

St. Louise de Marillac Catholic School

2020-2021 Course Descriptions

7th and 8th Grade Reading

In seventh grade students are required to deepen their reading skills, study skills and critical thinking ability. Students will utilize StudySync to introduce the different types of prose. Students read short stories, autobiographies, biographies, plays, essays, folk tales and poems. In addition to these literary pieces, students will also read various novels such as; *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry, *The Hobbit*, by J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Call of the Wild*, by Jack London and *The Outsiders* S.E. Hinton.

During eighth grade, students are asked to employ higher-level thinking skills, such as application, analysis, and evaluation moving quickly through complicated skills. They will be expected to practice various forms of writing, including the development of the thesis statement and the five-paragraph essay in relation to what they are reading in class. Tiered activities will be available to meet various learning styles and instruction will be differentiated. Throughout the course, students read a variety of short stories, plays, poems, and informational texts. In addition students read *Lord of the Flies*, by William Golding, *Refugee*, by Alan Gratz, *The Diary of Anne Frank: They Play* by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett as well as an additional novel that varies based on the units in the StudySync curriculum. In addition, students participate in an independent reading program, Accelerated Reader, which stresses choice of genre and the student's responsibility for taking a multiple choice, computerized test for each book read.

7th and 8th Grade English

The goal of the English program at St. Louise de Marillac School is to help students build 21st century skills to become better writers, problem solvers, speakers, team players, planners, and researchers in all facets of communication. In the classroom setting, students experience the digital environment through Google Docs and Edmodo.

Students learn the importance of identifying the topic, purpose, and audience of each writing assignment prior to developing a thesis statement and organizational structure. The revision and editing process is practiced throughout the year both online and through peer evaluation and writing groups. The Six Traits of Writing program (Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, Conventions, and Presentation) is used as a means to guide students through the writing process. This program provides the students with a common "language" of writing in order to develop dialogue for peer evaluation and editing.

In 7th grade, students begin the year being introduced to the format for a five paragraph essay, including how to develop an introduction with a thesis statement, to construct three body paragraphs that support their thesis, and to conclude with a closing paragraph that brings the essay to an end. The

Criterion Writing program is also used as a tool for revising and editing various forms of writing. Throughout the year, students write various pieces including poetry, a narrative, and a persuasive essay.

The 8th grade program builds upon the previous year and focuses on literary analysis and research writing based on the Modern Language Association guidelines. Criterion Writing is also used to enhance the revising and editing process. Students write a narrative, an argumentative essay, a literary analysis, poems and a career research paper. These various types of writing teach them the elements of writing.

Students are encouraged to enter various writing contests throughout the year. In addition, students also learn the fine points of using audio and video equipment to give life to the written word.

7th and 8th Grade Science

7th Grade:

The seventh grade science curriculum uses Glencoe Physical Science textbook. During the seventh grade year students will focus on the following topics with laboratory experiments used to enhance and exemplify the concepts taught in class:

The Scientific Method: Students will list the steps of the scientific method, analyze data and construct graphs, and name and use common laboratory equipment properly.

The Metric System: Students will apply the metric system, in class and the lab, being able to convert between units.

Chemistry: Students will define the properties of matter, construct an atom's structure and be able to calculate the number of protons, neutrons, and electrons for each atom on The Periodic Table. They will also be able to identify and distinguish between physical and chemical properties and changes. Students be able to show how atoms form covalent and ionic bonds thereby allowing them to read, write, and balance chemical equations.

8th Grade:

The eighth grade science curriculum uses Glencoe Life Science textbook. During the eighth grade year students will focus on the following topics with laboratory experiments used to enhance and exemplify the concepts taught in class:

The Scientific Method: Students review the steps of the scientific method, analyze data and construct graphs, and name and use common laboratory equipment properly. Students will apply the metric system, in class and the lab, being able to convert between units.

Cell Structure and Function: Students will learn to recognize thirteen organelles and be able to give the function of each. This will be accomplished by the use of diagrams, videos, and laboratory experiments. Each student will learn to use a compound light microscope.

Genetics: Students will be able to explain how traits are passed from generation to generation, in addition to make Punnett Squares to illustrate the ways alleles can combine in genetic

crosses. Students will be able to explain the Human Genome Project and label a diagram of DNA.

Zoology: Students will study ten phyla of organisms being able to give examples of both Phylum and Class. During six dissections, the eighth grade student will be able to identify major organs giving the function of each.

