



ACADEMIC PROGRAM

SOCIAL SCIENCES—HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

Primacy of Geography - Just as we cannot learn to read without first learning the alphabet and phonics, we cannot understand history without first learning geography.

We depend on natural resources for our survival, and the story of civilization is largely about man's quest for these resources and the means for their acquisition and transport. The migrations, explorations, wars, technological advances, and the formation of societies & governments have resulted from man's need for resources to survive.

Thus, geography forms a major block upon which the Academy builds its history and social studies curricula.

Core Knowledge - Four elements define this research-based curriculum:

- *Solid*—a body of lasting knowledge that should form the core of an elementary education. For example, world geographic features—mountains, rivers, lakes, the basic principles of constitutional government, and important events of American history.
- *Sequenced*—Children learn new knowledge by building on what they already know. This sequential building of knowledge not only helps ensure that children enter each new grade ready to learn, but also helps prevent the many repetitions and gaps that characterize much current schooling.



Fra Mauro's Map of the World, 1459

- *Specific*—The Core Knowledge Sequence is distinguished by its specificity. By clearly identifying important knowledge in geography, language arts, history and social science, the Sequence presents a practical answer to the question, "What do our children need to know?"
- *Shared*—Literacy depends on shared knowledge. To be literate means, in part, to be familiar with a broad range of knowledge taken for granted. For example, when sports reporters refer to an upset victory as "David defeats Goliath," or when members of the press refer to a "threatened congressional filibuster," they are assuming that their audience shares certain knowledge.

The Academy strives to provide all children, regardless of background and socio-economic status, with the shared knowledge they will need to be successful in high school and beyond as they become members of our national, literate society.