

CURRICULUM GUIDE

6th— 8th Grade

Twin Oaks Christian School

Twin Oaks Christian School provides a climate that is positive and God honoring. It is our desire to provide a quality core curriculum as well as give the students many opportunities to serve our community, learn how to conduct themselves in a social environment, and be exposed to many areas students may find of interest. It is our desire to begin preparing our students for life.

The **spiritual** aspects of a Christian education are emphasized. Each day is opened with a devotion and prayer. Each student is in the Word daily during Bible class. Chapel is held weekly. Students are also taught the value of developing and maintaining strong, Godly, Christian relationships.

Serving others is central to our development as Christians. The Biblical principle and call to serve others and let the love of Christ be demonstrated is taught through example and activity within each of the Middle School grades. **Service projects** are conducted by each grade level, both within the school and to the Twin Oaks community at large, throughout the school year. Past service projects have included assisting individual home owners in Valley Park, a local church with an aging congregation and sponsoring Field Day.

Conflict resolution is a life long skill that is taught in seventh and eighth grade. Each student is required to take Interpersonal Relationships, the girls Biblical Beauty, and the boys Band of Brothers, as Exploratory Classes. Students are also introduced to Peacemakers. This curriculum emphasizes the peacemaking principles of the Bible.

Beyond our core curriculum, students will find opportunities to explore their interests through our **Specials/Exploratory classes** (6th grade) and **Exploratory classes** (7th-8th grades). These classes provide students an opportunity to explore their interests and tap unknown abilities. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to become better acquainted with the gifts God has given them. There is a wide span of classes in the fine arts, practical skills for life, social development, and lifelong physical fitness and health. These

classes provide students with a superb experience in exploring their options as young adults.

Students also have structured **social opportunities** periodically during the year. Each social is a time for students to interact appropriately in a safe environment. The socials are well chaperoned. The students have enjoyed progressive dinners, an evening at the Fox Theater, ice skating at the Steinberg skating rink, a visit to the City Museum, and many more fun-packed interactive evenings together. Sixth Grade students have special social opportunities during the school day. Such activities as a Greek Festival are among the special parties held for the Sixth grade.

Developing the physical as well as the mental and emotional areas of each of our students is foremost among our goals. This is why TOCS offers a full schedule of **athletics**. Twin Oaks is a member of the West County Athletic League and the Catholic Youth Conference. Our sports teams compete against other private school teams in the area. Sports that are currently offered include soccer, volleyball, basketball, golf, baseball, softball and cheerleading.

The success of our program is found in our strong, loving **faculty**. Twin Oaks is committed to the 6th-8th grade program. The day is divided into three blocks of 85 minutes each. There is a Math/Science block, a Language Arts block and a Bible/Social Studies block. Each block is taught by a qualified teacher whose expertise is the academic area they are teaching. The students change classes and are exposed to teachers that love God, love them, and love the subject they are teaching. Each teacher works diligently with each student, encouraging personal growth and success. This builds a strong bond between student, teacher and parent.

Students and parents will find a quality, dynamic program at Twin Oaks Christian School. It is our desire to mature and grow our students into the man or woman that God would have them to be. This can only be done with the strong, united work of parents, students, and teachers. This is what Twin Oaks desires for your child.

Schedule of Classes

Core Classes:

6th Grade

Old Testament Survey
Ancient History
Language Arts
Math
Science

7th Grade

The Gospels
World Studies
Language Arts
Pre-Algebra
Science

8th Grade

Acts and the Epistles
American History
Language Arts
Algebra
Science

Specialty Classes:

6th Grade

Art
Band
Physical Education
Spanish
Vocal Music

Exploratory Classes:

7th and 8th Grade

Fine Arts:

3D Design
Art Appreciation
Introduction to Drama
Music Appreciation
Readers' Theater
Stomp
Theater Production*

6th Grade Exploratory Classes

Band of Brothers (gentlemen)
Biblical Beauty (ladies)
JA BizTown

Practical Arts:

Computer Applications
Computer Keyboarding
JA Finance Park
Journalism
Logic
Photography*
S.O.A.R.
Speech/ Debate*
Interpersonal Relationships
World Views

Social Development:

Physical Fitness/ Health:

Health and Nutrition
Physical Education

Note: 7th and 8th grade exploratory classes are subject to student interest, teacher availability and curriculum needs. Not all classes are offered every year.

*These classes are chosen by the students during the fourth quarter.

