**St. Athanasius Academy**

Class Syllabus – 4th Grade Language Arts

*“To introduce children to literature is to install them in a very rich and glorious kingdom . . . But they must learn to know literature by being familiar with it from the very first. A child's intercourse must always be with good books, the best that we can find.”*

* *Charlotte Mason*

**Teacher Information**

Name: Mrs. Kristen Vlahos

Phone: 408-482-7313

Email: kvlahos.saa@gmail.com

*(Please allow 24hrs for response; For urgent matters, Call or indicate URGENT in subject line; Please no calls before 7:45AM or after 6PM Pacific Time)*

**Course Description**

The Level 4 Language Arts course will follow *The Good and The Beautiful* curriculum, emphasizing God, family, nature, and high moral character. Students will develop fundamental skills in language arts through engaging lessons that integrate literature and writing with art and geography. Students will improve reading skills through exposure to high-quality and wholesome literature and will develop strong composition skills through structured writing assignments. This course will cultivate a love of learning and incorporate personal reading of poetry, fiction, historical fiction, biography, and nonfiction.

This class will meet Tuesdays & Thursdays

11:00 AM (Pacific Time) - each class is 25-30 min

**Required Text (to be purchased by the parents/guardians)**

\*Before purchasing course materials, Mrs. Vlahos recommends having your child take the assessment test on [www.goodandbeautiful.com](http://www.goodandbeautiful.com). If your child tests at a level above or below level 4, please contact Mrs. Vlahos (the earlier the better; before the start of the semester if possible).

* The Good and The Beautiful Level 4 Language Arts Course Set
  + Parents may choose to purchase hard copy resources (recommended) or download the **free** PDF copy. Available at [www.goodandbeautiful.com](http://www.goodandbeautiful.com)
  + Included on the course set:
    - *Level 4 Course Book Part 1*
    - *Level 4 Course Book Part 2*
    - *Level 4 Creative Companion*
    - *Geography & Grammar Cards*
* The Big Wave by Pearl S. Buck
* Twenty and Ten by Claire Huchet Bishop
* Personal reading books - one per week (Choose from The Good and the Beautiful book list <https://www.goodandbeautiful.com/book-list/> or list of your choosing). Mrs. Vlahos recommends accessing books through your local library.

***Additional items needed:***

* A timer, a highlighter, and tracing paper (or very thin paper)
* A set of chalk pastels (at least 24 colors)

Suggestions from Amazon.com: search for NuPastel 36 (high-quality recommendation) or B441R078-7003A (less expensive recommendation)

* A kneaded eraser, art tape, and a workable spray fixative

Like B012561WIA, AA20132, and K01306 on Amazon.com

* Watercolor or pastel paper (9" x 12")

Like B0024KMQ6K on Amazon.com

* A blank notebook with lined paper
* A binder for the child's "My Book of Stories and Writings"

(This same binder can be kept and used through all of the course levels to store the stories and writing assignments that the student creates)

Note: The student will also need some cotton swabs for art projects.

*Recommended text (optional, not required)*

* A handwriting course should be used 4–5 days a week in conjunction with this course. The Good and the Beautiful handwriting course is available on their website or you may acquire a handwriting program of your choice.

**Course Competencies/Learning Objectives (Overview – see pg. 3 of the lvl 4 Course Book for full details)**

***Reading and Literature***

* Students will read a variety of high quality, wholesome literature for pleasure, instruction, and information; read aloud with fluency, self-correct for meaning, and read silently; reflect regularly on reading and set future goals.
* Students will recognize and engage with different genres (poetry, fiction, historical fiction, etc.)
* Students will participate in small group literature discussions, reinforcing and building on the content and themes in the course.

***Writing, Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation***

* Students will write with increasing independence and confidence through consistent practice in writing effective sentences, paragraphs, and complete compositions
* Students will analyze and model the writing of master authors.
* Students will reread, edit and revise to improve their own writing; set goals.
* Students will develop appropriate skills in grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling.

***Geography and Art:***

* Students will apply and strengthen reading and writing skills in creative ways while learning about geography and art.
* Students will learn how to make meaningful connections across content areas.
* Students will learn to appreciate and find beauty in art.

