

Fifth - Eighth Grade Curriculum Objectives

Guardian Lutheran School

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Mission Statement

As we share the love of Jesus with all who enter our door, Guardian Lutheran School strives to nurture families and, through quality Christ-centered education, to prepare students academically to integrate faith and life.

A Christian Environment

- Christ-centered teaching and learning
- Daily religious instruction
- Classroom devotions
- Weekly Chapel services
- Dedicated Christian teachers
- A loving, nurturing and forgiving environment.

Religion

The more children become aware of the world around them, the more they need to know God's plan for them. The fifth grade religion course describes God's desires for His children as revealed in Scripture. Each lesson highlights how God's promises are fulfilled in Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

Through the Word and Spirit of God, students may come to know the love and forgiveness of Christ and respond in faith. Sixth grade students grow in faith as they see themselves as the reconciled, redeemed children of God and as members of the church, expressing joy in worship and in service to others. Learning the value of God's creative work in His world and the church, students grow as witnesses of Christ as the Savior of all people.

The seventh grade religion curriculum is divided into two different areas. For part of the year, the students will study the catechism. This will focus on the Lutheran confessional writings with scriptural support, as well as the church year. The other part of the year, the students will study church history. This course will examine what God has done from the early days of the church up to the present time to preserve and extend His kingdom.

The focus of eighth grade Religion is to prepare the students for Confirmation. The course content for the 1st Semester is the six chief parts of Luther's Small Catechism (10

commandments, Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Lord's Supper, Confession and the Office of the Keys). The 2nd Semester focuses on the Christians perspective on Contemporary Issues as well as preparation for Professions of Faith and Confirmation Day. After confirmation the class participates in an in-depth daily Bible Study.

Art

In fifth grade students work with mixing colors and consider the basic elements of design. Students use familiar materials in new ways and explore new mediums.

In sixth grade students continue to consider design and color. Pattern, repetition and perspective are explored. Students consider great works of art.

In seventh grade new concepts in artwork are considered. Students view new styles, realistic or abstract. Tone, texture, and vanishing point are discussed.

Eighth graders continue to experiment with a variety of materials and concepts. We consider great works of art and explore new and varied styles.

Computer Science

The same strands continue throughout the middle school computer curriculum, building each year on the previous year's learning. These strands are:

- keyboarding
- word processing
- spreadsheets
- databases
- safe and responsible use of the internet
- research skills using CD encyclopedias, online encyclopedias and the web
- power-point and other presentation techniques
- desktop publishing

In addition the general curriculum is reinforced through age-appropriate computer programs such as "The Logical Journey of the Zoombinis" - (math patterning and problem

solving); the “Carmen SanDiego” series - (geography, history, and problem solving); and “The Factory Deluxe” - (geometry and visual spatial reasoning).

Language Arts

The Language Arts curriculum in the upper grades encompasses several disciplines, which include reading, writing, listening and speaking, grammar and spelling, literature analysis and appreciation, and research. This curriculum continues the developmental skills taught in the lower grades (phonics, decoding, vocabulary building, context clues, and strategies for constructing meaning) and expands upon them to make students effective communicators. No area of language arts is taught in isolation; each discipline overlaps others. As students experience a wide variety of oral and written language and develop an increased command of it, they will use their skills of locating, selecting, and organizing information to solve problems in any area of the curriculum. These skills will be developed both on an individual basis and through group experiences.

During a typical school week, all students will have daily exposure to oral language, grammar skills, spelling, and reading. Each grade has an English text that teaches and reviews elements of language structure, grammar rules, and writing guidelines. A weekly spelling unit is taught in each grade, using both selected prepared word lists and context words. As time permits, each class experiences daily oral language in selections read by the teacher or shared by students. Each student also keeps a journal which includes both his own free writing as well as responses to suggested topics. Weekly library time is scheduled for each grade. Writing contests for both prose and poetry are available for all students.

As an introduction to the new challenges offered in the upper grades, fifth grade students will begin the year with a unit on study skills and test taking techniques. They will also complete a series of pretests on the parts of speech and a unit on effective use of the library.

The reading curriculum in fifth grade introduces the class to various literary genres, with selected units on families and traditions; friends and relationships; myths, legends, and tall tales, mystery, and poetry. Short stories, novels and poems are grouped together, and appropriate activities are planned for each selection including book reports. Trade books are provided for the class to share classic novels. Assessment is accomplished

through oral and written questions, worksheets, vocabulary lists, quizzes, and journal writing. Grammar in Grade 5 covers parts of speech, sentence and paragraph structure, and the five steps of the writing process. The Book-It and the Accelerated Reader Programs encourage independent reading and are the sources for some report writing. Library skills will be reviewed and practiced.

Students in sixth - eighth grades explore their literature through the units in the text *Literature and the Language Arts*. Each selection includes author information and opportunities for response to the selection. In addition, each grade will study at least one classic author together in more depth and read from his works (Grade 6-Mark Twain, Grade 7 - Charles Dickens, Grade 8-William Shakespeare). Brief grammar lessons in the literature texts highlight specific rules applied in the selection. Library skills and the writing process steps are reviewed and practiced. Students will be expected to read independently and write brief, thoughtful reviews. At various times during the year students will prepare book reports on books they have read individually, in partners, or in small groups. In Grades 7 & 8 the steps for writing research papers using the MLA (Modern Language Association) standards will be introduced. It is expected that, during research writing, students will make use of both the Guardian Library and the local public library. All 8th graders will participate in the "America and Me" writing contest, sponsored by the Farm Bureau, in October.