6th Grade Curriculum Guide

6th Grade Ancient History

Textbook: Story of the Old World, Christian Schools International: 1992

Materials: Worksheets from outside sources

This course examines in a story-like form the development of the world beginning with the ancient world of Mesopotamia and closing with the Reformation. In studying history, there are a few key areas in which we focus: 1) learning how to make decisions about the facts; 2) discovering how to feel about the history (personally) and examining how others feel; 3) deciding how to act based on what is learned—advancing study skills and research abilities. History is not only a story about people and their doings, but also about the story of God and his great work. Thus, the heartbeat behind this course is to develop a greater sense of God's sovereignty in the midst of the circumstances (good, bad, and ugly) of the world, and how he loves his people and saved them from eternal damnation through the gift of his own son, Jesus. The book is written from a Christian perspective, and it offers great questions at the close of each chapter that encourage students to dive deeper into their understanding of the world's events. The words in the title, "old world", simply mean that much of the history we explore is based in Western Europe's origins. This is an exciting course because so much is covered (albeit not extensively), and it is interesting for the students to begin to trace lines of similarity in the history of the world.

Features of the Class:

- Hands on activities
- Greek projects, ending with a great festival as our fall party
- Visual vocabulary
- Knighting process and partial etiquette course for boys and girls
- History Alive foldables
- Research paper (topic will vary)
- Multi-sensory appeal
- Reformation activities

6th Grade Bible

Textbook: Walking with God and His People. Christian Schools International

Materials: Worksheet packets

In this class we study the OT from Genesis through the book of Malachi with special emphasis on God's people and the development of their identity throughout this testament. We study the importance of God's covenants to His people. We complete a unit on Jewish feasts and festivals and how God reveals himself to his people through these. The book of Proverbs and its emphasis on wisdom is also studied.

Features of the Class:

- Scripture memory
- Student-made skits
- Opportunities for student illustrations of stories
- Art projects
- Group projects

6th Grade Language Arts

Textbooks: The Language of Literature. McDougal Littell Reading Series: 2006

Language Network. McDougal-Littell: 2001

Wordly Wise 3000. Educators Publishing Service: 2007

Novels: **The Bronze Bow** by Elizabeth George Speare

The Door in the Wall by Marguerite De Angeli

Sixth grade language arts students will expand their language skills through exposure to different genres of literature (non-fiction, fiction, drama, and poetry), vocabulary and word study, writing and communication practice, and application. Students will:

- Continue to develop comprehension skills while learning to evaluate and analyze reading material for literary elements, relevance to their own lives, and examining its message through the perspective of Biblical truth and principles.
- Continue to refine their descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive writing skills by expressing their ideas in an effective manner that demonstrates organization and sentence fluency and uses appropriate word choice, voice, and conventions of the language.
- Practice speaking and listening skills as a means of articulate communication in addition to writing.
- Expand their vocabulary, spelling, and grammar skills.

- Improve their media literacy to use news media, magazine articles, internet sources, film, music and multi-media presentations for information and evaluate them for fact and opinion, bias, and thematic messages.
- Advance their research skills to develop a research based project with documentation and bibliographical information.

Features of the Class:

- Projects based on response to literature and language application that are designed to encourage students to think, reason, and communicate in relevant ways.
- Writing paragraphs and multi-paragraph essays in a variety of formats which will be presented or published for an appropriate audience.
- An “editor” approach to writing where students revise their work based on specific, focused feedback about both strengths and weaknesses and constructive comments from the teacher or another reader.
- Multi-modal activities that incorporate a variety of learning styles, strengths and interests.
- Integration of literature related to History curriculum.

6th Grade Math

Textbook: Mathematics: Structure and Method Course 1. Houghton Mifflin, 2001

Sixth grade students are provided with comprehensive content, which emphasizes mathematics as problem solving, communication skills, and reasoning. Students will develop precision in the use of mathematical terminology and concepts such as:

- Operations with whole numbers
- Using variables
- Decimals: definitions and relationships

- Geometric figures
- Number theory
- Fractions: definitions and relationships
- Operations with fractions
- Solving equations
- Ratios, proportions, and percents
- Areas and volumes
- Integers and graphs

Features of the Class:

- Take students from the elementary level of mathematical problem solving which involves much guessing and checking, to being able to write equations that represent the problem and solving
- Think of and use a variable as a number
- Gain a solid foundation to move on to algebra

6th Grade Science

Textbook: Science for Christian Schools, 6. Bob Jones University Press: 2004

Materials: Student activities book and supplemental materials particularly with the Leaf Project as well as Festival of Learning experiments.

Sixth grade students are exposed to Life Science (plant kingdom, animal kingdom, cells, and genetics), Earth Science (Earth-moon system, Solar System, Earth's moving crust and changes over time), and Physical Science (properties and changes in matter, heat energy, objects in motion, work and machines). This particular text is written from a Biblical worldview and therefore brings science in focus by showing God's nature and man's responsibility as revealed through creation.

