



CONCORDIA CURRICULUM GUIDE



GRADE
7

Science



C O N T E N T S

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P R E F A C E

Ministry of Christian Schools

Parental expectations of Christian schools include

- excellent discipline;
- high academic standards;
- low teacher-student ratios;
- dedicated, conscientious teachers.

Many Christian schools offer these advantages. But the real distinction is that Christian schools proclaim Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world. Teaching Jesus Christ, then, is “the real difference” between Christian and public schools. In Christian schools, teachers and students witness personally and publicly to their faith in Jesus Christ. Students study the Bible and worship God daily. Teachers relate Jesus Christ to all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers and students share Christian love and forgiveness.

Those who teach in Christian schools are privileged with the opportunity to

- teach the Word of God in its truth and purity;
- acknowledge the Bible as God’s infallible Word and the Confessions as the true exposition of the Word;
- identify God’s Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper as the means through which God creates and sustains faith;
- emphasize Law and Gospel as the key teaching of Scripture;
- seek to apply Law and Gospel properly in daily relationships with students, parents, and other teachers;
- teach all of what Scripture teaches (including Christian doctrines) to all students, no matter what backgrounds they have;
- share with students what Jesus, the Savior, means to them personally;
- equip students to proclaim the Good News to others;

- encourage students to find the support and encouragement found only in the body of Christ, of which Jesus Himself is the head.

In Christian schools, Christ permeates all subjects and activities. Religion is not limited to one hour or one class. Teachers seek opportunities to witness in every class and to relate God’s Word to all aspects of life. Through this process, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, students grow in faith and in a sanctified life, and view all of life, not just Sunday, as a time to serve and worship God.

In summary, it is intrinsic to ministry in a Christian school that all energies expended in the educational process lead each child to a closer relationship with the Savior and with other members of the Christian community.

How to Use This Guide

The Concordia Curriculum Guide series is designed to guide you as you plan and prepare to teach. The introductory chapters provide foundational information relevant to the teaching of science to students in a Christian school. But the majority of the pages in this volume focus on science standards and performance expectations together with ideas and activities for integrating them with various aspects of the Christian faith. This volume does not provide a curriculum plan or lesson plan for any particular period or day. Instead, it provides a wealth of ideas from which you can choose and a springboard to new ideas you may create. You may use this curriculum guide with any textbook series.

The science standards included in this book are informed by the Benchmarks for Science Literacy, published in conjunction with Project 2061 of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) (see also ch. 3), and are provided as a compilation of the science standards and performance expectations adopted by the individual states. In order to offer a well-coordinated curriculum design, the science objec-

tives for this grade level relate to and connect with the standards provided at other grade levels.

The standards, then, can serve you and your whole faculty in several ways. They can help you

1. plan your teaching in an organized way;
2. coordinate your teaching of a subject with the teaching in other grades in your school;
3. select textbooks and other learning or teaching materials;
4. evaluate your current instruction, materials, and objectives;
5. implement procedures for school accreditation;
6. nurture the Christian faith of your students as you teach science.

We assume that teachers will use materials in addition to those included in the guide, but, since many materials do not integrate the Christian faith, we have provided suggestions for specific methods to use as you teach day by day. Everyone has a different teaching style. No one will be able to use all the ideas in this volume. As you think about practices that will work for you and would be helpful in your classroom, consider these possible ways to find and use ideas from this volume:

- Read the entire volume before school starts. Highlight the ideas you think you can use.
- Write ideas in your textbooks. List the page numbers from this volume that contain suggestions you would like to use in connection with a lesson or unit.
- Throughout the year, designate periods of time, perhaps at faculty meetings, to discuss portions of this volume as you seek to improve your integration of the faith in science. Brainstorm, develop, and implement your ideas. Then follow up with other meetings to share your successes and challenges. Together, find ways to effectively use the suggestions in this volume.

