



The Woodlands Christian Academy

2022-2023 LOWER SCHOOL Course Guide

"The Lord is with you mighty warrior."
Judges 6:12

Mission Statement

The Woodlands Christian Academy is an independent, Christ-centered, college preparatory school that integrates learning with Biblical faith and spiritual growth, and challenges students to reach their highest potential – intellectually, creatively, physically and socially – for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Vision Statement

At The Woodlands Christian Academy, we equip servant leaders to impact their world and all eternity for Jesus Christ.

The Woodlands Christian Academy (Woodlands Christian or TWCA), founded in 1993, is an interdenominational Christian, college preparatory, day school governed by a self-perpetuating Governance Board. The school enrolls students Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade.

The Woodlands Christian Academy is accredited by Cognia, CESA, and the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

SPIRITUAL PILLAR

Biblical Studies

Pre-Kindergarten

The year starts with the wonders of Creation and continues chronologically to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our Father's love for one another is emphasized throughout each of the Bible stories. Storytelling, songs, and related activities, show how God reveals Himself to mankind. Students learn the foundations of prayer helping them build confidence to pray at school and at home.

Kindergarten

Throughout the year, students begin to develop an understanding of God's design for Creation and the Christian responsibility of wisdom. Woven into the weekly lessons are opportunities to discover new methods for engaging in prayer, worship, and the study of God's word. The social and emotional aspects of the biblical stories provide students with strategies in real life situations.

First Grade

God's purposeful design and Christian responsibility are reinforced throughout the school year. Woven into the weekly lessons are opportunities to engage in prayer, worship, develop Godly character traits. Students learn the biblical truths of creation, the fall, and redemption. God's Word is the source and measure of truth is recognized through daily discussions.

Second Grade

Students focus on developing an understanding of God's design for Creation and the Christian responsibility of fellowship. Woven into the weekly lessons are opportunities to discover new methods for engaging in prayer, worship, and the study of God's word. Students learn to build fellowship with God through our Savior Jesus Christ. Lessons are designed to formulate a biblical perspective of the world. As students memorize weekly Bible verses, they begin to understand how to "hide God's word in their hearts"

Third Grade

An understanding of God's design for Creation and the Christian responsibility of image-bearing are developed. Woven into the weekly lessons are opportunities to discover new methods for engaging in prayer, worship, and the study of God's word. Learning the nature of who our Lord truly is helps students understand their role as image bearers of God. The fruits of the Spirit are explained to help students become ambassadors of Christ. In addition, they discover biblical characters who reflect God's nature: David, Samuel, Solomon, and Saul.

Fourth Grade

God's design for Creation and the Christian responsibility of servanthood are explored and studied. Woven into the weekly lessons are opportunities to discover new methods for engaging in prayer, worship, and the study of God's word. Students discover how Jesus served those around Him. They compile a list of ways they can serve others in their families, classroom, school, and community.

INTELLECTUAL PILLAR

English and Language Arts

Pre-Kindergarten

Students master reading and writing readiness skills through a multi-sensory approach, which includes songs, games, and group activities. Interactive read-alouds teach concepts about print and expand vocabulary. Actively engaging students in the asking and answering of questions help to retell the story in their own words. A language-rich environment helps develop the alphabetic principle and phonological awareness. Students learn to recognize, spell, and write their name.

Fine motor skills are strengthened through handwriting, tactile play, and practicing various types of grips. Handwriting incorporates number formation, letter formation, name practice, and labeling. Students learn to think critically and problem solve in social settings. They learn to verbally express their needs and practice their manners. Students exhibit independence as they take charge in completing tasks and other responsibilities.

Kindergarten

Students learn the foundational reading and writing skills that will set them on the path to become lifelong readers, writers, and communicators. They develop concepts of print, phonemic awareness, and phonics as well as letter/sound manipulation, rhyming, and other decoding skills. “Superpower” strategies are practiced daily to become fluent readers. A literacy rich environment allows students to focus on identifying the characters, setting, and plot while reading and listening to fictional stories. Reading and listening to non-fiction texts allows students to become experts on a particular topic.

The Writer’s Workshop model helps students progress through the writing process by the following: 1) illustrating pictures and labeling their drawings 2) writing a string of letters to convey meaning 3) communicating with simple sentences 4) writing to tell a story. Teachers provide assistance to students as they begin to learn the revising and editing process.

