



Zion Lutheran School

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Zion Lutheran School Fourth Grade Overview

Religion: *Voyages: Exploring God's Word* is a study of various Bible stories from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Students learn of God's love and care for people through the ages. Fourth graders study some of the miracles of Jesus. They memorize selected Bible verses as well as The Ten Commandments, The Articles, The Lord's Prayer, and Baptism as written in Luther's Small Catechism. Each Wednesday students attend a school chapel service. The fourth graders lead one chapel service during the school year. Prayer and sharing from God's Word are intertwined throughout the day.

Reading: In the Scott Foresman *Seeing is Believing* students read stories from many genres. They are exposed to non-fiction, biographies, fantasy, mystery, historical fiction, realistic fiction, legends, tall tales, and poetry. Skills such as paraphrasing, visualizing, cause and effect, compare and contrast, and summarizing are taught in conjunction with the stories. Fourth graders do book report projects based on independent reading in 8 different genres throughout the year. Students will also do 3 or 4 novel units which may include novels such as *Number the Stars*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, and *Stone Fox*.

Phonics: Fourth graders will have some written exercises from the reading textbook that reinforce the decoding skills of reading. Our English program also provides instruction in synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, and vocabulary.

Writing: Our writing program is intertwined in our English and reading curriculum. Fourth graders participate in journal writing several times a week. They learn to write expository and persuasive three point paragraphs. Some editing and revising skills are also introduced. In reading class students are required to write compare/contrast paragraphs as well as reactions to the stories. Students are required to write in cursive and are encouraged to write neatly in all subject areas.

English: The students at Zion use the *Shurley English* program. With constant repetition of jingles along with classification of sentences, students learn the eight parts of speech and how these words are used to create meaningful sentences. Many other grammar skills such as punctuation, letter writing, and vocabulary are stressed.

Spelling: Scott Foresman *Spelling* is used to increase vocabulary and spelling skills. Students who perform well on a pre-test are given alternate words for the week. These words usually consist of words taken from our reading, social studies, religion and science texts. Weekly spelling tests are given.

Math: We use Houghton Mifflin *Mathematics*. Fourth graders concentrate on learning the basic facts in all four operations by memory. They experience exercises in place value, time, graphing, geometry, measurement, multiplying and dividing by two-digit numbers, fractions, decimals, estimation and mental math.

Social Studies: In Scotts Foresman *Illinois* students learn about the settlement of Illinois as our country develops from colonial times to modern day. Practice exercises in map and globe skills, chart and graph skills, critical thinking and research are also included. Field trips to Cahokia Mounds, Funk Family Home and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum reinforce units taught.

Science: McGraw-Hill *Science* is the textbook used in fourth grade. Units are taught in life, earth and physical sciences. The specific curriculum taught in fourth grade includes but not limited to: plants, animals, rocks and minerals, solar system, and matter. Field trips to the Funk Rock and Gem Museum and the ISU planetarium along with hands-on activities are used to enhance the science curriculum.

Art: Fourth grade have art instruction each week. Fourth graders focus on the elements of art (line, shape, form, color, texture, and light) while creating an art booklet. Other seasonal projects are introduced to foster creativity.

Music: Students have vocal music instruction twice a week. The curriculum involves singing, listening and playing simple instruments. Fourth graders are usually involved in two musicals, both the Christmas and the spring musical. They learn a variety of Christian songs and hymns and are encouraged to attend Zion worship services when scheduled to sing throughout the year. Fourth graders may also learn to play a musical instrument. They have weekly lessons and participate in a beginning band program during the school day.

Physical Education: Fourth graders participate in a physical education program that promotes activities that develop strength, endurance and flexibility. They also learn basic skills in individual and team sports. Emphasis is placed on team work and good sportsmanship.

Computer: Fourth graders use computers often during the school week. Lessons in Word Perfect and a typing program, *Mavis Beacon*, are both part of the curriculum. Students also use the internet for research in science and social studies units. Students learn to create a *Power Point* presentation for a mystery book project.

Other Experiences: Fourth graders participate in Reading Is Fundamental. On three occasions students are treated to a reading program and allowed to choose a free paperback book. The Logan County Farm Bureau provides an opportunity for fourth graders to learn about agriculture. They participate in several hands on activities that reinforce the importance of agriculture in their

daily life. When available, fourth graders will attend a play or dramatization that correlates with classroom reading experience or a social studies unit.