

# Eighth Grade



## Bible

In eighth-grade Bible, we study the concept of worldview using, *Your Word is Truth*, from Desiring God Ministries. As part of using this curriculum, various areas of life and cultural issues are examined through the lens of Scripture. Students study relevant Bible passages in order to discern the truth about topics such as the nature of truth, the origin of the world, the environment, biblical manhood and womanhood, marriage, work, entertainment, money and more! The goal is for students to rightly interpret the truth of God's Word for themselves and to see all of life in light of that truth.

## Language Arts

The Dialectic Stage in language arts is a time when students are "digging deeper" into the material, using critical thinking. Faith is integrated with learning, and students are encouraged to be good stewards of their God-given gifts and talents. Core literature, including: *The Miracle Worker*, *Johnny Tremain*, *The Hiding Place*, and *The Screwtape Letters*, are read by the students and, at the end of the year, they read the unabridged version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as part of preparing and performing a student-led production of the play. Literature is discussed in a variety of ways, including dialectical journals, short answer essays, fishbowl discussions, and debate. As the eighth graders prepare for high school, they will receive experience in writing which includes persuasive/argumentative writing, expository writing, and response to literature writing. Vocabulary is taught both through literature, and through *Vocabulary Workshop Level C* by Sadlier-Oxford. Lessons are reinforced through daily usage, oral presentations, and creative writing, as well as through weekly assessments. Grammar usage continues to be stressed in their writing, aiding them in their transition to high school. Students are

expected to apply what they have learned, by using correct punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, and grammar in their writing.

## History/Social Studies

In eighth-grade history and social studies, our focus is on the United States, from its earliest colonial roots in the 1600s, through its place on the world-stage of WWII, along with forays into current events. A sampling of aspects of the study of the U.S. includes: founding, expansion, civics and government, economics, leaders, wars, demographics and burgeoning cultural identity. An appreciation for, and an increasing involvement in U.S. citizenship, is a recurring and underlying theme for the year. This includes frequent and sustained references to Christianity being the foundation and source of any- and all- successes our nation, its citizens and its leaders have experienced! Students use their established knowledge and skills in research, oral participation, expressive written work, hands-on projects and role-playing. These studies, which integrate literature and science, prepare our students for success in high school history, and for active and informed participation in our country's governance in the future. During either their seventh- or eighth-grade year, students have the opportunity to visit Washington D.C.

## Math

During eighth grade, students learn the concepts and skills of an Algebra 1 course, including the solving of equations, inequalities and systems, along with multiplying and factoring polynomials, and graphing and writing equations of lines and other functions. The focus this year, is on critical thinking, persevering in problem solving, and learning to find and generalize patterns. These skills prepare students for the rigors of high school mathematics.



## Science

Eighth-grade science is the study of physical science, which involves learning about the patterns, order and predictability of the universe that God created. It involves looking at matter and its structure, as students learn about atoms, chemistry, motion, and forces. Each week, students participate in inquiry-based, hands-on lab activities. They complete a unit on the Universe, to learn about the heavens and how they "declare the glory of God." As part of building-on their knowledge of the various laws and concepts they have learned, students create a day-long "Exploratorium" that the entire school to participates in and enjoys. The students build catapults, design roller coasters, set-up race tracks, race dominoes and observe the heavens. By participating in our Junior High Science Fair, students have another opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned, and some students choose to enter their projects in the County Science Fair. Every other fall, our seventh and eighth graders head to Mt. Hermon for a week of fun and science at Outdoor Science Camp.

## Logic

In eighth-grade logic, as part of the Dialectic Stage of classical education, students learn to defend their faith in a reasonable and rational way. We move from approaches to avoid in defending our positions, to learning techniques that will help us to support and defend our faith. We start with the common topics of definitions, testimony, comparison, relationship, and circumstance. This information benefits our students in their other subjects and assignments as they are able to use these techniques to support a thesis, or to improve a science fair hypothesis or as a foundation for building better arguments in debate. After learning how to build and defend arguments, the students progress to studying

formal logic, where they learn how to construct three-statement syllogisms and how to determine whether their syllogisms are valid. The fundamental reason logic is taught is to help students learn to think critically.

## Health and Safety

In keeping with our desire to cultivate our students' hearts and minds in Christ, we host annual sessions on sex education, drug and alcohol awareness, and internet safety for our junior high students.