

Bible

In Trinity School's first grade program, there is no separation between the secular and the spiritual. A Christian worldview undergirds the curriculum, and biblical principles are integrated into all content areas. The first grade Bible curriculum aims to present to the students an understanding of who God is. Achievement of this goal is pursued through:

1. Daily reading of Bible stories
2. Narrating (retelling) Bible stories
3. Daily group prayer
4. Memorizing monthly Bible verses
5. Singing Christian hymns and songs

First grade students start the year reading Larry Libby's *Someone Awesome*. This is followed with a review of Old Testament stories that lead up to the prophecy of the birth of Christ using the Jesse Tree devotions. In the New Year, students begin reading the New Testament, as they prepare to illustrate their own book, *The Life of Christ*, in watercolor. Students read C.S. Lewis', *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, alongside the New Testament to help them see the parallels. The school year ends with applications of the Bible to their lives and a discussion of the Trinity.

SELECTED TEXTS

Adney, W.F., and Bennett, W.H. *The Bible Story*. MacMillan Company, 1907.

Green, Steve. *Hide'em in Your Heart, Bible Memory Melodies, Vol 1 and 2*. The Sparrow Corporation. Price Stern, Sloan, Inc., 1986.

Libby, Larry. *Someone Awesome*.

Nystrom, Carolyn. *What is Prayer?* Moody Bible Institute, 1981.

Schooland, Marian. *Leading Little Ones to God*. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1981.

Stickney, Anne. *The Loving Arms of God*. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.

Vos, Catherine F. *The Child's Story Bible*. W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1977.

Language Arts

Reading

First grade uses the PhonoGraphix method to teach reading. PhonoGraphix is a multi-sensory (seeing, hearing, touching), multi-learning style (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) method of learning to read. This program teaches children to read by starting with what the children already know (the sounds that make up our language) and progressing to the symbols of the sounds (written language).

Students learn the skills of segmenting (the ability to break a word into the individual sounds that compose the word), blending (the ability to link the sounds together to form a meaningful word), and manipulating phonemes (the ability to try different sounds for a particular sound picture until a meaningful word is formed).

The first grade reading program builds fluency and expression through reading aloud, timed reading and drama. Students also build reading comprehension through narration (retelling stories), class discussion, and written work.

Handwriting

Students master D'Nealian manuscript (printed), focusing on size, shape, spacing of letters, slant, and rhythm.

Writing and Grammar

The main objective of the first grade writing curriculum is that the students develop the ability to construct a complete sentence with appropriate capitalization and punctuation. They are introduced to compound words, rhyming words, contractions, homonyms, antonyms, synonyms, plurals, and pronouns.

Spelling

This course covers a basic level of spelling competency, which includes words in which each sound is represented by only one letter. Students practice mapping words (saying each sound in a word as the student writes the sound picture), and they are introduced to scratch sheet spelling, an activity which engages the learner in active discovery of the correct spelling for a particular word.

SELECTED TEXTS

Bradrick, Susan. *Understanding Writing*. Bradrick Family Enterprises.

Campbell, Kenneth U. *Great Leaps*. Diarmuid, Inc.

Evan-Moor. *Daily Language Review*. Evan-Moor Educational Publishers.

Hall, Nancy, and Rena Price. *Explode the Code 1,2, and 3 1/2*. Educators Publishing Service, Inc.

McGuiness, Carmen and Geoffrey McGuiness. *PhonoGraphix Word Work Manual*. Orlando: Read America.

Math

First grade math is an introduction to basic math concepts that are reviewed and reinforced in second grade. The concepts introduced are calendar skills, time, fractions, geometry (plane shapes and angles), graphing, sorting and classifying objects, measurement, money, number facts (addition and subtraction), and numeration (0-100). Students follow Saxon Math 1 curriculum.

Saxon Math concepts are taught using the morning meeting, lesson, guided practice, homework, fact practice, and a variety of math manipulates. These include wrap-ups, fact cards, unifix cubes, clocks, geoboards, pattern blocks, dot cubes, thermometers, geometric solids, money, and measuring utensils.

SELECTED TEXTS

Larson, Nancy. *Saxon Math 1, Second Edition*. Saxon Publishing.

Hillen, Judith, Sheryl Mercier, Evalyn Hoover, and Betty Cordel, eds. *Primarily Physics*. Aims Educational Foundation.

