

Saint John the Baptist Middle School
8th Grade Accelerated Social Studies
2018-2019

Dear Student:

Today you have received the information for the 8th Grade Accelerated Social Studies Summer Project. I am so pleased that you expressed an interest in this course, and have been accepted. It is both an honor and a responsibility to have been selected for this class; therefore it is important to understand that the commitment you make in choosing 8th Grade Accelerated Social Studies is for the entire year. You need to be committed to the level of work, show dedication and the appropriate behavior that is required in this accelerated course; as poor grades, lack of time, other commitments or activities that prevent you from performing the additional workload, will not receive special consideration or be considered a reason to transfer out of the class. This class is much more demanding and requires an increased level of maturity from you, the student.

I want to make sure you have given careful consideration to your choice of this course. It is both more rigorous and faster-paced than the academic social studies class. Either course will prepare you for high school social studies; the accelerated course is for students with the maturity, time and interest to pursue the subject in greater depth, and commit to the additional workload.

If you decide you cannot make this commitment, please contact Mrs. Frakes in the SJBMS office, and request to be placed in the academic course for Social Studies for the next school year. This must be done before May 31, 2018.

I look forward to seeing you in 8th grade next year.

Mrs. Smith

Accelerated Social Studies 2018 - 2019

Overview-

This course is the study of United States history from the Age of Exploration (1500's) through Reconstruction (1870's), and is designed for students with a dedicated interest in Social Studies and a desire to understand this subject in greater depth. Students focus on political, economic, geographic, social events and issues related to the colonial and revolutionary eras, the creation and ratification of the U.S. Constitution, challenges of the early republic, westward expansion, sectionalism, Civil War, and Reconstruction. The course requires a high level of reading comprehension, as primary and secondary sources are utilized extensively. Current events are studied in a historical context to give students a better understanding of U.S. history and how it relates to their lives and the world today. The course also has a greater emphasis on writing and analytical discussion than the academic course. Enrollment in this course is based on an application process and completion of a summer project.

Student should-

- Demonstrate a desire to understand and have an interest to study this subject at greater depth
- Understand the additional commitment in time and effort required to be successful in this accelerated class
- Have the maturity, ability to focus, concentrate and work independently at an accelerated level
- Have strong reading comprehension and writing skills
- Have indicated "Accelerated Social Studies" choice on their enrollment packet
- Meet the academic and citizenship requirements

Student will be required to-

- Successfully complete a summer reading assignment (purchase of assigned book required - no electronic media copies allowed)
- Undertake a major exam on their summer reading assignment during the first class
- Submit a compare and contrast essay on their summer reading assignment, due within first two weeks of school (date to be advised during the first class)
- Complete additional assignments above the requirements for the academic course including additional reading, writing, PowerPoint presentations, research, discussions, and other work as assigned

***NOTE: No electronic readers or any electronic devices allowed in 8th Grade Social Studies.**

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Welcome and congratulations on being chosen for 8th Grade Accelerated Social Studies. It is both an honor and a responsibility to be selected for this class. This year you will be studying U.S. history - Prehistory through 1877.

Historians are concerned with the research and study of current and past events that relate to the human race. They study every historical period and all geographic areas of the world. The study of history is an essential part of being a good citizen, both of the United States and the world. History helps us understand the people and events that created the society we live in today. It also helps us plan for the future by giving an understanding of the past.

Most of all - history is fun! It is like hearing an exciting story. In history, there are stories to interest everyone. You will begin your study this summer by reading a novel about the events of the American Revolution or the Civil War.

Choose one book from the four novels listed below for your reading project. As you read the book, you should highlight, use post-it notes to mark important events, and make notes of major characters and events. This will allow you to go back and find information quickly, as we will be taking an open-book test and writing an essay. **You will need to bring your book (printed copy) and notes (handwritten only) to class and be ready for an open-book, 25 question – multiple choice test (worth 100 points) on the first day of school. The essay on your book will be assigned at that time.**

***NOTE: No electronic readers or devices will be allowed in Social Studies for any reason. All books used must be traditional printed copies and must be your own copy of the book (no shared books allowed).**

List of Books

“In My Father’s House” – Ann Rinaldi – ISBN-13: 9780590447317

(“In My Father’s House” may be out-of-print, but used copies are available on-line from suppliers such as Barnes and Noble.)

“Time Enough for Drums” – Ann Rinaldi – ISBN-13: 9780440228509

“With Every Drop of Blood” – James and Christopher Collier – ISBN-13: 9780440219835

“My Brother Sam is Dead” – James and Christopher Collier – ISBN-13: 9780590427920

*** NOTE: Make sure you get the full edition printed copy of the novel (not the “Junior Version”)**

I look forward to seeing you in class in August. Have a great summer and Happy Reading!

Mrs. Smith