

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS: This course is designed for **6th–8th graders** who want to develop their writing skills using the imitation and practice method contained in the Writing & Rhetoric series published by Classical Academic Press. Students should be familiar with elements of narration, description, and exposition in writing, and should feel comfortable writing a five- or six-paragraph essay when guided by prompts. All students should be in the process of mastering basic typing skills, for students will be expected to type all essay assignments.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Students will study with *Encomium & Vituperation* and *Comparison*, the seventh and eighth books of the Writing & Rhetoric series. An **encomium** is a short essay in praise of someone or something; a **vituperation** is an essay in which one criticizes something to show its faults. An encomium praises virtue, and a vituperation blames vice. In the middle of the year, students will also compose a multi-source biographical research paper. This course will work to develop a love and hunger for writing in each student and will do so through engaging class sessions, and assignments, as well as personal feedback. Students will also develop public speaking skills through short recitations and presentations.

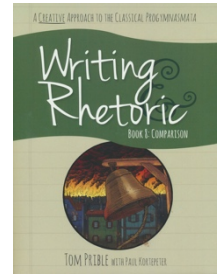
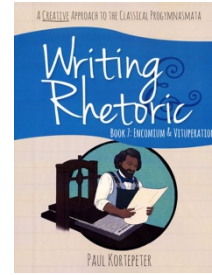
COURSE MAP: Our class will follow the timeline below, adjusting as needed for this particular group of students. There is some overlap between research paper writing and gathering tools for comparison writing. The reason for this will become clear at the start of the second semester!

Semester 1: QUARTER #1	
Weeks 1-6	Gathering tools for encomia and vituperation writing
Weeks 7-8	Writing encomia and vituperations
Semester 1: QUARTER #2	
Weeks 1-8	Writing encomia and vituperations
Semester 2: QUARTER #3	
Weeks 1-8	Planning and writing a research paper
Weeks 5-8	Gathering tools for comparison writing
Semester 2: QUARTER #4	
Weeks 1-8	Writing comparisons

OFFICE HOURS: In addition to class times, **students may schedule extra time with me during my “Office Hours,” Monday-Thursday from 12:15-1:00pm, and Fridays as available.** At these appointments, students may raise questions, seek assistance, or review class material.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

- Classical Academic Press’ *Writing & Rhetoric Book 7: Encomium and Vituperation* and *Book 8: Comparison*
- Commonplace journal (this may be a spiral notebook or a bound journal; no loose-leaf paper!)
- Optional: Audio files of both texts are available through www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com



IMPORTANT SKILLS & BEHAVIORS NEEDED PRIOR TO STARTING THE COURSE

Students should be able to read with fluency and to comprehend the text independently. Students should be able to narrate (tell back the story), summarize (shrink the story down), and amplify (stretch a story out by adding details, dialogue, and description) before enrolling in this course. Students should also be able to write a 5- or 6-paragraph essay before enrolling in this course. Students must be able to type or write legibly and understand basic English grammar rules and punctuation (ex: recognize a noun, verb, adjective, subject, etc.). They should be persevering as they begin on a long journey towards becoming great writers. Students should be motivated and inspired to persevere by the vision of mastery and wisdom laid before their eyes. They should be willing to take risks and to explore the art of writing. **6th-8th graders** should be able to log-in to Canvas to review homework assignments and upload completed work. When necessary, students should be able to comment on and collaborate with classmates through Canvas. However, some students new to Canvas may not be able to navigate the website independently; and thus, a parent or guardian should be willing to assist that student with homework assignments and other course materials obtained through this platform.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS DURING OUR COURSE: Class time will sometimes be spent reading aloud as a group and sharing each student’s writing. Class participation will also be required through discussion, writing, public speaking, and going over homework contained in the text. Reading and writing about the lives of famous people who lived virtuously and viciously contributes to our aim to cultivate the virtues as well as knowledge.

