

New!

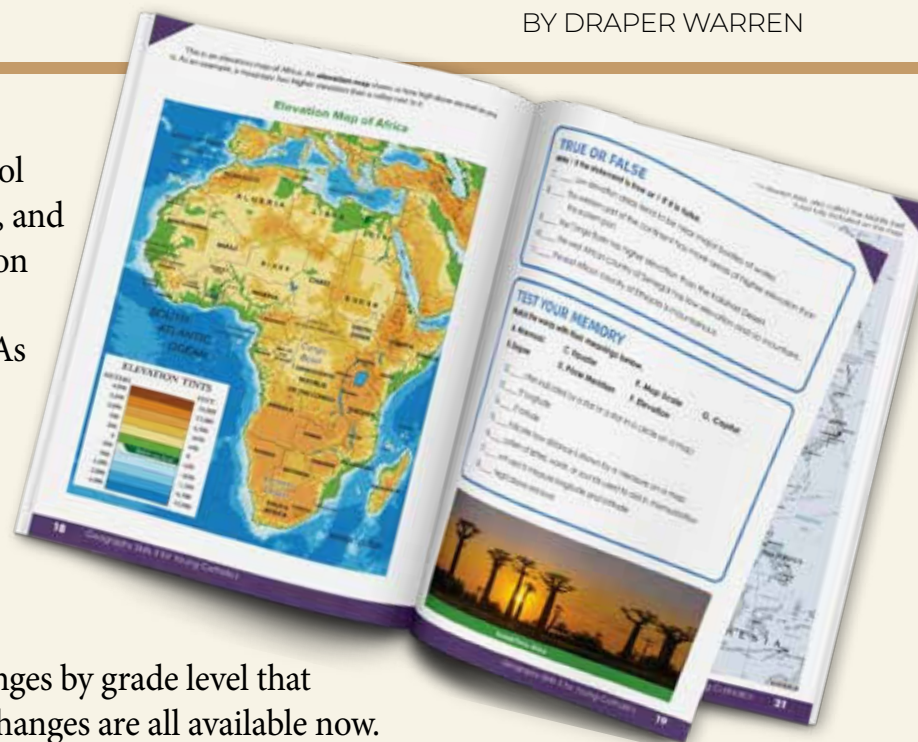


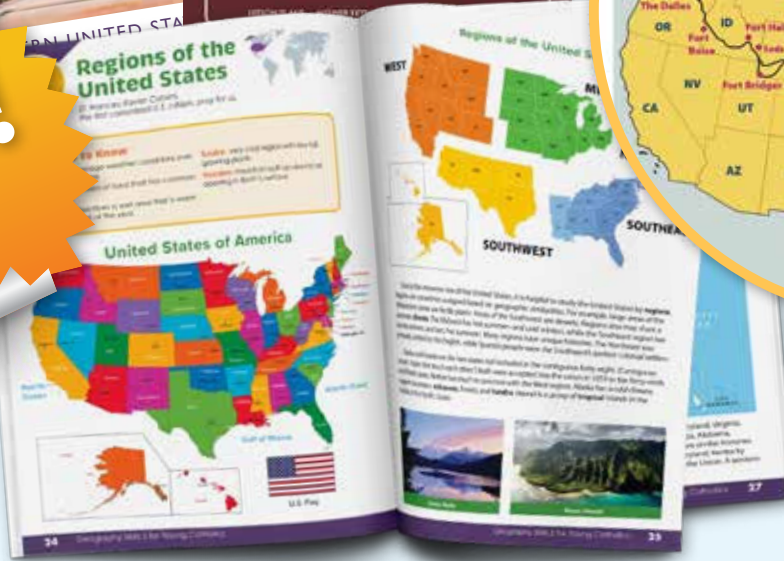
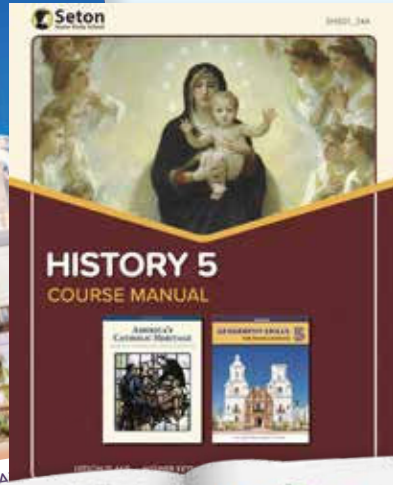
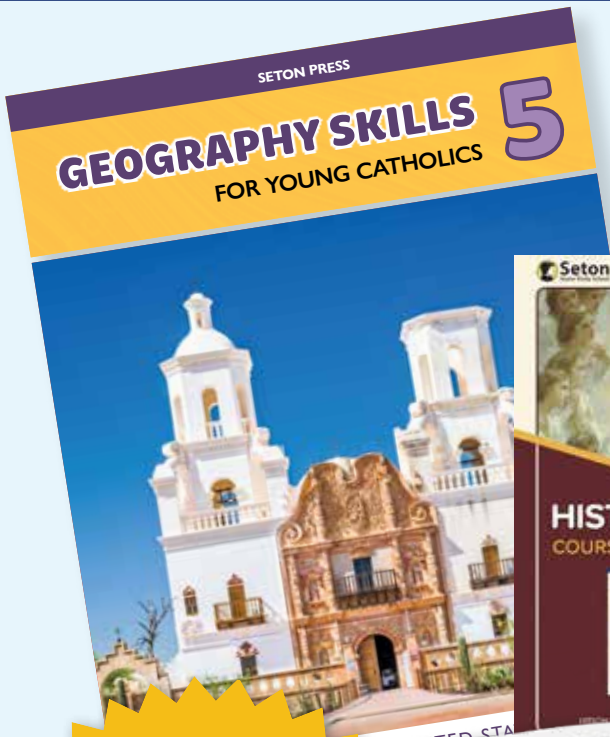
The Excitement Builds... 2024 Curriculum Updates

