

LANGUAGE ARTS INSTRUCTION (reading, writing, history): GRADES 5TH through 11TH

Instructor: Dr. Rita Simpson

The Goals:

There are three components of the language arts program. First, the language arts program seeks to improve competency in critical thinking, reading, and writing. Secondly, the students are asked to view reading and writing as a means of communication with others. Thirdly, students are presented with the kinds of ideas that change lives and develop character.

The Tools:

[1] Students will use one of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) textbooks. The *Pearl* textbook and companion workbooks are designed to present more than 700 pages of reading material and activities that encourage students to think about grammar, spelling, genre, writing, and reading within the context of a particular work (as opposed to being studied separately out of context). The books are organized according to character-building themes. Students will read and respond to the same stories to build community.

[2] Students will also be expected to read 25 books per year according to the NYS Department of Education guidelines. A reading list has been provided which is suitable for a Christian, multicultural audience. Students may purchase or borrow these books and read them at home. A reading log will be provided for each student, and will be placed in student portfolios. Students and parents are responsible for completing this list at home. A suggested reading list from the NYS Department of Education's website will also be available for additional reading and for a wider selection of books on appropriate reading levels.

[3] Students will be given access to the internet and will be asked to become proficient in reading, conducting research, and using the email or word documents to communicate in writing.

[4] Students will be asked to read the *Wall Street Journal* (Classroom Edition) which will be available at the school free of charge.

[5] The Abeka curriculum in language arts for grades 5-11 will be used to provide supplementary reading material at a wide variety of grade levels. The reference material will be available in the classroom.

The Techniques:

[1] We will use the Balanced Literacy Model. Guided reading, think-aloud, modeled writing, shared reading, independent reading, independent writing, and literature circles, are some of the techniques that will be used in the classroom.

[2] The *Stanford Achievement* Test will be used to provide formal assessment. The *Qualitative Reading Inventory-4* will also be used on an as-needed basis. In addition, the teacher will make informal assessments based on classroom interaction.

The Assignments:

[1] Students should always read the newspaper and spend time completing the independent reading list. This should be done on a daily basis during the entire school year.

[2] Students will be given a variety of assignments in the textbooks to complete. Assignments will be based on ACSI curriculum and balanced literacy activities.

The Competencies Developed:

[1] Please see the NYS Department of Education Standards.

[2] *Literacy* goes beyond making comparisons, finding main ideas, decoding words, and recalling plots. It also involves organizing ideas, understanding patterns of language, synthesis, evaluation, visualization, prior-knowledge integration, making predictions, monitoring for comprehension, and understanding grammar. *Writing* involves grammar, spelling, organization, creativity, writing for a particular audience, and being able to use technological writing tools.

The Curriculum:

[1] The history and language arts curriculums already developed for the ACSI *Pearl* textbook and the Abeka history books.

[2] The teacher reserves the right to make changes in the curriculum to accommodate the needs of the class as a whole, or students individually.