



Curriculum Guidebook



The Faith Experience

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond.

A PORTRAIT OF AN FXW LEARNER

The FXW Mission and Charisms guide student learning and reflection. Students see their growth as learners in these ways during their years at FXW, and graduate with the knowledge that learning is a lifelong endeavor. FXW supports individual student growth in cognitive, personal, and interpersonal competencies. This is achieved through a focus on developing curious, engaged, inclusive, and tenacious learners.

CURIOUS

I create, question
and reflect on my learning.



creative • inquisitive • reflective

TENACIOUS

I work through problems
and stick with challenges.



determined • courageous • resourceful

INCLUSIVE

I embrace all
people and experiences.



respectful • empathetic • kind

ENGAGED

I actively participate in learning,
service, my relationships and my faith.



collaborative • motivated • intentional

Digital Portfolios:

Capturing Learning, Experience, and Reflection

In today's evolving educational landscape, the ability to capture and reflect on the learning journey has become more vital than ever. At The Frances Xavier Warde School (FXW), digital portfolios offer an innovative solution to achieve just that. These dynamic platforms allow students to document their learning experiences, showcase their skills, and reflect on their growth in ways that are both structured and creative. This approach not only aligns with modern technology integration but also supports FXW's commitment to developing well-rounded, reflective learners.

Goals of Digital Portfolios

Digital portfolios serve several critical purposes that enhance the educational experience for both students and teachers. They promote self-reflection, document progress over time, enhance communication, encourage goal setting, and showcase a wide range of skills.

Promotes Self-Reflection

One of the primary goals of digital portfolios is to foster self-reflection. By providing a structured space for students to document their learning journey through text, images, and multimedia, they are able to articulate what they've learned, how they've grown, and the challenges they've encountered. This practice encourages students to develop metacognitive skills as they become more aware of their thinking and learning strategies, enabling them to take ownership of their educational progress.

Documenting Progress Over Time

A unique feature of digital portfolios is their ability to continuously document student progress throughout the academic year. By compiling work samples, projects, and reflections, students—and their parents and teachers—can observe and celebrate the growth that takes place over time. This not only serves as a powerful tool for assessment but also reinforces a growth mindset by highlighting improvements and achievements.

Enhancing Communication and Collaboration

Digital portfolios create a bridge for improved communication between students, teachers, and parents. Teachers can provide real-time feedback on student work, while parents can stay actively involved in their child's learning journey. This collaborative approach fosters a supportive learning environment and encourages meaningful conversations about each student's progress and goals.

Encouraging Goal Setting

Reflecting on one's learning process often leads to setting new goals. Digital portfolios offer students the opportunity to articulate their aspirations for improvement. This promotes a sense of responsibility and ownership of their education, helping students to stay motivated and focused on their personal growth.

Showcasing a Range of Skills

Beyond academic success, digital portfolios provide a platform to highlight a wide array of skills and talents. Students can showcase extracurricular activities, creative projects, presentations, and other achievements. This holistic representation of student abilities is invaluable for comprehensive assessments, offering a fuller picture of their development.

Preparing for Future Learning and Career Readiness

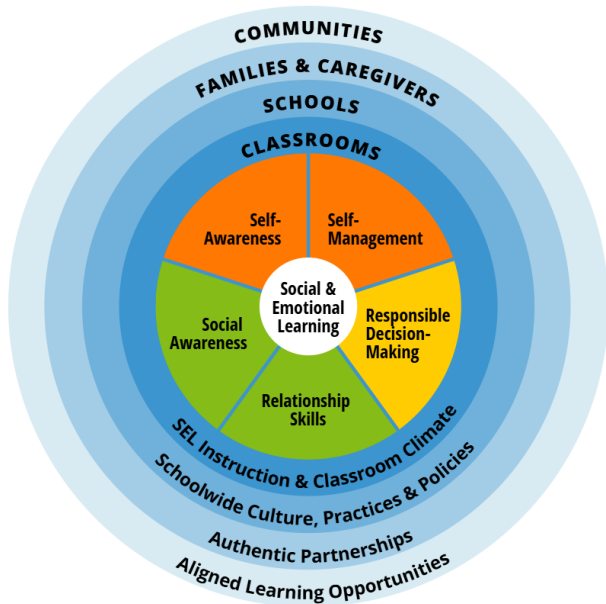
By regularly documenting and reflecting on their learning, students at FXW are preparing themselves for future academic and professional challenges. The ability to effectively communicate one's learning process is an essential skill for college admissions, job interviews, and beyond. Aligning with Technology Integration In a digital age, the use of portfolios seamlessly integrates technology into the learning process. This familiarizes students with the digital tools and platforms they will encounter in higher education and the workforce. At FXW, the integration of digital portfolios complements the school's broader commitment to technology in the classroom.

Customization and Personalization

One of the most exciting aspects of digital portfolios is their flexibility. Students have the freedom to customize their portfolios to reflect their unique learning styles and preferences. Whether through creative design, multimedia elements, or personal reflections, each student's portfolio offers a personalized representation of their learning journey. As FXW continues to support the development of *The Portrait of an FXW Learner* (details on the next page) in 2022–2023, digital portfolios provide the perfect platform for students to capture their learning process in a meaningful and reflective way. This tool not only enhances academic growth but also nurtures the essential life skills of critical thinking, self-awareness, and communication—preparing students for lifelong learning. ■

Social and Emotional Development

The primary and early elementary school years are where key foundational skills are built. Social-emotional competencies and skills are taught and naturally reinforced throughout the school year. Intentional lessons and instructional activities help to develop students' understanding of these concepts and provide the opportunity to practice them in an authentic setting to build social-emotional intelligence.



CASEL® Framework for SEL



SEL Instruction (Second Step®) and Classroom Climate

- Growth Mindset and Goal Setting
- Emotion Management
- Empathy and Kindness
- Problem-Solving
- Morning Meeting
- Closing Circle
- Shared Agreements

Schoolwide Culture, Practices, and Policies

- Campus-wide student assemblies
- Masses and prayer services
- Jaguar Leaders
- Restorative practices

Authentic Partnerships

- Classroom newsletter
- Family-teacher conferences

Preschool Overview

PHILOSOPHY	WE BELIEVE IN:	TEACHING PRACTICES
The FXW Preschool philosophy is to facilitate learning in developmentally appropriate ways. With teacher guidance, our youngest students delve into a wide range of experiential topics that they then investigate through long-term projects and themes, such as visiting the doctor's office, going to the grocery store, friendship building and practicing mindfulness. FXW teachers know that the best learning happens when a lesson sparks children's interest and strengthens their curiosity and self-motivation. Together, we work to provide an environment that fosters a love of learning that lasts a lifetime.	• Play as the foundation for all learning • The importance of social and emotional development with an emphasis on relationships, self-regulation, and initiative • Nurturing growth mindset and sense of belonging in the community of the classroom • Modeling and fostering the development of empathy and compassion to enhance relationships • Teaching critical thinking skills through discussing, questioning and exploring • Providing choices to foster motivation to learn and to experience the joy of learning • Building body awareness by strengthening gross motor and fine motor muscles • Supporting the religious and spiritual faith of all children through prayer and music • Encouraging self-help skills to build independence and pride • Child readiness for learning with sensitivity to individual differences and needs • Partnering with parents to establish goals in order to support and nurture children's development	Teaching Practices are grounded in how young children develop and learn supported by research around what is educationally effective practices. Practices include: • Authentic Play • Project Based Learning • Sensory Experiences There are five key areas that comprise effective teaching practices that promote inner strengths of children: • Daily Routines • Environment • Caring Connections • Activities and Experiences • Partnership between teachers and families

Building Resilience

An additional goal of our FXW Preschool Program is to strengthen children's protective factors which builds a child's resilience. Children who develop strong protective factors will be better prepared to face challenges. There is strong evidence that solid social and emotional development impacts future academic success.

Protective Factors include:

ATTACHMENT	INITIATIVE	SELF-REGULATION
Long lasting caring relationships between a child and the important people in their life. Secure attachment leads to trust and the belief that the world is a safe place, filled with caring people.	The ability to use independent thoughts and actions to get needs met. Initiative allows children to be in charge of their learning and activities.	The ability to tell right from wrong and behave in prosocial ways. Children who have self-regulation experience emotions and impulse, and then think before speaking or acting.

Preschool Religion Overview

Faith Experience

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Serving Others

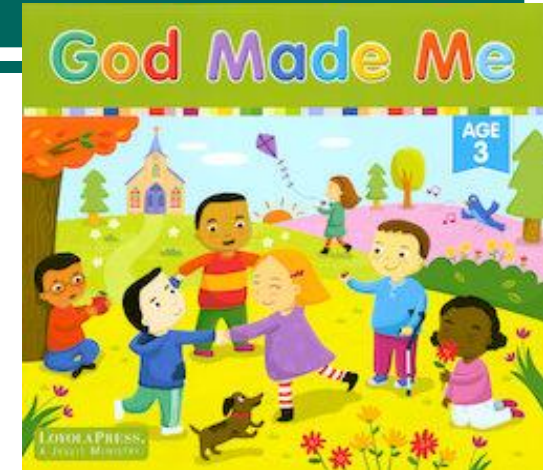
We live out our faith by serving others. In Preschool, students participate in the Blessings in a Backpack program during the year helping with food scarcity in the city of Chicago.



Theme: God Made Me and God is Love

Essential Questions:

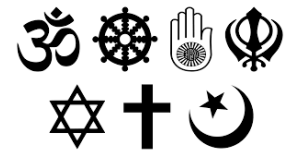
- What did God create?
- How do we celebrate God?
- How should we treat each other?
- How do we pray?
- What are our faith communities?
- How do we serve God?



Religious Characteristics of Preschool Students

The Preschool Religion programming aligns with developmental expectations of their age as outlined by Loyola Press *Finding God*

- Begin to understand God's love by experiencing human love
- Need to see that God made them and every other child unique and special
- Need to experience success and like to help
- Are full of wonder at creation and their own abilities
- Delight in simple prayer
- Are meditative, naturally contemplative, and prayerful; be absorbed in ritual, song, and drama
- Observe how adults handle religious matters



Preschool Standards (3 year old)

Learner Readiness

Follows multi-step directions
Shows responsibilities for belongings
Demonstrates independence with self-help tasks
Demonstrate engagement and sustained attention in activities
Follows and manages transitions between activities

Social Communication and Expression

Uses communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others
Respond appropriately to questions and conversations with others by staying on topic
Use sentences with multiple words when communicating

Social and Emotional Skills

Engages in cooperative play
Resolves simple conflicts with peers with independence, using gestures or words
Uses materials with purpose, safety and respect
Demonstrate persistence and creativity in seeking solutions to problems
Show empathy, sympathy, and caring for others
Identifies, expresses, and regulates emotions in an age-appropriate manner

Fine Motor Skills

Uses writing and drawing tools with some control
Developing muscle memory and coordination for fine motor tasks
Can create scribble marks, lines, circles and crosses

Large Motor Skills

Demonstrates body awareness when moving in different spaces
Coordinates and combines large motor movements to complete tasks

Early Literacy Skills

Engages with a story read aloud
Shows interest in emergent reading skills and abilities

Early Numeracy Skills

Shows interest in mathematical concepts

Preschool Standards (4 year old)

Learner Readiness

Follows multi-step directions
Shows responsibilities for belongings
Demonstrates independence with self-help tasks
Demonstrate engagement and sustained attention in activities
Follows and manages transitions between activities

Social Communication and Expression

Uses communication and social skills to interact effectively with others
Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others
Respond appropriately to questions and conversations with others by staying on topic
Use sentences with multiple words when communicating

Social Emotional Skills

Engages in cooperative play
Resolves simple conflicts with peers with independence, using gestures or words
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Fine Motor Skills

Uses writing and drawing tools with some control
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Large Motor Skills

Demonstrates body awareness when moving in different spaces
Coordinates and combines large motor movements to complete tasks

Early Literacy Skills

Demonstrate increasing competence in oral communication (speaking and listening)
Demonstrate an understanding of and enjoyment of books
Demonstrate increasing awareness of and competence in emergent reading skills and abilities
Demonstrate increasing awareness of and competence in emergent writing skills

Early Numeracy Skills

Demonstrate and apply a knowledge and sense of numbers, including numeration and operations
Explore measurement of objects and quantities
Identify and describe common attributes, patterns, and relationships in objects
Explore concepts of geometry and spatial relations

Grades K-3 Overview

Courses

- Religion
- English Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Phonemic Awareness, Word Study/Vocabulary, Grammar)
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Physical Education
- Art
- Music
- Library-Media
- World Language (Spanish)
- Drama (*Kindergarten only)

Mathematical Journey

- Students in Kindergarten use the Developing Roots program, which is the pre-cursor to the Think!Mathematics program.
- Students in grades 1-3 use the Think!Mathematics program.

English-Language Arts Journey

- Students in Kindergarten – Grade 3 use the Wit and Wisdom (Reading, Writing, Vocabulary and Grammar) and Foundations (Word Study) programs.
- Students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 use the Heggerty program (Phonemic Awareness).

Technology

- In these foundational years, it is critical for students to learn through hands-on experience as they working to develop fine-motor and visual-spatial skills. The academic program is designed to provide students with the appropriate tools to develop these skills and build a strong academic foundation.
- Teachers and students make intentional choices to use devices, programs, and applications that support workflows, provide access to information, facilitate cooperation and collaboration, demonstrate skill or content mastery, or support their creativity for original ideas or projects.

Grades K-3 Overview

Performances

Student experiences are intentionally designed to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate music learning, build confidence and self-expression, collaborate, explore with creative expression, and strengthen communication and speaking skills.

Kindergarten Kindergarten Musical and End-of-Year Showcase

Grade 1 Grade-level Showcase

Grade 2 Sounds of the Season (Holiday Performance) and Grade-level Showcase

Grade 3 Sounds of the Season (Holiday Performance) and Grade-level Showcase

Campus Service Experiences

Service is a theme woven throughout the FXW student experience using on-campus and off-campus experiences to serve specific populations in need.

Kindergarten: Blessings in a Backpack

Grade 1: Catholic Extensions

Grade 2: Misericordia

Grade 3: Veteran Community

Grades K-3 Overview

Assessment

- The school year is divided into three assessment periods. At the end of each, students and families receive Standards-Based Reports. In lieu of letter grades, students are given a deconstructed assessment of their individual proficiency in specific learning outcomes.
- FXW administers MAP® Growth™ interim assessments at regular intervals throughout the year to get an accurate view of how much each student has grown over time and what students are ready to learn. This data is used to analyze growth and attainment on many levels including the individual student.
- Assessment data, classroom-based and standardized, is used to regularly analyze school curricular materials and instructional moves. Data-driven decisions and changes are made to increase teacher efficacy and support student learning.
- The day-to-day assessment model places the individual student at the center of the process. An on-going cycle of feedback between teachers and students is an essential component in the learning process.

Supporting and Nurturing our Students

- All students need a safe space where they can make mistakes to learn and grow.
- The students engage in an intentional series of lessons each week centered on social-emotional development.
- The campus social workers proactively raise awareness and implement preventative measures to ensure that students are emotionally safe.
- Restorative practices are an essential component in student life at FXW. Restorative practices are a set of diverse ideas and approaches used to build healthy communities, increase social capital, repair harm, and restore relationships. Restorative practices emphasize addressing harm, the importance of community, and prioritizing healthy relationships.

Kindergarten Religion Overview

Faith Experience

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Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In kindergarten, students participate in the *Blessings in a Backpack* program during the year helping with food scarcity in the city of Chicago.



Values-Based

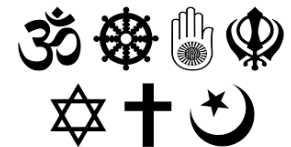
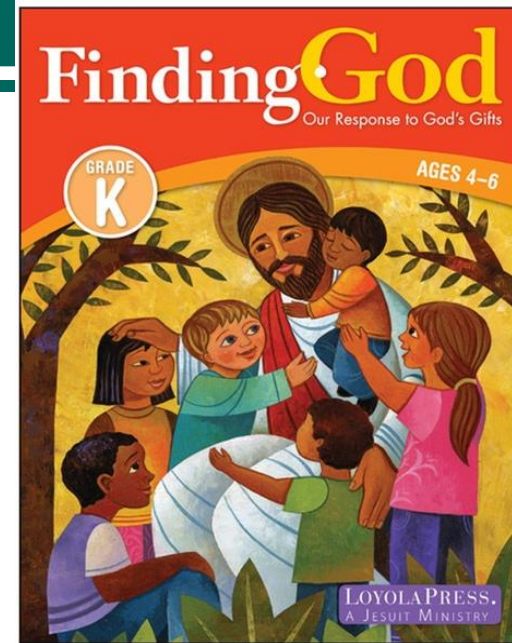
- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of belonging, praise, respect for self and others, care for all creation.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of service and social responsibility, religious diversity, peace, open-mindedness.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of uplifting others, respectful interfaith dialogue, religious diversity, peace, open-mindedness, and renewal and grace.

Principles of Catholicism

Our students use *Finding God: God Calls Us* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings.

Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

Kindergarten students do not yet split for Religion, and participate in a holistic, values-based experience learning about Catholicism alongside interfaith/multifaith teachings.



Kindergarten Reading and Writing Overview

Modules of Study

Module 1: The Five Senses

How do our senses help us learn?

Module 2: Once Upon a Farm

What makes a good story?

Module 3: America, Then and Now

How has life in America changed over time?

Module 4: The Continents

What makes the world fascinating?

Writing Genres Studied

Module 1: Informative

Module 2: Narrative

Module 3: Informative (research)

Module 4: Opinion

Curricular Highlights

- Complex, diverse set of texts
- Variety of learning structures
- Deep knowledge acquisition
- Socratic Seminars
- Art analysis



Instructional Strategies

Wit and Wisdom is a comprehensive curriculum that uses an integrated approach to learning. It is built on a “knowledge-building” concept, meaning that students study Science and Social Studies concepts through the English-Language Arts class.

- Students read, write about what they have read, learn grammar, and then articulate the meaning of each text.
- Students activate and develop content and vocabulary knowledge
- Students build critical literacy skills needed to be successful readers, exceptional writers, and strong communicators.
- Students write across a variety of genres using a strategic process of drafting, revising, editing and publishing

Kindergarten Literature Overview

The following are the core texts that are utilized in each module of study. Core texts are complex, wide-ranging, varied, and provide a careful balance of literary, informational, and fine arts texts.

Module 1: The Five Senses

My Five Senses by Alikì

My Five Senses by Margaret Miller

Rap a Tap Tap by Leo Dillon and Diane Dillon

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr and John Archambault

Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Peña

Module 2: Once Upon a Farm

Farm Animals by Wade Cooper

The Year at Maple Hill Farm by Alice and Martin Provensen

The Little Red Hen by Jerry Pinkney

The Three Billy Goats Gruff by Paul Galdone

Three Little Pigs adaptation by Raina Moore

Module 3: America, Then and Now

Communication Then and Now by Robin Nelson

Home Then and Now by Robin Nelson

Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin by Gene Barretta

School Then and Now by Robin Nelson

Transportation Then and Now by Robin Nelson

When I Was Young in the Mountains by Cynthia Rylant

The Little House by Virginia Lee Burton

Module 4: The Continents

Africa by Rebecca Hirsch

Antarctica by Rebecca Hirsch

Asia by Rebecca Hirsch

Australia by Rebecca Hirsch

Europe by Rebecca Hirsch

South America by Rebecca Hirsch

Introducing North America by Chris Oxlade

World Atlas by Nick Crane

Moon Rope by Lois Ehlert

The Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf

Why Do Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears: A West African Tale by Verna Aardema

Kindergarten Word Study Overview

Big Ideas

- Recognize and produce rhyming words
- Segment words in a spoken sentence
- Segment words into syllables
- Segment and pronounce initial, medial, and final phonemes in spoken CVC words
- Manipulate phonemes with additions or substitutions in one-syllable words
- Name all letters of the alphabet
- Write all manuscript letters in lowercase and uppercase
- Sequence letters of the alphabet
- Fluently produce sounds of consonants (primary) and short vowels when given the letter
- Fluently produce sounds for basic digraphs (wh, sh, ch, th, ck)
- Name and write corresponding letter(s) when given sounds for consonants, consonant digraphs, and short vowels
- Distinguish long and short vowel sounds within words
- Read and spell approximately 200 CVC words
- Spell other words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships
- Identify 75% of first 100 high frequency words, including 25–30 Trick Words (high frequency words) such as the, was, of
- Identify and name correct punctuation at end of sentence
- Capitalize the first letter of people's names and of words at the beginning of sentences

Instructional Strategies

The Foundations program uses a structured, sequential, and multi-sensory approach to help students develop skills in phonological awareness, decoding, sight-word recognition, and spelling.



Curricular Highlights

The key contribution of Foundations within the ELA curriculum is to support students connecting letters to sounds. This helps them to read and spell words at increasingly challenging levels as they continue in the grades.

Kindergarten Math Overview

Units of Study

Counting and Cardinality

Recognizing numbers, counting, and understanding number relationships.

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Understanding simple patterns, addition, and subtraction within 10.

Number and Operations in Base Ten

Understanding place value and two-digit numbers.

Measurement and Data

Exploring measurement and comparing objects.

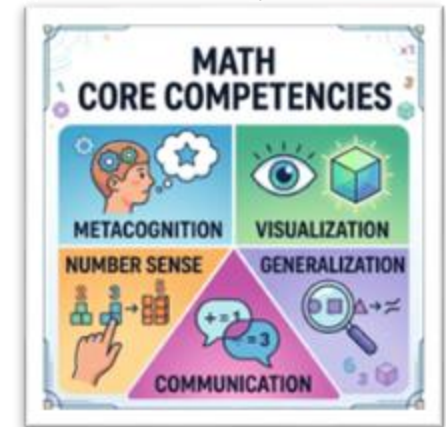
Geometry

Identifying and describing shapes, as well as analyzing and comparing them.



Instructional Strategies

- Hands-on math exploration
- "Shelf-work" time to allow students differentiated practice
- Game play to build number sense and fluency



Curricular Highlights

At FXW, our math curriculum aims to build students' confidence and competence in mathematics, fostering a growth mindset and emphasizing perseverance. We challenge students to engage in flexible problem-solving and provide individualized support. Through active learning and real-world applications, we aim to instill a love for math and equip students for success in education and in life.

