

# The San Luis Obispo Classical Academy **Scoop**



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## Dates to Remember

### March

1st..... Open Enrollment  
1st..... Andrew Pudewa  
5th..... Tuition Due  
13th..... Parent Info Meeting  
15th..... Primary Recitation Evening  
16th..... End of 2nd Trimester  
19th..... 3rd Trimester Begins  
22nd..... PIE Night  
30th..... Walkathon

### April

5th..... Tuition Due  
6th-13th.... Spring Break  
17th..... Parent Info Meeting  
18th..... PIE Night  
20th..... Session 4 Academy  
Classes Begin

## Field Trips

### March

9th..... PG&E..... 11 am  
28th..... Cirque Eloize  
at the PAC..... 11 am\*

### April

3rd..... If You Give a Mouse a  
Cookie at the PAC.. 11 am\*  
26th..... Ballet Hispanico  
at the PAC..... 11 am\*

\*Please arrive at **10:30 am** for all  
PAC performances.



Mrs. Ingham's Kindergarten Class at the  
Monarch Butterfly Groves in Pismo.

## Tools of the Trade

### Mommy's List

by Bravewriter.com -- a writing curriculum by a homeschooling Mom

\_\_\_\_\_ I made each of my kids laugh today.

\_\_\_\_\_ I found a way to get one of my kids to say "That was so much fun!"

\_\_\_\_\_ We read aloud and I heard the words I read, and noticed one great simile and one great word pair.

\_\_\_\_\_ We followed one rabbit trail today (someone brought up a subject that made me stop what I was doing to go do a google search, to look for a movie or book on the topic, to talk about it and follow it up with a plane of some kind).

\_\_\_\_\_ We used one freewrite prompt.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hugged each of my kids.

\_\_\_\_\_ I listened to on child tell me a long story about something important to him.

\_\_\_\_\_ I learned how to do something today that one of my kids taught me.

\_\_\_\_\_ I read a blog or book or magazine about relaxed schooling.

\_\_\_\_\_ I didn't do one thing that I hate to do.

\_\_\_\_\_ I didn't make my kids do \_\_\_\_\_ today.

\_\_\_\_\_ I did one thing that made me supremely happy today.

## The Education Column

### Choosing Good Books for our Children

By Rea Berg

The ancient philosopher reminds us that all true art is purposeful and is the product of expertise, creative genius, and often--intensive labor finding fruition in a work of beauty. No one would acclaim a toddler's spilled baby food as a masterpiece of design and imagery, and adolescents seldom write great works of literature (The Diary of Anne Frank perhaps excepted). Because art is imitative, it requires the mastering of techniques that enable the artist to create a work of beauty that reflects reality in a convincing way. Literature is no less a work of art than painting, sculpture, music, and dance. Thus literature must portray worlds that are believable because they in some way imitate the real world. This principle holds true in the world of children's books as well as the adult world of literature.

When considering classic literature, it is easy for most to identify the great works that belong to the canon of Western literature. The works of Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dickens, might head the list of writers across the pond, while classics of American literature would include To Kill a Mockingbird, Uncle Tom's Cabin, and Red Badge of Courage. But when it comes to choosing "classic" literature for children, we wonder, "Is there such a thing?" Is there truly a canon of children's literature? Great critics of children's literature such as Humphrey Carpenter, Anita Silvey, Virginia Haviland, Cornelia Meigs, would say unequivocally, "Yes." Indeed, Humphrey Carpenter, in his book Secret Gardens, identified 1860-1930 as The Golden Age of Children's Literature (the subtitle of his book). The writers that emerged in this period cover the span from Lewis Carroll to A. A. Milne and include such notables as George MacDonald, E. Nesbit, Charles Kingsley, Kenneth Graham, Beatrix Potter, Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Louisa May Alcott, Mark Twain, and J.M. Barrie and many others. The 70-year period between 1860 and 1930 established a literary foundation for children's literature still built upon today.

