

UPPER SCHOOL

Humanities

Our sovereign God providentially directs the course of history. Paul reminded those in Athens that it was God who “made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation” (Acts 17:26). Elsewhere, he reminded the Romans, “For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things” (Rom. 11:36). The study of history, then, is a study of God’s purposes worked out in time.

Therefore, the study of history, while capable of providing intellectual stimulation and aesthetic pleasure, cannot be an end unto itself. Rather, it is a tool for sharpening our character and equipping us to live faithfully. With this in mind, the study of history is not the mere memorization and regurgitation of facts and dates, but an exploration of human nature with a view to the shaping our own moral understanding. We study history for the pleasure of a good story, but also for insights into the ways that human beings have dealt with the moral dimensions of existence. We seek wisdom from the ideas and behaviors that have shaped our society, and we aim to free students from the chronological provincialism of modern culture by opening to them a past rich in fresh resources for their moral and intellectual development.

Smith Prep’s Lower School systematically studies the earliest civilizations through the present era. The Upper School students begin again with Ancient Civilizations but look at the unfolding of history with greater critical awareness. Students are encouraged to evaluate cause and effect patterns found in historical events and are challenged to critique their own historical assumptions. Throughout the year, students are also provided with multiple opportunities to conduct in-depth research of historical events and significant people of their choosing. During each semester, students give persuasive speeches and engage in full length debates to flesh out some of the more consequential historical issues.

- **7th Grade – Ancient History and Greco-Roman History**
Streams of Civilization Vol. 1, Eusebius’ *Church History*, and Plutarch’s *Lives*
- **8th Grade – Modern and Contemporary History**
Streams of Civilization Vol. 2, Selected readings from the Western tradition
- **9th Grade – American History**
Selected primary sources and Paul Johnson’s *A History of the American People*
- **10th Grade – Government and Economics**
Selected readings from the Western tradition of government and economics
- **11th Grade – World History**
Selected readings from the Western philosophical tradition and Colin Brown’s *Christianity and Western Thought*

- **12th Grade – Origins of Western Civilization**
Selected readings
- **12th Grade - History of Scientific Revolutions**
Selected reading

Logic and Rhetoric

Logic and Rhetoric are essential tools for effective communication and integral to the classical tradition. At Smith Prep, students begin formal instruction in logic in 7th grade, where they are trained in the principles of sound reasoning. This study continues into 8th grade and beyond, as students cultivate habits of clear thinking and intellectual integrity. Logic trains the mind to discern what is true; rhetoric trains the heart and tongue to express that truth persuasively and beautifully.

Together, these arts shape more than just skillful communicators—they form virtuous persons. Both logic and rhetoric are taught with the aim of cultivating *prudence* and *fortitude*: prudence in discerning what to say and how to say it, and fortitude in speaking truth when it is difficult. In the Christian tradition, these disciplines are not neutral tools of persuasion, but gifts to be stewarded in the service of neighbor and truth. We aim to train students who speak not to dominate or impress, but to build others up in love and to bear witness to what is good, true, and beautiful.

To the ancients, rhetoric was the crowning intellectual discipline. It took the knowledge the student had gained over the course of their years of schooling and the understanding of logical principles gained from the study of traditional logic and molded them into powerful tools of persuasion. To Aristotle, whose *Rhetoric* is the discipline’s foundational text, the art of rhetoric was the chief weapon in the service of truth. Throughout their Upper School experience, our students are encouraged to hone their skills in logic and rhetoric in every class.

- **7th Grade – Pursuing Wisdom: Introduction to Critical Thinking**
- **8th Grade – Informal Logic, Veritas**
- **9th Grade – Formal Logic, Veritas**
- **10th Grade – Rhetoric I**
- **11th Grade – Rhetoric II**
- **12th Grade – Senior Research Seminar**

Classical Languages

At Smith Prep, the study of Latin is not merely an academic requirement but a formative discipline that cultivates precision, attentiveness, and delight in language. Latin sharpens a student’s ability to think logically, reason clearly, and express ideas with beauty and clarity.

As the language of the Church, the academy, and much of the Western tradition, Latin offers students direct access to the foundational texts of our civilization and the Christian faith.

In the early years, students build joyful familiarity with Latin through vocabulary, chanting, and basic translation. As they mature, they begin to dwell more deeply in the language with visual and auditory tools provided by *Picta Dicta*, a rich and thoughtful language-learning program. In fifth grade and beyond, they study grammar in earnest, internalizing the structure of Latin through careful practice and reflection. Along the way, they read stories that increase in complexity with each lesson—eventually encountering adapted poetic forms modeled on the works of Virgil and Ovid. This careful, incremental approach allows students not only to translate Latin, but to think in it, savor its nuances, and appreciate its beauty.

Through this progression, students come to see that Latin is not a dead language but a language of life—one that forms the intellect, enriches the imagination, and connects them to the great conversation of Western civilization.

