

## ST. MARY'S ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

The Middle School of St. Mary's Academy promotes the unique skills and talents of each of its students, while fostering an appreciation for teamwork and community. The Loretto school values of *faith, community, respect, and justice* serve as the foundation for the Middle School Program.

With a focus on preparing students for a college-preparatory and advanced placement programs in high school, the SMA Middle School provides daily studies in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages. Co-curricular daily experiences in fine arts, physical education or sports, and theological studies further promotes academic and personal growth. Other components of the Middle School program include literacy enhancement, study skills development, and social-issue discussions.

With all-school reflections, community-action-team time, an academic environment rich in connections, regular liturgies, and frequent opportunities to engage in community service, Middle School students are regularly called upon to seek understanding and act responsibly.

### CORE CURRICULAR

#### SIXTH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS

Sixth grade language arts students are given the opportunity and tools to learn to read and write eagerly and effectively. Readings in various genres focus on the theme of *Fitting In*, while writing in various forms focuses on authenticity of voice and concentrates on conventions such as spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Vocabulary is practiced daily, and occasions for reading and writing for an audience are numerous.

#### Overall Essential Questions

- How can I make my writing look and sound like a “real” author?
- How can I clearly communicate my ideas to others?
- How can I become a better reader?
- How can active listening improve my life?
- How do different genres of literature bring me to a better understanding of life?

#### Unit One: Realistic Fiction/Memoir

Essential Questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages to being an “outsider”?
- How can I effectively write about my memories?

Topics/Skills:

- Reading comprehension – *The Outsiders*
- Memoirs – leads, conclusions, focus, sensory details
- Prefixes

- Vocabulary
- Conventions – homophones, quotation marks, capitalization
- Parts of Speech

Topics/Skills:

- Reading comprehension – *The Outsiders*
- Memoirs – leads, conclusions, focus, sensory details
- Daily Grammar Practice
- Vocabulary / Wordly Wise
- Conventions – homophones, quotation marks, capitalization
- Parts of Speech

### Unit Two: True Story/Feature Article

Essential Questions:

- What impact do “trail blazers” have on society?
- How can I effectively write about a nonfiction topic?

Topics/Skills:

- Reading comprehension – *Behind Rebel Lines*
- Feature articles – research, introductions, conclusions, paragraphing, text features, citations
- Daily Grammar Practice
- Vocabulary / Wordly Wise
- Conventions – commas, semicolons, colons

### Unit Three: Poetry

Essential Questions:

- What is Poetry?
- How can Poetry change me and/or the world?

Topics/Skills:

- Reading and writing of poetry
- Figurative language – alliteration, similes, metaphors, personification, onomatopoeia, rhyme
- Daily Grammar Practice
- Vocabulary / Wordly Wise
- Prefixes

### Unit Four: Science Fiction/Book Review

Essential Questions:

- What does it mean to be “alive”?
- How can I effectively communicate my opinions and ideas about a piece of writing?

Topics/Skills:

- Reading comprehension skills-*The Giver*

- Book Review – introductions, conclusions, body paragraphs, transitions
- Daily Grammar Practice
- Vocabulary / Wordly Wise
- Suffixes

### Unit Five: Short Stories

Essential Questions:

- How can I make people and places “come alive” in a fictional piece of writing?

Topics/Skills:

- Reading comprehension skills-Short stories
- Short stories-characterization, plot, setting, theme
- Daily Grammar Practice
- Vocabulary / Wordly Wise
- Root words

### Unit Six: Historical Fiction/Character Analysis

Essential Questions:

- What can the time period of slavery teach us about how we treat people today?

Topics/Skills:

- Reading comprehension skills - *Chains*
- Character Analysis
- Daily Grammar Practice
- Vocabulary / Wordly Wise
- Root words

## **SEVENTH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS**

The primary focus driving the seventh grade language arts curriculum is effective communication. The auditory and written intake of communication includes the comprehension, appreciation and evaluation of a variety of literary texts. This evaluation includes critical thinking, drawing conclusions, and the integration of information into other academic disciplines. In addition, the chosen literature is meant to foster intellectual, social and spiritual growth in the students’ own lives. The verbal and written output of communication includes a variety of formats and audiences.

### Big Idea

- All communication is affected by perspective and personal bias.

### Overall Enduring Understandings

- Literature enriches one’s understanding of the world and its inhabitants.

- Improving language skills enriches communication and understanding.
- Fixation on differences results in destructive and unproductive responses and behaviors.
- Injustice limits personal and societal growth.
- Heroes lead exemplary lives by using their gifts/talents to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

### Overall Knowledge and Skills

- What is my strategy for reading this text? What do I do if I get stuck?
- What techniques are used by authors to construct meaning? What is the impact on the reader?
- What am I bringing to the text? What is my bias?
- What is the author's bias?
- What can I learn from my conversation (verbal or written) with others?
- How do I glean understanding of new vocabulary and incorporate these words into my reading, speaking and writing vocabularies?
- How can I organize my writing to improve the readers' understanding?
- How and why do authors use figurative language? How can I use it in my writing?
- How can I use punctuation to accurately understand and convey meaning?

### Unit One: The Great Divide

#### Essential Questions:

- Why are humans threatened and divided by differences?
- How does our fixation on differences show itself in society?  
(*prejudice, religious and political intolerance, slavery, segregation, ethnic cleansing, war, terrorism*)
- How do we as people and societies build bridges across these divisions?
- How have our "differences" enriched our society?
- How does reading about humans' responses to human differences affect my life?

#### Skills:

- Vocabulary - novels, social studies, *Wordly Wise*
- Daily grammar practice - parts of speech; paragraph and sentence structure; mechanics of punctuation and capitalization; sentence diagramming

#### Evaluative Pieces:

- writing responses
- diary entry
- letter to the editor
- book talk
- presentation (student choice )
- persuasive speech

### Unit Two: Justice Denied

Essential Questions:

- To whom in our society is justice denied?
- What is the effect of denying another human being freedom?  
(*On the victim? On the perpetrator?*)
- Is life fair?(*Should it be? We all have the same basic needs, but do we all want the same things*)
- How does injustice limit personal and society's growth?
- How does reading about injustice affect my life?

Skills:

- Vocabulary - novels, social studies, *Wordly Wise*
- Daily grammar practice - parts of speech; paragraph and sentence structure; mechanics of punctuation and capitalization; sentence diagramming

Evaluative Pieces:

- writing responses
- political cartoon
- persuasive speech
- presentation (student choice )

Unit Three: Power and Social Change

Essential Questions:

- What qualities determine a hero?
- How can one person's behavior affect others?
- How does adversity reveal one's true character?
- What heroic qualities can I emulate in my life?
- How does reading about heroes affect my life?

Skills:

- Vocabulary - novels, social studies, *Wordly Wise*
- Daily grammar practice - parts of speech; paragraph and sentence structure; mechanics of punctuation and capitalization; sentence diagramming

Evaluative Pieces:

- writing responses
- political cartoon
- persuasive speech
- first person narrative

**EIGHTH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS**

The eighth grade language arts program emphasizes analytical thinking, reading and writing along with creative thinking and writing. For each text, students will identify and interpret character development, overarching themes, literary devices, and examine style and structure of language. A variety of assignments such as speech, debate, research, acting, artistic interpretations, and focus questions will be given to foster students' analytical thinking skills.

Analytical writing will be emphasized as well. Students will learn how to formulate an argument and then defend it with evidence from a passage and discussion and analysis of that evidence. The course will also focus on creative writing. We will use discussion and analysis of the texts as springboards for creative writing assignments that may include interior monologues, personal vignettes, and poetry.

### **Unit One: True Grit - Morality, Justice and Revenge**

Essential Questions:

- How does one differentiate between justice and revenge?
- How does one determine a moral code of conduct? When is it acceptable to break that code of conduct, and when is it not?
- Is it possible to seek and obtain justice with a sense of compassion and mercy?
- Within the context of the story, what does it truly mean to have “true grit”?
- How does the main character come of age in this story? What difficult lessons does she learn?

### **Unit Two: The House on Mango Street - Assimilation versus Acculturation**

Essential Questions:

- How does one assimilate into a foreign culture while still maintaining his or her identity?
- What is the best way to cope with hardship? Is it better to face it head on or simply escape it?
- How do people in a dominant culture use language as an exclusionary force?
- How can language be used as a source of empowerment?
- How does the main character come of age in this story? What difficult lessons does she learn?

### **Unit Three: Animal Farm – Satire as an Agent for Change**

Essential Questions:

- What is the purpose of satire?
- How does Orwell employ techniques of satire in *Animal Farm*?
- Is satire effective?
- What are some of the fundamental flaws of human nature?

