



ACTON ACADEMY  
KINGWOOD

# ESSENTIAL INFO KIT

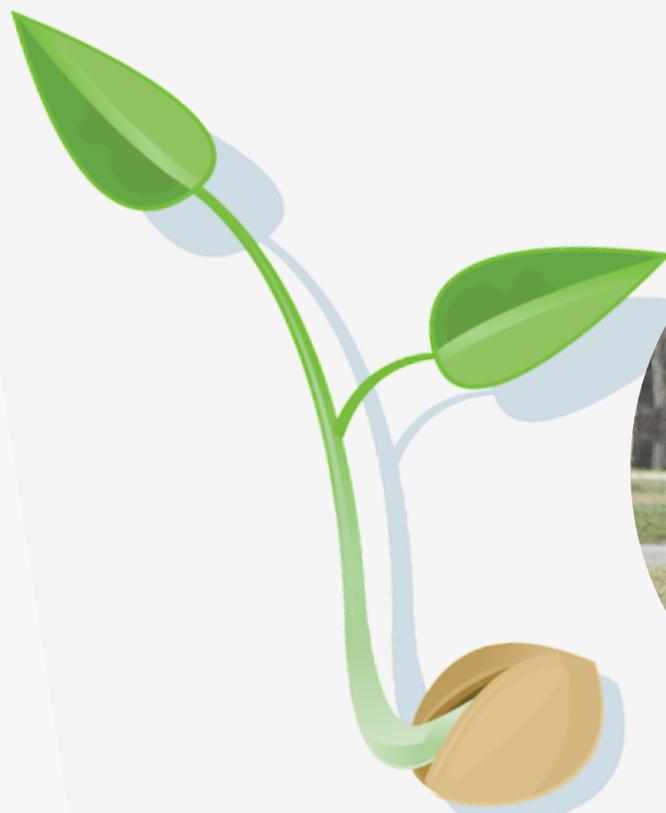


LEARN TO LOVE  
TO LEARN!

# WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER!

Like us, you are concerned about one of the most important decision you will make for your children's future, their education. They have unlimited potential, unique gifts and talents, and so much to offer the world if provided the right environment to grow.

We believe children are like a seed, filled with potential to become something beautiful and unique, and our school is a "garden" to help them reach their full potential. We don't "shape" young minds; we provide fertile soil, warmth, light, space, proper tools, and love, and young people flourish.





# Common Questions



## Grades/Ages?

- Pre-K through 12 (ages 3 - 18)
- Mixed-age classrooms



## Tuition?

- \$10,500 per year
- \$500 deposit

## Scholarships Available?

- Yes!

## How to Reach Us?

- James Van Duker - Head of School
- email: [james@actonkingwood.com](mailto:james@actonkingwood.com)
- website: [actonkingwood.com](http://actonkingwood.com)
- [facebook.com/actonkingwood](https://facebook.com/actonkingwood)

## Location?

- 23979 Wildwood Road,  
Porter, TX 77365



Please  
reach out  
with any other  
questions

346-305-1102



# Montessori Learning



# UNSTRUCTURED FREE PLAY

2-3 HOURS/DAY



## EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

"Play teaches children how to set and change rules, and how to decide when to lead and when to follow."



## PHYSICAL BENEFITS

"Children develop strength, muscle control, coordination, and reflexes. They push limits and try new things that can motivate them to take risks in other circumstances."



## INTELLECTUAL BENEFITS

"Play builds executive function skills, content knowledge, and creative thinking."



## SOCIAL BENEFITS

"Play requires children to share ideas and express feelings while negotiating and reaching compromises."



# Nature



Nature is a an essential part of childhood, and should be an essential part of their school!

Learners go offsite, on nature trips, to discover flora and fauna, hike trails, and explore the natural world!

# ENTREPRENEUR LEAGUE

• **BUILD**

• **CREATE**

• **SELL**

• **EARN**

• **INVEST**

• **COMPETE**





# Apprenticeships



Middle/High-school students complete 6 apprenticeships, in various fields they are passionate about, before graduating.





# Components of our weekly schedule that may be of interest...

## **LAUNCHES (morning & afternoon)**

Morning launch is a Socratic discussion about any variety of topics: character, resolving conflicts, annual theme, etc.

Afternoon launch is also a Socratic discussion, but will typically surround a topic related to the Quest or about the daily challenge.