Features of the Class:

- Leaf Identification project in the fall
- Festival of Learning science experiments in the spring

7th Grade Curriculum Guide

7th Grade Bible

Textbook: Bible Truths for Christian Schools: Learning from the Life of Christ. BJU: 1986

Materials: teacher-made worksheets, NIV/ ESV Bible

The content of this course is based on material from the four Gospels. Each unit of the text reveals a different aspect of Christ's teaching as well as His example for Christian living. Some lessons are in-depth treatments of a passage. Others examine several passages that develop the same spiritual concept (i.e. miracles of Christ). The purpose behind this course is to help the student conform to the image of Christ presented in the Gospels, and to teach the student to apply Scripture to his daily experience. Each lesson emphasizes a character quality the student is to cultivate, an action he is to perform, or a truth he is to believe. Through the teachings of Christ, we see God's grace in action. Much of this realization evolves through discussion in class, teacher-made worksheets involving real scenarios, and memorization of the Scripture verses. The intent is to reveal the truth of Christ to the student, while sorting through his/her questions and understanding of the Scripture. Although much of the book focuses on application, the role of the teacher is to encourage students to remember that it is "by Christ alone" we are able to do any good.

Features of the Class:

- Collage of pictures depicting Parable of the Sower
- Memorization of the entire book of Colossians
- Poster of pictures and explanations of material
- Student-created parable books which we read to the younger grades
- Personal testimony project, including interview with parents

7th Grade Language Arts

Textbooks: The Language of Literature. McDougal Littell: 2002

Language Network. McDougal Littell: 2001
Vocabulary Workshop, Level B. Sadlier Oxford

Materials: The Cay by Theodore Taylor
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain

The seventh grade Language Arts Block will further develop reading, writing, word study, study and research skills, and speaking and listening. Students will continue to apply comprehension strategies to more complex pieces of fiction and non-fiction and will analyze what they read using a wide variety of material, including poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction. They will also be given opportunities to make connections between their Christian faith and the messages that authors are presenting. Students will use the writing process in order to create effective expository paragraphs while developing multi-paragraph expository essays. Persuasive and narrative writing will also be developed. Emphasis will be placed on development of ideas, varied sentence structure, correct mechanics/conventions and grammatical structure. Both spelling and vocabulary development in reading and writing will be emphasized. Students will further develop their study and test-taking skills and use the research process while learning to evaluate both relevancy and reliability of information gathered. Speaking will be further developed as will listening for information. Students will be expected to apply these skills in preparation for future years of study.

Features of the Class:

- Interview a subject in order to write a short biography
- Informative Speech
- Interdisciplinary research report between language arts and social studies
- Instructional and enrichment activities developed from Multiple Intelligences research and designed to enhance a variety of student strengths

7th Grade Pre-Algebra

Textbook: Mathematics Structure and Function Course 2, Houghton Mifflin 2001

Seventh grade students are provided with a comprehensive math class with an emphasis on reasoning, problem solving, communication skills, number relationships and theory, patterns and functions, and algebraic concepts.

Through this class, the student will sharpen their mathematic skills with practice using decimals, positive and negative numbers, and rational

numbers. This will be accomplished by studying the use of variables, changing words into symbols, and solving equations and inequalities. Students will be exposed to problem solving with ratios, proportions, and percents. Graphing will be studied using a coordinate plane and graphing systems related to it. Exposure to basic geometry will conclude the year with a study of square roots and right triangles.

Features of the Class:

- Solve word problems related to everyday issues
- Learn how to estimate answers
- Calculate an answer without a calculator

7th Grade Science

Textbook: Modules, Prentice Hall

Seventh grade students explore biology, chemistry, physics, and earth science. One area of science is covered each quarter. Each quarterly module provides the opportunity for experimentation, problem solving, enrichment, and projects. The project for each module synthesizes the concepts learned in that module and requires the student to apply what they have learned during that quarter. The projects are practical ideas that each student will reference in some way the remainder of their lives. The modules studied in 7th grade are:

Environmental Science 2002

Electricity and Magnetism 2002

Human Biology and Health 2002

Earth's Waters 2002

This study brings Biblical principles and science in focus. It helps students better understand God's creation.

Features of the Class:

- Assemble an insect collection
- Environmental field trip to Weldon Springs
- Field trip to the Science Center
- Dissect a frog
- Perform experiments dealing with electricity

7th Grade World Studies

Textbook: World Studies for Christian Schools. Bob Jones University Press: 1999

Materials: Student activities book

The design behind this study is to understand the everyday people in history, not just the kings, presidents, generals, or battlefields. We will research and discuss not only significant time periods in world history, but also specific geographical areas. By studying the government, economic systems, religions, culture, education, location, and arts and crafts of various people groups, the students will gain a better understanding of the history of the people. This curriculum also provides a solid avenue to explore how to use a Biblical worldview in examining the realities of the lands outside of America. We take time every unit to study maps of the area and compare it to what it has become today. There are many opportunities for the students to discuss the differences they find in the cultures we study. There are also projects that research a bit further about world religions, world affairs, and even world inventions. The goal behind this course to reveal that history is living, meaningful, and relevant to everyday life. We begin with the Reformation and end somewhere near the events that led up to WWI and WWII.

