



Kindergarten

Program Overview

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Kindergarten is the first opportunity for children to begin to understand that school is a place for learning and working. They will learn about sharing, taking turns, respecting the rights of others, and taking care of themselves.

The kindergarten program provides initial learning experiences in language development, number concepts, creative skills, and social and physical growth. Using concrete experiences, pupils are given the building blocks for perceiving, thinking, and problem solving. Educational experiences provide balance and variety among physical, mental, spiritual, and social activities as the child's world of awareness is extended from the home to the classroom.

The kindergarten classroom is a language-rich experience for all. Students are introduced to basic reading skills through shared reading experiences, rhymes, poems, classic stories, and stories created by children. Technology is introduced as a learning tool.

Skills related to visual and auditory discrimination, left to right orientation, vocabulary development, whole word recognition, and relationships between letters and sounds are taught in the context of responding to high quality children's literature and our Houghton Mifflin integrated language arts program.

Math instruction uses McGraw Hill's *My Math* as the primary resource. Handwriting is learned through the *Foundations* program. Harcourt *Social Studies* and *Science* provide strong curricula in those areas. Each child will receive a personal *Beginner's Bible* for use in kindergarten and first grade.

Language Arts

Students are created in God's image with the unique ability to communicate, create, and express ideas. The language arts develop these abilities to understand and influence God's world for His glory. Therefore, Morrison offers a balanced language arts approach that teaches students to read with fluency and comprehension, evaluate text and media with discernment, listen with understanding and compassion, speak with conviction and effect, and write with clarity and persuasion. (O'Malley 1999)

The Kindergarten language arts classroom is a language-rich experience for all. Students are introduced to basic reading (phonics and comprehension) and writing skills (letter formation, expressing thoughts) through direct instruction, shared reading experiences, rhymes, poems, classic stories, and stories created by children. Group listening and speaking skills are modeled and practiced. Technology is introduced as a learning, reading, and writing tool as well.

Reading

Letter sounds, short vowel sounds, & consonant blends with teacher help

With help: learn reading strategies (access prior knowledge, preview pictures, retell, visualize)

Non-fiction participation: fiction & non-fiction; text & picture provide information

Fiction: character, setting, & events

Writing

Imaginative story with teacher help

Traits of Writing

Math

Morrison Academy strives to develop students who obtain a mastery of, and appreciation for, the content and processes of mathematics, as well as an understanding of how mathematics relates to other domains in life. While the study of mathematics occurs mostly within finite creation, it points us towards the character of an infinite God who values logic, order and consistency. Therefore, the purpose of mathematical instruction at Morrison is to develop students whose mastery of content includes insight into logical processes that will enable students to make meaningful connections to a world of order and help them transfer math concepts to other domains consistent to life. Such tangible engagement with math will help Morrison's students dynamically impact their world for Christ.

Kindergarten is the time to start thinking about numbers! The Counting and Cardinality strand takes precedence during this year. More learning time in Kindergarten is devoted to number sense than to other topics. Kindergarten focuses on two critical areas: (1) representing, relating, and operating on whole numbers, initially with sets of objects; (2) describing shapes and space.



Science

Morrison's science program seeks to help students gain knowledge of God through the study of His creation. This is accomplished with an activity-oriented program where teachers and students think analytically and logically, solve problems creatively, and use technology as a tool. Morrison endeavors to help students acquire developmentally appropriate concepts and science skills to make positive contributions as Christians in an increasingly scientific and technological society.

Students will learn that their physical world consists of materials that float or sink and can be changed by heating or freezing. Kindergarteners will learn that magnets attract some materials and will explore the water cycle and evaporation. They will identify the major characteristics and needs of plants and animals that help them survive in different environments. They will know that soil, water, gases and other living things are natural resources that need to be protected. The students will identify land forms and bodies of water. They will use tools to help them observe changes in the Earth's temperatures and weather patterns that result in the seasons that affect their lives. Students are asked to create meaningful questions and conduct careful investigations.

