



Divine Savior Academy

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COURSE CATALOG  
2021-2022

# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COURSE CATALOG

The purpose of this course catalog is to provide parents and students with information regarding elementary school course offerings and the overall progression of classes within the Divine Savior Academy elementary curriculum.

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CORE COURSES	SPECIALS COURSES
Word of God	Physical Education
Mathematics	Music
Reading	Art
Writing and Grammar	Spanish - Native
Spelling	Spanish - Non-native
Handwriting (2nd-4th)	Technology
Science	
Social Studies	

# SECOND GRADE

## Chapel and Worship

On Friday mornings, students attend a chapel service that is led by a Divine Savior pastor or teacher. Each service features an applicable lesson based on a Bible story, a worship song, and prayer.

Throughout the school year, students learn, prepare, and perform songs at worship services at Divine Savior Church. Various church holiday services include Thanksgiving, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, and Good Friday.

We invite all parents to attend our weekly chapel (Friday mornings) and Divine Savior Church (Saturday night and Sunday morning) services!

## Word of God: ChristLight

ChristLight is the curriculum used throughout all elementary school Word of God classes. Each week focuses on a specific theme, accompanied by two Bible lessons. Students use these themes and stories to see how Biblical truths apply to their own lives.

In second grade, students will conduct a study of either the Old Testament or the New Testament (these rotate every year). The Old Testament lessons will demonstrate how God fulfills his promises through people such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, and Daniel. New Testament lessons will follow Jesus's life from his birth through his ascension into heaven.

### Memory Work

Students memorize one Bible passage or song each week that relates to the theme of the Bible lesson being studied.

## Mathematics: Saxon Math

While other math curricula ask students to progress from simple to complex concepts in just a few weeks, Saxon Math scaffolds instruction of each concept and continues to review information introduced earlier. This allows students the time and practice to retain math concepts to the level of mastery.

Every second grade math class will begin with a math meeting focusing on calendar and counting skills and reviewing previous math concepts. The second grade Saxon math curriculum is a combination of the following mathematical facts and concepts:

- number and operations
- patterns
- algebra
- functions
- geometry
- measurement
- data analysis
- statistics
- probability
- problem solving

## Reading: Being a Reader and Making Meaning

The Being a Reader program supports students' reading development through a strategic mix of both whole-class and small group instruction. Students learn to approach reading with motivation and confidence as they grow as readers and critical thinkers. Literacy skills fostered through this program include oral fluency, language development, concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, and letter and high-frequency word recognition.

In second grade students continue developing the reading skills they learned in their Early Childhood Education courses with more focus on independent work and formally instructed word study lessons. The goal of Being a Reader is that students are able to successfully transition from learning to read to reading to learn.

Making Meaning is a program that fosters students' reading comprehension and the self-monitoring strategies that readers use to make sense of text. Students are engaged in interactive processes that involve thinking, questioning, discussing, rereading, and responding to texts. A variety of literature is incorporated to provide students with both fiction and nonfiction texts, which build their vocabulary and background knowledge.

The Making Meaning program from second grade consists of 10 units, which vary in length from 1 to 10 weeks. Each week consists of 3 days of Making Meaning instruction and practice.

## Writing and Grammar: Being a Writer

Being a Writer provides an entire year of research-based, whole-class writing instruction. Using a workshop model, the Being a Writer program teaches the writing process while developing intrinsic motivation for the craft of writing through immersion in the narrative, informational, and opinion/argumentative writing genres. Instruction encourages students to write regularly with passion and intent as they build an understanding of and appreciation for the skills and conventions (capitalization, punctuation, spelling, etc.) of writing. With Being a Writer, students learn to love writing and grow as writers, thinkers, and principled people, and teachers hone their skills, both as teachers of writing and as writers themselves.

In second grade, students study the following units:

- The Writing Community - In this seven-week unit, students generate writing ideas by drawing, listing ideas, and writing sentences. Throughout the unit students share stories, give feedback, and help one another become better writers.
- Telling More - This four-week unit helps students write longer stories and learn where and how to add more details to their writing, including giving and receiving partner feedback.
- Fiction - During this four-week unit, students use mentor texts to evaluate characteristics of fictional writing and apply those characteristics to their own writing. Students also explore the drafting process, including publishing their own writing.
- Nonfiction - In this five-week unit, students use mentor texts to evaluate characteristics of nonfictional writing and apply those characteristics to their own writing. Students practice writing questions, facts, functional nonfiction, and expository nonfiction.
- Letter Writing - This three-week unit teaches students how to read, discuss, and write friendly letters, including letters to one another, the teacher, family members, and friends. Throughout the unit, students learn to work responsibly, listen to the ideas of others, and share their own thinking.
- Poems and Words - For three weeks, students hear and discuss a variety of poems, informally explore figurative language, and generate lists of descriptive words to use in their own poems.
- Opinion Writing - In this three-week unit, students read and discuss examples of opinion writing. They write several opinion pieces supporting their opinion with reasons, using linking words to connect reasons to opinions and writing effective opening and closing sentences.

## Handwriting: Zaner-Bloser

The Zaner-Bloser Handwriting curriculum focuses on the four keys to legibility: shape, size, spacing, and slant. The program is based on research of how children learn best and offers flexibility in instruction based on student learning styles, language acquisition levels, and motor development. Each lesson includes an assessment rubric that helps students self-evaluate their handwriting, which builds confidence and ownership in the handwriting process.