Features of the Class:

- Group project about world religions
- Presentation and research of a chosen missionary
- Individual and group presentations and skits bring the history to life
- Original creations add meaning to cultural traditions from around the world

8th Grade Curriculum Guide

8th Grade Algebra I

Textbook: Algebra I, Pearson/Prentice Hall 2006

Eighth grade students study the basics of Algebra. This course lays the foundation for all of the higher mathematics classes. The students become less concerned about what number the letter represents and concentrate on the process of problem solving. The students use variables that stand for different numbers at different times. Expressions containing these variables represent quantities in the real world. Students have the opportunity to practice mathematics and the methodology for problem solving.

The first part of the year is spent writing expressions, finding the value of the expression when x is known and finding x when the value of the expression is known. This sequence leads to the Quadratic Formula by mid-year.

The second part of the book covers such topics as expressions with two variables, harder factoring problems, algebraic fractions, radical equations, and inequalities. The final chapter introduces topics to which students will spiral back in geometry, algebra II, and trigonometry.

Features of the Class:

- Learn to manipulate multiple variables
- Memorize and use the quadratic equation
- Simplify complicated expressions
- Learn to factor
- Manipulate radical expressions
- Understand inequalities
- Solve for the value of the expression
- Solve for "x" when the value is known

8th Grade Bible

Textbook: Walking with God and His People, Christian Schools International

The NIV Bible

Materials: God's World News: Top Story

This is a thematic look at the New Testament. We begin the course with a look at who Jesus is and the four gospels. The course then branches out to talk about the history and work of the Church through the Reformation up to the present day.

Features of the Class:

- Memorize all of Philippians
- Hear from missionaries
- Group projects

8th Grade American History

Textbook: The American Republic: Bob Jones University Press

Materials: God's World News: Top Story

This is a survey of American history. We begin with geography skills and the memorization of states/capitals. We begin our look at American history with the causes for separation from Great Britain. We take a look at the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and study the branches of our government and all they work together. Along with these, other highlights of the course will be: westward expansion, the Civil War, and the two world wars of the 20th century. We conclude the year by taking the ultimate field trip to Washington D.C.

Features of the Class:

- Class debates
- Research various founding fathers
- Washington D.C. scrapbook

8th Grade Language Arts

Textbooks: Language of Literature, McDougal Little: 2003

Language Network, McDougal Little: 2001

Vocabulary Workshop, Sadlier Oxford: 2005

Materials: Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes

The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom

The eighth grade Language Arts Block will further develop reading, writing, word study, study and research skills, and speaking and listening. Students will continue to apply comprehension strategies to more complex pieces of fiction and non-fiction and will analyze what they read using a wide variety of material, including poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction. They will be expected to find the main idea and to read critically. They will also be given opportunities to make connections between their Christian faith and the messages that authors are presenting. Students will use the writing process in order to write strong informative paragraphs and will continue to develop persuasive, personal narrative, compare/contrast, and literary analysis

paragraphs and/or essays. Emphasis will be placed on development of ideas, varied sentence structure, correct mechanics/conventions, and grammatical structure. Both spelling and vocabulary development in reading and writing will be emphasized. Students will further develop their study and test-taking skills and use the research process while learning to evaluate both the relevancy and reliability of information they have gathered. Speaking will be further developed with emphasis on clear, organized presentations. Effective listening skills will be emphasized. Students will, thus, be ready for high school reading and writing.

Features of the Class:

- Emphasis on critical thinking/ developing a biblical world view as it relates to the written word
- Focus on elaboration in writing
- Interdisciplinary research report between language arts and social studies
- 8th Grade Recognition Speech
- Instructional and enrichment activities developed from Multiple Intelligences research and designed to enhance a variety of student strengths

8th Grade Science

Textbook: Modules. Prentice Hall

Eighth grade students are exposed to chemistry, physics, and earth science. They cover one science area in the form of a module each quarter. With each module is the opportunity for experimentation, problem solving, enrichment, and projects. The project for each module synthesizes the concepts learned in that module and requires the student to apply what they have learned during that quarter. The projects are practical ideas that each student will reference in some way the remainder of their lives. The modules studied in 8th grade are:

Weather and Climate 2002

Chemical Interactions 2002

Motion, Forces, and Energy 2002

These modules help the students to better understand God's creation and introduce vocabulary and concepts that they will study more deeply in high school. The study brings Biblical principles and science in focus.

Features of the Class:

- Weather Project
- Field Trip to the Science Center
- Experiments in Chemistry

6th Grade Specialty/ Exploratory Class Descriptions

Twin Oaks Christian School desires to broaden the Sixth Grade experience by exposing the students to music, art, foreign language, and physical education. Each student is provided with the opportunity to hone their God given abilities. The students are exposed to these special classes on a weekly basis throughout the school year.