### **Unit Four: Master Harold...and the Boys – The Relationship between Victim and Oppressor**

Essential Questions:

- What happens on an individual level when racism and hatred becomes an institution that is legislated by the government?
- How is bigotry and racism dehumanizing for *both* the victim and the oppressor?
- Is it possible to transcend that which is ingrained in every aspect of society?
- How does “master” Harold come of age in the play?

## **Unit Five: Cyrano de Bergerac – Outer Appearance and Inner Character**

Essential Questions:

- How much value does society place on outer beauty?
- Does society correlate outer beauty with inner character?
- What type of person would Cyrano be, if he lived today?
- How does one determine a moral code of conduct? When is it acceptable to break that code of conduct, and when is it not?

## **Unit Six: To Kill a Mockingbird – Empathy as an Agent for Change**

Essential Questions:

- What does it mean to empathize with another person truly understanding his or her perspective?
- What are the effects of discrimination on individuals and groups?
- How does one transcend stereotyping and discrimination?
- How does Atticus formulate and then live up to his own code of behavior?
- How does the narrator come of age in this story?

## **SIXTH GRADE MATHEMATICS**

The sixth grade mathematics program is a traditional program that teaches discrete skills as they relate to the whole and serve to solve more sophisticated problems. Students are provided with opportunities to interconnect and apply acquired skills through tests, projects and multi-layered word problems. Key goals of the program are for students to master arithmetic skills involving whole and rational numbers, review and extend their understanding of dimensions and measurement, and gain experience in the language of algebra.

### Overall Essential Questions

- What influence does math have on my life outside of school?
- Is math a language?
- How do I communicate with math?
- How does math inform decisions that are made in the world?

### Unit One: Probability and Data – Algorithms and Applications

Essential Questions:

- What role does chance play in my life?
- How can I express the probability of an event occurring?
- How is probability related to scientific theory, exploration and application?
- How are probability and data used in business?
- How is data most effectively and accurately conveyed?
- How do I determine whether or not data is being accurately conveyed?

Topics/Skills:

- The relationship among percentages, decimals and fractions
- Operations with percentages, decimals, and fractions; Applications of percentages, decimals, and fractions
- Probability of single events occurring and expressing odds
- Probability of multiple events occurring
- Counting principals – combinations and permutations
- Circle, line and bar graphs
- Income, profit, and loss
- Game design and construction

Unit Two: Whole and Rational Number Computations and Applications

Essential Questions:

- Is there more than one way to solve a problem?
- How is the language of mathematics used to express process and solution?
- Do I have all the information I need?
- Is there another way to express the answer?

Topics/Skills:

- Operations with fractions and mixed numbers
- Operations and applications of integers
- Order of operations
- Solving simple equations
- Prime factorization
- Scientific notation
- Roots and powers
- Problem solving applications

Unit Three: Investigating and Applying Geometry and Spatial Reasoning

Essential Questions:

- How can we express the physical world mathematically?
- What is the relationship among a point, line, plane and space?
- How is geometry and spatial reasoning used in art, architecture, engineering and science?
- What use does the language of geometry have for me?

Topics/Skills:

- Angles, lines, and line segments
- Characteristics and types of polygons
- Characteristics of circles
- Perimeter and area of polygons
- Circumference and area of circles
- Pythagorean Theorem
- Volume of rectangular prisms, cylinders and other polyhedrons

- Multiple views and nets of polyhedrons
- Building design, layout, and scale drawings

## PRE-ALGEBRA

Seventh grade math is comprised of two mathematical aspects: sequential and foundational skills and interdisciplinary units. Sequential and foundational skills include textbook assignments and investigations, pertaining but not limited to: *Drawing Conclusions from Statistical Data; Integers and Variable Expressions; Equations and Inequalities; Graphing in the Coordinate Plane; Rational Numbers and Irrational Numbers; Application of Proportions and Percents; Patterns in Geometry; and Geometry and Measurement*. Interdisciplinary units include hands-on activities, integrated art projects, and simulations. The goals are to reinforce previously learned skills, develop an understanding of Pre-Algebra with algebraic connections, and to focus on new learning. In the process, students have opportunities to explore the relevance of math in their daily lives. Ongoing development of critical thinking and logical reasoning skills are integral to the course.

### Big Idea

- Mathematical patterns are inherent to all things.

### Unit One: Drawing Conclusions from Statistical Data

Essential Questions:

- How can I use data to make predictions?
- How are dependent and independent events different?
- How do you graph data in a variety of ways?
- How do you decide which graph to use your data (circle graphs, line graphs, double bar graphs, and stem and leaf plots)?
- How do you find mean, median, mode, and range given a set of data, and when should each be used?

Topics/Skills:

- Organizing and Displaying Data
- Reading Graphs Critically
- Displaying Frequency
- Measuring Central Tendency
- Making and Using Stem and Leaf Plots
- Making and Using Box and Whisker Plots
- Graphing Data
- Making Predictions from Scatter Plots

### Unit Two: Integers and Variable Expressions

Essential Questions:

- How can you use variables to represent everyday situations as algebraic expressions?

- How do you evaluate and simplify algebraic expressions?
- How can you use equations, and/or formulas to represent real life situations?
- How do you relate integers to whole numbers, rational numbers, and irrational numbers?
- How do integers match our real world?
- How will different number forms be seen in the real world?

Topics/Skills:

- Integers and Absolute Value
- Writing and Evaluating Variable Expressions
- Adding, Subtracting, Multiply, and Dividing Integers
- Simplifying and Evaluating Expressions with Exponents
- Scientific Notation

### Unit Three - Equations And Inequalities

Essential Questions:

- How do you use inequalities to represent real life situations?
- How do you display solutions to inequalities?
- How can you use equations, and/or formulas to represent real life situations?

Topics/Skills:

- Simplifying Variable Expressions
- Solving Equations by Subtracting, Adding, Dividing, or Multiplying
- Simplifying and Solving Equations
- Formulas
- Solving Inequalities by Subtracting, Adding, Dividing, or Multiplying

### Unit Four: Graphing In The Coordinate Plane

Essential Questions:

- How can you use tables, and coordinate graphs to organize, describe, compare, and interpret data?
- How does graphing happen in the real world?

Topics/Skills:

- Graphing Points
- Solving Equations with Two Variables
- Understanding Slope
- Using the Y-Intercept
- Using Graphs of Equations
- Working with Two Equations
- Exploring Translations, Reflections, Symmetry, and Rotations

### Unit Five: Rational Numbers And Irrational Numbers

Essential Questions:

- How do you simplify and use whole number exponents?
- How are the operation applied to rational numbers and how can they be ordered or compared?
- How do you simplify and use whole number exponents?
- What computational procedures are used to add, subtract, multiply, or divide rational numbers?

Topics/Skills:

- Identifying Prime and Composite Numbers
- Finding Common Factors and the Greatest Common Factor
- Writing Rational Numbers as Fractions in Simplest Form
- Adding, Subtracting, Multiplying and Dividing Rational Numbers
- Exploring Square Roots and Irrational Numbers
- Discovering the Pythagorean Theorem

### Unit Six: Applications Of Proportions

Essential Questions:

- Where and how do we use measurements?
- How do we compare measurement units?

Topics/Skills:

- Exploring Ratios and Rates
- Units of Measurement
- Solving Proportions
- Similar Figures and Proportions
- Using Proportions to Solve Problems

### Unit Seven: Applications Of Percent

Essential Questions:

- What is the most effective way to represent and communicate an answer?
- How can percentages be manipulated to inaccurately represent information?
- When do I know a percentage is accurate?

Topics/Skills:

- Fractions, Decimals and Percents
- Percents and Proportions
- Percents and Equations
- Creating Circle Graphs
- Percent of Change
- Markup and Discount
- Simple and Compound Interest

### Unit Eight: Patterns In Geometry

Essential Questions:

- Where do we see geometry in the real world?

Topics/Skills:

- Pairs of Angles
- Constructing Segments and Angles
- Angles and Parallel Lines
- Exploring Congruent Triangles
- Angles of Polygons
- Polygons and Tessellations
- Areas of Parallelograms and Triangles
- Areas of Circumference of Circles

Unit Nine: Geometry And Measurement

Essential Questions:

- How can we express the physical world mathematically?
- What is the relationship among a point, line, plane and space?
- How is geometry and spatial reasoning used in art, architecture, engineering and science?