In second grade, students hone their manuscript writing skills and progress toward writing application topics such as capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure, and sentence combining. They also begin to learn and practice the basics of cursive handwriting.

## Spelling: Guided Spelling - Collaborative Classroom

Guided Spelling uses carefully curated spelling lists to teach patterns, build vocabulary, and develop the skills students need to become proficient spellers. Proficient spelling leads to improved skills in other areas, including more fluent writing.

The second grade curriculum introduces a new word list each week, including sight words and review words. The spelling words are taught using syllables, repetition, sentence context, parts of speech, and more.

## Science: TCI - Bring Science Alive!

This science curriculum is tied to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and includes some exciting resources. Second graders are introduced to the diversity and interdependence of living things in ecosystems. Students compare the properties and functions of different kinds of matter and analyze the processes that shape Earth over long and short periods of time.

### Unit 1 - Plant and Animal Survival

Students will learn about the different kinds of living things in the world, what they need to survive, how animals and living things depend on one-another, and how they survive in different environments.

### Unit 2 - Materials and Their Uses

With this second grade science curriculum, students will spend their time learning about what makes up “everything,” the difference between solids and liquids, purposes of different materials, how things can be reused, and more.

### Unit 3 - Earth Changes

In the final unit, students dive in to understanding and appreciating how God shaped the Earth, what is on the Earth’s surface, the different kinds of land and water found on Earth, and how problems caused by wind and water can be solved.

## Social Studies: TCI - Social Studies Alive! Our Community and Beyond

Second graders will study five different units related to communities. These units will focus on the following topics:

- Government - branches of government and how our country’s leaders are chosen
- Historical thinking - how a variety of activists and leaders made positive changes in their communities
- Native Americans - compare and contrast various Native American cultures, based on regional geography
- Geography - studying continents, oceans, map reading skills, and the student’s location on a world map
- Culture - comparing and contrasting a variety of cultures to our culture in Doral

- Economics - studying goods and services, based on needs and wants within a community

## THIRD GRADE

### Chapel and Worship

On Friday mornings, students attend a chapel service that is led by a Divine Savior pastor or teacher. Each service features an applicable lesson based on a Bible story, a worship song, and prayer.

Throughout the school year, students learn, prepare, and perform songs at worship services at Divine Savior Church. Various church holiday services include Thanksgiving, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, and Good Friday.

We invite all parents to attend our weekly chapel (Friday mornings) and Divine Savior Church (Saturday night and Sunday morning) services!

### Word of God: ChristLight

ChristLight is the curriculum used throughout all elementary school Word of God classes. Each week focuses on a specific theme, accompanied by two Bible lessons. Students use these themes and stories to see how Biblical truths apply to their own lives.

In third grade, students will conduct a study of either the Old Testament or the New Testament (these rotate every year). The Old Testament lessons will demonstrate how God fulfills his promises through people such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, and Daniel. New Testament lessons will follow Jesus's life from his birth through his ascension into heaven.

Memory Work:

Students memorize two Bible passages, including the 10 Commandments, petitions of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and various hymns each week that relate to the theme of the Bible lessons being studied.

### Mathematics: Saxon Math

Saxon is unlike "traditional" math series that focus on grouping concepts into chapters. Saxon math takes concepts and distributes them throughout the course of the year. This allows for constant review and continual building of skills. In this program students take a test after every five lessons and cumulative tests are taken every ten lessons. This unique approach allows for constant assessment and spiral review.

The following is a list of the concepts that will be covered in third grade:

- Number and Operations
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Data Analysis and Probability
- Problem Solving
- Reasoning and Proof
- Connections and Representation

## Reading: Making Meaning

Making Meaning is a program that fosters students' reading comprehension and the self-monitoring strategies that readers use to make sense of text. Students are engaged in interactive processes that involve thinking, questioning, discussing, rereading, and responding to texts. A variety of literature is incorporated to provide students with both fiction and nonfiction texts, which build their vocabulary and background knowledge.

The third grade curriculum consists of 9 units that vary in length from 1 to 5 weeks. Students receive direct instruction and practice four days a week. Students continue to add to their thinking about reading skills by learning how to create double-entry journals and character webs.

## Writing and Grammar: Being a Writer

Being a Writer provides an entire year of research-based, whole-class writing instruction. Using a workshop model, the Being a Writer program teaches the writing process while developing intrinsic motivation for the craft of writing through immersion in the narrative, informational, and opinion/argumentative writing genres. Instruction encourages students to write regularly with passion and intent as they build an understanding of and appreciation for the skills and conventions (capitalization, punctuation, spelling, etc.) of writing. With Being a Writer, students learn to love writing and grow as writers, thinkers, and principled people, and teachers hone their skills, both as teachers of writing and as writers themselves.

