



St. Joseph Junior High School

Program of Studies

Mathematics:

Math 7 (seventh grade):

In this course, we will utilize previous skills learned in elementary school to create new techniques to solve problems. Developmentally, this year will also be an important step in terms of mathematical complexity, as students learn to solve not only word problems but also problems that take more than one step. This class covers simplifying basic algebraic expressions, one-step equations, integer operations, fraction and decimal operations, ratios and proportions, graphing on the coordinate plane, percents, measures of central tendency, angle relationships, and area, volume, and surface area.

Pre-Algebra (seventh or eighth grade):

In this course, we will explore the foundations of Algebra to prepare students for the rigors of a high school-level math course. We will study algebraic, geometric, and other material to bridge the gap between concrete mathematics and the future, which is predominantly abstract. This class covers simplifying algebraic expressions, including exponents, integer and fraction operations, multistep equations, and equations with variables on both sides, solving and graphing multi-step inequalities, ratios and proportions, percents, functions, graphing linear equations, and area, volume, and surface area.

Algebra (eighth grade):

In this course, we will explore fundamental concepts in higher mathematics, including linear algebra, solving quadratic equations, and complex word problems of a new variety that you have never seen. This course is important to your development because this math course makes the final leap into abstract thinking in reference to quantitative reasoning. Since this is a high school level course, it does lay the groundwork for high school math and even college. This class covers word problems of many varieties, basic proof, solving multi-step equations and inequalities, graphing linear equations, solving systems of equations, graphing linear inequalities, polynomial operations, proportions, and factoring quadratics.

English Language Arts

English Language Arts 7 (seventh grade):

This course is designed to enhance students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Students will explore various literary genres, analyze texts for deeper meaning, and develop their writing style through a variety of assignments and projects. In reading, students will read a variety of texts, including novels, short stories, poetry, and non-fiction articles. They will analyze these texts for themes, characters, and literary devices. In writing, students will practice various forms of writing, including narrative, persuasive, and informational essays. They will also work on grammar, spelling, and organization. In speaking and listening, students will practice effective communication skills through group discussions, presentations, and debates. In vocabulary, students will build their vocabulary through regular vocabulary assignments and quizzes. In research, students will learn how to conduct research, cite sources, and write research papers.

English Language Arts 8 (eighth grade):

This course builds upon the reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills developed in English Language Arts 7. Students will read more challenging texts and be expected to show a higher level of thinking. Assignments include literary analysis essays, creative writing assignments, vocabulary quizzes, research papers, and presentations. By the end of eighth grade, all St. Joseph students should know how to write a five-paragraph essay with a clear thesis statement and supporting details, along with proper citations.

Science

Life Science (seventh grade):

This course will provide students with a foundation in biology. Topics include cell structure, taxonomy, genetics, and the primary systems of the human body. Evolution, adaptation, and the history of life on Earth are explored, as well as an introduction to chemistry. Students will become familiar with the periodic table, the elements most critical for life processes, and the inextricable link between biology and chemistry.

Earth Science (eighth grade):

This course will provide students with a foundation in Earth science. The primary focus is on the interconnection of Earth's systems. Topics include geology, meteorology, basic chemistry, and the history of life on the planet. The causes, history, and approaches to mitigate the effects of earthquakes, storms, and tsunamis will be explored. Other topics include the energy flow in Earth's systems, radiation, and plate tectonics.

Social Studies:

World Geography (seventh grade)

In this course, students will go around the world in 180 days. We study all seven continents.

Students will examine the history, technologies, cultures, and economies of countries and regions so that they may have a deeper understanding of the world outside New Hampshire and the United States.

U.S. History (eighth grade):

In this course, students will understand and appreciate the legacy of our republic and become responsible citizens in our democracy. Highlights will include the American Revolution, with a special Native American ancestral quilt project; the Constitution and civics; the Civil War, including a soldier dress-up day); becoming a world power and World War I; the Holocaust and World War II; and the spread of communism and the Korea and Vietnam conflicts.

World Language:

French A (first year):

Prerequisite: None, Grades 7-8. In this course, students will begin their journey to communicate in the French language while gaining knowledge of the many cultures that make up the Francophonie. Students will receive an introduction to vocabulary, phrases, and grammar through sample dialogues, memorization, and classroom activities to reinforce lessons. Culture will also be covered, including songs and dances that are popular in French-speaking countries. This course is typically for seventh-graders, though in some circumstances, eighth-graders will take French A.