Topics/Skills:

- Three-Dimensional Figures
- Drawing Three Dimensional Figures
- Surface Area of Prisms and Cylinders
- Surface Area of Pyramids and Cones
- Volumes of Prisms and Cylinders
- Volume of Pyramids and Cones

**ALGEBRA IA**

The goal of Algebra IA is to develop fluency with rational numbers and proportional relationships. Students will be given opportunities to:

- Extend their elementary skills and begin to learn algebra concepts that serve as a transition into formal Algebra and Geometry
- Learn to think flexibly about relationships among fractions, decimals, and percents
- Learn to recognize and generate equivalent expressions and solve single-variable equations and inequalities
- Investigate and explore mathematical ideas and develop multiple strategies for analyzing complex situations
- Analyze situations verbally, numerically, graphically, and symbolically
- Apply mathematical skills and make meaningful connections to life's experiences.
- Learn to use the TI 84+ calculator.

## Unit One: Algebraic Expressions and Integers

Essential Questions:

- Why do we need a stated order of operations?
- How are integers used in the real-world?

## Unit Two: Solving One-Step Equations and Inequalities

Essential Questions:

- What is an inverse?
- What is the purpose of an equation?
- How can the accuracy of a solution be confirmed?

## Unit Three: Decimals and Equations

Essential Questions:

- Are all integers rational numbers?
- When is estimation ok?
- How are decimals used in the real world?

## Unit Four: Factors, Fractions and Exponents

Essential Questions:

- Why is it helpful to use exponents?
- What are some of the challenges of working with really large numbers or really small numbers?
- How do the operations of adding/subtracting fractions differ from the operations of multiplying/dividing fractions?

## Unit Five: Ratios, Proportions and Percent

Essential Questions:

- What are three ways you can express a ratio?
- How can cross-products be used to solve a proportion?
- What is the relationship between a ratio and a proportion?

## Unit Six: Solving Equations and Inequalities

Essential Questions:

- What methods can be used to solve systems of equations?
- How do we use a system of equations to model complex linear relationships?
- What does the intersection tell us?
- How can you tell if a system of equations has no solution, one solution, or more than one solution?
- What real-world situations require a maximum or minimum value?

## Unit Seven: Linear Functions and Their Graphs

Essential Questions:

- How does changing the slope in a linear equation affect the graph of the line?
- How can a linear function be used to model a real-life situation?

- Can a formula be developed for any given data situation?

### Unit Eight: Spatial Thinking

Essential Questions:

- Do people discover geometric properties or are they invented?
- Can more than one transformation be performed on a given shape?

### Unit Nine: Area and Volume

Essential Questions:

- Why is it important to be able to calculate area and volume?
- What does the volume of a shape represent?

### Unit Ten: Right Triangles in Algebra

Essential Questions:

- What is a Pythagorean triple?
- How can properties of triangles be used to find indirect measures?

### Unit Eleven: Data Analysis and Probability

Essential Questions:

- Can graphs mislead?
- How does knowing an understanding of probability and odds help in decision making?

### Unit Twelve: Polynomials and Factoring

Essential Questions:

- How are polynomial functions, written, graphed, and used to solve real-world situations?
- How are operations on polynomials performed?
- How is a common difference or common ratio used to find the next number in a sequence?
- Can affect does the coefficient in a quadratic function have on the graph of that function?

## **ALGEBRA I**

Algebra I lays the foundation for all of higher mathematics. Topics include: solving equations, simplifying expressions, understanding order of operations, using properties, arithmetic operations with positive and negative numbers, exponents, polynomials, factoring, graphing (linear and quadratic equations), working with radicals and expanding arithmetic knowledge. The TI 84+ is used extensively.

### Overall Essential Questions

- What does the correct answer look like?
- What is the best (most efficient, most appropriate for my brain) way to solve this problem?
- How can you describe data with an equation? What do you learn from doing this?
- Where do these patterns / relationships exist outside the classroom?

- What do you see when you look at this problem?
- What is the best way to solve this problem?
- Do I need to draw a diagram?
- Am I able to “crack the code” – understand the language of math?

### Unit One: Tools of Algebra

Essential Questions:

- How do we use variables in equations?
- What is the difference between a rational and irrational number?
- What are the differences between an expression, an equation, and an inequality?

### Unit Two: Solving Equations

Essential Questions:

- How do we know our answers are reasonable?
- Is there more than one way to solve a problem?
- How is the language of mathematics used to express process and solution?

### Unit Three: Solving Inequalities

Essential Questions:

- How are linear and absolute value equations and inequalities solved and used?
- What are some of the similarities and differences of solving inequalities as compared to equations?

### Unit Four: Solving & Applying Proportions

Essential Questions:

- What is the difference between a ratio and a proportion?

### Unit Five: Graphs and Functions

Essential Questions:

- What is a function?
- What does a graph show us?
- What impact does changing the input value of a function have on the output value?
- How do we recognize a relationship is linear?

### Unit Six: Linear Equations and Their Graphs

Essential Questions:

- How does changing the slope in a linear equation affect the graph of the line?
- How can a linear function be used to model a real-life situation?

### Unit Seven: Systems of Equations and Inequalities

Essential Questions:

- What methods can be used to solve systems of equations?
- How do we use a system of equations to model complex linear relationships?
- What does the intersection tell us?
- How can you tell if a system of equations has no solution, one solution, or more than one solution?

### Unit Eight: Exponents and Exponential Functions

Essential Questions:

- What are two ways you can write a real number based on the size of the number?
- In what real-life context would you use an exponential function to model a situation?

### Unit Nine: Polynomials and Factoring

Essential Questions:

How are polynomial functions, written, graphed, and used to solve real-world situations?  
How are operations on polynomials performed?

### Unit Ten: Quadratic Equations and Functions

Essential Questions:

- How are quadratic functions, written, graphed, and used to solve real-world situations?
- When is it optimal to solve a quadratic equation by factoring, completing the square, or applying the quadratic formula?
- How is the quadratic formula derived?

### Unit Eleven: Radical Expressions and Equations

Essential Questions:

- How are radical and binomial radical expressions, including expressions containing rational exponents, simplified?
- How are radical equations solved?
- What are some real-world situations that involve radical functions?

### Unit Twelve: Rational Expressions

Essential Questions:

- How are rational functions graphed, simplified and solved?
- What are the differences between direct, inverse, and joint variation?

## **SIXTH GRADE SCIENCE**

In sixth grade, students predominantly explore and investigate earth science. Also, a four-week unit on biology takes students on a journey of the human body. Students learn the body's

systems and how each part serves the whole to create the incredible human body. In earth science, students extend their knowledge about how weather occurs and plays a role in building and keeping a healthy atmosphere. They continue their study of earthquakes and volcanoes, as well, figuratively trekking across and below the surface of planet Earth. All units combine weekly lab experiments, on-line and textbook investigations, in class discussions, and current events that build skills of inquiry, observation, conclusion building, and the scientific method.

### Overall Essential Questions

- Is the scientific method applicable to my life?
- What does science have to do with me?
- What makes a scientific theory valid and believable?
- How do I make sense of the natural world?

### Unit One – Earth’s Weather

Essential Questions:

- Why is water essential to earth’s life forms?
- How does weather change and what effect does the change have on Earth’s life forms?
- What is my role in climate change?

### Unit Two – Dynamic Earth

Essential Questions:

- Was there a Pangaea? Were the mountains once under water?
- Are earthquakes predictable?
- How does the earth build and relieve stress?
- Why does the earth’s land mass look like parts of a jigsaw puzzle?
- What lies below the surface of the earth and what does it have to do with the surface?

### Unit Three – Human Anatomy and Physiology

Essential Questions:

- Why are body systems interdependent?
- Why do humans need oxygen?
- How does one body system support another?
- How do humans and other species compare?
- Why do we dissect animals?

## **SEVENTH GRADE SCIENCE**

The two *Big Ideas* that create the framework around which students study science in seventh grade are: structural design is essential for function and adaptation is required for survival. Focusing on science as inquiry, students will transfer their theoretical knowledge into practical applications by designing, conducting and analyzing scientific investigations. Emphasis is placed on: the diversity of species possibly developed through a gradual process over geologic

time, cells as the basic unit of structure and function for all living things, and the mechanisms through which traits are passed from one generation to the next.

### Unit One: From Bacteria to Plants

Enduring Understandings:

- All living things share some basic characteristics.
- Scientists hypothesize that life on Earth began with single-celled organisms and became more complex over time.
- Photosynthesis and respiration reactions fuel life on Earth.
- All living things interact with other living things and their environment.

Essential Questions:

- What makes some things alive and other things not alive?
- How do scientists hypothesize that life arose on Earth?
- Can life on Earth be sustained forever?

Content:

- Living Things
- Viruses and Bacteria
- Protists and Fungi
- Introduction to Plants
- Seed Plants – *Fast Plant* investigations

### Unit Two: Animals

Enduring Understandings:

- A defining characteristic of animals is that they are heterotrophs, organisms that acquire nutrients by consuming other organisms.
- The cells of most animals are organized into higher levels of structure, including tissues, organs, and systems all of which are necessary for survival.
- Behavior may be the result of instinct or conditioning but always helps the animal survive or reproduce.