Guidance

The program provides a biblically-based program that is available to all students, teachers/staff and parents helping them to recognize their uniqueness as individuals in Christ. Morrison seeks to provide a primarily proactive and preventative program which enables students to fulfill God's purpose in their lives by maturing spiritually, emotionally, academically, physically and socially.

Kindergarten students will begin to explore how to develop positive attitudes about themselves as unique and worthwhile people. At the Kindergarten level the focus for Guidance is will be on students identifying feelings and sharing them in appropriate ways, learning about making friends and getting along with others, and learning to be respectful and following the rules.

Social Studies

Social studies instruction at Morrison unites two important elements:

- *Acquiring a solid knowledge base of historical, geographical, civic, economic, and cultural concepts.*
- *Acquiring a social studies skill set to apply knowledge to situations using a global Christian perspective.*

Morrison's social studies program seeks to develop students who can influence the kingdoms of mankind as critically-thinking citizens of the Kingdom of God. We provide developmentally appropriate instruction through a balance of inquiry learning and direct teaching. Though implementing a United States based curriculum, we recognize the importance of a global approach to social studies curricula to meet the needs of our diverse population.

Myself and My School

Kindergartners will learn about family celebrations and holidays celebrated by members of their classroom. Students will also learn and use vocabulary related to chronology and time. They will begin the exploration of maps and globes by constructing maps of the classroom and recognizing some basic land and water features. Kindergarteners will be able to name some classroom and school rules. They will also be able to describe the work that people in the community might do.



Bible

God is the source of all truth, and the Bible is God's special revelation for all humanity. Through it we are introduced to the life of faith and the redemption offered to all in Christ Jesus. We comprehensively teach the Bible to foster biblical literacy, develop spiritual discernment, and equip students with a Christian worldview resulting in students who are transformed by the Holy Spirit and willing to be obedient to God's truth. Bible education aims to encourage each student to love God and to serve others.

The Morrison Academy Bible Curriculum: 5 strands

- *Biblical Literacy*-Students will know basic content of the Bible: stories about Old and New Testament characters, chronology, cultural and historical background, recurring themes and topics.
- *Spiritual Discernment*-Students will be able to appreciate who God is and accept one's self worth as God's creation, while distinguishing right from wrong.
- *Biblical Worldview*-Bible classes not only impart biblical and theological knowledge but use it as the basis of a biblical worldview which is used to explore the world.
- *Christian Character*-Through the teaching of the Bible we desire to see the love of God perfected in our students so that they know God, obey God's commands and love others.
- *Christian Service*-Beginning in middle school, intentional, hands-on service to local and global communities enhances students' academic learning, a natural outworking of biblical truth.

Kindergarten students study the redemptive story through the Old and New Testament stories of Creation and Fall, Abraham, Moses, Joseph, David and Goliath, Daniel, Esther, Jonah, Jesus' birth, Jesus and the children, parables of Jesus (Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin). Students learn Christian character traits of respecting others, obedience, showing kindness, and sharing with others.

Mandarin Chinese

God has given us the gift of language to communicate with Him, ourselves, and others. Morrison's Mandarin Chinese program is a foreign language program that equips all students to communicate more effectively in a global context to better impact their world as Christians. This is done through a unit-driven curricular program that teaches all students the four basic tenets (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) of communication as well as Chinese culture and Christian concepts.

Teachers use high yield instructional strategies, a variety of materials, teaching styles, and enriching activities that are age-appropriate, promote higher order thinking, relevant, and integrate technology and faith.

Library Media

Morrison Academy recognizes that people are gifted by God with the ability to inquire, gain knowledge, and delight in the creativity of others. Morrison Academy library program strives to equip students to enjoy information by teaching them how to use information effectively. The Library Media Center will support students by providing opportunities to become critical thinkers, life-long learners, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information.

The Kindergarten library media class is a literature rich and multi-media experience. Students are introduced to library space and usage as well as a variety of literature genres. Kindergarteners are also exposed to the idea that the library is a place to find answers to questions. Age appropriate internet safety information is given as well.