Art

The 6th graders have a one hour art class each week throughout the year. The first week or two usually involves a lesson related to the Bible theme verse(s) for the year, followed by the annual "Art to Remember" project. For the latter, every third year, all students in grades K-6 draw self-portraits (2006, 2009, and so on). In the years in between, 6th grade students study the art of Leonardo da Vinci and create a 3D version of the letters in their names using the principles of Renaissance one-point perspective. After a visual overview of the art and architecture of ancient Greece, students make a Greek vase. A field trip to the St. Louis Art Museum reinforces the social studies units on ancient civilizations and gives students the opportunity to see and compare traditional and contemporary fine arts using a Scavenger Hunt worksheet. In January all students in K-6 listen to a piece of classical music and create art work to "Picture the Music", a program sponsored by the St. Louis Symphony. (TOCS has been blessed in past years, 07, 06, 05, and 04 to have 7 students place in the Top 100 – each year the Symphony receives over 700 entries.) Continuing to coordinate art projects with the social studies curriculum, students create a medieval inspired clay gargoyle, and learn about Renaissance style profile portraiture, enlarging a photo using a grid system. The finished drawings are then reduced and become the basis for a 6" aluminum "coin", made with the repousse metal tooling technique. If there is time, additional projects might include: drawings of closely observed "God's art" objects (shells, bones, driftwood, pine cones, etc.); making block prints in the style of Albrecht Durer (Northern Renaissance); carving ceramic hieroglyphic trivets (ancient Egypt); and/or Impressionistic style paintings (after Monet, Renoir or Van Gogh). Students who complete assigned projects early are encouraged to create cartoons and other pieces of art to be displayed in the "ON YOUR OWN" or "CARTOON" GALLERIES (right outside the Art Room door)!!

Band of Brothers (B.O.B.)

The 6th grade gentlemen will receive basic training in personal character. By the end of this class the boys will learn about the "building blocks" of personal character by learning about six core values such as honor, commitment, wisdom, valor, loyalty, and accountability and assimilate them into their Christian worldview. Our theme verse is found in 1 Peter 2:17, "Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king."

Biblical Beauty

In this class, the sixth grade girls will uncover the Godly concept of beauty and discuss how the world perverts this concept. Lessons will be completed in areas such as gentleness, modesty, humility, and forgiveness. Together, the class will develop skills to battle the faulty images of beauty that our culture promotes. This course will teach our female students to differentiate between the truth of Scripture and the perverted truth of the world.

JA Biz Town

Biz Town introduces students to the free enterprise system through classroom instruction and active participation in a simulated community. Student complete classroom instruction prior to visiting Enterprise Village. Every student learns economic concepts related to banking, business, citizenship, opportunity costs, quality, ethics, and competition.

The students actively:

- Understand economic terms
- Identify the difference between for-profit and nonprofit businesses
- Learn the characteristics of a high quality business
- Demonstrate the skills needed to maintain a business and personal checking account
- Learn about bank services and relate them to business and consumers
- Determine business advertising, overhead and operating expense needs
- Discover the importance of matching personal skills and abilities to careers
- Recognize the importance of ethics, teamwork, and decision making in operating a high quality business
- Understand the cost of doing business by determining process for products and services

- Evaluate business performance and make recommendations on how to improve

Music

God calls us to praise Him with music, in both lyric and instrumental media. Through this specialty class, which meets weekly throughout the school year, students develop an appreciation for the musical gifts God has blessed us with. They learn to exercise vocal music skills, and grow in their musical literacy. Students are exposed to music history, compositions and composers, as well as basic music theory. Students are encouraged to develop original compositions for voice, instrument, and drama. As a highlight of the year, Sixth Grade students perform in a fall choral concert and are featured players and directors in the spring Biblically-based musical.

Physical Education

God calls each of us to be healthy in mind, spirit and body, as well as be good stewards of the body He has given us. This weekly specialty class stresses the importance of regular physical activity to our overall health. Major emphasis for Sixth Grade students centers on team sports education and competitive play. Personal skill development and refinement of each student's understanding of each sport are twin objectives for the school year. Teamwork, sportsmanship and the fun of competing are encouraged in all activities. Finally, students are tested on their knowledge of the rules of each sport.

Spanish

In His infinite wisdom, God has given man many diverse languages. Being able to communicate in more than our native tongue provides us with not only knowledge and cultural appreciation for another language, but provides us with the opportunity to present Christ to those who speak only that language. In this weekly specialty class, Sixth Grade students learn correct grammar, spelling, pronunciation, reading and writing skills within the Spanish language. Students are also introduced to the culture and flavor of Spanish-speaking countries through their history, their distinctives – even their foods!

7th and 8th Grade Exploratory Classes

“What are these for and why?”

Twin Oaks Christian School has developed a Graduate Profile for our students. In this profile, we have defined our desire for each graduating student to have a strong understanding in and mastery of all subjects taught at TOCS. To this end, the Exploratory Class offerings are designed so as to both broaden the educational experience of our students with quarter-long courses that provide both depth of topic as well as an opportunity to explore areas outside of our core subject offerings.