Essential Questions:

- Are humans essentially different from the other animals on our planet?

Content:

- Sponges, Cnidarians, and Worms
- Mollusks, Arthropods, and Echinoderms
- Fishes, Amphibians, and Reptiles
- Birds and Mammals
- Animal Behavior

### Unit Three: Cells and Heredity

Enduring Understandings:

- Cells are the basic unit of structure and function for all living organisms.
- All cells acquire their genetic material (information that controls an organism's traits) from other living cells.

Essential Questions:

- If the diversity of life on Earth can be explained by the *Theory of Natural Selection*, what might life on Earth be like in the distant future?
- Can the evidence that supports the *Theory of Evolution* be reasonably interpreted in other ways?

Content:

- Cell Structure and Function
- Cell Processes and Energy
- Genetics: The Science of Heredity
- Modern Genetics
- Changes Over Time—*The Theory of Evolution*

## EIGHTH GRADE SCIENCE

Eighth grade science is an integrated physical science course designed to connect and inspire students about science in our world today. Throughout the year, students will continue to focus on high-level inquiry, problem-solving skills (critical analysis and creative solutions), and effective communication as they develop more understanding of the interdependence of science and our shared environment. The course topics of Physics, Chemistry, and Environmental Science provide a strong academic foundation for hands-on labs and activities which embed math, technology, and engineering skills.

### Overall Essential Questions:

- How do science and its applications interact with the natural world, both locally and globally?
- What have been the multicultural contributions to the advancement of science over time?
- Why is the nature of scientific knowledge so dynamic?
- How can scientific models assist with our understanding of process and change?

### Overall Enduring Knowledge:

- Investigating with the Scientific Method
- Applying Metric Measurements
- Acquiring Lab Equipment Skills
- Analyzing Data (Graphing, Calculation, and Interpretation)
- Formulating and Communicating Conclusions
- Using Models for Scientific Research

### Unit One: Motion and Forces

Essential Question:

- What are the direction and magnitude of forces acting on a body, and how can forces change the motion of an object?

Integrated Environmental Issues:

- Newton's Laws and the advancement of modern society through the study of nature
- Oil Spills

Content:

- Linear Motion: Speed, Velocity, and Acceleration
- The Nature of Force
- Friction and Gravity
- Newton's Laws of Motion
- Conservation of Momentum and Collisions
- Centripetal Force
- Forces in Fluids

### Unit Two: Work and Simple Machines

Essential Question:

- How do simple machines interact to form complex mechanical systems?

Integrated Environmental Issue:

- The efficiency of today's engines and technologies versus their environmental impact

Content:

- Work and Power
- Mechanical Advantage and Efficiency
- Simple Machines

### Unit Three: Energy and its Conservation

Essential Question:

- What is energy, where do we find it, how does it change from one form to another, and how does it affect our everyday lives?

Integrated Environmental Issues:

- Renewable and Nonrenewable Energy Resources
- Energy Flow in our Ecosystems

Content:

- Kinetic and Potential Energy
- Forms of Energy
- Energy Transformation and Conservation

### Unit Four: The Atomic Nature of Matter

Essential Question:

- What is the relationship between matter, elements, and atoms?

Integrated Environmental Issue:

- Nuclear Energy

Content:

- The History of Atomic Theory
- Atoms
- The Atomic Nucleus and Radioactivity
- Elements
- Compounds
- The Periodic Table

### Unit Five: The Phases of Matter

Essential Question:

- How does the structure of matter determine its physical and chemical properties, and what patterns are observed within the Periodic Table because of these properties?

Integrated Environmental Issues:

- Land, Water, and Air Resources
- Household Chemicals
- Greenhouse Gases

Content:

- Solids
- Liquids
- Gases
- Plasma
- Patterns and Families within the Periodic Table

### Unit Six: Chemical Reactions

Essential Question:

- How does matter change form through chemical reactions while abiding by the law of conservation of mass and energy?

Integrated Environmental Issues:

- Acid Rain
- Fossil Fuels

Content:

- Ionic and Covalent Bonds
- Naming Compounds
- Conservation of Mass
- Balancing Chemical Equations

- Acids and Bases
- Hydrocarbons

### Unit Seven: Temperature, Thermal Energy, and Heat

#### Essential Question:

- How does energy transfer from one substance to another as heat, and how does this affect these substances?

#### Integrated Environmental Issues:

- The Greenhouse Effect
- Heat transfer in our Atmosphere

#### Content:

- Temperature and Heat
- Heat transfer
- Phase Changes

### Unit Eight: Vibrations and Waves

#### Essential Question:

- How do waves transfer energy?
- How do we hear sound?

#### Integrated Environmental Issues:

- Natural Hazards: Tsunamis and Earthquakes

#### Content:

- Pendulums
- Wave Description
- Wave Motion
- Types of Waves
- Doppler Effect
- Wave Interactions
- Sound Waves
- Water Waves
- Seismic Waves

### Unit Nine: Light, Color, and Optics

#### Essential Questions:

- What are the characteristics of light and how does it behave?
- Why and how do we see color? Why is the sky blue?

#### Integrated Environmental Issues:

- Electromagnetic Radiation

- Ozone

Content:

- Speed of Light
- EM Waves
- Light passing through materials
- Color spectrum
- Mixing color
- The Atomic Spectra
- Lenses

### Unit Ten: Electricity and Magnetism

Essential Questions:

- How has electricity changed the world?
- How do circuits complete a pathway to produce light, heat, or sound?
- How is magnetism transformed to electricity?

Integrated Environmental Issue:

- Wind and Solar Energy

Content:

- Electrostatics
- Conductors and Insulators
- Lightning Safety
- Batteries
- Electric Circuits
- Magnetic Fields and Poles
- Electromagnetic Induction

## **SIXTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES**

The social studies course investigates the historical developments of early American History from the founding of America to the causes of the American Civil War. Students look at the key events that helped to shape the history of the United States. They seek to understand that for every action in American History there was a reaction, and they look at how these reactions influenced who we are today. Finally, students consider how the ideas, choices and actions of each period in American History have a rippling effect on future generations of Americans. Learning will be enhanced through note taking, handouts, class discussions, weekly quizzes, projects and unit exams.

### Unit One: Discovery of America

Essential Questions:

- What were the cause and effect of European Exploration?
- How did American and European societies differ from one another before 1500?

Topics:

- America Before 1492
- Age of Discovery
- Spain's Empire in America
- France's Empire in America

### Unit Two: English Colonization

Essential Questions:

- How did Europeans transform life in the Americas?
- What traditions, events and forces helped form an American identity?

Topics:

- Age of Discovery
- Thirteen Colonies
- Development, Prosperity, and Growth
- The American Identity

### Unit Three: The American Revolution

Essential Questions:

- What is revolution?
- What drives groups or individuals to challenge authority?
- How was it possible for the Americans to win the war for independence?

Topics:

- The Road to Revolution
- The American Revolution

### Unit IV: A New Nation

Essential Questions:

- What challenges did the new nation face?
- How did compromise shape the Constitution of the United States?

Topics:

- The United States in 1783
- American Government
- The Nation's Beginning

### Unit V: Expansion and Conflict

Essential Questions:

- What forces and events affected the growth of the United States?
- What impact did the *Westward Movement* have on slavery and the nation?
- What issues and events shattered the nation's unity?

Topics:

- National and regional growth
- The Westward Movement and the Native American
- Slavery
- Sectional differences
- Compromises
- The Mexican / American War
- The 1860 election

## **SEVENTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES**

The focus of seventh grade social studies is an exploration of American History – from the period of the Civil War/Reconstruction to the beginning of the new millennium. Also included is an examination of the American Political process. The course fosters and encourages critical thinking skills to better understand the role of history in our lives. It also invites students to explore historical events from a variety of perspectives.

### Unit One: The Great Divide

Essential Questions:

- Is compromise the most effective solution to injustice?
- Was the American Civil War inevitable?
- Was fighting the American Civil War necessary to the survival of the U.S.?
- At what cost did the U.S. engage in its Civil War?

Topics:

- Causes of the American Civil War
- Compromises of the Antebellum Era
- Election of 1860
- The Anaconda Plan
- Significant battles
- Behind the scenes
- Music of the era
- War of attrition
- End of the war
- Aftermath
- Reconstruction
- Segues into modern day parallels
- Other “Divides”

### Unit 2: Justice Denied

Essential Questions:

- Why do some people deny other people justice/rights/freedom?
- How could the Holocaust occur?

- Which requires more courage, enduring oppression or stopping it?