- Plan ways to adapt ideas not closely related to specific lessons or units in your secular textbooks. Inside your plan book, clip a paper with a list of suggestions from the volume that you would like to use, or list each idea on a file card and keep the cards handy for quick review. Use those ideas between units or when extra time is available.
- Evaluate each suggestion after you have tried it. Label it as “use again” or “need to revise.” Always adapt the suggestions to fit your situation.
- Think about integrating the faith each time you plan a lesson. Set a goal for yourself (e.g., two ideas from this volume each week), and pray that God will help you to achieve it. You will find the index at the back of this volume especially helpful in finding faith-connecting activities relative to specific topics.
- If the ideas in the Concordia Curriculum Guide series seem overwhelming, begin by concentrating on only one subject per month. Or attempt to use the suggested ideas in only two to four subjects the first year. Add two to four subjects per year after that.

Probably the most effective teaching occurs when teachers take advantage of natural opportunities that arise to integrate the faith into their teaching. In those situations, you will often use your own ideas instead of preparing a lesson plan based on teaching suggestions in this guide. Use the white space on the pages of this book to record your own ideas and activities for integrating the Christian faith. We hope this volume will be an incentive to you to create your own effective ways to integrate the Christian faith into the entire school day.

We believe that Christian schools are essential because we believe that our relationship with Jesus Christ permeates every part of our lives. That is why our Christian faith permeates our teaching. That is why we teach in a Christian school.

CHAPTER 1

Vocations in Science and Education

By

Nathan Jastram

Dr. Nathan Jastram was born and raised in Japan, the son of missionary parents. He received a bachelor's degree in classical languages at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion. He earned his master's degree in theology at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He then went on to obtain his doctorate in ancient Near Eastern languages and civilizations—with a dissertation on the Dead Sea Scrolls—from Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts). He taught at Concordia University, River Forest, Illinois, from 1990 to 1999. Dr. Jastram has been teaching at Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, since 1999. He is currently the chairman of the theology division.

The Vocation of Scientist

Christian educators live out their vocation as they help others by word, attitude, and example to grow in knowledge, understanding, and skills while sharing with them the love of Jesus. Christians in the field of science serve God and others through their efforts to better understand and apply their understandings of God's creation. Although God has not specifically ordained the vocation of scientist in the Bible, the vocation of science is filled by people who love knowledge and search for wisdom, two attributes often praised in the Bible. Solomon urges, "Get wisdom, get understanding" (Proverbs 4:5 NIV), and rhapsodizes, "How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver!" (Proverbs 16:16 NIV). The wisdom that is extolled so highly begins with the fear of the Lord: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10 NIV). It continues with the intricacies of creation: "By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations, by understanding He set the heavens in place; by His knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew" (Proverbs 3:19–20 NIV). Before the fall into sin, Adam exercised his godly wisdom by engaging in the scientific activity of

naming animals (Genesis 2:19–20). Unlike those in the generations to follow him, Adam's understanding came directly from God; no human instruction was available or required.

Discovering How the World Works

When Adam fell into sin, his relationships with Eve, God, and the Earth became marked by disharmony, misunderstanding, and adversity. In some mysterious way, the Earth itself was affected. "Cursed is the ground because of you" (Genesis 3:17 NIV). The apostle Paul writes, "The creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time" (Romans 8:20–22 NIV).

The vocations of Christians who are scientists and of Christian educators are callings through which God shares understanding of the world. Scientists study God's creation to learn more about it. In recent times, it has become possible for scientists to work with the code of life itself as they experiment with DNA. This is a heady development that allows scientists to participate in the creative activity of God, the author and

CHAPTER 2

Teaching and Learning Science from a Christian Perspective

Why Integrate Religion with Science?

Knowledge of science helps students understand what makes things happen as they do in the world. The relationships that exist were established by God at the time of creation. The laws of science are human descriptions of these relationships. They are as accurate as our understanding of nature is at the moment, but they are never absolute. These laws are continually refined, expanded, and sometimes abandoned as we uncover additional information about natural phenomenon.

Those teaching in Christian classrooms have the opportunity to point their students to evidence in creation of God's love, wisdom, power, and majesty. Connections made between the concepts of science and the Word of God will help students respond with love, gratitude, awe, and reverence toward their Creator. By the power of the Holy Spirit, science instruction can help students develop these gifts:

Knowledge and understanding

- Learners will appreciate God's power and majesty in establishing and governing the universe and controlling and governing the forces of nature.
- Learners will recognize the constancy and order God designed for the natural world.
- Learners will respond to God's grace by helping make the world a richer, safer, more beautiful place for present and future generations.

