

Curriculum

Core Knowledge is a research-based, teacher-tested curriculum that engages students in diverse historical, scientific, and cultural content. The idea behind Core Knowledge is simple: knowledge builds on knowledge. The more you know, the more you are able to learn. This idea, grounded in cognitive science, sounds simple and obvious, but it has profound implications for reading achievement, standardized testing, critical thinking, problem solving, and a host of other educational issues. The Core Knowledge curriculum represents a first-of-its-kind effort to describe exactly what every literate American should know — what writers and speakers assume we all know — and to create a roadmap for teaching it, grade-by-grade, year-by-year, in a sensible, age-appropriate sequence.

The preschool curriculum is outlined in the Preschool Sequence, and includes the developmental areas of Physical Well-being and Motor Development, Social and Emotional Development, Approaches to Learning, Language and Literacy Development, and Knowledge Acquisition and Cognitive Development. The K-8 curriculum is outlined in the K-8 Sequence which details specific content and skills to be taught in language arts, history, geography, science, and the fine arts. The curriculum is carefully organized so that topics across subject areas build on one another to broaden and deepen students' knowledge and skills. This wide array of subject matter enables strong reading comprehension and critical thinking — the keys to educational success. Core Knowledge is carefully organized and systematic, yet it leaves room for teacher and student creativity. Grade-by-grade, our approach prevents the repetition or omission of important content, and creates a foundation for interdisciplinary exploration.

The 4-C Characteristics of the Curriculum: The Core Knowledge curriculum is content-rich, coherent, cumulative, and taught in a context-specific way. The content is organized coherently, or in a logical order, so knowledge builds on knowledge. Content and skills spiral within and through the grades.

Additionally, Core Knowledge content is taught in a context-specific way. This means that ideas, people, geography, sayings, and more are taught in the context of the time period or related area of knowledge — not in isolation. Students make connections to prior knowledge, other subjects, and real life. Teachers keep these characteristics in mind as they plan their year with Core Knowledge.