

## ***How do I know if my child is ready for STCA?***

At St. Thomas Classical Academy, we consider many factors when discerning a child's readiness. Children are persons with a mind, body, and soul. As every child develops at a different pace, they have different needs in their environment. As parents, you will consider how STCA might benefit your child; school leaders will talk to tutors to ensure that we have the capacity to meet the needs of each child and use our experience to help parents determine the best place for him. While our minimum age is 6 years by September 1, we find that many children are not ready for the structure of our day until age 7.

### **Grammar 1 goals:**

In Grammar 1, we focus on self-control, attention, and wonder. In service of this, we intentionally have a slower pace for skill work. Parents are encouraged to focus on phonics and reading at home, as their children grow in confidence, speed, and fluidity. The top academic priorities during these early years are reading, math, and exploration.

### **How we use assessment:**

There is no single test or measurement that determines readiness. However, we believe that assessments are good tools for conversation between the parent and tutor. Parents and children will meet a tutor for an academic readiness assessment. This will include reading, math, and hand control; it will also include a conversation about the non-academic readiness of each student. We trust that parents know their children, and we will share our observations of young students over the life of St. Thomas Classical Academy.

### **Question to ask about your child:**

- Does my child exhibit self control?
- Does he have the ability to focus for periods of time?
- Can he happily be away from me for 7 hours at a time?
- Does my child know letters and sounds fluently?
- Am I able to continue a phonics program in the 3 days at home?
- Placing a child into a classroom with other children does naturally lead to comparison; will this hinder my child's contentment with learning at his own pace?
- Will the added social life be a benefit or a hindrance for him?

### **What should I do if we discern that my child is not ready?**

- First, enjoy this year at a slow pace! Go outside and enjoy nature. Read aloud and play music. You will never regret spending this year of childhood together.
- Second, work through a phonics program. We recommend All About Reading; ideally, a student would be nearing the finish of Level 1 in order to join the 1st grade class in All About Spelling 1, but there is room for flexibility.
- Finally, watch your child grow. If the year at home finds your child reading at a high level, he might join 2nd grade next. Reading age does not indicate future success or struggle in school, so relax and enjoy your time together.