**Attendance**

We do not have an official attendance policy, but a lack of attendance could affect student progress and skill acquisition. The virtual classrooms are available to any students with internet access. We attempt to record all video calls to make them available for students who are absent. The recorded videos, while not as useful as live interaction, are made available for enrolled students to review when absent. We are unable to promise that 100% of all video calls will be recorded and posted online.

If a student is absent, he/she must make up the assignments and/or tests when you return. The expectation is that students will make up any missed work within one week.

Please notify me in advance in the case of planned absences.

**Classroom Expectations**

1. Arrive to class on time
2. Be prepared (complete work according to course schedule)
3. Bring a joyful and positive attitude to each class
4. Respect your classmates and teacher
5. Take responsibility for your actions
6. No eating, drinking, cell phones, or extra electronics permitted during class time

**Class Requirements**

Every Monday, I will send an email out to the whole class informing them of the lessons to be completed and the discussion topics to be covered in class.

***Parents should do the following each day:***

* Listen to the child read the challenging words and text at the beginning of most lessons and help sound out words the child cannot read. Rather than telling the word, help the child sound out the word.
* Check the child’s work using the answer key.

***Daily Checklist***

*Student (with support of parent as needed) completes the following items each day:*

* Practice grammar cards or geography cards for 5–7 minutes.
* Complete one lesson in your Course Book.
* Complete one lesson in your Creative Companion.
* Read independently for at least 15 minutes (choose from *The Good and the Beautiful Book List* or list of your choosing)

The time needed to complete coursework each day will vary greatly according to each child. Here is a sample schedule for an average child:

6 minutes: Geography or Grammar Cards (alternate days)

64 minutes: *Course Book* + *Creative Companion* (including

the course readings)

15 minutes: Personal Reading

**TOTAL=85 minutes**

**Make Sure the Child Reads and Understands the Following Instructions (also to be reviewed in class):**

* + - 1. Each day, simply follow the instructions in the course book. Mark the check boxes when you have completed a section to keep track of what you have already completed within a lesson. You should complete one lesson each day, but you can do more than one lesson if desired.
      2. Go through the lessons in order. Lessons build on each other, and some lessons include a review of principles. However, if you are stuck in a particular place and your parent or teacher is not immediately available to help you, move on to the next section or lesson and come back to where you were when possible.
      3. If you cannot figure something out after reading the instructions, ask your parent or teacher for help. Learn to communicate well. If you are feeling overwhelmed or confused, ask for help rather than sitting and doing nothing.
      4. If you are partway through an exercise and are unsure if you are doing it right, ask your parent or teacher to use the answer key and check the answers you have completed. That way, the exercise will be much more effective.

(The Good & The Beautiful, Level 5, pg. 5)

**Progress Monitoring and grading**

***Parents***:

Parents are responsible for checking the child’s work daily using the answer key. No matter what level the child is on, parents should check the child’swork on a daily basis, giving feedback. When needed, adjust the level

of parental involvement. Use the answer keys provided to correct work from the Course Books. Parents should also occasionally quiz the child on grammar and geography flashcards to assess progress.

***Teacher****:*

Mrs. Vlahos will review samples of student work each week and providing positive and constructive feedback. Mrs. Vlahos will also be available to assist with goal setting and problem-solving academic challenges as needed. Virtual class meetings will be interactive, and discussion based, reinforcing and building on content and themes from the curriculum.

**Plagiarism, Cheating, and Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism is the practice of copying words, sentences, images, or ideas for use in written or oral assessments without giving proper credit to the source. Cheating is defined as the giving or receiving of illegal help on anything that has been determined by the teacher to be an individual effort. Elementary students are still learning how to paraphrase and cite. Instruction on plagiarism, cheating, and how to avoid them will be integrated into the course. If plagiarism or cheating is detected, Mrs. Vlahos will contact the parents, give timely and direct feedback and instruct the student to revise and resubmit work.

**General Information:**

If you or your student is struggling with anything related to this course, contact me right away so that I can work with you. Please do not wait until the end of the semester! I am available to help parents and students problem solve challenges so that students experience growth and achieve the course objectives.