7th and 8th Grade Math

As our students enter 7th grade, we divide the class into 3 groups. Our goal is to group students of comparable ability based on Gr6 recommendations and assessments. With every math student, there is a period of accelerated growth where we see a jump in understanding, effort, self – discipline and achievement. Because this growth can happen for different students at different times, our groupings are flexible from year to year. Our 4th-8th grade math teachers collaborate to determine the best student placement. Our objective for every student in every group is to advance that child’s growth as a student and his/her ability in math so that he/she knows success in high school from day one.

Our groupings are defined below:

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
7th Grade	Pre-Algebra Algebra 1 Part 1	Pre-Algebra	Pre-Algebra
8th Grade	Algebra 1 Part 2 Intro to Geometry	Algebra 1	Algebra 1 Part 1
9th Grade Considerations	Honors Geometry <i>OR</i> Honors Algebra II	Honors Geometry <i>OR</i> Honors Algebra II	Algebra 1
Keystone Exam Recommendation	Exam Recommended	Exam Recommended	Exam NOT Recommended

Our Group 1 is for our most accelerated students. The design of the course is to give the child, for whom mathematics has been easy, experience in content and workload that challenges and grows his/her abilities as problem solvers. Students in this group are required to work the most difficult exercises each night for homework. This grouping is intended to prepare each child for excellence in any Honors–level study in Geometry or Algebra II in Grade 9. Every Group 1 student is encouraged to take the Keystone Examination for Algebra I in May of his Grade 8.

Our Group 2 is for students working and achieving at or modestly above grade - level. The design of the course is to give concentrated practice in all Algebra I skills through sets of exercises that are tailored in number and difficulty to the computational abilities of students. Students of more advanced abilities are encouraged to work a more rigorous problem set and problem solving, designed and supervised by their teacher. The study is intended to prepare each child for success in Geometry or Algebra II in Grade 9. Every Group 2 student earning a grade of C or better is prepared to pass the Keystone Examination for Algebra I in May of his Grade 8. Students not performing well in Algebra 1 in 8th grade, may benefit

greatly from an additional year of Algebra 1 in 9th grade, as Algebra 1 is a foundational pre-requisite for every high school mathematics course and a major component of every standardized test.

Our Group 3 is for students who would benefit from on-level and remedial instruction in multiple, basic math skills. The curriculum for that group in Grade 7 is deliberate, extended treatment and practice of all Pre – Algebra skills with emphasis on number sets, number sense and computation. Students in this Group 3 who meet or surpass grade–level expectations at the end of Grade 7 are invited to jump to our Group 2 at the start of Grade 8. In Grade 8, our Group 3 study Algebra I (Part 1 of 2): Writing, solving and graphing linear equations and inequalities. This study incorporates continued review and practice of Pre – Algebra skills as assessments recommend. The study is intended to prepare each child for success in a full year’s study of Algebra I in Grade 9. Because a full course in Algebra I is not taught to our Group 3 students, our recommendation is that those students do not take the Keystone Examination for Algebra I until May of their Grade 9.

Assistance from the math teacher is available to every student every day at lunchtime and 2-3 days a week after school. By our math curriculum, we guide each child in our charge from a world of asking, “How do you do it?” to a habit of asking, “Which way would be best?”

7th and 8th Grade Social Studies

In 7th grade, we use Pearson’s “World Geography Eastern Hemisphere” for the first semester. This course will begin with an introduction to Geography and continue studying Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Students will have access to videos, audio, and interactive activities online. During the second semester 7th grade will be using Pearson’s “American History my World Interactive” text. This text takes us from the early explorers of Europe in the 1720’s, through the Civil War. We explore our nation from colonies to statehood, from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War. Using social studies books and projects, students are required to synthesize and analyze information. We also study our government with the Declaration of Independence to the Constitution and our amendments. We learn how our government works and work our way through the election process. Students will learn about current events and geography as a part of classroom discussions and competitions, such as the National Geographic GeoBee Challenge.

In 8th grade, we use Pearson’s, “America History my World Interactive.” Students will begin learning about our country during the Civil War and continue through World War I, the Great Depression, War World II, the Holocaust, Cold War, Civil Rights, Korean and Vietnam War and the Space Race. We will be completing many interactive activities online. In 8th grade students will also study the Holocaust, using the series “Echoes and Reflections.” The students will listen to visual testimonies from Holocaust survivors and complete activities to help the students to understand the choices that were made at this time and a chronological time frame for the Holocaust. Our goal in eighth grade is to prepare students for high school Social Studies coursework. Students are required to complete group and individual projects throughout the year to enhance and enrich their learning. Students discuss current events and during election years will complete a unit on how our election process works.

