

The Trivium Method of Teaching and Learning

The Trivium dates back to the Great Greek Philosophers, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle; the existence of the mind as believed by Socrates and Plato governs knowledge. These great thinkers also found that having knowledge of the mind is perhaps as elusive to some as finding out their life's purpose. The knowledge of the capabilities of the mind is purposefully discovered through a step by step process in a classical model of teaching and learning called the Trivium.

Why do we use the Trivium at Fidelis Academy? We use the Trivium method of education to maximize a child's brain potential, for example, when we begin an exercise regimen, we understand that there are small steps to take to get the body to learn and master the movement in order to maximize time and energy, resulting in physical success. The brain is a muscle, the Trivium method provides the same process but for the brain. Each phase of a student's learning is coordinated with their physical growth. The Trivium capitalizes on the physical growth of the brain over time, developing a well-trained mind.

The Three Stages of the Trivium

The first stage is the Grammar Stage - This is the early part of learning, starting formally in Kindergarten through 5th grade. Students begin their training in answering the Who, What, When, Where and How of EVERYTHING! This process rests on the curiosity and the adventurous phase of a child's life; where they want to know everything!

The second stage is the Logic Stage - This step requires a little bit more maturity from the child, where they are now processing and understanding things around them. Students in this stage are typically entering the 6th grade spanning until the 8th grade, i.e. "Middle School." This stage of learning is perhaps one of the most difficult times of life to maneuver as a person. I call it "The FOG." Philosophical thinking and life lessons begin to form and perhaps "confuse" the student. They are now using everything they learned in the grammar stage and placing it under subjective scrutiny. In this phase a child attempts to learn more about self and existence.

The Rhetoric Stage – This third and last step of this process, finds students as they enter their 9th -12th year of formal education. This is the "How" stage. Students are now interacting with knowledge through their active output. Students are directed to use wisdom in their courses of study, dialogue and behavior. They begin to interact with the impact and consequences of the decisions they are making of the future. They see, understand, and begin to seek the influence they have in the existence of their mind.