In third grade, students study the following units:

- The Writing Community - This three-week unit review reminds students about their important role as a member of the classroom community of writers. Students explore various pre-writing techniques, respond to various writing prompts, and give one another feedback about their writing.
- The Writing Process - In this two-week unit, students focus on the entire writing process from brainstorming to publishing their final drafts, as a book.
- Personal Narrative - During this four-week unit, students explore the genre and write about significant events from their own lives.
- Fiction - This six-week unit allows students to explore various features of quality fiction and different types of fictional writing. Students practice incorporating the elements of character, setting, and plot in to their own writing.
- Expository Nonfiction - For six weeks, students are immersed in nonfiction texts about animals. Students work with a partner to choose an animal, conduct research, and create a formal report to present to their classmates. Throughout the unit, students practice the writing process and learn various features of expository texts.
- Functional Writing - In this three-week unit, students read and discuss directions for how to perform simple activities and write directions for others to follow.
- Opinion Writing - During this three-week unit, students read and write a persuasive essay, defending a position on a topic. Students learn to evaluate their audience and purpose as they present their own opinions.
- Poetry - For two weeks, students read, hear, and write poetry. Student learn to listen to language of poems and generate ideas for writing and publishing their own poetry.

## Handwriting: Zaner-Bloser

The Zaner-Bloser Handwriting curriculum focuses on the four keys to legibility: shape, size, spacing, and slant. The program is based on research of how children learn best and offers flexibility in instruction based on student learning styles, language acquisition levels, and motor development. Each lesson includes an assessment rubric that helps students self-evaluate their handwriting, building confidence and ownership in the handwriting process.

Third graders spend time reviewing manuscript writing, and then are introduced to writing individual cursive letters. By the second semester they progress to connecting cursive letters to words and formulating entire sentences.

## **Spelling: Guided Spelling - Collaborative Classroom**

Guided Spelling uses carefully curated spelling lists to teach patterns, build vocabulary, and develop the skills students need to become proficient spellers. Proficient spelling leads to improved skills in other areas, including more fluent writing.

The third grade curriculum introduces a new word list each week, including sight words and review words. The spelling words are taught using syllables, repetition, sentence context, parts of speech, and more.

## **Science: TCI - Bring Science Alive!**

TCI's 3rd grade science curriculum introduces students to the concepts of changing environments. Students will explore the variations and traits of different organisms that affect environments to how they affect survival in the past and today. Students will also spend their time learning about the weather, how to quantify and predict weather conditions under different circumstances and explore the effects of forces of motion.

### **Unit 1 - Environments and Living Things**

Students will learn about organisms and where they live, why animals live in groups, how the environments can change, and how we learn about extinct organisms.

### **Unit 2 - Forces and Motion**

Through this unit, students will explore various forces, what they do, what happens when they become balanced or unbalanced, how to predict patterns of motion, and what magnetic and electric forces can do.

### **Unit 3 - Weather and Climate**

Students will investigate weather and how to measure various types of weather, how to predict it, how extreme weather can affect people, and what they can do to reduce the damage of extreme weather.

### **Unit 4 - Life Cycles and Traits**

Students will be introduced to inheritance, how environments can affect traits, why members of some species survive, and the life cycles of plants and animals with and without backbones.

## **Social Studies: TCI - Social Studies Alive! Our Community and Beyond**

Social Studies Alive! Our Community and Beyond continues to broaden students' awareness about the local and global communities in which they live. Students learn the fundamentals of geography and explore different cultures and public service roles by answering the following Essential Questions:

- Where within the world and the United States is our community?
- What is the geography of our community?
- How do people become part of our country?
- What makes our community diverse?
- How do people improve their communities?
- How are people around the world alike and different?
- How does our economy work?



- How does global trade affect our community?
- What are the public services in our community?
- How do we have a voice in our community?

## FOURTH GRADE

### Chapel and Worship

On Friday mornings, students attend a chapel service that is led by a Divine Savior pastor or teacher. Each service features an applicable lesson based on a Bible story, a worship song, and prayer.

Throughout the school year, students learn, prepare, and perform songs at worship services at Divine Savior Church. Various church holiday services include Thanksgiving, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, and Good Friday.

We invite all parents to attend our weekly chapel (Friday mornings) and Divine Savior Church (Saturday night and Sunday morning) services!

### Word of God: ChristLight

ChristLight is the curriculum used throughout all elementary school Word of God classes. Each week focuses on a specific theme, accompanied by two Bible lessons. Students use these themes and stories to see how Biblical truths apply to their own lives.

In fourth grade, students will conduct a study of either the Old Testament or the New Testament (these rotate every year). The Old Testament lessons will demonstrate how God fulfills his promises through people such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, and Daniel. New Testament lessons will follow Jesus's life from his birth through his ascension into heaven.

Memory Work:

Students memorize two Bible passages, including the 10 Commandments, petitions of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and various hymns each week that relate to the theme of the Bible lessons being studied.

### Mathematics: Saxon Math

While other math curricula ask students to progress from simple to complex concepts in just a few weeks, Saxon Math scaffolds instruction of each concept and continues to review information introduced earlier. This allows students the time and practice to retain the following math concepts:

- Number and Operations
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Data Analysis and Probability
- Problem Solving
- Reasoning and Proof
- Connections
- Representation

Students in fourth grade expand on the skills learned in third grade and encounter the new skills of long division, division with remainders, exponents, comparing fractions and decimals, and square roots.

