

# WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



## ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM GUIDE

# Westminster Christian School

## Curriculum Guide

*“There are those who seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge, that is curiosity.  
There are those who seek knowledge to be known by others, that is vanity.  
There are those who seek knowledge in order to serve, that is love.”  
Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)*

Since the inception of Westminster Christian School in 1978, the mission of our school has been to partner with Christian parents to educate their children in the knowledge of God for the purpose of serving Him and glorifying Him in the culture in which we live. The administration, faculty, and staff who love the Lord seek to weave Biblical principles into all areas of the school experience. Our goal is to effectively prepare each of our students to succeed in all areas of their lives in order that they might affect their community for Jesus Christ.

We believe that the daily testimony of our faculty and staff, their words and actions, contribute in an ongoing and significant way to the formation of students' thinking. It is within the school setting and through classroom instruction that students learn how to view the world through God's principles, and thereby become better equipped to make decisions formed by God's values.

At Westminster Christian School, we believe it is important for all students to receive a high-quality, Christ-centered, academic education. Every student at Westminster receives foundational courses that are necessary for them to grow, learn, and succeed in both higher education and life. Students learn to work diligently and explore their gifts, while adhering to the principle that all work should be done with excellence and for God's glory. We believe that students must learn to think critically, and they should be challenged to evaluate and analyze the information presented to them.

Even as we realize the primary responsibility of education lies in the hands of parents, we embrace the opportunity to create this partnership and reinforce what is being taught at home. With this in mind, we believe that this collaboration of shared responsibility and accountability provides the best learning environment possible for our students.

God has blessed Westminster by providing us with the faculty, staff, students, and parents that compose this unique “Westminster Christian School family” community. Our prayer is that He will continue to provide His blessings in this joint effort to nurture and educate students now and for many years to come.

In His Service,

Westminster Christian School Administrative Team

*While significant effort is made to maintain accuracy, information found in this curriculum guide is subject to change based on enrollment, faculty availability, and other considerations. Westminster Christian School reserves the right to alter curriculum or withdraw a course when it becomes impractical to offer.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Instructional Program General Objectives</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Philosophy of Curriculum</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Academic Support Programs</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Preschool Program</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Elementary Program</b>	<b>8</b>
Kindergarten	8
First-Grade	9
Second-Grade	11
Third-Grade	12
Fourth-Grade	14
Fifth-Grade	16
Additional Elementary Courses	17
Extracurricular Activities	18
Grade Scale	18
Report Cards	19
Standardized Testing	19

# **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

## **Bible**

1. To know that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit.
2. To know that God reveals Himself and His salvation in the Bible.
3. To know that God is the Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign Ruler of the universe, ordering all things according to His eternal plan for His own glory.
4. To know that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, is the only Redeemer of mankind.
5. To know that there is one God, existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
6. To know that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature.
7. To learn to recognize and evaluate unbiblical ways of thinking and teaching.
8. To know that we are saved by grace and not by works.
9. To know that God is holy, just, and full of mercy.
10. To desire fellowship with God through prayer and worship experience.
11. To desire love, joy, peace, and fellowship with other believers.
12. To desire to obey all the commandments of God as stated in the Bible.
13. To desire forgiveness of sins by repentance and faith in Christ.
14. To use the gifts God has given and joyfully serve God as long as one shall live.
15. To be trained in the love and fear of the Lord.
16. To learn Bible facts and Bible truth.
17. To memorize Scripture verses.
18. To learn Christian songs.

## **Math**

1. To understand that God is the only source of order.
2. To understand that God established the laws of order.
3. To understand that God commands man to be orderly.
4. To be aware that God has created all things with a numerical aspect and numbers are subject to the laws of God: However, mathematical theorems are only man's fallible observation of God's order and not to be equated with God's law.
5. To be aware of continuity of space.
6. To understand and use the resources God has given.
7. To understand facts in order to be good stewards in God's world.
8. To perform computations with understanding, accuracy, and efficiency.
9. To understand the concepts of numbers.
10. To understand measurement.
11. To understand and solve the fundamental operations.
12. To observe and discover patterns in numbers and the geometric world.
13. To master basic mathematical facts.
14. To be neat in all work.

## **Reading**

1. To understand that the primary motivation for learning to read is to be able to read the Bible, God's Holy Word.
2. To understand that the Bible itself is the greatest piece of literature.
3. To develop Christian standards of judgment and discrimination in the selection and evaluation of reading material.
4. To enjoy reading for pleasure and as a tool for learning new information.
5. To cultivate skills essential to proficiency in oral and silent reading.
6. To acquire study skills.
7. To develop interest in many types of literature.
8. To develop appreciation of literature.
9. To develop the ability to read material of increasing difficulty, complexity, and depth.

## **Listening**

1. To listen quietly to God's Word with respect.
2. To look at the person who is speaking.
3. To listen and respond to a whole statement or idea before proceeding or responding.
4. To follow instruction.
5. To develop an appreciation and evaluation of what others are saying so as to minister or respond to their needs.
6. To realize that man is responsible for his listening choices.

## **Handwriting**

1. To gain knowledge of correct letter and word formation.
2. To develop proper spacing and neatness.
3. To develop and maintain skill in handwriting at all times.
4. To realize that handwriting enables man to have the Word of God in written form.

## **Spelling**

1. To acquire the ability and desire to spell correctly at all times.
2. To have knowledge as to where and how to find correct spelling of words.
3. To develop skill in using basic spelling rules.
4. To have knowledge of the meaning and usage of commonly used words.

## **Language Arts**

1. To know that God is the originator of languages, and that He communicates to man through language.
2. To develop speech that is glorifying to God.
3. To develop good grammar and enunciation.
4. To interpret and describe events in a meaningful way.
5. To develop the ability to speak to a group effectively.
6. To develop the ability to communicate thoughts precisely in written and oral form.
7. To increase one's ability to organize thoughts.
8. To develop a larger, more meaningful vocabulary.
9. To develop an understanding of the structure of language through a formal study of grammar.
10. To realize that man's speech reveals his inner attitudes.
11. To know that man is responsible to God for what he says.

