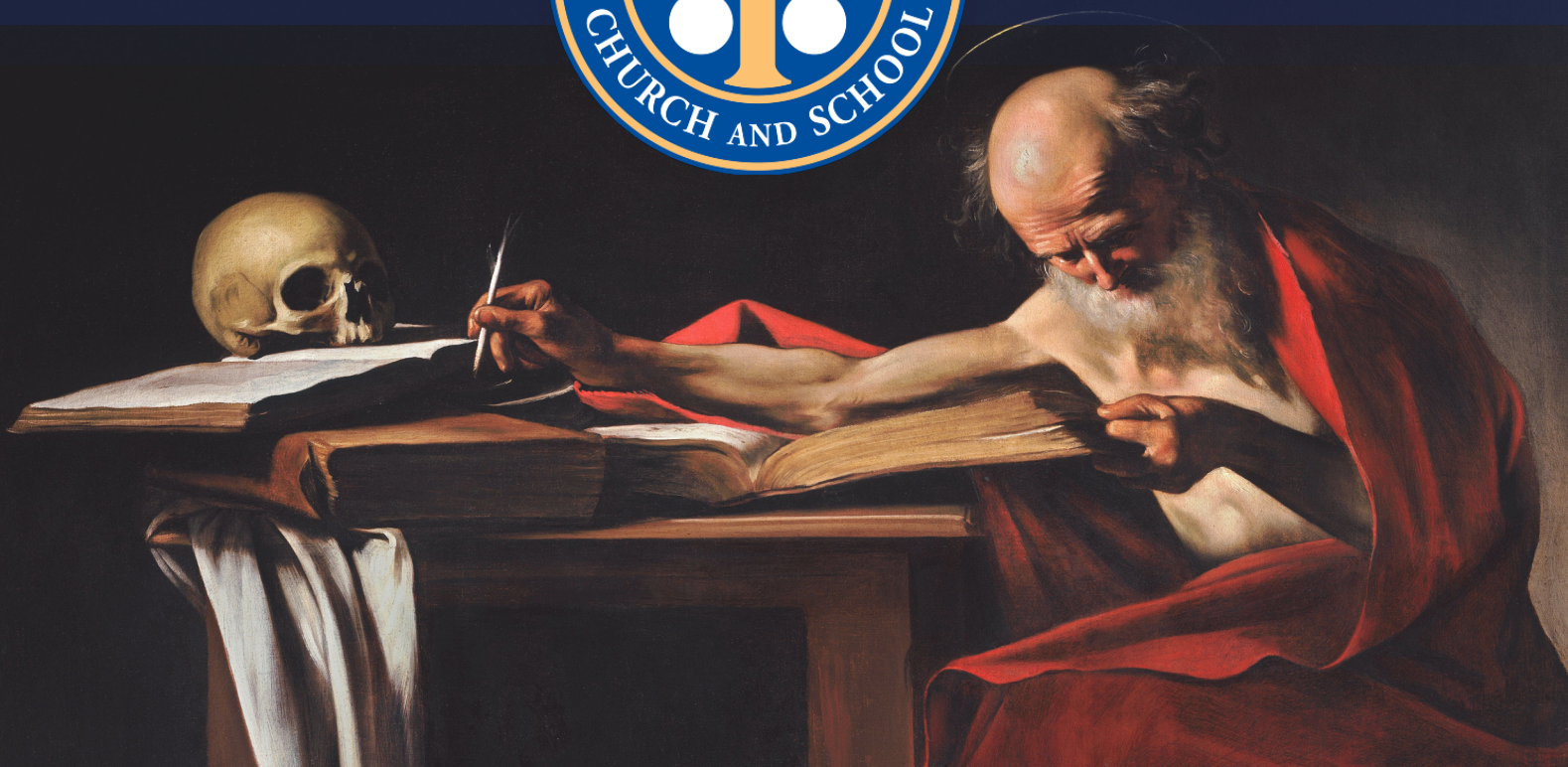
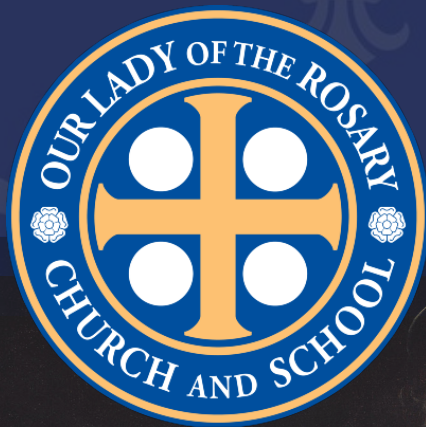