- **Class Readiness:** A student who demonstrates readiness arrives to class on time with all materials, having already submitted the relevant homework. Tardiness and/or missing materials will dock the student’s weekly readiness grade, which is part of the overall participation grade. Students who have not submitted their homework to the appropriate Canvas assignment folder prior to the start of class will not be permitted to join the live class session. Those students will be invited into a separate Zoom breakout room to work privately until they have completed the day’s assignment. After they have completed their homework submission, they will be permitted to rejoin the class in session. **A day spent in a breakout room due to incomplete work will constitute an absence from class. Two such absences in a given quarter will warrant a parent-teacher Zoom meeting.** If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent a student from completing the homework prior to class, the parent must contact the instructor prior to class time to arrange an extension.
- **Attendance:** Understandably conflicts will arise necessitating that a student miss class; a message from a parent will excuse an absence. **I ask that students not attempt to attend class while traveling in the car, train, bus, etc.** I’ve found this is far too distracting for both the class and the individual student, making it difficult for the student to engage well in the day’s lesson. **Please note that the Student-**

Parent handbook allows for a total of six absences for this course, so if you are aware that your child may miss more than six classes for the year, it may not be advisable to enroll in this course!

- **Submitting Assignments:** All due assignments must be uploaded to the appropriate Canvas assignment prior to the start of class each day. Students turning in late work will earn a **5% penalty for each school day the assignment is late. Assignments more than a week late will receive a zero.**
- **Canvas:** I will be posting our class syllabus, assignments, occasional class recordings, slides and other links in our Canvas course page, so please check Canvas for updates regularly throughout the week. Class recordings will be posted within 24 hours after class, as needed. Please make sure you can access Canvas or that you get help from your parents if you are having problems accessing it.
- **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, text chat and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video and other media can be displayed and analyzed. 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 assignments and engage with other class materials on the *Writing & Rhetoric 4* Canvas course page (access granted after enrollment is secured).
- **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. Additionally, 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 instructor or an MLA style manual for specific direction on obtaining, quoting, and paraphrasing sources.
- **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.

GRADING: While pursuing Writing & Rhetoric Year 4 through Scholé Academy will be “restful,” we 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 achievement goals for mastery of this discipline. Writing, as an element of Rhetoric, is a “core” discipline in Classical Education and learning to own the concepts introduced in this class will be a necessary and significant component of future success in growth in a Classical Education. In that sense then, attaining a mastery of Writing & Rhetoric is its own reward. As the teacher, I will assign the following grades to your student’s 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 will be designated *satis*. *Non satis* means lacking sufficiency or adequacy.

ASSIGNMENTS & CATEGORY WEIGHTS: Ms. White will communicate with students regarding assignment feedback and grading through the free online grading system Canvas. The teacher will provide students with more detailed information and access to the Writing and Rhetoric IV course page. Student's assignments will fall into two categories:

1. Assessments (60%): elocution recitations, drafts, and final papers.
2. Participation (40%): homework, outlines, discussion boards, and other classroom activities.

MASTERY PORTRAIT: During the first semester, *Cum Laude* students will masterfully craft essays of praise and blame, focusing on the following skills: discerning the main idea; utilizing hyperbole and thesis; incorporating background and supportive detail, biography, and autobiography; noting the good and poor qualities present in a person or event; contrasting virtuous behavior and vice; and crafting effective conclusions that encourage readers either to emulate virtue or eschew vice.

Moving into the second semester, students will further scholarship skills of source selection, while *Cum Laude* students will finetune their competency in note taking, organizing, and outlining in order to compose a multisource biographical research paper. For the remainder of the semester, building on the skills learned studying encomium and vituperation, *Cum Laude* students utilize the art of comparison, crafting comparative compositions that set two persons, events, ideas, texts, or objects side by side for assessment. In practicing this art of comparison, *Cum Laude* students will also master or show growth in elements of critical analysis, assessment, and judgment.

Finally, students are also guided in the development of the virtues of Truth, Goodness, and Wisdom. Ideally, students will employ wisdom when responding to virtues and vices, the actions and thoughts that they encounter in the readings. By the end of the course, a *Cum Laude* student understands that reading a rich selection of great literature is one of the ways in which it is possible to build the reservoir out of which one can draw good ideas and model our own lives and behaviors.

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:



Ash White holds a BA in English and Theatre from Mary Baldwin University, and has taught literature, writing, and logic at the middle and secondary level over fifteen years. Ms. White is passionate about classical education and homeschooling, both of which are flourishing in the Shenandoah Valley where she and her husband Jon live in the Pittsburgh area, and are both voracious lovers of books and music. If you visit their home, you'll find it difficult to determine which collection is largest: books or vinyl records!

Contact: awhite.schole@gmail.com