Topics:

- Jim Crow Laws/Black Codes
- Discrimination against women
- The immigrant experience
- Armenian genocide
- The Great Depression
- Holocaust of the Nazis against the European Jews
- “Baseball’s Great Experiment”
- “Killing Fields” of Cambodia/Kampuchea, Rwanda, Darfur

### Unit 3: Power & Social Change

Essential Questions:

- Who has power and how do they get it?
- How can people effectively create social change?
- At what cost “Equality”?

Topics:

- A study of “Isms – Imperialism, Capitalism, Communism
- Intervention
- Civil Rights Movement
- The power of music
- Symbols of power
- The Vietnam War
- Historical Time-Line

## **EIGHTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES**

The course focuses on world issues as they occur in the relationships among social systems, economies, histories, geographies and governments around the world.

### Unit One: Physical Geography-World Issue: Water Scarcity

Essential Questions:

- How does our physical environment affect how we live?
- How do I find the place that I am looking for?
- How does my behavior affect the world around me?

Topics:

- The role that physical geography, especially rivers have on human behavior
- Water Scarcity

### Unit Two: Human/Cultural Geography-World Issue: Cultural Understandings and Immigration

Essential Questions:

- Why do people belong to groups?
- How does our culture affect how we live?
- What motivates movement?

Topics:

- Cultural differences
- Our culture through the eyes of others
- The role culture has on global issues
- Cultural, historical, economic and political backgrounds of migration
- Pull and push factors
- Policies on immigration

Unit Three: History/Political Science/Economics-World Issue: Wars

Essential Questions:

- What issues throw groups/countries into conflict?
- What are the causes and effects of these events?

Topics:

- WWI-WWII-Cold War-Proxy Wars
- Iraq-Afghanistan
- Palestinian/Israel Conflict
- Nuclear Proliferation

Unit Four: Political Science/Economics/Sociology-World Issue: Human Rights

Essential Questions:

- Why do some people deny other people rights?
- How is power used?
- Can Genocide happen today?
- Can we recognize Genocide before it is too late?

Topics:

- Examination of the 30 rights of the UN Declaration of Human Rights
- Examples of violation of those rights
- Examples of those fighting for those rights
- Apartheid
- Human Trafficking
- Women's Rights
- Eight Stages of Genocide
  - Rwanda
  - Darfur

Unit Five: Election/Political Theory-World Issue: Current U.S. Political Issues

Essential Questions:

- What is civic participation?
- What is a citizen's role in our government?
- How does political philosophy affect decisions made by government?

Topics:

- Domestic political issues of the time
- Political beliefs
- Election process

### Unit Six: Human Geography/Economics-World Issue: Globalization

Essential Questions:

- How does our human environment affect how we live?
- How does my behavior affect the world around me?

Topics:

- The role that economics and trade has on our lives.
- How our economic behavior affects the world.

## **SIXTH GRADE SPANISH**

Sixth grade Spanish reviews and expands upon essential vocabulary and grammar concepts through rich Hispanic cultural readings and communication activities. The students build upon the grammatical structures, vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and sounds studied the previous year; students also begin the formal study of grammatical concepts needed to synthesize and advance their knowledge of the Spanish language. Spanish videos, tapes, books, magazines and games are used in class.

### Unit One: Introduction to and Review of the Basics

Essential Questions:

What basics do I need to speak with others in Spanish?  
How does the sound of a language reveal cultural identity?  
How do Spanish and English present tenses compare?

Topics:

- General review
- Spanish speaking countries and cultures
- Alphabet
- Numbers
- Greetings
- Introduction
- Names
- Days / Months - calendar
- Subject pronouns
- School supplies

- Verbs ser and estar – conjugations
- Different uses of the verb estar and ser with:
  - Feelings
  - Places
  - Nationality
  - Occupations
  - Origin
  - Description
- Prepositions
- Hours
- Singular and plural definite articles
- Singular and plural indefinite articles
- Syllables
- Cognates and false cognates
- Other grammar tips.

### Unit Two

Essential Questions:

What is the difference between the verb gustar and other verbs?

How can I describe what I like or what others like?

How can I express *necessity* in Spanish to others?

Topics:

- Articles
- Plural and singular noun endings
- Adjectives
- Nouns, articles and adjectives and gender and number agreement
- Animals and pets
- Verb gustar vs. use of gustar to express like
- Parts of speech : subject, adjective, article, gender, number of person
- Vocabulary for frequent actions or needs – verbs querer and necesitar
- Members of the family
- Parts of the house
- Items in the home
- “Hay” (there is/there are)
- The different places in the city or town
- Negatives sentences
- Short reading in the target language.
- Possessive adjectives
- Questions words
- Demonstratives

### Unit Three

Essential Questions:

Why are some of the Spanish verbs conjugated in different forms?

How can I describe the weather?

What do I need to know if I want to go to restaurant or to travel?

Topics:

- Conversational expressions and questions
- Weather with the verb hacer
- Identify, conjugate infinite verbs ending in Ar , Er, Ir
- Regular and irregular verbs
- Stem change verbs
  - E - Ei
  - O -Ue
  - E - I
- Restaurant vocabulary and expressions
- Travel vocabulary and expressions

## **SEVENTH GRADE SPANISH**

Seventh grade Spanish has been designed to develop the student's ability to effectively communicate in a second language. Students will learn to interact at an intermediate level – orally, through dialogues, in conversations, with role-plays, in presentations, and through reading.

### Unit One: Basic Spanish Grammar Components and Present Tense Review

Students will review and learn to answer:

- What do I do every day?
- How can I express likes and dislikes?
- What materials do I need for my classes?
- How can I express my emotions?
- How do I describe location?
- Which one is mine? This one or that one?

Topics:

- Learning the parts of speech
- Identifying likes and dislikes
- Applying adjectives (for self, family and objects)
- Expanding the use of the verb “ser”
- Describing location and feelings with the verb “estar”
- Distinguishing when to use “ser” vs. “estar”
- Solidifying present tense.
- Translating sentences and paragraphs
- Improving reading comprehension
- Learning to express feeling in writing
- Distinguishing objects or people using demonstrative pronouns

### Unit Two: Irregular Present Tense, Questions, Negative Sentences and Adverbs

Students will review and learn to answer:

- Why are some of the verbs in Spanish conjugated in a different form?
- How do I translate into Spanish “do” and “did” to formulate a question?
- How do I change a sentence to a negative statement?
- Where is my backpack?
- How can I give directions?

Topics:

- Identifying irregular verbs in present tense
- Reviewing and practicing stem-changing verbs
- Using more irregular verbs
- Showing where different objects and places are
- Explaining when some activities, tasks, or actions are done
- Learning to read aloud and comprehend simple stories
- Formulating questions
- Changing sentences to negative sentences

### Unit Three: Communication of Actions In Present Progressive, Immediate Future and Past

Students will review and learn to answer:

- What am I doing right now?
- How can I tell someone what I am about to do, or will do soon?
- How does the Spanish language distinguish events occurring soon or later?
- What did I do in my last vacation?

Topics:

- Communicating what is being done at the moment of talking
- Differentiating between actions in the moment and continuing vs. actions that happened in the present
- Communicating actions, plans and events that will happen in the near or distant future using three grammatical components
- Differentiating immediate future from distant future
- Expressing activities and situations that have occurred in the past

### Unit Four: The significance of Spanish within the United States and Globally and Understanding Hispanic Customs and Culture

Students will review and learn to answer:

- Why is it important to be bilingual today?
- How many Spanish-speaking countries are there?
- What are some traditions in Hispanic countries?
- How have Hispanics influenced our society?
- How can I meet people from Spanish speaking countries?

Topics:

- Recognizing the advantages of being bilingual in a diverse community
- Learning the geography of Spanish-speaking countries
- Focusing on history and customs of Hispanic countries
- Identifying the presence of the Spanish language in U.S. and the world
- Identifying Hispanic leaders and their impact on our society

## **EIGHT GRADE SPANISH**

Eight grade Spanish integrates the basics that the student has learned and moves toward fluent use of the language. Increasingly complex grammar and idiomatic nuances will be taught so that the student could use Spanish to converse and write. With an emphasis on the mechanics of reading and writing communication, a cultural component is integrated to develop cultural awareness, sensitivity and curiosity.

### Unit One: Review

Students will:

- Learn techniques for studying Spanish without speaking English.
- Review previously-learned topics as they add new ones.
- Review the differences between ser and estar, and their uses.
- How to describe self, others and surroundings.
- What is the role of articles, adjectives, and pronouns?
- How to talk about anything using regular verbs: AR, ER and IR.
- What are the direct objects and indirect objects pronouns? How and when we use them?
- How to describe the activities that we will do in the near future.
- How to use the verb GUSTAR.
- When to use the verbs: PODER, SABER and TENER QUE.
- What are the reflexive verbs? When and how we use them?

