

Curriculum-4th grade

Religion

In the intermediate age level we need to acknowledge that this is a time of transition. There are some general differences for children at this age; however there also may be some differences in the physical and emotional development that need to be recognized. These changes can reflect the child's perception of ones' self. Children of this age are also relying on their strong ties with their family, but are starting to move to actively interact with their peers.

In this age group the beginning of peer group identity is developing. The sense Of right and wrong, a sense of law and order, and the ability of decision-making and accountability for their actions are paramount in this age level.

Our mission statement "to educate a strong-faith centered community through a commitment to the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical development of very child" is reinforced in our religion curriculum.

The first semester will include spiritual and corporal works of mercy, virtues of faith, hope and love. One of the focuses of fourth grade is The Beatitudes. This is one of the main elements of study in the fourth grade curriculum. We do receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during both the Advent and Lenten Seasons. The Advent, Lenten and Holy Triduum Seasons are studied in the curriculum. We do participate in service projects throughout the year.

The second semester focuses on the Ten Commandments. The Lenten Season is celebrated during this semester with Stations of the Cross and the Living Stations that is performed by the eighth grade class.

The Mysteries of The Rosary and Mary are celebrated in both semesters.

The catechetical series and newspapers that we use are in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

Language Arts

Spelling

The spelling part of the Language Arts program focuses on spelling strategy for each unit. In most units there are twenty base words with review and challenge words for each spelling strategy. Emphasis is on Spelling Words and strategies used, word analysis, word structure and phonics. There is also focus on using the words in context in reading selections and writing selections. The spelling series we use is researched based and is used throughout the school year.

Reading

Students will identify story elements by analyzing characters, setting, and plot. We learn to identify the genre of each story we read. The students preview and predict to improve reading comprehension. The students will read award-winning novel selections each quarter, which will contain work through all of the Language Arts subjects, in addition to the classroom basal reading book. In the basal reader, we explore main idea, author's purpose, judgment/decisions, fact and opinion, and reading charts and diagrams. Students identify the sequence of events, identify and form generalizations. We also explore cause and effect relationships.

English

In grammar, students will identify sentences and sentence fragments to improve sentence fluency. Students will learn to capitalize and punctuate sentences, as well as identify simple subjects and simple predicates. Using the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing, students will learn the mechanics of writing a complete paper. They will write a compare and contrast, personal narrative, a story, and eventually a complete research paper. They will identify common, proper, and possessive nouns in singular and plural form. They will learn the correct spelling patterns for adding endings to present and past tense verbs. Students will identify and use adjectives and articles in their writing. Students will learn, identify and write different forms of poetry.

Science

The study of science in the fourth grade student will learn that basis of all science experiments through the scientific method.

There are teacher-led experiments in class throughout the year teaching a basic knowledge in both science inquiry and process.

The first semester will focus on scientific inquiry/experimentation into Earth and Physical Science. There are different areas of study in Earth Science including meteorology, the earth's makeup, the importance of the sun, and ocean study.

The areas of study in Physical Science include measuring matter, force and motion, electricity and magnetism, light and sound.

The second semester starts with the study of the human body. The systems that are studied in the fourth grade are the digestive, circulatory, and nervous system. There is also an emphasis on nutrition which includes making healthy food choices and studying the food pyramid. We move into the study of plants, plant adaptations and environments. The animal kingdom focuses on animal structure and functions.

At times, an elementary science fair will be conducted in the second semester.

Social Studies

Students will focus on the geography and regions of Texas. They will learn how to read, as well as create a map. Students will learn about the Native Americans, and the tribes that were indigenous to Texas, prior to the first European settlers. This study will provide the students knowledge of the various lifestyles for the Texas Indian tribes. Through this, we are lead through the many social and cultural changes that have shaped the Texas of today. We learn about the different cultures that compromise the citizens of this state. Students explore their own ancestry, customs and traditions. We study the history of Texas from gaining independence from Mexico to statehood. They will study the historical figures and the important contributions they made in Texas' journey.

Health

Health in the fourth grade is taught generally with the science classes. Some of the interpersonal skills and decision-making processes are taught within the religion and guidance subject areas.

First Semester

Students will make short and long-term goals for their health. Students will identify healthy choices for over-the-counter medications. In this semester we cover short and long-term effects of alcohol, tobacco and drugs. Prevention of disease and common communicable diseases will be introduced.

Second Semester

Students will recognize healthy choices to maintain health throughout their lifetime. Students will acquire basic knowledge and skills related to the food pyramid and making healthy food choices. Recognizing functions of the human body, (as explained in science), and how they can relate to personal health throughout their lifespan is emphasized in the human body systems unit of study. Health behavior and influencing factors on their health and personal/interpersonal skills are touched on in health, science and religion.