## **CORE SKILLS**

This is time when students work mostly independently on their core skills: math, reading, spelling, and self reliance. This time will be spent on computer programs like Beast Academy and Lexia, or reading independently. Younger 5-6 year olds use readers and Montessori manipulatives either independently or with the guide as appropriate.

At Acton Academy, we set S.M.A.R.T. Goals - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely goals for the session, week, and/or day (depending on the learner's age). Setting individual goals helps to brew passion and excitement.

## **WRITERS' WORKSHOP**

At Acton Academy we believe in the importance of communication. We believe that, while writing a 5-part essay may be important, it's also important to be able to write a convincing email that will get you a job, or create a flyer that will sell a product. While most time in writer's workshop is spent on written communication, it also includes verbal and visual elements such as pictures and videos.

## **QUEST TIME**

Quests are real world, hands-on projects. This is dedicated time when students are working individually or in groups (depending on the quest) to complete daily challenges and/or quest related projects.



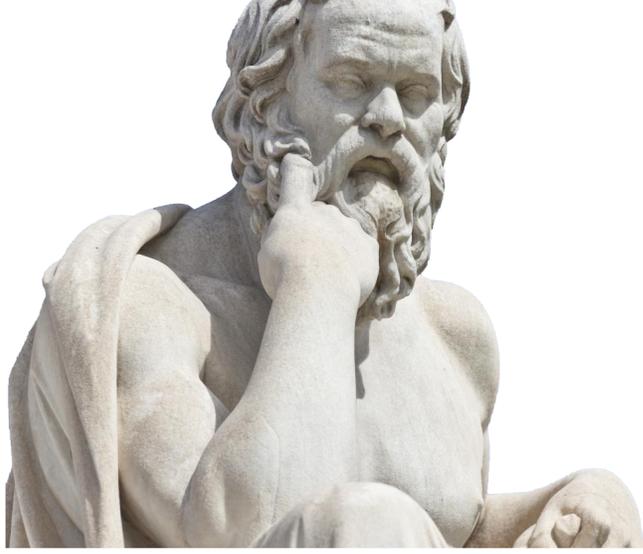
# LEARNING AND GROWING

How do we measure if students are learning and growing?

We measure progress in several ways:

- 1) At Acton Academy, students set S.M.A.R.T. Goals - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely goals for the session, week, and/or day (depending on the student's age). Students track their progress in relation to these goals and the learning community provides support.
- 2) At Acton, students work to mastery. This means working at one's own pace, and not moving on until they have mastered a skill or concept. At traditional schools, students move on at the teacher's pace, regardless of whether they have mastered a concept. If they score 80%, they may not understand the other 20% of the material. This gap widens as the material gets harder. At Acton, students work until a skill is mastered.
- 3) We utilize robust, real-time data for each of our e-learning tools. At any given time, students, parents, and guides are able to see how a student is progressing on a core skill such as math, reading, grammar, and spelling. Technology makes it easy for students to see how they are progressing and hold themselves, and each other, accountable.
- 4) Students create portfolios to showcase their best work.
- 5) Students host live, interactive, public exhibitions to display and demonstrate their work every 4-6 weeks.





# SOCRATIC METHOD

## WHY DOES ACTON USE THE SOCRATIC METHOD?

The Socratic method "is a form of cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals, based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas and underlying presuppositions" (Wikipedia).

## SOCRATIC DISCUSSIONS AT ACTON

At Acton Academy, a guide sets up scenarios and asks questions to stimulate critical thinking and independent learning. Acton uses the Socratic method, rather than lectures, because students improve their critical thinking and speaking abilities through discussions and actively making arguments to support their position. This engagement allows students to gain a better understanding of a topic as compared to passively taking notes during a lecture.

Outside of discussions, guides employ the Socratic method with students, throughout the day, in order to reinforce becoming independent learners who are able to answer their own questions. Guides are trained to answer questions with questions in order to help students discover truth through critical thinking. This method is important to the process at Acton Academy because as Charlotte Mason says, "What a child digs for becomes his own possession".



# frequently asked questions

- **How much homework will there be?**

- No homework. All work is done at school so that kids have time to play, relax, and spend time with family and friends.

- **Will children be grouped into grades?**

- We believe that young people learn best when working with others both younger and older than themselves rather than split up into groups based solely on age. In addition to individualized curriculum, all ages of students work together in groups.

- **Is Acton Academy Kingwood accredited?**

- Yes. The program is accredited through the International Association of Learner Driven Schools.