Topics:

- Introductions and greetings.
- Describing self and other.
- Giving personal information.
- Difference between SER and ESTAR.
- Regular verbs: AR, ER, IR.
- Irregular verbs: AR, ER, IR.
- Using the direct and indirect objects pronouns.
- Immediate future construction: IR + infinitive verb.
- Describing the things that we like to do and that we do not like to do.
- Similar verbs to the verb GUSTAR. (encantar, interesar, molestar, etc.).
- Describing what we are able to do, what we know and our obligations.

- Describing our routines and our feelings.

## Unit Two

### Essential Questions:

- How do we describe what we are doing now?
- How do we talk about what happened in the past?
- How do we talk about the weather?
- How do we compare things?
- How do we describe experiences?
- How do we describe something that started in the past and still continues in the present?
- How do we describe a routine that we used to do?
- What is the difference between indefinite preterit and definite preterit?
- How do we express what is going to happen in the future?

### Topics:

- The use of present continuous.
- Preterit of regular verbs: AR, ER, IR.
- Preterit of irregular verbs: AR, ER, IR.
- Describing the weather in Denver and different places in the world.
- Making comparisons.
- Present perfect: Describing our experiences and activities that we started in the past and we still do.
- Expressions that indicate the past.
- Imperfect preterit.
- Difference between indefinite and imperfect preterit.
- Impersonal way to describe something we have to do “hay que.”
- Personal way to describe something we have to do “tener que.”
- Imperfect future.

## Unit Three

### Essential Questions:

- How to communicate with others and how to tell someone to do something?
- What is the imperative voice?
- What is the difference between POR and PARA in Spanish?
- How do we express an action that was finished in the past before another action was completed? (Past action with similar characteristics to the present perfect).
- How do we express our opinions and our moods?
- How do we express our conditions?

### Topics:

- Imperative voice: Regular verbs.
- Imperative voice: Irregular verbs.
- Past perfect.
- Use of ya, todavía, aun.
- Subjunctives: Conjugation and when to use them.
- Expressing our conditions.
- Conditional phrases.

#### Unit Four

##### Essential Questions:

- How do we give an advice?
- How do we engage in a conversation in Spanish using all the different tenses and expressions?

##### Topics:

- Review of all other topics in a complimentary manner.
- More subjunctives.
- Giving advices to others.
- Expressing what could have happened if...

### **CURRICULUM DE LA CLASE AVANZADA DE ESPAÑOL**

#### **CURRICULUM DE LA CLASE AVANZADA DE ESPAÑOL Sexto grado**

La clase de Español avanzada del sexto grado se enfoca principalmente en el mejoramiento de la escritura, lectura y comprensión a un nivel académico efectivo y avanzado a través de un trabajo en el perfeccionamiento de la gramática, la escritura, la lectura y el lenguaje. Estudiar diferentes géneros literarios, gramática y la cultura será un medio de profundizar en la lengua española a través de la práctica diaria conectadas con los textos bases.

#### UNIDAD I

##### Preguntas esenciales:

- ¿Cuál es mi forma de leer un texto? ¿Qué es lo que más me ayuda a la hora de leer y comprender el texto?
- ¿Cómo construyo una oración correctamente?
- ¿Cómo los diferentes géneros literarios me ayudan a mejorar mi escritura y expresión oral?
- ¿Cómo puedo utilizar correctamente las puntuaciones para que se pueda entender fácilmente lo que escribo?

##### Temas:

- Lectura: “Cajas de Cartón” por Francisco Jiménez
- Comprensión de lectura y análisis del texto: Vocabularios en contexto, enfoques, conclusiones y detalles, etc.
- “Cajas de Cartón” aplicado y trabajado con la gramática, literatura y cultura en general
- Sinónimos,
- Antónimos
- Ortografía y deletreo correcto ( Dictado)
- Acentuación: palabras agudas, llanas, esdrújulas y sobreesdrújulas.
- Introducción a la literatura: Literatura oral y escrita
- Introducción general a la literatura: Los géneros literarios: Genero narrativo, Genero Lirico, Genero dramatico
- La Narración: Tipos, elementos, actividades
- Trabalenguas
- Elementos Latinos en la lengua Castellana/Española.
- La Noticia: Que es la noticia y el proceso de escribir una noticia ( parte de la publicación)
- La Carta: diferentes tipos, partes, usos
- Partes de una oración: Introducción general
- Partes de una oración: El articulo ( tipos y usos)
- Partes de una oración: sustantivos ( genero, numero, tipos y usos)
- Preposiciones ( tipos y usos)
- Ortografía: uso de la B y V
- Actividades sobre la cultura y la historia de algunos países hispanos hablantes: El mes de la Hispanidad y el Día de los muertos

## UNIDAD II

Preguntas esenciales:

- ¿Qué impacto tiene en mí esta lectura?
- ¿Cómo puedo expresarme correctamente cuando hablo o escribo en español?
- ¿Cómo puedo seguir reviviendo mi cultura en el hoy día?

Temas:

- Lectura: “Senderos Fronterizos” por Francisco Jiménez
- Comprensión de lectura y análisis del texto: Vocabularios en contexto, enfoques, conclusiones y detalles, etc.
- “Senderos Fronterizos” aplicado y trabajado con la gramática, literatura y cultura en general
- Partes de una oración: Adjetivo ( genero, numero, tipos y usos)
- Partes de una oración: el adverbio( tipos y usos)
- Los verbos: Presente de Indicativo, regular ar, er and ir
- El verbo: Mandatos o Imperativos (b formales, informales)
- Pluralización de las palabras en español
- Películas: análisis y actividades sobre la película “El norte” relacionando con la gramática y el libro de lectura “Senderos Fronterizos”
- Uso de Por y Para

- Ortografía: uso de la C,
- Silabas tónicas y atonas.
- Diferentes Jergas (argots) en Latino América
- Elementos Árabes en la lengua Castellana/Española.
- Introducción general a textos narrativos, descriptivos, argumentativos y expositivos
- Textos narrativos: la novela Elementos: lugares, tiempo, personajes.
- Silabas: Clasificación de las palabras según números de silabas: Monosílaba, bisílaba, trisílaba, tetrasílaba y pentasílaba
- Actividades sobre la cultura y la historia de algunos países hispanos hablantes: La navidad: Las posadas, el aguinaldo, celebración de los reyes magos

### UNIDAD III

Preguntas esenciales:

- ¿Cómo la comprensión de la gramática me puede ayudar a mejorar mi lenguaje?
- ¿De qué manera debo continuar este proceso de perfección de mi lenguaje?

Temas:

- Continuación de la lectura del libro: “Senderos Fronterizos” por Francisco Jiménez
- Continuar con la comprensión de lectura y análisis del texto: Vocabularios en contexto, enfoques, conclusiones y detalles, etc.
- El libro “Senderos Fronterizos”: aplicado y trabajado con la gramática, literatura y cultura en general.
- Películas: análisis y actividades sobre la película “Bajo la misma luna” relacionando con la gramática y el contexto del libro “senderos Fronterizos”
- Ortografía: uso de la Z
- Chistes en el pueblo
- Elementos griegos en la lengua Castellana/Española.
- Introducción general: Textos descriptivos: tipos de descripción, prácticas y ejercicios de textos descriptivos.
- Los Verbos: Regulares, irregulares
- Ortografía: uso de la SC ej.: Ascender
- Los verbos: Presente de Indicativo, irregular ar, er and ir
- El verbo: El pretérito simple y el pretérito imperfecto del tiempo Indicativo
- Cognados y falsos cognados entre el Español y el Ingles
- Palabras Homófonas
- Signos de puntuación: Uso de la coma, punto y coma, dos puntos, punto seguido, punto parte, punto suspensivo, paréntesis, apostrofe, signos de admiración e interrogación.
- Pronombre posesivos
- Familia de palabras
- Actividades sobre la cultura y la historia de algunos países hispanos hablantes: El carnaval, la Cocina Hispana.

## SEVENTH GRADE FRENCH IA

In the first year, students are introduced to the basics of the French language and culture. Students learn the skills required to function in a variety of situations.

### Overall Essential Questions:

- How do I use what I know about my own language to help me master French?
- How does risk-taking help me to get from what I'm not able to do to what I want to be able to do?
- How do words in a noun phrase agree?
- How and why do verbs change their spellings?

### Unit One

#### Essential Questions:

- How do I meet new friends?
- How do I speak differently to people and about people?
- How do I speak differently about males and females?
- How can I use spelling and numbers to contact my new friends?

#### Topics:

- Exchanging information when meeting for the first time
- Numbers and colors
- Identifying people

### Unit 2

#### Essential Questions:

- How will I get food and drink when I'm hungry and thirsty?
- How will I pay?
- How will I show up on time for a rendez-vous?