Kindergarten ST Math Overview

ST Math Overview

ST Math is a game-based, visual math program that develops students' conceptual understanding of math concepts and problem-solving skills. The way ST Math puzzles are designed, students are not only working through their grade-level math objectives, but they are also building up their ability to persevere with challenging problems and to see mistakes as opportunities for growth. The Learning Cycle graphic (right) show the 4 steps students should follow as they work to solve puzzles. It also includes questions you, as parent/guardian, can ask students to push their thinking.

Notice

What do you think the puzzle is asking you to do?

Notice all the parts of the puzzle.

Connect

What other math ideas does it make you think of?

Think about what you learned from the puzzle.

Predict

What do you think will happen when you click?

Visualize what is going to happen.

Analyze

What happens in the animation when you click?

Click and watch the animation to see what happens.



Kindergarten Science Overview

Instructional Strategies

In addition to the integrated English-Language Arts program where Science concepts are studied, students in kindergarten also explore additional concepts within the Science lab.

FXW uses the **eight practices** of science and engineering throughout our units and in an integrated manner with other curricular areas:

- Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Units of Study

Sunlight & Weather

Pushes and Pulls

Needs of Plants and Animals

Amplify.

Kindergarten Social Studies Overview

Instructional Strategies

In addition to the integrated English-Language Arts program where Social Studies concepts are studied, students in kindergarten also explore additional concepts within the classroom.

The learning standards for Social Studies are focused on themes that are explored further through the disciplinary concepts.

Themes Explored:

- Classroom community
- Identity, family, and traditions
- Community helpers
- Community leaders
- Geography

Developing the Whole Child Specials Classes

Special classes play a vital role in educating the whole child. These subjects nurture creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and emotional expression, complementing core academics by engaging different learning styles and intelligences. They provide students with opportunities to explore their passions, build confidence, and develop essential life skills such as perseverance, empathy, and communication. By supporting physical, social, and emotional development, special classes help create well-rounded students who are prepared not only for academic success but for meaningful, balanced lives. Below you will find more information on the overarching philosophies of each of the Specials area disciplines:

Library Media	Physical Education (PE)	Spanish	Art	Music/Drama
FXW's Library curriculum is based on Illinois Standards Aligned Instruction for Libraries (ISAIL) and the AASL National School Library Standards. Lessons integrate unit topics from Wit and Wisdom, Common Sense Media, the Global Read Aloud project, and the Monarch Award for Illinois readers.	Physical Education supports the development of the whole child by engaging students in the psychomotor (movement), cognitive (thinking and understanding), and affective (social and emotional) domains of learning. Through active play and games, students build a lifelong enjoyment of movement while developing teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.	The Spanish curriculum is designed to develop students' communicative competence while fostering cultural understanding and global awareness. The units of study are aligned with the principles of ACTFL standards, so the students can Communicate in other languages, get exposed to diverse Cultures , Connect with other disciplines, through Comparison , understanding the nature of the of the Spanish language and with participation in a multilingual Communities .	FXW's Visual Arts curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Visual Arts Standards and a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the support of fine motor development and self-expression while aligning with FXW's charisms of Academics, Faith, Service, and Diversity and Inclusion. Art is taught with a process-forward approach, meaning that students are encouraged to experiment and express themselves through materials without making value judgments about whether something is "good" or "bad." Artists are exposed to a variety of mediums throughout their time, including drawing, painting, ceramics, origami, collage, and fibers/textiles. Each year, students deepen their work in their respective mediums with more challenging and sophisticated applications that support their stages of development. Students are exposed to a diverse range of artists from around the world and throughout history who offer both "mirrors" and "windows" for them to broaden their understanding of what art can be. Collaborative murals and community projects highlight our community's connectedness and commitment to service. Opportunities for choice-based art-making are prioritized to offer students chances to find their voices as artists, meet them where they are, and encourage them to reflect on their own artistic decisions.	FXW's Kindergarten Drama curriculum advances the foundational creative skills learned in Pre-K, transitioning students into the official Illinois Arts Learning Standards for Theatre while maintaining a joyful, process-oriented ensemble atmosphere. At this level, students progress from independent dramatic play to sophisticated collaborative storytelling, improvisation, and spontaneity. The program builds a brave arena where young artists develop physical control, spatial awareness, and a resilient sense of confidence. FXW's Kindergarten Music curriculum advances the foundational exploratory skills learned in Pre-K, transitioning students into the official Illinois Arts Learning Standards for Music while maintaining a joyful, play-based environment. At this level, students progress from simple sound discovery to an advanced understanding of musical concepts, analyzing the differences between a steady beat and distinct rhythmic patterns. the program nurtures a supportive ensemble where young musicians cultivate physical coordination, auditory awareness, and a lifelong appreciation for artistic connection.

Kindergarten Specials Classes

	AP1	AP2	AP3
Library-Media	How library is organized Procedures and resources	Parts of a Book Authors/Illustrators	Information cycle: Think, Create, Learn, Grow Library Cards
Physical Education (PE)	Manipulatives: rolling, tossing, catching, throwing Nutrition Fitness	Coordination & Rhythm: Hula Hoop/Jump Rope Nutrition-Heart Healthy Basketball	Soccer Tee Ball Tumbling Chasing & Fleeing
Spanish	Foundations: Greetings and Classroom routines. Hispanic Heritage Month/ Day of the dead Family	Animals: Pets, Ocean and Farm. Special Celebrations: Our Lady of Guadalupe and Christmas and Valentines Day	Emotions Special Celebrations: Mother's Day
Art	Intro to Art, Gala Projects, Painting (<i>grip, brush strokes</i>)	Drawing and Painting (<i>grip, drawing shapes</i>)	Papercraft(<i>collage/origami</i>) Ceramics (<i>Pinch pot and developing simple forms in clay</i>)
Music/Drama	Classroom routines and practices Introduction to percussion instruments and care Music terms: volume, steady beat, tempo, pitch, rhythm Actor's toolbox: body, voice, imagination Roles: audience, director, actor Drama term: facing out Spatial awareness and isolated body movements Awareness of time, others, and body language	Musical concepts: Forte/Piano, Crescendo/Decrescendo, Legato/Staccato, steady beat versus rhythm Collaboration on the Kindergarten Musical Character creation, costume, prop, and set design Kindergarten musical collaboration	Small group and individual music play Active listening and identifying musical contrasts in different genres Introduction to rhythm writing Class blues song composition and DIY Jug band instruments Theatrical games, improv games, and character creation Smaller group work and partner exercises (e.g., mirror me) Storybook study: character, setting, repeated lines, story sequencing Collaborative sound effects creation Shared informal class play performance

Grade 1 Religion Overview

Faith Experience

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Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In 1st Grade, students participate in a Lenten service project, Pay It Forward, through our school's partnership with [Catholic Extension Society](#).



Values-Based

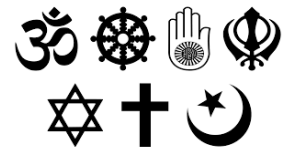
- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of belonging, praise, respect for self and others, care for all creation.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of service and social responsibility, religious diversity, peace, open-mindedness.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of uplifting others, reverence, religious diversity, peace, open-mindedness, forgiveness, renewal, and grace.

Principles of Catholicism

Our 1st Grade Moonbeam students use *Finding God: God Calls Us* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings.

Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

Our 1st Grade Shooting Stars students mirror the Moonbeams program in unit theme, aligned with the Six Tasks of the Catechesis. Students learn about Christian, Islamic, and Hindu traditions: creation stories, places of and types of worship, holy figures, traditions and holy days, and morality and living the faith.



Grade 1 Reading and Writing Overview

Modules of Study

Module 1: A World of Books
How do books change lives around the world?

Module 2: Creature Features
What can we discover about animals' unique features?

Module 3: Powerful Forces
How do people respond to the powerful force of the wind?

Module 4: Cinderella Stories
Why do people around the world admire Cinderella?

Writing Genres Studied

Module 1: Narrative
Module 2: Informative (research)
Module 3: Narrative
Module 4: Opinion

Curricular Highlights

- Complex, diverse set of texts
- Variety of learning structures
- Deep knowledge acquisition
- Socratic Seminars
- Art analysis



Instructional Strategies

Wit and Wisdom is a comprehensive curriculum that uses an integrated approach to learning. It is built on a “knowledge-building” concept, meaning that students study Science and Social Studies concepts through the English-Language Arts class.

- Students read, write about what they have read, learn grammar, and then articulate the meaning of each text.
- Students activate and develop content and vocabulary knowledge
- Students build critical literacy skills needed to be successful readers, exceptional writers, and strong communicators.
- Students write across a variety of genres using a strategic process of drafting, revising, editing and publishing

Grade 1 Literature Overview

The following are the core texts that are utilized in each module of study. Core texts are complex, wide-ranging, varied, and provide a careful balance of literary, informational, and fine arts texts.

Module 1: A World of Books

Tomas and the Library Lady by Pat Mora

Waiting for the Biblioburro by Monica Brown

That Book Woman by Heather Henson

Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss

Museum ABC by The Metropolitan Museum of Art

My Librarian is a Camel by Margriet Ruurs

Module 2: Feature Creatures

Seven Blind Mice by Ed Young

Me...Jane by Patrick McDonnell

Never Smile at a Monkey by Steve Jenkins

Sea Horse: The Shyest Fish in the Sea by Chris Butterworth

What Do You Do With a Tail Like This? by Steve Jenkins, Robin Page

Module 3: Powerful Forces

Brave Irene by William Steig

Owl at Home, "The Guest" by Arnold Lobel

Gilberto and the Wind by Marie Hall Ets

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer

Feel the Wind by Arthur Dorros

Feelings by Alik

Module 4: Cinderella Stories

Adelita by Tomie dePaola

Bigfoot Cinderrrrrella by Tony Johnston

Cendrillon: A Caribbean Cinderella by Robert D. San Souci

Cinderella by Marcia Brown

Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal: A Worldwide Cinderella by Paul Fleischman

The Korean Cinderella by Shirley Climo

The Rough-Face Girl by Rafe Martin

Grade 1 Word Study Overview

Big Ideas

- Segment syllables into sounds (phonemes)—up to 5 sounds
- Name sounds of primary consonants, consonant digraphs, and short and long vowels when given letters
- Name and write corresponding letter(s) when given sounds for consonants, consonant digraphs, and short and long vowels
- Print all uppercase and lowercase letters
- Distinguish long and short vowel sounds
- Name sounds for r-controlled vowels, vowel digraphs and diphthongs
- Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words
- Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions
- Read and spell the first 100 high frequency words, including irregular words (Trick Words)
- Identify word structures such as blends, digraphs, basewords, suffixes, syllable types (closed and vowel-consonant-e syllables)
- Read and spell CVC, CCVC, CVCC, CCVCC, CVCe words
- Read and spell compound words and other words with two syllables by breaking them into syllables
- Read and spell words with -s, -es, -ed, -ing suffixes when added to non-changing basewords
- Apply correct punctuation (period, question mark, exclamation point)
- Apply capitalization rules for beginning of sentences and names of people, places, and dates
- Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future

Instructional Strategies

The Foundations program uses a structured, sequential, and multi-sensory approach to help students develop skills in phonological awareness, decoding, sight-word recognition, and spelling.



Curricular Highlights

The key contribution of Foundations within the ELA curriculum is to support students connecting letters to sounds. This helps them to read and spell words at increasingly challenging levels as they continue in the grades.

Grade 1 Math Overview

Units of Study

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Understanding addition and subtraction and solving word problems within 100.

Number and Operations in Base Ten

Extending the understanding of place value to represent and compare numbers.

Measurement and Data

Developing an understanding of measurement and data representation specifically time, money, length and height.

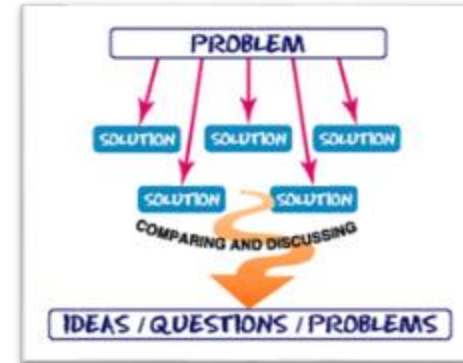
Geometry

Describing and analyzing 2D and 3D shapes.



Instructional Strategies

- Hands-on math exploration
- Math games to develop fluency and number sense
- Learning through problem solving
- Instruction designed to develop students' math core competencies



Curricular Highlights

At FXW, our math curriculum aims to build students' confidence and competence in mathematics, fostering a growth mindset and emphasizing perseverance. We challenge students to engage in flexible problem-solving and provide individualized support. Through active learning and real-world applications, we aim to instill a love for math and equip students for success in education and in life.

Grade 1 ST Math Overview

ST Math Overview

ST Math is a game-based, visual math program that develops students' conceptual understanding of math concepts and problem-solving skills. The way ST Math puzzles are designed, students are not only working through their grade-level math objectives, but they are also building up their ability to persevere with challenging problems and to see mistakes as opportunities for growth. The Learning Cycle graphic (right) show the 4 steps students should follow as they work to solve puzzles. It also includes questions you, as parent/guardian, can ask students to push their thinking.

Notice

What do you think the puzzle is asking you to do?

Notice all the parts of the puzzle.

Connect

What other math ideas does it make you think of?

Think about what you learned from the puzzle.

Predict

What do you think will happen when you click?

Visualize what is going to happen.

Analyze

What happens in the animation when you click?

Click and watch the animation to see what happens.



Grade 1 Science Overview

Instructional Strategies

In addition to the integrated English-Language Arts program where Science concepts are studied, students in kindergarten also explore additional concepts within the Science lab.

FXW uses the **eight practices** of science and engineering throughout our units and in an integrated manner with other curricular areas:

- Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Units of Study

Scientific Practices and Engineering Design

Animal and Plant Defenses

Spinning Earth

Light & Sound with TinkRworks



[Read How FXW uses
TinkrWorks in Grades 1-3](#)

Amplify.

Grade 1 Social Studies Overview

Instructional Strategies

In addition to the integrated English-Language Arts program where Social Studies concepts are studied, students in Grade 1 also explore additional concepts within the classroom.

The learning standards for Social Studies are focused on themes that are explored further through the disciplinary concepts.



Themes Explored:

- Families Near and Far: *How can we bring families together to build stronger communities?*
- Our Special Location: *How can we help others appreciate our special location?*
- Civic Engagement: *How can we work together for the good of the community?*

Developing the Whole Child Specials Classes

Special classes play a vital role in educating the whole child. These subjects nurture creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and emotional expression, complementing core academics by engaging different learning styles and intelligences. They provide students with opportunities to explore their passions, build confidence, and develop essential life skills such as perseverance, empathy, and communication. By supporting physical, social, and emotional development, special classes help create well-rounded students who are prepared not only for academic success but for meaningful, balanced lives. Below you will find more information on the overarching philosophies of each of the Specials area disciplines:

Library Media	Physical Education (PE)	Spanish	Art	Music
FXW's Library curriculum is based on Illinois Standards Aligned Instruction for Libraries (ISAIL) and the AASL National School Library Standards. Lessons integrate unit topics from Wit and Wisdom, Common Sense Media, the Global Read Aloud project, and the Monarch Award for Illinois readers.	Physical Education supports the development of the whole child by engaging students in the psychomotor (movement), cognitive (thinking and understanding), and affective (social and emotional) domains of learning. Through active play and games, students build a lifelong enjoyment of movement while developing teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.	The Spanish curriculum is designed to develop students' communicative competence while fostering cultural understanding and global awareness. The units of study are aligned with the principles of ACTFL standards, so the students can Communicate in other languages, get exposed to diverse Cultures , Connect with other disciplines, through Comparison , understanding the nature of the of the Spanish language and with participation in a multilingual Communities .	FXW's Visual Arts curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Visual Arts Standards and a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the support of fine motor development and self-expression while aligning with FXW's charisms of Academics, Faith, Service, and Diversity and Inclusion. Art is taught with a process-forward approach, meaning that students are encouraged to experiment and express themselves through materials without making value judgments about whether something is "good" or "bad." Artists are exposed to a variety of mediums throughout their time, including drawing, painting, ceramics, origami, collage, and fibers/textiles. Each year, students deepen their work in their respective mediums with more challenging and sophisticated applications that support their stages of development. Students are exposed to a diverse range of artists from around the world and throughout history who offer both "mirrors" and "windows" for them to broaden their understanding of what art can be. Collaborative murals and community projects highlight our community's connectedness and commitment to service. Opportunities for choice-based art-making are prioritized to offer students chances to find their voices as artists, meet them where they are, and encourage them to reflect on their own artistic decisions.	FXW's Music curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Musical Standards, with an emphasis in musical experience for elementary learners from the Orff and Kodaly pedagogies respectively. Key ideas include exploring the foundational elements of music (beat, rhythm and pitch), using music to experience cultural practices from around the world, storytelling through music and centering the music classroom around a foundation of musical play.

Grade 1 Specials Classes

	AP1	AP2	AP3
Library-Media	Library procedures and resources Digital Citizenship	Authors/Illustrators study Fiction vs Nonfiction Monarch books	Pose Real Questions Find Resources Interpret Information
Physical Education (PE)	Manipulatives: rolling, tossing, catching, throwing Nutrition Fitness	Coordination & Rhythm: Hula Hoop/Jump Rope Nutrition – Heart Healthy Basketball	Soccer Tee Ball Chasing & Fleeing
Spanish	Foundations: Greetings and Classroom routines. Hispanic Heritage Month/ Day of the dead Emotions	Food: Like vs Don't like Healthy vs Not Healthy Human Body Shapes Special Celebrations: Our Lady of Guadalupe, Christmas and Valentines Day	Colors Learning how to spell Spanish vocabulary
Art	Intro to Art, Gala Projects, Painting <i>(line, shape, color)</i>	Painting and Drawing <i>(sketching techniques and “mapping” simple shapes when depicting more complex forms)</i>	Papercraft <i>(collage/origami)</i> , Ceramics <i>(hand-building techniques and pottery)</i>
Music	The 4 Classroom Instrument Families Dynamics: Loud vs. Soft Body Games and Dance Community Story Time	Music of the Winter Holidays Rhythm Skills: quarter, eighth and rest notes Composing Rhythms: "Who Took the Cookies from the Cookie Jar" Project Musician Spotlight: Ella Fitzgerald	Music in Our Schools Month: Rhythm Battle Pitch/Melodic Skills: Sol-La-Mi Boomwhackers Introduction Performance Skills: First Grade Showcase

Grade 2 Religion Overview

Faith Experience

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond. Second Grade students split for Religion, and participate in a holistic, values-based experience learning about Catholicism alongside interfaith/multifaith teachings.

Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In 2nd Grade, students participate in a service throughout the year alongside partners at Misericordia.



Values-Based

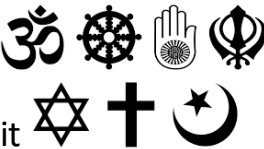
- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of belonging, praise, respect for self and others, care for all creation.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of service and social responsibility, religious diversity, peace, open-mindedness.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of uplifting others, peace, open-mindedness, forgiveness, and renewal and grace.

Principles of Catholicism

Our 2nd Grade Moonbeam students use *Finding God: God Calls Us* and *Rejoice Sacraments: Preparing for the Eucharist* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings.

Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

Our 2nd Grade Shooting Stars students mirror the Moonbeams program in unit theme, aligned with the Six Tasks of the Catechesis. Students learn about the Christian and Jewish tradition: creation stories, places of and types of worship, holy figures, traditions and holy days, and morality and living the faith.



Grade 2 Reading and Writing Overview

Modules of Study

Module 1: A Season of Change
How does change impact people and nature?

Module 2: The American West
What was life like in the west for early Americans?

Module 3: Civil Rights Heroes
How can people respond to injustice?

Instructional Strategies

Wit and Wisdom is a comprehensive curriculum that uses an integrated approach to learning. It is built on a “knowledge-building” concept, meaning that students study Science and Social Studies concepts through the English-Language Arts class.

- Students read, write about what they have read, learn grammar, and then articulate the meaning of each text.
- Students activate and develop content and vocabulary knowledge
- Students build critical literacy skills needed to be successful readers, exceptional writers, and strong communicators.
- Students write across a variety of genres using a strategic process of drafting, revising, editing and publishing

Writing Genres Studied

Module 1: Informative

Module 2: Informative

Module 3: Narrative

Curricular Highlights

- Complex, diverse set of texts
- Variety of learning structures
- Deep knowledge acquisition
- Socratic Seminars
- Art analysis



Grade 2 Literature Overview

The following are the core texts that are utilized in each module of study. Core texts are complex, wide-ranging, varied, and provide a careful balance of literary, informational, and fine arts texts.

