evaluating the Essential Curriculum in Social Studies, and this may change as those decisions are made in the Spring of 2008.

Spelling:

The spelling class utilizes the Spalding Method for formally teaching spelling. Since English is a phonetic language, phonics instruction, analysis of sounds, and composition of words are all dealt with. Students learn the phonograms that make up all words. Students have a weekly list of spelling words they practice with as they learn specific spelling rules taught when they are needed for writing the words being studied. Students deal with the high-frequency words that are most commonly found in their everyday reading.

Technology:

Technology will be integrated into all curriculum areas primarily through projects. Students combine technology and content area classes to produce products to meet standards within those content areas.

7th Grade

Life Science:

Life science is a class designed to give kids the knowledge to build a foundation for more in depth study when they reach the high school level. Students are taught to reason and apply their knowledge to real life situations and to think about their ethical implications. We begin with the cell and move up from there, concentrating on the systems of the human body. Labs are a big part of all of our science classes and teach them to think about and analyze evidence and to be able justify the conclusions that they reach. Technology is also an integral part of the how the class is taught.

Language Arts:

Students will work in the classroom and via homework to become proficient with the three language arts standards: reading, writing, and speaking/listening. Students will read and discuss several classic novels and plays in detail, which may include *The Hobbit*, *Merchant of Venice*, *The Odyssey*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and selected short stories. They will discuss the literary devices that authors use to catch and keep the reader's interest, and they will carefully study the structure of each work. Every student is responsible for reading the same novel and completing the work assigned with it.

Students will create the following types of compositions: one book report per quarter, expository essays of varying lengths and for various purposes, descriptive paragraphs, letters, expressive responses to literature, short stories, narratives, and poetry analysis. Students will utilize the writing process including pre-writing, writing first drafts, editing, revising, rewriting, proof reading, and completing final drafts.

Daily Oral Language is used to review punctuation, capitalization, and usage skills presented during previous years. Daily Oral Language also introduces newer, more sophisticated skills in punctuation, capitalization, and usage. These skills are maintained by reinforcing them with daily practice. Students are tested on the concepts that they have practiced at the end of each week.

Finally, in order to work towards proficiency in speaking/listening, students recite one poem every six weeks in front of the class. Additionally, some of the writing assignments, including book reports, are shared with a small group or even the entire class.

Latin:

Salvete! We teach Latin at CCA because it's a proven fact that students who study Latin develop a larger English vocabulary, achieve higher verbal SAT scores, and become sensitive to languages and people of other cultures. Studying the language, customs, and world view of a society from a different time and place is a mind-expanding experience. On the other hand, focusing on the similarities between our culture and that of the Romans offers us the opportunity to consider the Greco-Roman contributions to American life in the areas of government, architecture, ideals, and ideas.

Pre-Algebra:

The 7th grade math curriculum consists of pre-Algebra. Course content will consist of whole numbers, decimals, fractions, integers, percents, geometry, statistics, and probability. The pre-algebra emphasis includes simplification, evaluation, solving and graphing. Classes use technology in the form of graphing calculators and iMac computers.

Social Studies:

For 7th grade social studies, the year will cover two areas of study: geography of the Eastern Hemisphere and the modern history of Western Civilization. For the geography course, students will review basic themes and concepts learned in 6th grade, such as mapping skills and a greater emphasis on longitude and latitude. They will learn about important elements of culture and demographics of the countries that make up the Eastern Hemisphere. In addition, the students will study the development of modern Western Civilization in Europe, focusing on the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the gradual move to democracy in Europe and the rise of Marxism and alternative modes of government during the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

Technology:

Technology will be integrated into all curriculum areas primarily through projects. Students combine technology and content area classes to produce products to meet standards within those content areas.

Writing:

Students will create the following types of compositions: expository essays of varying lengths and for various purposes, descriptive paragraphs, research report with one to three sources, and expressive responses to literature. Students will utilize the writing process including pre-writing, writing first drafts, editing, revising, rewriting, proof reading, and completing final drafts.