#### Topics:

- Vocabulary and functions for getting snack food and beverages
- Telling time
- Asking and answering about prices
- Weather

### Unit 3

#### Essential Questions:

- How can I tell about what activities I like to do?
- How can I find someone to do these activities with me?
- How can I ask about where people are and what they are doing?

Topics:

- Actions for sports and leisure
- Conjugating verbs and negating sentences
- The irregular verbs “to be” and “to make”
- Forming questions for inviting
- Sentences with complimentary infinitive

#### Unit 4

Essential Questions:

- How can I identify my belongings?
- How can I describe their color and size?
- How can I describe people’s looks and personality?

Topics:

- Objects in the classroom and bedroom
- Adjective agreement
- The irregular verb “avoir”

### **EIGHTH GRADE FRENCH IB**

In Eighth Grade, students continue with their skill development and learn structures of increasing complexity. They will express themselves in the past, present and future. By the end of Eighth Grade, students are ready to enter a high school Level Two class.

#### Critical Thinking Essential Questions:

- How do I distinguish the grammar rules from the exceptions to the rules?
- How do my skills develop from the understanding phase to memorizing to freely expressing myself?
- How does pushing myself beyond my boundaries help to develop my skill?
- What is the relation between grammatical correctness and free expression?

#### Course-specific Essential Questions:

#### Unit 5

Essential Questions:

How do I describe the place in which I live, my house and my city? If I am lost, how can I find my way? What famous monuments would I see in Paris and how does one move around within Paris? How can I say I am “going to do” an action?

Topics:

Buildings around town and giving directions. Types of residences and rooms in a home. Means of transportation. Verbs “to come” and “to go”. Expressing future with the expression “going to do”. Musical instruments and games. Further vocabulary for family members. Possessive adjectives.

## Unit 6

### Essential Questions:

How can I identify and describe what people are wearing? What must I say to the employee when buying clothes? How do French view fashion differently? How do I talk about shopping? How do I ask “which one” and respond “this one”? How can I talk about my job, how much \$ I earn? How can I make people do what I want?

### Topics:

Vocabulary for items of clothing and opinions about clothes. Types of stores in which to buy clothing. Interrogative and demonstrative adjectives. Irregular adjectives. Verb categories of orthographic changes, -ir and -re verbs. Irregular verb *mettre*.

## Unit 7

### Essential Questions:

How can I express what happened in the past? How can I talk about vacation plans? How can I talk about pastimes and individual sports? How do I express my feelings?

### Topics:

Common weekend activities and household chores. Structure of Passé Composé with *avoir* and *être*. Periods of time in Past, Present and Future. Negative expressions “never”.

## Unit 8

### Essential Questions:

What words and expressions do I need to eat and cook food? How do I talk to vendors to ask the price and make a purchase? How do I ask for some of the food or a portion instead of all of the food.

### Topics:

Vocabulary for all three meals of the day. Articles and instructions for setting the table. Partitive articles. Direct and indirect object pronouns. Irregular verbs *vouloir*, *pouvoir*, *devoir*, *boire*, *prendre*, *connaître*, *lire* and *dire*.

## **CO-CURRICULAR**

### **FINE ARTS**

The fine arts program offers daily experiences in a variety of areas. Students take three one-semester electives each year that meet in multi-age configurations with the twin goals of providing opportunities for self-discovery and appreciation for the arts. Varied experience in the following three areas without specialization is the goal.

Performance Music: Concert Band; Orchestra; Show Choir; Hand Bells, Guitar Ensemble

Music: Beginning Band; Beginning Orchestra; Guitar; Rock, & Bach; Rhythm & Recorder.

Performance: Drama; Ballet Folklorico; General Dance

Visual Art: Some of the exposed techniques/media are: charcoal, collage, acrylic paint, 3-D design with cardboard/clay/other material, oil pastels, and colored pencil.

Academic Arts: Geo Design; Patterns of the Past; Latin Arts; Robotics

Publications: Limited to seventh and eighth grade students, the course teaches layout and provides opportunities to develop journalistic writing skills. Students create the yearbook and news periodicals, as well as podcasts and blogs.

## LITERACY AND RESEARCH

Literacy and Research is designed to develop skills in accessing information and evaluating its validity. Students learn to navigate various media including books, periodicals, databases and Internet sources, as well as the correct format and process of creating annotations and bibliographic citations. Students learn to understand what constitutes plagiarizing and how and when to paraphrase and cite.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS

The middle school physical education program emphasizes skill development, teamwork and fair play through numerous activities. The curriculum includes a variety of sports and recreational activities to foster the development of mature motor patterns in all fundamental skills. Students gain an understanding of game concepts as well as confidence to participate in physical pursuits.

In seventh and eighth grades, students have the opportunity to pursue interscholastic athletics on school sports teams in place of physical education. The practice sessions take place during the regular school day and games/meets are scheduled after school for most of the sports. The goals are to teach teamwork, sportsmanship, and skills. Teams are filled using a lottery system and not on the basis of ability. Sports offered are:

Trimester I	Boys' Soccer Girls' Volleyball Girls' Field Hockey Coed Cross-Country Coed Golf Coed Tennis
Trimester II	Boys' Basketball Girls' Basketball Dance Team
Trimester III	Boys' Lacrosse Girls' Lacrosse Girls' Soccer Boys' Baseball

As a member of the Association of Colorado Independent Schools, St. Mary's Academy adheres to the philosophy regarding interscholastic sports developed by the ACIS:

Middle school interscholastic athletics are an essential element of the education of students because they foster the development of character, life skills, sportsmanship and teamwork. In addition, our athletic programs strive to develop positive self-image and encourage physical activity as a part of a healthy lifestyle. Educational athletics serve as a source of school pride and maintain positive relationships between schools and communities. While schools recognize pride in winning, it does not supersede the educational goals of middle school athletics.

## **THEOLOGICAL STUDIES**

In theological studies, the rich history and biblical traditions of Catholicism serve as the curricular grounding within which students are encouraged to develop and reflect on their personal faith journeys. Prayer, reflection, and study of traditions animate the courses. Students are encouraged to seek an understanding of their part in the greater whole. In sixth grade the study of the Old Testament forms the foundation of the course. The New Testament grounds the seventh grade course, and Morality and Ethics are eighth grade topics.

## **SUPPORTING PROGRAMS**

### **COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM – CAT**

The purpose of the SMA Middle School multi-grade CAT program is multi-faceted. One goal is to provide opportunities for students to meet regularly with and develop knowledge of students in other grade-levels. CAT also provides an ongoing opportunity to build and strengthen the SMA Middle School community through service to others, discussions and team-building activities.

Students are assigned to the same CAT teacher for all three years in Middle School. Exceptions occur when new teachers join the community. The average ratio of teacher to advisees is 1:13.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Middle School students, with the help of committed parents and teachers, serve the community outside of St. Mary's Academy in on-going projects where relationships are developed with those whom are served. Community Action Teams leave school during the middle of the school day to help young children learn to read and to visit and entertain the elderly in area retirement communities. Also, through the CATeams, food is prepared for the homeless. Individual CATeams implement service projects of their own design.

The Middle School eighth-grade students travel to St. Elizabeth's weekly to help serve the homeless and work in the kitchen. During the year, the Loretto Leadership and Student Councils organized and implemented fund-raising activities for worthy causes.

These service opportunities reveal the courage and compassion that are such an integral part of middle school students' quest for social justice.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING TRIP**

An optional international trip to Peru is being offered from March 22 to April 4. Students will spend time in a community in Peru where they will help build a school, as well as study issues related to water, work, health and education. During their time, they will explore leadership styles, visit Machu Picchu and establish relationships that can be further developed in Middle School classrooms in the coming year. In preparation, students will present information to the Middle School student body about the community they will be visiting and the student body will earn money during Spirit Week to use in service to the Peru community. Each individual student is responsible for raising money outside of the school community for the service trip, as well. This extraordinary trip is personally rewarding, as well as being a significant connection for the entire Middle School community.

### **COUNSELING**

The SMA Lower and Middle School counselor is available to assist students and parents during the day with emotional and social issues. Parents or students may arrange a counseling session at any time by calling the Middle School office or contacting the counselor directly.

### **GRADE-LEVEL GROUPS**

In addition to belonging to a community action team CAT, each student also belongs to a grade-level group, which changes each of the three years. The goal of the grade-level groups is to provide a place and time to address specific academic issues facing students. With few exceptions, the grade-level guide teaches the students he/she guides. **The grade-level guide facilitates communication among a student's teachers and parents on academic issues. The guide also monitors study halls and encourages time management and study skills acquisition.**

### **LIBRARY**

Middle School students have access to library inventory throughout SMA through the MS library. Please be aware that in order to maintain the collection and teach responsible use of the resources, students will be fined for overdue books and charged for lost or damaged books issued in their name. Transcripts and end-of-the-year progress reports are held until outstanding books or fines are collected.

