



Upper Elementary Division
"Inspiring the Potential Within"

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Grades 3 and 4

Table of Contents

Message from the Head of the Upper Elementary Division.....	3
Third Grade Language Arts	4
Third Grade Math	7
Third Grade Social Studies	9
Third Grade Science	10
Fourth Grade Language Arts	12
Fourth Grade Math	15
Fourth Grade Social Studies	17
Fourth Grade Science	18
Upper Elementary Art	20
Upper Elementary Music	21
Upper Elementary Religion, Community Service, and Student Government	22
Upper Elementary Physical Education	24
Upper Elementary Technology	25
Upper Elementary Library	26
Upper Elementary Spanish	27
Upper Elementary Character Education.....	28
Upper Elementary Study Skills	29
Third Grade Highlights	30
Fourth Grade Highlights	31

Introduction

The mission of The Parish Episcopal School is to provide an enriching and challenging educational experience within a Christian community of service and worship.

Message from the Head of the Upper Elementary Division

The academic program of the Upper Elementary Division represents a two-year time period of building upon the foundation that was developed in the Early Childhood Division, and we endeavor to guide students in preparation for Middle School. We believe these transition years are significant in students' lives, and we embrace the mission of providing smooth transitions in which students can excel. We believe these are the years when students discover so much about themselves and their potential, and we strive to create a challenging academic environment that also encourages students to strengthen their appreciation of individual excellence spiritually and socially.

The contents of this Program Overview were designed to provide you with information about Upper Elementary course offerings, and some additional highlights are included to provide a broad overview. We hope you will find that the contents, herein, reflect our mission to guide students in their journey to achieve individual excellence. Please read the material carefully. Your support is important to our ability to achieve success for all students in our unique and special community.

Thank you for choosing Parish Episcopal School, and feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lynda Csaszar, Ph.D.
Head of the Upper Elementary School Division
lcsaszar@parishepiscopal.org
972-852-8778



Third Grade Language Arts

In third grade Language Arts, students read and write more independently than in any previous grades and spend significant blocks of time engaged in reading and writing on their own as well as on assigned tasks and projects. Third grade students focus on reading grade level material fluently and with comprehension. Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, quickly, effortlessly, and with appropriate expression and meaning. Fluent readers recognize words automatically. They group words rapidly to help them gain meaning from what they read. Students build oral reading fluency through guided oral reading. The teacher coaches their reading in the form of previewing, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing as the passage is read in a group.

Third grade students use root words, prefixes and suffixes, and derivational endings. Students demonstrate knowledge of synonyms, antonyms, and multi-meaning words. Students are beginning to distinguish fact from opinion in texts. During class discussions, students support their ideas and inferences by citing portions of the text being discussed. Students read a variety of genres, including realistic and imaginative fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Third grade students write with more complex capitalization and punctuation such as proper nouns, commas in a series, and quotation marks in dialog. Students write with more proficient spelling of contractions and homonyms. Third grade students write longer and more elaborate sentences. Students write several drafts to produce a final product. Students revise their writing to produce coherence, progression, and logic, and edit final drafts to reflect standard grammar and usage. Third grade students focus on mastering cursive writing. By the end of third grade, students should be able to write complete sentences with correct punctuation and capitalization.

Students in third grade language arts will focus on

LISTENING/SPEAKING

- listening to solve problems, gather information or appreciate stories
- listening to identify the musical elements of literary language, such as rhymes, repeated sounds or instances of onomatopoeia
- gaining increasing control of grammar, such as subject-verb agreement, complete sentences, and correct tense usage

READING

- reading independently (silently and aloud) with fluency, accuracy, and comprehension, fiction and nonfiction books appropriately written for grade three and beyond for increased periods of time
- reading orally from familiar texts with accuracy, expression, appropriate phrasing, and attention to punctuation
- reading for enjoyment, to solve problems, to gather information, and to extend vocabulary
- making and explaining important inferences in a story
- demonstrating knowledge of synonyms, antonyms, and multi-meaning words
- recognizing the purpose of a table of contents, index, and glossary as tools for locating information
- identifying setting, characters, and plot in a reading selection
- selecting appropriate antonyms, synonyms, and homonyms within context

- identifying similes and metaphors
- determining the meaning of unfamiliar words and multi-meaning words using context clues, dictionaries, and glossaries
- interpreting information using a chart, map, or timeline
- using prefixes, suffixes, and root words as aids in determining meaning within texts
- participating in activities for selected novels
- reading, discussing, and studying short story selections
- monitoring their own comprehension, rereading, using reference aids, searching for clues, and asking questions when understanding breaks down
- using multiple reference aids, including software, to clarify and seek information
- studying word meanings across content areas and through current events
- responding to readings and ideas through journal writing, discussion, and media
- offering observations, making connections, reacting, speculating, interpreting, and raising questions after reading
- choosing a logical word to complete an analogy using synonyms and homonyms

Book Reports: (4-6) *Animal fiction, Realistic or Fantasy fiction, Historical fiction, Biography, Mystery, and Mythology*
 Independent Reading Log: *Independent Reading*
 Reading Response Journal: *Fosters Critical Thinking*



GRAMMAR / USAGE / MECHANICS

- identifying different sentence types: *declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory*
- writing complete sentences including compound subjects and predicates, correct word order, and subject-verb agreement
- using increasingly complex capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
- writing the correct singular and plural forms of nouns
- identifying and using proper/common nouns and pronouns correctly
- recognizing and using action verbs, helping verbs, linking verbs, and adverbs
- using the correct past tense and present tense of regular and irregular verbs
- recognizing and using the correct forms of common adjectives and articles
- recognizing and avoiding double negatives
- using a comma between the day and year in a date, between the city and state in an address, in a series, and after yes and no
- using apostrophes in contractions and in singular and plural possessive nouns
- recognizing that homophones are words that sound alike, but are spelled differently and have different meanings
- incorporating new vocabulary during the writing process using synonyms, antonyms, and adjectives
- identifying and using common abbreviations such as: ft., lb., in., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., St., Ave., and TX