Math

In middle school the math curriculum continues to build on the two themes established in the elementary grades: understanding mathematical concepts and proficiency in computation skills. The curriculum gradually moves the student from working in the concrete, with math manipulatives, toward working in the abstract, seeing the problem mentally. Beginning in sixth grade students who have shown advanced abilities in abstract thinking are invited to work in a pre-algebra curriculum.

Fifth Grade students review the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. We still use quite a few manipulatives, but try to help the students move from those into math rules they can refer to mentally. Manipulatives remain available throughout the year for students who are not

ready to make the transition yet. We have daily proficiency (“Mad Minute”) quizzes until the student has mastered whole number addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. We also work with problem-solving, writing and solving equations, measuring in the metric and American systems, and plane geometry. The geometry topics are taught in math lab, an additional class taught once a week in addition to the regular daily math classes.

Sixth Grade students expand on the fifth grade topics but work much more with: the four operations on integers, order of operations, graphing points in the coordinate plane, prime factorization to find the greatest common factor and least common multiple, equations using fractions and integers, ratio, rate, proportion and percent. Pre-algebra I students cover these topics, presented from an algebra perspective, and additionally work with more complicated equations, properties of real numbers, graphing equations in two variables on a coordinate plane, repeating and terminating decimals, and simple probability. Math lab for 6th graders centers on problem solving.

Seventh Grade students review all of the materials from previous years and add: solving and graphing inequalities, squaring and finding rational square roots, writing numbers in scientific notation, using proportion to solve for unknown sides in similar polygons, calculating percent of markup and commission, and finding probability of dependent, independent and mutually exclusive events. In addition the pre-algebra II students work extensively with properties of real numbers, and learn to find irrational square roots, write and solve rational number equations, use the Pythagorean Theorem, calculate permutations and combinations, and add, subtract, multiply and divide polynomials. Seventh grade math lab is advanced problem solving.

Eighth Grade students in the regular math class work with all of the pre-algebra topics that were developed in the 6th and 7th grade pre-algebra classes, to prepare them to take algebra as high school freshmen. The 8th grade students who have successfully completed pre-algebra I and II complete a high school algebra curriculum in the 8th grade. Math lab for 8th graders is geometry. We review plane geometry but work mainly with constructions and solid geometry.

Music

As a basis for understanding the music that they will encounter in church and school

worship services, fifth grade students are taught the seasons of the Church Year, along with the colors and symbols associated with those seasons. Students will also explore the various resources available in the *Lutheran Worship* hymnal. Students will be taught about the various classifications of musical instruments.

Sixth grade students are exposed to the various eras of music history and some of the significant classical composers.

Seventh grade students are exposed to the various eras of music history and some of the significant classical composers.

Eighth grade students are exposed to the various eras of music history and some of the significant classical composers.

Instrumental instruction is available through both Beginning and Advanced electives. Vocal music continues through the School Chorus elective.

Physical Education

The physical education program is designed with both the physical and cognitive development of the child in mind. It focuses on the development of motor skills, strength, cardiovascular fitness, aerobic fitness, and flexibility while the student is involved in activities that develop creative thinking, problem solving, and appropriate social behavior. Throughout the year the students also participate in the President's Fitness Challenge. Physical education serves a unique purpose in providing students with knowledge, skills, and fitness that will empower them to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Science

Fifth grade students study in the three main area of science:

Life Science: Plants - the parts of flowering plants, plant cells, classifying plants, and plant structural 'adaptations' or the Creator's divine design!

Earth Science: Space - the night sky, how astronomers learn about space, the solar system, stars and galaxies, survival in space and the U.S. space program.

Physical Science: Energy, Work, and Machines - properties of energy including simple machines.

Sixth grade students study in the three main areas of science:

Life Science: Cells and Microbes - structure and life processes of cells including mitosis, protists and fungi, bacteria and viruses.

Earth Science: Changing Earth - theory of plate tectonics, movement of continents, formation of mountains, earthquakes, and volcanoes.

Physical Science: Forces and Motion - characteristics of motion, gravity, measuring changes in motion, friction, action/reaction forces, how forces affect the motion of objects.

Seventh grade students study Life Science under three main topics:

Cells - Building blocks of life, nature of life, cell structure and function, cell process, and cell energy.

Parade of Life - survey of the animal kingdom from simple to complex structure..

Human Biology - Health systems of the human body, effects of disease and drugs.

Eighth Grade students study Physical Science under two main topics:

Matter - general properties, physical and chemical changes, mixtures, elements and compounds, atoms, classification of elements with the Periodic Table.

Chemistry of Matter - atoms and bonding, chemical reactions, chemical compounds, radioactive elements.

Fifth - Eighth grade students learn through guided reading, study guides, class discussion, projects, and hands-on labs. Regular quizzes and tests monitor student progress.

Social Studies

The focus for fifth grade is the development of the country God has given us. We see how different people groups came to our land and learn about the contributions they

made. We learn about the structure of our national government and the Constitution. The role of economics in the development of our nation is considered. Continued development of map skills enable students to view our country and its relationship to other nations.

In sixth grade the study of the eastern hemisphere, its nations and historical development is the focus. Students see how economics, land forms, and individuals helped to form the nations we see, today. The development of different governments and how those governments affect the lives of its citizens is considered. Continued map skills help students gain a greater knowledge of the world God has created.

The study of the western hemisphere, its nations and historical development is the focus for seventh grade. Students see how economics, land forms, and individuals helped to form modern nations and consider the relationship the United States has with these nations.

The development of the United States of America and its unique position in God's world is the emphasis for eighth grade. Beginning with the first inhabitants and continuing through exploration and independence, students learn how their nation grew and developed. Students see how God has blessed our nation with resources and leadership, contributions of many people groups, and a durable plan for government. The Constitution is explored as a strong yet flexible document that works for all citizens. Students see the United States grow to a world power.