

Welcome to Saint Joseph- Hessen Cassel



5th Grade

Please get to know 5th grade a little better by looking through this packet of information. Feel free to contact me if you would like to know more information on procedures, curriculum, or classroom management.

God bless!

Mr. Kurt Homan
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Welcome to Fifth Grade!

Here are some facts to help you learn more about our 5th-grade curriculum.

Newsletters/Graded Work

I feel communication is extremely important. I will do everything I can to keep you informed of your child's progress throughout the year. Please be sure to access PowerSchool to see your child's grades. For the first half of the year, I will send home a weekly progress report letting you know how your child is currently doing on assignments. During the 2nd Semester you will need to access PowerSchool to get your child's grades. I do this to help transition parents and students into a regular checking of PowerSchool as this will be the procedure for Junior High. It is my goal each week to send this report home every **Tuesday**. Your child will receive a bonus each time this is signed and returned or if it is easier you may email me to confirm you saw the Graded Work. I will need an email within 24 hours for your child to receive his/her bonus. I utilize email regularly and will be sure to respond as quickly as possible. I also plan to send home my weekly Newsletter through email each Monday.

Assignment Notebooks/Planners

Each child has his/her own assignment notebook. The assignment notebook is the child's responsibility to complete throughout the day and to be finished at each day's end. These go home **every night** and come back every morning.

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held in the **fall** every year. Conferences can take place at any point in the year if a parent and/or teacher feel the need to discuss their child's progress. If at any time you have a concern and you would like to schedule an additional conference, please let me know.

Classroom Behavior

The **St. Joe's discipline code** can be found on pgs. 18-20 of the parent/student handbook. I am big on making students responsible for his/her own work and behavior. Your child is at an age where he/she needs to take more of a role in his/her own learning. Parents and teachers can only guide children in the learning process. Each student must do his/her part for long term success. Your child's job is to go to school. With this in mind, I utilize a **class economy** where your child is paid for his/her job. Each student will also be **fined** for breaking the rules or not doing his/her job.

Class Money

Students are paid class money to do his/her job. Each child is asked to learn but also to help create a pleasant classroom environment that allows others to learn. I will be discussing the three R's, **respect, responsibility, and reverence**. If a child doesn't do his/her job they receive a **fine**. I also give **bonuses** for many different things. The class will have **two auctions**, one before Christmas Break and the other at the end of the year. I will be asking for your help to donate items for these auctions.

Class Store/Supply List

I try to make my supply list as small as possible, so you don't have to spend an enormous amount of money each year. I also save supplies from year to year, so I have tons of extra supplies like scissors, crayons, glue, pencils, loose leaf paper, rulers, erasers, and folders saved from prior years that can be used. Yes, I can be a hoarder of school supplies!

I like to make students responsible for their supplies. I've found that if students can just ask Mom or Dad for more pencils they won't care for them and will be wasteful. To start the year, I will collect all pencils, eraser caps, and highlighters. Each student will start out with 3 pencils, an eraser, and a highlighter. If they however lose, break, or use up these items and need a new one it will cost them class money. **If your child keeps asking you for more pencils don't buy more.** I will have all the pencils that were brought in and they are to come to me if they need a pencil. If I run out of pencils, then I will send a note home asking for more pencils.

I normally ask for a certain kind of pencil because I have found this pencil works the best and does less damage to pencil sharpeners. The pencils I prefer are the **Ticonderoga pencils**. I have had fewer problems sharpening and keeping these pencils sharp. The more expensive pencils will last longer.

Grades

Grades will be given on a point system. Students can convert those ratios to percentages to see the letter grade earned according to the St. Joseph grading scale. Grades are updated weekly on PowerSchool, the online grading system used by the school. You may log in and view these at any time.

Reading/Language Arts

Our language arts curriculum focuses on the five categories of **grammar**, **spelling**, **vocabulary**, **comprehension**, and **fluency** through the *Macmillan McGraw-Hill* series. This is a new program that we adopted for the 2019-2020 school year. We read a story per week that follows a specific genre as well as vocabulary and spelling words that follow a specific phonemic pattern. Students will have an assessment each week on **Thursday**. Students will be expected to answer multiple choice questions about the vocabulary words as well as comprehension questions over the story. There will also be some short answer questions that require each student to write in complete sentences. Some of the questions ask opinion and will be graded based on how well they explain their thoughts rather than looking for an exact answer. In addition to our weekly stories, we plan to supplement with several novels throughout the school year as well. Some of the **novels** I love to read each year are: *Charlotte's Web*, *The Report Card*, *Maniac Magee*, and *Flying Solo*.

Students will also have a weekly **spelling** list based on a specific phonemic pattern. Students are given **20 words** with 5 bonus or extra words. Students will be asked to complete workbook pages for **homework** on **Monday** and **Tuesday** to practice spelling each word as well as looking at their meanings. On **Wednesday** of each week the class will take the **first test**. If students achieve **100%** accuracy of the 20 words on Wednesday, he/she is **done with spelling for the week**. If students miss a word on Wednesday, they will write each word they missed **10 times** as well as complete any additional homework given on Thursday as well as take the **final spelling test on Friday**.

I also utilize the *Simple Solutions Grammar* book to help students continually practice and review all grammar, spelling, and writing skills needed for 5th Grade. Students will have a weekly **quiz on Friday** to assess their knowledge of these skills. This program allows for long term learning rather than learn, test, and forget.

