



## *Writing and Rhetoric I* Yearlong Course 2023-24

**Grades:** 4-5; 3rd-graders welcome (**Please Note:** In most cases, 3rd-grade students require additional parental supervision and support in this course.)

**Prerequisites:** Before beginning *Writing & Rhetoric I*, students should know how to identify and create a complete sentence. They should be able to recognize the presence or absence of a subject or a predicate and know how to use capital letters and simple punctuation. Students should also be comfortable reading fluently and independently writing (though not necessarily composing) short paragraphs legibly by hand.

**Class Dates:** Begins Tuesday, September 5, 2023; running through Friday, May 24, 2024

**Class Times:** Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday: 4:45 – 5:45 P.M. (EST)

**Instructor:** Mr. Stephen Williams

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### WRITING AND RHETORIC I COURSE MAP

#### QUARTER 1

1. What are Fables?
2. What are Summary and Amplification?
3. What is the Role of Anthropomorphism in Fables?
4. Why is Elocution Important to Storytelling?

#### QUARTER 2

1. Exercising Copiousness
2. Summarizing Stories
3. Amplifying Stories
4. Identifying the Moral of a Story
5. Write Your Own Fable

#### QUARTER 3

1. Types of Narratives
2. What is a Parable?
3. How does Point of View Affect a Story?
4. Identifying the Main Idea in a Text
5. Amplification with Dialogue

#### QUARTER 4

1. Using Description
2. Combining Dialogue and Description
3. Employing Conflict
4. Write Your Own Narrative Conflict

**OFFICE HOURS:** To arrange office hours, please send an email request with your availability and the concept you would like to go over. Your teacher will do her best to respond to office hours requests within 24-48 hours.

### **REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS:**

The course texts are *Writing and Rhetoric Book 1* (student text) and *Writing and Rhetoric Book 2* (student text), which are available from Classical Academic Press ([www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com](http://www.ClassicalAcademicPress.com)). **Please note that textbooks are not included in the purchase of the course.**

**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS:** Students should have a lined notebook for class activities, notetaking, and organizing assignments.

### **WRITING AND RHETORIC 1 COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to help 4th–5th graders discover delight in writing and begin to develop effective tools and methods for writing well. The course uses the imitation and practice method utilized by the award-winning *Writing & Rhetoric* series to impart essential tools for writing to students. The first semester follows *Book 1: Fable*, which uses fables to teach students the practice of close reading and comprehension, summary (both aloud and in writing), and amplification. In the second semester, the course follows *Book 2: Narrative I*, which uses a variety of longer stories that expand the skill set learned in the first semester. This semester also includes more frequent and longer writing assignments. This course encourages a delight for story and writing in each student through engaging class sessions, creative assignments, and personal feedback.

The *Writing & Rhetoric 1* course is designed to:

- Expose students to the form of fables and narrative writing as well as culturally important examples.
- Model fluent reading for students and give them practice reading short texts.
- Give students practice copying texts accurately.

- Strengthen working memory through dictation, thus improving storage and manipulation of information.
- Increase understanding of the flexibility of and copiousness of language through sentence manipulation.
- Facilitate student interaction with well-written texts through question and answer and through exercises in summary and amplification.
- Give students opportunities to creatively imitate sentences, whole fables, and narrative sections.
- Introduce the concepts of main idea and character traits.
- Introduce the concepts of plot (beginning, middle, and end), dialogue, and description.

### STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students enrolling in Scholé Academy's *Writing & Rhetoric I* course will be expected to show development of Executive Function Skills throughout the year. Executive Function Skills speak to a set of qualities and skill sets students can develop and hone to better approach the courses, lectures, readings, and teachers they will face in their future academic coursework.

1. **Engagement:** Engaged students are willing to step into the arena of class discussion, ask questions, and supply answers. During class, students should be actively engaged as the teacher employs various interactive methods such as class repetition and recitation. Participation in these activities is central to class time and promotes a lively, delightful environment. Students should be active listeners during class time. They should be thoughtfully engaged with both each other and the teacher. Students should approach class time as an opportunity to grow in fellowship as the class journeys together to obtain knowledge.
2. **Attention to Detail & Preparedness:** Students attentive to detail are consistently prepared with all assignments complete at the start of every class session, have submission requirements fulfilled before each session, have confirmed technology is working prior to the start of class, are responsible to determine how to proceed after an absence, are responsible for consulting the course syllabus and adjusting as the class proceeds, etc. These students also come mentally prepared – ready to focus on the material being presented. They should arrive to the Zoom meeting on time and, if late, should respectfully listen to try to understand where the class is in relation to the text and should wait patiently for the teacher and classmates to finish the current

