

Our Curriculum



Language Arts

Mornings daily

Reading

Mrs. Gregg

Mrs. Purdum

Both groups will use *Treasures* Macmillan McGraw-Hill

Both groups will read a novel later in the year.

Both comprehension and skills are tested and are part of the reading grade, with comprehension being weighted more heavily. Class participation, oral reading, and other reading assignments are part of this grade.

Phonics

This is taught separately and incorporated into the reading grade.

English

Concentration is on usage and written skills. Oral communication skills are also practiced. The book is *Voyages in English*. Book reports are required each month. The format varies from month to month and will be discussed in class. Both groups write in journals to develop writing skills; additionally, other types of writing will be included.

Spelling

The Houghton-Mifflin series is used. Spelling units consist of basic words and a list of both review and challenge words. There is also a section titled “Real-World Vocabulary”. While this section will be discussed in class, these words will not be included in the weekly test. Final spelling grade is determined by tests, participation, other spelling assignments, and other written work done for language arts.

In Mrs. Purdum’s spelling program, the spelling words are introduced on Monday. Homework is given each night to reinforce the words of the week. Also, the spelling words should be reviewed nightly – a few at a time. The final test is given on Friday. It consists of dictation of the basic list and review words, four to five dictated sentences using many of these words, and the optional writing of the challenge words for extra credit. As a result, the student receives two spelling grades each week. One grade is given for the list words, and one grade is given for the sentences. Challenge words are marked with a check or check plus, depending on the number correct.

In Mrs. Gregg’s spelling program, one unit consisting of basic, review, and challenge words are studied each week, with the final test being given on Friday. Initially, the test will be a combination of dictated words and a few dictated sentences. Gradually, the number of sentences will increase, until the whole test is in sentences, as this is how most written work is done.

Handwriting

We are striving for continued improvement in all written work. The Zaner-Bloser method is IHM’s standard of measure when grading. Although neatness and legibility are very important, the skills and

form set forth in this method are the criteria by which a grade is given. These include size, shape, slant, spacing, and alignment.

Religion

Daily – Mrs. Luongo and Mrs. Gregg

We Believe & Family Life

We have integrated the Sadlier *We Believe* with the Benziger *Family Life* book. The content is rooted in scripture and based on the beliefs and traditions of the catechism of the Catholic Church. It integrates creed, liturgy and sacraments, moral life, and prayer, as well as age-appropriate components of child protection and human sexuality. Grades are based on review quizzes and tests, classroom activities and assignments, as well as individual and group participation.

Math

Daily – Mrs. King and Mrs. Purdum

All math students are presently working in a 4th grade instructional level text by Sadlier-Oxford. The pace, type of reinforcement, and enrichment vary from class to class, as well as from child to child. All groups begin the year with a review of basic skills and number facts so that the best possible approach to the new skills and applications can be utilized in the classroom. Children are assessed in the following areas: concepts, computation, and word problems. Testing is done at the end of the chapter. Quizzes are also given prior to the chapter test. Tests, quizzes, and other daily work are sent home in a folder around the end of the month for Mrs. Purdum's students. PLEASE HELP your child review number facts.

Social Studies

Afternoons – Mrs. Gregg Nystrom Jr. Atlas; The Maryland Adventure (Gibbs Smith)

4th Grade Social Studies covers both U.S. geography and Maryland. The atlas will be used for map skills at the beginning of the year, and as our framework for studying U.S. geography. Map quizzes will be given for each US geographic region. A text will be used mainly as a reference: for important vocabulary words (lists will be given and posted on SharePoint), for concepts like climate, natural resources, and the structure of the federal government. Map skills are an integral part of the Social Studies curriculum, and will be reinforced throughout the year. Maryland will be studied during the second half of the year, encompassing Maryland's history.

Current events may be covered as well. In addition to the map quizzes, vocabulary tests will be given on related terms. From time to time, projects will be assigned. All tests will be announced a week ahead of time. Look for the assignment in the home assignment book. Please help your child study at home. Grades are based on

participation, classwork, and projects assigned during the marking period, as well as vocabulary and chapter tests. Chapter tests are weighted more heavily than vocabulary tests. A word of caution: map skills need practice. For example, it is more important to be able to *use* a map key than it is to memorize the definition.

Science

Afternoons – Mrs. Purdum

Science (McGraw Hill)

This text provides the basis of information. Worksheets are used to reinforce the text. Hands-on and cooperative learning activities are included to further enhance each unit of study. Two tests are given for each chapter. The first one is a vocabulary test. It is a matching test. The vocabulary is defined in the student's science notebook prior to the test. The second test is given at the completion of each unit and is based on concepts and thought processes developed throughout the chapter. It is a multiple choice and short answer test and may require reasoning in addition to memorization. The text and notebook should be studied when preparing for the test. As in social studies, tests are announced a week ahead of time. YOUR HELP is needed with studying. Grades are based on independent classwork, cooperative learning activities, labs, participation and test grades. Chapter tests are weighted more heavily than vocabulary tests.

When appropriate, we make use of videos and computer software to supplement our curriculum in science and social studies. Guest speakers may also be invited from time to time to share their experiences.