



CTL CORNER



TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Pre-K-Kinder Class](#)

[Gr. 1-2 Class](#)

[Gr. 3-4 Class](#)

[Gr. 5-6 Class](#)

[Gr. 7-8 Class](#)

[CTL High](#)

[K-12 Art](#)

[K-12 Music](#)

Dear CTL Community,

What a wonderful start we've had to the 2025–26 school year! Each morning, I am delighted to greet your children and see the joy and curiosity they bring into our classrooms. From our youngest learners proudly sharing their first stories to our older students diving into debates, experiments, and performances, it is inspiring to watch them grow with confidence and creativity.

Our teachers are guiding students with such care—encouraging them to see themselves as readers, writers, scientists, mathematicians, artists, and musicians. The energy and kindness in our community make CTL a truly special place to learn and grow.

Thank you for sharing your children with us. I look forward to all the learning, laughter, and discoveries ahead this trimester.

With gratitude and joy,

Dr. Linda Ellis

CTL Founder & Head of School



PreK-Kindergarten Class

Ms. Macey Schank

There's nothing better than seeing our little learners bounce into the classroom each morning, all smiles and ready for the day! Our classroom buzzes with activity and joyful conversation as we learn, play, and grow together throughout the day.

In Reading and Writing workshop, our young authors are beginning to see themselves as real storytellers! Each day, we gather on the rug for a read-aloud, which inspires children to dive into their own stories—sometimes through pictures, sometimes with labels, and sometimes with brave first attempts at writing sentences. Students then proudly share their work with the class, building confidence and celebrating each other's creativity.

In Math, we're building number sense in hands-on ways—counting everything in sight, sorting and comparing objects, and playing with shapes to deepen spatial awareness.

In our *All About Me* unit, children are discovering what makes them unique while also learning about the many things they share with others. We've been exploring our similarities and differences, learning about our amazing bodies, and celebrating our families and communities. These conversations and activities are helping students build empathy, self-awareness, and a strong sense of belonging.

Science time is always filled with curiosity and wonder! Using our five senses, we've been exploring the world around us through sensory experiences such as nature walks, texture collages, smelling bottles, and listening games. .



Conversation Starters:

- What was the best thing you did at school today?
- Can you teach me something you learned about?
- Did you help a friend today, or did someone help you?



Grades 1-2 Class

English Language Arts & Social Studies from Ms. Brooke Zeegler

This trimester, our readers and writers are full of energy and curiosity! In Reading Workshop, students are learning to choose “just-right” books, and it is such a delight to watch them settle into cozy reading spots with stories that capture their imagination. During Writing Workshop, they are crafting “small moment” stories—little slices of life that matter to them. Their stories are filled with pets, family adventures, and imaginative ideas. Author’s Chair has become a joyful celebration where students cheer each other on and discover the power of their own words.

In social studies, we are zooming in on our community and then zooming out to explore Texas. Students are creating maps, identifying important landmarks, and learning about the people who help make our community strong. Sharing family traditions in class has been such a special way to see the unique stories and experiences each child brings to our classroom family.

Math & Science from Ms. Kaele Ramirez

In math, we are working with place value, addition, and subtraction. I love seeing students collaborate with base-10 blocks and explain their strategies during math talks. Their confidence is growing daily as they discover there are many ways to solve a problem—and that each of their strategies matters.

Our budding scientists are studying animals and their amazing parts. We are looking closely at wings, claws, beaks, and tails, discovering how each helps animals survive. The room buzzes with excitement when students sketch or build models of animals, and they are brimming with ideas for the “imaginary animals” they’re designing.



Gr. 1-2 Unit Snapshot Links for Families:

- [Reading & Writing Workshop](#)
- [Social Studies](#)
- [Math](#)
- [Science](#)



Grades 3-4 Class

English Language Arts & Social Studies from Ms. Brooke Zeegler

Grades 3-4 have hit the ground running with their reading and writing! In Writing Workshop, students are working on personal narratives and are beginning to weave in craft techniques like interesting words, and sensory details. It is amazing to see their confidence shine as they take risks and discover the writerly moves that make their stories come alive. Reading Workshop is equally joyful—students are getting lost in their books and sharing their book recommendations with peers, leading to animated Book Talks that show how much they love to read.



In social studies, we are exploring North America's landforms, regions, and cultures. Students are creating detailed maps and investigating how geography shapes communities. We are already working on our "North America Expo," where students will share projects that celebrate the richness and diversity of the continent.



Math & Science from Ms. Kaele Ramirez

In math, we are strengthening our understanding of place value, addition, and subtraction. Students are learning multiple strategies for problem-solving and explaining their thinking during Strategy Talks. I am so proud of how they support one another as mathematicians, building confidence and flexibility in their learning.



Science has been full of discovery as we dive into life cycles. From watching butterflies emerge to exploring how frogs change over time, students are captivated by the idea that life is always transforming. Their diagrams, models, and digital projects reflect not only what they are learning but also the creativity they bring to science.



Gr. 3-4 Unit Snapshot Links for Families:

- [Reading & Writing Workshop](#)
- [Social Studies](#)
- [Math](#)
- [Science](#)

Grades 5–6 Class

English Language Arts from Ms. Natalie Seyerle

Our 5–6 learners are stepping into the school year with excitement and focus. In ELA, we are creating strong reading and writing habits. Our class read-aloud brings us together as we share thoughts and predictions. Students are savoring independent reading time, keeping track of books that inspire them, and beginning to craft personal narratives with vivid characters and strong settings. I love seeing how daily Share Circles give them the confidence to present their writing and inspire their classmates.