First Grade

Reading strategies and skills learned in kindergarten continue to develop as students read increasingly complex texts. They build stamina by reading texts for uninterrupted, sustained periods of time. Independently reading texts reinforces comprehension strategies, word solving strategies, vocabulary, and fluency. Story elements and skills that are foundational to literal and inferential comprehension are emphasized. Non-fiction texts tap into the student’s natural curiosity about various themes and topics. Students learn a variety of text features unique for the non-fiction genre.

Different genres including narrative, informational, opinion and realistic fiction are taught throughout the year. Everyday events in students’ lives are transformed into focused, well -structured writing pieces. They breathe life into their characters by creating dialogue to make them talk, think, and interact. Topics of interest help to steer students into writing an informative piece where they learn how to write facts to inform their readers. Opinion pieces are created to review restaurants, tv shows, or sports teams. Realistic fiction pieces are written to “show, not tell”, using action, dialogue, and feelings to make the writing come alive.

Second Grade

Readers receive explicit strategy instruction and are given significant amounts of time to practice these strategies at their independent reading level. Lessons emphasize the importance of building a repertoire of strategies to improve comprehension and fluency in both literature and informational texts. Enjoyment of reading is stressed throughout the reading process where self-selection of reading material is highly valued. Students discern and analyze texts for God's truth. Phonics is taught systematically and comprehensively. Students are instructed in phonemic awareness and word study contributing to fluency, vocabulary development, and strategies for understanding.

Students learn to craft powerful stories based on their own small moments. Topics of interest are researched to convey factual information in a writing piece using a variety of resources. The language of poetry is explored to help compose five types of poems: cinquain, haiku, autobiographical, couplet, and acrostic. Teachers provide support as the students revise and edit their writing pieces.

Third Grade

Readers immerse themselves in fiction and nonfiction texts as they work on vocabulary development, identifying the main ideas, recognizing text structure, and thinking critically. Students are taught how to infer character traits, motivations, relationships, and how they change. They identify and explain the theme of a text and can analyze the author's choices. Reading non-fiction texts allows them to synthesize information across multiple texts. Research skills are developed to plan and present in various formats.

Personal experiences help students to compose a true narrative and use a variety of details to bring their story to life. Using information from multiple non-fiction texts, students will have the opportunity to use their research skills to plan and present on a topic of their choice.

Fourth Grade

Reading more complex texts allows for more in-depth conversations about various genres. Students learn how to utilize texts to research specific topics, compare and contrast themes, and analyze the complexity of characters as well as synthesize complicated narratives. During the individualized reading conferences, students share their thoughts about what they are reading, set goals for future reading, and receive immediate feedback from teachers. Students are held accountable for their reading and thinking and begin to take ownership of their learning.

Students become more familiar with opinion, informational and narrative writing pieces. Each unit of study provides a progression of instruction increasing their proficiency in the different writing genres. Students experience a wide range of writing abilities and topics. Through individual writing conferences, students learn strategies to help them develop persuasive essays, literary essays, and research reports. The fourth grade writing process creates a positive attitude among students towards writing and motivates them to improve their work.

History and Social Studies

Pre-Kindergarten

The foundation is set to build on the relationships students develop in their homes, communities, and schools. Citizens who work to help our community are invited to the classroom to speak and present their job descriptions. This allows students to see first-hand how they impact the community. Students are exposed to historical figures as well as cultural history. They discover and learn about places in the United States and in the world.

Kindergarten

Students identify characteristics about themselves as they share who they are with their peers. They understand the concept of location, and where they live using maps and globes. Students learn the concept of chronology and use vocabulary related to time. They explore state and national heritage by studying the celebration of patriotic holidays and contributions of historical figures. Basic human needs of food, clothing, and shelter are identified. They distinguish the difference between wants and needs. Throughout the year, students study celebrations, symbols, and customs that represent Texas and the United States.

First Grade

Students study their relationship to the classroom, school, and community to establish the foundation for being a responsible citizen in society. They understand the roles of authority figures and public officials. Maps are introduced to locate places using the four cardinal directions. They identify and describe landforms to understand the community and the world. Texas and US symbols, monuments, and how historical figures shaped our state and nation are explored. They discover the origin and customs of different holiday traditions by participating in such activities like Christmas Around the World.