As our students progress through TOCS, these Exploratory Classes will help each student to better understand and personalize the fine arts, practical arts, social development and health/physical fitness aspects of our total curriculum. By developing each of these particular areas, our students will gain a greater appreciation of how God creates us and gifts each of us to better our world.

Through the Fine Arts Exploratory offerings, students experience the joy and creative expression with which God endows man. Through the Practical Arts offerings, students interact with technologies and methodologies that provide man with the ability to communicate and expand intellectually. Within the Social Development Exploratories, students learn behavior characteristics that reflect honor and respect, as well as how to conduct themselves in multi-gender and multi-generational settings. In so doing, biblical admonitions of respect and honor are practiced and refined within our student's lives. Finally, the Health and Physical Fitness classes teach our students the importance of caring for the marvelous creation of the human body. By learning how our bodies work, how they develop and how to better care for them through diet and exercise, we equip our students to live a long and healthy life in which to develop all that God has intended for them.

Descriptions of Exploratory Classes:

Twin Oaks Christian School divides its Exploratory Class opportunities into four areas of primary interest: Fine Arts, Practical Arts, Social Development and Physical Fitness/Health. These four areas provide for the well rounded development of the student, and provide the complimentary educational experiences needed for our students.

Fine Arts

- 3D Design
- Art Appreciation
- Introduction to Drama
- Music Appreciation
- Readers' Theatre
- Stomp
- Theater Production

Practical Arts

- Computer Applications
- Computer Keyboarding
- JA Finance Park
- Journalism
- Logic
- Photography
- SOAR
- Speech/Debate

Social Development

- Interpersonal Relationships
- World Views

Physical Fitness/Health

- Health and Nutrition
- Physical Education

3D Design

In the 3D Design Exploratory Class for the eighth grade, students are briefly exploring the world of three-dimensional art through sculpture and photography for one quarter (about 7-8, 90 minute classes). Each student is expected to keep a small sketch pad in which to take notes on the types and techniques of the sculptural processes explored, and to make sketches or find/create photo/magazine/computer images relevant to each project assignment. Assignments include, but are not limited to:

- Observe several types of sculpture and determine how they were made
- Make a wire sculpture of a figure in action (using Alexander Calder wire sculpture as an example)
- Form a ceramic sculpture of favorite foods (using one by Claes Oldenberg as examples).
- Take digital photos of abstracted 3D forms and spaces around the TOCS campus.

Students will take a Sculpture quiz, after observing several types of sculpture and determining how they were made. They will also take a Sculpture and Ceramics test at the end of the quarter. The last class will include the FUN assignment of making (and eating) edible sculptures!!

Art Appreciation

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF ART AND DESIGN

Using a variety of 2D and 3D assignments, the students will more thoroughly explore the Elements and Principles that were generally introduced to them while they were in elementary school. At the end of the course, they will be expected to know and define what the Elements and Principles are, both concretely through the projects they create to show solutions to visual problems, and with verbal and written means.

We call the Elements of Art the "building blocks" of any piece of art work. They are LINE, COLOR, SHAPE, FORM, SPACE, VALUE, & TEXTURE. As you might expect, each element does not exist or "come alive" without relating it to some of the others. Thus, the Principles of Design refer to the way in which the Elements are "built" into an esthetically pleasing and interesting piece of art. The principles are MOVEMENT, PATTERN, BALANCE, EMPHASIS, CONTRAST, RHYTHM, & UNITY. As with the Elements, the Principles do not exist in isolation; in fact, some art works actually use all of them!

To make the visual problems to be solved appropriately challenging for Middle School

students, projects will emphasize the opportunity for each student to use his/her own creative problem solving skills and choices rather than an approach in which one illustrates the elements or principles being used. Some of the assignments could relate to the Music Appreciation class, calling on students to select a musician/piece of music and develop, for example, a CD cover or a poster that uses at least 2 of the Elements, say, Color and Shape, to create a design of Emphasis (focal point) through Contrast. Another project might relate to the student's personal interests in clothing, such as designing a printed piece of cloth using Line and Texture in a composition combining both Rhythm and Pattern.

Computer Applications

In addition to improving their computer skills, students will learn different programs such as Excel, PowerPoint, etc. This advanced course is designed to help students discover the practical applications of their computer. Students will gain basic proficiency in software applications utilized in high school and university academic courses. They will learn to utilize products to analyze data, make presentations, and enhance such usage with moderately advanced features, such as embedding objects, using data tools, and basic animation in transitions. All of this will help students gain a greater appreciation for the order of God's world as reflected in the consistency and order presented in computerized applications and use.

Computer Keyboarding

Each Middle School student is required to type 35 words per minute before they leave 8th grade. This course emphasizes mastering the QWERTY keyboard layout and developing eye-hand coordination skills.

