

# Middle School Language Arts

The Middle School Language Arts curriculum at St. Anne & St. Jude Catholic School is composed of four parts: writing/composition, grammar/usage, literature/reading comprehension, and vocabulary. The writing/composition portion of the curriculum includes mechanics, spelling, sentence structure and development, paragraph structure, types of paragraphs, forms of writing, and composition. The grammar/usage portion of the curriculum includes parts of speech and usage, sentence parts, punctuation, and subject-verb agreement. The literature/reading comprehension portion of the curriculum includes reading and responding to a variety of stories, essays, articles, poems, and at least two novels. The vocabulary portion of the curriculum includes learning 12 – 13 Latin and Greek stem words per week and being able to understand, spell, and use them in longer words in the English language.

Projects during the year include the South Carolina Independent School Association's Literary Meet, Spelling Bee, and Quiz Bowl; presentations of various genres of original student writing; and projects inspired by novels.

## Grade 5 Language Arts

During the writing/composition portion of the course, students receive instruction in the following topics: sentences, fragments, kinds of sentences, complete subjects and predicates, simple subjects and predicates, subjects in imperative sentences, conjunctions, run-on sentences, commas, interjections, quotations, abbreviations and titles. Students also gain skill in writing the following types of compositions: a narrative with a good beginning and ending; a story with characters, setting and plot; a compare and contrast paragraph with introduction and conclusion using a topic sentence and transitional words; a research report with an outline and bibliography; an opinion paragraph elaborating and organizing reasons; and a persuasive paragraph supporting the goal and evaluating reasons.

The grammar/usage portion of the curriculum includes the following topics: nouns, common and proper nouns, singular and plural nouns, singular and plural possessive nouns, action verbs, direct objects, main and helping verbs, linking verbs, present, past and future verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, verb contractions, regular and irregular verbs, verb phrases, adjectives, articles, demonstrative adjectives, comparing adjectives, proper adjectives, subject and object pronouns, possessive pronouns, contractions with pronouns, double subjects, adverbs, comparing adverbs, negatives, prepositions, prepositions and phrases, pronouns in prepositional phrases, and diagramming simple subjects and predicates, compound subjects and predicates, direct objects, linking verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases.

The Literature curriculum for fifth grade includes reading both classic and contemporary short stories, poems, articles, memoirs and essays from the fifth grade literature text *Literature and the Language Arts* (EMC Masterpiece Series). Featured writers include: J.R.R. Tolkien, Jerry Spinelli, Maya Angelou, Robert Frost, Toni Cade Bambara, Ray Bradbury, William Shakespeare, Nikki Giovanni, Rudyard Kipling, and many more. Students will also read at least two novels during the school year, including *The Secret Garden*, by Francis Hodgson Burnett and *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, by E.L. Konigsburg.

During the course of the school year, fifth grade students will learn and use 360 Latin and Greek

stem words from the program: The Word Within the Word. Each week, students will study a list of 12 or 13 words and their meanings; together the class will brainstorm to think of longer words in which the stems appear, and how we readily associate those words with the meaning of the stem. (For example, *bio* means *life*, and *logy* means *science*, so *biology* is *the science of life*.) Throughout the week, students study the words through a variety of activities, and understanding is assessed by a weekly quiz. There will be quarterly cumulative quizzes as well.

### **Grade 6 Language Arts**

The sixth grade writing/composition curriculum maintains the above curriculum and also covers the following material: subjects in interrogative sentences, compound subjects and predicates, and compound and complex sentences. It also includes writing a story with punctuating dialogue and an opinion paragraph with supporting opinions. The sixth grade grammar/usage curriculum maintains the above curriculum and also includes the following material: transitive and intransitive verbs, perfect verb tenses, pronouns and antecedents, pronouns after linking verbs, pronouns in compounds, indefinite pronouns, and prepositions used as adjective and adverb phrases.

