



Classic Children's Literature

Yearlong Course 2021-2022

*Justice, prudence, temperance, and fortitude: how can children learn these four classical virtues?
The aim of this course is to formatively and experientially teach children the beauty and worth to be
found in them through works of classic children's literature.*

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:

Incoming 4th and 5th graders

COURSE BASICS AT A GLANCE:

Class Dates: Begins Wednesday, September 8, 2021 and runs through Friday, May 27, 2022.

Class Times: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 2:15pm-3:15pm(EST)

Office Hours: By appointment contact me

Instructor: Emily Brigham

Email: ebrigham.scholeacademy@gmail.com

**Please note the above dates and times are anticipated class sections for this course. However, all dates are subject to change as the instructor's circumstances might dictate (e.g. illness, family emergency). Any classes canceled by the instructor will be made up at an alternate time designate by the instructor.*

OBSERVED SCHOLÉ ACADEMY HOLIDAYS (NO CLASSES)

- Monday, September 6, 2021 (*Labor Day*)
- Monday, November 22 Friday, November 26, 2021 (*Thanksgiving*)
- Monday, December 20, 2021 Friday, January 7, 2022 (*Christmas and New Year's*)
- Monday, February 14 Friday, February 18, 2022 (*winter break*)
- Monday, April 11 Friday, April 15, 2022 (*Holy Week/Easter*)

No other holidays between September 8, 2020 and May 28, 2021 are observed

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS

- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B.White
- *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis
- *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame
- *The Railway Children* by Edith Nesbit
- *Carry on, Mr. Bowditch* by Jean Lee Latham
- *Tales of Wonder, Volume 1* edited by Brian Phillips, Matt Bianco, and David Kern from the CiRCE Institute

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Spiral-bound blank sketchbook
- Ruled notebook
- Stockmar Beeswax block crayons*

**Students will frequently respond to what they've read through art. In order for there to be continuity in the materials used by the students, the instructor has chosen these block crayons, which are conducive to guided drawings.*

COURSE MAP

QUARTER 1: What is Justice?

- “Hansel and Gretel”
- “Rumplestiltskin”
- *Charlotte's Web*

QUARTER 2: What is Prudence?

- “Little Red Riding Hood”
- *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*

QUARTER 3: What is Temperance?

- *The Wind in the Willows*

QUARTER 4: What is Fortitude?

- *The Railway Children*
- *Carry on, Mr. Bowditch*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Why do we need stories? C.S. Lewis said, “The nearest I have yet got to an answer is that we seek an enlargement of our being. We want to be more than ourselves. . . We want to see with other eyes, to imagine with other imaginations, to feel with other hearts, as well as with our own.” Such is the yearning of children and adults alike, for it is through stories that we enter into a world that is not our own, and yet become more who we are meant to be. It is through stories that we can learn virtue. In giving children stories, they enter into the world of the characters and reflect on the virtues and vices of the protagonists and antagonists. It is a gentle, appropriate, and vivid way for children to learn what Dietrich von Hildebrand called a “response to value” and the virtue that blossoms from that response.

In this class, children will read, enjoy, and interact with classic works of children’s literature in order to learn through knowledge, experience, and reflection the four classical virtues: justice, prudence, temperance, and fortitude. Students will respond to these texts through discussion, written analysis and reflection, and artistic mediums in order to reach the whole child in our study. The skills practiced will include reading fluency, reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary, memorization, recitation, analysis, synthesis, and discussion.

IMPORTANT SKILLS & BEHAVIORS NEEDED FOR SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE

- Students should be able to read at a late-elementary level, smoothly and with understanding. Additionally, students should be able to read aloud with ease, clarity, and appropriate emotion.
- Students should be able to narrate a story back to the teacher, recalling both the main idea and pertinent details.
- Students should be able to distinguish between the main idea of the story and the details of a story.
- Students should be able to identify the characters, setting, and plot of a given book.
- Students should be able to answer text-based lower-order comprehension questions and be able to reflect on higher-order thinking questions.
- Students should be able to log-in to Schoology to review homework assignments and upload completed work. If a student is not able to navigate Schoology independently, a parent or guardian should be willing to assist that student with homework assignments and other course materials obtained through this platform.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS

Students enrolling in Scholé Academy's Classic Children's Literature will be expected to show development of Executive Function throughout the year. Executive Functioning is the brain's work of planning, prioritizing, controlling impulses, recollection, etc. These six areas of execution are important in this class, and ultimately, in the student's life.

1. Engagement: An engaged student is one who is willing to step into the arena of class discussion, to ask questions, to supply answers, and to generate the internal dialogue necessary to determine if a discussion is important and relevant to himself. Students should be viewing the class via Zoom and should not be browsing the internet instead. Scholars should be prepared to take notes on the text and on class discussion.