7th and 8th Grade Social Studies-Supplemental Text: Catholic Textbook Project- Light to the Nations, Part II: The Making of the Modern World

Seventh and eighth grade students will use this text in conjunction with myWorld Interactive. This text presents the history of the modern era in story form. This series focuses on how our world has developed based on Christian culture. This text also includes Catholic thinkers and the popes (particularly Leo XIII, Pius XI, Pius XII, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI).

7th and 8th Grade Religion

Throughout the course, students utilize the textbook *We Live Our Faith* Volume 1 (7th grade) and Volume 2 (8th grade). The goal is to have students develop a deeper and more meaningful understanding of their Catholic Faith. We examine in detail the Seven Sacraments, the liturgical calendar, and stories from the Bible. In eighth grade we do a Confirmation unit in preparation for their Confirmation in the fall of their 9th grade year. Students complete a research paper on their Confirmation Saint, and are required to create a “Spoon Saint” representing the Saint that they have chosen. In both 7th and 8th grade we work through the Olweus anti-bullying program, and in 8th grade student’s class work is supplemented with the Decision Points program as well as the Apologetics course that Mr. Zych and Mrs. Ingold teach to the students together in preparation for their oral exams with our parish priests.

Computer Technology Course Description K-8

Through the use of technology integrated across the curriculum, students will develop skills needed to become 21st Century lifelong learners. Activities and lessons focused on communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving will prepare students to be future-ready. The curriculum is aligned with the International Society for Technology in Education Standards and the Computer Science Teacher Association standards. During the year students will focus on basic computer skills and responsible computer use. Students will develop a basic understanding of Internet safety, evaluating websites, and ethical computer using resources from Common Sense Media and the National Association for Media Literacy in Education. This course will cover the basics of Google Apps for Education, accessing and saving files locally and to their Google Drive, copying and pasting files or text, understanding copyright laws, searching the Internet, and finding and citing images, video, and audio from the internet for school projects as well as keyboarding practice and drill with Typing Web, Typing Club and other online programs. Students will use the Microsoft Office Suite on the desktop computers. Students will be introduced to the use of digital cameras, photo editing, video production, audio recording and editing, computer programming and coding, Virtual Reality, engineering concepts, 3D design, robotics, circuits, online drawing and design tools, and numerous apps for learning and productivity on the school devices in the lab and classrooms.

Electives: See below

Middle School Art

Students participate in Art one time per week. Art work consists of 2D and 3D works. We explore many different techniques. Students study art history, multiple genres, color theory, sketching, painting, printmaking, metal, plaster, chalk pastels, oil pastels, fabric and clay.

Students in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 concentrate on the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design. The Elements of Art are the ingredients to all Art or the building blocks of Art. The Elements of Art are: Line, Space, Value, Form, Texture, Color and Shape. The Principles of Design organize the Elements of Art. The Principles of Design are: Unity, Contrast, Movement, Pattern, Emphasis, Rhythm and Balance.

Physical Education

Physical Education classes in grade 5-8 will prove to be an integral phase of each student's physical and social development. The aim of the physical education program at St. Louise de Marillac School is to develop and improve students' personal fitness and motor skills by providing developmentally appropriate activities through purposeful, creative and enjoyable instruction. By incorporating challenging yet achievable tasks, the students will attain positive attitudes about physical activity and movement. Your child's locomotor movement, manipulative skills, personal behavior, and fitness level will be monitored and assessed throughout the school year. The FitnessGram Fitness Testing conducted at the beginning of the year, measures the students' cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility. The Council seeks to expand the availability of quality information regarding physical activity, sports, and good nutrition and to empower Americans of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to adopt a healthy lifestyle through: regular physical activity, participation in sports, and healthy eating.

ALL students (grades 5,6, 7, 8 boys and girls) MUST change into proper attire for each physical education class:

- Clean, modest shorts (no shorter than mid-thigh)/sweat/work- out (long) pants
- Clean, modest (no inappropriate logo/print) T-shirts preferably short sleeved (no sleeveless or "crop" tops)
- Tennis shoes/socks (student will not be able to participate without proper footwear)

7th and 8th Grade Spanish

7th grade:

- Students will now have Spanish 3 days/week.
- Students will be using the next book in our book series ¿Asi se dice? 1A
- Students will continue to build on vocabulary & will be taught grammar which is equivalent to that which is taught at high school level Spanish 1
- Students will learn all aspects of conjugating regular and irregular verbs in the present tense
- The culture & customs of Argentina will be studied.

