

Welcome to fourth grade! Throughout this year I will strive to create and maintain a faith-filled, nurturing, fair, hardworking environment where we can all learn and grow. The Cosgriff Mission Statement, Student Learning Expectations (SLEs), the Utah State Standards, and Next Generation Science inform all of our work.

THE MISSION of J.E. Cosgriff Memorial Catholic School is to guide our students to become respectful, responsible, and productive citizens through quality academic instruction that is grounded in Catholic teachings and tradition.

COMMUNICATION: Students are encouraged to approach me with any concerns or ideas. I am almost always available at recess/lunch and before and after school. The school is working to conserve paper and increase efficiency by using the website, cosgriff.org, and email for much of our communication.

In fourth grade we also use: Planners

Take Home Folders

Teacher Emails (bi-weekly)

mgale@cosgriff.org

school: 801 486-3197 ext: 415

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: Management begins with clear expectations and mutual respect.

Classroom Rules:

* Be Respectful: Be respectful to others' property, ideas and opinions, and right to learn. Raise your hand to speak, do not disrupt class by moving unnecessarily. I will respect you, so please respect me by following instructions, keeping our classroom clean, and being an attentive listener.

* Be Honest: Always show me that I can trust you.

* Be Prepared: You are responsible to be at school on time ready to learn.

* Be Obedient: Stay on task and follow directions the first time given. This also goes for the school wide rules and uniform policies.

With these rules in place we will be able to keep our classroom flowing efficiently and create no problems for ourselves or others.

Consequences:

*First Offense: Verbal Warning

*Second Offense: Call home

*Third Offense: Visit to Mrs. Hunt's office and possible referral

*Fourth Offense: Referral

*** I reserve the right to skip levels of consequences, depending on the type of offense. All of these offenses will have a direct impact on the conduct of the student.

GRADING: The school grading scale and honor roll policy are stated in the handbook and may be found on the website. All work is marked with points earned over points possible, a check means all points were earned. Graded work will be returned in the take home folder. Students are expected to turn in work on time. I will accept a late assignment, however 10% will be deducted for each day late. You will be able to track student progress through TeacherEase, an online gradebook, which will be updated regularly. When using TeacherEase an (M) means an assignment is missing and is recorded as 0, an (E) means the work is excused and the points possible are not factored into the grade.

HOMEWORK: I encourage nightly reading of 20-30 minutes however, I require students to read 100 minutes per week. Reading logs are to be turned in promptly each Friday, unless otherwise stated. This may be any reading material the student chooses. Reading can be done out loud to family members, taking turns reading with someone, reading silently or even someone reading to them. I also expect students to complete any unfinished class work and turn it in the following day. Students will also receive homework assignments to reinforce skills and concepts we are working on during class. Students will be required to write down assignments and due dates in their Cosgriff planner.

ABSENT WORK: I will place all missed work on the student's desk. A buddy will record the missed work and homework assignments for the student. Students will have one day for each day they are absent to complete the work after their return to school. After school is an appropriate time for a sibling, friend or parent to get the missed work.

RELIGION

Religion is integrated throughout our day. We often make connections between our Catholic Christian beliefs and how we use our gifts, the choices we make and how we treat others. Our communication skills are critical to discussions and activities. We continue to use the Be My Disciples text from RCL Benziger. The standards of our religion curriculum focus on the following areas:

- *Demonstrating understanding of core Catholic beliefs
- *Demonstrating understanding and practice of Catholic prayer, worship and sacraments
- *Identifying moral virtues and the study of the Ten Commandments as a moral guide
- *Applying Catholic social teaching to our respect of creation, self and others
- *Reading, interpreting and applying Holy Scripture to daily life
 - the Beatitudes are one area of focus
- *Understanding and celebrating the liturgical year and the seasons
- *Appreciating vocations, the ministry of others and our own calling
- *Studying saints as role models and inspiration for Christian living
- *Review and introduction of vocabulary from our text and discussions
- *Active service, especially an annual knitting project from Oct – Dec, and visiting nearby St. Ambrose parishioners
- *Safe Environment Curriculum—involving respectful and appropriate relationships
- *Family Life—in the spring, parents will be notified, we'll discuss family life topics including basic fertilization, cell division and fetal development. We emphasize the wonder and gift of life.

Students are assessed through in class responses, activities, projects, tests and occasional homework. Please be aware that fourth grade is part of the student choir and it is hoped they will participate in the monthly Sunday school mass.

LANGUAGE ARTS: Our work in language arts focuses on the power of language and developing all of our communication skills. Reading, writing, speaking and listening are part of all subject areas. The subjects receiving letter grades are reading, writing/language and spelling.

Reading: The goal of our work is to build skills, comprehension and a positive relationship with reading. Our primary text is the Houghton Mifflin anthology, content is organized into six themes we will refer to throughout the year. Other texts will include poetry, paperbacks, author studies, genre studies, and student choice for silent reading. Our Power Hour small group participation and student responses are part of our graded work.

Focus Skills and Strategies:

Summarize	Story Structure	Fantasy vs. Realism
Monitor/Clarify	Author's viewpoint	Problem Solving
Question	Text Organization	Cause and Effect
Predict/Infer	Noting Details	Fact vs. Opinion
Evaluate	Sequence of Events	Following Directions
Identify Themes	Compare and Contrast	Topic, Main Idea, Details
Making connections between texts		

This year we will be focusing 50% of our time on informational text and 50% of our time on narrative text.

Vocabulary development is also an important part of our reading and writing work. Students will be tested on vocabulary from texts read in class. This is a portion of their reading grade.