Accelerated Reading (AR)

The students at St. Joe are very fortunate to be able to utilize the **AR program!** Each book is leveled and given a number of points for each book they read. The 5th-grade students will be assigned a **Lexile level range** based on their **NWEA score**. This range will allow them to select books to best fit their reading ability and allow them to grow and improve their reading. Each quarter, 5th graders must earn a certain number of AR points that will be factored into their overall Reading grade. The point requirements are as followed:

1st Quarter: 10 points

2nd Quarter: 12 points

3rd Quarter: 14 points

4th Quarter: 16 points

Math

We adopted a new math series for the 2019–2020 school year from **Pearson** called **Envision 2.0**. I also supplement a lot with other resources to make sure my students have the best opportunity to meet the Indiana Math Standards for 5th Grade. You will rarely see the math textbook. Homework, will be from the *Simple Solutions* math book. I feel this book will give your child the best opportunity to practice a variety of skills throughout the year rather than only practice the skill we are learning at the time. Math homework is typically sent home *every night*. Students will then be given a **quiz each Friday** to assess what skills they have mastered and what skills still need work.

I have seen wonderful results over the years from these books.

Social Studies and Science

We adopted *Pearson's My World Social Studies* starting with the 2017–2018 school year. This book follows the Indiana State Standards with a focus on **American History and Geography**. Students will also work on several big projects such as a **President Report, State Report, Family History Project**, and **memorize the 50 states and capitals** just to name a few. Fifth-grade students have two **Social Studies Field trips** this year. To begin the year the fifth-graders will begin preparing for **Junior Achievement's BizTown**. Students will learn about starting and working in a business. Students will then travel to Fort Wayne and spend the day at BizTown doing their job getting paid and spending their money. Students will also travel to Fishers, IN to visit the interactive history park, *Connor Prairie*. Students will get to see what life was like in 1836 and 1863.

Our **Science** book is from *Scott Foresman* and focuses on **life science, physical science, and earth science**, as well as **space and technology**. In **March**, students will attend a **5-day STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)** program at Starbase located at the 122nd Air National Guard. Students will also care for our four class tortoises throughout the year.

I also utilize the *Simple Solutions* books for both **Science and Social Studies**. This is the first year I've had the privilege of using the Social Studies book. Students will do a lesson each day, **some for homework and some at school**. Students will review and practice concepts in science and social studies all year long. Students will then be given a short **quiz each Friday** to assess what they remember and what they still need to work on. Yes, this seems like a lot but with proper daily practice and review students will find it much easier to remember concepts over time. These quizzes shouldn't require a lot of studying or cramming for the quiz.

Religion

The fifth-grade religion program is based on the Diocesan curriculum. Our religion text is the *We Believe* series from Sadlier.

We focus on the seasons throughout the church year. We learn about **Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter**. The main focus all year are the **sacraments**. We also learn about the saints and how they devoted their lives to God. We focus as well on the creed and beliefs of our church.

There is a school-wide **Mass** each **Friday**, on **Holy days of Obligation**, and 5th-8th grades attend **Mass** on **Tuesday**.

Students are required to follow all school standards for memorizing prayers. This year we are required to learn: The **Seven Sacraments, Spontaneous Prayer, the Glorious Mysteries, and the Apostles Creed** as well as the prayers from previous grades. Please refer to pg. 12 of the Parent/Student Handbook for the prayers they are already expected to know. If you should need a copy of any of the prayers, please let me know.

Homework

I **never** want homework to be a **conflict at home**. Students in 5th grade should be able to complete homework with little or no help from parents. If your child does need help, **please let me know** so I am aware that he/she was unable to complete the assignment his/herself. Homework should be a chance for your child to practice and review concepts. If homework is causing a conflict at home, please let me know so I can help solve this problem.

Typically, **homework** will be given **Monday-Thursday evenings**. I try not to ever give homework over the weekend. That is family time!!! It is the **child's responsibility** to make sure his/her homework is turned in every day. If a child does not turn in their homework, he/she will receive a **homework slip** for the parents to sign, a **point** will be **taken away** from his/her overall **conduct grade**, and a **fine** will be given to the child. This way parents are aware if their child has not completed his/her homework.

Requirements for homework can be anywhere from **50-60 minutes** a night including workbook pages, reading, and studying. If your child is spending more time than this on homework, please let me know so we can figure out why and create a solution to solve this problem. If your child is absent from school, he/she is required to make up that missing work from the day. It can be picked up from the school office or sent with a sibling. He/she will receive one day for each day absent to make up the work that was missed.

Your child's homework will consist mostly of the **Simple Solutions** books that I utilize in Math, Grammar, Science, and Social Studies. I won't assign all four books each night. One or two of these books will be completed at school. Your child will also have some sort of **spelling work**.

Specials

Saint Joe's students are very fortunate to have such a great specials team! Each 5th grader has **Art, P.E., Computer, and Music** time every week. The 5th graders also have a chance to check out **Library** books once a week. We are very fortunate to have these specials as such a great asset to our curriculum, and we thank all the volunteers that make that happen!

Special Schedule	Mon: Computer 8:00-8:40 Art 10:00-10:40 Tues: Music 1:35-2:20 Wed: Computer 8:40-9:20 Thurs: Gym 9:30-10:25 Fri: Library 9:00-9:25
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Scholastic Book Orders

Beginning in September, Arrow Scholastic Book Orders will be offered and sent home. Once I receive all orders by the due date, I will place the order online. Please send in **checks only**. Or you may order online using the classroom access code.

Birthday Treats

Students may bring in a treat for his/her birthday. They may be homemade or store bought. **PLEASE** send in treats easy to hand out/already cut. **Summer birthdays** are more than welcome to bring in a treat at any time.

Other Important Information

- You **MUST** watch the safe environment video before attending any trips with the school.
- Parents who drive on field trips **MUST** fill out the Driver Information form for the office.