BY DRAPER WARREN

Even the best Catholic homeschool curriculum can always be better, and in this pursuit of excellence, Seton has always placed a heavy focus each year on curriculum improvements. As we continue to replace books from other publishers with our own Seton Press materials, we improve our materials and help keep our costs low, which in turn helps keep our tuition low. In fact, there are no tuition increases in 2024!

The following is a list of significant changes by grade level that parents might like to be aware of. These changes are all available now.





New!

HISTORY

History 5 has a new Seton Press Geography Skills 5 workbook. This is the second half of Geography Skills 4, which came out last year. Both books teach basic map skills, but they also focus on learning about the different states in the U.S. The 4th-grade book covers each eastern state in detail, and this new 5th-grade book covers each of the western states in detail.

RELIGION

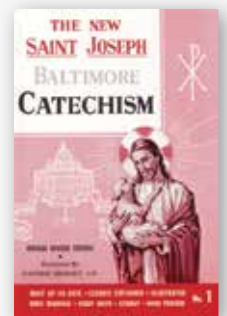


For Religion 4 and Religion 5, which use the *Baltimore Catechism #1*, we have made an excellent older resource available for free for enrolled families.

This resource is a series of video commentaries by the late Fr. Pablo Straub on the *Baltimore Catechism*. Originally recorded at

a television studio in the 1990s, these recordings have been digitally upscaled to preserve the profound reflections that Fr. Straub offers to students.

My mother and I watched these when I was in elementary school with Seton, and I still have fond memories of them to this day. You can find these pearls in the course resources in MySeton.



Geography 5 For Young Catholics:

Reviewed by Seton Academic Counselor Laura Fusto



As a Seton counselor and a former homeschooling parent, I am excited to introduce Seton's new *Geography 5 for Young Catholics* workbook. This fifth-grade book, the third in this series, focuses on the Western United States. This series replaces the map skills books used in the past. After reviewing the new fifth-grade book, I wished it had been available while homeschooling my little ones.

The first thing I noticed when I saw the new book was that it was titled Geography Skills instead of Map Skills. Why did this name change? This brand-new book and the others in this series introduce an additional discipline to our elementary students: geography.

While map skills tell us where things are, geography “seeks to answer the questions of why things are as they are, where they are,” as stated by Britannica. While the old books concentrated only on map reading skills, the new books combine both disciplines. Elementary students will now be better prepared for high school geography. Hurrah!

Reverently Catholic

The most exciting thing about this book and all the books in the series is that Seton writes it. Why is this exciting? It's Catholic! Of course, in true Seton fashion, the book's cover displays a beautiful photograph of a Catholic geographical site, the Mission San Xavier del Bac.

As I turned to Lesson 1, I noticed that a prayer to Saint Albert the Great, patron of the natural sciences, began the lesson. Nice! Then I skimmed through the rest of the book and discovered that all of the lessons begin with a prayer to a saint associated with the lesson being studied—what's not to like about that?

In the workbook activities, students' memory skills are constantly tested based on maps that have been studied. Students



don't just study and locate things on maps; they are also given blank maps to fill in from memory. The book even introduces the concept of mnemonics—an essential skill for memorizing geography concepts and material in many other disciplines.

