



Family Christian Academy
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Online Academy Student User's Guide

Note: The Online Academy Program works best when using Firefox, rather than Internet Explorer, as your internet browser. Firefox may be downloaded to your computer free from www.mozilla.com.

1. Entering student's personal Online Schoolroom

- Go to www.familychristianacademy.com
- On the "Online Academy" drop-down menu, click on "Student Log In". Student will be taken to the Welcome & Login Page.
- Enter Username. This is student's last name, then a space, then student's first name. First letters of first & last names must be capitalized.
- Enter the password provided by FCA. If student forgets the password, call the office.
- Click on Login or press Enter.

2. Inside the student's personal classroom

- The Welcome Page is the student's Home Page. Look at the 5 tabs on the left side of this page.
- Home: This tab returns student to the Welcome page from anywhere in the program.
- My Courses: shows the individual courses (and levels) currently assigned, the teacher's name, the date student began working on each course, a green progress bar showing the percentage of completion for the entire course, and the total cumulative grade to date. This is a button student will use often to look back at lessons already finished (so that you may study for quizzes) and to look back at quizzes already taken (to study for the Unit test).
 - By clicking on a particular course, student is taken to a page showing all 10 Units in that course.
 - By clicking on a Unit, the student is taken to a page showing all the work the Unit contains.
 - By clicking on an individual lesson, quiz, project essay or test, the student is taken to that individual work. In this page, the status column shows:
 - Assigned: Student is required to complete this assignment.
 - Skipped: The computer does not deliver this activity to student.
 - Blocked: Student cannot take this assignment or continue working without teacher permission. Contact the teacher.
 - Completed: Student has received this assignment and has completed it with a score at or above the passing threshold.



- NOTE: Student is not allowed to view any activity, other than its title, until student reaches a lesson, project, quiz or test in the order assigned to him. This means student must complete the work in one activity with a score at, or above, the passing threshold before another activity in the subject is available to work on.
- Messages: allows student/parent/guardian to send messages to, and receive messages from, any of student's teachers. Student/parents/guardians may also review all messages received and sent so far.
 - To send a message, click on this button, click on "Send Messages", click on the teacher's name, click on the middle box with the ">>" in it (to place the name into the "Recipients" box), enter a subject in the "Subject" line, write the message in the box under "Message", and send it by clicking on "Send".
 - Once a message has been read it will be sent to the Past Messages tab. Students may not message other students.
 - NOTE: *When sending a message to a teacher relating to a specific lesson, quiz, etc., always tell the teacher which Unit number and which Lesson or quiz the message is about.*
- My Settings: Allows student to change their password.
- Logout: will take student back to the sign-in page. The Program will automatically log out the student after 60 minutes of no activity. For security reasons, we encourage students to log out whenever away from their work for more than a few minutes.

3. Entering student coursework

- Scroll down toward the middle of the Home page.
- Student will see "Today's Messages". If there are messages waiting to be read, click on the Message side bar to read the message(s).
- The Projects box will indicate all incomplete projects. These will remain in the box until submitted to the teacher for grading.
- Below the words "Weekly Schedule" are tabs for each of the courses assigned. When a link within a tab is clicked, the words "This week in xxxxx [the course name appears in blue, and can be clicked on to open the next lesson in that course]. Clicking on this link will take the student directly to the next lesson, quiz, etc. which needs to be completed.

4. Weekly schedule

- Below the tabs is a box showing the calendar for the current week. Clicking on each course tab will bring up the weekly calendar for that course, showing the work that needs to be completed for each day of the week.
- When an assignment is completed, a line will appear through the assignment title, indicating student has mastered the work and will be able to move onto the next assignment.



- If, under the day's date, multiple lessons, quizzes, etc. are listed below one another, the student is behind and will need to do that many lessons, quizzes, etc. *each day* in order to catch up to be finished by the end of the school year. [FCA allows students to extend their schoolwork beyond the end of the school year if necessary by enrolling in Summer School in order to finish their work; however, this extension must be requested by the parents/guardians and will require parents/guardians to sign a new contract extending tuition fees].
- The calendar does not restrict a student from moving ahead in lessons beyond the calendar's recommendations. Each Sunday night, the Program automatically assesses the remaining work and evenly disperses this work throughout the rest of the school year.