Module 1: A Season of Change

Weather by Eve Merriam (poem)

How Do You Know Its Fall? by Lisa M. Herrington

Why Do Leaves Change Color? by Betsy Maestro

Sky Tree by Thomas Locker

The Little Yellow Leaf by Carin Berger

A Color of His Own by Leo Lionni

Module 2: The American West

The Buffalo Are Back by Jean Craighead George

Journey of a Pioneer by Patricia J. Murphy

Plains Indians by Andrew Santella

Johnny Appleseed by Steven Kellogg

John Henry: An American Legend by Ezra Jack Keats

John Henry by Julius Lester

The Legend of the Bluebonnet by Tomie dePaola

The Story of Johnny Appleseed by Alike

Module 3: Civil Rights Heroes

I Have a Dream by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. and the March on Washington by Frances E. Ruffin

Ruby Bridges Goes to School: My True Story by Ruby Bridges

The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles

Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Right for Desegregation by Duncan Tonatiuh

Grade 2 Word Study Overview

Big Ideas

- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words
- Segment syllables into sounds (phonemes)—up to six sounds
- Identify word structures such as vowels, consonants, blends, digraphs, and digraph blends
- Identify parts of words (syllables, basewords, suffixes)
- Identify all six syllable types: closed, vowel-consonant-e, open, r-controlled, vowel digraph/diphthong, and consonant-le
- Distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words
- Read and spell words with short vowels
- Read and spell words with long vowels in vowel-consonant-e and open syllables
- Read and spell words with r-controlled vowels (ar, er, ir, or, ur)
- Read and spell words with vowel teams (ai, ay, ee, ey, ea, oi, oy, oa, ow, oe, ou, oo, ue, ew, au, aw)
- Read and spell words with unexpected vowel sounds (old, ild, ind, ost, olt, ive)
- Read and spell words with suffixes (-s, -es, -ed, -ing, -est, -ish, -able, -ive, -y, -ful, -ment, -less, -ness, -ly, -ty)
- Read and spell words with common prefixes (un-, dis-, mis-, non-, trans-, pre-, pro-, re-, de-)
- Read and spell phonetically regular one-, two- and three-syllable words
- Identify words with inconsistent but common spelling-sound correspondences
- Read and spell the first 200 high frequency words including irregular words
- Divide multisyllabic words
- Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification
- Use synonyms
- Know some multiple meaning words
- Apply dictionary skills
- Use correct writing position and pencil grip
- Write clear, legible manuscript at an appropriate rate
- Spell words with options for the grapheme representation for sounds with use of a spell checker or dictionary
- Apply correct punctuation (period, question mark, exclamation point)
- Apply capitalization rules for beginning of sentences and names of people

Instructional Strategies

The Foundations program uses a structured, sequential, and multi-sensory approach to help students develop skills in phonological awareness, decoding, sight-word recognition, and spelling.



Curricular Highlights

The key contribution of Foundations within the ELA curriculum is to support students connecting letters to sounds. This helps them to read and spell words at increasingly challenging levels as they continue in the grades.

Grade 2 Math Overview

Units of Study

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Understanding addition and subtraction up to 1,000 as well as working with equal groups of objects.

Number and Operations in Base Ten

Extending the understanding of place value up to 1,200 and using place value understanding to add and subtract.

Measurement and Data

Understanding concepts of length, time, money, and data.

Geometry

Partitioning shapes into equal shares and describe these shares using fraction vocabulary.



Instructional Strategies

- Hands-on math exploration
- Math games to develop fluency and number sense
- Learning through problem solving
- Instruction designed to develop students' math core competencies



Curricular Highlights

At FXW, our math curriculum aims to build students' confidence and competence in mathematics, fostering a growth mindset and emphasizing perseverance. We challenge students to engage in flexible problem-solving and provide individualized support. Through active learning and real-world applications, we aim to instill a love for math and equip students for success in education and in life.

Grade 2 ST Math Overview

ST Math Overview

ST Math is a game-based, visual math program that develops students' conceptual understanding of math concepts and problem-solving skills. The way ST Math puzzles are designed, students are not only working through their grade-level math objectives, but they are also building up their ability to persevere with challenging problems and to see mistakes as opportunities for growth. The Learning Cycle graphic (right) show the 4 steps students should follow as they work to solve puzzles. It also includes questions you, as parent/guardian, can ask students to push their thinking.

Notice

What do you think the puzzle is asking you to do?

Notice all the parts of the puzzle.

Connect

What other math ideas does it make you think of?

Think about what you learned from the puzzle.

Predict

What do you think will happen when you click?

Visualize what is going to happen.

Analyze

What happens in the animation when you click?

Click and watch the animation to see what happens.



Grade 2 Science Overview

Instructional Strategies

In addition to the integrated English-Language Arts program where Science concepts are studied, students in kindergarten also explore additional concepts within the Science lab.

FXW uses the **eight practices** of science and engineering throughout our units and in an integrated manner with other curricular areas:

- Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Units of Study

Scientific Practices and Engineering Design

Properties of Materials

Plant and Animal Relationships with TinkRworks

Changing Landforms



[Read How FXW uses
TinkRworks in Grades 1-3](#)

Amplify.

Grade 2 Social Studies Overview

Instructional Strategies

In addition to the integrated English-Language Arts program where Social Studies concepts are studied, students in Grade 2 also explore additional concepts within the classroom.

The learning standards for Social Studies are focused on themes that are explored further through the disciplinary concepts.



Themes Explored:

- *Accessibility*
- *Identity and Family*: Use language and knowledge to respectfully describe how people are similar and different to each other.
- *Justice and Civic Engagement*
- *Geography*: Identifying cultural and environmental characteristics of cultures and regions
- *Economics*: Principles of goods and services, value of money

Developing the Whole Child Specials Classes

Special classes play a vital role in educating the whole child. These subjects nurture creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and emotional expression, complementing core academics by engaging different learning styles and intelligences. They provide students with opportunities to explore their passions, build confidence, and develop essential life skills such as perseverance, empathy, and communication. By supporting physical, social, and emotional development, special classes help create well-rounded students who are prepared not only for academic success but for meaningful, balanced lives. Below you will find more information on the overarching philosophies of each of the Specials area disciplines:

Library Media	Physical Education (PE)	Spanish	Art	Music
FXW's Library curriculum is based on Illinois Standards Aligned Instruction for Libraries (ISAIL) and the AASL National School Library Standards. Lessons integrate unit topics from Wit and Wisdom, Common Sense Media, the Global Read Aloud project, and the Monarch Award for Illinois readers.	Physical Education supports the development of the whole child by engaging students in the psychomotor (movement), cognitive (thinking and understanding), and affective (social and emotional) domains of learning. Through active play and games, students build a lifelong enjoyment of movement while developing teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.	The Spanish curriculum is designed to develop students' communicative competence while fostering cultural understanding and global awareness. The units of study are aligned with the principles of ACTFL standards, so the students can Communicate in other languages, get exposed to diverse Cultures , Connect with other disciplines, through Comparison , understanding the nature of the of the Spanish language and with participation in a multilingual Communities .	FXW's Visual Arts curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Visual Arts Standards and a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the support of fine motor development and self-expression while aligning with FXW's charisms of Academics, Faith, Service, and Diversity and Inclusion. Art is taught with a process-forward approach, meaning that students are encouraged to experiment and express themselves through materials without making value judgments about whether something is "good" or "bad." Artists are exposed to a variety of mediums throughout their time, including drawing, painting, ceramics, origami, collage, and fibers/textiles. Each year, students deepen their work in their respective mediums with more challenging and sophisticated applications that support their stages of development. Students are exposed to a diverse range of artists from around the world and throughout history who offer both "mirrors" and "windows" for them to broaden their understanding of what art can be. Collaborative murals and community projects highlight our community's connectedness and commitment to service. Opportunities for choice-based art-making are prioritized to offer students chances to find their voices as artists, meet them where they are, and encourage them to reflect on their own artistic decisions.	FXW's Music curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Musical Standards, with an emphasis in musical experience for elementary learners from the Orff and Kodaly pedagogies respectively. Key ideas include exploring the foundational elements of music (beat, rhythm and pitch), using music to experience cultural practices from around the world, storytelling through music and centering the music classroom around a foundation of musical play.

Grade 2 Specials Classes

	AP1	AP2	AP3
Library-Media	Library procedures and resources Digital citizenship	Finding "just right" books Book genres Monarch books	Pose real questions Find resources and interpret information Report findings
Physical Education (PE)	Soccer Nutrition Fitness	Coordination & Rhythm: Jump Rope Basketball Nutrition-Heart Health	Floor Hockey Tennis Chasing & Fleeing
Spanish	Foundations: Greetings and Classroom routines. Hispanic Heritage Month/ Day of the dead Migration	Animals: Pets, Ocean and Farm. Special Celebrations: Our Lady of Guadalupe and Christmas and Valentines Day	Communities Special Celebrations: Mother's Day
Art	Intro to Art, Gala Projects, Painting (<i>pattern, repetition, media experimentation</i>)	Painting, Drawing, (<i>mixed media techniques, painting organic subjects, texture</i>)	Papercraft (<i>collage/origami</i>), Ceramics (<i>hand-building techniques and pottery</i>)
Music	SEL Composing Project Acting out a Musical Story Exploring Dynamics with Orchestra Performance Skills: Sounds of the Season	Performance Skills: Sounds of the Season, Second Grade Showcase Connecting Stories to Music: "Giraffes Can't Dance"	Music in Our Schools Month: Rhythm Battle Pitch/Melodic Skills: Do-La solfege Boomwhackers Introduction Introduction to Meter

Grade 3 Religion Overview

Faith Experience

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond. Third Grade students split for Religion, and participate in a holistic, values-based experience learning about Catholicism alongside interfaith/multifaith teachings.

Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In 3rd Grade, students participate in service opportunities supporting our veteran community through the Jesse Brown Dept. Of Veteran Affairs Medical Center.



Values-Based

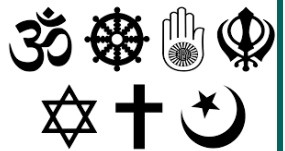
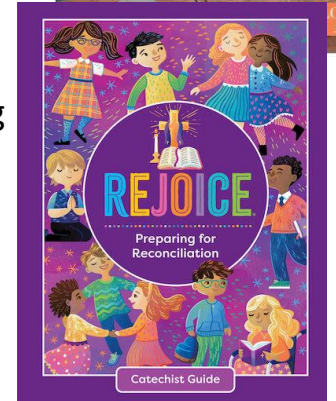
- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of belonging, praise, respect for self and others, care for all creation.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of service and social responsibility, religious diversity, peace, open-mindedness.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of uplifting others, religious diversity, peace, open-mindedness, forgiveness, renewal and grace.

Principles of Catholicism

Our 3rd Grade Moonbeam students use *Finding God: God Calls Us* and *Rejoice Sacraments: Reconciliation* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings.

Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

Our 3rd Grade Shooting Stars students mirror the Moonbeams program in unit theme, aligned with the Six Tasks of the Catechesis. Students learn about Christian, Islamic, and Hindu traditions: creation stories, places of and types of worship, holy figures, traditions and holy days, and morality and living the faith.



Grade 3 Reading and Writing Overview

Modules of Study

Module 1: The Sea

Why do people explore the sea?

Module 2: Outer Space

How do people learn about space?

Module 3: A New Home

How do stories help us understand immigrants' experiences?

Writing Genres Studied

Module 1: Informative

Module 2: Opinion

Module 3: Narrative

Curricular Highlights

- Complex, diverse set of texts
- Variety of learning structures
- Deep knowledge acquisition
- Socratic Seminars
- Art analysis



Instructional Strategies

Wit and Wisdom is a comprehensive curriculum that uses an integrated approach to learning. It is built on a “knowledge-building” concept, meaning that students study Science and Social Studies concepts through the English-Language Arts class.

- Students read, write about what they have read, learn grammar, and then articulate the meaning of each text.
- Students activate and develop content and vocabulary knowledge
- Students build critical literacy skills needed to be successful readers, exceptional writers, and strong communicators.
- Students write across a variety of genres using a strategic process of drafting, revising, editing and publishing

Grade 3 Literature Overview

The following are the core texts that are utilized in each module of study. Core texts are complex, wide-ranging, varied, and provide a careful balance of literary, informational, and fine arts texts.

Module 1: The Sea

Ocean Sunlight: How Tiny Plants Feed the Seas by Molly Bang and Penny Chisholm

The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau by Dan Yaccarino

Giant Squid: Searching for a Sea Monster by Mary M. Cerullo and Clyde F.E. Roper

Shark Attack by Cathy East Dubowski

Amos & Boris by William Steig

Module 2: Outer Space

Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11 by Brian Floca

One Giant Leap by Robert Burleigh

Starry Messenger: Galileo Gailei by Peter Sis

Zathura by Chris Van Allsburg

Module 3: A New Home

Coming to America: The Story of Immigration by Betsy Maestro

Grandfather's Journey by Allen Say

Tea with Milk by Allen Say

Family Pictures by Carmen Lomas Garza

The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco

Grade 3 Word Study Overview

Big Ideas

- Identify parts of words (syllables, basewords, suffixes)
- Identify word structures such as vowels, consonants, blends, digraphs, digraph blends, trigraphs (tch, dge)
- Identify all six syllable types: closed, vowel-consonant-e, open, r-controlled, vowel digraph/diphthong, consonant-le
- Identify the “exceptions” to these six syllable types
- Read and spell words with these unexpected vowel sounds (exceptions)
- Segment syllables into sounds (phonemes) and divide multisyllabic words
- Read and spell words with short and long vowel sounds
- Read and spell words with r-controlled vowels (ar, er, ir, or, ur)
- Read and spell words with vowel teams (ai, ay, ee, ey, ea, ei, eigh, ie, igh, oi, oy, oa, ow, oe, ou, oo, ue, ew, au, aw)
- Identify schwa
- Read and spell words with the unexpected vowel sound of schwa in unaccented syllables
- Read and spell phonetically regular words
- Read words with sound options for the grapheme representation
- Spell words with options for the grapheme representation for sounds with use of a spell checker or dictionary
- Read and spell words with additional sounds of a and ch, the suffix -ed, and the soft sounds of c and g
- Read and spell words with ph, nge, nce, tion, sion, ture, tu, ti, ci
- Read and spell words with silent letters (wr, rh, gn, kn, mn, mb, gh)
- Read and spell words with suffixes, including most common Latin suffixes (-s, -ed, -ing, -est, -ish, -able, -ive, -y, -ful, -ment, -less, -ness, -ly, -ty, -er, -en, -es, -ous, -al, -ent, -an, -ward, -or)
- Identify and know the meaning of most common Latin suffixes
- Read and spell words with suffixes added to unchanging basewords (strongest)
- Form and use regular and irregular plural nouns
- Apply spelling rules for adding suffixes to basewords that change (sliding)
- Read and spell contractions, reduce two words into a contraction, and identify the words from which a contraction was made
- Read and spell Trick Words or targeted high frequency words
- Read and know meaning of sound-alike words (homophones)

Instructional Strategies

The Foundations program uses a structured, sequential, and multi-sensory approach to help students develop skills in phonological awareness, decoding, sight-word recognition, and spelling.



Curricular Highlights

The key contribution of Foundations within the ELA curriculum is to support students connecting letters to sounds. This helps them to read and spell words at increasingly challenging levels as they continue in the grades.

Grade 3 Math Overview

Units of Study

Numbers and Operations in Base Ten

Using place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Solving problems involving the four operations, including multiplying and dividing within 100.

Numbers and Operations – Fractions

Understanding, comparing, and exploring equivalence with fractions.

Measurement and Data

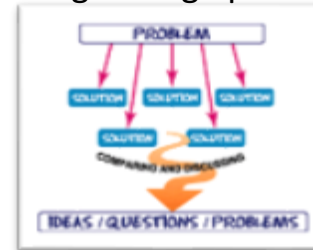
Understanding area and perimeter and solving problems involving time, liquid volume, and mass.

Geometry

Using attributes to classify shapes into different categories, and reasoning with partitioning of shapes to represent fractional amounts.

Instructional Strategies

- Consolidation and deepening of math understanding developed through journaling
- Multiplication facts learned through strategy development and practiced with games
- Instruction designed to develop students' math core competencies
- Learning through problem solving



Curricular Highlights

At FXW, our math curriculum aims to build students' confidence and competence in mathematics, fostering a growth mindset and emphasizing perseverance. We challenge students to engage in flexible problem-solving and provide individualized support. Through active learning and real-world applications, we aim to instill a love for math and equip students for success in education and in life.

Grade 3 ST Math Overview

ST Math Overview

ST Math is a game-based, visual math program that develops students' conceptual understanding of math concepts and problem-solving skills. The way ST Math puzzles are designed, students are not only working through their grade-level math objectives, but they are also building up their ability to persevere with challenging problems and to see mistakes as opportunities for growth. The Learning Cycle graphic (right) show the 4 steps students should follow as they work to solve puzzles. It also includes questions you, as parent/guardian, can ask students to push their thinking.

Notice

What do you think the puzzle is asking you to do?

Notice all the parts of the puzzle.

Connect

What other math ideas does it make you think of?

Think about what you learned from the puzzle.

Predict

What do you think will happen when you click?

Visualize what is going to happen.

Analyze

What happens in the animation when you click?

Click and watch the animation to see what happens.



Grade 3 Science Overview

Instructional Strategies

In addition to the integrated English-Language Arts program where Science concepts are studied, students in kindergarten also explore additional concepts within the Science lab.

FXW uses the **eight practices** of science and engineering throughout our units and in an integrated manner with other curricular areas:

- Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

Units of Study

Scientific Practices and Engineering Design

Balancing Forces with TinkRworks

Inheritance and Traits

Environments and Survival

Weather & Climate



[Read How FXW uses
TinkrWorks in Grades 1-3](#)

Amplify.

Grade 3 Social Studies Overview

Instructional Strategies

In addition to the integrated English-Language Arts program where Social Studies concepts are studied, students in Grade 2 also explore additional concepts within the classroom.

The learning standards for Social Studies are focused on themes that are explored further through the disciplinary concepts.



Themes Explored:

- *Building Classroom Community:* Windows and Mirrors and Personal Identity
- *Global Connections:* How can we act as global citizens?
- *Economics:* How can we make economic choices that have positive impacts?
- *Migration and Movement:* how can we honor and respect many cultures?
- *City of Chicago*

Developing the Whole Child Specials Classes

Special classes play a vital role in educating the whole child. These subjects nurture creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and emotional expression, complementing core academics by engaging different learning styles and intelligences. They provide students with opportunities to explore their passions, build confidence, and develop essential life skills such as perseverance, empathy, and communication. By supporting physical, social, and emotional development, special classes help create well-rounded students who are prepared not only for academic success but for meaningful, balanced lives. Below you will find more information on the overarching philosophies of each of the Specials area disciplines:

Library Media	Physical Education (PE)	Spanish	Art	Music
FXW's Library curriculum is based on Illinois Standards Aligned Instruction for Libraries (ISAIL) and the AASL National School Library Standards. Lessons integrate unit topics from Wit and Wisdom, Common Sense Media, the Global Read Aloud project, and the Monarch Award for Illinois readers.	Physical Education supports the development of the whole child by engaging students in the psychomotor (movement), cognitive (thinking and understanding), and affective (social and emotional) domains of learning. Through active play and games, students build a lifelong enjoyment of movement while developing teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.	The Spanish curriculum is designed to develop students' communicative competence while fostering cultural understanding and global awareness. The units of study are aligned with the principles of ACTFL standards, so the students can Communicate in other languages, get exposed to diverse Cultures , Connect with other disciplines, through Comparison , understanding the nature of the of the Spanish language and with participation in a multilingual Communities .	FXW's Visual Arts curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Visual Arts Standards and a pedagogical approach that emphasizes the support of fine motor development and self-expression while aligning with FXW's charisms of Academics, Faith, Service, and Diversity and Inclusion. Art is taught with a process-forward approach, meaning that students are encouraged to experiment and express themselves through materials without making value judgments about whether something is "good" or "bad." Artists are exposed to a variety of mediums throughout their time, including drawing, painting, ceramics, origami, collage, and fibers/textiles. Each year, students deepen their work in their respective mediums with more challenging and sophisticated applications that support their stages of development. Students are exposed to a diverse range of artists from around the world and throughout history who offer both "mirrors" and "windows" for them to broaden their understanding of what art can be. Collaborative murals and community projects highlight our community's connectedness and commitment to service. Opportunities for choice-based art-making are prioritized to offer students chances to find their voices as artists, meet them where they are, and encourage them to reflect on their own artistic decisions.	FXW's Music curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Musical Standards, with an emphasis in musical experience for elementary learners from the Orff and Kodaly pedagogies respectively. Key ideas include exploring the foundational elements of music (beat, rhythm and pitch), using music to experience cultural practices from around the world, storytelling through music and centering the music classroom around a foundation of musical play.

Grade 3 Specials Classes

	AP1	AP2	AP3
Library-Media	How library is organized and why we use them Digital citizenship	Common Sense Media Global read aloud	Pose real questions Find resources and interpret information Report findings
Physical Education (PE)	Soccer Fitness Test Nutrition	Basketball Coordination & Rhythm: Jump Roping Nutrition-Heart Health	Floor Hockey Fitness Gram Chasing and Fleeing
Spanish	Foundations: Greetings and Classroom routines. Hispanic Heritage Month/ Day of the dead The Anatomy of a sentence: Personal Pronouns	The Anatomy of a sentence: Verbs Numbers 1-100 Special Celebrations: Our Lady of Guadalupe and Christmas and Valentines Day	The Anatomy of a sentence: Adjectives Special Celebrations: Mother's day
Art	Intro to Art, Painting <i>(depth and space, perspective, complex image making)</i>	Painting, Gala Projects, Drawing <i>(color theory, introduction to acrylic painting)</i>	Independent Projects in Painting and Ceramics, Papercraft <i>(collage/origami)</i>
Music	Rhythms Review: Musicians Spotlight: Benny Goodman and Tito Puente Hip-Hop Halloween Rap Project Performance Skills: Sounds of the Season	Performance Skills: Sounds of the Season Folk Dancing Musicians Spotlight: Duke Ellington and Trombone Shorty Rhythm Skills: dotted half and whole notes	Music in Our Schools Month: Rhythm Battle Performance Skills: Mother's Day and Third Grade Showcase Pitch/Melodic Skills: Do-La solfege Boomwhacker Exploration

Building Belonging Through the Curriculum (OSP Campus)

At FXW, we utilize a DEIB framework to ensure that our teaching and learning intentionally reflect the values at the heart of FXW's Mission and Charisms. Our goal is to provide mirrors and windows within the curriculum for all students.

The framework provides a clear, developmentally appropriate roadmap for students as they explore identity and community throughout their FXW journey. Beginning in Preschool with *Identity: Exploring Ourselves & Our Families*, students build a foundation for understanding who they are and how they belong. As they move through the grades, themes deepen and expand—from *Family Structure* in Kindergarten to *Gender & Self-Expression* in Grade 1, *Age & Abilities* in Grade 2, and *Race, Language, Nationality & Immigration* in Grade 3.

Each topic is introduced through developmentally appropriate classroom discussion, literature, art, and community experiences that encourage **empathy**, **curiosity**, and **respect**.