- **Is Acton Academy a religious school?**

- No. While we expose children to the importance of mindful spirituality and stress the historical importance of Christianity to the development of Western Civilization, we do not promote any one religion. We strongly believe in religious, political, and economic freedom.

- **Does Acton Academy Kingwood serve children with special needs?**

- Severe Learning Disabilities: We are not trained or staffed to serve children with serious learning disabilities or behavioral challenges. However, each child and situation is unique and we will treat it as such. If you believe that Acton Academy Kingwood is a great fit for your family, and that your child can thrive in this environment, then please don't hesitate to reach out. We are committed to treating each child and family as unique individuals and will assess the situation in the same way.
- Minor Learning Disabilities: many minor learning disabilities are commonly misdiagnosed and can be the product of the child being in the wrong environment or lack of challenge, among other things. Again, if you feel this is the right fit for your child and family please don't hesitate to reach out.



# frequently asked questions

- **What is a "Hero's Journey"?**

- We believe that each of us has a special calling in life, and a series of trials and tests that must be faced with integrity and purpose, in order to live a satisfying and fulfilled life. Our mission is to prepare your child for his or her special journey.

- **What do you mean by "every child can change the world"?**

- We believe each of our students will find a passion — something they love and have a gift to do. They will use this gift to serve others and fulfill a need they are passionate about in the world. This may be by becoming a shoe-shiner who tells stories and makes people's day just by doing his job with love and vigor; it may be by becoming a coach who sees the light in a child's eyes and guides her to pursue a dream; it may be by becoming a father or mother who leads a family on a Hero's Journey; it may be becoming an entrepreneur or business leader guided by compassion and integrity; or it may be by becoming an artist or writer who brings beauty to people's lives.

- **What are quests?**

- Quests are real world challenges that make learning fun. Lasting anywhere from 4 to 6 weeks, quests put learners in the shoes of someone who has to solve an important problem. Students must use 21st century skills in areas such as chemistry, physics, robotics, math, public speaking, art, marketing, and more, to complete a series of challenges that culminate in an open public exhibition for friends and family.
- One example is the Bridge Building Quest, in which students are challenged to construct bridges that are structurally sound and also fit within the budget allocated for the project by their city. As bridge engineers, students explore concepts in physics like tension and compression, friction and elasticity. But physics isn't the only consideration; as project managers, the students must also figure out how to build a strong bridge within a limited budget.

- **What is an "independent learner"?**

- Someone who can research questions, follow instructions, solve problems—admit that they don't know something and figure out a solution when they hit a roadblock without asking an adult for help — participate in discussions, and strive for mastery.



# frequently asked questions



- **What is a "running partner"?**

- Running Partners are classmates who meet together regularly to set goals and hold each other accountable for meeting those goals. Running Partners encourage and inspire each other by asking good questions, listening and providing affirmation.

- **How do you use technology in the classroom without students having too much screen time?**

- At Acton Academy Kingwood, we believe in balance and age appropriate use of technology. By age appropriate, we mean that younger students will use less technology than older students. 5-6 years olds will use little to no technology. The reason for this is that at a young age so much in a child's body is still developing, in this case specifically their eyes; therefore, it is not recommended for young children to spend long periods of time doing 'close' work (screens or otherwise). So while each student will have some screen time, the amount of time will be dependent on their age.
- Balance. Using the incredible, self-paced eLearning tools now available, we are able to provide the rigor needed for learning math, vocabulary, spelling, and grammar in about 60-90 minutes each day (not all on computers), while freeing up the rest of the day for engaging, project-based learning. The two are highly complementary.

- **Where did Acton Academy get it's name?**

- Lord John Emerich Edward Dahlberg Acton (1834-1902) was a Victorian scholar of Freedom who saw liberty not as a license, but as the freedom to do what was right. He was suspicious of power for the sake of power, which led to his most famous quote: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." At Acton Academy, we celebrate his defense of economic, political, and religious freedom





# SAMPLE WEEKLY schedule

8:00 Drop-off / Free Time

8:45 Daily Launch

9:00 Morning Work Time  
Practical life, sensorial, language art, math, reading, culture and science, entrepreneurship, arts & crafts, rhythm, movement, dance.