2. Attention to Detail & Preparedness: These students are ones who consistently adhere to deadlines and submission requirements. A prepared student not only completes and uploads all assignments before class, but also confirms that technology is working. These students will be expected to show the virtue of constancy by remaining focused and diligent and pushing away even "good" distractions that would inhibit learning and mastery.

3. Self-Monitoring: Students who successfully self-monitor can evaluate their own performance. This is the action of perceiving both one's own strengths and weaknesses. These students determine which problems they can complete alone and which require peer, teacher, or parent support.

4. Task Initiation: This student recognizes the time to begin working and is able to do so without procrastination. A student who can initiate tasks easily adjusts from a Zoom classroom to a breakout room while still maintaining a scholarly attitude.

5. Employing Critiques: These students are ones who receive feedback to one of their submissions, and then attempt to apply that feedback to future assignments rather than repeat mistakes. Students should have an attitude of humility when receiving feedback, as this affords an invaluable opportunity to grow and to develop their God-given talents. Likewise, students should celebrate the successes of their peers.

6. Problem Solving: A student with well-developed problem-solving skills is willing to persevere, even when he is unable to successfully overcome a challenge on the first try. Good writing involves the problem-solving skills of perseverance; looking at a story from a new perspective; finding an additional source or doing research; taking a rest to refresh the mind and body; or asking for help from a teacher, parent, or the Lord.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: CLASS PARTICIPATION

“The intelligence can only be led by desire. For there to be desire, there must be pleasure and joy in work. The intelligence only grows and bears fruit in joy. The joy of learning is as indispensable in study as breathing is in running. . . It is the part played by joy in our studies that makes them a preparation for spiritual life, for desire directed toward God is the only power capable of raising the soul.”
[Simone Weil]

Recognizing that the purpose of education is not merely a gaining of information nor a competition for achievement but rather the directing of the desire towards God in worship, thanksgiving, and prayer, these are the student expectations in class participation:

During class time, students should. . .

- *Arrive prepared.* It is important to come with the materials needed and homework completed, but that is just the beginning. Arrive with a heart that is quiet and ready to receive, a mind that is active and ready to engage, and hands that are willing and ready to participate.
- *Arrive on time.* I will take note of patterns when it comes to tardiness, overlooking an occasional late entrance if it is out of character for the student. However, I will be in contact with parents if tardiness is habitual 4 or more late arrivals in one month.
- *Participate.* There will be plenty of opportunities for participation in classroom liturgies, discussions, and exercises. I understand that not all students are equally comfortable in being extroverted and conversing, but I appreciate consistent effort in this area!
- *Be an active learner.* It is expected that students participate in exercises, discussions, and activities during lesson time.

- *Exercise judgment and polite habits in the Zoom classroom.* Students should raise hands to speak, pause the video to use the restroom, or adjust the camera to limit the activity shown in the background of the student's setting. Other than when students need to step out of the room, the camera should be on at all times.

Outside of class time, students should. .

- Complete all course assignments and homework to the best of his ability. (A student who has not submitted his homework to the appropriate Schoology assignment prior to the start of class will not be well-prepared to complete the in-class practice and homework that follows. This will often result in a snowballing amount of homework that serves only to discourage an elementary student.) If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent a student from completing homework prior to class, a parent must contact the instructor prior to class time to ask for an extension.
- Upload homework to the appropriate Schoology Assignment folder prior to the start of class each day. Students must submit their work by scanning their homework pages and uploading it into the Schoology assignment window.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: HOMEWORK

Students will follow the sequence of study given by the teacher. The ultimate goal for the student will be, in a formative way, to learn the four classical virtues through classic children's literature and demonstrate that knowledge and understanding through written, oral, and artistic mediums. To achieve this goal, students will need to read fluently, listen carefully, and examine closely in order to take progressive steps toward their goals. Therefore, student work and assessments will be completed through the following both formative and summative assessments.

STUDENT EVALUATION: GRADING

While striking a "restful" posture of learning in this class through Scholé Academy, I also recognize the need to provide grades for students. It's a delicate balance to achieve both restful learning and excellent academic performance. Earning a specific grade should not overshadow the value of a formative understanding and love of the virtues set forth in these stories. It is my aim as a teacher to uphold and model the worth of such gain, and the application of it.

However, I will be assigning grades in the following categories:

- *magna cum laude* (with great praise) or MCL
- *cum laude* (with praise) or CL
- *satis* (sufficient, satisfactory) or S
- *non satis* (not sufficient) or NS

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 will be designated satis. Non satis means lacking sufficiency or adequacy.