# Classical Composition Curriculum

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*Grade 09*



# Course Overview

## Course Description

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This course initiates students into the art of composition by helping them overcome the fear of the blank page and training them in the disciplines of invention and imitation. Through sustained writing, thoughtful revision, and engagement with models of eloquence from Cicero to Hemingway, students learn to write with clarity, persuasion, and beauty. The first semester focuses on the logic of argument—how to refute and confirm the truth of a story—while the second semester introduces the imitation of great stylists to cultivate description, definition, and persuasion. Students will assemble a polished portfolio that demonstrates growth in both style and substance.

## Why We Teach It...

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We teach composition because language forms the soul and orders the intellect. Writing well is not merely a school task—it is a means of seeking truth, honoring beauty, and forming judgment. In the classical tradition, composition is not a technical skill but a humane art that trains students to think carefully, speak nobly, and write worthily. Our students must be prepared to defend the good, the true, and the beautiful in an age of distraction. To write clearly is to live wisely.

## Course Objectives

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*By the end of this course, students will be able to:*



Identify and employ the Heads of Development and Heads of Purpose in classical composition.








Compose persuasive Refutation and Confirmation essays through logical invention.



# Course Objectives | Continued...

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-  Revise drafts through peer critique, self-evaluation, and guided correction.
-  Imitate the stylistic virtues of exemplary authors from ancient, medieval, and modern traditions.
-  Distinguish between different forms of description, definition, and persuasion.
-  Build a portfolio that demonstrates increasing command of voice, structure, and insight.
-  Write with moral seriousness, rhetorical elegance, and growing confidence.

## Source Material

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*The Writer's Workshop* by Gregory Roper (ISI Books, 2007)

*Classical Composition: Refutation & Confirmation* by James Selby (Memoria Press, 2013)



# Key Concepts

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<i>Composition</i>	<i>Thesis</i>	<i>Authority</i>
<i>Invention</i>	<i>Argument</i>	<i>Command</i>
<i>Imitation</i>	<i>Counterargument</i>	<i>Voice</i>
<i>Narrative</i>	<i>Commonplace</i>	<i>Tone</i>
<i>Chreia</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Persuasion</i>
<i>Maxim</i>	<i>Distinction</i>	<i>Logic</i>
<i>Heads of Development</i>	<i>Five Senses</i>	<i>Style</i>
<i>Heads of Purpose</i>	<i>Telling vs. Showing</i>	<i>Revision</i>
<i>Refutation</i>	<i>Realism</i>	<i>Imitation</i>
<i>Confirmation</i>	<i>Impressionism</i>	<i>Portfolio</i>

# Assessments

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## **Summative: 45%**

- Expository Essays
- Recitations
- Tests
- Lesson Quizzes

## **Formative: 35%**

- Seminars/Debates
- Recitations
- Essay Process

## **Conscientiousness 20%**

- Homework
- Classwork
- Participation



# Scope & Sequence

## Unit 1 | The Story

1 Week

### Week 1

#### Overview

This unit returns students to the foundations of narrative composition. Students revisit and rewrite a story previously studied in the Narrative stage, such as “The Pen and the Inkstand” or “Tannenberg.” Emphasis is placed on the elements of plot, character, and moral insight. Students practice shaping a beginning, middle, and end while clarifying the lesson the story seeks to teach. By learning to craft a well-ordered narrative, students gain confidence in the written word.

#### Central-One-Idea

*A story well told reveals not only what happened, but what matters.*

#### Key Terms

narrative, plot, beginning-middle-end, character, moral, imitation, story structure

#### Great Questions

- \* What makes a story worth telling?
- \* How does narrative reveal the moral imagination of a writer?
- \* What is the difference between recounting events and composing a story?
- \* How does rewriting a story help us understand its meaning more deeply?
- \* Why is clarity of structure essential to storytelling?

