



GreatHearts[®]
Lakeside

Lakeside 101: Family Orientation Sessions

Session 4: Curriculum and Pedagogy

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Philosophical Pillars

- We believe that the world is ordered and knowable. The human intellect, while imperfect, can attain knowledge of reality through reason, hard work, and a coherent program of study.
- We believe that truth exists and that we must seek it relentlessly by disciplined study and good-willed conversation.
- We believe in the usefulness of a liberal arts education, and we gladly prepare our students for college studies, but our main purpose is the formation of their hearts and minds.

Focus on the Western Tradition

The Western tradition is one of great depth and diversity. It is a superb foundation upon which our students can build a life of learning.

This focus is not a statement about cultural superiority. We focus on the Western tradition because we believe that many of the principal values and ideas that underlie our own American society can be clearly traced to the classics we study.

Years spent at Great Hearts is just enough time for students to have a comprehensive introduction to the great works of the Western tradition, including literature, philosophy, history, math, science, languages, and the fine arts.

Great Books and the Great Conversation

The Great Books are books that represent an essential foundation in the literature of Western culture. “The Great Books are works that have stood the test of time as exemplary for their beauty, eloquence, impact on history, and profundity in addressing the essential questions of what does it mean to be a human being.” -Dan Scoggin, Great Hearts co-founder.

Interaction with these works is known as the “Great Conversation” (Robert Maynard Hutchins). Our students are taught to read, analyze and discuss these works with their fellow students. Students gain insight into the human condition and a fresh perspective through which they can understand their world because the ideas discussed in the Great Conversation throughout the ages are as relevant to us as they were to the authors who penned them.

The Socratic Method

"Wisdom begins with wonder."--Socrates, 5th Century B.C., Athens.

Socrates was a Greek philosopher from Athens who led rigorous dialogues in quest of the truth. He examined different premises of his Athenian fellows and demonstrated how they contradicted each other by questioning.

The teacher using this method engages the student by asking questions that provoke deep reflection. The class, as a whole, evaluates every statement using each other's arguments to arrive at a new conclusion.

The Socratic Method

By applying the Socratic method, students can engage with the material in a way that no textbook or system of memorization can provide. Socratic dialogue occurs whenever a teacher asks a question that provokes deeper thought. This is teaching by questioning, learning by discovery.

At Great Hearts, Socratic moments begin in kindergarten and first grade, and culminate in the upper high school grades when our scholars wrestle with the highest order questions of the human condition.

For more information you can read ["Understanding the Socratic Method at Great Hearts."](#)

Course of Study: K-5th Grades

English Language Arts	Spalding Phonics • Leveled Readers • Grammar • Composition • Greek and Latin Roots
Foreign Language	Spanish (K-3) • Latin (4-5)
Literature and Poetry	Classic Literature • World Folktales and Myths • Poetry Memorization and Recitation
History	Core Knowledge American and World History and Geography • Texas History (4)
Mathematics	Singapore Math
Science	FOSS Science Labs and Demonstrations • Core Knowledge Science
Fine Arts	Studio Art • Music
Other Core Subjects	P.E Class

Course of Study: Language Arts

Students of Great Hearts participate in a rigorous study of phonics, spelling, grammar, composition, literature and poetry.

In every grade level, students are surrounded by the beautiful language of high-quality children's literature. Teachers use specific guided instruction to train students in decoding and spelling skills through the Spalding method. Leveled readers are utilized to support students in their reading skills. Writing begins with dictation and imitation, developing into well-ordered compositions.

The study of language is also the science of grammar: classifying, describing, parsing, diagramming, declining and conjugating.

Course of Study: The Spalding Method

The Spalding method integrates instruction in spelling, writing, and reading in a manner that is explicit, interactive, diagnostic, and multisensory. Students see, hear, say, and write to enhance retention. All elements of the language are integrated in spelling, writing, and reading lessons.

The initial goal of Spalding is automaticity of the 72 phonograms in the English language. Students will begin using their phonogram knowledge to read and spell through a list of the most often used words in the English language.

The Spalding method also emphasizes precise techniques for good handwriting.

