

## **Sodalitas Gathering 2020**

### **Upper School Program Overview: Paul Schaeffer**

- I. Latin
  - A. The goal of Latin study is to be able to read fluently
  - B. How to catch up if you are starting Latin late
- II. Math
  - A. Children need mastery of arithmetic to be successful in upper school math
  - B. Seek success for each child; not every child needs to get to calculus
- III. Literature
  - A. MP plan versus others: not thematic or historical by design
  - B. More important to choose the best of the True, Good and Beautiful at each age/stage
- IV. Writing
  - A. The goal of the writing curriculum is to help students become persuasive writers; this is what the art of Rhetoric really is
  - B. Students must be writing in their other subjects as well in order to achieve enough practice at these skills
- V. Classical & Christian Studies
  - A. These content areas are interconnected rather than separate
  - B. Incorporating the faith is essential, even in subjects that don't seem to explicitly address the faith
- VI. American/Modern Studies
  - A. Younger years were spent focusing on specific details (names, dates, events)
  - B. Now, need to look deeper...trace connections, consider how one event influences another, find patterns and similarities, understand ideologies and their influence on decisions and events, the power of perception, etc.
  - C. Preview new guides, if time permits
- VII. Science
  - A. Emphasize the purpose of scientific study, which is to quantify the natural world
  - B. Science is an extension of the liberal art of astronomy as described in the Quadrivium
  - C. Training students to think during scientific inquiry is what is essential for students
- VIII. Grammar/Logic/Rhetoric
  - A. These are pivotal for all subjects; life as communication is vital.
  - B. Rhetoric is not equivalent to debate, but debate is a good way to practice it.

## Upper School Program Implementation: Sarah Kaye and Dorinda McCourt

### I. Latin

- A. Translation and beyond requires keeping the motivation strong.
- B. Get help if you can't do it with them.

### II. Math

- A. Keep kids pursuing mastery regardless of pace.
- B. Having more than one textbook is a help.
- C. Use Kahn Academy as a free resource.
- D. Hire tutor or enroll in class where necessary.

### III. Literature

- A. Raising the bar for upper school students.
- B. The work should be independent; conversation over the material is essential.
- C. Make it personal. Draw connections that matter to your child rather than a set idea from someone else.

### IV. Writing

- A. Don't skimp. Do as many essays as possible. The first ones can be terrible; they will get better at them.
- B. They can be "class period" assignments.
- C. Kids lose their fear of writing by writing often.

### V. Classical / Christian / American / Modern (same advice applies to all)

- A. The faith is a part of all we study; parents may need self-study in order to know the faith well enough to incorporate it.
- B. Discussion is key here also. Guide assignments help them think through things, but then they need that parent interaction to help them think more maturely than they would on their own. Without discussion, their thoughts remain very black/white (a characteristic of their immaturity) rather than nuanced.
- C. Ideas for making time for this.

### VI. Science

- A. Regular path science options: the solid path for most students
- B. Advanced path science options: when, why, and how

### VII. Logic/Rhetoric

- A. Teens often don't voluntarily "talk" a lot with parents; giving them a logic topic can give them good meat to apply what they have been learning.
- B. They can learn the courses pretty independently, but they need you to help them apply it / or a class.
- C. Accept differences of personality and/or temperament in how much to expect of them, but don't let them off the hook. Like anything else, these skills are difficult in the beginning, but they can get better at them through practice.