Visual and Performing Arts

Morrison Academy recognizes that students are made in the image of their Creator and that God has endowed them with His creativity and individual gifts. Because training in visual and performing arts is an essential component of educating the whole person, students must be given the opportunity to explore, develop, and enjoy their God-given artistic abilities. Students will learn to express their creativity by experiencing, appreciating and discerning the arts from historical, contemporary and multi-cultural perspectives. Morrison Academy's arts programs endeavor to use the arts to glorify and worship God, equip students to serve His church, and impact their world in a relevant and dynamic way.

Performing Arts

All elementary students receive general music instruction. Emphasis is placed on performance (playing various instruments, singing, improvisation, concert etiquette), notation (melody, rhythm, music symbols, reading music), and music appreciation (history of instruments and composers, folk dance, music of other cultures).

As new students to Morrison Academy, kindergarten will be a year of firsts for students. Repertoire will include music from around the world and activities will include a variety of props, instruments, songs, dances, and actions to draw students together in a music making community. We will talk about music in the most general terms; fast and slow, high and low, sound and silence, giving students a common vocabulary at the most basic level which will be the foundation for upcoming years of study in all elements of music.



Visual Arts

Children who complete the six grade levels of elementary art at Morrison Academy will be able to *create* art using a variety of art mediums in both the second and third dimensions and identify and use the common elements and principles of art. With confidence, they will create art that *communicates* their own thinking, tells stories, shares ideas, or evokes emotions. They will be led to *appreciate* the work of their peers, the art handed down through history, art from other cultures, and the place of art and artists in their world today.

Kindergarten art class is a hands-on class in which children will draw, paint, glue, and work with clay to explore and discover and create art. The students will learn to identify textures, colors, shapes and many other elements of art. They will use art to express things about themselves. They will also see how digital technology is a tool for assisting artists.



Physical Education

All people are creations of God designed to know and glorify Him through their lives and action. Therefore, Morrison's physical education program recognizes that our bodies are temples of God to be appropriately cared for and used in developing a mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually balanced life.

Students explore the world of motor skills by using games and age-appropriate movement drills. The games and drills utilized at this level aim to help students develop a good foundation in movement, fitness and sport. This is achieved by focusing on the development of the students' basic motor skills. The skills they learn at this stage are further developed and reinforced when they advance to the upper elementary grade levels. K- 2 PE also aims to develop in the students a love for exercise and participation in sport.

Health

Morrison Academy is committed to following Christ's example of a balanced life. Therefore we desire growth in four areas: wisdom (mental/emotional), stature (physical), favor with God (spiritual), and favor with man (social). Consistent with our integrated-based philosophy of education, we strive to incorporate instruction for life-long wellness throughout the curriculum.

How Parents Can Help

Activities That Support Your Child's Learning

- Read to and with your child daily, asking questions about what is being read
- Encourage older children to read to their younger siblings
- Model the importance of reading by being a reader yourself
- Label items around the house and encourage your child to read the labels
- Talk and listen to your child
- Encourage your child to ask questions and seek answers
- Play educational games including counting games
- Create special times to be alone with your child to participate in activities (cooking dinner, working in the shop, etc.)
- Take your child to places and talk about the visit(s)
- Read nursery rhymes and songs and encourage your child to learn the words by heart
- Tell your child family stories, especially events that happened when you were his/her age
- Ensure that your child knows the names of colors by using color words to describe clothing and other items at home
- Watch television with your child and discuss the programs together; limit viewing time; choose programs with care
- Give your child responsibilities such as bed making and picking up personal belongings
- Teach your child to write his/her name using capital and lower case letters
- Teach your child his/her home telephone number and address
- Encourage your child to use toys that develop small muscle coordination, such as clay, lacing cards, small blocks, and blunt-tipped scissors

Communicate your expectations regarding his/her behavior and performance at school