French B (second year):

Prerequisite: French A, Grade 8. This is the second half of the French program at St. Joseph. This course is for eighth-graders and will build on the skills learned in French A, including more vocabulary and more advanced grammar. There is also an emphasis on learning cultures, again including learning songs and dances that are popular in French-speaking countries. French B aims to give students a platform to succeed in French at the high school level.

Spanish A (first year):

Prerequisite: None, Grades 7-8. This full-year course is designed for the student with little or no Spanish language background. The course introduces and reinforces the use of the basic vocabulary and grammatical structures of the language so the student can learn to use these structures in written and oral communication. Students also explore the Catholic and cultural traditions of Spanish-speaking countries.

Spanish B (second year):

Prerequisite: Spanish A, Grade 8. This full-year course is designed for the student who has successfully completed Spanish A or demonstrates equivalent proficiency if initially enrolled as an eighth-grade student. The course continues to introduce and reinforce the use of the basic vocabulary and grammatical structures of the language so the student can learn to use these structures in written and oral communication. Students continue to explore the Catholic and cultural traditions of Spanish-speaking countries.

Academic Support Period

St. Joseph offers an Academic Support class in lieu of World Language for any student who could benefit from the extra time to focus on homework, study, and the like. A dedicated academic coach will work with the students on study skills, organization, and overcoming academic challenges, in addition to coaching students through their daily work.

Theology

Life of Christ (seventh grade):

This course begins with the revelation of our triune God. Students will explore what it means to be created in the image and likeness of an all-loving God who lives in communion (relationship) as three divine persons. They will learn that God sends His only son, Jesus, into a particular place and time through the mystery of the incarnation. Students will follow salvation history through the covenants, and will learn that Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and covenant relationship. They will see that scripture reveals God through Jesus Christ, and will go back in time to the world of the New Testament and the gospel writers.

Life of the Church (eighth grade):

This course begins with the revelation of our triune God. Students will explore what it means to be created in the image and likeness of an all-loving God who lives in communion (relationship) as three divine persons. They will learn that Jesus reveals God to all humanity and institutes a church through His apostles to begin His kingdom on earth and lead us to Heaven. Students will follow the progression of the Catholic Church and her history from the first century with the apostles and the missionary trips of St. Paul. They will see how the church continues to grow and spread despite persecutions, invasions, wars, and changing civilizations, and that only the Holy Spirit could help the church flourish. Students will learn how their call to holiness can be lived out through the church founded by Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church, in their time and place.

Specials

Physical Education (seventh and eighth grade):

This course encourages the physical, mental, spiritual, and social growth in each student. Students will demonstrate motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform various physical activities and sports. They will assess and monitor their physical health to meet fitness goals, which will be checked by fitness testing. They will maintain a safe, meaningful, and challenging environment where students are actively involved. They will promote health and wellness, demonstrate the importance of good sportsmanship, teamwork, and practicing the virtues during competition.

Foundations of Art (seventh and eighth grade):

Students will explore the fundamentals of art and design, gaining hands-on experience with the elements and principles of art while fostering their creativity. Through the "Art and Design Process," they will plan and create their own original artworks. Projects will include Art History and Digital Works, utilizing tools like Google Docs and Google Slides. The final project will be a portfolio and artist statement, presented in a PowerPoint format. Course units cover topics such as Introduction to the Art Room, Medieval Art History, Introduction to the Elements of Art, and Principles of Art.

Band (seventh and eighth grade):

The St. Joseph Stage Band is open to all students who play flute, clarinet, oboe, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, euphonium, French horn, bass guitar, or percussion. It is open to all levels of musicians, but at least one year of study on your instrument is needed. If you are interested in playing in the band but have not been playing for a year, please see Mr. Jenkins to work out a way you can participate. Rehearsals are going to be during the school day and will not conflict with after-school activities. Band members are required to perform in three concerts throughout the year. This is a pass/fail class, but students are given a grade for conduct and effort.

Chorus (seventh and eighth grade):

This full-year course allows students to practice and improve their singing voices. The St. Joseph choir sings at our combined school Mass twice a month, at the Holiday Evening of the Arts, and the Spring Show. Students also visit St. Teresa Manor during the Christmas season. No audition is required. No prerequisites.

BEAR Block

BEAR stands for Building Excellence and Responsibility. Helping students become more responsible for their workload and responsibilities is one of our goals at St. Joseph. Each school day ends with a quiet study period from 2:18 to 2:45. During this time, students work on homework, projects, or study. They can also meet with classroom teachers for additional help on assignments or concepts if needed.