11:45 Lunch

12:05 Unstructured Free Play  
Loose parts play, building, robotics, nature exploration, indoor & outdoor games, dance

1:45 Quest  
Hands-on work, team-based challenges

2:45 Studio Cleanup & Organization

3:00 Closing Group

3:15 Pick-up





# SAMPLE WEEKLY schedule

8:00 Drop-off / Free Time

8:30 Daily Launch (Socratic Discussion)

8:45 Goal setting, math, reading, writing, entrepreneurship, P.E., art, "brain breaks" throughout

12:00 Lunch / Free Time

12:45 Quest Launch

1:00 Quests  
Hands-on "quest" work, team-based challenges, history

2:45 Studio Cleanup and Organization

3:00 Closing Group (Socratic Discussion)

3:15 Pick-up



# SAMPLE ANNUAL calendar

Session 1: Aug. 30 - Oct. 1	August 2021							Labor Day: Sep. 6
	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
	29	30	31					

Break: Oct. 4-8 Session 2: Oct. 18-Nov. 19	October 2021							Break: Nov. 22-26 Session 3: Nov. 29-Dec. 17 E-League: Nov. 15-Dec. 17
	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
						1	2	
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	

Break: Dec. 20-31	December 2021							Session 4: Jan. 3-Feb. 4 MLK Day: January 17
	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
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	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
	26	27	28	29	30	31		

Break: Feb. 7-11 Session 5: Feb. 14-Mar. 25	February 2022							Break: Mar. 28-Apr. 1
	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
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	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
	27	28						

Session 6: Apr 4.-May 6 Good Friday: April 15	April 2022							Break: May 9-13 Session 7: May 16-Jun. 17 Memorial Day: May 30
	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
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	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
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	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
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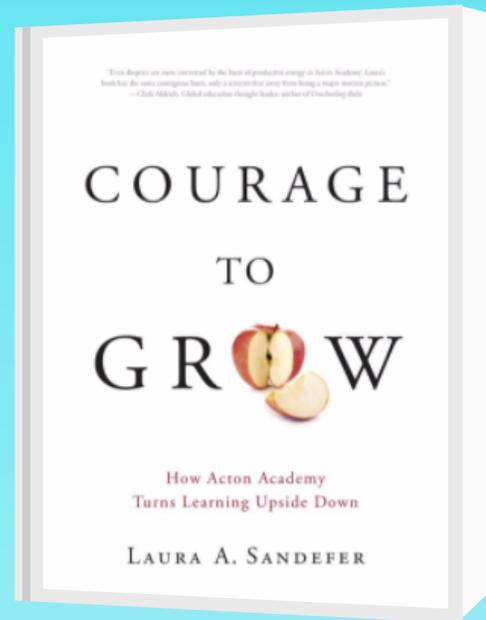
	June 2022							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #9900cc; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Launch/closing party</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #800000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Session break / Holiday</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #00ff00; border: 1px solid black;"></span> First/last day of school</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #ffcc00; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Session break / guide work day</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #ccccff; border: 1px solid black;"></span> In session</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #ff00ff; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Exhibition</li> </ul>
	Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	
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	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
	26	27	28	29	30			



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## COURAGE TO GROW BY LAURA SANDEFER

The story of how Acton Academy  
turns learning upside down



## VIDEOS



## DISRUPTIVE EDUCATION

An award winning independent  
documentary about Acton  
Academy.



## VIRTUAL TOUR OF ACTON ACADEMY

An explanation of Acton's core  
beliefs and how the school  
operates.



# FINALLY...FOCUS ON FAMILY

Raymond & Dorothy Moore, in their book, *Home Grown Kids*, wrote, "The school, not the home, is the substitute, and it's highest function is to compliment the family". That is exactly what we believe! At Acton Academy Kingwood, our goal is to support and compliment your family and help make you stronger.

Family life and culture are like a tree's roots; the stronger the roots, the healthier and stronger the tree. In today's culture, many things are pulling against family life, but at Acton we aim to support you in strengthening your family bonds.

A part of supporting the family is encouraging all members to embark on their own hero's journey. We invite family members to become the greatest version of themselves. Who do you want to be in the world? Are you on your hero's journey? Will you join us?

Warmest Regards,  
The Van Dukers





**ACTON ACADEMY**  
KINGWOOD



**I would love to meet you to  
answer any other questions**



**Acton Academy Kingwood**

**Co-Founder & Head of School:** James Van Duker

**Email:** [james@actonkingwood.com](mailto:james@actonkingwood.com)

**Schedule a meeting:** [calendly.com/jamesactonkingwood](https://calendly.com/jamesactonkingwood)

**Website:** [actonkingwood.com](https://actonkingwood.com)

**Address:** 23979 Wildwood Road, Porter, TX 77365

**Phone:** 346-305-1102