



Essentials

THE ESSENTIALS PROGRAM prepares 3rd thru 6th grade students for the Challenge Program. The students and their parents meet from 1:00-3:00 each week after their Foundations Program. The Essentials Program meets one day a week for 24 weeks each school year. The students will spend 45 minutes studying Classical Conversations' English grammar dialectically, 45 minutes on a writing assignment from the Institute for Excellence in Writing, and 30 minutes in a Math Slam competition. A single tutor will facilitate this program.

Parents are expected to attend so they can use the program as a complete Language Arts program at home. Our methodology challenges students to understand sentence structures that we actually speak and write and not just contrived sentences taught in textbooks. Phonics, spelling rules, parts of speech, and diagramming sentences will be taught and practiced.

All mathematical operations, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, exponents, and radicals will be practiced through a variety of math games. Students are encouraged to finish their writing assignments at home and present them the following week during their Foundations Presentation time.

The Essentials of the English Language Difference The Essentials of English Language is a complete language arts program that takes students beyond the worksheet. Through a mixture of strategic memorization of vocabulary, rules, and lists, along with a series

of analytical tasks, students are taught how to thoughtfully analyze sentence construction resulting in strong language construction and usage skills – written and oral.

Classical Conversations believes in the importance of parents and students being comfortable, and even masterful, with the use of words, words, words – whether in reading, writing, or speaking.

Analytical Tasks and Confirmations:

- 1) Grammar and recitation
- 2) Sentence Confirmation
- 3) Question Confirmation
- 4) Diagramming Confirmation
- 5) Modification Confirmation
- 6) Quid et Quo Confirmation

This is a dialectic program where English grammar is reinforced through conversations with adults who want their students to master the art of language studies. Tutors come prepared with:

- 1) a spelling lesson from Spelling Plus
- 2) an enhanced writing lesson from the IEW Structure and Style Syllabus correlated to the students' lesson from the IEW Writing Lesson text for that cycle,
- 3) math drills and games from Mega-Fun Math Card Games, and
- 4) the week's grammar and punctuation lesson from The Essentials of the English Language.

Classical Model These three years of language studies are hard work for parents. They are simi-

lar to those first three years of teaching reading in that it takes time and consistency. Our current students have proven that they can graduate from 6th grade able to write well-constructed papers and understand the grammatical structures that make up the romance languages. Critical analysis and expository writing will be easier for high school students who have a teaching parent who values the tools of language. We teach grammar rules through memory work, teach processing and understanding through conversations about language, and apply the grammar being mastered to structured writing assignments.

"The easiest way to explain the dialectic is to use examples. For instance, when I'm teaching Latin, I use the grammar rules the students have already learned in English to help them figure out the rules of Latin on their own."
–Leigh Bortins

The Classical Model

Classical Education trains students to learn any information through a 3-step process:

- 1) Memorize vocabulary and rules (also called grammar);
- 2) Process new concepts (also called dialectic or logic);
- 3) Clearly, persuasively and logically use grammar knowledge to influence others (also called rhetoric).

–Leigh Bortins
from her book *Echo in Celebration: A Call to Home-Centered Education*

Essentials

Scope and Sequence

	Weekly Class (Tutor-led)	At Home...	Students Will Learn...
Language Arts	45 minutes Essentials of the English Language Guide	Essentials of the English Language Guide	Through sentence diagramming, students learn basic capitalization and punctuation; phonograms; sentence structure, patterns, and purposes; eight parts of speech plus specific classifications for verbs, nouns, pronouns; and more!
Writing	45 minutes IEW Enhanced Lesson	Writing assignments from IEW's subject-based series	Different writing structures modeled on eight writing units, as well as techniques to polish any writing style.
Math	Drills from Mega-Fun Math Card Games	Regular personal/math program	Greater speed and accuracy in mental arithmetic as students prepare for success in Algebra and beyond.



