

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Kindergarten

Kindergarten provides the necessary foundation for the spiritual, academic, and social development of each child. Children become learners through discovery and play and engage in a wide range of developmental activities that produce a life-long love of learning. The reading/language arts program emphasizes a strong phonics base and beginning reading and writing. Biblical truth is taught through Old and New Testament stories, character trait studies, and Bible memorization. History is introduced through topics on the family, communities past and present, and patriotism. Using hands-on activities, students develop an understanding of beginning mathematical concepts. The science curriculum is based on the exploration of God's creation.

First Grade

Students make monumental growth in their cognitive abilities during first grade. Building upon the phonics and beginning reading and writing skills introduced in kindergarten, students expand their reading and writing ability significantly. In Bible, students learn about the world, families, friends, leaders, salvation, and God's plan for us. In history, students gain new insight into the world around them by surveying history as linear time through the study of civilizations, geography and map skills. Math is taught utilizing a combination of hands-on activities, a morning math meeting, drill and practice, and beginning problem solving. Through concrete activities of observation and discovery, students enjoy the stimulating exploration of God's world in science.

Second Grade

Second grade students build on the skills learned in first grade including reading, phonics, spelling, and the writing process. Reading and language arts components include reading comprehension, critical thinking, vocabulary development, literary response and development, grammar, writing strategies, and spelling skills (phonetic and high frequency words). The theme of "God and My Actions" is prominent in Bible study, as students explore the lives of Old Testament heroes, beginning with the life of Moses. History includes instruction on civilizations throughout linear time and the historical elements that affect the lives of people. The *Saxon Math* program develops number awareness and enhances student problem-solving skills through the use of concrete objects, numeration to 1000, computations to 20, regrouping and beginning multiplication. Science is studied through discovery and hands-on thematic studies of God's creation.

Third Grade

Third grade is a pivotal year in the education of young children. Students begin to read for content rather than focusing on the mechanics of reading, so reading plays an integral part in student learning throughout the curriculum. Through the language arts program and literature studies, students are introduced to a wide variety of quality literature that aids in developing reading comprehension, critical thinking, and vocabulary skills. Written communication is emphasized as a valuable learning tool through exploration of various genres of writing. Throughout the year, the theme "Christ and His Church" is studied through the Gospels, the book of Acts, and missions. History instruction includes the development of our nation, geography, and map skills. The *Saxon Math* program develops student skills using mental math. More complex mathematical concepts are introduced such as computation in regrouping, multiplication, and division, as well as continued growth in fractions and problem solving. Science exploration takes place through the study of plants, habitats, and God's living creation. The highlight of science is the Floating Marine Lab field trip which gives students a hands-on experience with marine animals.

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Fourth Grade

Fourth grade is a transitional year strengthening student independence and responsibility to ensure academic success. Students are taught tools for Bible study through investigation of God, His Word, the Holy Spirit, the Church, and salvation. Incremental growth in reading and writing skills continue as students are exposed to quality literature and comprehensive writing instruction. A key unit of study is California history, including the development of the mission system in California. During an educational field trip to Sacramento and San Francisco, students pan for gold in Coloma, visit the state capital, and gain an understanding of California history first-hand. In math, students are challenged in problem solving and more complex computation. The study of science allows students to apply and expand their knowledge in scientific processes, including observation, research, drawing conclusions, and critical thinking.

Fifth Grade

Fifth grade is a stimulating year of academic and social growth. Students are encouraged to be confident in the foundational principles of Scripture for application in their daily lives. Enthusiasm for reading grows and critical thinking skills are enhanced as students engage in literature studies and independent reading. During fifth grade, students become proficient in the writing process, beginning with pre-writing to the final draft of a composition, as well as a research report. The history curriculum primarily focuses on ancient history and geography from creation and Mesopotamia through the fall of Rome. In math, students are challenged with pre-algebra, division, decimals and fractions, while incorporating mental math, thinking skills, and logic. Science focuses on God's establishment of the physical laws which govern our universe and the organization, structure, and function of living systems.

Sixth Grade

In sixth grade, students are prepared for the academic, social, and spiritual transition to junior high. Students learn about God's role for them in society by studying God's Word and serving as leaders in the school. Through literature response and analysis, students grow in their ability to assess, discern, and draw conclusions. They become strong writers, proficient in a wide range of writing applications. The dominant theme in history is civilizations and nations of the world from the Byzantine Empire to the Industrial Revolution. Students study the broad, sweeping events that characterize changing times throughout history. Phenomenal growth in math is experienced in sixth grade as students are strongly challenged to compute, solve, and analyze problems and equations using algebra, geometry, and measurement. Science includes units of study that expand student knowledge and understanding of the integral elements of God's creation. The highlight of the year is sixth grade camp at Palomar Mountain, where sixth grade students from both elementary schools join together and experience a very special time enjoying the beauty of God's creation, spiritual growth, and student bonding with new friends.

Curriculum/Textbooks

Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Grammar, and Spelling) – Purposeful Design, Mosdos Press, ABeka, Loyola Press, Sadlier, Learning Headquarters, Write Source

Mathematics – Saxon Mathematics, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill

Handwriting – D'Nealian

Science – *Discovery Works* by Concordia

History – Historical documents, ancillary materials, ABeka, *Our Golden California*

Bible – Association of Christian Schools International, NIV Bible

Supplemental Reading – *Accelerated Reading Program*, summer reading

Literature Studies – Various selected works by grade level

ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

ENRICHMENT CLASSES

At the elementary level, kindergarten through sixth grade students have the opportunity to expand the traditional classroom experience by attending classes taught by gifted faculty and staff in the following areas each week:

Computer instruction is an integral part of the curriculum for all students. Christian Unified recognizes that technology is an important aspect of education for the twenty-first century student. In addition to basic computer functions, students learn how to type, perform research, prepare outlines, and prepare Power Point presentations. They participate in a wide variety of learning experiences designed to integrate the use of technology into classroom studies.

Library training, conducted on a weekly basis, includes instruction on the proper use of the library, a story-time, and the opportunity to check-out books for pleasure reading, book reports, or special assignments. The librarian makes resources available to teachers for various assignments throughout the year. The librarian guides students in choices for the Accelerated Reader program. Students may take quizzes for the Accelerated Reader program in the library, in the computer class, or in any regular classroom.

Physical education class introduces students to the basics of movement, good health, the value of exercise, and practice of the necessary elements for developing a healthy lifestyle of exercise and fitness. Students are introduced to a number of team sports, which are played during class. Physical education classes meet twice weekly with the exception of kindergarten, which meets once a week. In fifth and sixth grades, boys and girls are offered the opportunity to participate in after-school intramural sports, including flag football, soccer, basketball, and volley tennis. This allows them to experience competitive team sports in an informal setting.

Choral music introduces students to the fundamentals of music, including introductory theory and sol feg. The class emphasizes proper posture, tonality, and presence when singing. Twice each year students prepare a musical performance that includes drama and props. This gives them the opportunity to participate in a major performance for parents and friends, with the final purpose to give glory to God and share the gospel message.

Instrumental Music is offered to fifth and sixth grade students in Band class. There they are taught to read music and learn about the various genres of music. Once a week, students receive semi-private instrumental lesson with the teacher. Also, once per week, they play as a group during the lunch break. The students perform as a band at festivals and at the Christmas and spring school concerts.

Power Learning Program provides small group instruction for students needing remediation in core subject areas and/or assistance with organization and study skills.