Students practice repetitive drills to improve keyboarding skills and develop the ability to maintain a "heads-up" approach to keyboard interaction. Students will progressively develop proficiency in words per minute speed as well as accuracy in spelling without use of software-driven tools as a primary resolution. Students will gain an appreciation for the intelligence God endows to man through the creation and utilization of tools such as computers and software applications designed to enhance man's own creative efforts.

Health and Nutrition

The Health Exploratory is a fun, thought provoking class with lots of discussion and hands-on activities. Learning how to care for the physical

body that the Lord has given each of us is a cornerstone of our life-long learning process. This course features:

- Analysis of nutrition and fitness habits for maximum health, now and in the future.
- Health topics in the news are analyzed in light of Biblical principles.
- Units disclosing the dangers and ramifications of drug and alcohol abuse.
- Basic first aid skills and the practice of these skills to demonstrate proficiency.

Interpersonal Relationships

Preteens are faced with many pressures and stress that often overwhelm them. The constant battle of making right or wrong choices is often clouded by body image, identity, and friendships. The goal of this course is to help students learn what God's Word has to say about preteen issues such as coping with stress, analyzing friendships, communication styles, developing listening skills, conflict resolution, etc. We'll learn through a variety of ways including group discussion, role-play, and journaling / blogging.

- Gain appreciation for how people relate
- Identify interpersonal areas in which to grow
- Students will understand the importance of Godly relationships
- Develop a healthy identity in Christ
- Explore personal boundaries and their value
- Basic traits by which to identify those people who are an encouragement and provide personal growth
- Traits by which to identify those whose actions may not be in the best interest of the student
- Assignments that help establish successful habits in their lives based on Biblical principles

Introduction to Drama

This exploratory course is a general overview of some aspects of drama focusing primarily on basic acting skills. Attention is given to development of creativity, concentration, observation, and improvisation. Students will learn the basics of reflecting a character and presentation skills, such as vocal projection and body language to communicate with an audience. Students will experience the wonder of using individual God given talents to communicate to others for enjoyment, for education, and for information.

JA Finance Park

Finance Park is a practical and fun way to expose students to personal money management. It examines the fundamentals of the economic

system in which we live. It explores individual's roles and responsibilities from a Biblical perspective. This hands-on course allows students to experience topics such as:

- Financial institutions and what they offer
- Risks and benefits of saving and investing
- Advantages and disadvantages of credit
- Use of ATM and Debit cards
- Checking accounts and record keeping
- Taxation (sales, income, property)
- Annual and Monthly income (gross and net)
- Budgeting (Plan and actual)
- Spending within the budget
- Tithing

Course assignments focus on hands on application of the topics explored. Students are given the opportunity to make financial decisions and to see the subsequent effects in daily life. The course culminates in a field trip to JA Finance Park. At JA Finance Park the students are assigned a job with an annual income. They then must put into practice what they have learned in the classroom by making important spending decisions, while maintaining a balanced budget. This course is a wonderful way to expose and prepare students from a Biblical perspective on the fundamentals of money management. A terrific side benefit is that it gives students a greater appreciation for their parents and the many daily decisions they make to care for their family!

Journalism

This class helps students gain a basic understanding of the concepts, standards, responsibilities, and skills related to journalism. In addition to working with the following topics, our class will culminate in the publication of two or three versions of a year-end school paper (so that everyone can practice a meaningful publication responsibility.)

Journalism Topics to Be Studied and Practiced:

- Journalism – Its evolving definition and the perceived functions of a publication product.
- News-Story qualities that impact "news judgment" and strategies for idea generation. Source consultation, evaluation, and citation. Writing the "lead" and news story "body."
- Design and Layout (Using Microsoft Word and Publisher)-Standard components and format. Deliberate placement of stories and graphics and the use of fonts.
- Interviewing to collect story information – Types of interviews, preparation for interviews,

and questioning techniques. Writing the interview-based story.

- Teamwork-The composition of a newspaper staff and specific position roles and responsibilities.
- Journalistic Legality and Ethics – Laws and universal standards of honor and decency that must be respected.
- Feature Stories – Differences from news stories and strategies for idea generation and writing.
- Sports Stories – Differences from news and feature stories and strategies for idea generation and writing.
- Editorials – The opinion function of a newspaper and writing effective editorials.

Logic

We are living in an exciting time, a time of abundant information and unprecedented opportunity. But, as educators, this is an age that presents many challenges, as we strive to prepare our children to know our God and glorify him in their lives. As we all know there is a big difference between *knowledge* and *wisdom*. In an age where movie stars become as important as world leaders and reality TV shows often get more news coverage than issues of global concern, it is imperative that we teach our children how to discern, how to label data and ultimately how to think. They must be trained to use the minds God has given them in a way that rightly interprets the events of this world He has created. This is the aim of our course in Logic.