WRITING

- evaluating written compositions using assigned and established criteria
- using a dictionary to check and correct spellings when uncertain
- composing journals, letters, poems, narratives, and instructions
- using writing as a tool for learning

- capitalizing the first word in a sentence, the pronoun “I”, proper nouns, calendar items, days, months, holidays, people’s names, titles of people, initials, titles of books, stories, TV shows, place names, languages, historical events, letter parts, envelopes, and direct quotations
- indenting to designate paragraphs
- punctuating the end of sentences correctly using a period for declarative and imperative sentences, titles, abbreviations, and outlines
- using question marks at the end of interrogative sentences
- using exclamation points at the end of exclamatory sentences
- taking a piece of writing through the writing stages of prewriting, first draft, peer reviews, editing, revising, and final copies
- articulating how authors use a variety of techniques and craft in their writing, and showing evidence of the author’s craft in their own writing
- communicating effectively with different audiences
- incorporating new vocabulary during the writing process using synonyms, antonyms, and adjectives
- writing friendly letters to include a heading, salutation, body, closing, and signature
- writing varied genre styles such as: How To, Personal Narratives, Persuasive, Descriptive, Informative, and Poetry
- preparing for weekly spelling assessments of spelling words at the fourth grade level
- emphasizing the refinement of cursive handwriting

Writing portfolios: Required for each student. Portfolios contain writing genres that are more structured such as: How To, Descriptive, Persuasive, and Letter Writing.

Writing Journals: Required for each student. Journals contain creative writing (and poetry) on a variety of topics. Some topics are teacher assigned and others are student selected.

* *Writing is shared during parent conferences.*



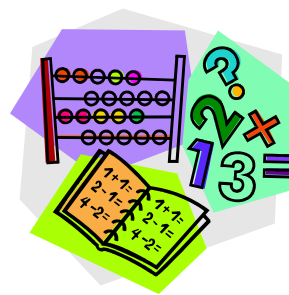
Third Grade Mathematics

Developments over the past 20 years have led to a tremendous increase in the importance of mathematics in a growing number of occupations and in daily life. As a result, the goal of achieving mathematical literacy for all citizens has become a national priority. By today's definition, mathematical literacy means that adults need to have a range of sophisticated mathematical knowledge and skills that extend far beyond basic calculation skills. To meet these demands, Parish has adopted the *Everyday Mathematics Program* developed by the University of Chicago. Over the past several years, our standardized testing results in math have exceeded the testing results in other independent schools in our comparison group. We believe that it is crucial to begin laying the groundwork for mathematical literacy at an earlier age than offered in traditional programs. Based on extensive research conducted by the program developers, the authors also firmly believe that children are capable of learning a great deal more than previously expected. *Everyday Mathematics* is the result of a rich collaboration between the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project author team, distinguished mathematicians, education specialists, teachers-in-residence, and hundreds of classroom teachers. Everyday Math is the core of our math program; however, teachers at Parish also utilize the most current supplemental materials available to teach grade level standards and challenge our students to reach their greatest potential.

Students in third grade math will focus on

NUMBER, OPERATION, AND QUANTITATIVE REASONING

- using place value to read, write, and describe numbers
- comparing and ordering whole numbers less than 10,000
- determining value of a collection of coins and bills
- constructing fractional models and comparing fractions
- naming fractional parts of a whole or set using symbols
- constructing models of equivalent fractions
- modeling addition and subtraction
- adding and subtracting with numbers less than 10,000
- learning and applying multiplication facts
- multiplying using a two-digit multiplier
- using models for division and recording the solutions
- rounding numbers to tens or hundreds
- estimating sums and differences



PATTERNS, RELATIONSHIPS, AND ALGEBRAIC THINKING

- making predictions and solving problems using patterns
- identifying patterns in multiplication facts
- identifying fact families for multiplication and division
- identifying fact extensions for multiplication and division

GEOMETRY AND SPATIAL REASONING

- naming, describing, and comparing shapes and solids
- identifying congruent shapes
- creating and identifying lines of symmetry
- locating and naming whole numbers and fractions on a number line

MEASUREMENT

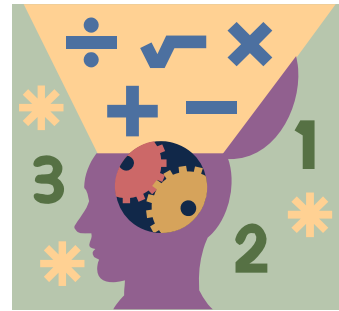
- estimating and measuring length using metric and customary units
- finding the perimeter of a figure
- determining area using concrete models
- telling and writing time on digital and traditional clocks
- determining elapsed time on digital and traditional clocks
- measuring length, area, temperature, and time to solve problems

PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS

- collecting, organizing, recording, and displaying data in picture and bar graphs
- interpreting information from graphs
- describing events as more likely, less likely, or equally likely

PROBLEM SOLVING

- identifying the mathematics in everyday situations
- using a problem-solving model
- using tools, such as real objects, manipulatives, and technology to solve problems
- explaining and recording observations
- relating informal language to mathematical language and symbols
- making generalizations from patterns
- justifying why an answer is reasonable and explaining the solution process



Third Grade Social Studies

Third grade social studies begins with a review and extension of the basic geography concepts of place, regional human and physical characteristics, and relative location introduced in previous grades. Students review map symbols, map keys, or legends, and directions. Students review the continents and identify all five oceans, along with Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Central America. The country of Canada will receive special emphasis. Students' exploration of the globe continues by having them review the location of the Equator, the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, and the North and South Poles. Students gain an understanding of river systems and their important role in the world. Major world rivers are introduced with the expectation of learning about their locations and uses. World geography will continue to be taught in conjunction with each region studied in third grade history.