**Sources:** “*The Pen and the Inkstand*” or “*Tannenberg*”  
(from previous Narrative stage work)





## Week 2-3 Overview

This unit introduces students to the art of developing wisdom in prose. Drawing from a well-known maxim or chreia, students revisit the techniques learned in earlier stages to construct a short essay that affirms the truth of a saying through examples, testimony, and reasoning. This exercise bridges moral insight with structured argument, helping students express timeless truths with clarity and grace. The chosen maxim may also connect to works read in English literature, encouraging thoughtful synthesis across disciplines.

### Central-One-Idea

A well-developed saying becomes a vessel for moral truth.

### Key Terms

chreia, maxim, heads of development, example, testimony, thesis, moral insight

### Great Questions

- \* Why do wise sayings endure across time and culture?
- \* How can a short statement express a profound truth?
- \* What makes a maxim worth writing about?
- \* How does example strengthen an argument?
- \* How does a chreia differ from a mere opinion?

**Sources:** *A selected maxim or saying, either from the \*Chreia & Maxim\* stage or from English literature class.*



## Week 4-7

### Overview

This unit marks the student's transition into formal argumentation. Drawing from the \*Refutation and Confirmation\* stage of classical composition, students learn the Heads of Purpose and begin constructing arguments that either disprove or affirm the truth presented in a story. This unit emphasizes logical clarity, structured invention, and rhetorical balance. Students engage with a specific narrative idea and respond with reasoned judgment, learning how to uphold or challenge a claim with integrity and insight.

### Central-One-Idea

To argue well is to serve the truth by seeking it with order and honesty.

### Key Terms

refutation, confirmation, heads of purpose, argument, thesis, counterexample, logic

### Great Questions

- \* What is the purpose of argument?
- \* How does one respectfully disagree with an idea?
- \* Why is it important to both affirm and challenge what a story claims?
- \* What role does structure play in writing a compelling argument?
- \* How does argument reveal what a student truly believes?

**\*\*Sources:** *Classical Composition: Refutation & Confirmation* \* (Memoria Press)



### Week 8-14

#### Overview

This unit consolidates the skills of Refutation and Confirmation through continued practice. Students write three to four formal essays responding to different moral or narrative claims, refining their use of logical invention, structured reasoning, and rhetorical style. Emphasis is placed on peer review, revision, and the habits of careful rewriting. By the end of the unit, students will not only understand the components of classical argument but will have practiced them with increasing depth and independence.

#### Central-One-Idea

*Mastery in writing is not found in brilliance, but in faithful revision.*

#### Key Terms

refutation, confirmation, heads of purpose, essay structure, revision, peer critique, final draft

#### Great Questions

- \* What does it mean to write with clarity and conviction?
- \* How does feedback help a writer grow in truth and humility?
- \* Why must an argument be rewritten before it can be trusted?
- \* What distinguishes a first draft from a final draft?
- \* How can writing become a craft rather than a task?

**Sources:** *Classical Composition: Refutation & Confirmation workbook* (Memoria Press); student-chosen stories or claims for essay response



**Week 15-16 Overview**

This unit initiates students into the craft of vivid description. By imitating the poetic counsel of Geoffrey of Vinsauf and the descriptive richness of Charles Dickens, students learn to paint images with words. The unit introduces two schools of artistic vision—Realism and Impressionism—and asks how a writer’s style influences the reader’s perception of reality. Through detailed observation and disciplined imitation, students begin to shape language that reflects both clarity and beauty.

**Central-One-Idea**

*To describe well is to help the reader see truly.*

**Key Terms**

description, imagery, realism, impressionism, poetic amplification, visual detail, imitation

**Great Questions**

- \* What is the difference between seeing something and describing it well?
- \* How do different authors help us perceive the same object differently?
- \* What makes a description beautiful or true?
- \* How do Realism and Impressionism differ in both art and writing?
- \* Why is imitation a path to originality?

**Sources:** *Geoffrey of Vinsauf, Poetria Nova (excerpts); Charles Dickens, \*Great Expectations*



## Week 17-18 Overview

This unit turns from the stillness of image to the movement of action. Students study how to bring events to life through dynamic, sensory detail. By imitating the restrained clarity of Ernest Hemingway and the stream-of-consciousness style of James Joyce, students learn to convey motion, tension, and sequence with precision. Special emphasis is placed on incorporating the five senses and understanding the vital difference between “telling” and “showing.” Students will experiment with voice, tempo, and tone to write scenes that move the reader both literally and emotionally.