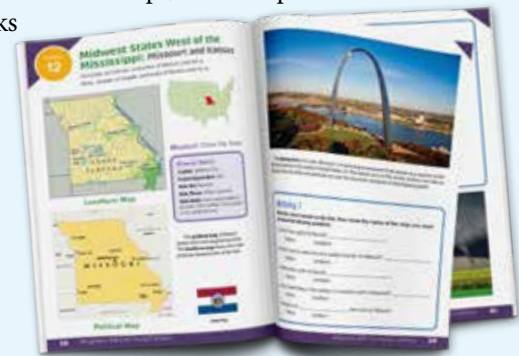
Learning to "Think Harder"

This book also challenges the student's deductive reasoning skills. For example, many map skills books would ask the student to find Switzerland on a map of Europe by telling him that Switzerland borders France, Germany, and Italy.

Seton's new book asks the student to locate Switzerland by only providing him with the official languages spoken there (French, German, and Italian). The book does a great job of making students think. (Don't our kids love it when we tell them to “think harder?”)

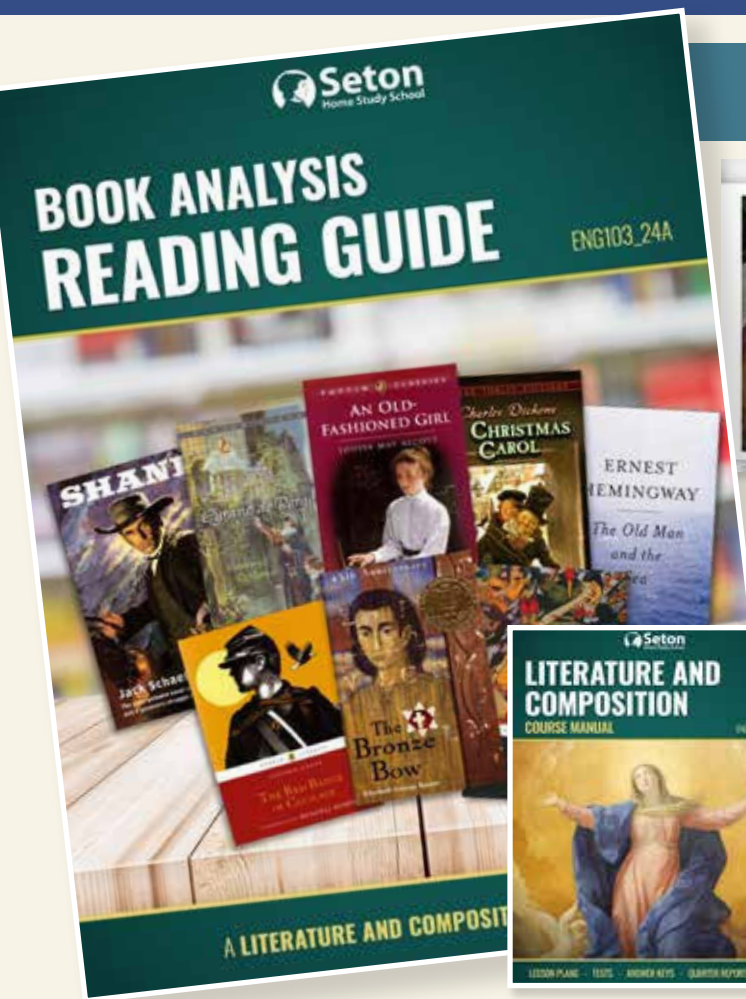
On top of everything else, this book is visually vivid and student-friendly. In addition to maps, there are photos of geographic landmarks throughout the book. Also, there are a variety of short activities in each lesson to help hold the attention of even the most fidgety kid.

I am not the only Seton staff member who loves this book. To quote the sentiments of one staff member after he looked through the book, “Wow! I sure wish I had this book as a kid.” I hope your kids enjoy this book the way he wished he had.