5. What the Units contain

- Each subject contains 10+ Units to be completed during a school year.
- Each Unit contains between 20+ lessons, quizzes, essays, and projects and a Unit final test
- Generally, each Unit will contain 2-4 lessons followed by a quiz. Interspersed within the lessons in some Units (especially Units like History, Language Arts and Bible) will be essays and projects to give the student practice in using the material being learned. The last entry will be the Unit final test (if the student receives a low grade on the Unit final test, the student may request to take the Alternate final test).
- The Program contains over 25,000 multimedia presentations such as videos, games, labs, vocabulary activities, newsreels famous speeches and more. Students should check out all the options so they will become familiar with what is available to help them learn.

6. What it takes to finish the work on schedule

- The coursework is arranged to take a school year (180 school days) to complete assuming 5 courses are being taken and the student is finishing a Unit in each course in no more than three weeks.
- The student may work ahead of his or her schedule, thus finishing early and receiving credit and grade when all the work is completed.
- As stated above, the student's calendar will let the student know if he or she is behind schedule. Students are also provided with a syllabus for each subject and can monitor progress against the dated syllabus.
- Should a student fall so far behind schedule that it is not possible to complete the coursework by the end of the school year, provision is made to work into the summer (see above).



7. Lessons

- At the top of each lesson is a place for the teacher to place a note to the student. This may be the first thing a student encounters when entering a lesson.
- Lessons contain readings and explanations of ideas and concepts, as well as video clips, pronunciation guides, games, suggested readings and websites.
- At the beginning of each lesson students will be given the lesson objectives and all the vocabulary words relating to that lesson are listed along with the ability to have the words pronounced to the student.
- After reading the lessons, students will answer questions.
- Questions: Always click or press the tab key after entering an answer and watch for the “sending” message and for the question box to flash indicating the answer has been received. Questions are in the following format:
 - Fill-in-the-blank/unordered: Sentences with one or more words missing. All answers are from the text. Pay attention to punctuation, capitalization, spelling and spacing when entering answers.
 - Multiple select: The question may tell the student how many should be checked and the student should check all appropriate responses.
 - Multiple choice: Choose the correct answer among 1-4 choices.
 - Text Multiple Choice: Answer boxes are highlighted in blue. Each time the student clicks on the blue box, the answer choice changes. Stop clicking when the answer is correct.
 - Click and Place: Used to label graphics or set up math equations. Click on an answer and click again where it is to be placed. “Start Over” will erase all answers placed; “Eraser” will delete only the last answer placed.
 - True/False.
 - Matching: Place numbers in the empty boxes on the right side that match sentences on the left.
 - Teacher graded Questions: Must be scored by the teacher. The computer scores these as a zero until teacher enters a grade.
 - Short answer: Usually answered in complete sentence format so be careful of syntax, grammar, spelling and punctuation.
 - Essays: Student is expected to expound on a theme in paragraph or essay format. Student must demonstrate mastery of the concept with appropriate writing. Write carefully and proofread all entries before sending the completed lesson, essay, etc.
 - Special Projects: Teachers are allowed to use this to give extra credit or to require extra work of their students.
- There may be 1-8 pages of questions with some page having only one question and others having multiple questions.
- Students must receive a minimum grade of 80 or the lesson will be automatically returned to the student to redo (at the *student’s request, the minimum grade of 80 may be raised by the teacher so the Program will not allow the student to receive a grade below their desired minimum but will continue to return*



the lesson to the student until the student's minimum grade is achieved. Many students request their minimum grade be raised to an 85. We do not recommend a minimum grade of 90. In some lessons, missing only one question could give the student a grade below a 90).

- After the lesson is finished, it will be sent to the teacher for review. Teachers check students' work several times a day.