### Central-One-Idea

*Good writing does not just tell what happens—it lets the reader feel it happen.*

### Key Terms

action, sequence, sensory detail, showing vs. telling, voice, tempo, tone

### Great Questions

- \* What makes a scene feel real to the reader?
- \* Why are the five senses so important in writing action?
- \* How does Hemingway create emotion through restraint?
- \* How does Joyce immerse the reader in a character’s experience?
- \* What does it mean to “show” instead of “tell”?

**Sources:** Ernest Hemingway, “A Day’s Wait”  
James Joyce, “Dubliners” (excerpts)



**Week 19-20 Overview**

This unit teaches students to think and write with precision by exploring the art of definition. Through the rhetorical force of Saint Paul and the moral clarity of Sojourner Truth, students learn how definition can reveal truth, draw distinctions, and deepen understanding. They study the structure of logical definition, the role of contrast, and the poetic nature of naming. By the end of the unit, students will not only define terms accurately, but use definition as a tool of both persuasion and praise.

**Central-One-Idea**

*To define well is to see clearly and speak truthfully.*

**Key Terms**

definition, distinction, essence, contrast, rhetorical clarity, precision, naming

**Great Questions**

- \* What does it mean to define something by its essence?
- \* How can definition be both logical and poetic?
- \* Why do distinctions matter in speech and thought?
- \* How do Paul and Truth use definition to defend the truth?
- \* What happens when we fail to define our terms?

**Sources:** *Saint Paul, Letter to the Corinthians*

*Sojourner Truth, “And Ain’t I a Woman?” (oration)*



## Week 21-22 Overview

This unit invites students to explore the rhetorical power of command. By imitating the declarative style of the Ten Commandments, students study how writers adopt voices of authority—not through force, but through clarity, conviction, and moral gravity. The unit explores the structure of imperative language, the role of shared norms, and the unifying force of ethical speech. Students will practice writing that calls others to truth, forming sentences that both instruct and inspire.

### Central-One-Idea

*The voice of authority speaks with clarity, conviction, and unity.*

### Key Terms

authority, command, imperative, law, norm, unity, voice

### Great Questions

- \* What gives a sentence moral authority?
- \* How do laws teach, even beyond enforcement?
- \* Why is authority persuasive in a way that argument alone is not?
- \* How does the form of the Ten Commandments shape their force?
- \* Can a writer unite readers through shared conviction?

**Sources:** The Ten Commandments (King James Bible)



## Week 23-24 Overview

This unit introduces students to the logical structure of thought. Through imitation of Saint Thomas Aquinas, students learn how to build short scholastic arguments using the method of objection and reply. They explore how logic clarifies ideas, tests assumptions, and reveals order within complexity. This form of writing sharpens precision, trains humility, and helps students articulate not only what they believe, but why. Logic becomes not merely a tool of argument, but a means of loving the truth.

### Central-One-Idea

*Logic orders thought so that truth may be pursued with clarity and humility.*

### Key Terms

logic, objection, reply, thesis, order, clarity, scholastic method

### Great Questions

- \* What makes an argument logical rather than emotional?
- \* How does the form of objection and reply shape our thinking?
- \* Why is logic necessary for persuasion?
- \* What can we learn from Aquinas about how to disagree charitably?
- \* How does logical form reflect the order of reality?

**Sources:** *Saint Thomas Aquinas, \*Summa Theologica\** (excerpts)



**Week 25-26 Overview**

This final unit invites students to unify all they have learned by studying the classical art of persuasion. By imitating Cicero's oration *\*Pro Archia\**, students explore how rhetoric moves the soul through logic, beauty, and ethical appeal. They review the seven liberal arts and the structure of classical oration, reflecting on how speech can shape a culture and defend what is good. Persuasion is not manipulation—it is the noble art of soul-leading.

**Central-One-Idea**

*True rhetoric leads the soul by uniting truth, beauty, and goodness.*

**Key Terms**

rhetoric, persuasion, oration, soul-leading, ethos, liberal arts, classical form

**Great Questions**

- \* What makes persuasion different from manipulation?
- \* How does Cicero unite argument, style, and virtue?
- \* Why must the orator be a moral man?
- \* How do the liberal arts serve the art of rhetoric?
- \* What is the purpose of speaking well?