Continued on page 2

## Choosing Good Books for our Children continued...

What Lewis Carroll was proposing when Alice fell down the rabbit hole was the very subversive notion that children's literature could be just for fun. Indeed, Lewis poked fun at the piously didactic juvenile literature of the past and wrote a rollicking tale of imagination at the same time. The popularity of Alice in Wonderland and Alice Through the Looking Glass changed the course of children's publishing and established a precedent that other children's authors have followed. E. Nesbit wrote of the adventures of the rambunctious but loveable Bastable children in The Treasure Seekers-introducing Edwardian children who were totally believable and not the pious angels of the past. While her protagonist's best intentions always seem to backfire in humorous ways, the children are honest, intelligent and brave. The popularity of Nesbit's Five Children and It and The Railway Children and their sequels moved the domestic novel away from the sentimentalized depictions of children in previous offerings. J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan immortalized eternal childhood while Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island was one of the first Robinsonnade adventures to avoid didacticism. Stevenson's masterful characterization combined with a gripping pace moved the boy's adventure story onto an entirely new plane. Frances Hodgson Burnett's beloved Secret Garden and The Little Princess had no angelic protagonists, but believable children who start out either quite pampered or unpleasant and through hardship and faith grow up nicely. Still popular today, these titles garner Hollywood remakes on a regular basis, (though none seem able to top Shirley Temple as Burnett's loveable protagonist in The Little Princess!). Louisa May Alcott created the impetuous, emotional, tomboyish but unforgettable Jo March in Little Women, taking the girl protagonist new heights and investing the quiet domestic scene with vibrancy, humor, and interest. Beatrix Potter and Kenneth Grahame in their anthropomorphic creatures Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail, and respectively, Toad, Rat, Mole and Badger—created animal worlds filled with delight and wonder for generations of children. So astute were both these authors at investing their animal creatures with human qualities that readers find it easy to see themselves or someone they know in these memorable creations. And finally, A. A. Milne's unforgettable Christopher Robin, with his companions of the Hundred Acre Wood--the unassuming, slightly simple-minded but deeply endearing Pooh, the nervous Piglet, the dreary Eeyore and Tigger and Owl and so on. A childhood devoid of the companions of the Hundred Acre Wood would be dull indeed.

What these nineteenth and early twentieth century authors for children demonstrated through their work was that children's literature must rise to the same standards expected for works of adult literature. In fact, few children's books that are not enjoyed by adults as well as children ever achieve the status of classic. Within the works above the authors have:

~ constructed plots that move the action in such a way that the reader must find out what happens next.

~ created settings that are convincing, clear, and so well described that the reader can see, hear, feel, and even smell the scenes as they unfold.

~ endowed his or her characters with flesh — in the sense that they are not stereotypes or cardboard figures, but are believable in their humanness (even if they are animal creatures or imaginary figures), enabling the reader to see themselves or others they know through these creations.

~ constructed concise, rich, and evocative language to carry the meaning of their story clearly.

~ carried their protagonists through conflict to resolution in such a way that readers can identify vicariously with the subject's fears, defeats, joys, losses, challenges, and victories in order to experience catharsis and ultimately empathy.

In essence, what each of the authors above have achieved has been the fruit of careful labor that pulls all the above elements together creating a work of beauty that speaks to universal themes of the human experience.

Matthew Arnold, the nineteenth century author and critic, noted that the purpose of literature is "instruction and delight." It seems that literature instructs best when it delights most. The authors explored here seemed to understand this notion. While they do not hold a monopoly on "children's classics" their work offers a good place to begin exploring the wonderful world of children's books.



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## Culinary Kids

Recipes for Kids to Help Make

### Irish Freckle Bread

This delicious, traditional soda bread recipe – freckled with currants, raisins or cranberries – is irresistible served warm with butter. It's easy to make, even if you've never made bread before.

#### Ingredients:

- 3-3/4 cups all purpose flour
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 3/4 cup dried currants, raisins or dried cranberries
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 1 egg

1. Preheat the oven to 375° F. Grease a cookie sheet or line with parchment paper.

2. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add the dried currants and mix well.

3. In another bowl, stir together the buttermilk and the egg. Pour the buttermilk mixture into the flour mixture, and stir well until everything is blended. Sprinkle some additional flour onto the counter or table and turn the dough out onto this floured surface. Knead the dough about 10 times - just to make it reasonably smooth and pliable. Gently form it into one large, round loaf and place it onto the prepared baking sheet. With a very sharp knife, cut a shallow X into the top of the loaf. (This allows the bread to expand in the oven rather than crack and split.)

4. Bake for 50 to 55 minutes, or until the loaf is nicely browned, and a toothpick poked into the middle of it comes out clean.

## News and Info

Primary Recitation Evening  
Thursday, March 15th

Enjoy dessert, beverages and a joyous evening of watching and listening to our sweet young children as they share their memorized poems. Mark your calendars for a lovely evening beginning at 7 pm in the Multipurpose room on campus.

## PIE Nights

Upcoming PIE Nights will be held on the following dates:

- Thursday, March 22nd at 6:30 pm
- Wednesday, April 18th at 6:30 pm

We will be discussing your needs and concerns from the Suggestion Box. This is a great opportunity to share ideas and get to know other parents. Please join us for a fun evening and, of course, pie!

## Walkathon

Friday, March 30th

Check in will be at 9:00 am and it ends at 11:30, followed by a pizza party! All participating students get a free piece of pizza and drink. Additional slices are \$1.50 and will also be available to family members. Drinks will be \$.50. Information packets will be in family files soon. Look for the sale of school t-shirts and sweatshirts the first week of March too!

[sloclassicalacademy.com](http://sloclassicalacademy.com)

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