8. Things to avoid when in a lesson

- When a student does not study a lesson thoroughly, it is difficult to answer the questions correctly and to achieve a decent grade.
- Because this is a computer program, students soon learn that they may "trick" the program in various ways. For instance, the program will give partial credit for a question when the student does not check any of the boxes in a multiple choice question (or when the student checks all boxes or every other box). Teachers will soon discover that a student is doing this and will change the score on this question to a 0.
- Each question contains a "Help" button which opens a box allowing the student to receive help specific to that particular question. If the student needs help, he/she should not type "help" or "don't know" in the question box as the teacher will not know what help is needed. If the student needs help, he/she should ask as detailed a question as possible so the teacher can respond to the actual need.
- Most missed questions occur in fill-in-the-blank questions. These questions usually ask for short answers with the exception of questions asking for an entire phrase (ie. in Language Arts). Sometimes the program is looking for an answer where the word is capitalized (or not capitalized); at other times, the student will misspell the answer and the program will count it wrong. Students should be careful when entering answers into fill-in-the-blank questions. Remember, the teacher will see all student's work and is able to adjust scores if the student answered the question correctly but the program didn't give credit.
- When writing Projects and Essays, a student should pay close attention to grammar, spelling and punctuation. It is important that students edit their own work before finalizing an Essay or Project. It helps to use a word processing program and cut & paste the final version into the box provided in the program. Language Arts teachers will be especially strict in grading off for poor grammar, misspellings and poor punctuation, especially at the higher levels of this course.
- If a student fails to read the directions, he may provide an answer that is different from the one being asked. Students should always read directions carefully in order not to receive a zero.
- Sharing passwords between students for the purposes of entering another student's work is strictly forbidden. Teachers are able to tell when this is happening.



9. Projects & Essays

- Projects & Essays take extra work, but are included in the program to allow the student to make sure he/she understands concepts being learned.
- Projects & Essays are scored by the teacher.
- Some Projects & Essays are noted as “skipped” but can be assigned by the teacher for extra credit. Others are assigned but may be skipped at the discretion of the teacher if he/she so chooses.

10. Quizzes

- After several lessons, the student will be given a quiz. Quizzes are different from lessons in that there is no minimum score which will return the quiz to the student to redo. A teacher is only allowed to reassign a quiz if the student encounters a computer error while taking the quiz and lets the teacher know of the problem encountered.
- Quizzes are “open book”, meaning a student may exit a quiz, study the lessons pertaining to that quiz, and reenter the quiz to continue.

11. Unit tests

- Unit tests are not “open book” but are meant to determine what the student remembers from the lessons and quizzes.
- Most of the questions on a test come from questions on the quizzes in that Unit. Therefore, it is wise for the student to study all the quizzes in the Unit before entering the Unit test.
- Tests are like quizzes in that there is no minimum score. Whatever is scored on a test is final.
- If the student would like to re-take a Unit test in order to try to improve his/her score, the student may appeal to the teacher for the student to take the Alternate Unit test.

12. Grading of Units

- Grades are weighted as follows: Lessons – 25%; Projects/Essays – 25%; Quizzes – 25%; Unit Test – 25%.
- Each lesson, project, essay, quiz and the final test is graded separately and the grades may be seen in the Unit section.
- Grades continually update as the student continues working.

13. What the teacher does

- Every student is assigned a teacher who is an expert in the field of academic studies for a particular course (history, language arts, etc.).



- The program will give a preliminary score for a student's work; however, every time a student finishes a lesson, quiz, etc., the teacher will receive the student's work to look over for final grading. The teacher is able to adjust the program's score if the teacher thinks the adjustment is warranted.
- Teachers check their student's work several times per day. Teachers answer student questions, offer tips, give teaching points, etc. If the student has asked a question through the "Help" tab, the teacher will respond directly in that question. When the student asks for help, the program allows the student to continue working without having to stop and wait for the teacher to respond.
- Teachers also send messages to the student and the student's parents/guardians through the Message tab.

14. Progress reports

- At the end of each 6 week period, FCA sends Progress Reports to parents/guardians. These reports will show grades for each course for each 6-week period and the accumulated grades throughout the year. An "I" indicates incomplete and that the student is behind schedule (has not completed the Units necessary to receive a grade for that 6-week period). If a student does not catch up on work, the "I" will become a zero and the zero will be averaged into work already done for a final grade.

15. Responsibilities of parents or guardians

- FCA was begun as a service organization to help parents and guardians who desired to take full responsibility for raising their own children, including their children's education. Because of this emphasis, FCA is different from public and private schools in an important way: In public and private schools, parents and guardians expect the school to ensure that their children receive an education. FCA does not assume this responsibility because we believe this places FCA in the role reserved by God for the parent or guardian. Instead, FCA offers the best, Christian education it knows to provide. Whether or not the student receives that education depends on the student and the parents or guardians.
- FCA knows that the more parents or guardians are involved in the student's Online work, the better the student will do academically. Parents/guardians must continually check their student's progress online and communicate with the school if there are any questions or concerns.

16. All questions about the use of the Online Academy Program should be directed to the Administrator of the School.

Family Christian Academy wishes its families a great school year!