**Sources:** *Cicero, Pro Archia Poeta (oration)*





# Course Catechism

This section is structured as a series of questions and answers—intended to cultivate wisdom, virtue, and a love of tradition in the soul of the reader. Drawing from classical education, Christian orthodoxy, and the accumulated insights of Western civilization, this catechism aims to form not only the mind but the moral imagination.



Each question is crafted to provoke contemplation, and each answer is more than mere information—it is a small liturgy of truth, designed to be memorized, internalized, and lived. In the tradition of ancient catechisms, this section assumes that learning is not just for passing tests, but for becoming someone.

## Section I | The Story

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**Q: What is a narrative?**

**A:** *A narrative is a structured account of events arranged to reveal meaning, often through plot, character, and resolution.*

**Q: What are the three essential parts of a story?**

**A:** *Beginning, middle, and end.*

**Q: What is the purpose of the beginning of a story?**

**A:** *To introduce the setting, characters, and central conflict.*

**Q: What happens in the middle of a story?**

**A:** *The conflict develops through rising action and leads toward a climax.*

**Q: What is the end of a story for?**

**A:** *To resolve the conflict and reveal the moral or meaning.*

**Q: What is plot?**

**A:** *Plot is the sequence of events that form the structure of a narrative.*



## Section I | Continued...

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**Q: What is character?**

**A:** *A character is a person or figure in a story whose actions and decisions shape the plot.*

**Q: What is a moral?**

**A:** *A moral is the lesson or truth the story reveals through its outcome.*

**Q: What does it mean to imitate a story?**

**A:** *To imitate a story means to rewrite it faithfully while preserving its structure and truth, often in one's own words.*

**Q: Why do classical writers study narrative first?**

**A:** *Because storytelling teaches structure, clarity, and the habit of moral reflection.*

## Section II | The Saying

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**Q: What is a chreia?**

**A:** *A chreia is a short narrative or anecdote that illustrates the usefulness of a wise saying.*

**Q: What is a maxim?**

**A:** *A maxim is a concise statement that expresses a general truth or principle.*

**Q: What is the purpose of writing about a saying?**

**A:** *To explore, explain, and affirm the truth it contains through examples, reasoning, and testimony.*

**Q: What are the Heads of Development?**

**A:** *The Heads of Development are parts of the classical chreia essay: Encomium, Paraphrase, Cause, Example, Testimony, Epilogue.*

**Q: What is an encomium?**

**A:** *An encomium is a brief praise of the person who spoke the saying.*



## Section II | Continued...

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**Q: What is a paraphrase in a chreia?**

**A:** *A paraphrase is a restatement of the saying in one's own words.*

**Q: What is the cause in a chreia essay?**

**A:** *The cause explains why the saying is true or worth following.*

**Q: What is the purpose of the example?**

**A:** *To illustrate the truth of the saying with a real or imagined incident.*

**Q: What is a testimony in a chreia?**

**A:** *A testimony is a quotation or authority that supports the truth of the saying.*

**Q: What is the goal of a chreia or maxim essay?**

**A:** *To affirm the truth of the saying by developing it with reason, evidence, and style.*

## Section III | The Argument

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**Q: What is a chreia?**

**A:** *A chreia is a short narrative or anecdote that illustrates the usefulness of a wise saying.*

**Q: What is a maxim?**

**A:** *A maxim is a concise statement that expresses a general truth or principle.*

**Q: What is the purpose of writing about a saying?**

**A:** *To explore, explain, and affirm the truth it contains through examples, reasoning, and testimony.*

**Q: What are the Heads of Development?**

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**Q: What is an encomium?**

**A:** *An encomium is a brief praise of the person who spoke the saying.*



## Section III | Continued...

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**Q: What is a paraphrase in a chreia?**

**A:** *A paraphrase is a restatement of the saying in one's own words.*

**Q: What is the cause in a chreia essay?**

**A:** *The cause explains why the saying is true or worth following.*

**Q: What is the purpose of the example?**

**A:** *To illustrate the truth of the saying with a real or imagined incident.*

**Q: What is a testimony in a chreia?**

**A:** *A testimony is a quotation or authority that supports the truth of the saying.*

**Q: What is the goal of a chreia or maxim essay?**

**A:** *To affirm the truth of the saying by developing it with reason, evidence, and style.*

## Section IV | Mastery

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**Q: What is the goal of the Mastery unit?**

**A:** *To refine and strengthen the student's ability to write Refutation and Confirmation essays through repeated practice and revision.*

