

Middle School

Science Curriculum

St. Anthony's Middle School Science Program is a challenging and balanced integrated curriculum that incorporates grade level concepts from the Physical, Earth, and Biological Sciences. Students are taught both content and process skills that stimulate natural curiosity, imagination, logical thinking and nurtures appreciation and concern for our environment. It is supported through hands-on investigative activities / inquiries that requires students to apply what they have mastered in class lecture/ discussion. The activities emphasize scientific methodology and reinforce required mathematical skills for data collection/modeling/analysis. The curriculum content spirals throughout Middle School – building on both depth of concept knowledge and student performance expectation.

6th grade: The major focus is formalizing scientific concepts along with applicable laboratory /field investigative procedures utilizing the scientific method, measurement taking /observation skills and basic statistical data analysis.

7th grade: Students are expected to build on previous learned material and experiences and focus on learning how to design experiments to a greater extent. In addition, students will demonstrate greater content understanding and application to investigative data modeling and analysis using basic algebra and statistics.

8th grade: Science continues on what was learned and practiced. 8th graders will primarily focus on the physical and biological /environmental sciences in both depth of knowledge and investigative activities as they incorporate Earth science concepts. Eight grade students are expected to design their experiments to greater sophistication, as well as demonstrate more sophisticated data modeling using algebraic and basic trigonometric mathematics and appropriate statistical analysis techniques. The curriculum is aligned to the National Science Education Standards: *American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)* and *National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) – National Science Education Standards*

Mathematics

The math program is based on the development of concepts and knowledge that help the student reason and problem solve concrete problems that are age-level appropriate. The program uses A Beka texts throughout. In the middle school, pre-algebra is taught in the 7th grade and algebra is taught in the 8th grade. There is heavy concentration on geometry in 6th through 8th grades. Students in the 7th and 8th grades may opt between two levels of instruction – the grade level math and a “Focus on Math” level. The “Focus on Math” level requires substantially more effort as these students are being prepared to compete for high school level honors math programs.

Social Studies

The middle school social studies curriculum extends and builds upon the skills and knowledge begun in the primary grades.

Sixth graders study World History from the beginnings of civilization through the twentieth century. Primary emphasis is given to Greco-Roman civilization because of its importance as the cornerstone for the subsequent history of Western Europe and the latter’s importance as background knowledge for the seventh and eighth grade history courses.

Seventh graders draw upon their acquired historical knowledge of Western Europe in their study of Texas History as they learn about the geography and culture of Texas as part of the primary inquiry into the origins of Texas and Texans and its manifestations under six different political systems. Special emphasis is given to Texas as part of New Spain and the Republic of Mexico, as well as the

Texas Revolution and its aftermath as the Republic of Texas. The course concludes with a sketch of Texas as part of the Confederacy, the impact of Reconstruction, the birth of the cattle and oil kingdoms, and the advent of modern Texas.

U.S. History 1492-1876 is the capstone history course of middle school that requires students to apply all their prior knowledge and experience as historians to analyze the first 400 years of “American” history. The focal points in this course are the origins and conduct of the American Revolution and the War Between the States. While all three courses are text-based, they successively supplement the text with class notes derived from lecture and discussion as student progress in this skill increases. The eighth grade class “DC Trip” is largely based on the U.S. History curriculum.

Foreign Languages

Students have the opportunity to broaden their horizons and experience a unique mode of learning through the study of foreign languages and cultures. Latin and Spanish are taught to prepare students for earning high school credits and to facilitate student success in the study of any language at the high school or college level. Enrollment in a foreign language occurs at the beginning of the seventh grade year and is a two-year commitment. These courses count as a core course for purposes of honor roll and NJHS consideration/retention

Latin is taught in the traditional manner of stressing grammar, vocabulary, Latin-based English derivatives, systematic thinking based on memorization, application, and analysis, and translation from both Latin to English, as well as English to Latin. An appreciation for Roman culture, an enhanced understanding of English grammar and vocabulary, and the acquisition of strong study skills are inevitable products of this rigorous course of study.

Spanish is taught from the first through the eighth grades. In grades 1 through 3, basic vocabulary and grammar are introduced. In grades 4, 5, and 6 grammar, oral and written proficiencies are acquired through basic conjugations, oral exams, and both individual and group projects. In middle school, a high school text is employed, and a historical focus on cultural influences and literary analysis of short stories culminate the Spanish curriculum.

Classical Heritage

Classical Heritage is an elective course for seventh and eighth graders which uses the timeless stories of Greco-Roman mythology as the springboard into an often inductive, “I-search” format of learning. Detailed testing on the plot’s characters, settings, and functions of these myths, as well as associated class notes, are the basic criteria for this course. Word etymology assignments every three weeks with associated testing round out the content of this broadening, challenging, and dictionary-intensive course. While Classical Heritage is an elective, it counts as a core course for purposes of honor roll and NJHS consideration/retention. Parents should be aware that due to the nature of these stories, “mature” themes are routinely read and discussed from an educational perspective.

Religious Studies:

6TH GRADE: SACRED SCRIPTURE : THE OLD TESTAMENT

This study is designed to help students become familiar with the Bible, the Word of God and increase their knowledge of Salvation History. They come to appreciate their ties to the Jewish people and understand how Jesus is foretold and pre-figured in the Old Testament. As the students

read God's Word and learn of the faith of their ancestors they are constantly reminded of their own faith and called to respond to God with ever deepening love and gratitude.

7TH GRADE: THE INCARNATE WORD OF GOD, JESUS CHRIST

This study is designed to help young adolescents grow in their knowledge of Jesus through reading and studying the four Gospel accounts and the Epistles in the New Testament . Understanding and encountering Jesus' Presence today in the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, is another aspect of this course. The main goal of this course is to enable the students to deepen their personal relationship with Jesus, not only as Lord and Savior, but as Brother and Best Friend.

8TH GRADE: THE CHURCH: BODY OF CHRIST AND PEOPLE OF GOD

This study is designed to help young adolescents grow in their knowledge and love of the Church founded by Jesus Christ on the "Rock" of Peter. Realizing that the Church is a Mystery, both divine and human, students can learn to love and forgive the members of their Faith Community, saints and sinners. They are presented with role models, saints of yesterday and today. Issues of morality and social justice are also studied in this course. United by Christian Baptism, students learn to recognize the presence of Christ in each other and what it means to be a Disciple of Christ in their world today.