Language Arts

Language is a gift of God. In the garden, Adam's first act was to deploy language to name the animals. By doing so, Adam reflected the God in whose image he was made. God spoke, and it was so; words became worlds. By using words to make sense of his world, Adam laid the foundation of all human civilization. Because we are awash in a sea of language and learning, to recognize and make use of the potential of language for meaning, truth, and beauty is not merely an academic exercise. It is an exercise in fully inhabiting the world God created by His words and redeemed by the Word made flesh.

For these reasons, literature is at the heart of Smith Prep's English curriculum. The best way to become skillful readers and writers is to thoughtfully and generously engage the very best of the literary tradition. Such engagement yields a variety of rewards.

Students are brought into a longstanding conversation about the meaning of human life. The best stories and poems of the Western tradition explore what is most significant in our experience, such as the nature of justice, hope, love, friendship, and courage. These stories give readers the opportunity not only to think about and discuss these themes, but also to feel and imagine their very reality.

However, to reach this level of engagement students must also cultivate certain habits of the mind. They must learn to be patient and generous because stories and poetry do not immediately surrender their beauty and wisdom. They must learn, as well, to recognize and appreciate metaphor, imagery, and symbolism. In so doing, they will learn not only about relationships

among words, but about the texture of reality as well. For example, bread and light can tell us something about God because God created a world in which meaning surprisingly and beautifully spills over from words to things and back into words again. Literature, then, trains the imagination as well as the intellect and the emotions.

At Smith Preparatory Academy, students receive systematic instruction in writing through the classical method known as the *progymnasmata*—a sequence of rhetorical exercises developed in ancient Greece and refined through the Renaissance to train eloquent thinkers and speakers. Our core resource is the Writing & Rhetoric series by Classical Academic Press, which guides students step by step into advanced forms of composition, including persuasive argumentation, comparative analysis of virtues and vices, and formal oratory. Each book builds incrementally in complexity, cultivating essential skills in writing, speaking, listening, and reasoning. Writing is integrated across our humanities curriculum, allowing students to engage deeply with great ideas while refining their rhetorical craft. This training equips students with the ability to think critically and communicate persuasively—skills essential for success in higher education, leadership, and life. In an age of rapid communication, our program fosters thoughtful, articulate voices capable of shaping culture with wisdom and clarity. Through their engagement with literature, students learn not only to appreciate great writing, but also how to write clear, articulate, compelling prose themselves so that they may fully partake in God’s gift of language.

Sample Literature Lists

Seventh Grade <i>April Morning</i> <i>Longfellow – Poems</i> <i>Around the World in 80 Days</i> <i>The Lost World</i> <i>Treasure Island</i> <i>God’s Smuggler</i> <i>The Hiding Place</i> <i>Through Gates of Splendor</i> <i>Across Five Aprils</i> <i>Johnny Tremain</i> <i>Father Brown Stories</i> <i>Sherlock Holmes</i>	Eighth Grade <i>Out of the Silent Planet & Perelandra</i> <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> <i>Red House Mystery</i> <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> <i>Red Badge of Courage</i> <i>The Chosen</i> <i>The Island of Dr. Moreau</i> <i>Death Be Not Proud</i> <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> <i>Animal Farm</i> <i>20,000 Leagues Under the Sea</i> <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas</i>
9th Grade – American Literature <i>The Scarlet Letter</i> – Nathaniel Hawthorne Short Stories – Nathaniel Hawthorne American Puritan Sermons <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> – Mark Twain Selected Poems – Emily Dickinson Essays – Ralph Waldo Emerson <i>Walden</i> – Henry David Thoreau Short Stories – Edgar Allen Poe <i>The Old Man and the Sea</i> – Earnest Hemingway <i>Ethan Frome</i> – Edith Wharton <i>O Pioneers</i> – Willa Cather <i>To Kill A Mocking Bird</i> – Harper Lee	10th Grade – British Literature <i>Beowulf</i> – Anonymous <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> – Geoffrey Chaucer <i>Frankenstein</i> – Mary Shelley Three Shakespearean Plays <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> – Jane Austen <i>A Tale of Two Cities</i> – Charles Dickens <i>Wuthering Heights</i> – Emily Brontë <i>Silas Marner</i> – George Elliot <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> – Oscar Wilde “The Importance of Being Earnest” – Oscar Wilde <i>A Brave New World</i> – Aldous Huxley
11th Grade – Word Literature <i>The Iliad</i> – Homer The Theban Plays – Sophocles <i>The Divine Comedy</i> -- Dante <i>Paradise Lost</i> – John Milton <i>Crime and Punishment</i> – Fyodor Dostoyevsky <i>The Odyssey</i> - Homer <i>The Aeneid</i> – Virgil	12th Grade – Dual Enrollment <i>English Composition I</i> <i>English Composition II</i>

Science

God is the creator of the universe and His imprint is on the visible world. According to Paul, “His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made” (Rom. 1:20b). The psalmist declares, “The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge” (19:1-2). The study of our world through the sciences leads us to worship and serve the Creator. Moreover, human beings have been called to be faithful stewards of both creation and scientific knowledge. With our study of the sciences, we are able to fulfill that calling.