## Reading: Making Meaning

Making Meaning is a program that fosters students' reading comprehension and the self-monitoring strategies that readers use to make sense of text. Students are engaged in interactive processes that involve thinking, questioning, discussing, rereading, and responding to texts. A variety of literature is incorporated to provide students with both fiction and nonfiction texts, which build their vocabulary and background knowledge. The program specializes in intentionally differentiating reading to meet the variety of students' reading levels.

The fourth grade curriculum consists of nine units in which students explore fiction, poetry, drama, narrative nonfiction, and expository nonfiction texts. Each unit teaches and reinforces skills that students must know to be successful in the future academic courses.

- Using schema/Making connections. Schema is the prior knowledge a reader brings to a text. Readers construct meaning by making connections between their prior knowledge and new information in a text. Students learn to connect what they know from their own experiences to texts before, during, and after a read-aloud. They also make connections between texts.
- Visualizing. Visualizing is the process of creating mental images while reading. Mental images can include sights, sounds, smells, tastes, sensations, and emotions. Good readers form mental images to help them understand, remember, and enjoy texts.
- Wondering/Questioning. Proficient readers wonder and ask questions to focus their reading, clarify meaning, and delve deeper into a text. They wonder what a text is about before they read, speculate about what is happening while they read, and ask questions after they read to gauge their understanding.
- Using text features. Readers who understand that expository texts have common features, such as tables of contents and indexes, headings and subheadings, and diagrams and charts, use those features to help them unlock a text's meaning.
- Making inferences. Not everything communicated by a text is directly stated. Good readers use prior knowledge and the information in a text to understand implied meanings. Making inferences helps readers move beyond the literal to a deeper understanding of texts. In *Making Meaning* grade 4, the students make inferences to think more deeply about both narrative and expository texts.
- Determining important ideas. Determining the important ideas in a text helps readers identify information that is essential to know and remember. What is identified as important in a text will vary from reader to reader, depending on the purpose for reading and prior knowledge. The students explore which ideas in texts are important and support their thinking with evidence from the texts.
- Analyzing text structure. Proficient readers use their knowledge of narrative and expository text structure to approach and comprehend texts. Readers who understand that authors of expository texts organize information through text structures, such as chronological order, cause and effect, and compare and contrast, use those structures to understand and remember the information.
- Summarizing. Summarizing is the process of identifying and bringing together the essential ideas in a text. Readers summarize as a way of understanding what they have read and communicating it to others. In *Making Meaning* grade 4, the students use text structure to help them think about both narrative and expository texts.
- Synthesizing. Synthesizing is a complex process that requires the reader to visualize, use schema, question, infer, and summarize to develop new ideas and understandings based on information in a text. In *Making Meaning* grade 4, the students informally synthesize to form opinions and make judgments about texts.

## Writing and Grammar: Being a Writer

Being a Writer provides an entire year of research-based, whole-class writing instruction. Using a workshop model, the Being a Writer program teaches the writing process while developing intrinsic motivation for the craft of writing through immersion in the narrative, informational, and opinion/argumentative writing genres. Instruction encourages students to write regularly with passion and intent as they build an understanding of and appreciation for the skills and conventions (capitalization, punctuation, spelling, etc.) of writing. With Being a Writer, students learn to love writing and grow as writers, thinkers, and principled people, and teachers hone their skills, both as teachers of writing and as writers themselves.

The fourth grade curriculum consists of the following units:

- **The Writing Community:** In this three-week unit, students build a caring community to better get to know one another, generate writing ideas from read-aloud books, and draft pieces of writing in a variety of genres.
- **The Writing Process:** During these two weeks, students select drafts from the previous unit to develop and publish, learn revision strategies, practice proofreading, and then publish a final draft.
- **Personal Narrative:** In this four-week unit, students write about a single event from their own lives. They practice including sensory details, transitional words and phrases, and creating an ending that brings the story to a logical conclusion.
- **Fiction:** This is an intense, six-week writing unit that helps students create an interesting story plot, use sensory details to enhance the setting, utilize strong adjectives, appropriately punctuate dialogue.
- **Expository Nonfiction:** In this six-week research unit, students work with a partner to research and write a report about a country. Students use their skills of examining text features and take research notes to help organize their essay.
- **Functional Writing:** This is a fun and important three-week writing unit that helps students see the importance of informative writing. Student practice sequencing skills as they write directions for recipes, drawing cartoon characters, and playing different games.
- **Opinion Writing:** Students use this three-week unit to identify audiences and purposes of opinion writing. The focus of the unit is helping students to create strong and clear opinion statements and then support those statements with reasons and evidence.
- **Poetry Writing:** For two weeks, students tap into their creativity to create poems that explore imagery, sound, and form.
- **Reflection Writing:** The final unit of the year allows students to reflect on their writing journey throughout the school year. Students log their writing growth and create a writing plan for the summer months.

## Handwriting: Zaner-Bloser

The Zaner-Bloser Handwriting curriculum focuses on the four keys to legibility: shape, size, spacing, and slant. The program is based on research of how children learn best and offers flexibility in instruction based on student learning styles, language acquisition levels, and motor development. Each lesson includes an assessment rubric that helps students self-evaluate their handwriting, building confidence and ownership in the handwriting process.

In fourth grade, students review the formation of lowercase letters, work on connections between cursive letters, and further develop fluency in cursive writing. Students are taught and practice handwriting through a variety of multi-sensory and writing-based activities.