8th Grade

Life Science:

Life science is a class designed to give kids the knowledge to build a foundation for more in depth study when they reach the high school level. Students are taught to reason and apply their knowledge to real life situations and to think about their ethical implications. We begin with the cell and move up from there, concentrating on the systems of the human body. Labs are a big part of all of our science classes and teach them to think about and analyze evidence and to be able justify the conclusions that they reach. Technology is also an integral part of the how the class is taught.

Language Arts

In 8th grade Language Arts, the focus of the language arts is still working towards proficiency in the standards of reading, writing, and speaking/listening. In class students will read and discuss many full-length novels considered to be classical literature, and complete comprehension assignments to prove understanding of the story and the author's use of literary devices and techniques. These novels may include: *The Pearl*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Johnny Tremain*, *Where the Lilies Bloom*, *Great Expectations*, selected short stories by Edgar Allan Poe, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students will continue to read independently and complete one book report per quarter as well.

Throughout the reading curriculum, students will have many opportunities to practice and demonstrate learning of writing conventions. Students will create many essays, expressive pieces, short stories, extended responses, journal responses, and works requiring research. Additionally, students will continue the study of proper punctuation, capitalization and usage skills for the English language through a Daily Oral Language review.

Finally students will recite one poem every six weeks in front of the class. Other venues for speaking opportunities might include formal presentations of research or informal sharing of student writing.

Latin:

Salvete! In this class students learn how to translate basic level passages from English to Latin and Latin to English. They continue to study Roman culture, civilization, mythology and history and will increase their knowledge of English vocabulary through the study of Latin roots, words, and phrases.

Logic:

Logic is the science and the art of reason. As a science, logic identifies the rules by which we reason. As an art it teaches how to follow those rules.

The purpose of the course is to get students started in developing the skill of thinking critically. How to develop this ability to think critically is one thing students learn in school which will be of use to them in the real world.

This course is an introduction to deductive logic. It covers topics such as statements and their relationships, syllogism and validity, argument in normal English, and informal fallacies. Evaluating the arguments of others is one of the most important and foundational skills that any person can have. This is, perhaps, more true today than it has ever been. The world bombards us with all sorts of recommendations about what to buy, what to believe, and what to do.

This course will deal with various types of informal fallacies. A fallacy is a commonly recognized bad argument failing to meet the requirements of relevance, clarity, or presumption.

US History I:

This course traces the development of Americans from the first arrivals on this continent to the American Civil War. Students will study innovations in Europe that allowed for exploration of the continent, and will examine the failures and successes of the early American colonies. They will learn how we became an independent nation and use original sources to understand why our founders created this form of government. Students will engage in an in-depth study of the Constitution, and examine how the Bill of Rights affects our society even today. The class will conclude with a unit on slavery and states' rights and ultimately, the Civil War.

Algebra I:

The course content in Algebra I includes simplification, evaluation, solving and graphing of both linear and quadratic functions. Special content areas include systems, inequalities, radicals, rational expressions and equations. Classes use technology in the form of graphing calculators and iMac computers.

Technology:

Technology will be integrated into all curriculum areas primarily through projects. Students combine technology and content area classes to produce products to meet standards within those content areas.

9th Grade

Language Arts:

In 9th grade, students are asked to read a variety of materials from short stories to drama to classic novels to autobiographies; selections often include the short stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne, “The Most Dangerous Game,” *Jane Eyre*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Night*. Students will be required to critique and synthesize main ideas, text elements, and supporting details to predict outcomes, draw inferences, and build opinions. Students will continue to complete one independent book report per quarter.

Along with their reading assignments, students will have many opportunities to write for various purposes. One of the main emphases in 9th grade is the reflective narrative, but students will also write many essays and expressive pieces such as poetry or journal entries as well. The study of grammar is continued using the Daily Oral Language component as well as pertinent mini-lessons.

Students will continue to hone their presentation skills by reciting one poem per quarter. Students will also have several opportunities to give presentations both individually and in small groups.

Physical Science:

This is an introduction to physics and chemistry course. These two sciences are integrated throughout the year. We focus on connecting foundational concepts, skills and knowledge to daily life. This is probably the most hands on class of all of the science classes with opportunities to do one or more labs and activities every unit. Students build water rockets, design experiments, and make Rube Goldberg machines, among other things. Students will be prepared to tackle any high school science class after being a part of this class.