Second Grade

Students focus on citizenship, community, government, economics, and geography. Map skills are practiced. Characteristics of being a good citizen in a variety of communities are identified. They learn how parts of the government are established and function, along with understanding economic concepts that affect daily life. Reading non-fiction texts exposes students to multiple vocabulary terms. Project-based activities deepen the understanding of the concepts.

Third Grade

Students understand the basic functions of the various levels of government. They discover facts about exploration, migration, and early settlement as they research the Westward Expansion. Individuals who have influenced various communities are recognized. They will identify characteristics of good citizenship exemplified by historical and contemporary figures. Topics are researched using a variety of resources and then published on different platforms.

Fourth Grade

Students are immersed in the Texas culture. They learn the important customs, symbols, and celebrations of Texas. Using geographic tools, students understand how the locations, patterns, and geographic factors influence where people live and how they adapt and modify their environment. Critical thinking skills are applied to organize and use information acquired from a variety of resources to research aspects about Texas.

Mathematics

Pre-Kindergarten

Mathematical concepts are introduced using books, songs and manipulatives. Students develop number sense, count, and identify numbers. One to one correspondence is reinforced by counting objects. Objects are sorted by various attributes. They identify and create patterns. Students identify shapes, determine if sets of objects are the same or different; more or less. Calendar time allows students to learn the days of the week, months of year, weather patterns, and reinforces counting.

Kindergarten

Students continue their focus on number sense. They apply principles of counting to make the connection between numbers and quantities. Manipulatives and visuals help to facilitate the learning of addition as joining and subtraction as separating. Strategies are taught to solve word problems and respond to practical situations involving addition and subtraction.

First Grade

The primary focus is the understanding and applying of place value, solving problems involving addition and subtraction, and understanding the sequential order of numbers. Students learn to tell time to the hour and half hour, identify coins and their value, analyze attributes of two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional solids. Data is organized to interpret information and solve problems by creating a variety of graphs. Manipulatives and real-life objects are utilized to build a foundation of mathematical concepts.

Second Grade

Students develop their knowledge of place value to compare and order whole numbers up to 1200. A variety of strategies are explored to add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers. Students represent and solve word problems using addition and subtraction. An introduction to financial literacy concepts helps determine and write the value of a collection of coins using the cent symbol and dollar sign. Concrete models are used to count fractional parts beyond one whole and recognize how many parts it takes to equal one whole. Students learn how to read an analog clock and write time in hours and minutes. Information from a graph is understood to draw conclusions and make predictions. Using concrete objects, students model, create, and describe contextual multiplication and division situations.

Third Grade

Students apply mathematical process standards to represent and compare whole numbers and understand the relationship related to place value and rounding. Strategies and methods are taught to add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers. Students recall multiplication facts and recall the

corresponding division facts to help solve multi-step word problems using multiplication and division. Students begin to solve 2-digits by 1-digit multiplication problems. They can represent and compare fractions and determine the area and perimeter of rectangles. Information from graphs and scaled intervals helps students solve one and two-step problems.

Fourth Grade

Students build upon the standards from third grade with more complexity. The primary focus is number operations, fractions, decimals, algebraic reasoning, geometry measurement, and data analysis. Students will discover how to use problem-solving models and select appropriate tools to solve mathematical problems. They learn to use mathematical relationships to generate solutions, make connections, and predictions.

Science

Pre-Kindergarten

Students learn to recognize God's beauty and design in all that He has created. They investigate different animals and insects and how they live on Earth. They can explore various items and objects by using their five senses. STEAM activities encourage students to problem solve and use their critical thinking skills.

Kindergarten

Students explore our world by integrating the seven days of Creation. They are introduced to the different aspects of animals, plants, the Earth, states of matter, and the water cycle. The world is explored using the five senses. STEAM activities encourage students to problem solve and use critical thinking skills.

First Grade

Students apply the Bible's teachings to science concepts. They defend the Truth that God created all things and sustains their existence. They explore and explain how the design of living things meets their needs for growth and survival. The patterns of the Earth, sun, moon, and stars are observed and analyzed. Foundational science process skills are used to develop orderly approaches to problem solving. Active participation and relevant discussions give students the opportunity to apply their science knowledge.