Pre- K	Identity: Exploring Ourselves & Our Families
Kindergarten	Family Structure
First	Gender & Self-Expression
Second	Age & Abilities
Third	Race, Language, Nationality & Immigration

Kindergarten: Family Structure



Kindergarten DEIB Reading Guide - Family Structures

In Kindergarten, our identity-focused DEIB learning builds on students' growing awareness of themselves by exploring **family structure**.

Through age-appropriate books, classroom discussions, and reflective activities, students will consider questions such as:

- What does a family look like?
- How can families be the same and different?
- What makes a family a family?

Students will learn that families come in many forms and that all families are rooted in love, care, belonging, and connection regardless of their structure. This work helps children develop respect for differences while strengthening their understanding of community and belonging.

By honoring each child's lived experience, we reinforce the message that every student and every family is valued at FXW. This foundation supports empathy, inclusion, and a classroom culture where all children feel safe and respected.

Here is a collective list of books that we will read and explore this year. Please note that this list is continuously updated to ensure cultural responsiveness and representation.

Book Title	Author	Type of text	Themes / Notes
<i>In My Family & Family Pictures</i>	Carman Lomas Garza	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Celebrates family diversity through art. Belonging, love and care, family togetherness and support, cultural celebrations
<i>The Family Book</i>	Todd Parr	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Celebrates diverse families, inclusion, universal love, individuality, and acceptance
<i>Families, Families, Families!</i>	Suzanne Lang	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Belonging, love, care for each other, and acceptance, love makes a family
<i>A Family is a Family</i>	Sara O'Leary	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Respect for all family types, embracing differences, love makes a family, belonging, family is a feeling



<i>Love Makes a Family</i>	Sophie Beer	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Love, acceptance, highlights actions of love and support, care
<i>One Family</i>	George Shannon	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Community, togetherness, unity, acceptance
<i>Stella Brings the Family</i>	Miriam B. Schiffer	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Acceptance, empathy, belonging, all families are rooted in love and care
<i>Who's in My Family?: All About Our Families</i>	Robie H. Harris	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Diversity of family structures, inclusivity, universal experiences
<i>Julian at the Wedding</i>	Jessica Love	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Celebration of love, identity, gender expression, acceptance, friendship, individuality, unconditional support
<i>The Great Big Book of Families</i>	Mary Hoffman	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Cultural and religious diversity, inclusion, universal experiences of family, love and connection
<i>All Kinds of Families</i>	Norma Simon	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Families are united in love and support, inclusion, diversity in family structures
<i>And Tango Makes Three</i>	Justin Richardson	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Love makes a family, acceptance, community support, identity

Grade 1: Gender and Self-Expression



First Grade Gender & Self Expression- DEIB Reading Guide

This year, as part of our Social-Emotional Learning curriculum, first-grade students will explore the topic of **gender and self-expression** in thoughtful, age-appropriate ways. These lessons are designed to help children better understand themselves, appreciate the uniqueness of others, and build a classroom community rooted in kindness and respect.

Throughout this learning, students will explore questions such as:

- How do we express who we are?
- What are the different ways people express themselves?
- Why is it important to respect how others express who they are?

Through stories, classroom discussions, and creative activities, students will learn that people express themselves in many different ways.

The emphasis of these lessons is on helping children develop self-awareness, confidence, empathy, and respect for others. Students are encouraged to appreciate that each person is unique and that everyone deserves to be treated with kindness and dignity.

Our goal is to support students as they build positive relationships, celebrate differences, and recognize that the many ways people express themselves help make our school community stronger.

Here is a collective list of books that we will be reading this year. Please note that this list is continuously updated to ensure cultural responsiveness and representation.

Book Title	Author	Book Type	Themes/SEL Connections
<i>Jacob's New Dress</i>	Sarah and Ian Hoffman	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Gender expression, self-confidence, acceptance, family support
<i>Julian is a Mermaid</i>	Jessica Love	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Self-expression, celebration of identity, acceptance
<i>Red: A Crayon's Story</i>	Michael Hall	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Identity, being true to yourself, uniqueness
<i>From the Stars in the Sky to the Fish in the Sea</i>	Kai Cheng Thom	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Gender diversity, self-expression, courage, belonging



<i>Introducing Teddy: A Gentle Story About Gender and Friendship</i>	Jessica Walton	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Gender identity, friendship, empathy, support
<i>Prince & Knight</i>	Daniel Haack	Picture Book / Read Aloud	LGBTQ+ representation, non-traditional love, courage, heroism
<i>The Family Book</i>	Todd Parr	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Family diversity, inclusion, self-acceptance
<i>Not Quite Narwhal</i>	Jesse Sima	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Identity, belonging, exploring differences
<i>Pink is for Boys</i>	Robb Pearlman	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Gender expression, breaking stereotypes, self-acceptance
<i>Jack not Jackie</i>	Erica Silverman	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Gender expression, confidence, acceptance, and family support
<i>Sparkle Boy</i>	Leslie Newman	Picture Book / Read Aloud	Gender expression, confidence, acceptance, and family support

Grade 2: Age and Abilities



Second Grade Age and Abilities - DEIB Reading Guide

In Second Grade, our identity-focused DEIB curriculum centers on **age and abilities**, helping students understand growth, change, and the many ways people experience the world.

Students will explore questions such as:

- What does it mean to grow and change?
- How and why are people's abilities different?
- How can we help everyone feel included, valued, and supported?

Through guided conversations, literature, and collaborative activities, students learn that everyone has strengths and challenges, and that fairness means meeting people where they are. This unit emphasizes empathy, inclusion, and recognizing the value of every individual.

By developing awareness of differences in age and ability, students deepen their understanding of respect and learn how to create welcoming, supportive communities.

Here is a collective list of books that we will be reading this year. Please note that this list is continuously updated to ensure cultural responsiveness and representation.

Title	Author	Type of text	Themes
<i>El Deafo</i>	Cece Bell	Graphic Novel / Read-Aloud	Deafness, self-advocacy, friendship, identity
<i>We're All Wonders</i>	R.J. Palacio	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Simplified version of <i>Wonder</i> , celebrating differences, empathy
<i>A Boy Called Bat</i>	Elana K. Arnold	Chapter Book	Autism representation, friendship, identity, compassion
<i>Six Dots: A Story of Young Louis Braille</i>	Jen Bryant	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Overcoming blindness, innovation, persistence, accessibility
<i>After the Fall: How Humpty</i>	Dan Santat	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Resilience, overcoming fear, persistence



Title	Author	Type of text	Themes
<i>Dumpty Got Back Up Again</i>			
<i>A Color of His Own</i>	Leo Lionni	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Identity, self-recognition, belonging
<i>Boothwaite & Woolam</i>	David Elliott	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Friendship, empathy, differences in abilities and perspectives
<i>And Ask</i>	Sonia Sotomayor	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Understanding, empathy, various abilities (neurodiversity and physical ability)
<i>That's Not Fair?</i>	Courtney Butera	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Navigating fair vs equal
<i>My Three Best Friends and Me, Zuley</i>	Can Best	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Blindness, innovation, persistence, accessibility
<i>Emmanuel's Dream</i>	Laure Ann Thompson and Sean Qualls	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Missing limb at birth, innovation, understanding, empathy, various abilities, persistence, accessibility, prejudice
<i>The William Hoy Story</i>	Nancy Churnin	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Deafness, ASL, innovation, persistence, accessibility, prejudice
<i>My Brother Charlie</i>	Holly Robinson Peete	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Autism, understanding, empathy, various abilities, accessibility
<i>47 Strings</i>	Bucky Carey	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Down Syndrome, empathy, various abilities, accessibility
<i>This is How We Talk</i>	Caroline Cupp and Jessica Sica	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Celebration of diverse communication methods
<i>Everyone Belongs</i>	Heather Avis	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Inclusion, friendship, bravery

Grade 2: Age and Abilities

Title	Author	Type of text	Themes
<i>A Little Like Magic</i>	Sarah Kurpiel	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Stepping outside your comfort zone, incidental disability
<i>I am a Masterpiece</i>	Mia Armstrong	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Down Syndrome, self-acceptance and celebration
<i>Fouya Singh Keeps Going</i>	Simron Jeet Singh	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Perseverance
<i>What Happened to You?</i>	James Catchpole	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Limb difference, inclusivity, curiosity, politeness
<i>My Ocean is Blue</i>	Darren Lebeuf	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Mobility aid, Acceptance, empathy, beauty of differences, incidental disability
<i>I Talk Like a River</i>	Jordan Scott	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Speech impediment, stutters, self-acceptance, confidence
<i>It Was Supposed to be Sunny</i>	Samantha Cotterill	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Autism, Disappointment, flexibility
<i>Aaron Slater Illustrates</i>	Andrea Bealy	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Dyslexia
<i>Sam's Super Seats</i>	Keah Brown	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Cerebral Palsy, friendship
<i>Mommy Soyang</i>	Rosana Sullivan	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Long term illness

Title	Author	Type of text	Themes
<i>We Want to Go to School!</i>	Maryann Cecca-Leffler and Janine Leffler	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Social Justice, stand up for what is right, making a difference
<i>What's Silly Hair Day with No Hair?</i>	Norene Paulson	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Alopecia, friendship
<i>Best Day Ever!</i>	Marilyn Singer	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Mobility aid, friendship and belonging, incidental disability
<i>Miss Tizzy</i>	Libba Moore Gray	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Age, friendship, working together, community

Grade 3: Race, Language, Nationality and Immigration



Third Grade Race, Language, Nationality, and Immigration –

DEIB Reading Guide

In Third Grade, students engage in a more expanded exploration of identity that includes **race, cultural identity, language, nationality, and immigration**, in ways that are thoughtful, age-appropriate, and grounded in respect.

Students will consider questions such as:

- Where do we come from?
- What languages do we speak?
- What is race, and how does it shape experiences?
- How can we affirm and celebrate all cultures in our community?

Through stories, discussion, and reflection, students learn to appreciate their own identities while developing respect for the identities and experiences of others. This learning supports empathy, critical thinking, and a deeper sense of belonging within our diverse community.

The goal is not only understanding differences but also recognizing shared humanity and learning how to be inclusive, caring classmates and citizens.

Here is a collective list of books that we will be reading this year. Please note that this list is continuously updated to ensure cultural responsiveness and representation.



Book Title	Author	Type	Themes/SEL Connections	Notes
<i>Islandborn</i>	Juno Diaz	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Immigration, cultural identity, memory, belonging	Great for prompting discussions on remembering one's heritage and family stories
<i>My Papi Has a Motorcycle</i>	Isabel Quintero	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Family, Mexican-American culture, community	Vibrant illustrations, connects students to different family traditions and cultural pride.
<i>The Name Jar</i>	Yangsook Choi	Picture Book / Independent Reading / Read-Aloud	Names, language, self identity, cultural acceptance	Encourages discussion about pronunciation, respecting others' names, and cultural pride.
<i>A Different Pond</i>	Bao Phi	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Immigration, family, resilience	Explores intergenerational immigrant experiences; rich for SEL reflection on empathy and gratitude
<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>	Allen Say	Picture Book / Read-Aloud/ Independent Reading	Immigration, nationality, belonging	Highlights the tension between countries of origin and new home; fosters discussion of personal identity
<i>Come on, Rain!</i>	Karen Hesse	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Cultural setting, nature, community	Subtle themes of multicultural urban experience; accessible for discussion of environment and heritage
<i>Bilal Cooks Daal</i>	Aisha Saeed	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Pakistani culture, food, family, sharing, cultural traditions and	Highlights cultural traditions through food; good for cross cultural comparison.

Grade 3: Race, Language, Nationality and Immigration

Book Title	Author	Type	Themes/SEL Connections	Notes
<i>Islandborn</i>	Junot Diaz	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	immigration, cultural identity, memory, belonging	Great for prompting discussions on remembering one's heritage and family stories
<i>My Papi Has a Motorcycle</i>	Isabel Quintero	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Family, Mexican-American culture, community	Vibrant illustrations, connects students to different family traditions and cultural pride.
<i>The Name Jar</i>	Yangsook Choi	Picture Book / Independent Reading / Read-Aloud	Names, language, self identity, cultural acceptance	Encourages discussion about pronunciation, respecting others' names, and cultural pride.
<i>A Different Pond</i>	Bao Phi	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	immigration, family, resilience	Explores intergenerational immigrant experiences; rich for SEL reflection on empathy and gratitude
<i>Grandfather's Journey</i>	Allen Say	Picture Book / Read-Aloud/ Independent Reading	Immigration, nationality, belonging	Highlights the tension between countries of origin and new home; fosters discussion of personal identity
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<i>Bilal Cooks Daal</i>	Aisha Saeed	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Pakistani culture, food, family, sharing, cultural traditions and	Highlights cultural traditions through food; good for cross cultural comparison.

			pride	
<i>The Journey</i>	Francesca Sanna	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Refugees, immigration, resilience	Powerful visual storytelling; addresses experiences of fleeing war and seeking safety.
<i>My Two Blankets</i>	Irena Kobald	Picture Book / Read-Aloud	Immigration, language barriers, friendship	Prompts discussion on learning new languages and forming connections in a new country.
<i>One Green Apple</i>	Eve Bunting	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Cultural assimilation, friendship	Illustrates shared experiences of children from immigrant backgrounds.
<i>Saima the Syrian Chef</i>	Danny Ramadan	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Refugee experience, family, cultural adaptation, memory, cultural traditions, resilience, pride	Explores resilience and cultural pride through a relatable child character. Cultural traditions through food
<i>Tea with Milk</i>	Allen Say	Picture Book/Read-Aloud/ Independent Reading	Japanese American experience, cultural traditions, belonging, homesickness, Bicultural identity	Reflects on cultural heritage and memory, perfect for cross cultural comparison.
<i>We Are Still Here: Native American Truths Everyone Should Know</i>	Traci Sorrell	Picture Book/Read-Aloud	Indigenous cultural pride, highlights strength, resilience, and community	

Grade 3: Race, Language, Nationality and Immigration



<i>We are Water Protectors</i>	Carole Lindstrom	Picture Book/Read Aloud	highlights activism, cultural pride, nature/environment.	
<i>I'm Not a Costume</i>	Maria "White Cedar Woman" Desjarlais	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Highlights importance of respect, empathy and diversity.	
<i>The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family</i>	Ibtihaj Muhammad	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Highlights cultural pride, empathy, resilience, and identity	Encourages antibullying/combating bigotry Positive identity and cultural pride
<i>Thank You, Omu!</i>	Oge Mora	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Highlights cultural pride and celebration, community, sharing through food and gratitude	Community building, cultural celebration through food and gratitude
<i>Sunwe</i>	Lupita Nyong'o	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Highlights identity, cultural pride, importance of name and self esteem	Focuses on embracing oneself/self esteem identity
<i>Watercress</i>	Andrea Wang	Picture Book/Read Aloud	explores themes of cultural identity, grief, empathy, and appreciation	Chinese American immigrant experience Family trauma and grief
<i>Abuela</i>	Arthur Dorros	Picture Book/Read Aloud	Highlights immigration, bilingualism culture, family relationships and appreciation.	Cultural pride, immigration experience, written with some Spanish words



<i>Mango, Abuela, and Me</i>	Meg Medina	Picture Book/Read Aloud	multilingualism (has Spanish and English) familial bond/relationships	Written with some Spanish great for multilingual families
<i>My Name is Yoon</i>	Helen Recorvits	Picture Book/Read Aloud	highlights cultural adjustment, fitting in with others, identity, embracing one's heritage and importance of one's name.	Vibrant illustrations Self-acceptance and identity
<i>Suki's Kimono</i>	Chieri Uegaki	Picture Book/Read Aloud/Read	embracing one's heritage-cultural	Perseverance Pride
<i>Suki's Kimono</i>	Chieri Uegaki	Picture Book/Read Aloud	embracing one's heritage—cultural pride and perseverance Staying true to oneself	Perseverance Pride Cultural representation Self-acceptance and identity
<i>All the Colors We Are: The Story of How We Get Our Skin Color</i>	Kate Kissinger	Picture Book/Read Aloud	celebrates and highlights diverse families written in both English and Spanish	uses science to explain skin tone highlights diverse families. written in both English and Spanish
<i>Let's Talk About Race</i>	Julius Lester	Picture Book/Read Aloud	highlights and embraces identity, diversity	Prompt discussion on how everyone's story is unique, but we are all human and share that quality. Identity and diversity

Grades 4-8 Overview

Courses

- English Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Word Study/Vocabulary, Grammar)
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Education
- Religion
- Art
- Music
- World Language (Spanish/French) or Guided Study
- Drama
- Global & Digital Citizenship

Mathematical Journey

- Students in grades 4 and 5 use the Think!Mathematics program.
- All FXW students are enrolled in an accelerated math program beginning in grade 6. This means that students in grades 6-8 complete four years of math instruction in three years.
- Students in grades 6 and 7 use the accelerated Illustrative Math series.
- All grade 8 students take Algebra 1 published by Open Up, which is a high-school level course.

Technology

- Usage is purposeful and empowering.
- Teachers and students make intentional choices to use devices, programs, and applications that support workflows, provide access to information, facilitate cooperation and collaboration, demonstrate skill or content mastery, or support their creativity for original ideas or projects.
- In addition to the use of individual devices, the Learning Lab is a hub for digital media projects, 3D modeling and design, and purposeful tinkering and making.
- Additionally, all students participate in a course to build Global & Digital Citizenship. This course explores our obligation to society as advocates for change and as humans who have the responsibility to leave a positive legacy in the cyber-world and beyond.

Grades 4-8 Overview

Performances

Students highlight their talents with productions that are holistic, project-based experiences that allow students to learn everything that needs to be done on-stage and off-stage.

“Backstage” activities include student leadership with things like set design, sound, choreography, advertising, and costume creation.

Grade 4 Winter Sing-Along

Grade 5 Musical

Grade 6 Dia De Los Muertos Celebration

Grade 7 Black Excellence Celebration

Grade 8 Musical

Campus Community Capstone Experiences

The scope of the capstone trips was intentionally scaffolded to allow for increased levels of autonomy that is developmentally appropriate for adolescents over the years.

Grade 4: Springfield

Grade 5: Dozin with the Dinos

Grade 6: Milwaukee

Grade 7: St. Louis

Grade 8: Washington, D.C

Grades 4-8 Overview

Assessment

- The school year is divided into three assessment periods. At the end of each, students and families receive Standards-Based Reports. In lieu of letter grades, students are given a deconstructed assessment of their individual proficiency in specific learning outcomes.
- FXW administers MAP® Growth™ interim assessments three times annually to get an accurate view of how much each student has grown over time and what students are ready to learn. This data is used to analyze growth and attainment on many levels including the individual student.
- Assessment data, classroom-based and standardized, is used to regularly analyze middle school curricular materials and instructional moves. Data-driven decisions and changes are made to increase teacher efficacy and support student learning.
- The day-to-day assessment model places the individual student at the center of the process. An on-going cycle of feedback between teachers and students is an essential component in adolescent learning.

Supporting and Nurturing our Adolescents

- Adolescents need a safe space where they can make mistakes to learn and grow.
- Service is a theme woven throughout the middle school experience using on-campus and off-campus experiences to serve specific populations in need.
- The campus social workers proactively raise awareness and implement preventative measures to ensure that students are emotionally safe.
- Emotional and physical safety are protected through an anonymous bullying reporting and fact-finding process.
- When bullying occurs, the mental health team creates a strategic plan to support victims and offenders.
- Restorative practices are an essential component in middle school at FXW. Restorative practices are a set of diverse ideas and approaches used to build healthy communities, increase social capital, repair harm, and restore relationships. Restorative practices emphasize addressing harm, the importance of community, and prioritizing healthy relationships.

Grade 4 Religion Overview

Faith Experience

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond.

Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In grade 4 we take a deep dive into the unhoused population in our local community through a meaningful partnership with the House of Mary and Joseph.

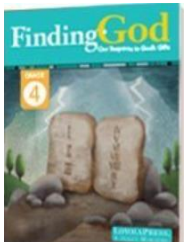


Values-Based

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of compassion, harmony, and humility.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of conscience, gratitude, and hope.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of truth, wisdom, and empathy.

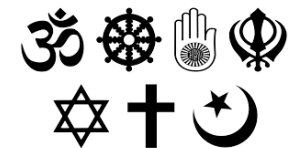
Principles of Catholicism

We use *Finding God: Our Response to God's Gifts* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings. The program is based on Ignatian spirituality which respects our lived experiences as a flexible, adaptable way of interacting with the world and one another.



Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore Taoism.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore Protestantism.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore Hinduism.



Grade 4 Advisory Overview

Units of Study

- Growth Mindset and Goal Setting
- Emotion Management
- Empathy and Kindness
- Problem Solving
- We all have mental health
- Navigating your digital world and current events

Instructional Strategies

Students will participate in weekly, 30 to 50-minute advisory sessions and will learn through teacher directed activities, group work and games. Students will participate in discussions, activities, and ask questions to engage appropriately during this time.