8th grade:

- Students continue with Spanish 3 days/week.
- Students will be using ¿ ¿Asi se dice? 1B.
- Students are continuing to build upon vocabulary & grammar already learned.

- Students will be continuing at a high school level Spanish 1 & a fair amount of high school Spanish 2.
- The culture & customs of Spain will be studied.

All 6th, 7th & 8th graders are invited to join Spanish club in the Winter/ Spring.

KIVA club is a service-based club where students learn about people around the world and their hopes to build a business to help provide for themselves and their families. We meet once a week during lunch and students research and lend to a small business owner.

Spanish Club is also a service-based club where students are assisting with our school's fundraiser for the Diocese of Pittsburgh's mission in Chimbote, Peru. We meet once a week during lunch.

Exploratory Latin/Classics Course Grades 7 & 8

Students will develop an awareness and appreciation for all aspects of ancient Roman civilization, including its culture, daily life, dress, ancient coins, art, history, language, architecture, and mythology. The class meets in the computer lab and the grades are incorporated into the computer grade, so there is a strong technology component to this course. Students will use numerous websites, games, drills, flashcards, and online sources for interactive study. Students also use their Google Apps for Education accounts for project work. The main focus of the course is etymology to build vocabulary for SAT Prep and students will use online tools, apps, and interactive games. 7th Grade will use the text *Minimus: Starting out in Latin* by Barbara Bell with its online activities and in 8th grade students will explore materials from the Cambridge Latin Course online components as well as other online materials.

Interested students also have the option to participate as docents in an Ancient Coin Museum exhibit at school and be part of the Latin and Ancient Coins Club. Students have the option to take the National Etymology Exam in the fall and the National Mythology Exam in the spring. Both exams are sponsored by the American Classical League.

Music 5-8

The general music program at St. Louise de Marillac School is grounded in the National Standards for Arts Education. Throughout the school, music class includes singing, composition, improvisation, and musical movement, games, playing instruments, listening to performances, learning about historical and cultural contexts, and responding thoughtfully and appropriately to music. As part of the school-wide focus on singing, each class prepares songs for our annual Christmas and spring concerts.

Grades 5-8 see an increase in the academic expectations in music class with more quizzes, class work, and projects in addition to the participatory singing and playing activities used in the younger grades. Grades 7 & 8 begin each year with a thorough review of the basic elements of music and related concepts (rhythm, melody, harmony, texture, timbre, and dynamics). After Christmas, we then venture into lessons on American Popular Music History, studying music from the late 1800s through today. We use Google Classroom extensively for in-class writing and assignments.

Band

Students in grades 4-8 also have the opportunity to join the STL Band. Students can choose to learn flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, or percussion instruments. Pull-out lessons occur during the school day, and ensembles rehearse together once a week before school. Band students perform at concerts in the winter and spring. Students in grades 6-8 have the opportunity to audition for and perform with Diocesan Honors ensembles in the spring.

6-8 Grade Electives 2020-2021

During Independent Study periods or when classwork is complete.

GRADE	TRADITIONAL CURRICULUM	LANGUAGE STUDY	DIGITAL MEDIA	FINANCIAL EDUCATION/ STEM & CAREER READINESS
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	1st Nine Weeks	2nd Nine Weeks	3rd Nine Weeks	4th Nine Weeks
6th Grade	Traditional Library Classes	French German Italian	Digital Storytelling Website Creation Digital Tools with Adobe Spark Applied Digital Skills	Vault Future Goals FutureSmart

7th Grade	Traditional Latin/Computer Classes	French German Italian Latin	Digital Storytelling Website Creation Digital Tools with Adobe Spark Applied Digital Skills	Future Goals FutureSmart Entrepreneurial Expedition Endeavor-STEM Career Exploration Character Playbook
8th Grade	Traditional Latin/Computer Classes	French German Italian Latin	Digital Storytelling Website Creation Digital Tools with Adobe Spark Applied Digital Skills	FutureSmart Entrepreneurial Expedition Endeavor-STEM Career Exploration