## **Social Studies**

1. To understand one's self as God's child living in God's world.
2. To understand human behavior and social relationships in terms of one's significance as created in God's image.
3. To understand the abnormal conditions of the world due to sin and how sin adversely affects all human behavior and social relationships.
4. To see one's relationship to other people in the light of Christian fellowship and stewardship.
5. To see history as the unfolding of God's plan to bring glory to Himself.
6. To see history in terms of God's purpose to judge sin and to redeem His people.
7. To develop social studies, reading, map and globe skills so as to become better acquainted with God's world.
8. To develop critical thinking skills.
9. To develop Christian attitudes and values in relation to responsible citizenship.
10. To be aware of the many types of career choices that are a part of the adult world.
11. To be aware that their one's choice of career must involve using the gifts God provides, for His glory.
12. To develop Christian attitudes and values toward the world of work.

## **Science**

1. To understand that God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.
2. To understand that man is a finite creature in the universe.
3. To understand that the order of the universe represents God's continued providential control.
4. To increase knowledge and understanding of God's natural world.
5. To learn enjoyment, appreciation, and stewardship of God's world.
6. To acquire careful, logical, and investigative thinking.
7. To evaluate scientific technology from a Biblical perspective.
8. To learn about the pattern and order of nature as planned by God the Creator.
9. To develop God-given senses through scientific activities.
10. To understand that one's body is the "temple" of God, and that every believer has the responsibility to keep his body healthy so that he can serve the Lord properly.

## **Art**

1. To understand that all are image-bears of God and possess God-given creative ability.
2. To recognize, explore, and develop the creative talents of all students.
3. To develop a feeling for the aesthetic.
4. To develop a positive Christian perspective of one's creative ability and how to use it to the glory of God.
5. To participate in various art experiences and art media.
6. To develop Christian love by sharing materials and working together congenially.
7. To see and appreciate the beauty of form, color, line, and composition of God's creation.

## **Physical Education**

1. To know that God created the physical body.
2. To know that the body belongs to God and therefore, should be used for Him.
3. To know that God is concerned with health and health habits as evidenced by the laws to Israel.
4. To know that one is responsible to God to keep the body clean, neat, and under control.
5. To understand the body's needs of food, exercise, and rest.
6. To acquire laterality, directionality, and balance.
7. To participate in movement experiences that are fun and challenging.
8. To develop efficient hand-eye-foot coordination and rhythm.
9. To develop agility, balance, and coordination.
10. To acquire locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills.

## **Music**

1. To make a joyful noise to the Lord, vocally and instrumentally.
2. To broaden and deepen the worship experience.
3. To learn the value of music in enriching the lives of others.
4. To appreciate and enjoy different types of music.
5. To respond through bodily movements: clapping, jumping, skipping, etc.
6. To have knowledge of and experience with melodic movement, rhythm, form of music, and harmony.
7. To have appreciation and knowledge of instruments.
8. To realize that whatever one does in music should help one to please God and delight more in Him.
9. To realize that God created man with the ability to produce and appreciate music.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF CURRICULUM**

Westminster Christian School believes that each student should have access to instructional and library/research materials that enrich and support the educational programs of the school. It is the duty of the Curriculum Committee to provide a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty with diversity of appeal and the presentation of differing viewpoints. One example can be found in science instruction, as we teach both the truth of creationism and the falsehood of evolution. The goal of instruction is to incorporate our faith and to use the Bible as the lens through which all curriculum is viewed. We seek to teach Biblical truths and to instruct students how to defend their faith.

It is our goal to provide high quality, relevant, seamless curriculum for all content areas and to ensure coherency and continuity across and between grade levels. As we seek to use high-quality and challenging curriculum components to best prepare our students for the next phase of their education, these goals may be achieved through the use of materials which come from both Christian and secular publishers.

Because of our Biblical approach, it is critical that each teacher, whose life is submitted to Christ and whose commitment is to incorporating Biblical truths into all aspects of instruction, be the driver of the curriculum. Westminster Christian School administration will provide on-going instructional leadership and professional development opportunities for all teachers in this critical area, which will in turn support learner-centered instruction for all students.

## **ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

**Resource Services at Westminster** exists to provide support to students needing varied instruction and to partner with parents of unique learners.

### **Tiered Programming Services**

**Programmed Instruction** is coordinated with the program principal, classroom teacher and resource instructor. Programmed instruction in middle school and high school is accomplished during study halls, or with permission, in lieu of scheduled classes.

SLANT (IMSLEC accredited reading program designed for the dyslexic student)  
I CAN LEARN Math (Fundamental Math, Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, Geometry)

**Instructional Support** is coordinated with the program principal, classroom teacher and resource instructor. Instructional support for Middle School and High School are scheduled during study hall, before or after school.

Reading Reflex  
Content area curricular support

Communication support  
Strategic instruction specific to coursework

**Organization and Study Skills Support** is coordinated with the program principal, classroom teacher and resource instructor. At middle school and high school, it is scheduled during study halls, before or after school.

Individual progress reviews  
Study skills training  
Organizational training

**After School Homework Center** is available to students, providing after school supervision for homework completion in a group setting. The supervising teacher will answer questions and assist with studying or projects at the student's request.

**Supported Study Hall** is available to Middle School students to provide direct instruction in organization and study skills, as well as accountability through progress report reviews and parent communications via ParentsWeb.

**Summer Academic Programming** is available for a variety of content areas and skills for academic success.

Resource Support Services provided directly to students through individual or group instruction incurs a fee in addition to regular tuition.

