



SCHOLÉ ACADEMY
CLASSICAL ACADEMIC PRESS

Writing and Rhetoric Year 3 (Section 2) –
Middle School W&R Transition Course
Book 5: Refutation & Confirmation / Book 7: Encomium & Vituperation
2018-2019

Course Description: The Writing & Rhetoric Transition Course introduces older students (target grade range: 7th–9th grade) to the series beginning with *Book 5: Refutation & Confirmation*. In this way, the course is similar to the first semester of Writing & Rhetoric Year 3; however, this middle school transition course will follow a different pace and trajectory in order to include instructional lessons that review concepts from previous levels and will accelerate as needed through clearly identified areas of mastered skills specific to students in 7th–9th grade. In the first few weeks of the course, the teacher will assess student abilities in the areas of reading and writing and make adjustments as needed.

Throughout the year, students will develop and hone their skills in persuasive writing and speaking. In this course, students learn to refute or defend certain parts of narratives according to whether the identified parts are unbelievable, improbable, unclear, or improper—or believable, probable, clear, or proper. After learning to identify the parts of a story that can be attacked or defended, students practice writing refutations or confirmations using sound arguments to explain their opinions. Following mastery of skills and content in Book 5, students will write six-paragraph essays which are arguments against the common vices of people and arguments in favor of common virtues, including alternately praising and blaming the character and careers of specific historical figures (Book 7). Students will learn to master a thesis statement, use comparison and contrast, introduce and conclude an essay, use a variety of rhetorical devices, invent soliloquies to support an argument, demonstrate the use of pathos to engage readers, deliver writing orally, and revise writing.

In this course, students may progress more quickly through various forms of essays, including a brief biographical research project, commonplace essay, and comparison essay. The teacher reserves the right to adjust the course expectations, content, and pacing as needed to align with identified student skills and abilities.

Placement:

- This course is designed for students in 7th–9th grade who have had previous writing instruction but are new to the Writing & Rhetoric series.
- Because the goal of this course is to lead students to Writing & Rhetoric Year 5, students are expected to have mastered the following prerequisites:
 - Narrative and descriptive writing
 - The multi-paragraph essay (introduction, body, conclusion)
 - Strong grammatical concepts and conventions such as punctuation, sentence structure, and subject-verb agreement
 - The ability to sequence and organize ideas
 - Strong penmanship
 - Strong reading and comprehension skills for target grade level
 - Scholé Academy administers placement assessments in order to get to know each student and find the best learning environment for him or her, as we seek to educate our students well and wisely. After registration, a placement assessment will be provided to students. Registration is finalized when the student’s placement assessment has been returned by the course instructor with placement confirmation.

Course Texts:

The required texts for the course are *Writing & Rhetoric: Refutation & Confirmation (Book 5)* and *Writing and Rhetoric: Encomium & Vituperation (Book 7)*, published by Classical Academic Press.

Student Expectations: This class aims to cultivate a communal love and exploration of story and writing. Class time will sometimes be spent reading aloud as a group, as well as sharing each student’s writing. Class participation will be required through discussion, writing, public speaking, and homework contained in the text. This course strives for the cultivation of virtue as well as knowledge.

Yearlong Tutoring: 32 weeks, 64 classes
Monday & Wednesday, 11:00-12:15p EST

Instructor's name: Joanne Schinstock

Emails and phone calls are generally returned within 24 hours during the week; communication sent during the weekends/holidays is returned on the next school day. Please note calendar holidays.

If there is an issue or concern that requires discussion of details, please call me directly instead of email. Email is best suited for exchange of information. When in doubt, it is best to pick up a phone. In our frenetic times, it is convenient to send emails, but not always the best option for relationship building and problem solving.

Phone Number: 469-231-3008

Email Address: jschinstock@scholeacademy.com

Course Schedule **The pacing is subject to change to fit the needs of the class.*

August 29	Orientation (see Welcome Letter for details)
Sept 3	NO CLASS: LABOR DAY
Sept 5	First Class: Warm-up Week “Come to the Feast”
Sept 10 –12	Reading & Writing Assessments/Introduction
Sept 17-19	Student Presentations
Sept 24-26	Book 5(Lesson 1)
Oct 1-3	Lesson 2
Oct 8-10	Lesson 3
Oct 15-17	Lesson 4
Oct 23-24	Lesson 5
Oct 29-31	Lesson 6
Nov 5-7	Lesson 7
Nov 12-14	Lesson 8
Nov 19-21	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK
Nov 26-28	Lesson 9
Dec 3-5	Lesson 10
Dec 10-12	<i>Commonplace Essay (attacking vice/defending virtue)</i>
Dec 17-Jan 4	CHRISTMAS BREAK/NEW YEAR’S BREAK
Jan 7	<i>Review Commonplace Essay/Student Presentations</i>
Jan 9	Review Biography v Autobiography (Lesson 2/Book 7)
Jan 14-16	Lesson 13: 7 steps multi-paragraph research paper
Jan 21-23	Lesson 14: Sources & Citations
Jan 28-30	Your First Biography
Feb 4-6	Research Outline
Feb 11-13	Notecards
Feb 18-22	WINTER BREAK/NO CLASS
Feb 25-27	*Research Paper due: Student Presentations/Lesson 1(Book 7)
Mar 4-6	Lesson 1
Mar 11-13	Lesson 3
Mar 18-20	Lesson 4
Mar 25-27	Lesson 5
Apr 1-3	Lesson 6
Apr 8-10	Lesson 7
Apr 15-19	EASTER/HOLY WEEK/NO CLASS
Apr 22-24	Lesson 8
Apr 29-May 1	Lesson 9
May 6-8	Lesson 10
May 13-15	<i>Review Comparison Essay</i>
May 20-22	<i>Review Comparison Essay</i>

***Please note the above dates and times are the anticipated class sessions for this course. However, all dates are subject to change as circumstances might dictate (e.g. illness, family emergency). If the instructor is ill a substitute will be assigned when possible.**

****This year students will write a research paper. The schedule currently marks 6 weeks for**

this project. Pacing will vary depending upon class progress and most of the project will be completed outside of classtime.