**Q: How many essays are typically written in this unit?**

**A:** *Three to four full essays, each addressing a different narrative claim.*

**Q: What is revision?**

**A:** *Revision is the process of improving a written draft by reworking its structure, clarity, logic, and style.*

**Q: What is peer critique?**

**A:** *Peer critique is the practice of offering and receiving feedback from classmates to improve one's writing.*

**Q: Why is rewriting important in composition?**

**A:** *Good writing requires refinement, correction, and the discovery of clearer expression.*



## Section IV | Continued...

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**Q: What is a final draft?**

**A:** *A final draft is a carefully revised and polished version of an essay, suitable for formal submission.*

**Q: What does it mean to master a form of writing?**

**A:** *To master a form means to write it confidently, clearly, and skillfully without depending on prompts or examples.*

**Q: What are some signs of improvement in student writing?**

**A:** *Stronger organization, clearer thesis statements, more persuasive arguments, and greater stylistic control.*

**Q: What is the role of structure in argument writing?**

**A:** *Structure helps guide the reader through a logical progression of thought, making the argument easier to understand and more persuasive.*

**Q: How does repeated practice build mastery?**

**A:** *It deepens familiarity with the form, strengthens habits of thought, and increases confidence in written expression.*

## Section V | Learning How to Describe

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**Q: What is description in writing?**

**A:** *Description is the use of vivid and specific language to create a sensory image in the reader's mind.*

**Q: What is the goal of description?**

**A:** *To help the reader see, hear, feel, or imagine what the writer is describing with clarity and precision.*

**Q: Who is Geoffrey of Vinsauf?**

**A:** *Geoffrey of Vinsauf was a medieval writer who taught rhetorical principles in his work \*Poetria Nova\*, especially how to describe well.*



## Section V | Continued...

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**Q: What is poetic amplification?**

**A:** *Poetic amplification is the rhetorical technique of expanding or elaborating a subject to highlight its beauty or significance.*

**Q: What is realism in literature?**

**A:** *Realism is a style of writing that seeks to depict life accurately and without embellishment.*

**Q: What is impressionism in literature?**

**A:** *Impressionism is a style that aims to capture the fleeting, subjective experience of a moment rather than its exact details.*

**Q: Why is imitation used to learn description?**

**A:** *Because imitating great stylists helps students internalize effective techniques and develop their own descriptive voice.*

**Q: How does Charles Dickens describe?**

**A:** *Dickens uses detailed, imaginative, and often exaggerated language to create vivid scenes and characters.*

**Q: What does it mean to write with visual detail?**

**A:** *It means to include concrete and specific images that appeal to the reader's sense of sight.*

**Q: How does description relate to truth?**

**A:** *Good description helps the reader see what is truly there—not just physically, but morally and emotionally.*





## Section VI | Describing Action

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**Q: What does it mean to describe action in writing?**

**A:** *To describe action is to depict movement, change, or events unfolding in a way that the reader can follow and visualize.*

**Q: What is the difference between “showing” and “telling”?**

**A:** *“Showing” uses concrete sensory details to let the reader experience the scene, while “telling” simply states what happens or how someone feels.*

**Q: Why are the five senses important in descriptive writing?**

**A:** *Because they help the writer engage the reader’s imagination by appealing to sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell.*

**Q: Who was Ernest Hemingway?**

**A:** *Hemingway was a 20th-century American writer known for his clear, restrained, and action-driven prose.*

**Q: What is Hemingway’s style known for?**

**A:** *Short sentences, concrete nouns and verbs, and emotional understatement.*

**Q: Who was James Joyce?**

**A:** *James Joyce was an Irish modernist author known for his experimental style and use of stream-of-consciousness narration.*

**Q: What is stream-of-consciousness?**

**A:** *A literary technique that presents a character’s thoughts and perceptions in a continuous flow, often without conventional structure.*

**Q: Why is pacing important in action scenes?**

**A:** *Because it controls the rhythm of the narrative and affects how the reader experiences movement and tension.*

**Q: What does it mean to write with “voice”?**

**A:** *It means writing in a way that reflects the distinct personality, tone, and rhythm of the narrator or author.*



## Section VII | Describing Action

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**Q: What is a definition?**