## **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

Westminster Preschool promotes joy in learning, spiritual and academic growth, and positive character development. The program is dedicated to creating an educational community that is vibrant, joyful, and respectful to our Creator and His creation. Preschoolers learn to be independent, to take pleasure in the school environment, and to assimilate well with others. They are also encouraged to think critically and creatively, to express themselves clearly, and to have the courage to own, live, and explain their beliefs.

The learning environment incorporates a multi age setting thereby promoting a family-like grouping. In this setting, more experienced students share what they have learned with others less experienced. This not only reinforces their own learning, it also teaches the students to cultivate and expect a healthy community environment.

Westminster Christian School offers separate classes for three year old and four year old students. Students turning three by September 1 attend classes on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:00 a.m.–11:20 a.m. Students turning four by September 1 attend classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 8:00 a.m.–11:20 a.m.

### **Bible**

Biblical principles are the backbone and foundation of preschool. Preschoolers have an inherent desire and need to have a relationship with their Creator. With that in mind, classes focus on God's eternal love and commitment to His children, with emphasis given to creating an environment in which God's love and character is modeled and practiced by all in the classroom community. A daily time of prayer is held where each student is given the opportunity to talk with God silently or corporately. A time of singing and praise is also a daily activity.

### **Enhanced Educational Opportunities**

In addition to the core curricular offerings, students in the preschool program are exposed to art, music, and world awareness activities. Special mentoring partnerships with other elementary-level classes are also used.

### **Math**

The math curriculum encourages number recognition, number formation, matching, and comparing quantity. Rote counting and numeral recognition are also reviewed. When appropriate, some students may begin work with number tracing and formation, and simple addition and subtraction.

### **Phonics and Preliminary Reading**

The phonics and preliminary reading curriculum begins with letter recognition and ends with the blending of sounds. During the phonics learning time, the children are divided into small groups of three so that each student can receive individual care and instruction. By the end of a student's preschool experience, he/she should be able to move from letter recognition to hearing isolated phonemes, sorting by phoneme, associating phoneme to letter, and may culminate with preliminary decoding of words.

### **Physical Education**

The Preschool teacher incorporates activities that demonstrate, develop, and practice locomotor skills. The teacher incorporates Biblical reference on creation and the wonders of our bodies. Group games and activities that encourage sitting still and keeping one's hands to one's self while listening and following simple directions are provided. The introduction of playing with others and objects is given through organized activity as well as individual learning through playing with objects.

### **Printing**

We explore the entire alphabet and review familiar words that apply to the current letter of study. During the year, each student creates an alphabet book. Depending on the student's level of fine motor control, preliminary tracing of letters and transition to letter and word writing may begin. Specific work exercises within the classroom that focus on a skill necessary for further learning, i.e. learning to hold a pencil properly, are performed.

### **Social Development and Work Skills**

Growth in these two areas is an integral part of the preschool program. Students are encouraged and guided to help others spontaneously, to demonstrate responsibility, to show respect and care for the classroom environment, and to resolve conflict in a healthy manner. In the area of work skills, curiosity, desire for order, initiative, problem solving, and use of others as a resource are nurtured. Opportunities for students to work on eye-hand coordination, coordination of two or more muscles, and to take care of personal needs are given. Attention is given to developing students' abilities to persevere and concentrate in work, to transition to different tasks, and to focus in group activities.



## ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

### Kindergarten

Westminster Christian School provides a kindergarten program designed to enable each student to learn and grow in a loving and caring environment. Each child has the opportunity to experience, explore, and create using his or her God-given abilities. Our program partners with parents and encourages parental participation throughout the year. Our ultimate goal is to prepare students for first-grade. Both half-day and full-day kindergarten programs are offered. Both programs are similar in their curricular design, with more attention given to extended learning in the full-day program. Each program allows students to develop a love for learning and the confidence to succeed within a positive atmosphere.

#### **Bible**

Bible time is included daily in the kindergarten schedule. The instructor uses Scripture, picture cards, and flannel graph to present God's revelation of Himself from Genesis to the life of Christ. Students have opportunities to retell these stories through sequencing the flannel graph pieces and by dramatizing the stories themselves and with story figures. The teacher encourages practical application of the stories to the students' lives throughout the day, and seeks to develop, enrich, and broaden the students' responses to God as their Creator and Savior. Students are introduced to Bible characters and memorize Bible verses in accordance with the reading schedule. Occasionally, the Kindergarten classes attend chapel as their Bible time and are responsible for part of the chapel activities.

*\*Key Text: God's Wonders, Christian Schools International*

#### **Free Play**

Students have a free choice play period each day to provide opportunities for them to participate in activities that interest them with children of their choosing. Some of the options during this time include: playing with construction type toys, cars/trucks, the water/sand table; engaging in various learning games and books; climbing/sliding; kitchen play; painting; puppet and dress up play.

#### **Handwriting**

This course teaches students neat and correct formation of manuscript letters. Each letter is introduced, practiced, and reviewed. Daily letter writing encourages proper letter formation, pencil grip, and posture.

*\*Key Text: Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.*

#### **Math**

This class provides a variety of hands-on activities for students. Students are engaged in learning through the use of different manipulatives, games, and activities related to each lesson. Students learn to identify shapes, sort, classify, compare, match, create patterns, graph, count and read numbers, tell time (on the hour), measure, estimate and explore coins. Students also begin the basics of adding and subtracting. The instructor provides ongoing assessments to keep students on target.

*\*Key Text: enVision Math, by Pearson*

#### **Music**

Music is taught for worship, for appreciation of some classics, for tone recognition, for body motion, for verbal instructions, and for fun. Integration occurs as students sing songs related to content being studied. Lummi sticks and rhythmic band activities are included in the music program. Students have the opportunity to participate in school musicals beyond the classroom.

#### **Phonics and Reading**

During instructional time students learn to recognize letters, associate sounds with letters, and blend sounds into words. Students identify similarities in words, memorize basic sight words, and begin reading simple sentences. Throughout the year, reading is integrated into other subject areas using themes and special events. Poems, stories, and finger plays expose students to a variety of written expression. Daily oral reading, shared-book experiences, and 'recycled' books encourage reading for pleasure.