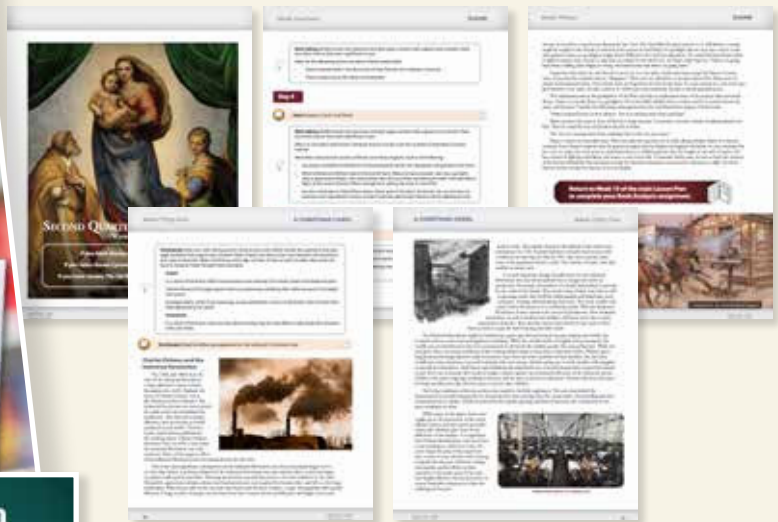


Laura Fusto received her BA in Communications from McDaniel College. She and her husband, John, have been blessed with three daughters. In her spare time, she enjoys gardening, golfing, shopping with her daughters, and playing pinochle with her husband and their friends.

High School



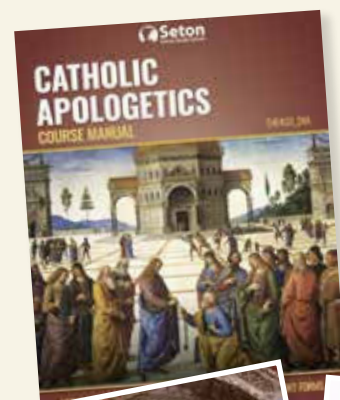
LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION



We have added a Literature and Composition Reading Guide, which improves and enriches the book analysis assignments.

The reading guide contains a daily reading schedule, guidance to help students better prepare for book analysis essays, and explanatory enrichment material about the authors and historical contexts to help students better understand and enjoy the books they have chosen.

CATHOLIC APOLOGETICS



We have revised the written tests in *Catholic Apologetics*. It is a slight change in most respects. Still, it improves the students' quality of life, as they are better able to study for the tests, and the scope of the questions is more reasonable. It also highlights the most important Apologetics content from the course.



ONLINE TESTS

Several of our high school courses have weekly tests. Most of our students take these tests online and receive instant feedback. We have previously been in the practice of sending out paper versions of all the tests to anyone enrolled for courses with weekly tests, which are an extra hundred pages that are never used by the vast majority of families.



This year, we will not send out those paper tests by default with four courses: *U.S. History*, *Understanding the Scriptures*, *The Early Church and the Fathers*, and *World Geography*. Paper tests will still be available for any family who requests them at no additional cost, but we estimate this one little change will save a couple hundred reams of paper (over 100,000 sheets). Printable copies of the tests will also be made available online.

U.S. GOVERNMENT ONLINE

U.S. Government Online addresses the theoretical and practical aspects of the United States government from a Catholic perspective. It evaluates America's federal, state, and local governments in light of Catholic morality and social teaching, which means that the way government functions is gauged by its effect on the Church and society.

This course addresses the Framers' intent in creating America's government. It examines what the authors of the Constitution and the other laws that govern our nation meant when they created those laws. The course contains numerous sections of *The Federalist Papers*, which most people consider the finest explanation of the U.S. Constitution ever written. Students will also read sections of Supreme Court opinions that have shaped America's government.

Finally, the course traces the development and growth of government, often contrasting what the Founders intended with how things are today and how they became that way. Students will study the federal government's executive, legislative, and judicial branches and their roles in domestic and foreign policy. Students will also study state and local



government and the relationship of those governments to the federal government and individual citizens.

This course differs from the other U.S. government courses in that it is a ½ credit and only available online. Second, it has 18 chapters, each with a twenty-five-question multiple-choice test. There are no essays. Dr. Paul Clark, who holds both a law degree and a Ph.D. in Philosophy, was the primary course author. This course will become the default government option. It is open only to Juniors and Seniors.

HONORS CIVIL LIBERTIES & CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

This is an advanced course designed for students interested in Political Science, Pre-Law, or American History.

Designed by Dr. Paul Clark, this course examines the most important Supreme Court cases affecting our rights and liberties as American citizens.

Students will learn about the moral, social, political, and economic issues confronting American Catholics.

The course will examine the function of government, the role of the American citizen, and that citizen's civil liberties and responsibilities in light of Catholic social teaching, prominent Catholic philosophers such as Augustine and Aquinas, and contemporary Catholic philosophers and Church documents.



There are written essays for which students are challenged to pick positions on controversial legal questions and be able to support their arguments from the precedents they learned about in the course. Dr. Paul Clark has also recorded eight excellent video lectures for the course.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Our curriculum improvements have not been limited to our standard curriculum. Some of the high school courses in our Special Services program, specially modified for students who need special accommodations, are also being colorized and made available in the SetonOnline format.

Special Services course changes are being made available as they are ready and are not aligned with a June 1st date, as are the standard curriculum updates. Please contact the Special Services Department with any questions.