Hoover, Evalyn and Sheryl Mercier. *Primarily Plants*. Aims Educational Foundation.

History

First grade history is designed to present an introduction to certain areas of biblical history, American history, biographies, and geography. In addition, several interesting people are studied in depth to foster a love of history and a desire to learn more (e.g., Leonardo da Vinci, George Washington, Beatrix Potter). Our first graders learn history by reading and narrating ‘living books’ (i.e., books that open the mind and encourage continuous reading), illustrating their own books on a topic, creating related artwork, and going on history related field trips.

SELECTED TEXTS

Alden, Laura. *President’s Day*. Children’s Press, 1994.

Barksdale, Lena. *The First Thanksgiving*.

Bennett, W.H., and W.F. Adeney. *The Bible Story*. MacMillan Company, 1907.

D’Aulaire, Ingri and Edgar. *George Washington*. Doubleday, 1936.

Denyer, Susan. *At Home With Beatrix Potter*. Abrams, Inc., 2000.

Gibbons, Gail. *Knights in Shining Armor*. Little Brown and Co. 1995.

Herbert, Janis. *Leonardo da Vinci For Kids*. Chicago Review Press, 1998.

Platt, Richard. *Castle Diary*. Candlewick Press, 1999.

Science

Students discover the universe God created through observation. They are introduced to basic scientific principles through the study of life science (trees, plants, birds, human body), earth science (water, minerals, weather), and physical science (light and color).

Students use the outdoors, watercolors, hands-on activities, narrations, and field trips to gain understanding of various areas in the sciences. They perform nature studies, make models, make and test predictions through hands-on experiments. “Living books” are also a valuable tool used to communicate scientific information.

SELECTED TEXTS

Bailey, Jill and David Burnie. *Birds*. Eyewitness Explorers, Dorling Kindersley, 1992.

Florian, Douglas. *Discovering Trees*. Aladdin Books, 1986.

Gibbons, Gail. *The Reasons for Seasons*. Scholastic, 1995.

Primarily Earth, 1996, AIMS Education Foundation.

Primarily Plants, 1990, AIMS Education Foundation.

Primarily Physics; 1992, AIMS Education Foundation.

Searle-Barnes, Bonita. *Light*. Lion Publishing, 1993.

Silver, Donald and Patricia Wynne. *Human Body*. Scholastic Professional Books, 1999.

Music

The overarching goal of the first grade music program is to impart a love of music and to equip students for worship through familiarity and understanding of great music and through skills development. First grade students receive 45 minutes of music education twice weekly. The skills-based program concentrates on singing, playing instruments, and moving/dancing. Daily activities are balanced for consistent training in all four of the following areas:

1. Performance of a steady beat and simple rhythm patterns
2. Aural discrimination and vocal pitch matching
3. Development of coordination through movement and dance
4. Learning a large and varied repertoire of songs, especially ones correlated with the first grade regular curriculum unit studies (history; explorers; pilgrims; Native Americans; kings and queens; presidents; genealogy; science, human body; and literature), art studies (da Vinci, Seurat, Renoir, and Miro), and songs used in performance (e.g., hymn of the month).

A major effort is put into memorizing songs to get the texts and melodies into the hearts and minds of the students. Students are also exposed to classical recordings and foreign languages through song (e.g., French, Spanish, German, and Latin).

TEXT

Various teacher provided materials such as, *The Magic Circle: Activity Songs and Singing Games for Young Children* (Isabel McNeill Carley) Waterloo Music, Ontario, Canada, 1994.

Physical Education

The ultimate goal of a first through eighth grade physical education program is for students to have the tools necessary to be active for a lifetime. This begins in elementary school with teaching basic skills (e.g., throwing, catching, kicking, tumbling) and the concept of team play.

First grade students participate in activities that reinforce basic and locomotor skills (e.g., running, skipping and jumping), and introduce complex skills (e.g., shooting, passing). Students play many “tag” games that focus on cooperative play rather than individual competition. Often, students encourage their classmates in friendly spirit, and play ‘with’ instead of ‘against’ each other.

TEXT

Rink, Judith E. *Teaching Physical Education for Learning*. McGraw-Hill Humanities.