Reading instruction develops knowledge and skills necessary to recognize printed words. Strategies are used as building blocks for fluent reading and comprehension. All students read a variety of genres to obtain a better understanding of God's world. Students also have opportunities to respond to literature.

## **Guided Reading**

In addition, Westminster uses a guided reading approach to learning reading strategies. Students study text at their individual reading level and are instructed in small groups. A variety of formative and summative assessments are used to monitor reading growth and progress.

**\*Key Text: World of Wonders series, Scott Foresman Publishing**

## **Science**

Students in kindergarten learn about specific topics found in Life, Physical and Earth Science. Students explore and learn through three distinct pathways: reading, digital/technology, and a discovery-based approach that enables them to experience a learning environment that is “hands-on.” During their Kindergarten year, students learn more about themselves and the uniqueness that God has given to each individual. Students explore God’s creation, which is all around them. Some topics covered include the following: living and non-living things, plants and animals, earth and sky, matter and mixture, and motion.

**\*Key Text: Interactive Science, Pearson Publishing**

## **Social Studies**

This class teaches the importance of our family and community. Students learn about the world and how God intends for us to be responsible citizens.

**\*Key Text: My World, Houghton Mifflin Publishing**

## **Writing**

Instruction in this class builds solid foundational skills in written and oral communication and critical thinking. Teaching in this class centers on the traits model of writing which is a research-based, spiraling sequence of seven specific areas of focused instruction. These traits include the following: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation. The teacher utilizes a wide variety of "Mentor Texts" for student use, models her own writing on a daily basis, and focuses on frequent assessment to help drive further instruction.

This class also provides students with numerous concrete and practical strategies for planning, revising, and editing their writing such as free writing, gathering details, using graphic organizers, peer responding, improving word choice and sentence fluency, and using convention checklists. Each strategy is presented with models to illustrate the strategy, Try-It activities to give students practice with strategies, and whole-class, small-group, and individual student activities to help students master the strategies and apply them independently.

Students also learn to apply different strategies as they write in the various forms. These forms include narrative, expository, persuasive, response to literature, creative writing, research writing, and writing across the curriculum. The course also covers grammar skills, study reading, test-taking skills, note-taking skills, and public speaking.

**\*Key Text: Traits Writing, Scholastic**

**\*Key Text: Write Source, Great Source Publication Group**

## **First-Grade**

### **Bible**

A daily Bible time uses picture cards and activities to present God’s covenant with His people. Students learn about God through Old Testament and New Testament Bible stories. Teachers use memorizing Bible verses, attending chapel, singing, dramatizing Bible stories, writing, and artistic activities to nurture students’ faith in God and to encourage practical applications of His word in students’ lives.

**\*Key Text: God’s Plan, Christian Schools International**

### **English**

This course seeks to develop students’ communication skills in listening, speaking, and writing. Daily oral language activities are also used to guide students in applying correct grammar usage to both oral and written work.

**\*Key Text: Shurley English, Shurley Instructional Materials**

## **Handwriting**

This course teaches students neat and correct formation of manuscript letters. Students will strive for mastery of all lower case and upper case (capital) letters. Students are expected to utilize acceptable penmanship in all written work.

**\*Key Text:** Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.

## **History**

In social studies, first-graders learn about the communities in which they live. These communities include family, school, and nation. Students explore the culture of past communities. They learn map skills to explore the geography of our Earth. They learn and then use basic economics principles such as needs, wants, and choices. They explore how to honor God by becoming good citizens in their communities.

**\*Key Text:** School and Family, Houghton Mifflin Publishing

## **Math**

Our first-grade math students learn to understand and use numbers through 100. They practice addition and subtraction concepts and apply math skills and strategies to solve problems. Students explore and use patterns, shapes, fractions, time, and money. The teacher provides materials and instruction for first-graders who need extra math support, who are on grade level, or who are advanced math learners. We also use “hands-on” materials as we explore, use, and master math concepts. The course also includes a strong technology component and offers online access for students when they are away from school.

**\*Key Text:** enVision Math, Pearson

## **Reading**

Reading instruction in first-grade develops knowledge and skills necessary to recognize printed words. Strategies are used as building blocks for fluent reading and comprehension. All students read a variety of genres to obtain a better understanding of God’s world. Students also have opportunities to respond to literature.

## **Guided Reading**

In addition, Westminster uses a guided reading approach to learning reading strategies. Students study text at their individual reading level and are instructed in small groups. A variety of formative and summative assessments are used to monitor reading growth and progress.

**\*Key Text:** Take a Closer Look series, Scott Foresman Publishing

## **Science**

Students in first-grade study specific topics found in Life, Physical, and Earth Science. Students explore and learn through three distinct pathways: reading, digital/technology, and a discovery-based approach that enables them to experience a learning environment that is “hands-on.” In first-grade, students will study the following areas: *Collecting and Examining Life* (Life Science), *Motion* (Physical Science) and *Weather* (Earth Science).

**\*Key Text:** Interactive Science, Pearson Publishing

## **Spelling**

Instructional time in this class is designed to enhance the weekly phonics skills taught in the reading curriculum. Students interact with the spelling words in a variety of daily assignments that include writing and phonics practice.

**\*KeyText:** Spelling Connections, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.

## **Writing**

Instruction in this course builds solid foundational skills in written and oral communication and critical thinking. Teaching in this course centers on the traits model of writing which is a research-based, spiraling sequence of seven specific areas of focused instruction. These traits include the following: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation. The teacher utilizes a wide variety of "Mentor Texts" for student use, models her own writing on a daily basis, and focuses on frequent assessment to help drive further instruction.

