

ROSARIAN ACADEMY

— Est. 1925 —



LOWER SCHOOL COURSE OF STUDY 2019-2020

Wonder and joy in learning characterizes Rosarian Academy's Lower School, where hands-on, open-ended activities develop our children's curiosity and problem-solving skills. Instruction is carefully sequenced to encourage skill consolidation and cross-curricular connections. Throughout the program, students reflect upon and explain their thought processes and gain confidence in oral and written expression. Small class sizes are conducive to diverse learning styles coupled with dynamic and authentic inquiry and understanding. Traditional Dominican values of community, prayer, study, service, empathy, and grace permeate our culture. Reference to national standards of best practice in teaching and learning afford us the opportunity to consistently monitor, analyze, and refine all aspects of our students' experiences within the Lower School community.

Religion

Elements of Catholic faith, prayers, and religion are practiced daily in Lower School. Religion classes throughout the grade levels provide spiritual enrichment, as well as age-appropriate sacramental preparation. Second-grade students participate in the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Third- and fourth-grade students prepare, conduct readings and lead school liturgies throughout the year. Kindergarten-through-fourth-grade students attend and participate in all school liturgies, school family events and guidance lessons. Parents are welcome to attend our school liturgies which are celebrated monthly in the Theater or Rosary Chapel. To complement our Lower School religion instruction, students follow a grade-specific Sadlier Religion textbook, and students in kindergarten through third grade utilize a Catholic Faith Scriptures manuscript and cursive formation textbook.

Language Arts

The focus of the Lower School Language Arts program is to instill a love and appreciation for reading. Lower School (grades K-4) has adopted the Pearson ReadyGen Literacy Program, an integrated and well-balanced approach to reading and writing instruction. The program is designed to include a 90-minute literacy block, composed of small group guided reading instruction, literacy workstations, and collaborative comprehensive literacy activities. Within the small groups, students are presented with decodable and fluency readers aiding in the solidification of essential phonemic awareness skills that are critical for developing strong readers. Additionally, students and teachers read and engage in discussions about full-length, authentic literary and informational texts. The program takes the students from learning to read to loving to read.

Writing

The Rosarian Lower School writing curriculum follows the *Empowering Writers* methodology. This foundational writing framework teaches students the skills they need to produce solid writing. During writing lessons, students are introduced to writing concepts and skills through published examples. Techniques are modeled for the students with numerous opportunities for guided writing practice. The students are taught to apply writing skills to develop written works which demonstrate: organization, great beginnings, supporting details, suspense, fully elaborated main events and satisfying endings. Additionally, our Rosarian writers display their writing in school-wide theme displays to showcase their progress as young authors.

Grammar Workshop

The Lower School follows Sadlier's research-based grammar program that provides instruction in the conventions of standard English along with abundant practice. The Sadlier Grammar Workshop accompanies the school's *Empowering Writers* program by offering simple systemic lessons that clearly explain and model the rules and principles of grammar, usage, and mechanics skills. Additionally, scaffolded exercise sets give students practice in all grammatical skills that allow them to apply those skills to writing.

Social Studies

The Lower School Social Studies program correlates to the themes of the [National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies](#). Lessons are designed around the following themes: culture, time, continuity and change, people, places and environments, individual identity and development, groups and institutions, power and governance, production, distribution and consumption, science, technology and society, global connections, and civic ideals and practices. Our goal is to help students make sense of information about the world they live in and then act on it. Students are introduced to *essential questions* which connect them to the content of the lessons. Students utilize the *Pearson My World Interactive Write- in Textbook* and complete small group activities which range from mapping, graphing, role playing, interactive read-alouds and analyzing primary sources. Our Social Studies program is literacy based and includes classroom-leveled libraries to support the concepts, content and skills presented in the themed lessons. Targeted reading and writing skills include: cause and effect, sequence, summarize, fact and opinion, draw conclusions, main idea, supporting details, and compare and contrast.

Mathematics

The Lower School Mathematics program strives to provide students with an authentic experience with numbers. Students in Kindergarten - 4th grade use the Sadlier-Oxford Math series. This program builds on algebraic thinking, the understanding of how math works in the real world, word problem solving, and foundational math sense. The strengths of the program include the ability for

students to be challenged and to build foundational skills necessary to be proficient in math. Further, the program provides a hands-on approach to understanding mathematics. Students are given manipulatives to activate their prior knowledge helping them make connections between what they already know and what they are about to learn. Additionally, students are presented with a Problem of the Day and a Mental Math activity prior to the inception of the lesson. Problem solving steps and strategies are interwoven within the daily lesson. Sadlier-Oxford Math provides students with authentic experiences that showcase how math is present in their everyday lives.

Science and Science Lab

Guided by Next Generation Science Standards, Lower School science is taught through reading, inquiry and digital pathways. Units of study include: Earth Science, with in-depth lessons about our Earth's resources, weather and solar system; Physical Science, with in-depth lessons about matter, energy, motion, force, magnetism and electricity; Life Science, with in-depth lessons about living things, plants, animals, gardening and ecosystems. Each Lower School classroom is equipped with a science library featuring a selection of leveled science readers which support the science concepts and vocabulary being taught within the lessons. In addition to classroom science instruction, all kindergarten-through-fourth-grade students attend weekly visits to our Lower School Science Lab. The Science Lab teacher guides students' participation in lab experiments which support the classroom science lessons and teach the Scientific Method. All K-4th students utilize a grade specific *Pearson Interactive Science Write-in Textbook* and Rosarian Academy provides lab materials to support our inquiry-based methodology for teaching science to our Lower School children. In the spring, students celebrate their scientific accomplishments for the year during Science Mania Day. This fun day is devoted to science project displays, experimentation, demonstrations and hands-on STEM exploration.