## Spelling: Zaner-Bloser - Spelling Connections

Spelling Connections is supported by extensive research; it uses carefully curated spelling lists to teach patterns, build vocabulary, and develop the skills students need to become proficient spellers. Proficient spelling leads to improved skills in other areas, including more fluent writing.

In fourth grade, students learn and practice the following spelling concepts:

- Short and Long Vowels
- Digraphs and Diphthongs
- Silent and Complex consonants
- Clusters
- Homophones
- R-controlled vowels
- Double Consonants
- Schwa sounds
- Adding “ed” and “ing”
- Contractions
- Plurals and Possessives
- Suffixes
- Compound Words
- Calendar words
- Words about our world

## Science: TCI - Bring Science Alive!

Bring Science Alive! examines the functions of internal and external plant and animal structures in growth, reproduction, and information processing. Students explore the roles of weathering, erosion, and deposition in shaping Earth’s surface. They analyze patterns in wave motion and how energy is transferred by sound, light, heat, and electric currents.

### Unit 1 - Plant and Animal Structures

Students will learn about plant structures and how they are used for support, growth, and protection. They will then move to understanding plant reproduction, how plants respond to their environment, and how various plant and animal structures are used for digestion, circulation, movement, and sensing the environment around them.

### Unit 2 - Energy

In the second unit, students begin to understand the correlation between energy and motion, how energy is transferred through collision, sound, light, heat, and electric currents, and how energy is stored and used. This unit sheds light on how people choose from the various energy resources available to us today.

### Unit 3 - Earth’s Changing Surface

Students learn about how to identify how Earth’s surface changes: how wind, water, and living things change the surface, how fossils form, and what people can do about natural hazards.

### Unit 4 - Waves and Information

Students will explore waves, their properties, how they affect other people, what kinds of waves pass through Earth, how they can be used to send messages, and more.

## Social Studies: Houghton Mifflin - Florida Studies

This course traces the history of Florida from early inhabitants to current times. Students begin the year studying various aspects of Florida's geography. As the year progresses, students study important time periods in Florida's history and roles Florida and its people played in various U.S. and world events. Units include content related to following topics: Native Americans, Spanish conquistadors, the American Revolution, the Civil War, famous Florida entrepreneurs, the World Wars, immigration patterns, and the Cold War era. Students end the year learning about Florida's government at the state and local levels, Florida's constitution, and the current events and issues affecting the state today.

One of the main components of the curriculum is utilizing document-based questions (DBQs) to help students develop high-level critical thinking skills in answering a compelling essential question. Students progress through a six-step process:

1. The Hook Exercise: students are engaged and oriented to an essential question
2. The Background Essay: students learn essential context to better understand an historical timeframe
3. Understanding the Purpose: students clarify the essential question and begin pre-organizational work
4. Analyzing the Documents: students learn to search for evidence to support the thesis (answer to the essential question)
5. Organization: students categorize their evidence from the documents and practice constructing a purposeful, direct thesis statement
6. Outline and Writing: students use templates to create an outline and then write a multi-paragraph, evidence-based essay that answers an essential question

# FIFTH GRADE

## Chapel and Worship

On Friday mornings, students attend a chapel service that is led by a Divine Savior pastor or teacher. Each service features an applicable lesson based on a Bible story, a worship song, and prayer.

Throughout the school year, students learn, prepare, and perform songs at worship services at Divine Savior Church. Various church holiday services include Thanksgiving, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, and Good Friday.

We invite all parents to attend our weekly chapel (Friday mornings) and Divine Savior Church (Saturday night and Sunday morning) services!

## Word of God: ChristLight

ChristLight is the curriculum used throughout all elementary school Word of God classes. Each week focuses on a specific theme, accompanied by two Bible lessons. Students use these themes and stories to see how Biblical truths apply to their own lives.

In fifth grade, students are given their own Bible copy, which is used to read and study in class. The class conducts a study of either the Old Testament or the New Testament (these rotate every year). The Old Testament lessons will demonstrate how God fulfills his promises through people such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, and Daniel. New Testament lessons will follow Jesus's life from his birth through his ascension into heaven.

### Memory Work:

Students memorize various Bible passages, including the 10 Commandments, petitions of the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, and various hymns each week.

## Mathematics: Saxon Math

Saxon is unlike "traditional" math series that focus on grouping concepts into chapters. Saxon math takes concepts and distributes them throughout the course of the year. This allows for constant review and continual building of skills. In this program students take a test after every five lessons and cumulative tests are taken every ten lessons. This unique approach allows for constant assessment and spiral review.

During fifth grade, students study the following content:

- Number and Operations
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Data Analysis and Probability
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Reasoning and Proof
- Connections
- Representation

## Reading: Making Meaning

Making Meaning is a program that fosters students' reading comprehension and the self-monitoring strategies that readers use to make sense of text. Students are engaged in interactive processes that involve thinking, questioning, discussing, rereading, and responding to texts. A variety of literature is incorporated to provide students with both fiction and nonfiction texts, which build their vocabulary and background knowledge. The program specializes in intentionally differentiating reading to meet the variety of students' reading levels.