Grades are based on various class responses/activities (60%), assessments/projects (25%) and regular (almost every week) language arts homework, (15%).

Writing/Language: The writing traits we focus on are ideas, basic conventions, organization, powerful word choice and legibility.

We use the writing process to complete our projects. We brainstorm, develop and organize the ideas (planning), complete a first draft, revise, edit, publish, and celebrate. Students will often share their work and support each other during this process. Our projects will include a personal narrative, opinion, poetry, informative reports, short research projects and letter writing among others. Students review writing models and a rubric for each project. Other language activities include skill work with the parts of speech and punctuation. We use the Voyages in English text from Loyola Press.

Grades are based on in class activities (60%), assessments/projects (25%) and weekly language arts homework (15%). Parents are encouraged to help students reread their work and check for ideas, basic conventions, organization, powerful word choice and legibility.

Spelling/Word Work: In fourth grade, students will have traditional spelling words and Words Their Way (WTW), which takes place during Power Hour. Our whole group structural analysis word work will look at prefixes/suffixes, word roots, spelling patterns (VCV, VCCV), and changing to among others. Spelling/phonics work will also include study of the vowel sounds and how they are spelled, r-controlled vowels, compound words, silent consonants, frequently misspelled words and unusual spellings. When Power Hour begins students' grades will come from that work as well as the spelling words sent home.

Power Hour includes fifteen minutes of focused leveled word work and twenty minutes of guided reading. The Power Hour teacher will have a participation rubric where the student earns daily points and also points for their performance on each Thursday assessment. Students will keep their work in a notebook and these scores will be communicated primarily through TeacherEase.

MATH: The key to a successful math experience is being open to the work, being tenacious and diligent about the work, and being reflective about our math thinking. We will be using the Math in Focus text which employs Singapore Math methodology. As a school we implement the Common Core Math Curriculum. The Common Core allows us to go into greater depth on these math topics to further student understanding and prepare them fully for mathematics in the future.

Content Areas:

Place Value/Decimals/Fractions	Estimation	Multi-digit Multiplication and Division
Number sentences/Algebra	Geometric figures	Organizing Data
Perimeter/Area	Reflection/Symmetry	Factors/Multiples

The typical math lesson will review math homework and/or warm-up problems. We continue with an overview of a concept with the whole class working together. The students work alone, in pairs or in small groups, to practice and explore the concept. The homework, will follow up our in class work, or support a coming lesson. All these steps are important to learning. At any point the students are encouraged to ask questions or share their own connections in order to clarify instruction and benefit us all.

Fluency of single digit multiplication and division math facts is expected by the end of third grade according to Utah Core Math standards. The Utah Core states " By the end of Grade 3, students need to know from memory all products of two one-digit numbers." During the first month of 4th grade, students' math fact fluency will be assessed. Those not reaching the **target level of fluency by September 29th will be expected to participate in a mandatory practice program after school until fluency is attained. This is necessary to allow 4th graders to learn new concepts that require fluent use of multiplication facts. I will be teaching this after school program Wednesday afternoons 3:20-3:50. I apologize if this interferes with extracurricular activities, but the fluency of these facts is crucial and in the best interest of your child.**

Grades will be based on activities/homework (75%) and assessments (25%). Some homework will be checked in class. Other homework will be collected and graded. If a student does not have a completed assignment to check in class they cannot earn the full points. There will be an in class review period before every chapter test and a study guide test will be sent home to prepare for the test. Also, keeping and reviewing the homework connected with each unit can be helpful.

SOCIAL STUDIES: The major focus of fourth grade social studies is Utah. We will explore the physical geography of our state/region, the early people, trappers and explorers, Mormon settlement, statehood

and modern Utah. Utah Our Home is our primary text. Grading is based on in class activities (65%) and assessments/projects (35%). Any major projects will have a rubric and reasonable completion time.

SCIENCE: It is my hope that students will develop an appreciation and enjoyment for science. We will use inquiry-based learning in science. Inquiry implies hands-on involvement to construct much of their understanding. This will be done with many hands-on experiences followed by discussion, reading, and writing to solidify understanding. Some activities are hard to recreate after being done with the class and students may have to perform a different activity should they be absent. Grades are based on student notebooks, assignments, tests and participation. Health will also be part of this grade. Health will constitute 10% of the Science grade. This year, the Dioceses will be transitioning to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). We will pull our curriculum from both the Utah State Core Curriculum and NGSS in order to fully adopt NGSS in the future.

Following the Utah State Core Curriculum and NGSS, we will be exploring the areas of:

- The Scientific Method and process,
- The changes in the state of water as it moves through the water cycle,
- The elements of weather and that they can be observed, measured, and recorded to make predictions and determine weather patterns,
- The basic properties of rocks, the formation of soil and the needs of plants provided by the soil,
- Fossils and how they are formed, where they are found in Utah and how they can be used to make inferences
- Weathering and Erosion
- Animal Adaptations
- Energy Transfer

HEALTH: The health curriculum standards emphasize each student focusing on how they can develop as a healthy individual. During the year we will focus on nutrition, summarizing the function of the cardiovascular and respiratory systems, preventing substance abuse, personal safety, healthy relationships, and improving mental health and managing stress. The topics will be approached by sharing of written information and hands on activities. The graded health activities will comprise 10% of their science grade.

I am very much looking forward to this year and getting to know you and your student!

Megan Gale

Please detach this portion and return to school after the disclosure has been read and signed by both parents and student.

Student Name

Parent Name

Student Signature

Parent Signature