The third grade social studies program is highly interactive. Teachers engage students in lively discussions of history as students are encouraged to ask questions and seek answers through investigations using current research tools. Smart Board technology is available in third grade social studies classes to provide students with instant access to information on current topics of study. Each year, the third grade social studies curriculum will change somewhat in order to keep the program growing and improving. Third grade students will continue to develop their writing skills throughout the year in social studies by practicing the writing genres introduced in language arts during our studies of history and geography.

THIRD GRADE INSTRUCTIONAL UNITS:

World History and Geography

- World Geography including major world rivers
- Canada
- Rome and the geographic regions of the Mediterranean
- Vikings

American History and Geography

- The Earliest Americans
- Early Exploration of North America
- The Thirteen Colonies and Times Before the Revolution

Third Grade Science

Science is considered a core subject at Parish, and to ensure the development of appropriate targeted skills, the Upper Elementary science curriculum is rich in hands-on, project-based exploratory activities that provide numerous opportunities for students to become strong, independent learners. The science curriculum in Upper Elementary School is designed to be vertically teamed with the science disciplines in middle school. Each grade level will focus on a particular discipline of science that will then be re-explored three grade levels higher. In third grade, the emphasis of study is physical and earth science. Particular emphasis in Upper Elementary science is focused on process skills, and each component of the curriculum is written in adherence to the nationally recognized *Benchmarks for Science Literacy*. These science benchmarks have also been cross-referenced with their appropriate classification standard as described in *Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*.

There is a third and fourth grade Invention Convention each spring in which the results of process skill applications are put on display. Each grade level targets a different set of skills for development during the preparation time for student projects. Students in both grades will also do at-home experiments in order to practice the scientific method. Exactly what are process skills, and why are they so important? To answer that, let's remember that we prepare students to be "life long learners", and for that goal, they must hone skills that enable them to solve problems, no matter what the situation. The skills stressed in the *Benchmarks* are:

Observing: *Students learn to use all of their five senses. They record their sensory experiences as data.*

Communicating: *Students share information with others, orally, in written form, non-verbally or using symbols.*

Measuring: *Students make observations that can be stated in numerical terms.*

Comparing: *Students assess different objects, events or outcomes for similarity.*

Contrasting: *A companion skill to comparing, outcomes are evaluated according to their differences.*

Organizing: *Students learn to arrange data into a logical order so it is easier to analyze and understand. This skill includes sequencing, grouping, and classifying data by making tables and charts, plotting graphs, and labeling diagrams.*

Predicting: *Students state in advance the result that will be obtained from testing a hypothesis. An accurate prediction tends to support a hypothesis.*

Classifying: *Students group items into like categories. This can be done at many different levels, from very general to very specific.*

Analyzing: *Students determine relationships between events, identify separate components of a system, diagnose causes, and determine the reliability of data.*

Inferring: *Students draw conclusions based on reasoning or past experience.*

Hypothesizing: *Students develop explanations for events that can be tested. Testing either supports a hypothesis, or refutes it.*

A good background in process skills can lead to higher-level thought and help students develop critical thinking abilities where they validate facts, form generalizations based on experiences, make decisions and interpret information. From that point, they can begin to apply their skills. They can take information from previous experiences and use it to make new predictions or hypothesize with new factors, all of which lead to problem solving abilities that are invaluable as they grow and mature. In fourth grade, some of the units that students will use to accomplish these goals are:

- Introduction to the Scientific Method
- Introduction to the Engineering Design Process
- Property of Matter
- Acids and Bases
- Water Cycle and Weather
- Circuitry
- Magnets
- Forces and Motion
- Rocketry
- Simple machines
- Rocks Minerals, Plate Tectonics, Volcanoes, Earthquakes

Fourth Grade Language Arts

In fourth grade Language Arts, students spend significant amounts of time engaged in reading and writing independently. Fourth grade students focus on becoming critical listeners and analyze a speaker's intent such as to entertain or persuade. When speaking, they adapt their language to the audience, purpose, and occasion. Students continue to read classic and contemporary literature selections. Fourth grade students read with a growing interest in a wide variety of topics and adjust their reading approach to various forms of texts. Students expand their vocabulary systematically across the curriculum. Students read for meaning and can paraphrase texts. Fourth grade students practice connecting, comparing and contrasting ideas. Fourth grade students can identify and follow varied text structures such as chronologies, and cause and effect. Students can produce summaries of texts and engage in more sophisticated analysis of plot, settings, and characters.

Fourth grade students are able to select and use different forms of writing for specific purposes such as to inform, persuade, or entertain. Their writing tasks take on style and voice. Fourth grade students write in complete sentences. Students vary sentence structure and use adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, and conjunctions. Fourth grade students become more proficient spellers. Students edit their writing based on their knowledge of grammar and usage, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions of written language. Students can produce a final, polished copy of a written composition. Fourth grade students understand and use visual media and can compare and contrast visual media to print.

Students in fourth grade language arts will focus on

LISTENING/SPEAKING

- listening to gain information and support evidence
- monitoring their understanding of a spoken message and appropriately seek clarification
- interpreting speakers' messages (verbal and nonverbal), purposes, and perspectives
- gaining increasing control of grammar, such as subject-verb agreement, complete sentences, and correct tense usage

READING

- reading independently (silently and aloud) with fluency, accuracy, and comprehension, fiction and nonfiction books appropriately written for grade four and beyond
- reading and understanding informational texts from other content areas as well as language arts
- adjusting reading rate according to the purpose of reading
- determining the main idea of a selection, identifying cause and effect, summarizing text, paraphrasing for understanding the logical sequence of events/ideas
- recognizing plot features of a variety of genres
- identifying character, setting, and plots in a passage
- identifying the author's purpose (e.g., to entertain, to persuade, to inform, or share feelings)
- choosing a logical word to complete an analogy using synonyms and antonyms
- determining the problem in a story and finding the solution
- recognizing the purpose of a table of contents, index, and glossary as tools for locating information