Guidance

The goal of the Guidance program at Rosarian Academy is to address the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students. Developmentally sensitive guidance activities introduce students to the concepts and processes that are involved in making effective behavior choices. Children will define and identify thoughts, emotions, sensations, behaviors, and consequences that influence their choices. Monthly, they will participate in mindfulness activities to assist in the identification of these concepts and start to identify how the choices they make impact their relationships with others.

CO-CURRICULAR CLASSES

Co-curricular classes enrich our students physically, artistically, musically, culturally, and mentally. They enhance the skills of technology and open the doors to cyber research tools, as well as physical mediums in our library system. These classes include Spanish, Physical Education, Visual Art, Library, Performing Arts Wheel, and STEM Wheel. The Performing Arts Wheel includes Choral Music, Music Theory, and Drama. The STEM Wheel includes Computer Science, STEM Lab and Technology.

Spanish

Lower School students receive Spanish instruction twice per week. Spanish classes engage students in lessons, songs, games, food, and activities designed to immerse them in both the language and the traditions and culture of Spanish-speaking countries.

Physical Education

Lower School students participate in Physical Education for forty-five minutes, two times per week. Physical fitness, the fundamentals of traditional and non-traditional sports, coordination, spacial awareness, movement education, character education and how to achieve lifelong fitness are emphasized, while children enjoy a wide range of games and team building activities.

Visual Arts

The visual arts classroom provides a safe learning environment for media exploration and self expression. A structured and stimulating environment is established in order to allow for exploration of different materials and tools in creating various styles of art.

Lower School children attend visual arts classes once per week for developmental instruction that includes art history, media experiences, color and design concepts, and opportunities for individual self expression and cooperative learning.

Middle School students will continue to grow and learn using the foundation laid in the lower grades. Students begin to work more independently and more in depth with projects of personal interest. The visual arts environment remains stimulating and a bit more intensive as students investigate and explore more advanced techniques, styles and media. Students are becoming more proficient in using visual art language to discuss and critique works of art. There will be an increasing independence and responsibility for creating and presenting original and inspired works of art. An appreciation of the visual arts not only inspires, but also enables students to better communicate their ideas and feelings.

Library

Weekly visits to the Rosarian Media Center provide opportunities for students to develop the library skills necessary to conduct and locate books for basic research and to explore titles and authors for personal reading pleasure. Younger students enjoy library 'story time' which fosters a love of reading and spending quality time in the Rosarian Media Center.

Lower School Performing Arts Wheel

Lower School students rotate each trimester between Choral Music, Music Theory, and Drama.

Choral Music

Lower School students are taught choral music to perform at Rosarian Academy school performances. Showmanship, enunciation, memorization, unison and harmony are showcased during annual celebrations such as the Christmas program, Grandparents' Day and monthly liturgies.

Music Theory I & II

Following the elements of music, students are taught a basic understanding of notation, rhythm, melody and harmony. Developing lifelong love for music, singing, listening acuity and timbre awareness and gross motor skills.

An introduction to Orff instruments, recorders and instruments from various cultures, composers and great masterpieces helps students appreciate music. The annual Rosarian Academy Grandparents' Day Performance celebrates all that the children have learned through their Music Theory classes.

Drama

Drama and theater education in grades K-4 is guided by national and state standards and the practical and professional real-world experiences of our faculty.

Focusing on the actor's toolbox--body, voice, and imagination--students participate in a variety of theater games and improvisation. These activities and exercises explore listening skills, body and sensory awareness, while developing a sense of personal and collaborative creativity. In the long term, a student should feel empowered and confident in performance on stage or in classroom presentations.

First-through-fourth- grade students may elect to participate in the Lower School Musical production held each fall.

Lower School STEM Wheel

Lower School students rotate each trimester between Computer Science, STEM Lab, and Technology.

Computer Science

Computer Science offers students the opportunity to learn the principles of engineering, coding and robotics. Engaging computer science lessons teach students to write code, create games and animations, write programs with Scratch and Scratch Junior. Debugging their programs helps develop important problem solving, logic and computational skills.

STEM Lab

The Lower School STEM Lab is a place to create, build and learn the design process. Students collaborate, solve problems and think about solutions by exploring a variety of materials and ideas. The STEM Lab is a place for students to extend their academic learning by putting their learning into motion, action and authentic designs through trial, error and critical thinking.

Technology

Students are taught the necessary grade-level skills needed to understand and use the computer and chrome books for assignments. All students are introduced to the five basic components of the computer and their functions, keyboarding, various programs, apps and internet safety.

Cultural Experiences / Field Trips

Our community is rich with cultural and educational opportunities for our students. Educational study trips are encouraged through the grade levels. Visits to the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts enhance our study of language and fine arts through classic plays, musicals, and cultural dance troupes. Ongoing field experiences include visits to the Norton Museum of Art, the Flagler Museum, the Little Red Schoolhouse, the Florida History Museum, the Palm Beach Zoo and the Busch Wildlife Sanctuary. Additionally, Rosarian hosts in-school visits from the Kravis Center traveling theater troupes, the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium, and the Chamber Music Society of Palm Beach Young Concert Artists Series.