Spanish

The first grade Spanish program focuses on introducing the spoken Spanish language in a classroom setting. Spanish communication and comprehension skills are encouraged through interactive games, question-and-answer sessions, storytelling, and music. Artistic and creative activity helps the students to assimilate written and oral Spanish vocabulary. With emphasis on

basic conversation skills and memorization, the students gain confidence in their ability to learn a foreign language.

Art

First grade art program emphasizes fostering students' confidence in their individual abilities. They develop observation skills appropriate to their age, explore and expand their own imagination, and develop dexterity with the manipulation of materials and tools. A wide variety of media is introduced, including, but not limited to watercolors, printmaking, sewing, and 3D sculpture. Special attention is given to line, shape, and color in the artwork of others as well as in their own.

Students explore the art and artists of other times and places (e.g., Renoir, Monet, and Leonardo Da Vinci). Students also develop an ability to recognize and to describe works of art in simple terms that relate to their own lives and that of the community. Opportunities for sensory awareness and the observation of beauty are provided in many forms. For example, students take part in outdoor experiences, observing and recording the details found in nature, exploring objects using a magnifying glass, and looking closely at artwork in the classroom.

SELECTED TEXTS

A variety of children's picture books that relate to topics being studied or provide exposure to a variety of illustration techniques:

Anderson, Joel. *Jonah's Trash: God's Treasure*. Thomas Nelson,
Carle, Eric. *The Grouchy Ladybug*. Scott Foresman,
Chan, Ju Hong. *The Jade Stone*,
Mayhen, James. *Katie and the Mona Lisa*. Orchard Books.

Charlotte Mason Studies

Charlotte Mason (1842-1923) was an English educator who over the course of a long career established a teachers' college and several schools and authored a six-volume work on her new philosophy of education for home and school. She advocated a rich, high-quality, interesting curriculum for all children, not merely to "educate" them, but also to guide them in the development of character and cultivate in them a lifelong love of learning. At Trinity School we seek to implement many of Mason's insights and ideas.

Picture Studies

Teachers present selected works of arts by Leonardo Da Vinci, Auguste Pierre Renoir, Seurat and Miro for the students to study and, in some cases, reproduce in sketch form. Class discussions allow the students to share their observations and feelings, which helps to recreate the picture in the mind's eye, and thus, to reinforce a lasting memory and appreciation of the art.

Nature Studies

The first grade places a considerable emphasis on nature studies in order to encourage and refine the Charlotte Mason tools of inquiry, observation, journaling, and painting at this very important age. Nature studies are integrated with science, history and art unit studies. For example, students develop observational skills using the dry brush watercolor painting technique as they paint a tree in the various seasons throughout the year.

Narration

At this level, the students are still developing their ability to express themselves verbally and to focus attention for extended, but defined, periods of time. Thus, together with this development, narration receives greater and greater emphasis as the first grade year progresses. Oral narrations provide a wonderful opportunity for the children to practice these skills and to build confidence at the same time.

The teacher reads through a passage or story one time, and then the children are asked to retell the events in detail and in chronological order. With this Mason approach, students' minds are trained not only to attend the details but also to appreciate the art and form of that which is under study.

Monthly Topics

September	Information about trees	January	Castle Diary Fairy Tales
October	Life of Leonardo da Vinci	February	George Washington Abraham Lincoln
November	Squanto or The First Thanksgiving	March	Life of Jesus Information on birds
December	Readings for the Jesse Tree Devotions	April	Information on plants Beatrix Potter biography
		May	Information on the body

Music Studies

Below is a selected list of composers chosen for first grade music studies. Many of these composers differ greatly in style, making it easy for the students to differentiate between their works, and over the course of the school year students listen repeatedly to several works by each of the composers. The students listen to a portion, or an entire selection, and are given a chance to share their observations afterwards. They are asked to tell what they heard (tempo, mode, dynamics, instrument types) and how the music made them feel. Following the attentive listening activity, the students are given additional exposure to the recording when it is played during appropriate times, such as during nature study drawing sessions, quiet snack or lunch, or art/craft projects. To add interest and to encourage appreciation, the classroom teacher may present a brief biographical sketch and information about the time period during which the composer lived.

Mozart (1756-1791) *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*; *Rondo alla Turca*; Variations on "Twinkle"; Overture to "The Magic Flute"; *Ave verum corpus*

Joplin (1868-1917) *The Entertainer*; other piano rags