In fifth grade, students learn, practice, and develop the following comprehension strategies:

- Using schema/Making connections: Schema is the prior knowledge a reader brings to a text. Readers construct meaning by making connections between their prior knowledge and new information in a text. In Making Meaning grade 5, the students learn to connect what they know from their own experiences to texts before, during, and after a read-aloud. They also make connections between texts.
- Visualizing: Visualizing is the process of creating mental images while reading. Mental images can include sights, sounds, smells, tastes, sensations, and emotions. Good readers form mental images to help them understand, remember, and enjoy texts. In Making Meaning grade 5, the students visualize to make sense of figurative language and deepen their understanding and enjoyment of poems and stories.
- Wondering/Questioning: Proficient readers wonder and ask questions to focus their reading, clarify meaning, and delve deeper into a text. They wonder what a text is about before they read, speculate about what is happening while they read, and ask questions after they read to gauge their understanding. In Making Meaning grade 5, the students wonder and ask questions before, during, and after a read-aloud to make sense of a text.

- **Using text features:** Readers who understand that expository texts have common features, such as tables of contents and indexes, headings and subheadings, and diagrams and charts, use those features to help them unlock a text's meaning. In *Making Meaning grade 5*, the students identify features of expository texts and use those features to help them understand the texts.
- **Making inferences:** Not everything communicated by a text is directly stated. Good readers use their prior knowledge and the information in a text to understand implied meanings. Making inferences helps readers move beyond the literal to a deeper understanding of texts. In *Making Meaning grade 5*, the students identify features of expository texts and use those features to help them understand the texts.
- **Determining important ideas:** Determining the important ideas in a text helps readers identify information that is essential to know and remember. What is identified as important in a text will vary from reader to reader, depending on the purpose for reading and prior knowledge. In *Making Meaning grade 5*, the students explore which ideas in texts are important and support their thinking with evidence from the texts.
- **Analyzing text structure:** Proficient readers use their knowledge of narrative and expository text structure to approach and comprehend texts. For example, readers who understand that stories have common elements, such as setting, characters, and plot, have a framework for thinking about stories. Readers who understand that authors of expository texts organize information through text structures, such as chronological order, cause and effect, and compare and contrast, use those structures to understand and remember the information. In *Making Meaning grade 5*, the students use story elements to help them think about stories.
- **Summarizing:** Summarizing is the process of identifying and bringing together the essential ideas in a text. Readers summarize as a way of understanding what they have read and communicating it to others. In *Making Meaning grade 5*, the students identify important ideas and use those ideas to develop oral and written summaries.
- **Synthesizing:** Synthesizing is a complex process that requires the reader to visualize, use schema, question, infer, and summarize to develop new ideas and understandings based on information in a text. In *Making Meaning grade 5*, the students synthesize to form opinions and make judgments about texts.

## Writing and Grammar: Being a Writer

Being a Writer provides an entire year of research-based, whole-class writing instruction. Using a workshop model, the Being a Writer program teaches the writing process while developing intrinsic motivation for the craft of writing through immersion in the narrative, informational, and opinion/argumentative writing genres. Instruction encourages students to write regularly with passion and intent as they build an understanding of and appreciation for the skills and conventions (capitalization, punctuation, spelling, etc.) of writing. With Being a Writer, students learn to love writing and grow as writers, thinkers, and principled people, and teachers hone their skills, both as teachers of writing and as writers themselves.

The fifth grade curriculum consists of the following units:

- **The Writing Community:** In this three-week unit, students build a caring community and get to know one another through their writing; get a variety of writing ideas from read-aloud texts; and draft a range of pieces of writing in a variety of genres.
- **The Writing Process:** This two-week unit reviews the important ideas of producing texts. Students select one of the drafts they created in the previous unit, revise, proofread and edit, and construct a final version for publication.
- **Personal Narrative:** The first quarter ends with this four-week unit that allows students to write about significant experiences where they either learned or changed. In the process, students practice writing using sensory details, proofread for consistency in verb tense, and explore strong openings and conclusions to enhance narrative writing.

- Fiction: This is one of the longer units in the school year. For six weeks students explore the various literary features of fiction writing. Their main goals are to develop an interesting plot, explore a variety of conflicts, apply descriptive language to describe both setting and characters, develop characters through dialogue, use point-of-view to create accurate, consistent verb tenses.
- Expository Non-fiction: In this six-week unit, students learn and apply skills related to research writing. Students research a nonfiction topic of choice, explore expository text features to include in reports, and record and organize research notes.
- Functional Writing: In this unit students practice writing directions to a specific location. They examine the importance of understanding audience, purpose, sequence, accuracy, completeness, and clarity when providing instructions.
- Opinion Writing: This three-week unit helps students identify the audience and purpose for opinion writing, write clear statements of opinion supported by reasons, and explore strong openings and conclusions.
- Poetry: In this two-week unit, students are encouraged to tap into creativity as they write poems that explore imagery, sound, and form.
- Revisiting the Writing Community: The school year closes with students reflecting on their growth as a writer and a community member from the beginning of the school year. Students also create writing goals to pursue over the summer.

## Spelling: Zaner-Bloser - Spelling Connections

Spelling Connections is backed by extensive research; it uses carefully-curated spelling lists to teach patterns, build vocabulary, and develop the skills students need to become proficient spellers. Proficient spelling leads to improved skills in other areas, including more fluent writing.

