



Dear CCA Parent:

Welcome to the 2007-08 school year. I am so glad that you and your child will be a part of the middle school social studies track.

While for most of you this is old information, let me reintroduce myself.

My name is Michael Simmonds and I am a pastor here at Covenant Community Church. I am the husband of Gretchen and the Dad of Patrick (7), Maxwell (3), and Kathleen (20 months).

I hold Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in education from Stetson University in Deland. The emphasis in my education studies was in social sciences for secondary schools. Prior to my stint here at CCA I taught World History and Psychology to 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, & 12<sup>th</sup> graders. In addition to my classroom experience with students, I am a corporate trainer.

I am excited about the year ahead. My primary goal will be to give your child opportunities to exercise the skills they will use for all future academic success. I really do believe that your student is at an incredible time in their academic careers. Middle school is the beginning of the time in which it is not about how smart you are, but how smart you work. This is the time when a genius can fall back into just an average status and an average child can find himself excelling academically. The skills I intend to focus on are: communication, information gathering (note taking, research), and group dynamics.

We will be using Bob Jones University curriculum to cover our studies in World History. In addition to the primary text I have also acquired the Student Activity text. This will increase the number of opportunities for in class activities we will be able to do this year. Please keep in mind that the textbook has more information than we can possibly cover in class so out of class preparation (i.e. Homework) is essential.

### **What you can expect:**

#### **Homework**

Your child will come home with homework 99.99% of the time. I will begin class by giving an overview of the week's assignment and then post it as a weekly update on the [www.mycca.org](http://www.mycca.org) website. He/She should write the assignment in their homework notebook (I suggest a string bound composition book). In many cases assignment will be to read sections of the text. If that is the case, I will be teaching/encouraging your child to take notes as they read. Please encourage them to do a little each day instead of trying to plow through a mountain in one sitting. This will improve their retention of information and make school a little more bearable. Other assignments will include: current event write-ups, reaction papers, group projects, etc. Homework may or may not be collected for a grade but I will always create accountability for information gathered. If for some reason there is no homework, I recommend your student use the time to look back over information previously covered or look ahead.

#### **Quizzes**

Quizzes will be given frequently though out the year. Some may be announced but most will just happen. The primary focus of quizzes will be current or recent assignments or in class activities. Homework and quiz grades will combine to make up between 1/4 and 1/3 of your child's final grade.

#### **Exams**

Your child will have a chapter test every 1 – 3 chapters. They will get no less that 2 weeks notice to prepare for these exams. Generally the homework around exam time will be exam prep related. Exams will make up between 1/3 and 1/2 of your child's final grade.



### **Special Projects**

Your child will have three "special projects" through out the year. The first will be due mid-November. The Second early February and finally a research paper about an event in world history due in May. Details about each special project will be given to your child during class. Special projects will make up 1/4 to 1/3 of your child's name final grade.

### **Parent Communication**

I really want to talk with you as often as you need. You can call me at home 407-322-9994 or at the office 407-324-0203 ext. 103 anytime you have any questions or concerns. Exams will come home within a couple of weeks of being graded but quizzes will not. At any point, if you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress my grade book and my door is always open. Check your child's homework notebook or the weekly updates on the web site if there is anything specific your child (and you) needs to know about specific assignments. It should be written there.

### **What You Child Needs for Class**

1 hard back 3 ring binder  
1 marble type string bound composition book  
A hand full of pens  
BJU Text Books  
Other items as need (will be given sufficient notice)

### **The Big Picture**

I will tell your child time and time again that it is not about the grade, but what they learn. This year I want more than anything for your child to learn how to learn. I am convinced that if they master that ability it will serve them well as long as they live and they'll get good marks this year to boot. I can't wait.

Blessings,

Michael D. Simmonds