This course also provides students with numerous concrete and practical strategies for planning, revising, and editing their writing such as free writing, gathering details, using graphic organizers, peer responding, improving word choice and sentence fluency, and using convention checklists. Each strategy is presented with models to

illustrate the strategy, Try-It activities to give students practice with strategies, and whole-class, small-group, and individual student activities to help students master the strategies and apply them independently.

Students also learn to apply different strategies as they write in the various forms. These forms include narrative, expository, persuasive, response to literature, creative writing, research writing, and writing across the curriculum. The course also covers grammar skills, study reading, test-taking skills, note-taking skills, and public speaking.

**\*Key Text:** Traits Writing, Scholastic

**\*Key Text:** Write Source, Great Source Publication Group

## **Second-Grade**

### **Bible**

The course focuses on God's promises. Second-grade begins by studying the creation and the conflict that arises with the fall into sin. As the year progresses, students read about how God acted to save and restore His people to a right relationship with Him and with the world. The year climaxes with Christ's death and resurrection, and it ends with a preview of the new heaven and the new earth.

**\*Key Text:** God's Promises, Christian Schools International

### **English**

This goal of this course is to develop students' communication skills in listening, speaking, and writing. Daily oral language activities are also used to guide students in applying correct grammar usage to both oral and written work.

**\*Key Text:** Shurley English, Shurley Instructional Materials

### **Handwriting**

Explicit, ongoing handwriting instruction is a critical component of students' overall literacy development. Second-grade handwriting begins with an extensive review of all the manuscript letters. The review process allows each student to master the concepts of shape, size, slanting, and spacing taught in first-grade. The transition from manuscript to cursive will take place during the beginning of the second semester and will focus on forming lower and upper case cursive letters.

**\*Key Text:** Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.

### **History**

This course guides the student to understand the people and places of the world through an understanding of the places and functions surrounding them, beginning in the neighborhood. Topics such as rules of a community, geographical climates, immigration, American symbols, goods and services, America's Indians, the American Revolution, heroes in America's history, and government are addressed through non-fiction literature as well as biographies, fictional stories, and map skills.

**\*Key Text:** Neighborhoods, Houghton Mifflin Publishing

### **Math**

This course meets the diverse learning needs of all children. The class promotes structure and order. With teacher guidance, students see that there is an absolute truth from God - even in math. Students are taught introductory and mastery level concepts including addition and subtraction facts up to 20, place value to 1,000, graphing, money, 3-digit regrouping, fractions, geometry, measurement, time, and multiplication and division facts of 2, 5, and 10. The teacher provides materials and instruction for second-graders who need extra math support, who are on grade level, or who are advanced math learners. We also use "hands-on" materials as we explore, use, and master math concepts. The class also includes a strong technology component and offers online access for students at school and when they are away from school.

**\*Key Text:** enVision Math, Pearson

### **Reading**

This course incorporates several different components each week: comprehension and vocabulary; phonics, word study, and spelling; writing and grammar; oral language, speaking, and listening. These components are presented in many different ways throughout the week and include the following: whole group and small group interaction, center work, workbook pages, silent reading, reading buddies, games, and songs. The goals for this course are to instill a love for reading, to have students read fluently, and to have students comprehend reading material on an appropriate developmental level.

## **Guided Reading**

In addition, Westminster uses a guided reading approach to learning reading strategies. Students are given text at their individual reading level and are instructed in small groups. A variety of formative and summative assessments are used to monitor reading growth and development.

**\*Key Text: Great Expectations, Scott Foresman Publishing**

## **Science**

Students in the second-grade study specific topics found in Life, Physical and Earth Science. Students explore and learn through three distinct pathways: reading, digital/technology, and a discovery-based approach that enables them to experience a learning environment that is “hands-on.” In second-grade, students will study the following areas: *Life Cycles, Solar System, Weather, Matter, Energy, Motion, and Force.*

**\*Key Text: Interactive Science, Pearson Publishing**

## **Spelling**

This curriculum is designed to enhance the weekly phonics skills taught in the reading curriculum. Students interact with the spelling words in a variety of daily assignments that include writing and phonics practice. At the end of each week, students take a spelling test.

**\*Key Text: Spelling Connections, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.**

## **Writing**

Instruction in this course builds solid foundational skills in written and oral communication and critical thinking. Teaching in this course centers on the traits model of writing which is a research-based, spiraling sequence of seven specific areas of focused instruction. These traits include the following: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation. The teacher utilizes a wide variety of "Mentor Texts" for student use, models her own writing on a daily basis, and focuses on frequent assessment to help drive further instruction.

This course also provides students with numerous concrete and practical strategies for planning, revising, and editing their writing such as free writing, gathering details, using graphic organizers, peer responding, improving word choice and sentence fluency, and using convention checklists. Each strategy is presented with models to illustrate the strategy, Try-It activities to give students practice with strategies, and whole-class, small-group, and individual student activities to help students master the strategies and apply them independently.

Students also learn to apply different strategies as they write in the various forms. These forms include narrative, expository, persuasive, response to literature, creative writing, research writing, and writing across the curriculum. The course also covers grammar skills, study reading, test-taking skills, note-taking skills, and public speaking.

**\*Key Text: Traits Writing, Scholastic**

**\*Key Text: Write Source, Great Source Publication Group**

## **Third-Grade**

### **Bible**

Bible in third-grade focuses on the students being able to gain factual knowledge of the Bible and to grow in living to God's glory. Students develop a deeper understanding of God and His plan of redemption through the study of creation and God's covenantal relationship with His people. The course includes weekly Scripture memorization and classroom discussion.

**\*Key Text: Calling of God's Tribe, Christian Schools International**

### **English**

This course seeks to provide a solid foundation in the skills needed to communicate effectively. Using brain-based teaching principles like rhythm, repetition, and student-teacher interaction allows students to achieve success and gain enthusiasm for English.