In the Upper School, we strive to impart more than the knowledge of basic facts and formulas. We encourage students to engage the sciences from a broader and more comprehensive framework. We want our students to achieve honors level competency in the sciences and also to understand the social and moral consequences of science and technology. Science carries philosophical and theological implications, so students must be prepared to critically evaluate these implications.

In order to accomplish this, Smith Prep emphasizes not only an understanding of the scientific disciplines, we also encourage an understanding of the history of science. By exploring scientific concepts as they developed throughout history students grasp the impact and influence of science and its technological application.

- **7th Grade** – Earth Science & Astronomy (Novare, Memoria Press)
- **8th Grade** – Life Science (Novare, Memoria Press)
- **9th Grade** – Physics (Novare)
- **10th Grade** – Biology (Novare)
- **11th Grade** – Chemistry (Novare)
- **12th Grade** – Dual Enrollment Psychology (PBA required text)

Mathematics

Mathematics is the language by which we can observe, study, and understand God’s created order within the universe. A true liberal arts education always included the study of arithmetic (number in abstract), music (number in time), geometry (number in space), and astronomy (number in space and time). In our Christian classical paradigm, we see mathematics as a language by which God reveals Himself to us.

After gaining a firm foundation of digit and quantity in the lower school, students then proceed through Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Algebra II, Geometry, and Pre-Calculus. As students work through equations or geometric proofs, our goal for them is to see the rational order and harmony which has been imposed on creation by God. The discipline required to master mathematics requires fortitude and patience. Our instructors are eager to lead students to worship God more fully and serve Him more faithfully through the study of mathematics.

Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment gives a high school junior or senior a jump starts on a college education, allowing you to complete college credits while simultaneously earning a high school diploma. Smith Preparatory Academy partners with Palm Beach Atlantic University offering multiple courses taught by our Smith Prep faculty. The classes include Composition I & II, Bible, and Psychology. All Smith Prep seniors are eligible for these dual enrollment classes.

Upon approval, Smith Prep students may also take dual enrollment classes at their community college that do not conflict with other Smith Preparatory Academy classes or schedule. Smith Preparatory Academy may approve these alternative dual enrollment classes only if a student has completed more than 12 high school credits, has at least a 3.0 unweighted grade point average, and the appropriate SAT and ACT scores according to our Smith Preparatory Academy policies.

Each college has its own set of guidelines once an application is received. The Dual Enrollment Program is not for every student and is reserved for the top students in our program.

Theological Studies

God is Truth and He is the source of all truth. God has revealed Himself through the created order, through His Son, and through His Word. Since God is the source of all truth, we believe that Christians may confidently pursue truth wherever it may be found with humility, wonder, and joy. These convictions are the foundation of all academic pursuits at Smith Prep and they guide our approach to learning in every discipline.

Mankind is created in God's image and blessed with the gifts of intellect and reason. We believe that it is part of our calling as disciples of Christ to love Him with our whole mind. Training our minds and cultivating our intellect is, therefore, an act of faithfulness and worship.

Scripture is God's truthful and authoritative revelation. We must pursue knowledge in humble reliance upon God's Word. We do not merely correlate Bible verses with what we learn apart from the Bible. Rather, we allow biblical wisdom to frame all of our learning. God's word provides the philosophical and moral foundations for the pursuit of knowledge, establishes its parameters, and determines the ends toward which that pursuit strives.

All disciplines at Smith Prep are taught in light of these convictions. Writing during the Second World War, C.S. Lewis summarized these convictions well: "If we thought that for some souls, and at some times, the life of learning, humbly offered to God, was, in its own small way, one of the appointed approaches to the Divine reality and the Divine Beauty which we hope to enjoy hereafter, we can think so still."

- **7th Grade** – Old Testament Survey
- **8th Grade** – New Testament Survey
- **9th Grade** – Introduction to Theological & Educational Studies
- **10th Grade** – Biblical Theology
- **11th Grade** – Systematic Theology
- **12th Grade** – Worldview & Apologetics, Dual Enrollment Exploring the Bible

COMMON ARTS

Many classical programs mistakenly conflate the subjects of the humanities and make them equivalent to classical schooling. Language and math were never meant to stand alone but were part of a much larger enterprise integrating wonder and worship into something that benefited the common community. In fact, the scientific revolutions were birthed out of this conviction. Christian classical education shapes a person to a particular way of life. It is this way of life, properly understood, that manifests itself in communities with vision to see the advancement or growth of God's kingdom everywhere.

The Common Arts are an essential part of the Christian classical paradigm and necessary in the establishment of a genuine community. For a millennia classical educators knew that the liberal arts tradition was practical and that our practices were to be grounded in the skills of life. Building, planting, and creating are pursuits that have been lost and must be revived in our current cultural context. The Common Arts, taken together with God's commands and virtuous living, become more than a useful skill for survival. They are the path to human flourishing. The great poet John Milton said that these arts are a chance for students to gain that "real tincture of natural knowledge, as they shall never forget, but daily augment with delight." It is our desire that our students grow in Godly virtue and that we prepare every student to dwell in God's Kingdom, enjoying a life of leisure (from Greek *scholé*, meaning "restful learning") while engaging this material world rightly.