



6-8th Grade Profile

Classes Available	<p>Two sections per grade</p> <p>The Upper School, grades 6-8, are taught in a departmentalized manner. Each grade has two classes and each class is assigned a homeroom teacher. Students rotate on a bell system to various instructors.</p>
Teachers	<p>Mrs. Rachel Gamarra – Spanish; 6th grade homeroom</p> <p>Mrs. Shannon Connors - Science; 6th grade homeroom</p> <p>Sr. Mary Anthony Nguyen, OP- Religion; 7th grade homeroom</p> <p>Mrs. Katherine Asher- Social Studies; 7th grade homeroom</p> <p>Mrs. Judy Gavin - Math; 8th grade homeroom</p> <p>Mrs. Toni Pouttu – Language Arts; 8th grade homeroom</p>
Class Size	Maximum 25 students
Religion	<p>Upper School Religion classes each have their own focus.</p> <p>Sixth grade focuses on the Old Testament using Sadlier’s <i>We Believe: We are God’s People</i>. They study the history of our Jewish brothers and sisters and all that leads to the coming of Christ. From the Creation to the Judges, 6th graders will experience the world of the Old Testament and the prophecy of the coming Messiah.</p> <p>Seventh grade studies Sadlier’s <i>We Live Our Faith: As Disciples of Jesus</i>. Students learn to experience Christ on a personal level, learn about the life of Christ and His Apostles, and finally the Seven Sacraments, instituted by Christ for us to experience the Sacred on Earth.</p> <p>Eighth grade examines the history of the Catholic Church with Sadlier’s <i>We Love Our Faith: As Members of the Church</i>. From the beginnings of our Church at Pentecost through centuries of change, 8th graders learn the true teachings of the Church and Her part in their lives. Our students attend a Diocesan Vocation Day along with all the 8th graders in Catholic schools throughout the Diocese of Fort Worth.</p> <p>To help build a strong relationship with Jesus and to practice the values of our faith, we usually dedicate Friday as the day of praise and worship. In ordinary times, we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet and sing praise and worship songs in class. During Advent, we pray the Rosary, as well as during the Marian months of October and May.</p>



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	<p>During Lent, we go to the church to pray the Stations of the Cross. At times on Friday, we walk over to the parish's chapel for adoration and to reflect on the Sunday Gospel passages. Whatever we contemplate in our prayer life, we put it into action by helping out with the Mass as well as with service projects like garage sales and canned food drives.</p>
Language Arts	<p>Students study Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking in an integrated way in the Language Arts classroom. Students use the writing process to plan, draft, revise and edit their writing pieces in a recursive process. Within the writing process, students learn to apply standard English conventions and skills as they write essays for a variety of purposes. In reading, students actively develop their proficiency for comprehending a variety of texts by thinking critically and analytically about the literature they read through the use of written responses to literature and participating in Socratic discussions. Learning to actively listen to others and speaking to communicate ideas effectively rounds out the important components of our Language Arts classroom. Our students become thoughtful, articulate young people who can apply their skills of logic and reason to the greater world.</p>
8 th Grade Advanced Language Arts	<p>All 8th grade students are taught the same Standards; however, students in Advanced Language Arts use above grade level reading materials when appropriate as a springboard for their concentration on writing. Students in the advanced class are self-motivated and able to comprehend texts and write to express their thoughts at levels beyond their grade-level peers. Students will likewise cover at a faster pace the grammar and mechanics of standard English required of the on-level 8th-grade students. This program best serves students that learn new skills quickly with little reteaching of concepts needed. To meet the needs of the advanced students, assignments that allow for creativity, imagination, and choice are provided.</p>
Spanish	<p>The Upper School Spanish program at SJCS follows the <u>World Language Curriculum Standards</u> set forth by the University of Loyola's Center for Catholic School Effectiveness. These achievement standards, as well as our student objectives, fall within the following strands: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons among Cultures, and Communities. Every lesson utilizes all four language modes: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The textbook series <i>¡Avancemos!</i> (Levels 1 and 2) by Holt McDougal is used to support our curriculum standards.</p>



