



DCM PATHFINDER

Science Philosophy

Pathfinder Science begins with purpose under God. Students investigate the world He made before they memorize labels and laws—and they see how science connects to real work, stewardship, and service.

WHY WE STUDY SCIENCE

Christians study the natural world because **God created it**. Nature is not meaningless; it is the work of a rational Creator. Because God made the world with order and intelligibility, creation is **discoverable**—we can observe, investigate, and understand it. Because God is truthful, creation is **rational**—things make sense, and honest inquiry can be trusted.

Science is faithful attention to what God has made: receiving the gift of creation with wonder, gratitude, and diligence—not a rival to faith when pursued humbly.

EVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE AND CREATIONISM — A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

DCM Pathfinder teaches **both evolutionary science and creationism** from a Christian perspective. We reject the false choice that evolution equals atheism or that Christian faith requires ignoring mainstream science.

Pathfinder presents **both models**—what evolutionary science claims and what creationism claims—so students can engage the modern world competently and think clearly about origins. Pathfinder is **not** the ultimate source of truth on these questions; families, Scripture, and the church guide what students ultimately believe.

General Christian truth—that God is Creator and creation is good—is part of our framing, but it is not a substitute for teaching the creationist model alongside evolutionary science. Where the models differ, Pathfinder names the tension fairly, age-appropriately, and invites parents and mentors to guide the deepest conversations at home.

WHAT WE MEAN BY EACH MODEL

A **model** is a coherent account of how nature works or came to be—with claims, evidence, vocabulary, and limits. Pathfinder teaches **both** evolutionary science and creationism as models; families, Scripture, and the church guide what students ultimately believe.

Evolutionary science means mainstream scientific models in textbooks and higher education—biological evolution, deep time, and standard cosmological accounts where relevant—not atheism or materialism. Students learn what these models claim so they can engage modern science competently.

Creationism means origins and design models that affirm deliberate divine creation and/or challenge purely naturalistic accounts—taught as models with claims and evidence, not as a substitute for general Christian truth about

God as Creator. Depending on grade, Pathfinder may present major strands fairly, including young-earth creationism, old-earth creationism, and intelligent design, without requiring one Christian position.

Where origins are in view, Pathfinder compares what each model claims, names limits honestly, and does not present itself as the final authority on which model is true.

APPLICATION BEFORE THEORY — AND REAL INDUSTRY

Like Pathfinder Math, science is **application-first**. Students meet a real phenomenon, design problem, or human need before vocabulary lists and abstract laws. Concepts are tools discovered through investigation—not facts floating alone in a textbook.

Pathfinder also connects science to **industry and skilled work**: trades, engineering, medicine, agriculture, energy, technology, and stewardship. Every unit should answer, in age-appropriate language: *Who uses this? What work does this enable?* That honesty strengthens the STEM pipeline and shows students that science serves real neighbors in a real world.

LIVING BOOKS FOR SCIENCE

Pathfinder prefers **living books and primary scientific prose** over textbooks for science reading; textbooks may supplement, not replace, narrative and observational reading.

Science interest reading in weekly packs draws from our [Reading Catalog](#) — grade-aligned living books, field-naturalist narratives, scientist biographies, primary sources where appropriate, and paired origins texts taught fairly from a Christian perspective.

EVERY LESSON FOLLOWS THIS SEQUENCE

1. **Application scenario** — A phenomenon, design problem, or industry context worth investigating.
2. **Observation & investigation** — Look, measure, compare, experiment safely, or analyze a case.
3. **Concept naming** — Name the pattern, model, or law as a tool that explains what was observed.
4. **Focused practice** — Lab follow-up, analysis, design challenge, or narration of findings.

SCIENCE COURSE MAP (GRADES 1–12)

Grades 1–3 use General Science; Grades 4–8 use one mandatory discipline per year; high school follows a core sequence with a Grade 12 elective.

Grade	Discipline / course
Grade 1	General Science
Grade 2	General Science
Grade 3	General Science
Grade 4	Life Science

Grade	Discipline / course
Grade 5	Earth & Space Science
Grade 6	Physical Science (Intro)
Grade 7	Biology
Grade 8	Physical Science
Grade 9	Biology
Grade 10	Chemistry
Grade 11	Physics
Grade 12	Teachers/parents/students select one of the following: • Anatomy & Physiology • Astronomy • Advanced Biology • Advanced Chemistry • Marine Science

PATHFINDER SCIENCE TODAY

Science placement and weekly-pack scaffolding exist in Pathfinder today. Grades 1–3 use Providence General Science content; Grades 4–8 and high school AI-authored sessions follow this philosophy and course map.