

## The Classical Model of Education

The classical model of education has been a part of our Middle School Curriculum for the last 4 years. It was then implemented into k-5<sup>th</sup> grade for the last three years after we realized what a success it was as well as the positive results that emerged from it.

Classical education is sometimes called “leadership education” because it builds skills needed for leadership: logic, debate, public speaking, clear reasoning, researching, writing, and communicating.

These skills are practiced in every subject (math, science, history, geography, reading, language, Latin, fine arts, and more), which prepares students to become leaders in any field they pursue.

The classical model divides our learning into three phases:

- 1. The Grammar Stage: Learning the words and terms associated with a subject or particular topic**
- 2. The Dialectic Stage: Asking questions, sorting, comparing, and practicing the knowledge learned in the grammar stage**
- 3. The Rhetoric Stage: Communicating the truth of the subjects learned in the dialectic stage through writing, speech, conversation, or computation**

Here at NCA, we focus on three main academic areas of our student’s development – Reading, Math, and Language. This connects complements the learning phases of the classical model.

While we teach other disciplines such as history and science, we integrate Math and Science as one grade in addition to Language and History as one grade due to the advantage of being able to teach not just from a textbook but to incorporate activities and topics that will benefit our student’s educational journey at NCA.

It is imperative that our students know how to read and critically think and reason. It is important that they master their basic computation skills, and moreover, it is fundamental that they know how to write and speak well using proper subject verb agreement as well as incorporating accurate writing techniques.

As part of our daily teaching, we ensure that students are drilled everyday on their basic math computation skills as they master this indispensable area to do further Math problems that require reasoning.

Moreover, we expose them to vocabulary drills, weekly journal writing that is integrated with Bible, History, Language, Math, and Science.

We assimilate presentation assignments into our given grade levels to assist our students in being able to conduct research, read data, and put the information into their own words.

Reading fluency is another major area that our teachers place special emphasis. If a student has mastered reading, then he or she may be capable to read, critically think through, and solve Math word problems.

This model opens the door for teachers to incorporate outside resources that correlates with our curriculum. It gives us the ability to teach our students what cannot be found in a textbook.

Moreover, it leads our students to become independent learners as we strive each day to make Math, Reading, and Language the focal point of mastery.

Once these areas have been mastered, then we can challenge our students to begin mastering tertiary level work as they prepare for high school and or college.

We have been privileged to be able to participate in the challenge activities that the Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden offers every year. For the past 2 years, we have conducted an experiment as we observed if plants can grow in space based on the seeds and materials provided to us from the Fairchild.

Students were able to plant and see the seeds germinate under the proper care. They learned responsibility, measuring the leaves weekly and imputing the data on an excel sheet, creating hypotheses, and keeping a journal of our weekly observations and communicating our observations electronically to the Fairchild Tropical Botanical Gardens.

We also created a brochure and earned points as we incorporated research, writing, and creativity into our brochure for the Green Cuisine challenge.

Elementary Students capitalize on the opportunity to partake in the Art challenge projects at the Fairchild. Because of our classical model, it allows students to express their learning abilities in different ways other than just reading and writing.

While there are so many other areas that expose our children to a paramount form of learning, the classical model of education teaches our students:

1. How to think and how to live
2. To read, write, and think logically and creatively
3. It grants us the opportunity to integrate Christ into all areas
4. It cultivates excellence rather than conformity.

