

CLASSICAL COMPOSITION SUGGESTED SEQUENCES:

IDEAL SEQUENCE

(for students beginning in 4th or 5th grade)

Fable (4th)

Narrative (5th)

Chreia/Maxim (6th)

Refutation/Confirmation (7th)

Common Topic (8th)

Encomium/Invective/Comparison (9th)

Characterization (10th)

Description (11th)

Thesis & Law (12th)

(students starting in fifth grade will not get to Thesis/Law)

STUDENTS BEGINNING IN 6TH OR 7TH GRADES:

STUDENTS BEGINNING IN 8TH OR 9TH GRADES:

STUDENTS BEGINNING AFTER 9TH GRADE:

yr. 1: Fable and Narrative
yr. 2: Chreia/Maxim and Refutation/Confirmation
yr. 3: Common Topic
yr. 4: Encomium/Invective/Comparison
yr. 5: Characterization
yr. 6: Description
yr. 7: Thesis & Law

yr. 1: Fable and Narrative
yr. 2: Chreia/Maxim and Refutation/Confirmation
yr. 3: Common Topic and Encomium/Invective/Comparison
yr. 4: Characterization and Description and Thesis & Law

yr. 1: Fable and Narrative
yr. 2: Chreia/Maxim and Refutation/Confirmation
yr. 3: Common Topic and Encomium/Invective/Comparison

(students beginning in 7th grade will not get to Thesis & Law)

(a student who begins in 8th grade may spend another year on the last three Stages)

(students beginning after 9th grade will not get through all the Stages, but should try to at least get through Refutation-Confirmation)

Outcomes

The curriculum's success lies in the core skills being broken down into manageable subskills, and the results are truly astounding. Over the last ten years, the Classical Composition developer, Mr. Jim Selby of Whitefield Academy in Overland Park, Kansas, has found that all students are able to master these skills. Whitefield Academy has a 100% qualification rate on the optional essay portion of the college entrance exams (ACT and SAT) versus the national average of 23%, or has gained college credits with successful completion of the English AP exams. Qualification (min score of 8 on a scale of 1-12) requires that a cohesive and coherent essay be written within a 30 minute period.

Since its inception into our online program in 2010, the curriculum has proven to produce creative, innovative writers who can think compositionally, capable of generating a wide array of arguments and support, allowing them to choose high quality components for their specific writing projects. Students in physical school settings and our online academy, both past and present, consistently report their ability to complete on-demand (e.g., SAT/ACT) and college writing assignments in a fraction of the time it takes their peers. This is because Classical Composition specifically aims and succeeds in:

- Teaching students to *create* ideas for composition, to think and create! It teaches skills step-by-step, or “precept upon precept, line upon line” and thus eliminates frustration.
- Teaching with an eye toward *mastery*. Writing skills are built and reviewed with each stage, so that the writing process becomes second nature.
- Teaching through *modeling* and *repetition*. Writing skills are thus truly mastered by the students, and guess work on how to write is *eliminated*. No guesswork is involved; merely mastery.
- Teaching students to write descriptively and clearly.
- Teaching ideas, rather than introducing style too early, thus emphasizing content rather than ‘extras’.
- Teaching that style is dependent on the audience, not as an isolated skill. Writing is supposed to *move* your audience.