task. Homework should be uploaded to Canvas before class begins. Students should try to develop 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 in the 3rd-5th grade range should continually develop self-monitoring skills. Those who successfully self-monitor can evaluate their own performance. These students are able to see both their own strengths and weaknesses. Self-monitoring students are those who determine which problems they can work through on their own and where they need peer, teacher, or parent support. Students should follow behavior guidelines appropriate to the age and study of this course. They should practice hand-raising, speaking when called upon, listening to others, and focusing solely on the task at hand.
4. **Responsibility:** Responsible students recognize when it is time to begin working and are able to do so without procrastination. These students are able to easily transition between tasks while maintaining a scholarly attitude. During class time, students shall uphold the integrity of the period by showing technological responsibility. They will refrain from playing computer games, viewing alternate screens, or otherwise engaging in distracting activities.
5. **Problem-Solving:** Students with well-developed problem-solving skills are willing to persevere, even when they are unable to successfully overcome a challenge on the first try. Good scholarship involves looking at a situation 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 peer, parent, teacher, or the Lord.
6. **Employ Critiques:** Students who employ critiques receive feedback to submissions and are diligent to apply that feedback to future assignments rather than repeating mistakes. These students also glean information from the live class critiques of fellow students and note mistakes to avoid by learning from others. Students should have an attitude of humility when receiving critiques. They should view class as an opportunity to grow and to develop their God-given talents. Students should be happy for the successes of their peers, even if the gifts and capacities of their classmates surpass their own.

## STUDENT EVALUATION: GRADING

Studying the English language is rewarding in many ways and will serve those who persevere in it. Students who complete this course will have gained appreciation for the order and structure of language, which in turn equips them to utilize it in effective ways. Further, students are enriched as they interact with delightful, nourishing literary works and produce individual expressions of truth, goodness, and beauty.

Students will not be measured against a traditional grading scale with letters and numbers. Instead, students will be assessed holistically, including participation, attitude, behavior, growth, virtue, and understanding. Students will be assigned the following broad categories to your student's level of achievement according to Scholé Academy's grading policy: *magna cum laude* (with great praise), *cum laude* (with praise), *satis* (sufficient, satisfactory), and *non satis* (not sufficient).

Ideally, every 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; students who receive *non satis* will need to do additional work to achieve understanding and be able to move on to subsequent levels of composition. The hope is that this system of grading will aid both the student and the instructor in assessing an individual pupil's journey toward mastery and that the emphasis will be on loving and knowing the subject rather than chasing a particular number or grade.

In conjunction with the grading scale outlined above, narrative evaluations of student performance in the classroom will be sent quarterly to keep parents abreast of their student's level of growth and achievement. These narrative evaluations are the core of the student assessment process.

**Please note:** Photographs of completed assignments will not be accepted as they are incredibly difficult to read. Please submit all work in PDF format. Documents must be scanned right-side-up and not sideways.

Late homework will be given a 5% penalty for each weekday that the assignment is late. Assignments seven or more days late must still be completed in a satisfactory manner but will be assigned the minimum *satis* grade of 70%.

## STUDENT EVALUATION: MASTERY PORTRAIT

By the end of the course, students should be able to identify and define fables, morals, narratives, fairy tales, myths, histories, and parables. They will have learned how to use synonyms and will have begun to write copiously. *Writing & Rhetoric I* students will be able to expand or shrink a story. By May, students will have learned to recognize nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The children will be equipped to write their own fable that teaches a moral lesson. In addition, by the end of the course, students will be able to recognize that nearly all narratives contain a beginning, middle, and end, as well as colorful dialogue, lively characters, and vivid description. Furthermore, students will also learn to speak with better elocution, the art of speaking skillfully.

Students will also be guided in development of the virtues of truth, goodness, beauty, and wisdom. We will discuss how the stories we read are similar and different to stories in the Bible and enjoy various visual depictions of the *Writing & Rhetoric* stories. Furthermore, students will employ wisdom in persevering through new challenges and discerning when to ask for assistance or when to use the tools already in their minds to respond to a challenging writing prompt.

## STUDENT EVALUATION

Students will receive communication regarding assignment feedback and grading through the free online grading system, Canvas.

Student assessment will include the following:

1. Homework and written assignments including response questions, longer writing assignments, and memorization. Student work will be graded not only for content but also for excellence in form and presentation.
2. Class participation including attitude toward learning, completeness of assignments, timeliness of submitted work, respect for the subject matter, and adherence to the standards outlined in the Student-Parent Handbook regarding the virtual classroom.

## STUDENT EVALUATION: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students will often take assessments privately at home. 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. A plagiarized assignment will result in a failing grade.

## 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 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 right-side-up PDFs**. They will submit their work to the *Writing & Rhetoric I* Canvas assignment page (access granted after enrollment is secured).