**\*Key Text: Shurley English, Shurley Instructional Materials**

## **Handwriting**

Explicit, ongoing handwriting instruction is a critical component of students' overall literacy development. The third-grade handwriting curriculum begins with a short review of manuscript writing. This is followed by extensive practice in cursive to develop mastery in letter formation. Students also practice the use of writing for various purposes such as making lists, writing letters and postcards, and addressing envelopes.

**\*Key Text:** Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.

## **History**

The third-grade Social Studies course is taught through units with an underlying connection to Communities. By studying their own geography as well as the development of very early communities long ago, students learn reasons why people have moved from place to place as things change over time. They also learn about various governments within differing communities. Students develop an understanding of basic human needs and wants while learning to make good economic choices. They also learn what it means to be a good citizen while celebrating all of our differences and cultures.

**\*Key Text:** Communities, Houghton Mifflin Publishing

## **Math**

Third-grade students continue to improve addition and subtraction skills with multi-digit numbers, while learning multiplication and division facts. Throughout the year students also work with measurement concepts, place value, fractions, decimals, graphs, geometric figures, and word problems. The goal is to improve students' critical thinking skills and application of key math concepts. This teacher provides materials and instruction for third-graders who need extra math support, who are on grade level, or who are advanced math learners. We also use "hands-on" materials as we explore, use, and master math concepts. The course also includes a strong technology component and offers online materials for students both in class and when they are away from school.

**\*Key Text:** enVision Math, Pearson

## **Reading**

This course focuses on several different components each week: comprehension and vocabulary; phonics, word study, and spelling; writing and grammar; oral language, speaking, and listening. These components are presented in many different ways throughout the week and include the following: whole group and small group interaction, center work, workbook pages, silent reading, reading buddies, games, and songs. The goals for this course are to instill a love for reading, to have students read fluently, and to have students comprehend reading material on an appropriate developmental level.

## **Guided Reading**

In addition, Westminster uses a guided reading approach to learning reading strategies. Students are given a wide variety of texts at their individual reading level and are instructed in small groups. Formative and summative assessments are used to monitor reading growth and development.

**\*Key Text:** Great Expectations, Scott Foresman Publishing

## **Science**

Students in the third-grade study specific topics found in Life, Physical and Earth Science. Students explore and learn through three distinct pathways: reading, digital/technology, and a discovery-based approach that enables them to experience a learning environment that is "hands-on." In third-grade, students will study the following areas: *Ecosystems, Plants and Living Things, Earth and Weather, Earth and Our Universe, Matter, Energy and it's Forms, Forces and Motion.*

**\*Key Text:** Interactive Science, Pearson Publishing

## **Spelling**

This spelling curriculum is designed to enhance the weekly phonics skills taught in the reading curriculum. Students interact with the spelling words in a variety of daily assignments that include writing and phonics practice. At the end of each week, students take a spelling test.

**\*Key Text:** Spelling Connections, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.

## **Writing**

Instruction in this course builds solid foundational skills in written and oral communication and critical thinking. Teaching in this course centers on the traits model of writing which is a research-based, spiraling sequence of seven specific areas of focused instruction. These traits include the following: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation. The teacher utilizes a wide variety of "Mentor Texts" for student use, models her own writing on a daily basis, and focuses on frequent assessment to help drive further instruction.

This course also provides students with numerous concrete and practical strategies for planning, revising, and editing their writing such as free writing, gathering details, using graphic organizers, peer responding, improving word choice and sentence fluency, and using convention checklists. Each strategy is presented with models to illustrate the strategy, Try-It activities to give students practice with strategies, and whole-class, small-group, and individual student activities to help students master the strategies and apply them independently.

Students also learn to apply different strategies as they write in the various forms. These forms include narrative, expository, persuasive, response to literature, creative writing, research writing, and writing across the curriculum. The course also covers grammar skills, study reading, test-taking skills, note-taking skills, and public speaking.

**\*Key Text: Traits Writing, Scholastic**

**\*Key Text: Write Source, Great Source Publication Group**

## **Fourth-Grade**

### **Bible**

In Bible, fourth-graders learn about the history of God's people. The main aspect of the Bible curriculum is to show that even when God's people went astray to follow worthless idols, God continued to draw His people closer to Himself. Study begins by examining First Samuel and traces the history of Israel to Second Chronicles. Throughout the year, fourth-grade students see that God continues to send prophets to His people to draw them back to Him.

**\*Key Text: Record of God's Nation, Christian Schools International**

### **Computer Keyboarding**

The instructor in this course uses an application software program for teaching touch typing. The program includes a number of speed tests and constantly tracks the user's words-per-minute typing speed. It also includes a number of typing games. The purpose for using this curriculum is to help students grow in their typing skills - primarily in the areas of speed and accuracy.

**\*Key Text: Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing, Encore Software**

### **English**

This course is a study of how our language is put together. Students cover the eight parts of speech, learn how to classify sentences, and engage in word studies such as synonyms, antonyms, analogies, hyphenated adjectives, multiple-meaning words, and acronyms.

**\*Key Text: Shurley English, Shurley Instructional Materials**

### **Handwriting**

Explicit, ongoing handwriting instruction is a critical component of students' overall literacy development. Extensive practice in cursive to develop mastery in letter formation is the heart of the fourth-grade curriculum. Students also practice the use of writing for various purposes.

**\*Key Text: Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.**

### **History**

This course focuses on the states and regions of the United States. It begins with geography and the basic concepts of a region. Students then explore each region and the way of life of its people. The East, the South, the Midwest, and the West are the core of the content. Instruction also engages students to make connections to other places in the world.

**\*Key Text: States and Regions, Houghton Mifflin Publishing**

## **Math**

Students in this course review and expand on addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. They also work on adding, subtracting, and multiplying with fractions and decimals. Place value, estimation, and rounding are also covered to help students in all aspects of math class. Some higher-level areas of math will be taught including algebra, integers and rational numbers, mental math, graphs, inequalities, and patterns. Materials and instruction are provided for fourth-graders who need extra math support, who are on grade level, or who are advanced math learners. We also use “hands-on” materials as we explore, use, and master math concepts. This course also includes a strong technology component and offers online access for students in the classroom and when they are away from school.