- using headings, graphics, and captions to make meaning from text
- selecting sources from which to gather information on a given topic, and locating information to support opinions, predictions, and conclusions
- selecting appropriate antonyms, synonyms, and homonyms within context
- identifying similes and metaphors
- determining the meaning of unfamiliar words and multi-meaning words using context clues, dictionaries, and glossaries
- interpreting information using a chart, map, or timeline
- using prefixes, suffixes, and root words as aids in determining meaning within texts
- participating in activities for the novels Snow Treasure and In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson
- reading, discussing, and studying short story selections
- monitoring their own comprehension, rereading, using reference aids, searching for clues, and asking questions when understanding breaks down
- using multiple reference aids, including software, to clarify and seek information
- studying word meanings across content areas and through current events
- responding to readings and ideas through journal writing, discussion, and media
- paraphrasing and summarizing text
- representing text information by generating timelines, and graphics
- offering observations, making connections, reacting, speculating, interpreting, and raising questions after reading

Reading Contracts: (1 per quarter)

Fiction: *Mystery, Realistic, Animal, Fantasy, Poetry, and Short Stories*

Fiction or Non-Fiction: *Sports, Biography, Autobiography*

Independent Reading Log: *Independent Reading*

Reading Response Journals: *To foster critical thinking*



GRAMMAR / USAGE / MECHANICS

- identifying different sentence types: *declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamatory*
- writing complete sentences including compound subjects and predicates, correct word order, and subject-verb agreement
- using increasingly complex capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
- writing the correct singular and plural forms of nouns
- identifying and using proper/common nouns and pronouns correctly
- recognizing and using action verbs and adverbs
- using the correct past tense and present tense of regular and irregular verbs
- recognizing and using the correct forms of common adjectives and articles
- recognizing and avoiding double negatives
- using a comma between the day and year in a date, between the city and state in an address, in a series, and after yes and no
- using apostrophes in contractions and in singular and plural possessive nouns
- identifying and using coordinating conjunctions
- recognizing that homophones are words that sound alike, but are spelled differently and have different meanings
- incorporating new vocabulary during the writing process using synonyms, antonyms, and adjectives
- identifying and using common abbreviations such as: ft., lb., in., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., St., Ave., and TX

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

- evaluating written compositions using assigned and established criteria
- using a dictionary to check and correct spellings when uncertain
- composing journals, letters, poems, narratives, and instructions
- using writing as a tool for learning
- capitalizing the first word in a sentence, the pronoun “I”, proper nouns, calendar items, days, months, holidays, people’s names, titles of people, initials, titles of books, stories, TV shows, place names, organizations, languages, historical events, letter parts, envelopes, outline forms, and direct quotations
- indenting to designate paragraphs
- punctuating the end of sentences correctly using a period for declarative and imperative sentences, titles, abbreviations, and outlines
- using question marks at the end of interrogative sentences
- using exclamation points at the end of exclamatory sentences
- taking a piece of writing through the writing stages of prewriting, first draft, peer reviews, editing, revising, and final copies
- articulating how authors use a variety of techniques and craft in their writing, and showing evidence of the author’s craft in their own writing
- communicating effectively with different audiences
- incorporating new vocabulary during the writing process using synonyms, antonyms, and adjectives
- writing friendly letters to include a heading, salutation, body, closing, and signature
- writing varied genre styles such as: How To, Personal Narrative, Persuasive, Descriptive, Friendly Letters, and Poetry
- preparing for weekly spelling assessments of spelling words at the fifth grade level (challenge words also provided for students mastering fourth grade words)

Writing portfolios: Required for each student. Portfolios contain writing genres that are more structured such as: How To, Personal Narrative, Persuasive, Descriptive, Friendly Letters, and Poetry.

Writing Journals: Required for each student. Journals contain creative writing (and poetry) on a variety of topics. Some topics are teacher assigned and others are student selected.

* *Writing progress is reviewed during parent conferences.*

Fourth Grade Mathematics

To compete in the global economy, you must know math. Therefore, it is more important than ever that our students receive solid math instruction in the early grades to prepare them to take and pass Algebra and other challenging courses in middle school and high school. Today's high school graduates need to have solid math skills—whether they are proceeding directly to college, or going straight into the workforce. In today's changing world, employers seek critical thinkers and practical problem-solvers fluent in today's technology. Our expectations for our students and our schools are higher than they have ever been. To meet these expectations, Parish has adopted the Everyday Math Program developed by the University of Chicago. This program offers students a broad background in mathematics. Some approaches in this program may differ from those you used as a student. However, they are based on research results, field-test experiences, and the mathematics that students will need in the twenty-first century. Over the past several years, our standardized testing results in math have exceeded the testing results in other independent schools in our comparison group. Our Upper Elementary math instructors understand that mathematics instruction requires solid computational skills as well as quantitative reasoning and problem-solving skills. Everyday Math is the core of our math program, however, teachers at Parish also utilize the most current supplemental materials available to teach grade level standards and challenge our students to reach higher.

The Parish fourth grade math program is based on

- a problem-solving approach that uses mathematics in everyday situations through hands-on activities
- partner and small-group activities that promote cooperative learning
- concepts and skills introduced and reviewed throughout the school year, promoting retention through a variety of exposures
- opportunities to discuss and communicate mathematically
- frequent practice using games as an alternative to tedious drills
- opportunities for home and school communication

NUMBER, OPERATION, AND QUANTITATIVE REASONING:

- read, write, compare, and order whole numbers through millions
- read, write, compare, and order decimals through hundredths
- model fractions greater than one
- generate equivalent fractions using models
- compare and order fractions using concrete and picture models
- relate fractions and decimals, tenths and hundredths
- add and subtract whole numbers and decimals to hundredths
- model factors and products
- represent multiplication and division
- recall and apply multiplication facts
- multiply with two-digit multipliers
- divide with one and two-digit divisors
- use addition and subtraction to solve problems
- round to tens, hundreds, or thousands
- estimate products and quotients

PATTERNS, RELATIONSHIPS, AND ALGEBRAIC THINKING:

- use patterns to remember multiplication facts
- solve division problems using fact families
- use patterns to multiply by 10 and 100
- describe the relationship between two sets of data

GEOMETRY AND SPATIAL REASONING:

- use formal language for angles
- identify parallel and perpendicular lines
- describe shapes and solids with vertices, edges, and faces
- demonstrate translations, reflections, and rotations
- verify congruence and symmetry
- locate and name whole numbers, fractions, and decimals on a number line

MEASUREMENT:

- estimate and measure weight and capacity
- measure length, perimeter, time, temperature, and area

PROBABILITY AND STATISTICS:

- interpret bar graphs
- list possible outcomes of a probability experiment
- use a pair of numbers to describe the probability of an event

PROBLEM SOLVING:

- identify the mathematics in everyday situations
- use a problem-solving model
- select or develop an appropriate problem-solving strategy
- explain and record observations
- relate informal language to mathematical language and symbols, and make generalizations from patterns

Fourth Grade Social Studies

Texas History and Geography

In grade 4, students examine the history of Texas from early beginnings to the present within the context of influences of the Western Hemisphere. Historical content focuses on Texas history including the Texas Revolution, establishment of the Texas Republic, and subsequent annexation to the United States. Students discuss important issues, events, and individuals of the 19th and 20th centuries. Students conduct a thorough study of regions in Texas and the Western Hemisphere that result from human activity and from physical features. A focus on the location, distribution, and patterns of economic activities and of the settlement in Texas further enhance the concept of regions. The teaching of fourth grade Texas history is enhanced by the use of a variety of primary and secondary source materials including: biographies, novels, speeches and letters, poetry, songs, artwork, and video media. Each student will be working from the textbook, *Scott Foresman Social Studies: Texas Edition*, as a guide for our daily lesson concepts. Fourth grade history students will be responsible for recording orderly notes and benders in preparation for unit assessments.

The aim of social studies is to give students the background and understanding to become responsible citizens in their communities now and in future years. We will explore the past, the choices we can make to affect the present, and how those choices will influence the future. Students learn history best when it is told in story form with the facts imbedded in the story. The individuals who influenced history are presented within the context of the events that occurred at that time in history. Parents who are native to our great state will remember some of the stories their children come home and retell. Those parents not born in Texas will receive an education along with their children.

Fourth Grade Texas History and Geography Units:

Geography of Texas: Regions, Climate, Plants and Animals, Terrain

First Texans: The Native American Tribes (native to Texas)

Early European Explorers of Texas

The Spanish Mission Influence

Texas Fight for Independence

The Republic of Texas

Statehood

The Civil War

War on the Plains and the Disappearance of the Buffalo Culture

The Cowboy Period (cattle drives, railroads, and the oil boom)

Texas History Highlights:

- Trip to Austin
- Texpert Trail Research Project and Texas Hero Character Portrayal
- Pioneer Day

Fourth Grade Science

Science is considered a core subject at Parish, and to ensure the development of appropriate targeted skills, the Upper Elementary science curriculum is rich in hands-on, project-based exploratory activities that provide numerous opportunities for students to become strong, independent learners. The science curriculum in Upper Elementary School is designed to be vertically teamed with the science disciplines in middle school. Each grade level will focus on a particular discipline of science that will then be re-explored three grade levels higher. In fourth grade, the emphasis of study is Life Science, as it will be again in 7th grade. Particular emphasis in Upper Elementary science is focused on process skills, and each component of the curriculum is written in adherence to the nationally recognized *Benchmarks for Science Literacy*. These science benchmarks have also been cross-referenced with their appropriate classification standard as described in *Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*.

There is a third and fourth grade Invention Convention each spring in which the results of process skill applications are put on display. Each grade level targets a different set of skills for development during the preparation time for student projects. Students in both grades will also do at-home experiments in order to practice the scientific method. Exactly what are process skills, and why are they so important? To answer that, let's remember that we prepare students to be "life long learners", and for that goal, they must hone skills that enable them to solve problems, no matter what the situation. The skills stressed in the *Benchmarks* are:

Observing: *Students learn to use all of their five senses. They record their sensory experiences as data.*

Communicating: *Students share information with others, orally, in written form, non-verbally or using symbols.*

Measuring: *Students make observations that can be stated in numerical terms.*

Comparing: *Students assess different objects, events or outcomes for similarity.*

Contrasting: *A companion skill to comparing, outcomes are evaluated according to their differences.*

Organizing: *Students learn to arrange data into a logical order so it is easier to analyze and understand. This skill includes sequencing, grouping, and classifying data by making tables and charts, plotting graphs, and labeling diagrams.*

Predicting: *Students state in advance the result that will be obtained from testing a hypothesis. An accurate prediction tends to support a hypothesis.*

Classifying: *Students group items into like categories. This can be done at many different levels, from very general to very specific.*

Analyzing: *Students determine relationships between events, identify separate components of a system, diagnose causes, and determine the reliability of data.*

Inferring: *Students draw conclusions based on reasoning or past experience.*

Hypothesizing: *Students develop explanations for events that can be tested. Testing either supports a hypothesis, or refutes it.*

A good background in process skills can lead to higher-level thought and help students develop critical thinking abilities where they validate facts, form generalizations based on experiences, make decisions and interpret information. From that point, they can begin to apply their skills. They can take information from previous experiences and use it to make new predictions or hypothesize with new factors, all of which lead to problem solving abilities that are invaluable as they grow and mature. In fourth grade, some of the units that students will use to accomplish these goals are:

- Brain Owner's Manual/Process and Study Skills
- The Digestive System/Healthy Eating
- Circulatory System/Heart Health
- The Skeletal System/Forensic Science/Prevention of Osteoporosis
- The Lungs and Respiratory System/Anti-Smoking Education
- Classification/Vertebrate Animals/Dinosaurs
- Caves/Cave Animals
- Plant and Animal Cells

Upper Elementary Visual Art

Third Grade

Students express themselves as they develop skills in drawing, painting, printing, weaving, and working with clay. They practice using the art elements (line, shape, color, texture, etc.), and they learn vocabulary words for talking about art. A field trip to the Dallas Museum of Art enriches learning about art.