Curricular Highlights

- Establishing classroom culture and community
- Developing a sense of belonging in the advisory group
- Developing social and emotional skills
- Increasing understanding of mental health and coping tools



Grade 4 Reading Overview

Units of Study

- Unit 1** – Comprehension (Fiction)
- Unit 2** – Interpreting Character (Fiction)
- Unit 3** – Reading the Weather (Nonfiction)
- Unit 4** – Reading History (Nonfiction)
- Unit 5** – Historical Fiction Clubs
- Unit 6** – Free Verse (Fiction)

Instructional Strategies

Reading Workshop curriculum is built on the idea of balanced literacy. Grade 4 students study high interest texts to practice reading skills from defining new vocabulary to making inferences and connections. Key elements include:

- Explicit teaching of skills*
- Time given for independent reading*
- Opportunities to practice skills in discussion and writing*
- Assessment with meaningful feedback*

Curricular Highlights

- Choice of diverse collections of books
- Interactive read aloud
- Teacher-student reading conferences



Grade 4 Literature Overview

Comprehension Unit

I Love You, Michael Collins by Lauren Baratz-Logsted

Realistic Fiction Unit

The Tiger Rising by Kate DiCamillo

During the Nonfiction Unit

Because of Mr. Terupt by Rob Buyea (not part of unit but class read aloud at that time of the year)

Free Verse Unit

Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate

Love That Dog by Sharon Creech*

Hate That Cat by Sharon Creech*

Heartbeat by Sharon Creech*

Out of the Dust by Karen Hesse*

Inside Out & Back Again by Thanhhai Lai*

Serafina's Promise by Ann E. Burg*

Garvey's Choice by Nikki Grimes*

Before the Ever After by Jacqueline Woodson*

Historical Fiction Unit

Rose Blanche by Roberto Innocenti

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

Toliver's Secret by Esther Brady*

On the Blue Comet by Rosemary Wells*

Jackie & Me by Dan Gutman*

Glory Be by Augusta Scattergood*

Finding Langston by Lesa Cline-Ransome*

Leaving Lymon by Lesa Cline-Ransome*

Riding Freedom by Pam Munoz Ryan*

Dear Levi by Elvira Woodruff*

The Storm in the Barn by Matt Phelon*

Our Only May Amelia by Jennifer L. Holm*

Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis*

The Mighty Miss Malone by Christopher Paul Curtis*

Revolutionary War on Wednesday by Mary Pope Osborne*

Secret Weapons by Jessica Gunderson*

Buttons for General Washington by Connie Roop and Peter Roop*

The Top Secret Adventure of John Darragh by Connie Roop and Peter Roop*

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson by Bette Bao Lord*

Sarah Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan*

Caleb's Story by Patricia MacLachlan*

Skylark by Patricia MacLachlan*

Rachel's Journal by Marissa Moss*

Unspoken by Henry Cole*

George Washington's Socks by Elvira Woodruff*

*Reading selections are Book Club options.

Grade 4 Word Study Overview

First 6 Units of Study

Unit 1: Short Vowel Sounds

Unit 2: Vowel-Consonant-e

Unit 3: Long a: a, ai, ay

Unit 4: Long e: ea, ee, ie

Unit 5: Long i: i-C-e, y, igh, ey, uy

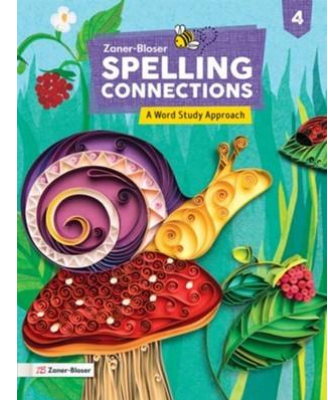
Unit 6: Assessment and Review

Instructional Strategies

Using this curriculum provides advanced phonics and spelling skills practice, exposure to sound blends, diphthongs, digraphs, and sound patterns. Each unit provides different opportunities for students to practice different literacy skills such as making inferences, using context clues, making vocabulary connections, identifying idioms, and enhancing reading comprehension. As students progress through the units, students' vocabulary and reading comprehension skills improve, so does their spelling mastery.

Curricular Highlights

- Wednesday- Unit introduction
 - Whole group word sort
 - Skill practice
- One week to complete unit
 - Mid-week check points
 - Homework
- Wednesday- Before new unit
 - Students assessed on skill through 20 word "quizzzer"
- Spelling and Usage Assessments
 - Every 6 units
 - Students assessed on ability to spell and use past unit words correctly



Grade 4 Writing Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1 – Realistic Fiction

Unit 2 – Personal Essay

Unit 3 – Information Writing

Unit 4 – Literary Essay

Unit 5 – Poetry

*12 units of *Easy Grammar* incorporated throughout the writing curriculum:
Nouns, Pronouns, Verbs, Adjectives,
Adverbs, Types of Sentences, Prepositions,
Direct Objects, Capitalization, Punctuation,
Sentence Writing, Review

Instructional Strategies

Our goal is to create lifelong writers. Students will:

- Engage and participate in a writing workshop model where the writing process is broken down into steps.
- Students will have writing partners to help them brainstorm ideas and peer edit.
- Lead a conference with their teacher where students and teachers collaborate on their writing.

Through using Easy Grammar, students will:

- Engage in tri-weekly lessons with instruction, practice, and assessment.
- Apply their practiced skills to their writing work.

Curricular Highlights

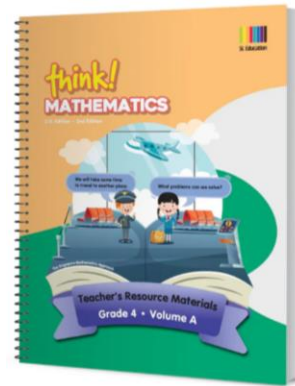
- Publishing an Informational Book on an event or person from The American Revolution
- Publishing a Poetry Book
- Reinforcing grammar and sentence structure
- Collaborative writing with peer editing



Grade 4 Math Overview

Units of Study

- Numbers and Place Value to 1,000,000
- Addition and Subtraction to 1,000,000
- Multiplication and Division
- Number and Shape Patterns
- Geometry
- Time
- Fractions
- Decimals
- Volume and Mass
- Measurement and Data
- Word Problems

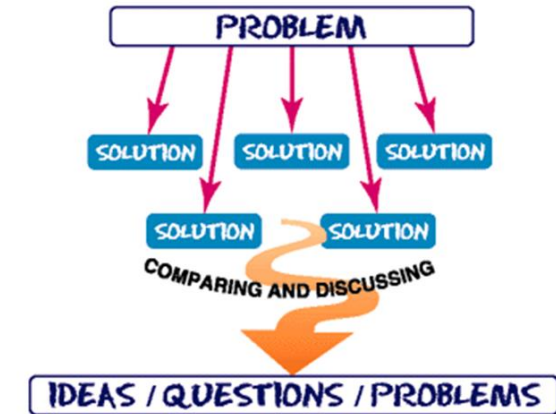


Curricular Highlights

- Grade 4 students love to play daily multiplication fact fluency games to practice mental math strategies and grow their automaticity! This is a major focus this year.
- ST Math offers a fun and independent way to exercise visual/special reasoning in a fun and challenging way!

Instructional Strategies

- Learning through problem solving



- Daily formative assessment
- ST Math to supplement student visual/spatial reasoning
- Homework assignments will vary (around 15-20 minutes)

Grade 4 ST Math Overview

ST Math Overview

ST Math is a game-based, visual math program that develops students' conceptual understanding of math concepts and problem-solving skills. The way ST Math puzzles are designed, students are not only working through their grade-level math objectives, but they are also building up their ability to persevere with challenging problems and to see mistakes as opportunities for growth. The Learning Cycle graphic (right) show the 4 steps students should follow as they work to solve puzzles. It also includes questions you, as parent/guardian, can ask students to push their thinking.

Notice

What do you think the puzzle is asking you to do?

Notice all the parts of the puzzle.

Connect

What other math ideas does it make you think of?

Think about what you learned from the puzzle.

Predict

What do you think will happen when you click?

Visualize what is going to happen.

Analyze

What happens in the animation when you click?

Click and watch the animation to see what happens.



Grade 4 Science Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1- Earth Features

Unit 2- Energy Conversions

Unit 3- Vision and Light

Curricular Highlights

- Hatching chicks under the 4-H Incubation and Embryology program at the University of Illinois!
- Making models to explore core concepts
- Hands-on labs and experiments

Amplify.

Instructional Strategies

Amplify's curriculum includes hands-on investigations, multiple literary resources, integrated real world connections, and interactive digital tools and simulations under NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards). Grade 4 science enables students to begin with a Unit Anchoring Phenomenon to then investigate, collaborate and explore various scientific concepts.

Resources embedded include:

- Integrated Science and Engineering Practices
- Explorations of Disciplinary Core Ideas
- Embedded Crosscutting Concepts



Grade 4 Social Studies Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1: Natural Resources of the US

Unit 2: The American Revolution

Unit 3: Our State's History

Unit 4: Economic Choices

Curricular Highlights

- The regions, states, and capitals
- American Revolution
- Springfield Field Trip in May



Instructional Strategies

FXW's Social Studies curriculum is designed from the NCSS (National Council for Social Studies). Grade 4 social studies aids students in the development of nonfiction and critical thinking skills through observation, inquiry, argument, collaboration, and communication.

With our inquirED curriculum, students engage in inquiry-based social studies which moves away from a main source of knowledge like a textbook to varied, diverse sources. Instead, it supports investigation, builds future-ready skills, and helps to combat bias and issues of representation.

Grade 4 Spanish Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1 - "*Nos conocemos*"

Unit 2 - "*¿Cómo vivimos?*"

Unit 3 - "*Vamos a aprender*"

Unit 4 - "*Los animales*"

Unit 5 - "*Nos cuidamos*"

Unit 6 - "*Nuestro ambiente*"

Perú

Argentina

Honduras

Colombia

República Dominicana

España

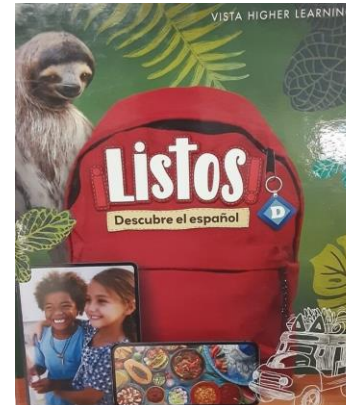
Curricular Highlights

- Researching the origins of Spanish festivities such as “Día de los Muertos”, “Día de Reyes”, and “Cinco de Mayo”
- Collaborative work with Art Class
- Unit Projects

Instructional Strategies

50-minute language class two times per week

- Conversational approach in different authentic situations
- Teach Proficiency by Reading Stories (TPRS) and Phonetics
- Task-based Instruction



Grade 5 Religion Overview

Faith Experience

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond.

Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In grade 5 we take a deep dive into serving our senior citizen population in Chicago.



Values-Based

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of Loyalty, Perseverance and Knowledge of the Scriptures.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of Faith, Prayer, Charity and Justice
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of Non-violence, Reverence and Simplicity.

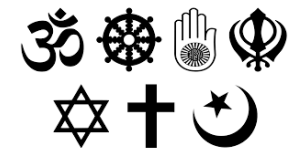
Principles of Catholicism

We use *Finding God: Our Response to God's Gifts* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings. The program is based on Ignatian spirituality which respects our lived experiences as a flexible, adaptable way of interacting with the world and one another.



Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore Evangelicalism.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore Islam.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore Jainism.



Grade 5 Advisory Overview

Units of Study

- Community Building and Problem Solving
- Growth Mindset and Goal-Setting
- Emotion Management
- Empathy and Kindness
- Navigating your digital world and current events
- Depression Awareness and Suicide Prevention
- EOY Test Prep/MAP Preparation
- Puberty I – Understanding Changes

Instructional Strategies

During advisory meetings, students engage in guided discussions and activities in small groups. These conversations help students better navigate their preteen worlds and encourage students to build meaningful, empathetic relationships that support our diverse community and help them find their own voice.

Through community building and developing positive relationships, students find a safe space at school to build social-emotional awareness, practice communication skills and reach their full potential.

Curricular Highlights

- Establishing classroom culture and community
- Developing a sense of belonging in the advisory group
- Developing social and emotional skills
- Increasing understanding of mental health and depression awareness
- Developing skills to cope with the influences of technology and social media.
- In February, educators from Candor Health will teach our students about physiological changes that occur during adolescence through their research-based program *Puberty 1: Understanding Changes*. More information is available on Candor Health's website and will be shared closer to the presentation date.



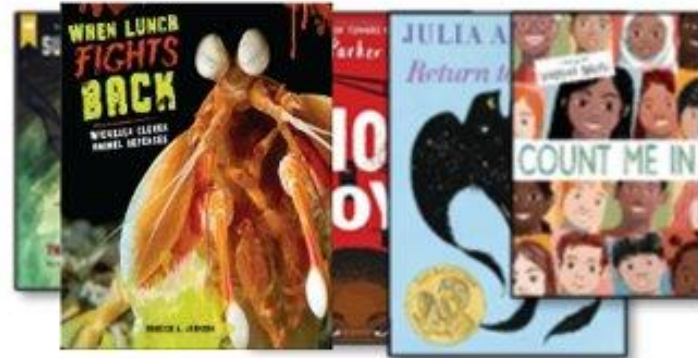
Grade 5 Reading Overview

Units of Study

- Comprehension Skills
- Theme in Realistic Fiction
- Non-fiction and Persuasive Texts
- Fantasy Novels
- Poetry
- Social Issues Book Clubs

Curricular Highlights

- Poetry Recital
- Book Clubs
- Reader's Notebooks



Instructional Strategies

Units of Study Reading Curriculum utilizes a workshop model. Students will be introduced to reading skill and see how it works in a demonstration using a mentor text. Students will then read and apply this skill independently or in guided, small groups. As students continually practice reading strategies, they build their comprehension and critical thinking, applying their skills across a variety of texts. Skills from each unit are practiced and built upon in each workshop to build students' "tool kit" before the end of the unit.

Grade 5 Literature Overview

Unit 1: Literary Book Clubs

Paperbag Princess by Robert Munsch

No Talking by Andrew Clements

Count Me In by Varsha Bajaj

Wringer by Jerry Spinelli

Wish by Barbara O'Connor

Ghost by Jason Reynolds

Unit 2: Nonfiction, Informational Texts

When Lunch Fights Back by Rebecca L. Johnson

Earth's Incredible Places: Everest by Sangma Francis, Lisa Feng

Achoo!: The Most Interesting Book You'll Ever Read about Germs

(*Mysterious You*) by Trudee Romanek, Rose Cowles

Deep Dive into Deep Sea: Exploring the Most Mysterious Levels of the Ocean by Tim Flannery, Sam Caldwell

Don't Mess with Me: The Strange Lives of Venomous Sea

Creatures (How Nature Works) by Paul Erickson, Andrew Martinez

The Language of Plants by Helena Harastova, Darya Beklemesheva

Zombie Makers: True Stories of Nature's Undead by Rebecca L. Johnson

Unit 3: Nonfiction, Argument Reading

"Lessons from the Deep" Adapted from a text by Anna Gratz Cockerille

Unit 4: Fantasy Book Clubs

Gregor the Overlander by Suzanne Collins

Masterpiece by Elise Broach

The Girl Who Drank the Moon by Kelly Barnhill

The Last Wild by Piers Torday

Mysterious Benedict Society by Trenton Lee Stewart

Spiderwick Chronicles (books 1 and 2) by Tony DiTerlizzi and Holly Black

Social Issues Book Clubs

Stella by Starlight by Sharon M. Draper

Ghost Boys by Jewell Parker Rhodes

In the Footsteps of Crazy Horse by Joseph M. Marshall III

Weedflower by Cynthia Kadohata

Return to Sender by Julia Alvarez

Shooting Kabul by N. H. Senzai

Grade 5 Writing Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1 – Personal Narrative

Unit 2 – Informational Writing: Westward Expansion

Unit 3 – Memoir

Unit 4 – Informational Writing: Opinion Writing

Unit 5 – Poetry

Curricular Highlights

- Writing an informational, cross-curricular essay on the time of Westward Expansion.
- Writing and reflecting on how you became the person you are in a Memoir.
- Writing and creating a poetry anthology



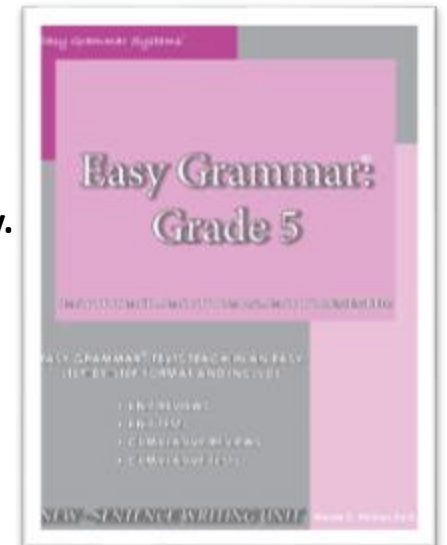
Instructional Strategies

Our goal is to create lifelong writers with the skills and knowledge to convey their thoughts completely and accurately.

- Engage and participate in a writing workshop model where the writing process is broken down into steps.
- Students will work with partners and/or their groups to aid in learning the new skill.
- Exhibit growth at different points in the unit using formative assessments.

Through using Easy Grammar, students will:

- Engage in bi-weekly lessons with instruction, practice, and assessment.
- Apply their practiced skills to their writing work.



Grade 5 Vocabulary Overview

Branches of Study*

Branch 1 – Vowel Sounds

Branch 2– Schwa and “r”-Controlled Vowels

Branch 3 – Diphthongs, Prefixes, and Suffixes

Branch 4 – Consonants, Compounds, and Commonly Confused Terms

Branch 5 – Complex Prefixes and Suffixes

Branch 6 – Frequently Misspelled Words and Roots

*Each branch is made up of 5 units and 1 review unit

Curricular Highlights

- Utilizing group-based learning to help grow individual spelling skills
- Completing formative check-ins throughout the unit leading to a summative assessment at the end of the unit
- Utilizing knowledge grown in grammar workshop to aid in our word study work in Spelling Connections



Instructional Strategies

Our goal is to create lifelong writers with the skills and knowledge to convey their thoughts completely and accurately.

Both the Units of Study Writing Curriculum and Grammar Skills Curriculum utilize a workshop model. Students will be introduced to a writing strategy or grammar concepts and experience it in a mentor text. Students will then work independently or in guided, small groups to develop the skill and practice. As writers, students will share their work in a collaborative process to continually improve their work.

Through using Spelling Connections, students will:

- Engage in weekly lessons with instruction, practice, and assessment.
- Apply their practiced skills to their writing work.

Grade 5 Math Overview

Units of Study

1. Place Value and Decimals
2. Order of Operations
3. Multiply and Divide Whole Numbers
4. Add and Subtract Decimals
5. Multiply and Divide Decimals
6. Add and Subtract Fractions
7. Multiply and Divide Fractions
8. Measurement and Data
9. Area and Volume
10. Geometry
11. Expressions and Graphs
12. Ratios, Rates and Percentages

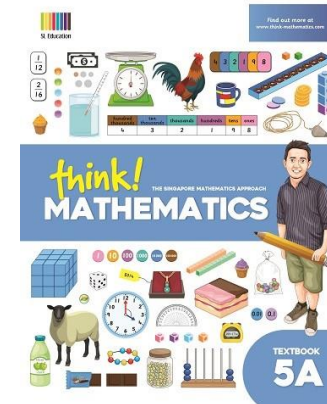
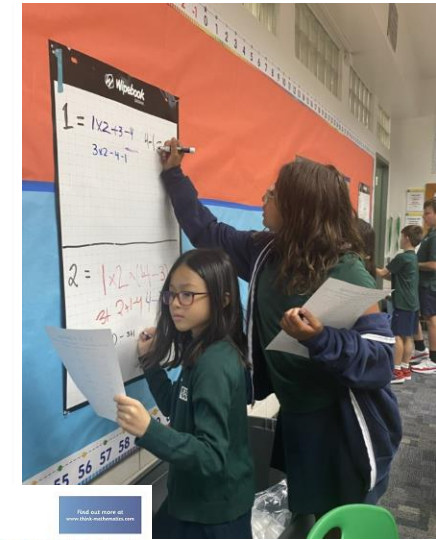
The last unit of 5th grade math will be the first unit of the 6th grade Open Up curriculum.

Instructional Strategies

- Vertical whiteboard problem solving and display
- Use of math manipulatives such as place value disks, fraction circles, and 3D shapes
- Group work to promote collaboration, teamwork, inquiry, and communication.
- Use of personal whiteboards and expo markers encourages problem solving
- Homework to reinforce concepts (20 min per night)

Curricular Highlights

- Think! Mathematics is a problem-solving based curriculum with extensive visuals to build conceptual understanding
- ST Math is a fun and visual way to reinforce concepts
- Teacher-created extension activities available for enrichment for students who seek more challenge. Examples:
 - Unit 1 – Different number systems
 - Unit 8 – Convert between Celsius and Fahrenheit



Grades 5-7 ALEKS Overview

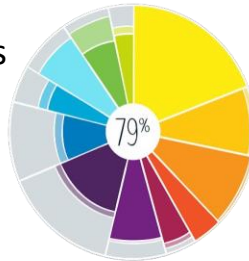


ALEKS Overview

- ALEKS is a web-based mathematical platform used to enhance FXW's middle school math curriculum. Continued and dedicated use of ALEKS has increased student comprehension and assessment scores across all three grade levels.
- FXW teachers and students use ALEKS in two different ways:

Independent Work on an Individual Path

This path consists of material that ALEKS believes the student is ready to learn based on periodic knowledge checks. All students are required to complete a minimum of **5 – 10 topics per week on their individual path** in ALEKS.



Classroom Assignments

These assignments are teacher-created and based on current class lessons designed to give students immediate feedback for new topics and/or help prepare them for assessments.

- Students should expect to spend about an hour per week in ALEKS, however, they can always spend more time and/or work faster through their individual path if desired. If a student completes 85% - 100% of their course, they may be placed in the next higher level and given the opportunity to further enrich their mathematical understanding.
- Parents can opt into ALEKS emails to track their student's progress, **please be on the lookout for an emailed invitation from "ALEKS Corporation" inviting you to opt-in to parent progress emails**. This email should come out within the week. Please note that you must respond to the email and click on the enclosed link to receive the updates, if you do nothing you will not be enrolled.

Grade 5 Science Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1- Ecosystem Restoration

Unit 2- The Earth System

Unit 3- Modeling Matter

Instructional Strategies

Amplify's curriculum includes hands-on investigations, multiple literary resources, integrated real world connections, and interactive digital tools and simulations under NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards). Grade 5 science enables students to begin with a Unit Anchoring Phenomenon to then investigate, collaborate and explore various scientific concepts.

Resources embedded include:

- Integrated Science and Engineering Practices
- Explorations of Disciplinary Core Ideas
- Embedded Crosscutting Concepts

Curricular Highlights

- Hands on experiments
- Creating models to display core concepts
- Using the Engineering Design Process during Invention Convention

Amplify.

Grade 5 Social Studies Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1: Native America

Unit 2: The Colonial Era

Unit 3: Rights and Responsibilities (Constitution and Federal Government)



Curricular Highlights

- Investigation of primary and secondary sources from multiple perspectives
- Discussion and debate with small groups and the whole class
- A variety of projects that includes posters, presentations, a class book, and more



Instructional Strategies

The fifth grade Social Studies curriculum focuses on analyzing topics and themes in U.S. history, geography, civics, and economics. Utilizing the inquiry-based resource inquirED, students learn to ask questions about history, make connections to the present day, and take action in our modern communities.