Please review the Scholé Academy Academic calendar for important dates. Remember September 17th is the last day to add/drop fall semester/yearlong courses unless provisional enrollment is granted during the enrollment process.

Students will be expected to keep as a record weekly lesson plans posted on Schoology. These plans describe in detail the lesson objectives, class activities, homework assignments, upcoming due dates for projects, and other pertinent information. Students should review these lesson plans each week prior to class in order to manage their learning objectives and writing assignments. A good way to keep track is to print and keep stored in course binder. Students should also keep a notebook for class notes.

Evaluation Procedures and Grading Criteria

Teachers will often assign the following grades based on students' level of achievement: *magna cum laude* (with great praise), *cum laude* (with praise), *satis* (sufficient, satisfactory), and *non satis* (not sufficient). Ideally, every average student working diligently should do praiseworthy work (*cum laude*). Those who excel beyond this expectation will be the *magna cum laude* students. Students who do adequate but not praiseworthy work should be designated *satis*. *Non satis* means lacking sufficiency or adequacy. These assessments are not mere grading instruments but ways for both the student and the instructor to assess mastery. Students will receive written feedback on each essay. These graded essays, including instructor feedback, should be kept as a portfolio of their academic progress over the course of the year. The written feedback will be referred to as the **narrative grade**. **If students need to complete a college transcript with either a numeric or letter grade, they will need to notify the teacher in advance so she can provide a traditional grade accordingly upon request at the end of the course.** Please review the Student-Parent Handbook for policy regarding traditional grades. Parents are the final authority on traditional grades.

As noted in the Student-Parent Handbook, the instructor and student with Scholé Academy pursue together the path of virtue and wisdom. Keeping that in mind, each student must strive to cultivate habits of **patience, constancy, temperance** and other virtues that ideally raise a student from a *satis* level to a *cum laude* and even *magna cum laude* level of mastery. As such the instructor expects students to:

- **Arrive on time for class** (Students who are late must catch up to the pace of that day which can cause confusion and setback for the student and interrupt the restful learning of others online. The instructor will not review material that day for a tardy student. Once a student views the recorded session, she should contact the instructor for assistance on core concepts if needed.) ***It is best for a family not to enroll their student in a course in which he or she will have to miss more than 6 classes.*** (See Student-Parent Handbook). ***All classes will be recorded and available for viewing for student absences. Recordings are not meant to replace a live class.***
- **Complete work on time** in preparation for discussion to enkindle curiosity and zeal as a member of the learning community. (All assignments will be reviewed by the instructor

and considered late after 8am on the due date. The instructor requires assignments submitted before class begins. **Late** assignments will not receive credit beyond one week. All student work will always receive teacher feedback.) Students should plan ahead scheduled absences.

- **Listen and contribute to class discussion respectfully** by practicing **humility** and **love** as we delight in seeking to cultivate “affection and taste” for truth, goodness and beauty.

In general, tardiness, speaking over others, forgetting assignments, submitting assignments completed in a rush, poor penmanship, and ultimately encountering the task of learning with a passive attitude do not typify *restful* learning. As members of Scholé Academy we are responsible for how our attitudes and affections influence the learning community.

Please remember restful learning consists of accurate expectations, accurate preparation, and accurate attitude. –Joelle Hodge, principal of Scholé Academy

A word about Reading Fluency Assessments. Reading fluency assessments along with writing and speaking assessments will be administered the first full week of class. These assessments help the instructor understand more fully the content and skill level of all incoming students. These assessments are administered within the first two weeks allowing course enrollment adjustments in some cases.

Student Presentation—(1st full week of class)

The first full week of school, students will be asked to present a 2-minute brief introduction about themselves using objects. In order to prepare for this assignment, students will need to read: “What Objects Tell the Story of Your life?” (New York Times) and “Object Lessons in History” (New York Times). These two brief articles will help set up the student for his/her presentation. Details will be explained, and article links provided during orientation week. As the art of elocution is a skill introduced in previous levels of the series, students will be asked to give a brief presentation as a preliminary public speaking assessment.

On the “classroom” environment: My commitment to you ...

“Augustine described education as essentially teaching students to “love that which is lovely,” following on Plato’s idea that affections and taste must be cultivated.” (Student-Parent Handbook) As your instructor, I will endeavor to model and foster virtues of successful learning, including love, humility, patience, constancy, perseverance, and temperance. (See “**My Philosophy of Education**”)

The Virtual Classroom:

Scholé Academy uses free online “virtual classroom” software provided by Zoom, one of the leading companies that provides such software. The virtual classroom will provide students with interactive audio and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video, and other media can be displayed and analyzed. Once enrolled, student will be emailed a link that will enable them to join the virtual classroom.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com.

A final word...Students with questions or concerns not addressed in this course syllabus are invited to contact me by phone. (**Direct line: 469-231-3008**; Weekday phone calls made after 3pm EST are typically returned the next day. I return weekend calls on the next business day.) On occasion the student might receive a request to attend a 15-minute tutorial.

“As we seek to recover and renew the scholé tradition of education, we know that we will misstep and veer from this path—after all we don’t know the path nearly as well as we would like. Still, we believe that finding and walking that path will be enriching to students, parents, and teachers. As we seek to recover the classical tradition of scholé, we welcome parental feedback and ideas about how we can better embody scholé in our online classes.” (Student-Parent Handbook)