Second Grade

Students discover the wonders of the world by asking questions and looking for answers. They learn that matter is all around us and can identify and describe the diverse properties of matter. Students identify and locate various landforms found around the world. Specific characteristics of plants and animals and how they work together to help each other thrive are discovered. As students examine the different habitats and environments, they understand how the basic needs are met for plants and animals. Hands-on activities and experiments allow them to explore engineering and design concepts.

Third Grade

Different aspects of science from a biblical worldview are explored. Students understand the connection between balanced and unbalanced forces of motion. They describe various types of weather conditions. Heredity is explained as being inherited from parents, a variation of a trait, or as influenced by the environment. How animals adapt to survive are researched using a variety of resources. Scientific thinking is developed through planning and investigation.

Fourth Grade

Students recognize, define, and use a variety of Greek and Latin root words appropriately. Energy transfers and how to distinguish between renewable and nonrenewable resources are introduced. Properties of waves and the electromagnetic spectrum are investigated, as well as the interactions of the Earth's spheres and what makes up the landscape of the Earth. Earth's orbit and rotation and the moon phases are explored. Structures of the living things including plant, animal cells, and the human body systems are researched.

Foreign Language

Spanish

Students are exposed to the language of Spanish in its spoken form. Stories, songs, games, picture symbols, and other activities are utilized to help students comprehend and retain the Spanish language. Students begin by hearing and repeating simple phrases and vocabulary such as colors, numbers, classroom objects, family members, etc. As the course builds in each grade, students will become equipped for interaction in real life situations and are challenged to create more complex sentences. In addition to learning the language, students develop an awareness of the culture and geography of a variety of Spanish speaking countries. An emphasis is placed on God's love for people of all languages.

Dual Language Spanish Immersion

English speaking students in the Dual Language Spanish Immersion program will be in an instructional setting with a native speaking Spanish teacher. Students will master grade level knowledge and skill in all content areas. As the course builds in each grade level, students will continue to grow in grade-level biliteracy, cultural competence, and develop academic achievement commensurate with or above that of similar student populations. In grades kindergarten to second grade, students receive one-hundred percent of their academic instruction in Spanish. After second grade, the instruction time in the minority language decreases by percentages as the student progress through lower school.

CREATIVE ARTS PILLAR

Specials

Music

A variety of spiritual truths through music, drama, and dance are introduced. Opportunities are given to express their creative interests and talents in class. Lower School students can perform in the Christmas program and other musical events. They experience an assortment of engaging activities throughout the year individually and collaboratively. Performances rejoice and celebrate the Christian beliefs through musical theater.

Music Theory

Language of music is learned through the joy of playing piano. Music is enjoyed through projects with partners, while written symbols, note values on the staff, chords, and scales are learned. Utilizing *Piano Marvel*, an iPad application, students earn medals and trophies as they learn, practice, and play the piano with their favorite songs. Students can connect to the iPad program at home to continue earning trophies. In addition to piano, students explore other instruments such as guitar, ukulele, and drums.

S.T.E.A.M. Studio

Students use the knowledge gained in science and apply it with hands-on experiments and engineering builds. A variety of STEAM related careers, art integrated projects, and STEAM challenges are experienced. They develop their creativity and critical thinking as they collaborate with one another. Learning is deepened as real-world challenges are solved by thinking outside of the box.

Art

The art program in the Lower School begins with a firm foundation in the basic elements of design: line, shape, texture, and color which are built upon each subsequent year. Students will be introduced to the visual arts through vocabulary, demonstration, reflection, collaboration, and exploration of a variety of art mediums and processes. They will study elements of art and principles of design as well as incorporating historical context and color theory while growing an appreciation for His creation as well as our own and others.

PHYSICAL PILLAR

Physical Education

In PE, Lower School students grow and develop their bodies and mind through physical movement. Students participate in extracurricular units including running club, four square, rhythm and dance, cup stacking, DRUMFIT, and skating. Throughout the year, a variety of sports are explored: football, volleyball, soccer, track and field, golf, and tennis. As students improve their physical ability, PE Coaches incorporate biblical truths to help them become strong warriors for Christ.