

RELIGION

The school has adopted the RCL Benziger series as our text. Blest Are We Faith & Word focuses on the Old Testament of the Bible. Students will become familiar with the stories of the time before the birth of Jesus. Using these stories and related activities, we will come to better understand and appreciate God's creation of our world and ourselves. The four chapters in each unit center on a theme through the four pillars of Catholic Catechism: doctrine (what we believe); worship (sacramental rites such as the Mass); morality (how we make good choices); and prayer, both formal and informal.

Our Family Life program continues the fifth grade theme of sexual intercourse and conception by focusing on pregnancy and delivery. We concentrate on respect for God, others, and ourselves. Students will participate in the Archdiocesan program Shield the Vulnerable in order to recognize and learn active responses to unacceptable behavior such as bullying or abuse.

Throughout the year we partner with the first grade to model and live our faith. We attend monthly mass together and often participate in holiday activities. First graders look up to their sixth grade partners, and our students learn responsibility by offering gentle guidance and being responsible role models.

MATHEMATICS

Our McGraw-Hill mathematics series is organized into five strands: Number Sense; Algebra and Functions; Measurement and Geometry; Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability; and Mathematical Reasoning. Each of the chapters ample practice for each lesson, spiral review of prior skills, test preparation, quizzes to check progress, a study guide, and a chapter posttest.

If your child does not know the basic math facts for all four operations with ease, I would strongly urge consistent nightly practice in this area. Students weak in their math facts often have difficulty expressing understanding of concepts in several of the above strands because they get bogged down in the calculations and are unable to follow a problem requiring several steps.

Nightly homework will be provided through workbook, dittos, or text and will be corrected the next day. Although not graded, students will earn credit toward their quarterly grade based upon whether or not the assignment is completed on time. Please feel free to assist your child as necessary using the spiral notebook to review examples completed in class. Encourage your child to explain aloud the process by which they arrive at an answer. This strengthens both their understanding as well as recall.

READING

Our text, Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes, supports the California Language Arts Standards and Framework. Within the reading domain, students focus on vocabulary development, including word analysis and fluency, comprehension, and literary analysis and response. The text is filled with classics by authors such as Ray Bradbury, Jack London, Rudyard Kipling, and Isaac Asimov. Poetry, informational articles, and essays are included, as well as many works by contemporary writers.

A variety of resources are used to support your child's progress, such as a workbook, graphic organizers to display information, and extension activities to integrate reading with other subjects. This year we will also be reading and listening to a variety of novels, beginning with The Phantom Tollbooth which appears as an adapted play in our texts.

To extend our reading outside of the classroom, the students will present a project on a preapproved book on an assigned date during the quarter. They will have some choice within the genre to choose an accompanying project so that there will be variety between the student's projects. To support good reading habits, it's helpful to have some quiet time at home for family reading for pleasure.

Grades will be based on class participation, multiple-choice and open-ended tests, projects, and homework.

SPELLING

Each week a new set of 20 basic words is introduced. After alphabetizing the basic words there are various exercises in the next three pages of text. We correct the lesson on Wednesday, and the test is given each Friday. The test includes review words from prior lessons, as well as vocabulary words from our planners. When the tests are returned on Monday or Tuesday the students will bring them home for your signature. Any incorrect words need to be written 5 times each as additional homework. The signed tests are due in two days so you have a chance to review them.

HOMEWORK POLICY

All assignments are announced by the end of each period. Students are instructed to immediately write them in their planners. Each student is responsible for taking down the assignment as it is given by the teacher and packing the necessary materials to complete the assignment. I encourage the students to have a wall calendar at home in order to remind themselves of any long-term assignments.

Most homework assignments are not graded. Exceptions may include reading comprehension exercises and math cumulative reviews. However, I do record the number of

incomplete or missing assignments daily for each student. At the end of the quarter this homework grade is factored into their average.

Students who come to class without their completed homework need to enter the date and the missing assignment on the “Late Homework” clipboard. If the student shows me the completed assignment with your signature by the following Monday, the student will earn back 5 of the 10 points deducted for a late assignment.

Please provide your child with all necessary supplies and a quiet area free of distraction. Nightly homework usually averages about 90 minutes of actual working time. (This does not include talking on the phone, getting a drink of water, or having a snack). Long-term projects require additional time.

Homework assignments are designed to be independent reinforcement and review of the day’s lesson. You can help your child by reviewing basic math facts, giving pretests in spelling, math, and reading and social studies vocabulary, as well as checking for completion and neatness of assignments.

If a child is absent s/he needs to call upon a friend, sibling, or parent to obtain both the day’s in-class assignments and the night’s homework. Students are responsible for making up both what they have missed in class as well as assigned homework.

PROGRESS FOLDERS

Tests or projects are usually returned on Mondays for reading and math and will be entered in the student’s record folder. Please review these papers and sign the cover where indicated so I know that you are aware of your child’s progress. The students have two nights to get their record folders signed so you have a chance to review their work thoroughly. Please

don't sign a record folder without examining the corresponding assignment.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

As mentioned above I do review the record folders on a regular basis and would be happy to call you during the day if you leave a phone number and a good time to reach you. I am also available for conferences from 7:55-8:05 am., or from 3:10-3:30 pm. I'd like to talk with each child's parent(s) or guardian(s) at least once in addition to our scheduled November conference.

ITBS TESTS

St. Anne will be administering the Iowa Test of Basic Skills this year. Please do not schedule any medical or dental appointments during this week. Since our schedule will need to change to accommodate the testing, classes will be shortened. Accordingly, homework is likely to be fairly light for the week.