**\*Key Text: enVision Math, Pearson**

## **Reading**

This course focuses on several different components each week: comprehension and vocabulary; phonics, word study, and spelling; writing and grammar; oral language, speaking, and listening. These components are presented in many different ways throughout the week and include the following: whole group and small group interaction, center work, workbook pages, silent reading, reading buddies, games, and songs. The goals for this course are to instill a love for reading, to have students read fluently, and to have students comprehend reading material on an appropriate developmental level.

## **Guided Reading**

In addition, Westminster uses a guided reading approach to learning reading strategies. Students are given a wide variety of texts at their individual reading level and are instructed in small groups. Formative and summative assessments are used to monitor reading growth and development.

**\*Key Text: Great Expectations, Scott Foresman Publishing**

## **Science**

Students in the fourth-grade study specific topics found in Life, Physical and Earth Science. Students explore and learn through three distinct pathways: reading, digital/technology, and a discovery-based approach that enables them to experience a learning environment that is “hands-on.” In fourth-grade, students will study the following areas: *Ecosystems, Plants and Animals, Earth's Resources, Earth and Space, Matter, Energy and Heat, Electricity and Magnetism, and Motion.*

**\*Key Text: Interactive Science, Pearson Publishing**

## **Spelling**

This course is designed to enhance the weekly phonics skills taught in the reading curriculum. Students interact with the spelling words in a variety of daily assignments that include writing and phonics practice. At the end of each week, students take a spelling test.

**\*Key Text: Spelling Connections, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.**

## **Writing**

Instruction in this course builds solid foundational skills in written and oral communication and critical thinking. Teaching in this course centers on the traits model of writing which is a research-based, spiraling sequence of seven specific areas of focused instruction. These traits include the following: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation. The teacher utilizes a wide variety of "Mentor Texts" for student use, models his own writing on a daily basis, and focuses on frequent assessment to help drive further instruction.

This course also provides students with numerous concrete and practical strategies for planning, revising, and editing their writing such as free writing, gathering details, using graphic organizers, peer responding, improving word choice and sentence fluency, and using convention checklists. Each strategy is presented with models to illustrate the strategy, Try-It activities to give students practice with strategies, and whole-class, small-group, and individual student activities to help students master the strategies and apply them independently.



Students also learn to apply different strategies as they write in the various forms. These forms include narrative, expository, persuasive, response to literature, creative writing, research writing, and writing across the curriculum. The course also covers grammar skills, study reading, test-taking skills, note-taking skills, and public speaking.

**\*Key Text:** Traits Writing, Scholastic

**\*Key Text:** Write Source, Great Source Publication Group

## **Fifth-Grade**

### **Bible**

This course takes students on a survey from Genesis to Acts. Writings from the Pentateuch and the Books of History are studied. Students are given an introduction to Biblical poetry in Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, and instruction is given on the prophetic writings, especially those of Amos and Isaiah. The life of Jesus is followed through the Gospels, and then the birth of the early church in Acts is examined.

**\*Key Text:** Witness to the Gospel, Christian Schools International

### **Computer Keyboarding**

This curriculum is an application software program for teaching touch typing. The program includes a number of speed tests and constantly tracks the user's words-per-minute typing speed. It also includes a number of typing games. The purpose for using this curriculum is to help students grow in their typing skills - primarily in the areas of speed and accuracy.

**\*Key Curriculum:** Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing, Encore Software

### **English**

Instruction in this course continues with classify sentences using the eight parts of speech, and a fifth sentence pattern is added. In addition to classifying sentences, several writing opportunities are also given including narrative, persuasive, and expository essays, research reports, and journal entries.

**\*Key Text:** Shurley English, Shurley Instructional Materials

### **Handwriting**

Explicit, ongoing handwriting instruction is a critical component of students' overall literacy development. Extensive review and practice of cursive writing is the focus of the fifth-grade curriculum.

**\*Key Text:** Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.

### **History**

Students in fifth-grade history travel the walkways of America's heritage and history beginning with the "original" Americans and their interaction with the European explorers. From there, the journey continues through the thirteen colonies to the constructing of the United States by the colonists' revolution against England. Exploration of the western expansion that led to an eventual and unstoppable Civil War and its impact on the country's future is also studied. The course concludes with a study of the Reconstruction period and immigration.

**\*Key Text:** United States History, Houghton Mifflin

### **Math**

Fifth-grade math builds on the concepts taught in fourth-grade. Students learn to add, subtract, multiply and divide decimals and fractions. Students become skilled in two-digit multiplication and will divide with two digit divisors. Geometry concepts include symmetry, congruence, and classifying and measuring angles, triangles and polygons. Algebra concepts include missing digits and factors. Coordinate graphing, percent, volume, mass, data collection, probability and problem solving is taught. The curriculum provides materials and instruction for fifth-graders who need extra math support, who are on grade level, or who are advanced math learners. We also use "hands-on" materials as we explore, use, and master math concepts. The curriculum also includes a strong technology component and offers online access for students when they are away from school.

**\*Key Text:** enVision Math, Pearson

## **Reading**

This course covers a variety of reading skills important to developing better reading comprehension. Such skills include identifying the characters, setting, plot, and theme within a text; sequencing of events; comparing and contrasting elements within a text; and searching for context clues. Students are assessed in vocabulary and comprehension skills.

## **Guided Reading**

In addition, Westminster uses a guided reading approach to learning reading strategies. Students are given a wide variety of texts at their individual reading level and are instructed in small groups. Formative and summative assessments are used to monitor reading growth and development.

