# An Introduction to the Language Arts Curriculum

## Program overview and relationship to the SCS mission

The Language arts program spans first through twelfth grade. The overall goal of Santiago Christian School’s Language Arts program is to prepare global communicators equipped with the ability to evaluate the written and spoken word from a biblical perspective.

At the elementary level Language Arts Curriculum is composed of reading, writing, and communication. In the area of reading an emphasis is placed on increasing ones vocabulary. In the area of writing the emphasis is on the correct usage of grammar and “Six Traits of Writing”. With the emphasis on vocabulary and grammar the students are equipped to communicate both through the spoken and written word.

At the secondary level curriculum integrates a survey of literature with the fundamentals of reading, composition, grammar, research, vocabulary and speaking skills. Emphasis in composition is on unified, coherent writing following the “Six Traits of Writing” instruction and evaluation guidelines. Grade level appropriate analysis of literature is emphasized, and students also read supplementary works from an approved list.

## Biblical foundation

The goal of the Language Arts program at SCS is to provide students with the ability to both communicate and evaluate the written word from a Biblical perspective.

One of the most essential tools mankind has been given to bring glory to God is communication. There are countless ways to use communication to glorify God, but several seen clearly throughout the Bible directly mention communication: humanity can glorify God by hearing the word of God and keeping it, by speaking the good news of Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him, and by writing about the wonderful things He has done. The Language Arts Curriculum develops students who can evaluate messages and express their thoughts from a Biblical perspective so that they can glorify God.

What a person believes about truth determines his or her worldview. Students’ exposure to texts allows them to identify and analyze character and an author’s worldview and to evaluate the validity of an author’s message. Based on this worldview encounter, students are faced with the critical decision of deciding whether or not to incorporate that author’s message into their own worldview. As such, literature proves a crucial vehicle for developing the habit of measuring an author’s claim in the light of biblical text.

## Essential questions

### Essential questions for biblical integration

* How can we use communication to glorify God?
* How does God’s truth appear in written and spoken word?
* How does an author’s world view affect his or her message?
* What can literature teach us about human nature?
* What does the Bible say about effective communication and listening skills?

### Essential questions for disciplinary integration

* Why is literature important?
* Why is it important to know the meaning of words?
* How does understanding different genre affect one’s understanding of a text?
* What is the value of effective communication skills?
* How do listening skills effect one’s communication?
* Why is the writing process important?
* How does one appropriately use formal and informal communication?
* How do mechanics and usage affect the meaning and effectiveness of the written and spoken word?

## Pedagogical approach

The ESL nature of the SCS student body demands special attention in the curriculum. In light of this, the school’s second-language approach in the primary levels is progressively reduced as students mature in their master of English language.

## The lower Elementary Language Arts program uses several methods to instruct. In the area of vocabulary and reading, co-teaching and reading groups are used. Co-teaching allows the ESL teacher to support the classroom teacher in meeting the vocabulary needs of the ESL students in the classroom. Reading groups are used to meet the needs of the various reading levels of the students.

The upper Elementary Language Arts program also uses several methods to instruct. In the area of vocabulary and reading teachers use a Basal reader from Houghton and Mifflin and use ESL strategies in order to better meet the needs of the students. In writing we use the six traits of Writing, which focuses on one aspect of writing at a time in order not to overwhelm students and generate a love of writing in our students; we use the grammar book *English* in order to help students writing comprehension.

The Secondary Language Arts also uses several methods, including Six Traits of Writing, independent and group reading, differentiated instruction and scaffolding. A grammar and writing scope and sequence is followed, and students written samples are combined into a portfolio structure.

## Sources

## Textbooks

Elementary Language Arts Texts books include:

Basal Readers from Houghten Mifflin

Houghton Mifflin’s grammar program, *English*

*Zoophonics (Pre-K – 2)*

*Wee Can Write (PK-K)*

*Handwriting Without Tears (PK-K)*

*Six Traits of Writing* (Third grade – high school)

*Spelling software*

*7th grade*

*English, Houghton Mifflin, Shirley Haley-James and John Warren Stewig, 1990, 37 copies*

*The Language of Literature by McDougal Littell, 2000, 38 copies*

*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by CS Lewis, Harper and Collins, 1978, 50 copies*

*Tuck Everlasting by Natalie Babbit, Square fish, 2011, 48 copies*

*A Wrinkle in Time by M. L’Engle, Square fish, 2011, 60 copies*

*The Giver by Lois Lowery, Delacourt Press, 1993, 60 copies*

*Eighth Grade*

*English, Houghton Mifflin, Shirley Haley-James and John Warren Stewig, 1990, 37 copies*

*Cuba 15 by Nancy Osa, Delacorte Press, 2005, 36 copies*

*Light in the Forest by Conras Richter, Vintage Books, 2004, 40 copies*

*The outsiders by S.E Hinton, penguin Group, 2009, 45 copies*

*The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom,* Elizabeth Sherrill and John Sherrill (To be ordered)

*Ninth Grade*

Night by [Elie Wiesel](http://www.amazon.com/Elie-Wiesel/e/B000AP933K/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1315409192&sr=8-1) and Marion Wiesel, 2006, 38 copies

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare; Bantam Classics, 2004, 60 copies

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee, 2002, 48 copies

The Last Battle by C.S Lewis, Harper Trophy, 2002, 47 copies

Writing

Simon and Schuster’s Handbook for Writers, Prentice, 2005, 61 copies

*Tenth Grade*

American Literature

The Crucible by Author Miller, Dramatist Play Series, 1982, 52 copies

Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain, Penguin Books, 1986, 43 copies

The Great Gatsby by [F. Scott Fitzgerald](http://www.amazon.com/F.-Scott-Fitzgerald/e/B000AQ0J28/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1315411378&sr=1-1), 2004, 83 copies

Elements of Literature 5th Course by Robert Anderson, Holt, 1997,50 copies

American Literature

Of Mice and Men by [John Steinbeck](http://www.amazon.com/John-Steinbeck/e/B000AQ2D1I/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1315411690&sr=1-1), Penguin, 1993, 50 copies

Ethan Frame Edith Wharton and Kent Ljungquist, Barnes and Noble Classics, 2004, 48 copies

Eleventh Grade

Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes - The British Tradition, Prentice Hall, 2000, 54 copies  
 The Canterbury Tales by [Geraldine McCaughrean](http://www.amazon.com/Geraldine-McCaughrean/e/B000APIV4C/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1315413761&sr=8-1), Puffin Classics,1984, 49 copies  
 Pride and Prejudice by [Jane Austen](http://www.amazon.com/Jane-Austen/e/B000APWOKO/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1315413935&sr=8-1), Dover, 1995, 47 copies  
 1984 by George Orwell, 1949, 63 copies

Twelfth Grade

World Literature (No curriculum yet)

Brave New World by [Aldous Huxley](http://www.amazon.com/Aldous-Huxley/e/B000APWRRY/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1315414099&sr=8-1), Penennial Classics, 1998, 37 copies