Social Studies from Ms. Amy Kiddy

In social studies, we are traveling back to medieval Europe. Students are comparing the lives of peasants, knights, noblemen, and priests by living the daily lives of people during these times. They are exploring how religion, trade, and geography shaped communities and how the fall of the Roman Empire paved the way for other civilizations to flourish. Through round table discussions and key exploratory activities they will delve into the life and culture of all civilizations from 500 AD to 900 AD.

Math from Ms. Alisha Lovato

Math has us exploring place value, number representation, decimals, and the various ways to measure things using the metric system. Students are solving multi-step problems, applying strategies, and documenting their work in their math journals. Our “Number Museum” project is helping them connect math skills to real-world applications, which has been so rewarding to watch.

Science from Ms. Amy Kiddy

In science, we are diving into Earth’s four spheres—geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere—and exploring how they interact with each other and how their interdependence affects everything. Student teams are designing biome models that highlight the delicate balance of ecosystems. Once these are designed, they will begin creating them. Their collaboration and creativity in explaining how plants, animals, and Earth systems are interconnected has been inspiring.



Grades 5–6 Unit Snapshots for Families

- [Reading & Writing Workshop](#)
- [Social Studies](#)
- [Math](#)
- [Science](#)



Grades 7-8 Class

English Language Arts from Ms. Natalie Seyerle

In ELA, students are building stamina as readers and writers. Independent reading is giving them time to explore books they love and experiment with new authors and genres. Our class read-aloud brings us together as we share our insights and predictions. Weekly Book Talks build a community of readers who share insights and recommendations of books they have read and love. Writing Workshop is focused on crafting pieces with purpose and voice, with students learning to revise and refine through feedback and conferencing.



Math from Ms. Alisha Lovato

Our math learning is currently centered on algebraic thinking. Students are learning to write numbers in scientific notation, working fluently with exponents, and identifying the patterns that connect place value, powers of ten, and how quantities grow or shrink. Group problem-solving allows them to push their reasoning and build confidence in explaining their strategies.



Science from Ms. Amy Kiddy

In science, we are investigating how the world is made up of cells and the scientists like Louis Pasteur who paved the way for our current cell theory. Students replicated his experiment that disproved spontaneous generation of organisms and explored looking at cells under a microscope. They learned about the many different types of cells, such as unicellular and multicellular and the differences between plant cells and animal cells. They are currently creating giant cell models to share their knowledge and explain how they function. What better way to learn about microscopic things than to make them big and easy to see!



Social Studies from Ms. Amy Kiddy

In social studies, we are immersed in the founding of our nation. We negotiated the Treaty of Paris that ended the American Revolution, are learning about the problems with the Articles of Confederation, and will reenact the Constitutional Convention, stepping into the shoes of delegates to debate representation, power, and slavery. I was amazed at their excitement and excellent negotiation skills during the Treaty meetings. Armed with the groundwork and reasons behind the Constitution, they will delve into the Constitution itself by going to "Law School" as we learn more.

Grades 7-8 Unit Snapshots for Families

- [Reading & Writing Workshop](#)
- [Social Studies](#)
- [Math](#)
- [Science](#)

CTL High

English Language Arts from Ms. Natalie Seyerle

High schoolers are starting the year with energy and focus. In ELA our class read-aloud brings us together as we share insights and predictions. Students are reading widely across genres and beginning to refine their writing with clarity, voice, and purpose. Independent choice reading has created such a calm and thoughtful classroom atmosphere, and writing workshops are filled with meaningful conversations about character, theme, and perspective. In drama, students are embracing performance and interpretation, learning how to bring texts to life on stage with creativity and confidence.

Social Studies from Ms. Amy Kiddy

In social studies, students are exploring government, economics, and history. Through inquiry, debate, discussion and research, they are connecting past events to present-day issues such as how important becoming our own nation was, the trauma and surprise of 9/11, and past, present, and future views on allies to the United States as a nation. I am impressed with how they are developing strong opinions and supporting them with evidence. We look forward to negotiating Treaties, learning more about the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution.

Math from Ms. Alisha Lovato

We're diving into algebra and precalculus, using patterns as the backbone of algebraic thinking. Through modeling and problem-solving, students are applying new concepts to create meaningful projects—it's been very exciting to watch them connect abstract ideas to real-world situations.

Science from Ms. Amy Kiddy

In science, we are building strong foundations in chemistry. Students are conducting labs, experimenting with elements to show periodic table trends, building models and analyzing how these trends affect element interactions and bonding. Their ability to collaborate and explain their findings shows just how capable they are as scientists. We are looking forward to exploring more about bonding and the compounds formed in this process.



**CTL
HIGH**
A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE

CTL High Syllabi for Families

- [English I-IV](#)
- [U.S. History](#)
- [Algebra I](#), [Algebra II](#), [Precalculus](#)
- [Chemistry & Physics](#)



K-12 Art

Ms. Lisa Johns

It is always such a joy to watch students express themselves through art. From our youngest learners experimenting with color and line to our high schoolers developing their own style, every project is filled with energy and creativity. This trimester, students are exploring media such as drawing, painting, and sculpture, and learning how art connects to history, culture, and their own lives. My favorite moments are when students step back from their work, smile, and proudly say, "I made this!"

[CTL Art Program Snapshot for Families](#)



K-12 Music

Ms. Kristina Friesen

Our music classes are alive with rhythm, movement, and joy! Younger students are diving into songs and rhythm chants that get them moving and singing together, while older students are exploring instruments, learning note names beyond the C major scale, and gaining confidence as they perform for their classmates. Music is a time where every student can discover their voice, and it's inspiring to see the pride on their faces when they master a rhythm or share a song with confidence. As the trimester unfolds, we are building skills that not only make us better musicians but also connect us as a community through the universal language of music.

[CTL Music Program Snapshot for Families](#)