Logic is one of the lost tools of learning. An essential component of a strong education, the subject of Logic is a discipline that is being recovered in Christian schools everywhere. It is not philosophically abstract; it is very practical.

Essentially, the study of Logic teaches children how to:

- Think categorically and strategically
- Organize information
- Compare data
- Recognize fallacies and wrong patterns in thinking
- Identify irrational decision-making
- Avoid the pitfalls of illogical conclusions

It is God's desire that we be strong thinkers, for truth is always on the side of one who fears God. (Proverbs 3:13, 14)

Music Appreciation

The Book of Psalms provides a wonderful example of how God enjoys our songs of praise and

worship, and of His gift of creative expression. Like David, our students will learn to use music and song to worship the Lord. Vocal music provides a venue to learn proper singing techniques as well as to develop the gift of song that God provides. Students will explore and experience many styles of music from various periods: Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern. Major composers from each period will be studied as well as the artistic elements of each period. Students will become acquainted with the elements of music, such as note reading, rhythm, melody and harmony. American music will be a concentration within the class, with students examining music of the Civil War, Western music, Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, Big Band era, as well as present day musical trends.

Photography

Students get the opportunity to work with a professional photographer. They make their own camera and take pictures with it. They also learn what makes a good picture and how to compose a picture, how long to expose the film to make the picture, and how to develop black and white film.

Students will become acquainted with a hobby that can develop into a lifelong pursuit.

Students gain an understanding of pursuing an interest with a passion so that it becomes a life calling (interaction with the professional photographer), thereby gaining a greater understanding of how God provides each of us with special gifts and how we might be able to identify them.

Students will better understand the intricacies of science in nature through the perspective of the lens.

Physical Education

God calls each of us to be healthy in mind, spirit and body. It is important for students to understand the value of physical activity that maintains health, strengthens bodies, and provides enjoyment and personal fulfillment. Within this class, students will be challenged to learn and practice in a variety of activities which should serve to accomplish these very objectives. Students will be exposed to a variety of sports and games which require varying levels of physical exertion. Students learn the value of teamwork, and experience the value of physical activity.

Readers' Theater

This exploratory course focuses on the use of the student's voice, analysis of literature, and oral interpretation. Depending on the year, there may

be an opportunity for all or select persons to perform for the school or other community groups. Students will learn the power of the spoken word, and in so doing gain a greater understanding of how God empowers each of us to be a "voice crying in the Wilderness". Students will learn self confidence through their practice and presentation. Students will better appreciate the wonder of human imagination via the spoken word and its mental imagery.

SOAR (Student Opportunities for Advanced Research)

SOAR offers interested and motivated Twin Oaks Christian School students the opportunity to study topics of intense interest and to present their research findings in a variety of ways relative to the requirements of two national student contests. Students will receive individualized and small group instruction in the research and media literacy, along with instruction in the writing, performance and technological skills needed to produce quality products. Success and satisfaction in the class experience will be directly proportional to interest and passion in exploration topic choice. Students may choose to have their research work culminate in either an entry in the National History Day competition or the Think Quest competition.

Speech/ Debate

No matter how good a written speech is, the delivery is what the audience remembers. Learning about and practicing volume, stress, pacing, and pronunciation helps students to deliver an oral presentation effectively. Debate is a skill that trains students to discern and think clearly; examine information carefully; and articulate ones self well. It insists that they begin to know their own minds. Not only does it require courage and determination to stand up for one's own position, it demands the intellectual flexibility and compassion required to fairly weigh the positions of others with whom we might disagree. These are skills whose importance extends well beyond the academic.

Stomp

Percussion rules the day as students study and experience the physics of sound production and perception. They will learn the different classifications of sound production: membraphone, Idiophone, Aerophone and Chordaphone. Basic rhythm notation will be taught so that students can create rhythms with household items, building their own instruments

and culminating in creating and performing their own "Stomp" piece.

Theater Production

This exploratory course is designed to take a play/musical from its inception to performance. Students experience the audition process, rehearsals, production meetings, costuming, stage make-up, stage management, publicity, house management, lighting and sound design (if applicable). A performance is generally held at the completion of the course. Students gain first hand experience within the fine arts. They learn to set goals and pursue their attainment in a variety of areas to achieve both personal and group success. Students experience the joy of bringing entertainment to others.

World Views

What exactly do other faiths and sects teach that impact our Christian worldview? How do we seek to understand the differences of these faiths related to God's Word and His direction for our lives? Why do some who claim to follow a certain faith believe the things that they do regarding life, death, heaven, hell, dedication to one's faith, social mores, and, ultimately, the impact of Christ in history as well as in our faith? The relevance of our Christian Faith to our daily life and how we live it will be examined as our students learn to look beyond the immediate and see how their world is impacted by so many other factors. How can our students stand tall and secure in their faith in the swirling world they see in the nightly news, magazines, on TV, radio and other outlets – World Views will help them strengthen the Foundations.