



# HIGHLANDS LATIN *Cottage School* — Anderson —

## The Primary School | *A Partnership from School-to-Home*

### PURPOSE

At HLS Anderson, our goal is to *enhance* the homeschool experience of our students by providing a challenging, traditional academic environment that enlivens the mind and refines the soul. As the parent, you are your child's primary teacher. We are here to support and strengthen your efforts and to point your children to the true, the good, and the beautiful.

### CURRICULUM

At HLS Anderson we utilize the Memoria Press Curriculum and are here to support families that use Memoria Press in their homeschool as well. Your child will achieve great success with this curriculum simply by following the daily, incremental assignments. This program focuses on two central ideas: *mastery* and *simplicity*.

#### *Mastery...*

Mastery of content is the goal of the primary program. Students are guided through the material in a way that emphasizes mastering a concept before moving on to a new one. The ability to immediately recall information and explain ideas is the end goal. Repetition, repetition, repetition is key for success.

#### *Simplicity...*

Rather than building the curricula full of extras and dress-ups, Memoria Press provides a robust, thorough, and focused exploration of each subject as it is studied. It is not necessary to add to this curriculum or to deviate from the weekly assignments. Kindergarten students can easily complete their assignments in two additional days of instruction with daily reading and arithmetic practice. First and Second Grade students need no more than three school days at home to stay on track and achieve remarkable results. There is beauty in simplicity.

## ACADEMIC FOCUS

At HLS Anderson we only meet one day each week and must maximize our class time for the most important instruction. *Reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic* are the foundation upon which the tower of learning is built, and they are given the highest priority in grades K-2. The basic skills, work habits, and attitudes formed in the primary years are of critical importance.

### *Reading...*

Our approach to reading includes systematic phonics and exposure to good literature during read-aloud time. A rich language experience, provided both at home and in school, is an important factor in reading success.

**Kindergarten:** The primary goal of our Kindergarten curriculum is learning to read using Memoria Press' *First Start Reading*, a program which teaches correct pencil grip, manuscript form, consonant and short vowel sounds, three-letter word formation, consonant blends, and long vowel/ silent e. Common words are also taught and memorized. Stories read utilize the mastery of phonetic and common words.

**Grades 1 and 2:** Our reading program for grades 1 and 2 continues the development of reading skills through literature study guides that train students to become active readers. Students read whole books that captivate and motivate students.

### *Writing and Spelling...*

Writing in the primary grades focuses on the discipline of neat and legible penmanship and is practiced through copywork and spelling. Copywork is a time-honored learning activity in which students copy Scripture, maxims, poetry, and literary selections. The young student is not burdened by trying to compose his own words. In copywork, students practice penmanship, spelling, reading comprehension, punctuation, and vocabulary. Students develop habits of accuracy, neatness, attention to detail, and patience; they practice correct grammar and good writing style; they develop an appreciation for what is good, noble, and beautiful in literature. While penmanship is hard work, the young student should come to delight in the physical act of creating a beautiful page of writing. Additionally, students develop the visual memory for accurate spelling by a systematic study of phonics, word families, and spelling rules, and by a lifetime of seeing, reading, and writing words correctly.

**Kindergarten:** Students in Kindergarten will write in manuscript in all copybooks and assignments and practice spelling as a part of the *First Start Reading* program.

**Grades 1 and 2:** Students in grades 1 and 2 use cursive script with *New American Cursive* and will have weekly spelling words in the *Traditional Spelling Program*.

### *Arithmetic...*

Mathematics is cumulative, rigorous, and demanding; it develops logical, accurate, and precise thinking habits. Arithmetic is the art of counting and calculation. Like Latin grammar, arithmetic is concrete, based on memorization, and is a small and finite subject. These characteristics make arithmetic appealing to the child's mind; it is something that he can understand and achieve mastery over. In the trivium model of learning, arithmetic is the focus of grades K-6. Next to the alphabet, arithmetic is the most useful tool students will ever possess. It should not be rushed over in a hurry to get to higher mathematics. Immediate recall of addition and subtraction facts through 18 is the focus in the primary school.

Many modern textbooks do not observe the distinction between arithmetic and mathematics. Algebra topics are included in texts as early as Kindergarten and obscure the necessary arithmetic skills for each grade. The energy and effort of students are dissipated over a variety of topics, many of which are too abstract for students to understand. Insufficient time is given to basic skills, and students do not experience the satisfaction of mastery learning, nor are they adequately prepared for higher math. A failure to master basics is the cause of the glass ceiling that most students reach in their mathematics education.

Our textbooks and teaching at HLS Anderson ensure that students learn arithmetic in an age-appropriate scope and sequence, eliminating aforementioned deficiencies so prevalent in modern mathematics education. We have found the *Rod and Staff* math textbooks to be the most closely aligned with our goals in arithmetic and mathematics education in the primary and grammar school grades. While enrolled in HLS Anderson, it is essential that you commit to using the Rod and Staff materials at home to solidify the instruction given in class. Daily repetition is necessary.