In fifth grade, students learn and practice the following spelling concepts:

- Words with common vowel or consonant sounds
- Prefixes, suffixes, and endings
- Plurals
- Compound words
- Frequently misspelled words
- Synonyms and antonyms
- Words from other languages

## Science: TCI - Bring Science Alive!

Students are introduced to the roles of decomposers, consumers, and producers within a healthy ecosystem. They will spend time studying the geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere and discover how each of these 'spheres' interact with one another. Students will then explore patterns caused by the relative positions of Earth and the sun, as well as learn how to identify particles of matter that are too small to be seen.

### Unit 1 - Living Things and Ecosystems

Students will learn about an ecosystem, the roles within an ecosystem (decomposers, consumers, producers), how matter and energy moves within an ecosystem, how ecosystems change, and what is within a healthy or unhealthy ecosystem.

### Unit 2 - Earth Systems



Students explore the four primary systems of Earth: how the Earth produces weather and climate, how various industries affect the Earth, how we as humans directly affect the Earth, and what we can do to protect the systems of the Earth.

#### Unit 3 - Changes in Matter

Students are guided through understanding matter, what it is made of, how substances can be identified, the causes of change, how weight can be affected by changes, what people can do about natural hazards, and how engineers can improve materials.

#### Unit 4 - Earth, the Moon, and the Stars

Students will explore what gravity is, why the sun is brighter than other stars, how there is night and day, why stars seem to move in the night sky over time, why the moon appears to change shape and move around, and how scientists observe space.

### Social Studies: Houghton Mifflin - Focus on United States History

This course explores the history of our country from the time of the Native Americans to the present. Special areas of emphasis include the Thirteen Colonies, Westward Expansion, the Civil War, and eras from 1900 to the present. Students will rely heavily on reading and discovering history through primary and secondary sources. They will use technology to research and access a variety of historical documents to better evaluate the scope and sequence of historical events.

One of the main components of the curriculum is utilizing document-based questions (DBQs) to help students develop high-level critical thinking skills in answering a compelling essential question. Students progress through a six-step process:

1. The Hook Exercise: students are engaged and oriented to the essential question
2. The Background Essay: students learn essential context to better understand the historical timeframe
3. Understanding the Purpose: students clarify the essential question and begin pre-organizational work
4. Analyzing the Documents: students learn to search for evidence to support the thesis (answer to the essential question)
5. Organization: students categorize their evidence from the documents to support the thesis
6. Outline and Writing: students use templates to create an outline and then write a multi-paragraph, evidence-based essay that answers the essential question

## SPECIALS COURSES

All elementary students participate in elective courses that are designed to enhance their well-rounded education: physically, analytically, and creatively. Some of these courses vary their curricula, based on a multi-year cycle.

### Physical Education

DSA's Physical Education program mission is to enrich a child's life with a holistic approach: spiritually, physically, cognitively, and socially in their early years. It empowers children by exposing them to fun and exciting games through fitness, and it focuses on teaching our elementary students basic skills to enjoy and play a variety of organized sports for years to come. Through these games and activities, we seek to boost a child's brain, power,

and physical development. The program covers all the physical fitness components necessary to help develop a fit and healthy young individual including balance, agility, strength, and other fitness components.

## Music

Second grade music class provides students with singing opportunities as they rehearse and perform unison and partner songs, call-and-response songs, and sacred songs from a variety of cultures and languages. Students read and perform simple rhythms and use a variety of handheld percussion to demonstrate understanding of rhythm and expressive techniques, such as dynamics and tempo.

Third grade music class provides students with instrumental and vocal opportunities as they perform songs from a variety of cultures and languages. Students identify and perform rhythms in 2/4 and 4/4 meters. Students use handheld percussion to demonstrate varying rhythms and proper ensemble behavior. Students also perform selections on recorder while reading notes in the treble clef.

Fourth grade music class provides students with a whole year of singing exploration and opportunities, including performing unison and partner songs, call-and-response songs, and singing in harmony. Students learn to sing melodies using solfege and moveable “do,” while also identifying these notes on a music staff. Identifying and performing different rhythms and notes in different time signatures is a key component to the fourth grade curriculum. Besides their own voice and body percussion sounds, students also use instruments to play these rhythms and notes, including maracas, bells, recorders, and conga drums.

Fifth grade music class provides students with performance opportunities as individuals, in small groups, and as a whole class. Students learn to identify all of the notes of a scale and can sing or perform them in different combinations. Additional notes, rhythms, and time signatures are introduced in fifth grade music, allowing the students to build upon their musical foundation and perform duets with other students. Music reading is also an important part of the fifth grade curriculum, as students learn to play and perform the recorder, conga drums, and ukulele.

## Art

Elementary school students are taken to the art lab to learn about and practice artistic skills and concepts. The main objectives of the elementary art program are listed below:

- to continually remind students about how art and their individual artistic abilities are a gift and blessing from God
- to learn step-by-step drawing skills using basic shapes as a template
- to understand various types of media in art and how each creates a different artistic effect
- to discover different artists and time periods in art and examine their impact in the art world
- to teach students how to manage time wisely to complete their own projects in class

## Spanish as a Heritage Language

The DSA Spanish program focuses on a variety of curricular areas: reading, writing, oral communication, and listening. Basically, the learning of Spanish means to understand and follow the Spanish instructions, read and speak fluently, acquire the skills to write correctly (in both grammar and orthography), and develop communication and presentation skills. The main objective is that each student enjoys learning the Spanish language and can be proficient in the different areas related to language acquisition.