Geometry:

This course is Euclidean Geometry. Content of this course includes proof (both informal and formal), polygons, congruent triangles, perimeter, area, surface area, volume, graphing (both two dimensional and three dimensional), similarity, circles and trigonometry. Classes use technology in the form of graphing calculators and iMac computers.

Latin (option):

Ninth grade students master all six verb tenses in the active and passive voices for both the indicative and subjunctive moods. They learn how to compare adjectives and adverbs, how to use subordinate clauses with the subjunctive, and how to form and translate participles. Cultural topics include Roman education, banqueting practices, bathing customs, gladiatorial games, and chariot races. Historical figures studied include Julius Caesar, Augustus, Cicero, Ovid, and Virgil.

US History II:

This course begins with the period of reconstruction following the Civil War and moves through post-World War II America. We study a variety of topics within this time period, including a unit on economics. We study industrialization, immigration, the civil rights movement, the Cold War, worldwide military conflicts in which the United States was involved, and the creation of the United States as a superpower. We also study Wyoming history and government so that students can become more familiar with the state in which they live.

Political Discourse:

This course helps a student develop his or her public speaking skill using theories and principles of rhetoric. We examine current political issues and use these issues to develop our speaking and debating abilities. To accomplish this task, we utilize the following activities: cross-examination debate, persuasive speaking, Lincoln-Douglas debate, extemporaneous speaking, student congress, parliamentary debate, mock trial, and speaking drills. The main goal of this course is to help students eliminate their natural fear of public speaking and to encourage them to convincingly express opinions using evidence and reason.

Spanish (option):

Spanish I is an introduction to Spanish which covers basic vocabulary such as food, clothing, classroom objects, places, and sports. The course introduces basic grammar points such as the present, past, present progressive, command, and simple future tenses. The Body Of Evidence activities for proficiency in Foreign Language are covered during this class as well.

Technology:

Technology will be integrated into all curriculum areas primarily through projects. Students combine technology and content area classes to produce products to meet standards within those content areas.

Curriculum for All Grade Levels

Physical Education:

The purpose of this class is to learn about sports/activities/fitness and to have fun. We will cover team sports and individual sports with a great emphasis on fitness education and sportsmanship. It is our hope that you will want to use what you learn in this class to become healthier, happier, and more skilled individuals.

Art:

This course strongly emphasizes art production using numerous media. Students also receive a general overview of art history. They participate in artistic criticism of their own and others' work.

Band:

This class is designed to accommodate all students grades 6-9 who wish to further their knowledge in instrumental band literature and technique. Two to four years prior experience is preferred. Any student having less than two years experience needs to consult with the teacher prior to enrollment. Students will perform a minimum of three concerts during the year. 8th and 9th grade students will have the opportunity to participate in the town-wide Junior High music clinic.

Choir:

This is a full year elective for 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th graders. This course focuses on healthy vocal technique, music theory applicable to vocal singing, and ear training. Students will participate as a group and perform a minimum of three concerts during the year. There is no prerequisite for this class. If you want to learn how to sing or already know how....sign up.

Orchestra:

Orchestra provides continuing instruction in both the individual skills to play a bowed stringed instrument and the ability to perform in a larger ensemble, the string orchestra. Through a variety of styles of traditional and alternative lit, this course advances students' techniques such as rhythm, intonation, tone color, and upper positions while increasing each student's orchestral skills such as following a conductor and listening while playing to the other members of the ensemble. 8th and 9th graders are eligible for the NCSD #1 Junior High Music Clinic, and 9th graders are eligible for high school activities such as the Wyoming State String Clinic, the Wyoming All-State Orchestra, and the All-Northwest Regional Orchestra. Students will have a minimum of three performances during the school year.

Prerequisites include at least one year's instruction at the elementary level on the violin, viola, cello, or bass, as this is not a beginning course. Most musical materials and some large instruments (cello and bass) are provided; students must purchase incidental supplies, usually under \$20.00 per year.