

GRADES 4 – 6 CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

MATHEMATICS

4 – Fourth graders enter the world of multiplication and division in a much greater sense. We take the skills introduced in third grade and build on them by introducing double digit multiplication. We also focus on long division. Students work hard on the surveying skills by picking a topic, interviewing people, and creating a bar graph showing their results. We also learn the need for standard measurement through hands on activities.

5 – Students in the fifth grade continue to build upon skills taught in previous years, with an emphasis on fractions and decimals. A variety of teaching techniques and games are used to achieve our objectives. The wireless computer lab is integrated into our math study.

6 – From visual-spatial and deductive reasoning activities such as Tangrams, Pentominos, Math Basketball, and our annual Catholic Schools Week Mind Bending Marathon, sixth grade math is challenging and fun! We offer differentiated instruction that allows all students to work at their own ability levels, and we have an excellent text with wonderful on-line resources. Algebraic reasoning is emphasized and students are challenged each month to find math in the “Real World”.

RELIGION

4 – We examine and put into practice the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes, and celebrate each of the seasons of the Church year with hands-on activities. We discover our own unique gifts and talents to share with the parish, school and our Prayer partners.

5 – Students in the fifth grade focus on the sacraments. In addition to our study of the sacraments, we study saints as well as the gifts of the Holy Spirit by creating prayer journals. We share our faith with our Prayer Partners. All of the students love our Birthday Blessings celebration for their birthdays!

6 – Sixth graders focus on the study of the Old Testament. Participation and integration of our religious values are experienced through many activities: Prayer partnering with the second grade, Bible Quiz games, Talent Service Project, traditional forms of prayer (Rosary & Stations of the Cross), informal meditative and contemplative prayer opportunities.

SCIENCE

4 – Our students experience science in the outdoors, in the classroom and in the computer room. As a right of passage, all fourth graders complete the ultimate Leaf Project. Students collect, identify, and present leaves found in Ohio. These projects bring the forest into our hallway! When we study ecosystems, students construct their own coral reef and identify the species that live there.

5 –The first quarter is a study on the human body systems and other health topics. Subsequent quarters consist of units on astronomy, amphibians, chemistry, sound, electricity and magnets, and air quality. Hands-on activities are incorporated into our learning and we use the science lab at least once a week.

6 – We focus on Life Science. Through weekly labs and activities, students delve into *Cell Theory* (worms, raw eggs, mystery boxes, looking at onion skin slides and guard cells under the microscope), *Genetics* (determining descendants with the roll of the dice!), *Plant Life* (eating taproots), *The Structure and Function of Body Systems*, *Evolution* (modeling natural selection and bird beaks), and *Endangered/Invasive Species*. Project Alert is a drug and alcohol awareness program for students presented by the school guidance counselor. Sixth graders also get their first taste of Science Fair!

LANGUAGE ARTS

4 – Who is Stone Fox? Why does Leigh Botts keep pestering an author? These are just a few of the characters we meet through our novels. Besides using our reader to learn more about the world of Literature, we try to dive into some great novels that teach all about life, problem solving, and forming personal relationships. In the spring, we work on poetry, both writing and reciting. In writing we try to sharpen our skills through various creative writing entries as well as personal narratives!

5 – We use novels, our basal reading series, and other types of literature to expose the students to varied forms of reading and writing. Fifth graders work in both small group and whole group situations. The writing process is emphasized daily through both writing and the development of longer stories.

6 – Prepositional phrase obstacle courses, diagramming relays, vocabulary theatre, independent reading novels, creative writing, recitations, imaginative book projects and dramatic presentations are just a few of the exciting activities that are a part of the sixth grade Language Arts program. Students engage in numerous writing activities including journaling and producing and presenting their own original poems for two voices.

SOCIAL STUDIES

4 – If constructing a Native American home, testing your strength as a civil war soldier, or going back into an 1800's school house sound like fun, then you're going to love fourth grade social studies. Fourth graders explore the regions of the USA by doing hands-on projects, web searches, and PowerPoint presentations. We get knee deep into studying Ohio's rich history and diversity. We end our year with a celebrating of Ohio Day!

5 – Students begin the year studying geography and map skills with an emphasis on Africa. The five themes of geography are applied to various classrooms activities. Students then study history starting with the beginning of man and civilization. The year is concluded with a study of Egypt and Greece and the Greek Olympics. The laptops are utilized weekly in the classrooms.

6 – Sixth graders explore Ancient World History through reenactments of the Roman Republic, create Byzantine mosaics, icons, and hippodromes; sing continent map songs, participate in the Geography Bee, design a personal coat of arms, design their own medieval projects and research a contemporary “slice of life”. Students also take time teach month to reflect on current and share how the events relate to the Key Principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

In addition to classroom teachers, St. Helen School employs certified teachers dedicated to the following areas: art, music, computer lab, physical education, and library.

**St. Helen School
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GRADES 7 – 8 CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

MATHEMATICS

7 – Seventh graders work with number patterns, integers, measurements/conversions, fractions, decimals, data analysis, coordinate graphing, and percentages. Graphing and statistics are studied in depth. A connection to the real world with special emphasis science is also stressed. The students will make geometric shapes and discover why formulas work. Students will work on quarterly math projects that have a connection to the real world. An advance math class is offered to students who require more challenges.

8 – Eighth grade students become math masters in the application of skills with whole numbers, integers, fractions, decimals, meaning of operations, and percentages. Students use and apply their skills to real life problems involving ratio, proportions, percentages, stats, and geometry. Students will also be able to solve inequalities, variables, and functions. Students will work on a quarterly math project that has a connection to the real world. An advanced math class is offered to students who require more challenges.

RELIGION

7 – Our core program centers on the study of Faith. The unit themes include: Revelation, Trinity, Jesus Christ, Church, Morality, Sacraments, and The Kingdom of God. There are daily and weekly opportunities for student-led prayer, and a variety of other prayer forms. In addition, students prepare and participate in Mass.

8 – We have two courses of study for our students: Faith and Confirmation. The unit themes include: Revelation, Trinity, Jesus Christ, Church, Morality, Sacraments, and The Kingdom of God. In addition to preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation, the students have the opportunities to prepare and participate in Mass and para-liturgies such as “The Living Rosary” and an enactment of the events of Holy Week. The Confirmation retreat is open to all students as well as all daily and weekly student-led prayers.

LANGUAGE ARTS

7 – Because the junior high grades are transition years from the elementary grades to high school, the seventh grade focuses on more independent work that expands and utilizes the skills they have acquired from the lower grades. A variety of writing forms and styles are introduced which will serve as a foundation for future work in eighth grade and in high school. Strong vocabulary skills, the writing process, and literary forms and devices are particularly emphasized.

8 – To help prepare for high school, we study many writing styles including expository, narrative, technical, descriptive, persuasive and others. Reading for comprehension and understanding is emphasized along with the vocabulary that the students will need in high school and beyond.

SOCIAL STUDIES

7 – Students engage in active learning opportunities to help them understand our nation’s history and national identity, with the ultimate goal of becoming interested, knowledgeable, and involved citizens. Seventh grade students learn about the early years of America’s story from the 1600s through the Reconstruction Era of 1877.

8 – We build on last year to further strengthen our interest, knowledge, and involvement in our citizenship. We pick up America’s story from the Reconstruction Era of 1877 through modern times.

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