### **REFLECTIONS, PRAYER SERVICES, AND LITURGIES**

The entire Middle School community gathers regularly in the Commons to reflect on social issues and experience less formal prayer services as well as traditional liturgies. Leaders of the gatherings include students, teachers, the school chaplain, the principal, or invited priests or speakers, as appropriate to the gathering. The social time together builds a sense of community

and provides a forum for students to experience public speaking by observation and participation.

### **SEMINARS IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

Students are educated and have discussions about health and social issues. The school counselor, a registered nurse with extensive and wide experience, leads these weekly discussions with small, grade-level groups. Topics range from how to manage stress to the consequences of alcohol or cigarette addiction. The content and number of weeks dedicated to each topic varies to meet the needs and ages of the group.

### **SEMINARS IN STUDY SKILLS AND LEARNING STYLES**

During *Study Skills Seminars*, students learn tips for time management, listening, note taking, reading textbooks, studying, test-taking, memory, and test preparation. The seminars occur once each week for approximately six weeks in a row three times each year.

### **ODDS AND ENDS**

#### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

These pre- and young adolescent years are marked by significant developmental changes, which provide unique academic challenges to students. Students must learn how to learn first, and in the process will discover strengths and weaknesses, potential passions in a particular core subject, the arts, or sports. Each student is encouraged to discover ways to play to their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses.

St. Mary's Academy does not provide learning specialists aside from our experienced and committed teachers. However, students with identified learning differences have and can thrive in SMA Middle School's rigorous academic program by applying determination and commitment. Support outside of school may be recommended (see Tutoring/Extra Help – page 40). In the classroom, depending on the individual and context, teachers consider a range of accommodations, from extra time on tests and specific seating to oral testing and modified assignments, to help students grow and progress academically.

#### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

When a student is unable to progress and demonstrate his/her knowledge over time, considerable communication will take place between school and home to discover and implement strategies and solutions. One of the consequences of academic failure may be Academic Probation or an Academic Contract.

Students whose averages fall below 65% in one or more subjects are considered for Academic Probation or an Academic Contract. Consistent scores below 65% may result in having to complete summer assignments in order to re-enroll for the subsequent year or losing the opportunity to re-enroll.

## BOOKS

The textbooks and workbooks that are issued to students are the property of SMA Middle School and must be covered, protected, and returned in good condition at the end of the school year, with the exception of workbooks that students mark as part of their assignments. Personally owned copies of classroom textbooks can be ordered by students upon request.

## COMPUTER AVAILABILITY

The SMA Middle School has a bank of desktop computers in the library and four rolling carts of computers for student use during the school day. Every St. Mary's Academy student and his/her parents/guardians are required to sign a contract at the beginning of the year regarding computer and Internet usage.

**Note: Tampering with or damaging SMA computers are significant discipline infractions that could result in suspension or expulsion.**

## EIGHTH GRADE TO HIGH SCHOOL – APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

The transition from middle to high school is often a **competitive** one. Preparation should begin from the first day of school. Attention to academics and effort is important. Teacher recommendations weigh as much as percentages. Hard work, honest effort, and good behavior make an impression on admission committees. **High grades without qualities of character do not impress admission committees.**

Each student and his/her parents **are encouraged to make an appointment with the Middle School Principal** to discuss the application and admission process for high school.

Note: We encourage our female students and their parents/guardians to look at St. Mary's High School objectively. The High School is not the Middle School. The strengths of the High School can be missed when students think of it as a continuation of Middle School. Going to SMA's High School is a significant change and an exciting one that provides a fresh start and perspective. We strongly recommend that parents and students attend the All-Academy Open House.

What follows are suggestions and considerations for parents of eighth grade students:

- ❖ Because each student has his/her own profile and each school offers a different set of strengths and its own unique environment, **take time to discuss high school choices with your student.** Consider where your child would be most comfortable and able to achieve his/her goals: public or private? large or small? art or athletic emphasis? Does your student need a school that accommodates learning differences? Provides an AP or IB program?
- ❖ **Have your student shadow** at the schools where he/she has an interest. Visiting classes and experiencing a school day provides significant insight about whether or not a school offers the right fit.

- ❖ **Attend school open house events as a family.** The Catholic High Schools open their doors for prospective students and their parents on Sunday, **November 7th from 10am-2pm**. Independent schools such as Colorado Academy or Kent Denver have separate dates that can be determined with a phone call or a visit to the prospective school's web site.
- ❖ **Register for the Catholic High School Placement Test (HSPT)** – Online registration is available for this test which occurs the first Saturday of December.
  - Have your student register for and take the High School Placement Test even if there is only a small chance he/she will apply for admission to a Catholic High School.
  - Students are highly encouraged to take the test at their first-choice school.
  - When taking the test, students record their first-, second-, and third-choice schools. The possibility of being placed on a waiting list is highly probable for second and third choices. Record choices thoughtfully.
  - **To be considered for a merit scholarship from SMA, the HSPT must be taken at St. Mary's Academy High School.**
  - **Students with identified learning differences** and/or special needs that are noted in current professional testing may qualify to take the test with **extended time (not untimed)**. Extended time is provided only at SMA and Machebeuf and takes place during the school week prior to the Saturday test. There is no penalty. Please request extended time if current testing specifies the benefit to your student.
  - Practice for the High School Placement Test will take place in language arts and math classes. Mr. Pattison and Mrs. Allan offer additional practice times after school. The dates and times of those practice sessions are to be determined.
  - Have your student sleep in his/her own bed the night before the test. A sleep-over is not recommended. Provide breakfast and a positive morning so that your child arrives confident and ready.
- ❖ **Complete admission packets on time.** The number of openings in non-public schools is far fewer than the number of applicants.
- ❖ **Ask for eighth grade transcripts and teacher recommendations earlier rather than later.** Teachers give thought and effort to writing meaningful and supportive recommendations. If the recommendation form is due the next day, they are at a disadvantage.

- ❖ Call or do a web search of prospective Independent Schools for information on tests specific to their schools' admission process.
- ❖ Call or do a web search of prospective school districts to learn more about the school's AP or IB offerings.

### **INFINITE CAMPUS PORTAL**

Instructions for parent and student portal registration is available in the Middle School office. Parents/guardians who are new to SMA will be mailed instructions for gaining access to their students' information. During computer literacy, students will be instructed on how to use the portal.

The portal offers views of student assignments on a calendar (all subjects with work due on a given day) or on a schedule of classes (per subject for the week or weeks for which assignments have been entered). An absence/tardy record and scores for completed assignments round out the portal information. One of many useful communication features is the teacher's ability to append a comment to an unexpected or unusual score. Parents receive news and notes from teachers and the school and can respond on the portal.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports are posted on Infinite Campus at the **end of each trimester**. Trimester I and II reports include narratives that note specific and general aspects of a student's academic and social growth. Trimester III reports summarize the percentages and include a general comment and instruction for the summer. Progress reports are posted on Infinite Campus three times each year.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Standardized achievement tests (Terra Nova) are administered to all Middle School students in the spring. The results of the tests are shared with parents and used by the teaching staff as one of many tools for assessing curriculum and individual student needs.

### **SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS**

Students returning to the St. Mary's Academy Middle School are assigned summer reading and on-line math quizzes that are to be completed before the first full day of school at the end of summer break.

Students who would be at a curricular disadvantage without summer remedial assignments will be given tailored assignments to complete in the summer in addition to the summer reading and on-line math quizzes.

### **TEACHER NOMINATIONS FOR OUTSIDE PROGRAMS**

If a parent is interested in having his/her child participate in outside programs such as the Junior National Young Leaders Conference in Washington D.C. or the Duke Talent Search, please contact the agency or organization directly. Many fine organizations ask SMA to submit

nominations for leadership conferences and academic programs. Because we believe all of our students are potential leaders, we will no longer choose among our students by nominating specific students for these for-profit organizations. The principal will submit nominations with the permission of the parents.

### **TUTORING/EXTRA HELP**

Students who are having academic difficulties are **encouraged to make arrangements to work with an SMA teacher and/or to talk with his/her grade-level guide about strategies and solutions.**

Parents of students with ongoing academic difficulties may be advised to engage a tutor who is not one of his/her student's teachers. **Recommendations for tutoring must come from the Principal of the Middle School in conference** with teachers and the affected student and parents. Students with identified learning differences often engage tutors to learn strategies and skills for independent work.

SMA requests that parents notify the school when they have engaged a tutor for their child. If a **tutor works in the buildings of SMA**, he/she must have a background check through the SMA business office.

**Effective tutoring leads the student toward independence rather than dependence.** Care must be taken that the tutor does not inadvertently edit or modify the student's work in a substantive way.