Examples of third grade art activities

Drawing.....	Prismacolor colored pencils.....	Observation and imagination
Painting.....	Oil pastels, watercolor.....	Fantasy, pattern, overlapping
Printmaking.....	Styrofoam, stylus, ink.....	Mexican Day of the Dead
Ceramics.....	Clay, acrylic paints.....	Zoo animals, form and texture
Weaving.....	Cardboard looms, yarn.....	Plain and two-color weaving
Architecture.....	Ebony pencil.....	American house styles

Fourth Grade

Students continue to develop perceptual and motor skills with a variety of materials. They also develop an understanding and appreciation of our multicultural world by learning about art from various cultures and historical periods. A self-tour is designed for our annual trip to the Dallas Museum of Art.

Examples of fourth grade art activities

Drawing.....	Prismacolor pencils.....	John James Audubon
Painting.....	Tempera.....	Abstract art, color theory
Printmaking.....	Soft-Kut, cutting tools, ink.....	African textiles
Ceramics.....	Clay, glazes.....	Pueblo coil pottery
Weaving.....	Floor looms, yarn.....	Navajo weaving
Tribal arts.....	Chipboard, oil pastels.....	Maasai shields

Special Events

- Field trips – Dallas Museum of Art (3rd & 4th) or other venues
- Arts Night – Visual and Performing Arts’ big event in the spring
- *Dia de los Muertos* – Day of the Dead display
- Floor Loom Weaving – individual projects for each 4th grade student
- Community art exhibits – Barnes & Noble, The Point (senior living), the Farmers Branch Fire Department, and more

Upper Elementary Music

The purpose and objectives of the music program in third and fourth grades are designed to contribute to the intellectual and cultural development of the child and develop every child's musical aptitude and a life-long love and appreciation for music. Upper Elementary music students are taught musicianship through the processes of listening, creating, performing and interpreting music. Students develop problem-solving skills and critical thought through exposure to different kinds of music. Concepts and skills are taught according to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and include reading music, rhythmic notation, interpretation and phrasing, awareness and recognition of musical terms, recognition of composers and knowledge of music history and the demonstration of excellent musicianship.

Third Grade

Areas of concentration:

- A continuation of developing and refining vocal and aural skills
- higher skill level requirements in differentiation of steady beat versus rhythm
- continued development of *solfege* or organized scale tones, note/rest, and other musical symbol recognition
- music appreciation through music history and composer study
- folk dancing to correlate with world, Texas, and US history

Fourth Grade

Areas of concentration:

- continuation of sequential development of basic music skills and other curricula as introduced in earlier grades
- aural and visual comparison of strong and weak beats and use of syncopation in music
- understanding and application of meter and time signatures in music
- aural and visual recognition of melodic direction and respective interval relationships through regular use in the music classroom

Enrichment and performance opportunities for Upper Elementary students:

- 3rd grade field trip to Meyerson Symphony Center to hear a concert of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra
- PES Upper Elementary Choir which rehearses Wednesdays after school for students desiring to improve singing skills, expand their music repertoire and have opportunities to perform
- Annual Christmas concert featuring the combined voices of the entire division

Upper Elementary Religion, Community Service, & Student Government

RELIGION / SPIRITUAL LIFE

Third and fourth grade students participate in religious studies in addition to daily chapel and bi-monthly Eucharist services. Students attend a 45-minute religion class once in a six day rotation. Third grade student lessons are based on the stories of the Old Testament. Students gain an understanding of the Seasons of the Christian Church, Fruits of the Spirit, and Jewish traditions and holidays, as well as traditional Christian holidays. Both third and fourth grade students study the Lord's Prayer in their studies of prayer in general. Both grade levels maintain a journal of their weekly lesson focus. Fourth grade student lessons are based on New Testament writings to include the life and times of Jesus as well as His teachings. Fourth graders examine the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the writings of Paul, and the development of the early Christian church. In addition to the emphasis of the Christian faith, third and fourth graders are exposed to other religions to broaden their view of world faiths and to develop an appreciation for diverse cultures.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Service is an integral part of student life at Parish. Building a vibrant community service organization provides students opportunities to

- develop an understanding of service learning through active participation in service experiences
- learn to reflect by thinking, discussing and/or writing about their service experience
- use skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- extend their learning beyond the classroom and into the community
- develop a sense of caring for others

Each grade level adopts a local agency to support through collection drives, and various other outreach projects are created by the students. Vital to the overall success of the Parish model is the actual visit to a local agency by students. Examples of Parish community service initiatives for grades three and four have included outreach projects in association with the S.P.C.A., Operation Kindness, Dallas and Fort Worth Zoos, Austin Street Shelter, Habitat for Humanity, Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, Parkland Hospital, adoption of U.S. military personnel in war zones, Christmas Cards for Charities, and Parish Night at Barnes and Noble to support local charities.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

The Parish Upper Elementary Division provides students an opportunity to participate in student government through a forum known as "*Excellence in Action*." Representatives from each homeroom class meet once a month with a faculty advisor to discuss ways to involve their peers in upcoming school and community events, community service projects, and problem solving for school improvement. We believe when students have the chance to practice making responsible decisions as a group, they take another major step toward adulthood in a democratic society. The Upper Elementary E.I.A. consists of 20 students including one boy and one girl from each homeroom class. Representatives are selected by their homeroom peers through nomination and secret ballot. Students serving as grade level

representatives from previous grade levels may not be nominated again to represent grades three and four, however, all students will have the opportunity to run for student government positions in the fifth grade. The Excellence in Action team meets from 7:30 to 8:00 one morning per month. Letters are sent home to the families of elected students immediately following the elections in late September. E.I.A. membership is a source of pride for our Upper Elementary student body. They serve as student ambassadors for all special school visitation days and school assemblies. These student leaders are the voice of their peers, and their positive participation contributes to the school's overall motto of "*Wisdom, Honor, Service.*"

Upper Elementary Physical Education

The purpose of physical education is to guide children to be physically active for a lifetime. Physical education is one of the ultimate examples of the brain-based learning approach, and is firmly established on the understanding that children learn better by doing. The program is developed for third and fourth grades to encourage and support students' mental participation throughout physical education activities. The Parish Episcopal program is guided by the National Content Standards; therefore, the program is student-centered and developmentally appropriate. Our focus is on teaching physical skills as well as social skills, and is accompanied using effective classroom management to create a safe learning environment. There is a balance between competitive and cooperative units, with our main focus on physical activities to form a foundation of lifetime fitness and wellness.