**\*Key Text: Great Expectations, Scott Foresman Publishing**

## **Science**

Students in the fifth-grade study specific topics found in Life, Physical and Earth Science. Students explore and learn through three distinct pathways: reading, digital/technology, and a discovery-based approach that enables them to experience a learning environment that is “hands-on.” In the fifth-grade, students will study the following areas: *Classifying Organisms, Growth and Survival, Ecosystems, Water Cycle and Weather, Earth's Surface, Earth and Space, Properties of Matter, Forces and Motion, and Changing Forms of Energy.*

**\*Key Text: Interactive Science, Pearson Publishing**

## **Spelling**

This curriculum is designed to enhance the weekly phonics skills taught in the reading curriculum. Students interact with the spelling words in a variety of daily assignments that include writing and phonics practice. At the end of each week, students take a spelling test.

**\*Key Text: Spelling Connections, Zaner-Bloser, Inc.**

## **Writing**

Instruction in this course builds solid foundational skills in written and oral communication and critical thinking. Teaching in this course centers on the traits model of writing which is a research-based, spiraling sequence of seven specific areas of focused instruction. These traits include the following: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation. The teacher utilizes a wide variety of "Mentor Texts" for student use, models his own writing on a daily basis, and focuses on frequent assessment to help drive further instruction.

This course also provides students with numerous concrete and practical strategies for planning, revising, and editing their writing such as free writing, gathering details, using graphic organizers, peer responding, improving word choice and sentence fluency, and using convention checklists. Each strategy is presented with models to illustrate the strategy, Try-It activities to give students practice with strategies, and whole-class, small-group, and individual student activities to help students master the strategies and apply them independently.

Students also learn to apply different strategies as they write in the various forms. These forms include narrative, expository, persuasive, response to literature, creative writing, research writing, and writing across the curriculum. The course also covers grammar skills, study reading, test-taking skills, note-taking skills, and public speaking.

**\*Key Text: Traits Writing, Scholastic**

**\*Key Text: Write Source, Great Source Publication Group**

## **Additional Elementary Courses**

### **Art:**

Students have art one day a week for one hour. The elementary art program introduces students to the visual principles that God, as the Ultimate Creator, has set in place, and allows students to discover and develop their own God-given creativity. The program equips students with visual literacy and critical thinking skills, and exposes them to cultural, historic, and contemporary art perspectives. Additionally, hands on learning experiences serve to further develop students' technical skills within an array of art materials. Concepts are repeated and built upon year to year, developing self-esteem and self-discipline, and preparing students to be future creators and visual consumers.

## Physical Education:

Students in grades kindergarten - fifth receive P.E. class twice a week for a period of thirty minutes each class.

**Kindergarten:** The teacher incorporates activities that demonstrate, develop, and practice locomotor skills. The teacher incorporates Biblical reference on creation and the wonders of our bodies. Group games and activities that encourage sitting still and keeping one's hands to one's self while listening and following simple directions are provided. The introduction of playing with others and objects is given through organized activity as well as individual learning through playing with objects.

**First and Second-Grade:** The teacher incorporates activities that develop strong locomotor skills through teaching, demonstrating and thoroughly practicing specific skills. Group games and activities that work on listening and following simple as well as advanced directions are provided. Students are also introduced to team games. Students are taught to play games by the rules and to play fairly. Students are given the opportunity to increase their throwing and catching skills by playing games and engaging in activities that use different sizes and types of balls, beanbags, or other objects. Biblical integration is taught through the incorporation of Biblical principles as they apply to the care of the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, the wonder of the human form, and the reality of being created in God's image.

**Third – Fifth-Grade:** The teacher incorporates activities that continue to fine tune students' locomotor, throwing, and catching skills. Students are taught proper stretching techniques before exercise, the importance of physical fitness, and the importance of physical education from a Biblical perspective. Students practice fitness activities throughout the year and participate in a fitness program. Students are also introduced to team games with more rules and are taught how to learn, follow, and play by the rules. The importance of sportsmanship and playing for the Lord is a major focus. Students are asked to start the process of learning basic team and individual strategies for the games and activities that are played.

## General Music:

Students have music class twice a week for a period of thirty minutes each class.

General classroom music is an on-going course of study that is intended to equip each student with the auditory, visual, and cognitive tools necessary to function musically at some level. The elementary course of study also prepares gifted students with the necessary groundwork to succeed in High School and Collegiate music courses. To accomplish this, the National Standards in Music Education are followed. They include singing a varied repertoire; performing on instruments; improvising melodies, variations and accompaniments; composing and arranging within guidelines; reading and notating music; listening to, analyzing, and describing music; evaluating music and music performance; understanding relationships between music, the other arts and disciplines outside the arts; and understanding music in relation to faith, history and culture.

## Extracurricular Activities

### **Athletics:**

*Grade five only*  
Soccer (Boys-Fall)  
Volleyball (Girls-Fall)  
Basketball (Boys and Girls- Winter)

### **ACSI Activities:**

Art Festival  
Music Festival  
Math Olympics  
Speech Meet  
Spelling Bee

### **Fine Arts:**

Band  
Instrumental Concerts/Recitals  
Choir Concerts/Musical Production  
Visual Arts Classes

### **Clubs:**

Young Author's Club  
Beginning Chess Club  
Advanced Chess Club  
Safety Patrol

## Grade Scale

A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Below 60	P Pass
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66		F Fail
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62		

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are issued for each of the four quarters, and a final grade is reported as a year-end average. Report cards are posted on Renweb/ParentsWeb following each quarter grading period and reflect letter grades. Students are expected to be aware of their ongoing grades, and parents are strongly encouraged to monitor academic progress on a more frequent basis between report cards. Westminster Christian School seeks to assist parents in this task by making teacher grade books available at all times on Renweb/ParentsWeb and by encouraging frequent communication between parents and teachers.

## **Standardized Testing**

All students in Grade 1 through Grade 5 take the TerraNova 3 standardized assessments. This set of assessments is administered each spring, usually in late April. Results are shared with parents in June.