Mathematics is an exact language, one that is unrelenting and unforgiving. Students must overlearn math facts if they are to be successful in high school math. Our textbooks are carefully chosen, and our teachers are committed to the goal of mastery learning in arithmetic.

### ENRICHMENT

Our afternoon time of literature and enrichment gives the young child an *introduction* to the subjects of literature, poetry, art, music, history, culture, and science. We will combine primary students for this instructional time. HLS Anderson follows a three-year cycle of using one primary enrichment guide each year for all primary students as the activities are not grade specific. This allows for a richer experience for all students.

# What Is Completed at School and Home in Kindergarten?

Our goal is to maximize the class time for activities that lend themselves to the classroom setting and are critical to your child's success in Kindergarten.

At *school*, we will focus on:

- **Recitation:** We will practice the Kindergarten Recitation as listed in the back of your Curriculum Manual. Students will stand up straight, let their arms rest at their sides (or gently grasping their side seams), face forward, and speak clearly. No fidgeting or yelling.
- **Christian Studies:** We will read and discuss the weekly Bible Story.
- **Phonics:** We will complete the MAJORITY of the week's instruction in the *First Start Reading* books. All new concepts will be introduced and practiced at school and stories will be read and illustrated.
- **Copybook:** We will complete the language lesson (Step 2), work to begin memorizing (Step 3), copy/trace (Step 4), and illustrate (Step 6) the weekly copybook exercise. We will recite and review previous lessons (Step 7).
- **Math:** We will complete the "Monday" lesson as listed in the curriculum guide. We will complete drill and practice games and review.
- **Literature and Enrichment:** We will expose your child to the entire week's literature and enrichment in a beautiful integrated afternoon.

At *home*, you will focus on:

- **Recitation:** Daily practice.
- **Christian Studies:** Re-read and review (*Optional*)
- **Phonics:** Using the curriculum guide, complete the week's *Core Skills Phonics* pages, read and review the word lists in *Classical Phonics*, read aloud the week's selection in the *Christian Liberty Nature Reader*, color the animals in *Animal Alphabet*, read the stories listed from *Fun in the Sun*, *Scamp and Tramp* and *Soft and White* when applicable. Review your phonics flashcards DAILY.
- **Copybook:** Work to memorize (Step 2), Proofread and Correct (Step 3), Review Previous Lessons (Step 7). NOTE: Correct pencil grip is essential.
- **Math:** Complete the math lessons as listed for Tuesday-Friday. Lessons can be combined, but not skipped. Practice math flash cards DAILY.
- **Literature and Enrichment:** No additional studies are necessary.

# What Is Completed at School and Home in First & Second?

Our goal is to maximize the class time for activities that lend themselves to the classroom setting and are critical to your child's success in First Grade.

At *school*, we will focus on:

- **Traditional Spelling:** Cottage School Instruction will include an introduction to the week's phonics focus as well as all new words and definitions for the week. Students will complete all Day 1 activities as listed in the Teacher Manual.
- **Reading/Phonics:** We will cover the Monday's lesson in the Curriculum Guide and read the new short story together.
- **Recitation:** We will practice the Recitation as listed in the back of your Curriculum Manual. Students will stand up straight, let their arms rest at their sides (or gently grasping their side seams), face forward, and speak clearly. No fidgeting or yelling.
- **Christian Studies:** We will read and discuss the weekly Bible Story.
- **Cursive Penmanship:** We will learn and practice a new letter weekly.
- **Copybook:** We will complete the language lesson (Step 2), work to begin memorizing (Step 3), copy/trace (Step 4), and illustrate (Step 6) the weekly copybook exercise. We will recite and review previous lessons (Step 7).
- **Math:** We will complete the "Monday" lesson as listed in the curriculum guide. We will complete drill and practice games and review.
- **Literature and Enrichment:** We will expose your child to the entire week's literature and enrichment in a beautiful integrated afternoon.

At *home*, you will focus on:

- **Recitation:** Practice at least once during the days at home, more if needed.
- **Traditional Spelling:** Complete the remaining pages and practice sheets. Complete the dictation practice on Monday to prepare for Tuesday's test.
- **Reading/Phonics** Re-read the short story. Complete the phonics lessons not covered in class. Review your phonics flashcards DAILY.
- **Copybook:** Work to memorize (Step 2), Proofread and Correct (Step 3), Review Previous Lessons (Step 7). NOTE: Correct pencil grip is essential.
- **Math:** Complete the math lessons as listed for Tuesday-Friday. Lessons can be combined, but not skipped. Practice math flash cards DAILY.
- **Literature and Enrichment:** No additional studies are necessary.