Upper Elementary physical education concepts to be emphasized

- cardiovascular fitness is developed by engaging in aerobic activity
- movement concepts and terms are similar in a variety of motor skills
- practice, attention, and effort are required to improve skills
- strength, endurance, and flexibility interact to develop and maintain health-related fitness
- learning new games, strategies, rules, and etiquette
- stress can be relieved through physical activity
- measuring cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, endurance, agility and flexibility through the Presidential Physical Fitness tests
- safe movement and proper use of equipment
- appropriate changes in performance can be accomplished based on correct feedback

Upper Elementary Technology

Third and fourth graders are engaged in learning for the 21st century. Students use multiple software programs to brainstorm outlines (Inspiration and Kidspiration), to create movies with sounds and photographs, and to learn fundamental skills. In addition, our digital generation students learn how to collaborate their work with Web 2.0 tools which enables them to focus on making connections beyond the classroom. Students have a scheduled computer class each week where they are exposed to various computer application tools and skills, and they further develop their keyboarding proficiency. Core teachers have opportunities throughout the week to take their classes to the computer lab to engage in additional assignments.

Third and fourth grade advance student achievement by:

- identifying uses of technology and how to apply it to related areas of study
- using graphing programs to enter data and graph results
- demonstrating proper keyboarding techniques
- retrieving and editing word-processing documents
- digital photography and movies
- creating, saving, and printing
- safe online searching
- sharing work with Web 2.0 tools
- digital citizenship skills
- multiple educational software applications
- applying proper presentation skills using the SMART Board

Upper Elementary Library & Media Center

The Upper Elementary School Library is dedicated to fostering a love of literature in all students. We want to encourage children to love books, to love to read, and become lifetime readers. To this end we offer a comprehensive selection of books that will appeal to a wide range of interests and suitable for all reading confidence levels.

In addition, we want students to look to their library as their first step in locating information during their introduction to research in the third and fourth grades. To be successful researchers, students need information literacy skills. When a student possesses these skills they

- recognize the need for information
- know where to look for it
- find appropriate information in a variety of sources
- make critical decisions about authority, validity, currency, and relevancy
- comprehend information gathered
- synthesize information to create new knowledge
- evaluate the process and the final product

Ultimately, we want our Upper Elementary students at Parish to be self-reliant, independent, life-long learners, skilled in using varied information sources. Information literacy begins with mastering the basic skills involved in locating information. Information literacy begins with printed sources first, followed by electronic sources. The Parish Upper Elementary Library has computers designated specifically for third and fourth grade students. In addition to the training students receive regarding the effective use of electronic sources, students will also receive instruction for using the Internet from the instructional technology specialist and their classroom teachers.

Students are encouraged to make a contribution to our library on their birthday by selecting a book from those already purchased by the school librarian. This ensures that the library collection remains current with quality materials, and duplications are kept to a minimum. These donated books will be given a bookplate with the name of the student honoree and the special occasion printed on it. Birthday book presentations are made during a regular chapel service scheduled by the student or his/her parents.

Students in grades three and four have a designated 45-minute library period every two weeks as well as open access throughout the week to replenish their reading materials as needed. The school librarian works closely with core classroom teachers to provide books, DVDs, and other resources that directly relate to current topics of study. Classroom libraries are developed in cooperation with classroom teachers and the librarian to provide instant access for teachers to use in the classroom. This optimizes instructional time, and frees the library for continued use by the students at large. The Parish Upper Elementary Library serves as the hub that supports all content areas with support materials vital to a rich educational experience. It is through the unyielding support of the Parents' Association, donors, and Parish families that our library continues to grow and serve our students with exemplary reading materials.

Upper Elementary Spanish

As cited by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages, “*Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical.*” National studies indicate that the benefits of early foreign language programs go beyond language acquisition. Foreign language study in the Upper Elementary program supports multiple intelligences through a multi-sensory approach. It sharpens global awareness and exposes children to other cultures and thoughts. The study of foreign language helps prepare students to interact in the global community of the future, thus helping to place our students in a more equitable position with students from other global countries. Research also indicates that children studying a foreign language have improved self concept and sense of achievement in school.

National world language standards outline the following goals for students in American schools:

- communicate in languages other than English
- gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- develop insight into the nature of language and culture
- participate in multilingual communities at home & around the world

Third and fourth grade Spanish students will focus on the following performance standards to achieve these goals:

- engaging in conversations, providing and obtaining information, expressing feelings and preferences, providing descriptions, and exchanging opinions
- understanding, interpreting, and producing written and spoken language on a variety of topics: school, weather, calendar, numbers, body, activities, personal descriptions, meals, health, and community
- presenting information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics
- demonstrating an understanding of elementary grammatical concepts
- reinforcing and furthering their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language
- recognizing the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the study of foreign language and its cultures

The Parish Upper Elementary Spanish program is taught by a certified teacher who emphasizes conversational Spanish and the development of early literacy skills in Spanish. The program is aligned to national standards using lessons conducted mainly in the target language (Spanish), projects, dialogues, presentations, question/answer activities, games, and authentic manipulatives and visuals such as calendars, weather charts, cultural musical instruments, and other items from the country of study. Upper Elementary students will participate in lessons about Mexico’s Day of the Dead, learn about Christmas in Mexico and study the history Mexico’s Independence Day (September 16th).