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	<p>Sixth and seventh grade classes master all grammar concepts in the present tense and some past tense while building upon the vocabulary previously learned in the PreK-5 Spanish program. Eighth grade branches into using more of the past, future, and conditional tenses with a strong focus on original self-expression in the language. All classes participate in student-centered learning activities that foster students' confidence, creativity, and accuracy in language expression. Students also explore many different Spanish-speaking cultures and think critically about their similarities, differences, and connections to their own community and Catholic beliefs. Teaching methodologies and technology used in the classroom include: TPR (Total Physical Response), TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling), Games, Chants/Songs, Conversational Drills, online WebQuests, computer-based practice and project resources, and the Promethean Flipcharts, ActivBoard, and ActivExpression learner response system.</p>
Math - General	<p>Math is offered at several levels, 6th grade math, Pre-Algebra and Algebra I. Pre-Algebra is offered to all 7th grade students – in two ways; one class consists of top math students and moves at a rapid pace allowing them to move onto Algebra I in 8th grade. The other Pre-Algebra class moves at the pace of the students and continues into their 8th grade year. Graphing calculators are used in all Upper School classes to assist in our math program.</p>
Math - 6 th	<p>Sixth grade math covers problem solving and graphing; decimals, fractions and ratios – adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing them; proportions and percents; geometry – area and volume; algebra – adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing integers; algebra – solve equations; probabilities</p>
Math - Pre-Algebra	<p>Pre-Algebra covers algebra – adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing integers, solving equations and inequalities solving two-step and multi-step equations and inequalities; ratios, proportions and percents; statistics and probability; geometry; measurement – area and volume; trigonometry; polynomials</p>
Math - Algebra	<p>Algebra covers solving expressions, equations and functions; solving linear equations and inequalities as well as systems of linear equations and inequalities; graphing – relations and functions; polynomials; factoring; quadratic equations and exponential functions; trigonometry; rational and radical expressions and equations</p>



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Science	<p>The Upper School science program consists of an integrated curriculum which allows students to sample a variety of fields. These fields include: life science (biology), physical science (chemistry/physics), and Earth science (geology). The curriculum encourages hands on learning through the use of labs and demonstrations. Each grade level touches on most fields with a slight emphasis in each grade level.</p> <p>In sixth grade, the students learn a combination of physical science and Earth science. They begin by studying how elements make up the geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere and the interactions between all of these. They will also develop their lab skills by constructing a multi-dimensional model of Earth's structure. Sixth graders also study the sun, moon, and planets and how each one affects the others.</p> <p>In seventh grade, the students focus on life science. They begin with organisms and how they interact with their environments and progress to cells and how they work together to create larger body systems. They also study Texas land and how organisms (especially humans) affect the land and interact with it. Lab skills that seventh graders utilize are microscopic observations, models of system interactions, and dissections.</p> <p>In eighth grade, the students return to physical and Earth sciences. The focus here is to develop an enhanced understanding of matter and the periodic table, identifying chemical reactions as endothermic and exothermic. Students will also study energy, motion, force, and Newton's Laws of Motion. Lab opportunities will include demonstrating chemical reactions, calculating the speed, velocity, and acceleration of objects, and constructing a marble roller coaster (or another equivalent project) to apply their knowledge of the concepts</p>
Social Studies	<p>The primary focus for the sixth grade social studies program is World Cultures. We begin with a survey of early civilizations and their impact on modern cultures in countries all around the world. Students will study the geography, history, cultures and economies of different countries today. Students will continue to learn fundamental concepts in civics, economics, and geography.</p> <p>Students in seventh grade will study Texas history in the Fall semester and world geography in the Spring semester. Students study the history of Texas from early times to the present. Content is presented with more depth and breadth than in Grade 4. Students' focus each year is on key individuals, events, issues, and their impact. Seventh graders use primary and secondary</p>



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	<p>sources to examine the rich and diverse cultural background of Texas. The fundamentals of geography are explored by investigating the cultural aspects of the seven continents. Students will use the five geographic inquiry skills for the course. They incorporate the use of instructional technology, as well as the continued development of critical thinking skills.</p> <p>Eighth Grade United States History is designed as a survey course through American History. This course will focus on the period of American History from the discovery of North America through Reconstruction (after the Civil War.) Students taking this course will attain a mastery of U.S. History from the 1490s through the 1870s with special focus on critical thinking, chronology, and geography.</p>
Field Trips	The Upper School attends various trips to museums and other interesting places.