Skills

- Learners will use their scientific insights in a life of praise and devotion to God.
- Learners will grow in the ability to think critically and wisely, ever looking to God for guid-

ance when human inquiry fails to find answers or when it leads them away from God's revelation in His Word.

Connecting Science and the Christian Faith

Through the study of science, we learn more about our God—the one who made the world, redeemed it, and supports and preserves all things for the benefit of humanity. Teaching science from a distinctively Christian perspective involves building all lessons on the foundation of God's Word. The message of God's Word relates to science concepts in the following ways.

God made the world: He upholds the universe.

God created all things. He made the universe and everything in it in six days.

He made the world of intricate design and complex order.

God made the plants and animals, each after its own kind. On the sixth day, He created the first people, Adam and Eve, in His image.

The natural world reveals to us the existence of God the Creator (Romans 1:20).

The universe has fallen under the influence of sin.

Yielding to the temptation to abandon God's will, Adam and Eve sinned.

All of creation suffered sin's devastating consequences.

Strife between God and fallen humanity, among people, between people and animals, among animals, and between people and their environment continues as a result of sin (Genesis 3).

CHAPTER 3

Using the Benchmarks for Science Literacy

In 1993, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), specifically Project 2061's Science for All Americans (SFAA), published a list of Benchmarks for Science Literacy. This resource was developed by teachers and administrators with the help and input of education specialists and scientists. Its intent is to provide a curriculum design tool helpful to those planning curriculum so that desired science literacy outcomes can be obtained. These benchmarks are organized by grade level according to the following categories.

The Scientific Worldview

Kindergarten–Grade 2
Grades 3–5
Grades 6–8
Grades 9–12

Scientific Inquiry

Kindergarten–Grade 2
Grades 3–5
Grades 6–8
Grades 9–12

The Scientific Enterprise

Kindergarten–Grade 2
Grades 3–5
Grades 6–8
Grades 9–12

These benchmarks have been adapted as follows to incorporate elements of the Christian faith.

A. The Scientific Worldview

Kindergarten–Grade 2

By the end of the second grade, students should know this:

- When a science investigation is done the way it was done before, they can expect to get a very similar result because of the laws God put into place at creation.
- Science investigations generally work the same way in different places.

Grades 3–5

By the end of the fifth grade, students should know this:

- Results of similar scientific investigations seldom turn out exactly the same. Sometimes this is because of unexpected differences in the things being investigated, sometimes because of unrealized differences in the methods used or in the circumstances in which the investigation is carried out, and sometimes just because of uncertainties in observations. It is not always easy to tell which. Some of these differences characterize life in our fallen world as contrasted with the perfection our first parents enjoyed in Eden.

Grades 6–8

By the end of the eighth grade, students should know this:

- When similar investigations give different results, the scientific challenge is to judge whether the differences are trivial or significant, and it often takes further studies to decide. Even with similar results, scientists may wait until an investigation has been repeated many times before accepting the results as correct.

CHAPTER 4

Science Curriculum Standards for Students in Grade 7

This chapter includes science standards that have been compiled from the individual state departments of education. They are organized, grade by grade, into the following four areas:

1. Physical Sciences 
2. Life Sciences 
3. Natural Sciences 
4. Science Processes and Approaches 

The Concordia standards have been systematized according to the following numerical designations to indicate grade level, area, category, and performance objective:

- The first digit indicates the grade level (e.g., the 2 in 2.3.1.4 designates that the performance expectation is for grade 2).
- The second digit indicates the area of science (as listed above) addressed by the standard (e.g., the 3 in 2.3.1.4 designates the standard as a natural sciences area since 3 is the number for natural sciences).
- The third digit indicates a category within the area. These categories are the same at every grade level (e.g., the 1 in 2.3.1.4, relates to the category of space studies, which is the first category of natural sciences at every grade level).
- The fourth digit indicates the number of the specific performance expectation. These expectations will vary from level to level (e.g., the 4 in 2.3.1.4, as found in the natural sciences area of the grade 2 standards relating to the category of space studies, refers to the fourth item in that category).