"... a good education teaches a child how to build a [place in] the mind for every subject. You not only feed children information to [retain], but help the students see ways to organize the information for quick retrieval..."

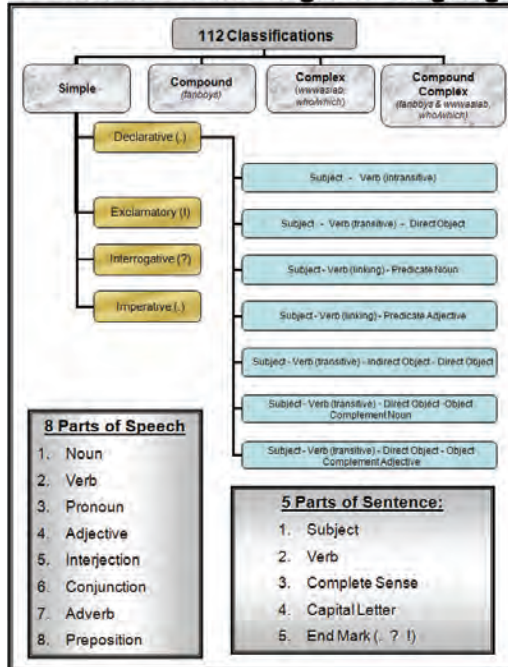
...When the organizational system is mastered, which means quickly accessible and confidently retrieved, the information becomes very useful and can be dialectically synthesized into any new idea."

—Leigh Bortins

THE ESSENTIALS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DIFFERENCE

STRUCTURE
PURPOSE
PATTERNS

Essentials of the English Language



THE TEACHER SHEET

Week #5, Sentence #5 Advanced

HV AJ AJ SN VI

Dictated Sentence: Did the weeping Jesus pray?

Task 2: Mechanics
1. Punctuated correctly? 2. Spelled correctly? 3. Is it truly a sentence?

Task 3: Question Confirmation (Hint: Re-state as declarative then proceed with Question Confirmation.)
Who wept? Jesus, subject noun.
What is being said about Jesus? Jesus did pray, helping verb, verb intransitive.
Which Jesus? the, article adjective.
What kind of Jesus? weeping, adjective.
[Weeping is a participle: a verb plus 'ing' acting as an adjective.]

Classification: Simple, Interrogative, S-VI

Task 4: Diagramming Confirmation

Task #5: Modification Confirmation

Rewrite by Purpose	Rewrite by Structure
Using declarative purpose: The weeping Jesus did pray. (D)	Using interrogative purpose: The weeping Jesus did pray, for we sinned. (C-d)
The weeping Jesus did pray! (E)	The weeping Jesus, who loves us, did pray. (C-a)
Did the weeping Jesus pray? (Int)	The weeping Jesus, who loves us, did pray, and He helped us. (C-d-C-a)

Advanced: Modify nouns or pronouns with simple one-word adjectives

A simple sentence consists of one independent clause that expresses a complete thought.

Verb(s): Did pray	Number? Singular
Type? Helping/Intransitive	Person? 3 rd Tense? Simple Past Voice? Active
Mood? Indicative	
Noun(s)/Pronoun(s): Jesus	Number? Singular
Type? Proper/Concrete	Gender? Masculine
Adjective(s): the, weeping	Type? Limiting, Descriptive
Degree? N/A	Modifying? Jesus
Verb(s): weeping	Type? Present Participle
Modifying? Jesus	

Remember: The EEL Tasks are designed to be progressive - to be learned and mastered over a 2-3 year period. Families new to EEL should not feel compelled to complete "every task" on "every sheet", rather they should focus on the first two tasks and their associated skills, doing them well, and then introduce the higher-level tasks at a pace that is best determined by the parent.

To find an Essentials Community near you, to start an Essentials Community, or to learn more about participation costs, visit our web site and click on the "Communities" link. For resources and materials needed to participate in our Essentials Community, visit our online book store.