Student's grades will be comprised of the following:

Class Participation (25%)

1. Active listening
2. Group work
3. Participation in class discussions
4. Preparedness
5. Staying on task and following along with the text
6. Timely attendance
7. Putting forth one's best effort
9. Attitude and approach towards the class and its members

Formative Assessments (Homework) (45%)

1. Comprehension questions
2. Chapter summaries
3. Guided drawings
4. Sentence frames
5. Character sketches
6. Reflective essays

Summative Assessments (30%)

1. Book reports (*five total*)
2. Author imitations
3. Alternate endings
4. Poetry recitations (*four total*)

Students must understand that late homework will be given a 5% penalty for each weekday that the assignment is late. If an assignment is seven or more days late, then it must be still be completed in a satisfactory manner, but will be assigned the minimum satis grade of 70%.

STUDENT EVALUATION: MASTERY PORTRAIT

Students in this class are learning to take on the responsibility of their educations. It's imperative, then, that this course not only provide the academic components necessary to achieve mastery of the content of the class (knowledge) and skills associated with analytical thought, but also help engage the student in development of moral virtues. These three aspects of the course would comprise the "learning target".

- *By the end of the first semester, cum laude* students will understand how the virtue of justice is portrayed in "Hansel and Gretel," "Rumpelstiltskin," and *Charlotte's Web* and how prudence is portrayed in "Little Red Riding Hood" and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*.
- *By the end of the second semester, cum laude* students will understand how the virtue of temperance is portrayed in *The Wind in the Willows* and how the virtue of fortitude is portrayed in *The Railway Children* and *Carry on, Mr. Bowditch*.
- Cum laude students will be able to summarize the main idea of each book through a book report (for a total of five book reports).
- Cum laude students will be able to define and give text-based as well as personal examples of the four virtues studied in this course. They will be able to demonstrate this understanding in reflective essays.
- Cum laude students will be able to identify and successfully imitate a given author's writing style and provide an alternate ending as means of interacting with a text.
- Cum laude students will be able to answer comprehension questions, finish sentence frames, complete guided drawings, and create character sketches from the text.
- Cum laude students will be able to memorize and recite a poem per quarter (for a total of four poetry recitations) with ease and appropriate emotion.
- Cum laude students will have faithfully practiced the skills necessary to read aloud with fluency. Students will show attention to volume, pace, and inflection when speaking. Similarly, students will be encouraged to speak well to one another in pursuit of excellent work, in discussion of ideas and responses, and to build camaraderie in the group.
- Students will also be guided in development of the virtues of Wisdom, Goodness, and Truth. Ideally, students will employ wisdom when responding to virtues and vices, the actions and thoughts that he'll encounter in his reading.
- By the end of the course, students should understand that reading a rich selection of great literature builds the reservoir out of which we draw good ideas and find examples for our own lives. Students will be encouraged to use good writing and speaking to deliver and celebrate truth.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students are on their honor to abide by Scholé Academy's Learning Philosophy which assumes the personal cultivation of Student-Virtues described in the Student-Parent Handbook.

Plagiarism is a serious and punishable offense. Proper citation of all sources is essential to the academic endeavor. Remember to cite any source if the information is not common knowledge or is an opinion obtained through any source. A plagiarized assignment will result in a failing grade. Students should consult the MLA Style Guide for specific direction on obtaining, quoting and paraphrasing sources.

THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

We will be using the 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 whiteboard capabilities, in addition to shared screen texts, diagrams, video and other media for display and analysis. We will not utilize the chat function of this technology.

We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom. Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the Technology in the Classroom section of the Student Parent Handbook.

Students will submit documents by scanning and uploading them to their personal computer, then attaching those files as .pdfs to an email. They will submit their work to the Classic Children’s Literature Schoology assignment page. The Schoology access code to Classic Children’s Literature will be provided in your Orientation Packet.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR

Emily Brigham holds a BA in Primary Education from the University of North Florida. She was homeschooled through high school in the classical tradition, and previously taught the elementary grades in a Waldorf-inspired public charter school. Her classical upbringing instilled in her what Plato called an “affinity for the good” in academics, art, and virtue, while her Waldorf training inspired an appreciation of the unique nature of the child. She now seeks to cultivate those whole-child pedagogical approaches in the classical, liturgical tradition, to awaken in her own students that “affinity for the good.”

Emily lives in Jacksonville, Florida. Her avocations include bringing classical, sacred, and old-time music to churches, front porches, and street corners, and coaxing as many flowers as possible into her garden. These, and a trip to the mountains, are where she loves to find the glimpses of God’s goodness in these sacred ordinary days.