Chapter 5 provides faith-integration activities organized by category. These activities provide many opportunities to teach aspects of the Christian faith in conjunction with each area of the science curriculum. Each activity is keyed to a specific performance expectation.

A complete list of science standards performance expectations for this grade level is provided on the remaining pages of this chapter. In order to offer a well-coordinated curriculum design, the science education objectives for each grade level are related to and connected with the standards provided at other grade levels. Teachers and schools are invited to use the CD that is included in the *Concordia Curriculum Guide: Science* volume at each grade level to modify the Concordia science education standards for use in their own particular situation.

PHYSICAL SCIENCES



7.1 Seventh-grade students in Lutheran schools will understand concepts related to the physical sciences.

7.1.1 Composition of Matter

- 7.1.1.1 Construct a classification system for matter based on similarities and differences.
- 7.1.1.2 Explain that all matter is made up of atoms.
- 7.1.1.3 Understand that elements are the simplest form of matter and that atoms of a given element differ from atoms of another element.
- 7.1.1.4 Explain that all materials are made of elements classified as metals, nonmetals, and noble gases and that few elements exist naturally in pure form.
- 7.1.1.5 Recognize elements as represented by symbols on the periodic table.
- 7.1.1.6 Relate properties and location on the periodic table of metals, nonmetals, and noble gases.
- 7.1.1.7 Compare metals and nonmetals with respect to luster, thermal conductivity, malleability, electrical conductivity, ductility, and reactivity with acids.
- 7.1.1.8 Identify a change as physical or chemical.
- 7.1.1.9 Acknowledge that when a new substance is formed through a chemical change, the substance has physical properties that are different from the original substance.
- 7.1.1.10 Recognize that energy is transformed during chemical reactions.
- 7.1.1.11 Explain that although matter can change forms, the total amount of matter remains constant.
- 7.1.1.12 Identify chemical properties of substances according to how the substance reacts with acids, oxygen, and bases.
- 7.1.1.13 Explain that materials may be acids, bases, or neutral according to their pH scale.
- 7.1.1.14 Recognize instances when a chemical reaction has occurred through the release of energy, the production of gas, a change in color, the formation of a solid from solutions, the formation of a new substance, a change in temperature, or a change in indicators.
- 7.1.1.15 Describe the reactants and products in a chemical reaction.
- 7.1.1.16 Explain that factors like the addition of reactants, a change in acidity, and the adding of energy can influence reaction rates.
- 7.1.1.17 Define and explain buoyancy force.
- 7.1.1.18 Contrast organic with inorganic compounds.

7.1.2 Magnetism, Force, and Motion

- 7.1.2.1 Explain that the gravitational force between two bodies depends on their masses and the distance between them.
- 7.1.2.2 Recognizing that electrically charged objects attract or repel each other, build a simple electromagnet.

7.1.3 Energy

- 7.1.3.1 Explain that force is necessary to accelerate an object or to change the direction of an object.
- 7.1.3.2 Show that friction resists changes in the motion of an object.
- 7.1.3.3 Relate the distance an object is moved by a force to the change in its stored energy (potential energy) or energy of motion (kinetic energy).

CHAPTER 5

Information and Activities for Integrating the Faith as Keyed to Grade 7 Standards

The science standards included in this chapter have been compiled from the individual state departments of education and organized, grade by grade, into the following four areas.

1. Physical Sciences



2. Life Sciences



3. Natural Sciences



4. Science Processes and Approaches



The standards have been systematized according to the following numerical designations to indicate grade level, area, category, and performance objective as described on the first page of chapter 4.

Performance expectations are numbered sequentially (e.g., the 8 in 2.3.1.4 is found in grade 2, in the natural sciences area, relating to the category of space studies, and is the fourth item in that category). A complete list of science standards performance expectations for this grade level is provided in chapter 4.

On the pages of chapter 5, you will find an easy-to-reference two-column format for faith integration with the science standards. The left-hand column, under the heading “Information by Topic,” provides helpful teaching background information and insights relevant for integrating some aspect of the Christian faith. The number following the topic identifies the performance expectation to which the topic relates (see ch. 4). Beside each entry, in the right-hand column, under the heading *Discussion Points/Activities*, you will find ideas helpful for planning and organizing student learning experiences that reinforce and expand upon these faith connections.