Upper Elementary Character Development

The Parish Episcopal School's third and fourth grade teachers have adopted a common set of social skills/rules that will be expected of students during these very important transition years. Most of these expectations are not new; they were expected of us (or should have been!) when we were in school. We were inspired to have a stronger focus on character education in our curriculum by the best selling book, The Essential 55, by Ron Clark. Mr. Clark is an extraordinary educator who was chosen as a Disney Teacher of the Year and has appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show to share his philosophy and methods. We encourage all of our parents to read Mr. Clark's book to gain greater insight into our strong endorsement of his ideas. For anyone interested in purchasing his book, the order number is ISBN # 1-4013-0001-4.

After reading his book, we have created a revised list for our students which we call "**The North Dallas Forty!**" Each month during the school year, Dr. Csaszar, the teachers, and all third and fourth grade students assemble to discuss the manners chosen for emphasis that month and make sure everyone understands the expectations. We already acknowledge and expect these behaviors in our classrooms all year long, but we felt that putting them in writing AND choosing several each month for **particular** focus would make this a more organized effort. The list is printed in students' assignment books, and we strongly encourage parents to track the "Manners of the Month" and reinforce them at home as well.

In order to provide an atmosphere in which all students can grow in their respectfulness of others in their community, develop self-discipline, and practice their manners as they move about the Midway campus, the Upper Elementary division also created several "Zones of Respect" in the building. Students are expected to abide by the guidelines in a mature and responsible manner, which reflects favorably upon them, their parents, their school, and their community.

Zones of Respect in the Upper Elementary Division include

- **Zone of Respect for the cafeteria workers** where students are expected to become quiet when they enter the serving area, except for questions of the servers or for responses to the servers. Students are expected to respond with "please" and "thank you."
- **Zone of Respect for the receptionists** where students are expected to become quiet when they enter the lobby. Our receptionists have to answer important phone calls and they need to be able to hear. In addition, our quiet presence will make a positive impression to any visitors.
- **Zone of Respect for God** in the chapel where students become quiet upon entering, and they are to remain quiet until they have exited. Students enter and exit in an orderly fashion.
- **Zone of Respect for our readers** where students are expected to remain quiet from 7:30 to 8:00 a.m. during our Morning Read-in while other students, teachers, and guests are reading in the Great Hall Meeting Area.
- **Zone of Respect for our teachers** in their classrooms where teachers each explain individual guidelines of respectful behavior and responsiveness on the part of all students.

Upper Elementary Study Skills

One of the things that sets Parish apart from others schools is the strong foundation students receive toward building effective study skills they will use throughout their lives. Other Dallas private and public schools have long recognized the Parish study skills program as an effective and successful building block of student success.

Mastering the structure of these study skills is one of the most important “life skills” children ever learn. It is the goal of Parish to start our students along the path to success with a strong foundation in academic organization, time management and test preparation.

We begin this process as a structured element of the curriculum in third grade, and then continue to strengthen the skills in fourth grade. It is hoped by the time students enter middle school, they will recognize the importance of study skills, and they will understand how to apply them.

Our program is based on the SMART STUDENTS STUDY SMART system developed by Mrs. Lisa Fuchs, a veteran teacher at Parish. The SMART STUDENTS STUDY SMART curriculum is administered by employing the latest research into how the human brain learns so that students understand why the techniques and strategies have value and will work when used properly. Mrs. Fuchs stays abreast of the brain research as it applies to education, and the Upper Elementary teachers are periodically updated as to what applies to our system.

Mrs. Fuchs has isolated three main conclusions scientists have formed from their research, and those are the foundation for what our students learn.

1. **Put information into small “packages”.** *The smaller the amount, the quicker it can be moved into long term memory.*
2. **Do things over and over.** *This is the theory behind our Regular Daily Review policy.*
3. **Make “connections” for everything you want learned.** *This is the key finding that most affects how we present information to our students, and is the research on which we base the techniques and strategies taught in our division. This is also what raises students’ studying to a higher level in order for them to be able to answer essay, open-ended, and critical thinking questions.*

Third Grade Highlights

- **Panther Cub Camp:** A fun, interactive scavenger hunt to introduce new third graders to the Midway Campus
- **Excellence in Action (E.I.A.):** Upper Elementary Student Government
- **Annual Christmas Program**
- **Invention Convention**
- **Field Trips:** Operation Kindness, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Temple Shalom
- **Field Day**
- **Blessing of the Animals Day**
- **Grandfriends and Parents Visiting Days**
- **2nd and 3rd Grade Carnival**
- **Day of the Dead**
- **Fine Arts Night**
- **Read for 2011**
- **C.S.I. Parish (Character's Secret Identity):** A Language Arts theme day based on each student's favorite literary character and their writings about the characters.
- **Rocket Launch Day:** Kids gather for an afternoon of fun as they watch their rockets fly in celebration of the completion of the Forces and Motion physics unit.
- **SWARMS Night:** An evening designed to highlight student achievement and skills in core academics.

Fourth Grade Highlights

- **“Happy Birthday, Milton Hershey”:** A Science theme day introducing the Scientific process skills used throughout the year
- **“Snow Day” / Marshmallow Parade:** A Language Arts theme day marking the conclusion of the novel, Snow Treasure
- **Texpert Trail / Pioneer Day:** A Social Studies theme day including a research paper, character portrayal, and pioneer food and festivities
- **“Secret Knowledge of Fourth Graders”:** A Language Arts theme day based on the novel, The Secret knowledge of Grown-Ups.
- **Geography Bee**
- **Blessing of the Animals**
- **Excellence in Action (E.I.A.):** Upper Elementary Student Government
- **Annual Christmas Program**
- **Invention Convention**
- **Field Trips:** Austin Day Trip, Dallas Museum of Art, Frontiers of Flight Museum, Museum of Nature and Science, IMAX Theatre
- **Field Day**
- **Grandfriends and Parents Visiting Days**
- **Day of the Dead**
- **Fine Arts Night**