

Dear 8th Grade Families,

I am very excited for the start of the new school year, especially walking with your children in their final year here at FHLS. This year the 8th graders will have me once again for math and literature, but also for religion and memory. I wanted to inform all of you of how these new classes will be run, as well as some new things happening in the classroom.

Religion

I believe this class will be one of the most important classes the 8th graders take this year because for many of them it will be the last religion class they will take. We will be studying the New Testament this year, looking at the life of Christ and the history of the early church. However, we will also be doing many things in religion that will be preparing the 8th graders spiritually for high school. This will involve many life application lessons throughout the year, as well as a year-long independent morning devotion process known as Lectio Divina.

Memory

For memory this year, there will be a section or two of Scripture each month that will need to be memorized. The passages of Scripture will need to be recited to me before the end of the month. It is their responsibility to take the initiative to make this deadline. If memory is late, they will lose their recess until it is said, and each week it is late will cause a 10% deduction.

Math

Although the 8th grade class is split into two different groups, each group will be operated the same. Our math class will consist of three parts. Daily assignments, which will be worth 45% of the overall grade, will be given on the topic discussed in class. All assignments will need to be completed in their math notebook, which will be their graph paper notebook. Any late daily assignments will be docked 10% each day it is late and will not be accepted after the chapter test. Tests will be given at the end of each chapter, with several days of review preceding it. The tests will also be worth 45% of the overall grade. If someone struggles on a test, they will get an opportunity to retake the test. Their final score for the test will be an average of the two scores. However, it is the **individual student's responsibility** to schedule the retake with me, whether it be at lunch, after school, etc. The third part of class, which will be worth 10% of the grade, is class presentations. These are new to math class this year. At the start of each class, three or four problems from the homework assignment the night before will be presented to the class by the students. For each two week period, each student will be asked to present at least two problems to the class. A class presentation consists of coming up to the whiteboard, showing the work they did on the problem, and walking the class through the process of arriving at the answer. This will be very beneficial to everyone. It will show me how much they truly understand the concepts, it will allow the rest of the class to hear a peer explain the concept, and it will help the presenter become more comfortable talking in front of others. On top of this, they say the best way to fully understand something is to teach it, and the students will get that opportunity to teach each other.

Literature

For literature this year, the 8th graders will be out of the textbook they had last year and into novels. The plan for the year is to work our way through one book per quarter in class starting with S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*. One thing that I find very important when reading through and studying a book is to be able to mark different things and highlight in the book. For this

reason, I am asking that each book we read in class be bought. This way the book is theirs to keep which leaves them free to mark or highlight anything they need to in it. The way the books will be purchased is the school will order the books and your school account will be charged for the amount, which will be around \$10 per book on average. If you happen to already own a copy of a book we will be studying, let me know and I will make sure your account is not charged.

Along with literature, once again, comes book reports. These will be run just like last year. Each student will be required to do one book report per quarter. There will be required to read one book from four different genres throughout the year, however they will be able to choose the order they read them in. They will also be required to do four different types of book report throughout the year on the different books they read. The different genres and book report types will be presented to the students in class in the first week, and the forms handed out to them will also be found on my classroom website.

Vocab

8th grade Vocab class will be run the same way it was run last year when they were 7th graders. Vocab class will meet once a week (Wednesdays), and it will take 2 weeks to work through each unit in the book. The first week, the unit in the book will be due and corrected in class. The second week, a spelling test will be given on the words in the unit as well as a separate vocab test. The vocab test will consist of multiple choice questions dealing with the definitions of the words, synonyms and antonyms, and using the words in a sentence. The only units that will not be tested are the review units. Those units will only take one week to work through.

New Features

There are several other new features in my classroom I am very excited about that the 8th graders will have access to. First, there is a new CD library in my classroom full of the latest in Christian music. The 8th graders will have the opportunity to check CD's out from this library throughout the year.

The other new feature is the opportunity to check grades online. In the first week or two of school, the 8th graders will have the opportunity to learn how to access their grades online. After this, you will receive a sheet showing how you can access them as well. On this website, you will be able to check the grade in the classes, as well as any missing assignments your child may have. More information on this to come.

Thank you so much for being a part of our school family. If you ever have any questions or concerns for me, my information is below. The best ways to contact me is my e-mail or my cell phone if it is something that requires immediate attention. I would like to know the best ways to contact you as well. If you could fill out the contact sheet accompanying this, that would be great. Thank you once again. It is going to be a great year.

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