The Literature curriculum for sixth grade includes reading both classic and contemporary short stories, poems, articles, memoirs and essays from the sixth grade literature text *The Language of Literature*, (McDougal Littell). Featured writers include: Lois Lowry, Sandra Cisneros Maya Angelou, Gary Paulsen, Walter Dean Myers, Laurence Yep, Theodore Roethke, Langston Hughes, and many more. Students will also read at least two novels, including *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry, and *Eight Keys*, by Suzanne LaFleur.

During the course of the school year, sixth grade students will learn and use 360 Latin and Greek stem words from the program: The Word Within the Word. Each week, students will study a list of 12 or 13 words and their meanings; together the class will brainstorm to think of longer words in which the stems appear, and how we readily associate those words with the meaning of the stem. (For example, *ortho* means *straight*, and an *orthodontist* straightens your teeth. *Bene* means *good*, and so a *benevolent* giant wouldn't hurt you.) Throughout the week, students study the words through a variety of activities, and understanding is assessed by a weekly quiz. There will be quarterly cumulative quizzes as well.

### **Grade 7 Language Arts**

The seventh grade writing/composition curriculum maintains the above curriculum and also covers the following material: dates and addresses in friendly and business letters, semicolons, colons, apostrophes, hyphens, dashes, parentheses, and clauses. It also includes writing a persuasive paragraph answering objections. The grammar/usage curriculum maintains the above curriculum and also covers the following material: collective and compound nouns, progressive verb tenses, indirect objects, predicate nouns and adjectives, active and passive voices, inverted and interrupted order, interrogative, demonstrative and reflexive/intensive pronouns, and pronouns after prepositions.

The Literature curriculum for seventh grade includes reading both classic and contemporary short stories, poems, articles, memoirs and essays from the seventh grade literature text *The Language of Literature*, (McDougal Littell). Featured writers include: Gary Soto, Jackie Robinson, Charles Dickens, Langston Hughes, Chaim Potok, Emily Dickinson, Julia Alvarez, Eleanor Roosevelt, Walt Whitman, O. Henry, and many more. Students will also read at least

two novels, including: *Firestorm*, by Joan Hiatt Harlow and *Cast Two Shadows*, by Ann Rinaldi.

During the course of the school year, seventh grade students will learn and use 360 Latin and Greek stem words from the program: The Word Within the Word. Each week, students will study a list of 12 or 13 words and their meanings; together the class will brainstorm to think of longer words in which the stems appear, and how we readily associate those words with the meaning of the stem. (For example, *pro* means *forward*, and *vid* means *look*; one can *provide* for the future by *looking forward*.) Throughout the week, students study the words through a variety of activities, and understanding is assessed by a weekly quiz. There will be quarterly cumulative quizzes as well.

### **Grade 8 Language Arts**

The eighth grade writing/composition curriculum maintains the above curriculum and also covers the following material: independent and subordinate clauses, adjective clauses, essential and non-essential clauses, adverb clauses, and noun clauses. It also includes writing a narrative using flashback and writing a persuasive paragraph using strategies. The grammar/usage curriculum maintains the above curriculum and also covers the following material: agreement in inverted and interrupted order, participles and phrases, gerunds and phrases, and infinitives and phrases.

The Literature curriculum for eighth grade includes reading both classic and contemporary short stories, poems, articles, memoirs and essays from the seventh grade literature text *The Language of Literature*, (McDougal Littell). Featured writers include: Jack London, Nikki Giovanni, Mark Twain, Cynthia Rylant, Shel Silverstein, Reeve Lindbergh, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Gwendolyn Brooks, and many more. Students will also read at least two novels, including: *Slam*, by Walter Dean Myers, and *To Kill A Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee.

During the course of the school year, eighth grade students will learn and use 360 Latin and Greek stem words from the program: The Word Within the Word. Each week, students will study a list of 12 or 13 words and their meanings; together the class will brainstorm to think of longer words in which the stems appear, and how we readily associate those words with the meaning of the stem. (For example, *phon* means *sound* and *homo* means *same*, so the words *to*, *two*, and *too* are homophones.) Throughout the week, students study the words through a variety of activities, and understanding is assessed by a weekly quiz. There will be quarterly cumulative quizzes as well.