



## Classical Curriculum

**“Kingswood Academy provides challenging academics through a *classical curriculum* in a morally sound and spiritually enriching environment.”**

The classical method of education was born in ancient Greece and Rome and used throughout the Western world by the 16th century. It remained the norm until at least 1850. The reason for its widespread use: It works. The worlds’ great authors, statesmen, scientists and politicians were classically educated. For the last 50 years, conventional education has taken an experimental attitude, trying a new approach and then abandoning it for the next great thing when it fails. Much modern education is so eclectic that the student has little opportunity to make connections between past events and the flood of current information. In the meantime, in the 1940s, Dorothy Sayers advocated a return to classical education and to **teaching students how to think**. Instead of the latest fad, classical education is a return to a system proven for more than 1,000 years.

Classical education follows a three-part pattern known as the Trivium: the mind first must be supplied with facts; then given the logical tools for organizing those facts; and finally equipped to express conclusions. Students throughout all grade levels benefit from each method of teaching. Classical education works because it focuses on the way children learn best at each stage of life, then builds on the foundation of previous stages. New students, however, can be successfully integrated at any grade.

In the **Grammar** (elementary) **Stage**, students enjoy memorizing songs, rhymes, and jingles. This is important because in many schools, students don’t memorize anything anymore. Children learn the factual foundations of each subject and learn rules of phonics, spelling and grammar. Children hear stories in history and literature; they memorize math facts and descriptions of plants and animals.

In the **Dialectic/Logic** (middle school) **Stage**, teachers channel students’ natural desire to argue through the formal study of logic. Students are interested in cause and effect, relationships between different fields of knowledge, and the way facts fit together in a logical framework. Students analyze, evaluate and critique information. Students discover why the War of 1812 was fought instead of simply reading the history. The logic of science requires that children learn the scientific method. They learn persuasive writing and guided critical analysis.

In a high school with a classical education, you would find the **Rhetoric Stage** where students have acquired knowledge and the skills necessary to arrange facts into arguments. They develop the skills needed to communicate those arguments to others through writing and speech. Students research important themes and present those concepts in papers and speeches. They discuss world events and explore career options. They are well-prepared to become lifelong learners.

### **The Classical Curriculum**

- teaches a student how to think and reason critically
- provides a substantive base of knowledge, resulting in a well-rounded, culturally literate individual
- uses history from ancients to moderns as its organizing theme
- emphasizes learning through written and spoken words instead of through images (pictures and videos)
- requires the mind to work harder because of its language based learning