Grade 5 Spanish Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1 - "*Nos conocemos*"

Unit 2 - "*¿Cómo vivimos?*"

Unit 3 - "*Vamos a aprender*"

Unit 4 - "*Los animales*"

Unit 5 - "*Nos cuidamos*"

Unit 6 - "*Nuestro ambiente*"

Nicaragua

Paraguay

México

Costa Rica

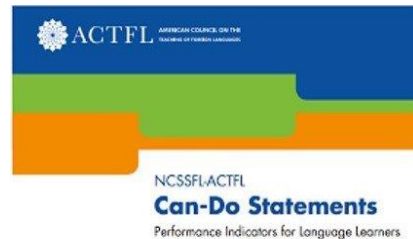
Cuba

Chile

Instructional Strategies

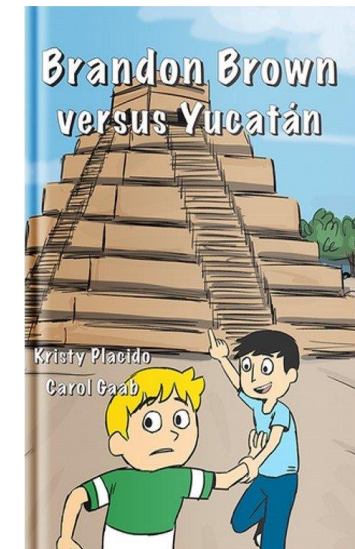
50-minute language class two times per week

- Conversational approach in different authentic situations
- Teach Proficiency by Reading Stories (TPRS) and Phonetics
- Task-based Instruction



Curricular Highlights

- Reading the book *Brandon Brown versus Yucatán* by Kristy Placido y Carol Gaab
- Researching the origins of Spanish Celebrations such as "Día de todos los Santos", "Día de los Muertos", "Día de Reyes", and "Cinco de mayo"
- Collaborative work with Art Class
- Unit Projects



Grade 6 Religion Overview

Faith Experience

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond.

Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In grade 6 we take a deep dive into service by partnering with a local organization, Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly, in which we work with the elderly on creating various artistic projects together.



Values-Based

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of tradition, respect, and honesty.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of compassion, care for creation and sustainability, and wisdom and karma.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of community, ethical conduct, and peace and justice.

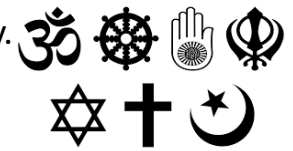
Principles of Catholicism

We use *Finding God: Our Response to God's Gifts* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings. The program is based on Ignatian spirituality which respects our lived experiences as a flexible, adaptable way of interacting with the world and one another.



Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore Orthodox Christianity.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore Buddhism.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore Judaism.



Grade 6 Advisory Overview

Units of Study

- Mindsets and Goals
- Developing a Positive Sense of Self
- Thoughts, Emotions and Decisions
- Managing Relationships and Social Conflict
- Navigating your digital world and current events
- Depression Awareness
- Embracing Diversity: Gender Expression, Pronouns and Identity
- Puberty II – Navigating Changes

Instructional Strategies

During advisory meetings, students engage in guided discussions and activities in small groups. These conversations help students better navigate their teenage worlds and encourage students to build meaningful, empathetic relationships that support our diverse community and help them find their own voice.

Through community building and developing positive relationships, students find a safe space at school to build social-emotional awareness, practice communication skills and reach their full potential.

Curricular Highlights

- Establishing classroom culture and community
- Developing a sense of belonging in the advisory group
- Developing social and emotional skills
- Increasing understanding of mental health and coping tools
- Understanding the role of social media in shaping relationships, digital citizenship, and responsible online behavior.
- Exploring elements that make up a student's individual identity and learning about gender diversity.
- In February, educators from Candor Health will teach our students the effects of changes that occur during puberty with additional information on both male and female anatomy through their research-based program *Puberty II – Navigating Changes*. This program is a follow up to *Puberty I – Understanding Changes* which our students participated in during their Grade 5 year. More information is available on Candor Health's website and will be shared closer to the presentation date.



Grade 6 Reading Overview

Units of Study

- Comprehension Review
- Deep Study of Character
- Social Issues Book Clubs
- Nonfiction Signposts
- Afrofuturism

Instructional Strategies

The workshop model is utilized in reading. Students will receive direct instruction via a mini-lesson. Following the mini-lesson, students will work within their groups to practice the new skill. To end the lesson, students will practice the skill independently, during which time we will conference with individual students or groups to check-in or to offer additional support when necessary.

Historical Fiction

A Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park

Short Stories

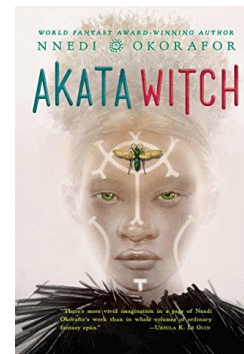
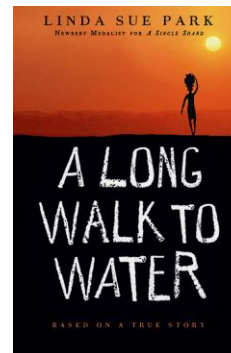
"Raymond's Run" by Toni Cade Bambara
"Your Move" by Eve Bunting
"Gift of the Magi" by O. Henry
"Everything Will Be Okay" by James Howe
"Thank You, Ma'am" by Langston Hughes
"Inside Out" by Francisco Jiménez
"Super Human" by Nicola Yoon

Social Issues Book Clubs

Return to Sender by Julia Alvarez
The Mighty Heart of Sunny St. James by Ashley Herring Blake
The War that Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
A Good Kind of Trouble by Lisa Moore Ramée
"Shot Clock" by Carson Butler and Jason A. Reynolds."
"Efrén Divided" by Ernesto Cisneros."
"The Night Diaries" by Veera Hiranandani."
"Black Brother, Black Brother" by Jewell Parker Rhodes."

Afrofuturism

Akata Witch by Nnedi Okorafor



Literature Selection Beliefs Grade 6

Dear Grade 6 Families,

We are excited for the year we have planned for your students in Grade 6 English & Language Arts. Our series of units will support students in developing their ability to analyze various genres of literature while also supporting them in exploring themes and topics that are typically of interest to this age group. We believe that adolescent literature should address relevant and complex topics, providing opportunities for critical thinking and discussion. When adolescents are presented with literature that explores these topics, it encourages them to think critically and deeply about the issues at hand. It prompts them to analyze, evaluate, and question the complexities and nuances of the subject matter. This process of critical thinking fosters intellectual growth, cognitive development, and the honing of analytical skills necessary for success in high school and college literature courses and beyond...

Adolescence is a time when young people are discovering and questioning their own identities. They are grappling with questions of who they are, where they come from, and how they fit into the world. Literature encompassing themes ranging from societal challenges like discrimination, inequity, and environmental issues to personal battles like mental health not only weaves a diverse tapestry of narratives, experiences, and viewpoints but also deeply connects with adolescents as they navigate their journey of self-discovery. Books are powerful tools that can serve as “mirrors and windows,” reflecting students' own identity and offering them glimpses into the lives of others. As such, part of our job as educators is selecting diverse texts covering a wide variety of topics.

FXW is committed to providing high quality literature that is representative of diverse authors and characters. Students are exposed to a variety of text genres and text types that are carefully selected to meet students' needs and interests. Students deserve to have access to a wide choice of texts that reflect themselves, their communities, and interests. Learners will also experience texts that help them to understand the perspectives of others, to value diversity, and to analyze and critique injustices, in alignment with our mission and charisms. Thus, our teachers and administrators work together to select a set of texts for our year-long ELA class that will help students achieve these goals.

Beyond text selection, we also work hard to ensure that our students will explore themes and topics rigorously and with care. Our goal is to prepare students to engage with the texts at the highest of academic levels, developing their understanding of how authors employ various literary devices to create worlds on the page, to analyze the arguments made through literature, and to explore together the big questions that great books push us to ask about ourselves and our society. With each unit and any such topic, we will analyze texts, read additional resources to provide context, and facilitate meaningful discussions for the students to grapple with these themes. By doing so, we prepare our students to engage in the world as responsible citizens.

Literature Selection Beliefs Grade 6

Throughout the units of study, students engage in readings and text-based discussions. At FXW, we believe in empowering students to have a voice and be active participants in shaping their educational journey. We value their perspectives, ideas, and lived experiences, and recognize the importance of providing opportunities for open and thoughtful discussions. We gather student input, consider real world relevance, and use our teacher guidance to make decisions about our discussion topics. By inviting students to share their interests, concerns, and questions, we ensure that the topics chosen for discussion are meaningful and relatable. We incorporate current events and real-world issues into our discussions to help students make connections between classroom learning and the world around them. By exploring diverse perspectives, students gain a deeper appreciation for the complexity of the world and develop empathy and understanding. Finally, our teachers play a crucial role in guiding the selection of discussion topics and facilitating the discussions so that all students are learning within a structured conversation.

At FXW, we understand the vital role parents play in their child's education and development. We invite you as parents and guardians to support your students throughout the year. First and foremost, encourage your student's reading, both of our shared class texts and any additional text they may choose to read independently. Reading will help them deepen their understanding of the world and grow their vocabulary. Discuss the literature and themes that we are exploring at school with your students. Although each unit is centered around specific genre skills, topics, and texts, there are also over-arching questions that will allow for robust student discussions.

We look forward to partnering with you in developing your child's literacy skills and supporting them in their personal development as well. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education.

Warm regards,

Kristen Hockney and Ryan Ziencina

The literature list provides an overview of the selections FXW provides for students. Some of these are whole class selections and some are book club choices (your child will be able to select a text). Since this is the list of literature for the entire year, keep this list handy throughout the year to refer to if you have further questions. If text selection options change, you and your child will be notified on Canvas. Otherwise, this will be the only communication you receive regarding text selections. Please note that an internal process is used to ensure that our literature selections meet our criteria for excellence. In addition, we conduct an annual review to ensure alignment in representation. The following link provides a framework for what we use to guide this process: <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/ejroc/culturally-responsive-curriculum-scorecards> If you ever have questions or concerns about curriculum content, materials, or learning intentions, please see the FXW Family and Student Handbook for the details of the process in place.

Grade 6 Writing Overview

Units of Study

- Personal Narratives
- Literary Essay
- Research-Based Information Writing

Instructional Strategies

Similar to reading, the workshop model is also utilized in writing. Students receive direct instruction via a mini-lesson. Following the mini-lesson, students work within their groups to practice the new skill. To end the lesson, students practice the skill independently. Additionally, one-on-one conferences occur during independent writing time to assess individual student needs and to best support their growth in each writing unit.

Curricular Highlights

- Practicing the full writing process in each unit
- Strengthening typing skills
- Finding and properly citing research from various sources



Grade 6 Vocabulary Overview

Units of Study

Rather than having specific units of study within our vocabulary curriculum, we instead teach **all** elements of vocabulary throughout the course of sixth grade. As the year progresses, so does the depth and complexity of the vocabulary elements.

- Word Parts
 - *Prefixes, Roots, Affixes, and Suffixes*
- Connotation vs. Denotation
- Parts of Speech
- Defining unknown vocabulary within literature

Instructional Strategies

Vocabulary instruction is taught several times a week during writing block.

Lessons are made using various texts and current research as the foundation alongside supplemental, teacher-made materials. Students will practice all vocabulary skills explicitly, and they will incorporate the skills learned within all reading units throughout the course of their sixth grade ELA experience.

We Believe

- Systemic, explicit vocabulary instruction is necessary to grow students' vocabularies.
- A combination of using word parts (Greek/Latin roots, morphology) and context clues can best help students decode words.
- Intentionally teaching high-frequency, tier 2 words from texts found within the curriculum creates usable, transferable, and personal vocabulary knowledge.
- Using Greek and Latin root studies in vocabulary instruction significantly aids vocabulary acquisition by relating words, meanings, and connotations.
- Students should be assessed by their ability to use words correctly in context and in their own words.
- Effective vocabulary instruction includes demonstrations/modeling, practice with peers, and independent applications.
- Vocabulary instruction can be equitable and accessible by allowing students to include slang, translanguaging, cognates, or other personal connections as part of their understanding and explanation of words.

Grade 6 Grammar Overview

Units of Study

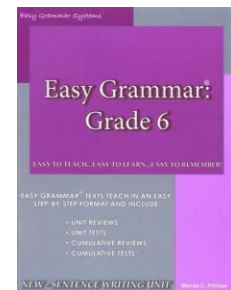
- Parts of Speech
 - *Nouns*
 - *Pronouns*
 - *Verbs*
 - *Adjectives*
 - *Adverbs*
 - *Prepositions*
- Punctuation
 - *Colons*
 - *Semicolons*
 - *Commas*
- Quoting and Citing in MLA Format
- Sentence Structure Diversification
 - *Subordinating Conjunctions*
 - *Coordinating Conjunctions*

Curricular Highlights

- Backwards mapping grammar from the High School Placement Test
- Blend of inductive and deductive teaching strategies to best support all learners

Instructional Strategies

Grammar instruction is taught several times a week during writing block. Lessons are made using the text *Easy Grammar: Grade 6* by Wanda C. Phillips, Ed.D. as the foundation alongside supplemental, teacher-made materials. Students will practice all grammar skills explicitly, and they will incorporate the skills learned within all writing units throughout the course of their sixth grade ELA experience.



Grade 6 Accelerated Math Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1- Geometry

Unit 2- Fractions and Decimals

Unit 3- Expressions and Equations

Unit 4- Proportional Relationships

Unit 5- Percent Increase and Decrease

Unit 7- Rational Numbers

Unit 8- Data Set and Distributions



Instructional Strategies

A typical lesson has four phases:

1. A warm-up
2. One or more instructional activities
3. The lesson synthesis
4. A cool-down

Each class period will include a combination of the following:

- whole class discussion
- student exploration in pairs or small groups
- independent student practice
- small group instruction
- individual assessment
- individual conferencing between student and teacher



Grade 6 Science Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1 – Geology on Mars

Unit 2 – Plate Motion

Unit 3 – Plate Motion Internship

Unit 4 – Earth, Moon and Sun

Unit 5 – Ocean, Atmosphere and Climate

Unit 6 – Weather Patterns

Curricular Highlights

Hands-on labs and experiments will align with the units of study and the Amplify science curriculum.

Amplify.

Instructional Strategies

The combination of the units of study, resources and hands-on experiences will provide continued progression of students towards proficiency in science along the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Key elements include:

- Performance Expectations & Science and Engineering Practices in lab writing and design
- Disciplinary Core Ideas
- Cross-cutting Concepts

Grade 6 Social Studies Overview

Units of Study

In Grade 6 social studies, students learn about ancient civilizations and topics including:

- Prehistory
- China
- Egypt
- India
- Greece
- Mesopotamia
- Norte Chico
- Rome

Curricular Highlights

- Individual and Group Projects
- Learn note-taking skills
- Inquiry-based lessons to help further critical thinking
- Interactive games and activities



Instructional Strategies

Students will be assessed through a number of formats and methods. Informal assessments, such as in-class activities, discussions, participation, individual and group activities, will be on-going. Upon completion of a unit, students will be given a formal written assessment. In addition, major projects will be assigned and will be given the same weight as a formal written assessment.

Grade 6 Spanish Overview

Units of Study

Mi Familia/Día de los Muertos

- ¿Cómo nos conectan las tradiciones a nuestro pasado? *How do our traditions connect us to our past?*

Nos Conocemos: Descubre Bolivia

- ¿Cómo usamos el lenguaje para relacionarnos en la comunidad? *How do we use language to build relationships in our community?*

¿Cómo vivimos?: Descubre España

- ¿Cómo formamos comunidades que nos ayuden en nuestra vida? *How do we build communities that support us in our daily lives?*

Vamos a aprender: Descubre El Salvador

- ¿Cómo influye la educación en nuestra vida? *How does education influence our daily lives?*

Instructional Strategies

Communicating effectively in the target language and interacting with cultural competence and understanding are important goals in language learning. World language learners experience a language-rich learning environment where they develop habits and skills meant to foster and strengthen a love of learning language. The following instructional strategies support learning in an immersion-like environment:

- Support comprehension, interpretation, and production through context, gestures, and visual support
- Introduce, model, and practice word study exercises and negotiating the meaning of phrases
- Elicit talk that increases in fluency, accuracy, and complexity over time

Curricular Highlights

My Family Presentation

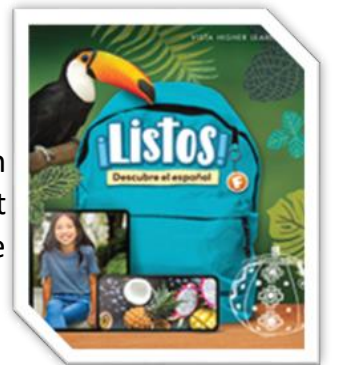
Students will use language structures and learned vocabulary to introduce their families in a class presentation

Cultural Artifacts

Students will highlight what they learn about Spanish-speaking countries and cultures by creating artifacts

Performance Tasks

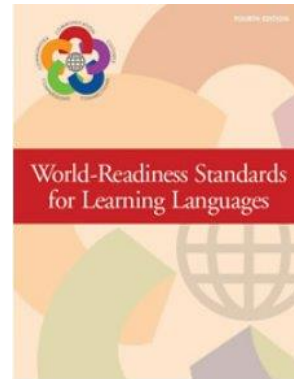
Students will engage in authentic and purposeful performance tasks chosen by them



Grade 6 French Overview

Units of Study

- Greetings & Expressions of courtesy
- Numbers, family, animals
- Geography
- House
- Food
- Art, music
- Body & health
- Clothing
- Time and colors
- Weather & seasons
- Days & months
- Literature
- Leisure & recreation
- Shopping
- Travel & transportation

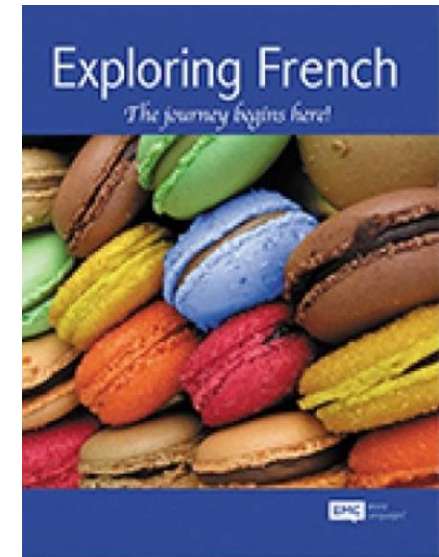


Curricular Highlights

- Family PowerPoint project
- Geography of France project
- Art & literature extended readings
- I have...Who has... game
- Gimkit, Blooket, Kahoot

Instructional Strategies

- Comprehensible Input
- Cooperative Learning Method
- Whole Language Approach
- Immersion
- Gamification



Grade 7 Religion Overview

Faith Experience

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond. Grade 7 students are grouped into two classes for religion. Moonbeams prepare for the Catholic sacrament of Confirmation. Shooting Stars continue their holistic, values-based experience learning about Catholicism alongside interfaith/multifaith teachings.

Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In grade 7, students commit to 15 hours of service.

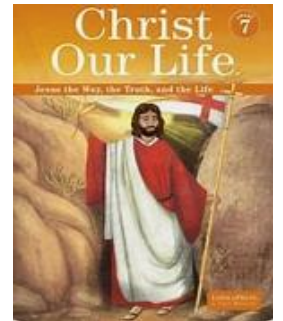
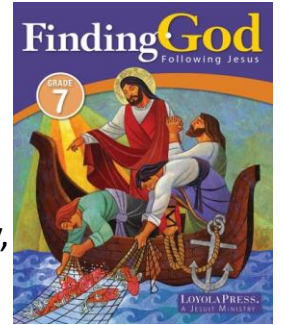


Values-Based

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of service, personal duty toward nature and community, and themes of hope, peace, and joy.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of personal conscience and moral reasoning, service and social responsibility, and renewal and grace.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of uplifting others, respectful interfaith dialogue, religious diversity, peace, open-mindedness, and equality.

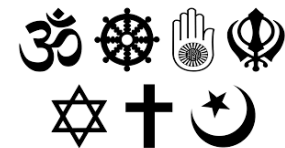
Principles of Catholicism

Our Shooting Stars use *Finding God: Following Jesus* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings. Moonbeams use *Christ Our Life: Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life* which is a catechesis program that joyfully nurtures discipleship among students.



Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore Shintoism.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore Protestantism.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore Baha'i.



Grade 7 Advisory Overview

Units of Study

- Mindsets and Goals
- Developing a Positive Sense of Self
- Thoughts, Emotions and Decisions
- Managing Relationships and Social Conflict
- Depression Awareness
- Alcohol and Drug Awareness (Candor Health)
- Navigating your digital world and current events

Instructional Strategies

During advisory meetings, students engage in guided discussions and activities in small groups. These conversations help students better navigate their teenage worlds and encourage students to build meaningful, empathetic relationships that support our diverse community and help them find their own voice.

Through community building and developing positive relationships, students find a safe space at school to build social-emotional awareness, practice communication skills and reach their full potential.

Curricular Highlights

- Establishing classroom culture and community
- Developing a sense of belonging in the advisory group
- Developing social and emotional skills
- Increasing understanding of mental health and coping tools
- In January, Candor Health educators will teach our students the short- and long-term risks associated with substance use as well as the safe use of prescription medications in their research-based program *Substance Abuse Prevention – Influencers*. More information is available on Candor Health's website and will be shared closer to the presentation date.



