

# Ivy College Guru

Dr. Gavin Wittje

[gavinwit@gmail.com](mailto:gavinwit@gmail.com)

[www.ivycollegeguru.com](http://www.ivycollegeguru.com)

**Phone: 616-516-3959**

---

## 2026 Spring Session Junior English Genius Syllabus

**Sundays, 6pm-8pm from 1/18-5/3/2026 (or Saturdays 10-12)  
A 16-week Spring Semester Session; One Meeting Per Week**

### I. Purpose of the program

This class is carefully designed by Dr. Gavin Wittje. The class is intended for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, who are at the age when they should and can start reading and appreciating classic stories and poetry, with the proper and expert guidance. Exposure in early ages to the classic canon and the reading and understanding of these works will enhance their language ability and reading comprehension. By taking this class, 4-5<sup>th</sup> graders will be well prepared for their upcoming middle school academic challenges in language arts classes.

The intent of the class is to achieve the following overall goals:

- 1) Increasing students' skills in English vocabulary
- 2) Reading and appreciating classic books in their original or adapted versions
- 3) Enhancing students' reading, writing, and grammar skills
- 4) Heightening students' capability to understand and enjoy life
- 5) Deepening students' all-round knowledge about humanities and social sciences
- 6) Enriching students' educational experience overall

### II. Major Contents of the program

The class will consist of the following specific contents and learning objectives:

- 1) Intensive vocabulary-building
- 2) Guided classic English reading: reading classic books/novels and classic poems
- 3) Guided and graded writing assignments
- 4) Feedback on each writing assignment for each student

### III. Textbooks and Study Materials

The class requires a number of books and other materials. Some will be shared to you in pdf format; others you will need to buy online:

- 1) *Junior English Genius Study Guide* (Spring 2026)
- 2) *Wordly Wise Book 7* (ISBN: 978-0838877074, or pdf)
- 3) *Grammar for Writing Level Yellow* (pdf)

#### Classic Novels

- 4) *Alice in Wonderland & Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll (ISBN: 9781853261183)
- 5) *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London (ISBN: 9780486264721)
- 6) *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (ISBN: 9781853261589)
- 7) *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett (ISBN: 9781853261046)
- 8) *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame (ISBN: 9781853261220)

#### Various poems and other materials provided by the instructor

### IV. Schedule of the Ivy-Classic Star English Program (15 weeks)

C#	Dates	Reading/Literature/Poems	Writing	Wordly Wise Book 11	Grammar Workbook
1	1/18	<i>Alice in Wonderland &amp; Through the Looking Glass</i> by Lewis Carroll <i>Walt Whitman Poem: "A Noiseless Patient Spider"</i>	Instructions on Writing	Introduction	p. 21

2	1/25	<i>Alice in Wonderland &amp; Through the Looking Glass</i> “A Red, Red Rose”	In-Class Writing Practice	Lessons 1-2	p. 22
3	2/1	<i>Alice in Wonderland &amp; Through the Looking Glass</i> Christina Rossetti Poem: “A Birthday”	First Essay (Book Report) Due	Lessons 3-4	p. 23-4
4	2/8	<i>The Call of the Wild</i> by Jack London Edgar Allan Poe Poem: “Eldorado”	Comments on Writing	Review for Lesson 1-4	p. 25
5	2/15	<i>The Call of the Wild</i> Eugene Field Poem: “Little Boy Blue”	Story Writing (1)	Lesson 5-6	p. 26
6	2/22	<i>The Call of the Wild</i> John Donne Poem: “No Man is an Island”	Second Essay (book report) Due	Lessons 7-8	p. 27-8
7	3/1	<i>The Little Prince</i> by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry William Blake Poem: “Nurse’s Song”	Book discussion and analysis	Review for Lesson 5-8	p. 29
8	3/8	<i>The Little Prince</i> William Shakespeare Poem: Sonnet 18	Story Writing (2)	Lesson 9-10	p. 30
9	3/15	<i>The Little Prince</i> Lewis Carroll Poem: “The Walrus and the Carpenter”	More discussion on writing	Lessons 11-12	p. 31
10	3/22	<i>The Secret Garden</i> by Frances Hodgson Burnett George Gordon Byron Poem: “So We’ll Go No More a Roving”	Third Essay (Book Report) Due	Review for Lessons 9-12	p. 33-4
11	3/29	<i>The Secret Garden</i> Burnett Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Poem: “The Children’s Hour”	Story Writing (3)	Lessons 13-14	p. 35
12	4/5	<i>The Secret Garden</i> Burnett Robert Louis Stevenson Poem: “The Land of Nod”	Book discussion and analysis	Lessons 15-16	p. 36-7
13	4/12	<i>The Wind in the Willows</i> by Kenneth Grahame Edward Lear Poem: “The Owl and the Pussy-cat”	Fourth Essay (Book Report) Due	Review for Lessons 13-16	p. 38-9
14	4/19	<i>The Wind in the Willows</i> Grahame Alexander Pushkin Poem: “The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish”	Book discussion and analysis	Lessons 17-18	p. 39-43
15	4/26	<i>The Wind in the Willows</i> Robert Frost Poem: “Fire and Ice”	Story Writing (4)	Review for 19-20	p. 44-5
16	5/3	“All Summer in a Day” by Ray Bradbury; “Introduction to Poetry” by Billy Collins	Super Summary	Review whole book	p. 46-8