Course of Study: Foreign Language

Spanish is studied in grades K-4 for its beauty and cultural significance. Through song, poetry, story and conversation, students develop an appreciation of Hispanic culture, a positive attitude toward language learning, and a solid foundation for basic communication skills in the Spanish language.

The study of Latin is the beginning of a Great Heart student's experience with the language in which many of the seminal classics of Western Civilization were written. Students in grades 5-8 will enjoy exposure to the authors, history, and classical literature, and will begin to appreciate language as such.

Course of Study: Literature and Poetry

The goal of literature at Great Hearts is to help our students to fall in love with reading and with story. Students read beautiful stories and have discussions in class about the stories.

These conversations allow the teacher to address concepts such as setting, character, narrative, etc., as they arise in the context of the story.

Poetry is another introduction to that which is beautiful. Students focus on the memorization and recitation of poems. They are guided to ask questions about why a poet chose a particular word or phrase or why he/she wrote a line in a particular way.

Course of Study: History

History is the story of people through place and time. We teach our students history in order to give them facts, stories, insights, and models.

Through a coherent course of study, students will arrive at an understanding of the people, societies, places, governments, and arts that have shaped Western Civilization. Each grade level in K-5, focuses on a major civilization as well as a section of American history.

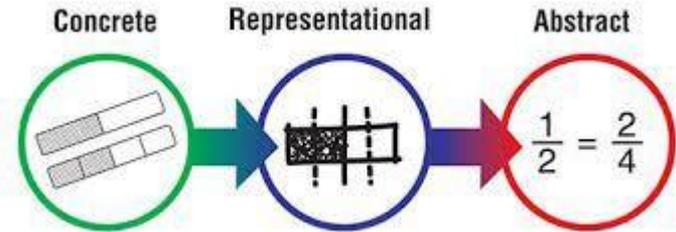
Course of Study: Mathematics

Mathematical exploration is the pursuit of truth. Students move from the exploration of concrete objects, towards a pictorial representation of the objects. Then they move onto abstract symbols and the algorithms that operate on these symbols.

The K-5 math curriculum is focuses on mastery through the concrete, pictorial, and abstract progression. Students learn to think mathematically instead of pushing through rote memorization.

Course of Study: Singapore Math K-5

The Singapore math method is focused on mastery, through an intentional sequence of concepts. Some of the key features of this approach include the CPA Model- Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract, Number Bonds, Bar Modeling, and Mental Math



Singapore Math

- emphasizes developing good thinkers and problem solvers
- covers fewer topics but in greater depth
- encourages algebraic thinking, even among early learners

Course of Study: Science

Our students explore the natural world through direct observation, demonstrations, experimentation, reading, and lectures. They learn how to hypothesize, test their theories, infer, and construct models.

K-5 students learn to be attentive, knowledgeable observers of the natural world and natural phenomena. They attain a basic understanding of the workings of life, the ecosystem, earth and the cosmos, from deep space to the atom.

Course of Study: Fine Arts

A classical liberal arts curriculum is not complete without the study of the musical, visual, and dramatic arts. Our instruction focuses on the skills of the craft and the appreciation of artistry.

When they examine an artwork, students step outside of themselves and their own time. When they put on a play, students appreciate the value of participating in a collective endeavor.

The study of great works will allow them to see the origins of excellence and better understand the traditions from which new and creative works are generated.

Course of Study: Physical Education

Athletics has a two-fold benefit for students.

First, the training of the body leads to an excellence of physique, health, and happiness. Second, competition leads to perseverance and teamwork.

Competition has two Latin parts. **Petere**: to seek. **Com**: together. **Competition** literally means to seek or strive together. In athletics there is both struggle and camaraderie.

Course of Study: Physical Education

PE lessons consist of traditional and non-traditional sport activities that encourage teamwork, leadership, focus, and building concrete habits. We foster love of the game by emphasizing the fundamentals of each sport.

Additionally, we teach and demonstrate good sportsmanship, how to lose and win with honor, how to be a good person on the field, and how to carry that into the classroom, on campus, and into the community.

Questions?

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Great Hearts Lakeside! While we have endeavored to provide meaningful information about Curriculum and Pedagogy, we recognize that there may be unanswered questions.

Please email questions to info@greatheartslakeside.

In partnership,

Great Hearts Lakeside