Grade 7 Reading Overview

Realistic Fiction

The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

Novel in Verse

Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds

Historical Fiction Book Clubs

Girl in the Blue Coat by Monica Hesse

Between Shades of Gray by Ruta Sepetys

The Light in Hidden Places by Saron Cameron

This Light Between Us by Andrew Fukuda

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

Prisoner B-3087 by Alan Gratz

Historical Fiction Drama

The Diary of Anne Frank (play) by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, adapted by Wendy Anne Kesselman

Nonfiction Book Clubs

Discovering Wes Moore by Wes Moore

Chew on This by Eric Schlosser

I am Malala by Malala Yousafzai

Enrique's Journey by Sonia Nazario

We Are Displaced: My Journey and

Stories by Malala Yousafzai

Eyes Wide Open by Paul Fleishman

An Inconvenient Truth by Al Gore

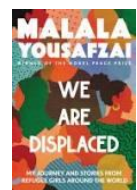
Instructional Strategies

Teacher will use the workshop model, which includes:

- Mini-lessons
- Partner or group work/discussions
- Independent work time
- One-on-one conferences with teacher
- Critical inquiry of texts
- Project-based learning where appropriate
- Class discussion & annotation to build reading comprehension

Additionally, teacher will provide students time in class to independently read a book of their choice. Teacher will meet with students to conference about their books throughout the year and provide recommendations if needed.

Beyond the listed text, students also read selected short stories and articles from sources such as Newsela and NYT's UpFront Magazine. Texts are chosen to feature diverse authors and represent a wide range of experiences portrayed in a culturally responsive manner.



Literature Selection Beliefs Grade 7

Dear Grade 7 Families,

We are excited for the year we have planned for your students in Grade 7 English & Language Arts. Our series of units will support students in developing their ability to analyze various genres of literature while also supporting them in exploring themes and topics that are typically of interest to this age group. We believe that adolescent literature should address relevant and complex topics, providing opportunities for critical thinking and discussion. When adolescents are presented with literature that explores these topics, it encourages them to think critically and deeply about the issues at hand. It prompts them to analyze, evaluate, and question the complexities and nuances of the subject matter. This process of critical thinking fosters intellectual growth, cognitive development, and the honing of analytical skills necessary for success in high school and college literature courses and beyond...

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Literature Selection Beliefs Grade 7

Throughout the units of study, students engage in readings and text-based discussions. At FXW, we believe in empowering students to have a voice and be active participants in shaping their educational journey. We value their perspectives, ideas, and lived experiences, and recognize the importance of providing opportunities for open and thoughtful discussions. We gather student input, consider real world relevance, and use our teacher guidance to make decisions about our discussion topics. By inviting students to share their interests, concerns, and questions, we ensure that the topics chosen for discussion are meaningful and relatable. We incorporate current events and real-world issues into our discussions to help students make connections between classroom learning and the world around them. By exploring diverse perspectives, students gain a deeper appreciation for the complexity of the world and develop empathy and understanding. Finally, our teachers play a crucial role in guiding the selection of discussion topics and facilitating the discussions so that all students are learning within a structured conversation.

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We look forward to partnering with you in developing your child's literacy skills and supporting them in their personal development as well. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education.

Warm regards,

Jessica Arl and Scott Flubacker

The literature list provides an overview of the selections FXW provides for students. Some of these are whole class selections and some are book club choices (your child will be able to select a text). Since this is the list of literature for the entire year, keep this list handy throughout the year to refer to if you have further questions. If text selection options change, you and your child will be notified on Canvas. Otherwise, this will be the only communication you receive regarding text selections. Please note that an internal process is used to ensure that our literature selections meet our criteria for excellence. In addition, we conduct an annual review to ensure alignment in representation. The following link provides a framework for what we use to guide this process: <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/ejroc/culturally-responsive-curriculum-scorecards> If you ever have questions or concerns about curriculum content, materials, or learning intentions, please see the FXW Family and Student Handbook for the details of the process in place.

Grade 7 Writing Overview

Projects

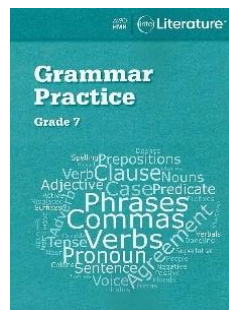
- Realistic Fiction Short Stories
- Screenwriting and Filmmaking
- Literary Analysis Essay
- Companion Book
- Argument Essay
- TED Talk Presentation

Grammar

Grammar instruction is tied into each specific writing unit. Lessons are teacher made, from *Into Literature: Grade 7 Grammar Practice* by Houghton Mifflin, or a mix of both. Students will practice these grammar skills throughout the writing process and by completing short assignments at the beginning of class.

Grammar Concepts Taught

- Capitalization
- End Punctuation
- Quoting and citing
- Apostrophes
- Verb tense
- Sentence Structure
- Appositives



Instructional Strategies

Teacher will use the workshop model, which includes:

- Mini-lessons
- Partner or group work (i.e. peer revising/editing)
- Independent writing time
- One-on-on conferences with teacher

Teacher will go through the full writing process with students for each writing piece. The writing process includes:

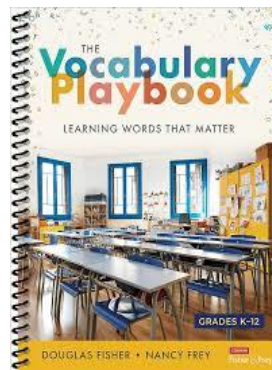
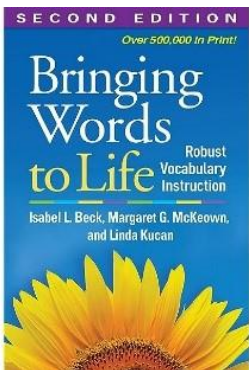
- Brainstorming and Planning
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing



Grade 7 Vocabulary Overview

Instructional Strategies

- Vocabulary units are taught using vocabulary selected from texts in each major reading unit
- Greek and Latin root learning is integrated into vocabulary lessons
- Lessons and units are teacher created or adapted from research-backed principles
- Students will demonstrate their understanding through writing assignments, assessments, and review games



We Believe

- Systemic, explicit vocabulary instruction is necessary to grow students' vocabularies.
- A combination of using word parts (Greek/Latin roots, morphology) and context clues can best help students decode words.
- Intentionally teaching high-frequency, tier 2 words from texts found within the curriculum creates usable, transferable, and personal vocabulary knowledge.
- Using Greek and Latin root studies in vocabulary instruction significantly aids vocabulary acquisition by relating words, meanings, and connotations.
- Students should be assessed by their ability to use words correctly in context and in their own words.
- Effective vocabulary instruction includes demonstrations/modeling, practice with peers, and independent applications.
- Vocabulary instruction can be equitable and accessible by allowing students to include slang, translanguaging, cognates, or other personal connections as part of their understanding and explanation of words.

Grade 7 Accelerated Math Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1 – Transformations

Unit 2 – Angle Relationships

Unit 3 – Writing and Solving Equations

Unit 4 – Inequalities and Expressions

Unit 5 – Linear Relationships

Unit 6 – Functions and Volume

Unit 7 – Exponents

Unit 8 – Irrational Numbers

Curricular Highlights

- Using integers and becoming comfortable with all integer operations
- Exploring probability and data analysis using Skittles
- Appreciating art through the lens of mathematics
- Introduction to two-variable equations, graphing, and relationships between independent and dependent variables
- Understanding exponents, scientific notation, and irrational numbers

Instructional Strategies

Grade 7 Math uses a hands-on, collaborative approach to learning. We believe in a growth mindset and that mistakes help us learn. Key elements include:

- Using random grouping and vertical white board surfaces to build collaboration and relationship skills among peers
- Relating mathematical concepts to practical real-world applications and problems through context and projects
- Embracing mistakes as opportunities to increase knowledge and problem-solving skills



Grade 7 Algebra I Overview

Units of Study

- 1- Solving Linear Equations
- 2- Solving Linear Equalities
- 3- Graphing Linear Functions
- 4- Writing Linear Functions
- 5- Solving Systems of Linear Equations
- 6- Exponential Functions and Sequences
- 7- Polynomial Equations and Factoring
- 8- Graphing Quadratic Functions

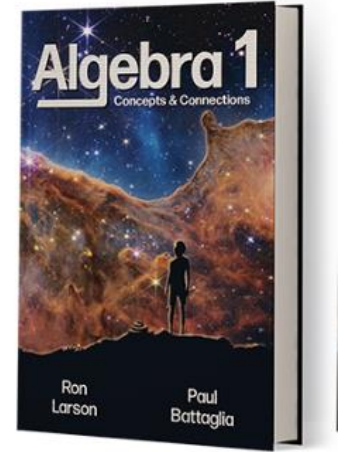
Instructional Strategies

Grade 7 Algebra I uses a hands-on, collaborative approach to learning. We believe in a growth mindset and that mistakes help us learn. Key elements include:

- Using random grouping and vertical white board surfaces to build collaboration and relationship skills among peers
- Relating mathematical concepts to practical real-world applications and problems through context and projects
- Embracing mistakes as opportunities to increase knowledge and problem-solving skills

Curricular Highlights

Students will be encouraged to think and to make conjectures while they persevere through challenging problems and exercises. They will make errors—and that is ok! Learning and understanding occur when we make errors and push through mental roadblocks to comprehend and solve new and challenging problems. In this program, students will also be required to explain their thinking and analysis of diverse problems and exercises. Being actively involved in learning helps students develop mathematical reasoning and use it to solve math problems and work through other everyday challenges. This is an exciting step in preparation for the challenges you will continue to tackle in the math classroom and beyond!



Grade 7 Science Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1: Cells

Unit 2: Microbiome

Unit 3: Metabolism

Unit 4: Traits and Reproduction

Unit 5: Population and Resources

Unit 6: Natural Selection

Unit 7: Evolutionary History

Unit 8: Dissections

Curricular Highlights

- Metabolism Engineering Internship
- Alien Family Project
- Hands-on Labs
- Bullfrog Dissection

Amplify.

Instructional Strategies

The Amplify Science curriculum embodies cutting-edge approaches in science education. Each unit of Amplify Science immerses students in a meaningful, real-world problem, where they explore scientific phenomena, collaborate and discuss with peers, and create models or explanations to find solutions. The combination of the units of study, resources and hands-on experiences provide a continued progression of towards proficiency in science aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

Key elements include:

- Performance Expectations & Science and Engineering Practices in lab writing and design
- Disciplinary Core Ideas
- Cross-cutting Concepts

Grade 7 Social Studies Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1: Introduction to World Studies

Unit 2: North America

Unit 3: Central and South America

Unit 4: Europe

Unit 5: Africa

Unit 6: The Middle East

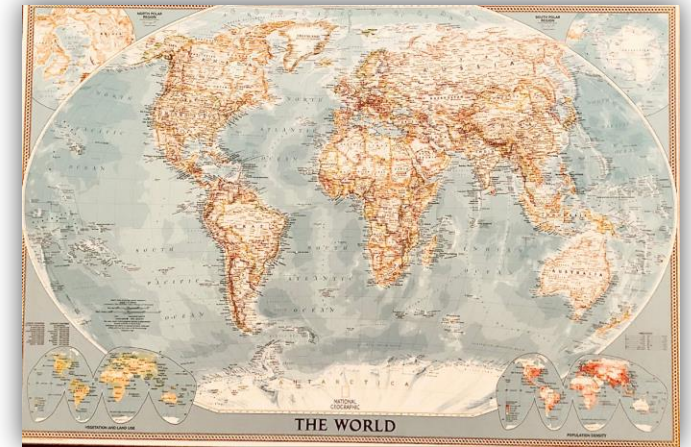
Unit 7: Asia

Instructional Strategies

- Focus on foundational academic skills for student success.
- Scaffolding in skills-development and projects.
- Intentional use of multi-media resources to enhance and differentiate learning.
- Emphasis on social-emotional skill development in tandem with academic content.
- Examination of historical events with a critical lens.

Curricular Highlights

- Student-Driven Research Projects
- Indigenous Studies
- World War 1 and World War 2
- Socratic Seminars
- Interactive Simulations
- Civic Engagement



In this course, students will explore the world one continent at a time. Through the study of geography, culture, and history, students will take a closer look at specific countries across the globe. From ancient civilizations to modern-day societies, students will gain a deeper understanding of how people live, work, and interact with their environments.

Grade 7 Spanish Overview

Units of Study

- **¿Quién soy yo?**: Mi identidad
- **Primeros Pasos**: Expresiones útiles en el salón de clase
- **México: Amigos en México**: ¿Qué papel desempeño en mi familia y comunidad? *What roles do I play in my family and community?*
- **Puerto Rico: La vivienda en el Caribe**: ¿Cuáles aspectos de los hogares y vecindarios son influenciados por la cultura? *Which features of homes and neighborhoods are influenced by culture?*
- **Guatemala: De compras en Centroamérica**: ¿Qué comunicamos a través de nuestra ropa y vestimenta? *What do we communicate through our clothing and apparel?*
- **Peru: La comida de los Andes**: ¿Qué hace que un platillo sea auténtico? *What makes a dish authentic?*
- Soy una lectora/un lector!

Instructional Strategies

Communicating effectively in the target language and interacting with cultural competence and understanding are important goals in language learning. World language learners experience a language-rich learning environment where they develop habits and skills meant to foster and strengthen a love of learning language. The following instructional strategies support learning in an immersion-like environment:

- Support comprehension, interpretation, and production through context, gestures, and visual support
- Introduce, model, and practice word study exercises and negotiating the meaning of phrases
- Elicit talk that increases in fluency, accuracy, and complexity over time

Curricular Highlights

Narraciones/Narrations:

Students will offer oral narrations for a variety of images depicting complete stories.

Capciones/Captions:

Using the target language, students will write captions for images that highlight Bolivian life

Podcasts:

As evidence of increased cultural competency, students will address audiences with limited meaningful understanding of Spanish-speaking countries, their history, traditions, and people.

Cultural artifacts:

Students will highlight what they learn about Spanish-speaking countries and cultures by creating artifacts



Grade 7 French Overview

Units of Study

- Bonjour, toute le monde! (Hello, everyone!)
- Les loisirs (Pastimes)
- À l'école (At school)
- Le weekend ensemble (The weekend together)



The T'es Branche curriculum is designed to allow students develop personal connections to other cultures and build their confidence as speakers. Our French program gives students diverse opportunities to find their passion in a safe space through meaningful interactions with the French language.

Essential Questions

- In what ways is learning another language beneficial?
- What do activities and past-times reveal about a culture?
- How does education shape individuals and societies?
- What activities do friends do in other countries together?

Instructional Strategies

Vocabulaire Actif & Structure de la Langue- Students develop reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills

À Vous la Parole- Students develop communication skills at the end of each lesson

Points de Départ- Students learn about culture, products, practices, and perspectives in various francophone countries

Rencontres Culturelle- Students engage with dialogues and conversations, comparing francophone culture to American culture, and French grammar to English grammar

Grade 8 Religion Overview

Faith Experience

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond. Grade 8 students are grouped into two classes for religion. Moonbeams prepare for the Catholic sacrament of Confirmation. Shooting Stars continue their holistic, values-based experience learning about Catholicism alongside interfaith/multifaith teachings.

Serving Others

We live out our faith by serving others. In grade 8, students commit to 20 hours of service.

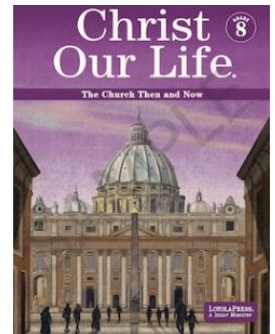
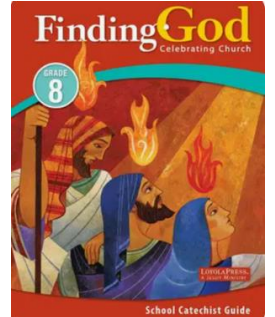


Values-Based

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore the values of equality, inclusivity, and life.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore the values of sincerity, steadfastness, and social responsibility.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore the values of faith, responsibility, and moral code of conduct.

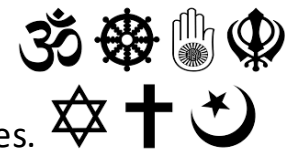
Principles of Catholicism

Our Shooting Stars use *Finding God: Following Jesus* which is a curriculum that integrates the fundamental themes of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Scripture and Catholic social teachings. Moonbeams use *Christ Our Life: The Church Then and Now* which is a catechesis program that joyfully nurtures discipleship among students.



Interfaith/Multi-faith Teachings

- 1st Assessment Period we will explore Sikhism.
- 2nd Assessment Period we will explore Protestantism.
- 3rd Assessment Period we will explore Jehovah's Witnesses.



Grade 8 Advisory Overview

Units of Study

- It's time to shine!
- High school guidance and advocacy
- Developing a Positive Sense of Self
- Thoughts, Emotions & Decisions
- Managing Relationships & Social Conflict
- Depression education and suicide awareness
- The Science Behind Drugs: Decisions (Candor Health)
- Navigating your digital world and current events
- Emotional Intelligence

Instructional Strategies

During advisory meetings, students engage in guided discussions and activities in small groups. These conversations help students better navigate their teenage worlds and encourage students to build meaningful, empathetic relationships that support our diverse community and help them find their own voice.

Through community building and developing positive relationships, students find a safe space at school to build social-emotional awareness, practice communication skills and reach their full potential.

Curricular Highlights

- Students reflect and use self-knowledge to map out their milestone journey as 8th graders by intentionally planning on exercising leadership and living the FXW charisms.
- Students learn how to recognize strong emotions and unhelpful thoughts, and they learn to apply strategies for managing their emotions and reducing stress.
- Students learn strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships, perspective-taking, and dealing with conflict. Students learn to honor and understand differences based on varied personal, familial, and cultural backgrounds.
- A deeper discussion about depression and suicide along with a strong focus on help-seeking and good mental health.
- In January, led by educators from Candor Health, students learn research-based information about the effects of drug use on the brain and their mental and physical health. More information is available on Candor Health's website and will be shared closer to the presentation date.



Grade 8 Reading Overview

Units of Study

Reading Workshop

- Dystopian Fiction
- Classic Literature: *A Christmas Carol*
- Literary Non-fiction
- Comparative Literature – historical and contemporary fiction
- Poetry

Dystopian book clubs

The Giver by Lois Lowry

Feed by M.T. Anderson

Shipbreaker by Paolo Bacigalupi

Legend by Marie Lu

Rebel Seoul by Axie Oh

Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Scythe by Neal Shusterman

Classic literature

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

Comparative literature

Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry by Mildred D Taylor

Literary Nonfiction book clubs

Bomb by Steve Sheinkin

Witches: the Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem by Rosalyn Schanzer

Undeclared by Steve Sheinkin

Port Chicago 50 by Steve Sheinkin

Most Dangerous by Steve Sheinkin

The Stonewall Riots: Coming Out in the Streets by Gayle Pitman

Killers of the Flower Moon (Young Readers Edition) by David Grann

Getting Away with Murder by Chris Crowe

Rolling Warrior by Judith Heumann

From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry by Paula Yoo

Instructional Strategies

The workshop experience combines mini-lessons, small group discussions, individual work, and teacher conferencing. Reading workshop teaches students strategies to increase their reading comprehension and build skills in literary analysis. We also select texts that help students examine and critically think about the world around them.

Curricular Highlights

Investigative Journalism

Students publish a features article based on their reporting and interviews.

Dystopian Fiction

Students analyze dystopian short stories, novels, and films in order to critically think about how this connects to the world around them.

Activism Symposium

Students will integrate speech writing, interviewing, multimedia, and research skills to create a symposium presentation on the activism issue they have explored throughout the year.

Literature Selection Beliefs Grade 8

Dear Grade 8 Families,

We are excited for the year we have planned for your students in Grade 8 English Language Arts. Our series of units will support students in developing their ability to analyze various genres of literature while also supporting them in exploring themes and topics that are typically of interest to this age group. We believe that adolescent literature should address relevant and complex topics, providing opportunities for critical thinking and discussion. When adolescents are presented with literature that explores these topics, it encourages them to think critically and deeply about the issues at hand. It prompts them to analyze, evaluate, and question the complexities and nuances of the subject matter. This process of critical thinking fosters intellectual growth, cognitive development, and the honing of analytical skills necessary for success in high school and college literature courses and beyond...

Adolescence is a time when young people are discovering and questioning their own identities. They are grappling with questions of who they are, where they come from, and how they fit into the world. Literature encompassing themes ranging from societal challenges like discrimination, inequity, and environmental issues to personal battles like mental health not only weaves a diverse tapestry of narratives, experiences, and viewpoints but also deeply connects with adolescents as they navigate their journey of self-discovery. Books are powerful tools that can serve as “mirrors and windows,” reflecting students' own identity and offering them glimpses into the lives of others. As such, part of our job as educators is selecting diverse texts covering a wide variety of topics.

FXW is committed to providing high quality literature that is representative of diverse authors and characters. Students are exposed to a variety of text genres and text types that are carefully selected to meet students' needs and interests. Students deserve to have access to a wide choice of texts that reflect themselves, their communities, and interests. Learners will also experience texts that help them to understand the perspectives of others, to value diversity, and to analyze and critique injustices, in alignment with our mission and charisms. Thus, our teachers and administrators work together to select a set of texts for our year-long ELA class that will help students achieve these goals.

Beyond text selection, we also work hard to ensure that our students will explore themes and topics rigorously and with care. Our goal is to prepare students to engage with the texts at the highest of academic levels, developing their understanding of how authors employ various literary devices to create worlds on the page, to analyze the arguments made through literature, and to explore together the big questions that great books push us to ask about ourselves and our society. With each unit and any such topic, we will analyze texts, read additional historical documents to provide context, and facilitate meaningful discussions for the students to grapple with these themes. By doing so, we prepare our students to engage in the world as responsible citizens. Among the themes we will explore this year will be the dehumanization of particular groups and the role language plays in that process. As such, we wanted to make you aware that some of the texts we read will include words that are denigrating and hateful. Part of reading literature is learning about and understanding the complexity of our history and our present-day world. In our work we strive to ensure that students understand the impact of this language within both historical and present contexts and have opportunities to engage with each other about their own experiences with any such language.

