

# Veritas Classical Academy

*News – November/December 2006*

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## Welcome Mrs. Schroeder!

Though we were sad to lose Sherry McDonald from our staff because of health problems, we were pleased to welcome Shannon Schroeder as our new first grade teacher in October. She has done a great job in leading her class this quarter. We are grateful to the Lord for providing such a wonderful replacement midyear.

## Upcoming Dates

**December 14-** 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Veritas Christmas Program in the Trinity Baptist Sanctuary at 7pm. A dessert reception will follow in the Fellowship Hall.

**December 14-January 3-** Christmas Break (No classes for Middle School on Friday, Dec. 15.)

**January 4-** First day of third quarter

## Parent Partnership Association

Thanks to all who signed up to help with various aspects of the school through the Parent Partnership Association. If you have not already been contacted regarding helping in a certain area(s), you should be hearing from someone soon. Thank you for your patience.

## School Needs

**Games for indoor recess**—board games, puzzles, card games, etc. Items may be taken to the Veritas office. PE equipment, such as a big ball for games, also is welcome.

**Good books** for classroom libraries and teacher resources. These may either be given directly to a teacher or taken to the Veritas office.

## Items for Prayer

- School location for next year
- Funds to erase start-up deficit and hire an Upper School principal for next year (\$100,000 total goal)
- Person to serve as Middle and Upper School principal for next year
- Plans regarding Middle and Upper School schedule and curricula

## PE Alternatives

In an effort to provide more options during PE time, we will be allowing students to go into the room next to the gym to play board games as long as there is another adult in the room to supervise. If you would be willing to come occasionally to help, please email Seth Thomas, PE coordinator, at [seththomas30@yahoo.com](mailto:seththomas30@yahoo.com) to sign up for a day and time. Volunteers may bring other children as long as they are able to adequately monitor activity in the room. We only will offer this alternative on days that there is a volunteer signed up to supervise.

## Reading with Our Children

I had been missing out. But I forgot how much I was missing out until I started again. After months of not making it a priority to read aloud in the evenings, I recently restructured our family's evening routine to include reading aloud before bedtime more often than not. The blessings of that time have gone both ways.

The blessings to my children are both tangible and intangible. Sure it helps their vocabulary and reading comprehension. Sure it helps their attention spans and base of knowledge about the world. It also helps them to just be in one room

together with me or my husband and experience the story and learn together. It develops the association between reading and pleasure and between learning and home.

The blessings to me are that my children are used to gathering around me to share in a common experience of learning. I can get in good snuggle time that doesn't come quite as often otherwise as the kids get older. I can comment on the good and the bad elements of a story in the moment and naturally guide them toward, hopefully, greater discernment. In short, it is a natural and enjoyable means of discipling my children.

I love it when the kids and I are going about our day and one of us will say something like "I was dumbfounded" (referring to *Henry the Explorer*) or "I wonder what I will do to make the world a more beautiful place" (like in *Miss Rumphius*). The opportunities for connections are as many as the books read and can benefit older students as much as they can younger ones.

As a school we are looking for more ways to foster a love of learning, which is often closely associated with a love of reading. However, anything we do as a school will never come close to having the impact you have as the parent in setting the tone for learning in your home. This being the case, **I strongly encourage you to begin or re-begin fostering a love of reading and words in your children.** One simple, practical way to do this is to try to read with your children at least 15 minutes each day. Another way is to let your children see you reading.

Reading is really the gateway for learning about most other subjects as a student grows. Even if a student is inclined more toward math or science or history, much of what he or she will need to learn will be in print somewhere. By developing a comfort level and fluency with printed and spoken words, he will be in a much better position to learn more specialized information in any area.

With Christmas approaching, I highly recommend asking for a copy of *The Read-Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease if you do not already own it. Other good resources are *Books Children*

*Love* by Elizabeth Wilson and Susan Macaulay and *Honey for a Child's Heart* by Gladys Hunt. Online, you can look at all the Newbury winners (be careful for age-appropriateness) or book lists for Sonlight or Veritas Press curriculum.

Encouraging Veritas parents to read aloud with their children is very much in keeping with the mission and philosophy of the school. Reading aloud fosters academic success and family cohesiveness. It is my hope that as a school we will become better and better at finding ways to encourage our students to love learning about God's world. Reading aloud is an important means to this end.

A Veritas education: \$2050/ year.  
Reading aloud with your child: priceless.

- Julie Serven, VCA Parent and Acting Principal

### Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. Thinking everything has to be perfect before you can begin. Just begin.
2. Reading boring books. Think about what would interest your kids and you. Allow your kids to have a say in what you read.
3. Not reading consistently. I pretty much killed my kids' appreciation for George MacDonald's *The Princess and Curdie* because I read it so infrequently that it took forever for us to finish it.
4. Reading too long at one time. I think of this as "reading to the point of despair". No fun for anyone.
5. Trying to include too diverse of an age span. You may need to have multiple "reading groups" in your home. Remember that reading aloud is good for any age student. You could try having older students do the reading sometimes or take turns reading parts for various characters.
6. No variety. It can help to mix in longer and shorter selections, fairy tales and realistic fiction, biographies and interesting nonfiction.