**A:** *A definition is a clear statement of what something is, usually by identifying its essential qualities.*

**Q: What does it mean to define by essence?**

**A:** *To define by essence means to identify what something is in itself, not merely what it does or how it appears.*

**Q: What is a distinction?**

**A:** *A distinction is the act of separating two or more ideas to clarify meaning and avoid confusion.*

**Q: Why is definition important in writing?**

**A:** *Because clear definitions help the reader understand exactly what the writer means and why it matters.*

**Q: Who was Saint Paul?**

**A:** *Saint Paul was an apostle of Christ known for his epistles in the New Testament, which often include precise definitions of spiritual and moral truths.*

**Q: How does Saint Paul use definition?**

**A:** *Paul uses definition to clarify doctrine, confront error, and unify the Church around truth.*

**Q: Who was Sojourner Truth?**

**A:** *Sojourner Truth was an African-American abolitionist and speaker known for her moral clarity and rhetorical power.*

**Q: How does Sojourner Truth use definition?**

**A:** *She defines womanhood, dignity, and justice by confronting cultural contradictions with personal witness and logical argument.*

**Q: What is the role of contrast in definition?**

**A:** *Contrast sharpens definition by showing what a thing is not, helping to highlight its essential features.*



**Q: What is authority in writing?**

**A:** *Authority in writing is the power to speak with command, clarity, and moral weight that compels attention and respect.*

**Q: What is an imperative sentence?**

**A:** *An imperative sentence gives a command or instruction and often implies the speaker has the right to be obeyed.*

**Q: What is the purpose of writing with authority?**

**A:** *To unite the reader and writer around shared truths, norms, or moral convictions.*

**Q: What is the source of moral authority?**

**A:** *Moral authority comes from truth, experience, wisdom, or divine law—not merely personal opinion.*

**Q: What are the Ten Commandments?**

**A:** *The Ten Commandments are divine laws given by God to Moses, expressing moral truths in concise, authoritative language.*

**Q: What makes the language of the Ten Commandments powerful?**

**A:** *Their clarity, brevity, and use of direct imperatives rooted in divine authority.*

**Q: What is a norm?**

**A:** *A norm is a shared standard or rule that governs behavior within a community.*

**Q: How can a writer establish authority?**

**A:** *By writing with clarity, moral confidence, ethical consistency, and reference to shared truths or tradition.*

**Q: What is the danger of writing without authority?**

**A:** *It leads to vague, uncertain, or overly subjective expression that fails to guide or persuade the reader.*

## Section IX | How to Make Sense: Logic

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### **Q: What is logic?**

**A:** *Logic is the art of reasoning rightly, by which we move from what is known to what must be true.*

### **Q: What is an argument?**

**A:** *An argument is a set of statements in which a conclusion is drawn from one or more premises.*

### **Q: What is a premise?**

**A:** *A premise is a statement that provides support or evidence for a conclusion.*

### **Q: What is a conclusion?**

**A:** *A conclusion is the statement that follows logically from the premises in an argument.*

### **Q: What is the scholastic method?**

**A:** *The scholastic method is a form of structured reasoning that uses objection, reply, and resolution to seek truth.*

### **Q: Who was Saint Thomas Aquinas?**

**A:** *Saint Thomas Aquinas was a Catholic philosopher and theologian who used the scholastic method in his *\*Summa Theologica\** to explain and defend doctrine.*

### **Q: What is an objection?**

**A:** *An objection is a reasonable challenge or counter-argument to a thesis.*

### **Q: What is a reply?**

**A:** *A reply is the writer's answer to an objection, defending the thesis through clarification or counter-reasoning.*

### **Q: Why is logical order important in writing?**

**A:** *Because it helps the reader follow the reasoning clearly and recognize the truth of the conclusion.*



## Section X | Learning Persuasion: Rhetoric

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**Q: What is rhetoric?**

**A:** *Rhetoric is the art of persuasion, by which a speaker or writer moves the soul through reason, beauty, and ethical appeal.*

**Q: What does it mean to “lead the soul”?**

**A:** *To lead the soul means to guide a person toward truth, goodness, and right action through persuasive speech or writing.*