Be sure to consult the index at the end of this volume for a complete listing of topics and where they may be found.

PHYSICAL SCIENCES



INFORMATION BY TOPIC

DISCUSSION POINTS/ACTIVITIES

7.1 Seventh-grade students in Lutheran schools will understand concepts related to the physical sciences.

7.1.1 Composition of Matter

Matter, Classifying

To imagine the events of all six of the days of creation boggles the human mind. God is the Creator. “Without Him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). Genesis provides us with a window into God’s classification system. (7.1.1.1)

- Read the story of creation in Genesis 1. What classifications does God’s Word use to describe the kinds of life God created? In what ways have scientists duplicated God’s system?
- Choose a category of furniture such as things on which we sit. Next, choose three or more examples of items in your category (e.g., chair, stool, bench). Third, list the properties of each item that they have in common and those that make each unique. See if your classmates can guess your specific example. Relate these steps to the classification of God’s living creation.
- Draw a plan for organizing your desk, drawer, room, book bag, or some other item. Upon what similarities and differences is your organization system based? Relate being able to organize to God’s creative genius.
- What are the three major classifications of matter? Are light and heat matter? Why not? (Matter has weight and occupies space. Light and heat are forms of energy released from the sun.) How is God’s Son like the sun? (Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” [John 8:12].) As a follower of Jesus, are you a mirror or a candle? Why?

Atoms

An architect chooses each of his building materials with care, even down to the size of the smallest nail. The Bible tells us that God has numbered each hair on our head (Matthew 10:30). As the architect of all creation, it stands to reason that God would know intimately all the building blocks in His creation—each and every atom, each and every Adam. (7.1.1.2)

- Make or draw a model of an atom. Read Matthew 10:30. Guess how many atoms are in the thickness of a strand of hair. (One million) God knows and loves us down to the smallest and most minute parts of our being. Thank God for the marvelous and wonderful love.
- Riddle: If Adam were an atom, what would two Adams be? (A molecule) Why? (Molecules are made up of atoms.)

**Elements**

Just as elements differ from one another, so Christians are called to be different, no longer to conform to the values of this world (Romans 12:2). We are to be transformed not only in actions but also in our thoughts. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that we become transformed as redeemed people in a sinful world. He transforms us through God's Word and the Sacraments. (7.1.1.3)

- In Psalm 139:14, King David wrote, "I praise [God] because I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (NIV). Each of us is made of elements that are nonmetals. List the nonmetals that make up your body in the order of most to least in percentage. (Oxygen [65%], Carbon [18.5%], Hydrogen [9.5%], Nitrogen [3.2%], Calcium [1.5%], other [2.3%])
- Create a metallic bas-relief by using a mold of a Christian symbol and a thin sheet of copper or aluminum, which is available in craft and Christian supply stores.
- Metalloids are elements that have characteristics of metals and nonmetals. Some metalloids are shiny but are not good conductors. Compare this type of metalloid to false prophets.
- Silicon is a metalloid. For what is Silicon Valley noted? Put that silicon to good use. Create your own Web site, and use it to share the Good News of Jesus and His love.

Elements, Classification of (Metals, Nonmetals, and Noble Gases)

When God created the world, everything was pure and without sin. When sin entered the world, everything lost its purity. The fact that not even a single element exists naturally in its pure form can remind us of sin, which permeates down to the core. Only through the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ are people made pure once again. (7.1.1.4)

- Sing a hymn or song about Jesus' sacrificial death such as "Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain" (*LSB* 435; *LW* 96). Comment about how Jesus' sacrificial work makes us pure. Compare with the process scientists use to identify pure elements. In your journal, write what this song means to you from the standpoint of the past, present, and future.
- Noble gases were at one time referred to as inert gases. What does it mean to be inert? (Lacking power in motion or activity.) Give an example of when it would be good or bad to be inert in the Christian life.
- Neon, argon, and helium are three examples of noble gases. They are often used to produce colored light in signs. What color is emitted in each of these gases if an electric current is passed through it? (Neon—orange, argon—lavender, helium—peach) Design a monochromatic sign that reads "Christ is the light of the world" using one or more of the above colors.

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