## Spanish as a Second Language

These courses are intended for students with limited exposure to the Spanish language. Students will be introduced to the sound system and grammatical structure of Spanish. They will mainly focus on developing skills in the areas of listening, speaking, basic reading, and writing. Additionally, students will acquire a knowledge of the geography, culture, and people of the regions in the world where Spanish is spoken.

## Technology

All elementary classrooms visit our elementary computer lab twice a week. Students learn to navigate the basics of a desktop computer and spend time working on one of the several educational websites detailed in the next section. All classrooms are also equipped with an iPad cart, which allows for technology usage in the classroom during lessons or study time.

# SUPPLEMENTAL TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

## IXL Math

IXL Math helps students gain fluency and confidence in math as they master essential skills at their own pace through fun and interactive questions, build in support, and motivating awards.

## IXL Language Arts

IXL Language Arts helps students learn phonics, reading comprehension, writing strategies, and more. IXL helps learners develop communication skills needed for success in the future.

## EDU Typing

EduTyping, Jr. helps elementary school students in their keyboarding proficiency. The curriculum introduces new keys by rows where students first learn the middle row, then the top and bottom row of the keyboard. The content is designed with a purposeful focus on sight and high frequency words. Teachers customize how many lessons students are required to complete.

## Newsela Essentials

Newsela is an Instructional Content Platform that brings together engaging, accessible content with integrated assessments and insights to supercharge reading engagement and learning in every subject. Content on Newsela covers topics students care about, that connect to core curriculum content, and that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Each article on Newsela is published at five different reading levels so that every article is accessible to every student in a class, regardless of their reading ability. Thousands of articles are leveled specifically for grades 2-6, ensuring that teachers can find content that is accessible for younger readers, too. Additionally, many articles are available in both English and Spanish. Assessments are integrated directly into articles to help students engage with the content and to give teachers and principals actionable insights on students' activity. The result is more engaged readers—and engaged readers are better learners.

## Accelerated Reader

Accelerate Reader (AR) is a computer-based program that monitors independent reading practice and progress. The program helps DSA teachers guide students in finding books that both interest them and that are within their reading Zone of Proximal Development. After students finish a book, they take a multiple-choice test to gauge their reading comprehension. The program also allows teachers to set individual reading point goals for each student. The number of points for each book is based on its length and reading difficulty.

# EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

## English as Second Language (ESL)

DSA offers ESL classes for students who need added support in learning English. All students are annually assessed in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Those with a score below their grade level are enrolled in the ESL program until they have acquired the skills needed to learn independently.

## Academic Support Program

Our Academic Support Team consists of qualified classroom teachers and special education professionals that are available to assist students who need additional academic support in the classroom. Standardized testing scores, academic performance, and teacher observation and feedback determine which students need support and what type of support to provide. Academic support takes place both inside and outside of the classroom, in small groups or an individual setting, or through co-teaching.

## School Counselor Initiatives

The school counseling program is an integral component of the school's mission by following the American School Counseling Association national model (ASCA). The ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors are organized in the following way:

### Category 1: Mindset Standards

Includes standards related to the psycho-social attitudes or beliefs students have about themselves in relation to academic work. These make up the students' belief system as exhibited in behaviors. The main focus is the belief in the development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, spiritual, social/emotional and physical well-being.

### Category 2: Behavior Standards

These standards include behaviors commonly associated with being a successful student. These behaviors are visible, outward signs that a student is engaged and putting forth effort to learn. The behaviors are grouped into three subcategories.

- a. Learning Strategies: Processes and tactics students employ to aid in the cognitive work of thinking, remembering or learning.
- b. Self-management Skills: Continued focus on a goal despite obstacles (grit or persistence) and avoidance of distractions or temptations to prioritize higher pursuits over lower pleasures (delayed gratification, self-discipline, self-control).
- c. Social Skills: Acceptable behaviors that improve social interactions, such as those between peers or between students and adults.

The school counseling curriculum also incorporates the five SEL competencies (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision making, and relationship skills).

K-8 School Counselor Lesson Themes:

- Growth Mindset/Attitude/Effort/Grit
- Respect/Differences/ Self-Esteem
- Responsibility/Behavior/Listening
- Feelings/ Emotion Regulation
- Friendship/Sense of belonging
- Bullying/Mean Behavior
- Kindness/Empathy
- Mental Health Education

These domains promote mindsets and behaviors that enhance the learning process and create a culture of college and career readiness for all students.

## *Our Philosophy of Education*

We believe every child should know the love of Christ.  
Sharing His love with children is the reason we exist.

Education gives our children a foundation for life.  
They are future explorers and creators,  
innovators and leaders, neighbors and parents.

We are a community of families, students, educators,  
and friends who are dedicated to working together to  
help our children thrive. That's why we call ourselves  
*"The Divine Savior Family."*

Our mission has an eternal impact and  
that education can change the world.  
Because we believe this, we strive to give our children  
excellence in all we do.



*a family of four academies*

DORAL CAMPUS | DELRAY BEACH CAMPUS  
SANTA RITA RANCH CAMPUS | SIENNA CAMPUS

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