**Q: What are the three rhetorical appeals?**

**A:** *Ethos (character), logos (reason), and pathos (emotion).*

**Q: What is ethos?**

**A:** *Ethos is the credibility and moral character of the speaker or writer.*

**Q: What is logos?**

**A:** *Logos is the logical reasoning or argument presented in a persuasive work.*

**Q: What is pathos?**

**A:** *Pathos is the appeal to the emotions, imagination, or sympathies of the audience.*

**Q: Who was Cicero?**

**A:** *Cicero was a Roman statesman, philosopher, and orator known for his mastery of persuasive speech and classical oration.*

**Q: What is the classical structure of an oration?**

**A:** *Introduction (exordium), Statement of Facts (narratio), Proof (confirmatio), Refutation (refutatio), and Conclusion (peroratio).*

**Q: Why must the rhetorician be a moral person?**

**A:** *Because true persuasion requires integrity and a commitment to what is good and just.*

**Q: What is the goal of rhetoric in a classical education?**

**A:** *To form students who speak the truth with beauty, clarity, and courage in service of the common good.*



# Week 1

## Weekly Logos | The Foundations of Truth

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Students begin their study of composition by returning to the first and oldest form of writing: narrative. Through guided discussion and imitation, they explore the essential structure of story—beginning, middle, and end—and how narrative conveys moral truth through plot and character. By rewriting a familiar tale, students learn to order events clearly and express meaning with simplicity and confidence. The week concludes with a short composition and a seminar on the moral imagination.

## What Are We Assessing? | The Facts

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- ▮ A narrative has three main parts: beginning, middle, and end.
- ▮ The beginning introduces setting, characters, and conflict.
- ▮ The middle develops the conflict through rising action.
- ▮ The end resolves the conflict and reveals the story's moral.
- ▮ Plot is the sequence of events arranged to show meaning.
- ▮ Characters reveal truth through choices, speech, and action.
- ▮ A story may be retold with different words but the same truth.

## What Are We Assessing? | The Skills

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- ▮ Identify and describe the structure of a well-told story
- ▮ Rewrite a familiar story in clear, ordered prose
- ▮ Recognize how moral insight is embedded in plot
- ▮ Practice paragraphing and transitions
- ▮ Introduce or conclude a short composition gracefully





# What Are We Assessing? | The Truths

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*“Nothing can both be and not be at the same time and in the same respect.”*  
– Aristotle

- ▣ Storytelling is a human act rooted in memory, meaning, and morality.
- ▣ A good story reflects something true about the world.
- ▣ Clarity of structure helps communicate moral insight.
- ▣ To imitate a story is to enter its wisdom, not replace it.
- ▣ The stories we tell shape the people we become.

## Assessments | Suggested Types

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- ▣ Rewrite “The Pen and the Inkstand” or “Tannenberg” (2–3 paragraphs)
- ▣ Diagram the story’s beginning, middle, and end
- ▣ Journal Prompt: What lesson does the story teach, and how does it show it?
- ▣ Seminar: What makes a story worth remembering?



## Pacing | By Week

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<i>Day</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Homework</i>
Monday	Introduce course & unit 1. Read & Discuss, “The Pen & the Inkstand.”	Retell the story in 6-8 sentences
Tuesday	Discuss structure & clarity: “Does your story have shape?” Intro plot and moral insight.	Revise retelling into paragraph form
Wednesday	How to begin & end a composition revised paragraph in pairs	Finalize draft for submission
Thursday	Seminar: “What makes a story worth telling.” Char., conflict, meaning	Write: Is it possible to deny truth without using it? (1 paragraph)
Friday	Recitation: Retell the story orally in 60 sec.	None



# Teacher Tips

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## **Model Narrative Structure Aloud**

Regularly pause to narrate aloud the shape of a story: “Here is the beginning—this is where the conflict begins—notice how the story moves.”

## **Use the Whiteboard to Diagram Plot**

Draw visual arcs of the story’s structure (beginning, middle, end) to help students see how plot unfolds and resolves.

## **Stress the Moral Element**

Ask: “What is this story trying to say about the world?” Encourage students to look beyond the sequence of events to the lesson being taught.

## **Encourage Oral Retelling**

Before writing, let students practice telling the story aloud to a partner. This builds fluency, clarity, and confidence before they face the page.

## **Praise Clarity Over Complexity**

Affirm students who write clearly, even if simply. Let them know that precision and order are more valuable than ornamentation at this stage.

## **Connect to the Imagination**

Invite students to enter the world of the story. Ask how it made them feel, what stood out, or whether they would act differently than the characters.