Literature Selection Beliefs Grade 8

Throughout the units of study, students engage in readings and text-based discussions. At FXW, we believe in empowering students to have a voice and be active participants in shaping their educational journey. We value their perspectives, ideas, and lived experiences, and recognize the importance of providing opportunities for open and thoughtful discussions. We gather student input, consider real world relevance, and use our teacher guidance to make decisions about our discussion topics. By inviting students to share their interests, concerns, and questions, we ensure that the topics chosen for discussion are meaningful and relatable. We incorporate current events and real-world issues into our discussions to help students make connections between classroom learning and the world around them. By exploring diverse perspectives, students gain a deeper appreciation for the complexity of the world and develop empathy and understanding. Finally, our teachers play a crucial role in guiding the selection of discussion topics and facilitating the discussions so that all students are learning within a structured conversation.

At FXW, we understand the vital role parents play in their child's education and development. We invite you as parents and guardians to support your students throughout the year. First and foremost, encourage your student's reading, both of our shared class texts and any additional text they may choose to read independently. Reading will help them deepen their understanding of the world and grow their vocabulary. Discuss the literature and themes that we are exploring at school with your students. Although each unit is centered around specific genre skills, topics, and texts, there are a few over-arching questions we will consider this year to guide student discussions.

We look forward to partnering with you in developing your child's literacy skills and supporting them in their personal development as well. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education.

Warm regards,

Cornelis van der Hout and Faith Bejar

The literature list provides an overview of the selections FXW provides for students. Some of these are whole class selections and some are book club choices (your child will be able to select a text). Since this is the list of literature for the entire year, keep this list handy throughout the year to refer to if you have further questions. If text selection options change, you and your child will be notified on Canvas. Otherwise, this will be the only communication you receive regarding text selections. Please note that an internal process is used to ensure that our literature selections meet our criteria for excellence. In addition, we conduct an annual review to ensure alignment in representation. The following link provides a framework for what we use to guide this process: <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/ejroc/culturally-responsive-curriculum-scorecards> If you ever have questions or concerns about curriculum content, materials, or learning intentions, please see the FXW Family and Student Handbook for the details of the process in place.

Grade 8 Writing Overview

Projects

Informational Writing: How-To Manual
Informational Writing: Resume
Informational Writing: Profiles
Analytical Writing: Literary Essay
Argument Writing: Activism Essay
Filmmaking: Activism Symposium
Narrative Writing: Variety Show Scripts
Narrative Writing: Poetry



Instructional Strategies

Our goal is to create lifelong writers who will:

- Engage and participate in a writing workshop model where the writing process is broken down into steps.
- Students will have writing partners to help them brainstorm ideas and peer edit.
- Lead a conference with their teacher where students and teachers collaborate on their writing.
- Engage in bi-weekly grammar lessons with instruction, practice, and assessment.
- Apply practiced grammar skills to their writing projects.

Grammar

Grammar instruction involves both direct teaching of grammar rules and concepts, as well as analyzing texts throughout the year to help students see how grammatical choices affect the writing.

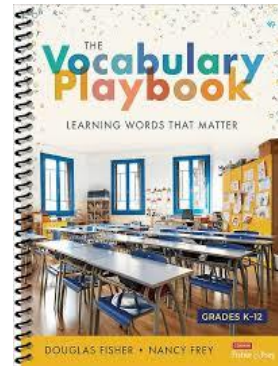
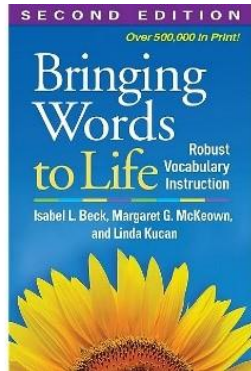
Program organized around five units of direct instruction:

- Editing 101: Capitalization, Commas, Apostrophes
- Sentence structure and Dialogue
- Parts of Speech: Nouns, Verbs, Objects
- Parts of Speech: Pronouns, Adverbs, Adjectives
- Parts of Speech: Phrases, Prepositions, and Conjunctions

Grade 8 Vocabulary Overview

Resources

- 9 units
- Vocabulary selected from curriculum model texts such as "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson, "Hidden Figures: Young Reader's Edition" by Margot Lee Shetterly, and Shakespearean sonnets
- Year-long Greek and Latin word-part study



We believe:

- Systemic, explicit vocabulary instruction is necessary to grow students' vocabularies.
- A combination of using word parts (Greek/Latin roots, morphology) and context clues can best help students decode words.
- Intentionally teaching high-frequency, tier 2 words from texts found within the curriculum creates usable, transferable, and personal vocabulary knowledge.
- Using Greek and Latin root studies in vocabulary instruction significantly aids vocabulary acquisition by relating words, meanings, and connotations.
- Students should be assessed by their ability to use words correctly in context and in their own words.
- Effective vocabulary instruction includes demonstrations/modeling, practice with peers, and independent applications.
- Vocabulary instruction can be equitable and accessible by allowing students to include slang, translanguageing, cognates, or other personal connections as part of their understanding and explanation of words.

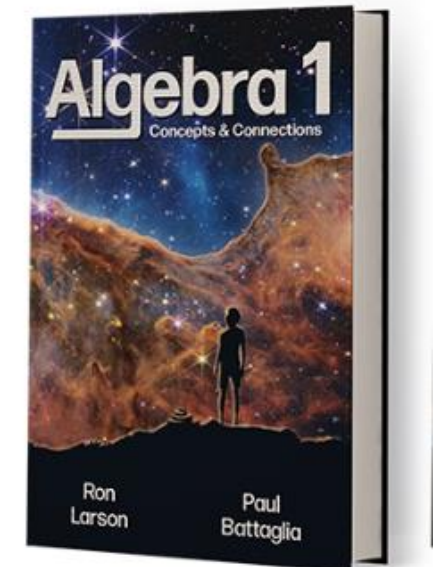
Grade 8 Algebra Overview

Units of Study

- ☐ Foundations of Algebra I
- ☐ Absolute Value Equations and Inequalities
- ☐ Graphing Linear Functions
- ☐ Writing Linear Functions
- ☐ Solving Systems of Linear Equations
- ☐ Exponential Functions and Sequences
- ☐ Polynomial Equations and Factoring
- ☐ Graphing Quadratic Equations
- ☐ Solving Quadratic Equations
- ☐ Radical Functions and Equations

Curricular Highlights

- Deep, consistent connections to real-world situations and settings
- Equivalent to High school Algebra 1 curriculum
- Daily teacher one-on-one support available (Morning / Evening Math Lab, Choice Time)
- Mathematicians of the Past Project
- Making Math Moments activities
- Games to increase number sense / review concepts
- The Absolute Value Game
- Jaguar Jenga
- Sink or Swim?
- Twelve Days of Christmas Mathematical Analysis
- Domain and Range Project
- Line of Best Fit Project
- Poster / Anchor Chart group creation
- DESMOS Art Project
- Trigonometry, Algebra 2, Calculus afterschool offerings



Instructional Strategies

Lessons begin by developing conceptual understanding with a task that invites students to use their own logic to develop ideas and approaches to solving problems. Once these ideas have surfaced, students are guided toward becoming fluent and flexible with the mathematics. Students will be encouraged to actively engage in tasks to help them deepen and connect their mathematical knowledge. During the classroom experience, they will enhance their understanding through structured discussion with peers as they share their ways of seeing the mathematics unfold. Student work will be used to highlight the purpose of each lesson. Student thinking is valued and respected. We want students to believe in their own ability to do mathematics while still acquiring the efficiency of doing mathematics established by the mathematical community.

Grade 8 Algebra II Overview

Units of Study

- ☐ Linear Functions
- ☐ Quadratic Functions
- ☐ Quadratic Equations and Complex Numbers
- ☐ Polynomial Functions
- ☐ Rational Exponents and Radical Functions
- ☐ Exponential and Logarithmic Functions
- ☐ Rational Functions
- ☐ Data Analysis and Statistics
- ☐ Trigonometric Ratios and Functions
- ☐ Sequences and Series
- ☐ Matrices

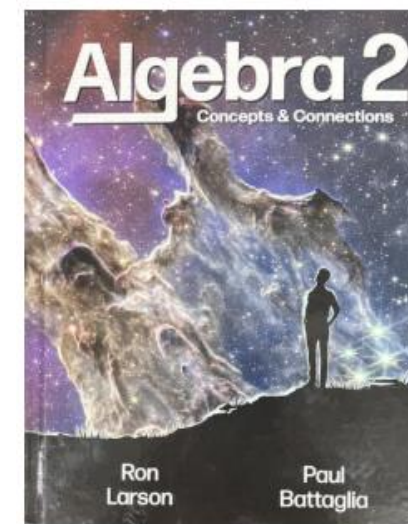
Curricular Highlights

- Deep, consistent connections to real-world situations and settings
- Equivalent to High school Algebra 2 curriculum
- Daily teacher one-on-one support available (Morning MathLab & Choice Time)
- Games to increase number sense / review concepts
- DESMOS Art Project
- Exploration of Trigonometry
- Introduction to Matrices
- Experiment design and analysis project
- Mathematical career exploration



Instructional Strategies

Algebra 2 is collaborative in nature, with students learning and growing together. We take a growth mindset approach where mistakes are celebrated and used as learning opportunities. Each unit begins with a career spotlight and a "big idea" highlighting mathematics in the real world and allowing students the opportunity to see endless future mathematic possibilities. The class utilizes a mixture of best practices including, group work, independent practice, projects, games, and direct instruction. Daily homework, in addition to classwork is an important and valuable component necessary for full comprehension. Intentionally small class size allows for individualized attention and lively group discussions.



Grade 8 Geometry Overview

Units of Study

- ☐ Essentials of Geometry
- ☐ Reasoning and Proof
- ☐ Congruent Triangles
- ☐ Relationships within Triangles
- ☐ Similarity
- ☐ Right Triangles and Trigonometry
- ☐ Quadrilaterals
- ☐ Applications of Transformations
- ☐ Properties of Circles
- ☐ Properties of Polygons
- ☐ The Pythagorean Theorem
- ☐ Measuring Length and Area

Curricular Highlights

- Deep, consistent connections to real-world situations and settings
- Equivalent to High school Geometry curriculum
- Daily teacher one-on-one support available (Morning / Evening Math Lab, Choice Time)
- Making Math Moments activities
- Games to increase number sense / review concepts
- Indirect measurement trigonometry project
- The Power of Pi project
- Symmetry City project
- The Absolute Value Game
- Jaguar Jenga
- Sink or Swim?
- Poster / Anchor Chart group creation
- Algebra 2 and Calculus afterschool offerings



Instructional Strategies

In Geometry, we use a variety of instructional strategies designed to help students build confidence and deep understanding. Lessons begin with visual examples and hands-on activities so students can see and explore geometric concepts in action before moving to formal definitions and theorems. Collaboration through partner and group work is highly encouraged, giving students opportunities to discuss their reasoning and learn from one another. Interactive tools are also integrated to make abstract ideas more concrete and engaging. Emphasis is also placed on problem-solving and real-world applications. This helps students recognize geometry is not just a set of rules, but a powerful way of thinking that connects to art, design, science, and life.

Grade 8 Science Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1: Harnessing Human Energy

Unit 2: Thermal Energy

Unit 3: Phase Changes

Unit 4: Chemical Reactions

Unit 5: Waves

Unit 6: Forces & Motion

Curricular Highlights

- Learning about chemistry and physics and how it applies to our everyday lives
- Hands-on labs and experiments
- Physics Day at Six Flags!

Amplify.

Instructional Strategies

The Amplify Science curriculum embodies cutting-edge approaches in science education. Each unit of Amplify Science immerses students in a meaningful, real-world problem, where they explore scientific phenomena, collaborate and discuss with peers, and create models or explanations to find solutions. The combination of the units of study, resources and hands-on experiences provide a continued progression of towards proficiency in science aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

Key elements include:

- Performance Expectations & Science and Engineering Practices in lab writing and design
- Disciplinary Core Ideas
- Cross-cutting Concepts

Grade 8 Social Studies Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1 – U.S. Constitution

- Legislative Branch: Operations and Legacy
- Executive Branch: Operations and Legacy
- Judicial Branch: Operations and Legacy

Unit 2 – Pursuit of Equality

- Early America
- Civil War
- Reconstruction
- Civil Rights Era

Unit 3 – United States at War

- Extended Research and Group Presentation
- Topics include Spanish-American War, World Wars, Korean War, and Vietnam War

Unit 4 – Movement Matters

- Colonization
- Westward Expansion
- Waves of Immigration
- Great Migration

Curricular Highlights

- **Construct** and **examine** timelines by thematic unit.
- Analyze **primary source documents** that represent diverse perspectives and experiences across U.S. History.
- Craft **arguments** using evidence from primary sources.

Instructional Strategies

- **Thematic Approach:** Students examine patterns across time periods.
- **Historian's Workshop:** Teacher models skill, students practice in small groups before demonstrating independently.
- Small group and whole-class **discussion**
- Range of **assessment** types: exams, essays, visual projects, verbal presentations



Primary Sources within Each Unit

Grade 8 Spanish Overview

Units of Study

- **Unidad Puente:** ¿Recuerdas?
- **España: La salud en España:** ¿Cómo son las rutinas de salud e higiene un reflejo de nuestras prácticas y perspectivas culturales? *How are health and hygiene routines a reflection of our cultural practices and perspectives?*
- **Estados Unidos: Los Pasatiempos en Casa:** ¿Cómo afecta la cultura a nuestro trabajo y actividades de ocio? *How does culture affect our work and leisure activities?*
- **Argentina: De viaje por tierra de gauchos:** ¿Por qué viajar es una experiencia de aprendizaje importante? *Why is travel an important learning experience?*
- **Chile: La Naturaleza de los Andes:** ¿Cuál es el papel de una persona en el cuidado de un planeta? *What is a person's role in the care of a planet?*



Curricular Highlights

Dialogue/narration:

Students will engage in a dialogue or oral narration of experiences relevant to a trip to a Spanish-speaking country.

Cultural artifacts:

Students will highlight what they learn about Spanish-speaking countries and cultures by creating artifacts

Biculturalism in the United States:

Students will study the effects of culture and language in the United States on its diverse population

Instructional Strategies

Communicating effectively in the target language and interacting with cultural competence and understanding are important goals in language learning. World language learners experience a language-rich learning environment where they develop habits and skills meant to foster and strengthen a love of learning language. The following instructional strategies support learning in an immersion-like environment:

- Support comprehension, interpretation, and production through context, gestures, and visual support
- Introduce, model, and practice word study exercises and negotiating the meaning of phrases
- Elicit talk that increases in fluency, accuracy, and complexity over time

Grade 8 French Overview

Units of Study

- Les gens que je connais (People I know)
- La rue commerçante (Shopping in town)
- À la maison (At home)
- À Paris (In Paris)



The T'es Branche curriculum is designed to allow students develop personal connections to other cultures and build their confidence as speakers. Our French program gives students diverse opportunities to find their passion in a safe space through meaningful interactions with the French language.

Essential Questions

- What is the nature of relationships in other cultures?
- How is shopping different in other countries?
- What makes a house a "home?"
- How do major world cities tell their stories?

Instructional Strategies

Vocabulaire Actif & Structure de la Langue- Students develop reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills

À Vous la Parole- Students develop communication skills at the end of each lesson

Points de Départ- Students learn about culture, products, practices, and perspectives in various francophone countries

Rencontres Culturelle- Students engage with dialogues and conversations, comparing francophone culture to American culture, and French grammar to English grammar

Grades 4-8 Drama Overview

Units of Study

Grade 4: Theatre fundamentals, introduction to playwriting, and puppetry, Pantomime/silent movie unit

Grade 5: Introduction to play production and performance. African folktale plays.

Grade 6: World theatre: Chinese shadow puppets, Introduction to Shakespeare, and Ancient Greek Theatre.

Grade 7: Shakespeare Film Project

Grade 8: Play production and performance.

Instructional Strategies

FXW's drama curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Drama Standards. The goal of our performing arts program is to instill an awareness and appreciation of theatre and all forms of performing arts. This includes:

- Acting
- Directing
- Puppetry
- Playwriting
- Design (scenic, costume, props, and sound)
- Theatre appreciation

Curricular Highlights

Grade 4: Pourquoi puppet plays

Grade 5: Musical

Grade 6: Ancient Greek Monologues

Grade 7: Shakespeare Film Project

Grade 8: Musical



Resources

- Improv Ideas: A Book of games and lists by Justine Jones and Mary Anne Kelley
- Shakespeare with Children by Elizabeth Weinstein
- Chinese Fairytales and Legends Richard Wilhelm & Frederick H. Martens
- WeVideo
- Teacher Created content
- Various Scripts



Grades 4-8 Global Digital Citizenship (GDC) Overview

Units of Study

Unit 1 – Becoming a De- 'Tech'-Tive

Unit 2 – Citizenship

Unit 3 – Digital Reputation

Unit 4 – Ethical Thinking

Unit 5 – Cyberbullying

Unit 6 – Identity & Privacy

Unit 7 – Misinformation

Unit 8 – Information Literacy

Unit 9 – Artificial Intelligence

Unit 10 – Touch Typing

(All units vary depending upon grade, skill level and interest)

Instructional Strategies

Students' class participation will be assessed with the help of assignment rubrics, hands on projects, discussions, decision making, role-play, and individual and group activities.

Curricular Highlights

- Individual and Group Projects
- In-class projects
- Quizzes and puzzles
- Role-play
- Participatory Culture



Grades 4-8 Music Overview



Units of Study

Unit 1 – Vocal Intonation and Melodic Structure

Unit 2 – Music Literacy

Unit 3 – Music Theory

Unit 4 – Composition and Production

Unit 5 – Instrumental Performance

Unit 6 – Connecting to Culture

(All units vary depending upon grade, skill level and interest)

Instructional Strategies

FXW's music curriculum is based on the Illinois State Board of Education Musical Standards with a more modern and tailored approach. Our Music Education includes traditional approaches as well as differentiation based off skill level and interest. Key elements include:

- Rigorous musical performance and composition.
- Explorations of various styles and approaches to creating and enjoying music
- Connecting how music is influenced by the greater culture and vice versa.

Curricular Highlights

- Rigorous traditional music education based on students' interest and musical tastes as well as modern approach to newer styles of music (ex: guitar and production)
- Hands-on instrumental performance-based instruction as well as traditional choir approach.
- Live Performances:

Grade 4 Winter Sing-Along

Grade 5 Musical

Grade 6 Dia De Los Muertos Celebration

Grade 7 Black Excellence Celebration

Grade 8 Musical

Resources

Websites

Musication, Brainpop, Chrome Music Lab, Music K-8, Teach Rock, Tidal (recorded music), Musescore, Bandlab, Chordchord

Physical

Various instruments: boom whackers, audio mixer, keyboards, iPads, surfaces, drums.

Sheet Music

Musical scripts, liturgical music, classical music, pop lead sheets

Grades 4-8 Physical Education Overview

Units of Study

Based on National and State Physical Education Standards from 2024

Our curriculum consists of the latest PE trends in the US and focuses on the Social Emotional growth of students in group activity settings and encourages students to develop their Physical Literacies & Skills across a wide variety of activities and movements.

Philosophy

Be Safe – Have Fun – Contribute!

In all PE Activities, both our individual and collective safety is a top priority. We experience the thrills of exploring movements which push our limits, and we always emphasize sportsmanship in everything we do, to help students develop the skills essential to become effective team members on and off the field.

Skills and Activities

Units this year include:

- Daily Warm-Ups
- Daily Stretching
- Team Building
- Throwing of objects
- Catching of objects
- Kicking of objects
- Sports Related Footwork
- Principles of Team Offense and Team Defense
- Soccer
- Volleyball
- Floor Hockey
- Basketball
- Basic Tumbling
- Intro to Yoga
- Fundamentals of Kickball, Softball & Baseball
- Intro to Lacrosse & Basic Stick Skills



Grades 4-8 Visual Arts Overview

Grade Level Emphasis

Grade 4

Mixed Media and Puppets

Grade 5

Painting and Printmaking

Grade 6

Moving Masterpieces

Grade 7

Sculpture and Realistic Drawing

Grade 8

Identity and Expression through Mixed Media

Instructional Philosophy

A bright and welcoming studio environment is the foundation to creative discovery and artistic risk taking. Purposeful introductions to a variety of artists, movements, and media allow for self-discovery and individual expression while strengthening our school culture and community.

Curricular Highlights

- Introduction and use of the elements of art and principles of design
- Materials handling and application techniques with various media
- Introduction to historical and contemporary artists and movements
- Introduction to various local artists and art viewing opportunities
- Guided and independent reflection to enhance artistic capacity and confidence



Curriculum Review Process



	2025/26	2026/27
FXW Charism	A Community of Faith	Preparing Thinkers and Leaders
Step 1: Conduct an Internal Review, Research Best Practices, Revise FXW Philosophy and Teaching and Learning Strategies	Religion: Preschool-Grade 3 ELA: Grades 4-8	Math Preschool-Grade 3
Step 2: Review and select materials, arrange professional development		Religion: Preschool-Grade 3 ELA: Grade 4-8
Step 3: Implement and ongoing evaluation of new curricular materials; schedule ongoing professional development	Literacy: Preschool-Grade 3 Religion--Grade 4-8	Literacy: Pre-Grade 3 (Word Study)
Step 4: Refinement and Evaluation of effectiveness on student learning outcomes		

We use the [Culturally Competent Scorecard](#) to evaluate curricular materials by examining how well curricular materials reflect diverse perspectives, promote equity, and support inclusive learning environments. The scorecard guides our review process by assessing representation, authenticity, and accessibility across cultural, linguistic, and social dimensions. This ensures that the curriculum fosters respect and relevance for all learners.

AI Roadmap

Driven by our mission, The Frances Xavier Warde School (FXW) recognizes the importance of staying abreast of AI's potential as an educational tool without sacrificing cognitive liberty. Rooted in our commitment to providing an academically excellent, values-oriented education, this policy aims to identify the responsible and ethical use of AI.

We acknowledge AI literacy as an evolving component of our learning journey as we develop decision-making skills and a sense of responsibility for ourselves and the world we will inherit. This policy provides the necessary parameters to ensure academic integrity and uphold FXW's standards for excellence.

Using AI Responsibly includes:

- Maintaining the cognitive process for students
- Recognize biases and inaccuracies in AI
- Follow the use of AI as designated by your teachers
- Properly cite, explain, and justify use of AI

[The Frances Xavier Warde School Roadmap for the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#)
[FXW AI Stoplight for Classroom Use](#)