

**All About Fifth / Sixth Grade**  
**St. Nicholas Catholic School**  
**Mrs. Brumley**  
**2017-2018**

What a great year we have ahead of us! I am very privileged to partner with you in your child's academic, social, and spiritual development. I hope this note will give you a sense of how the year will unfold and the expectations I have for the students. Please keep this and refer to it throughout the year. I will have this file on my classroom homepage on the school's website, [www.stnicholasrupert.org](http://www.stnicholasrupert.org). Some information is also in our Family Handbook, but some of the items are specific to my classroom.

**Accelerated Reader** - St. Nicholas has an Accelerated Reader (AR) program. The program entails students reading a library book, taking a computerized comprehension test, and earning points toward prizes for every passed test. Students do not receive a grade for AR, but progress is tracked. You can keep track of your child's progress by setting up an account via our school website. Your child can also take an AR test at home through our website.

When taking a test, encourage your child to look back in the book to find any answer he/she is unsure of. This is great way to gauge your child's comprehension.

To give students a wider reading choice, they can earn reading points from any library book, classroom book, or book at home that is in their reading range, regardless if it has a test on the AR website. If a book does not have a test, your child can write a one page summary of the story. I will assign AR points for that written summary. Your child earns points for every test that is passed or summary turned in. Students will have rewards throughout the year if goals are met.

The AR website program is set up so that fifth and sixth graders take tests at or above their minimum reading level. Unfortunately, we have had students load up on first grade books to earn points just before award deadlines. Students can only take the test on the exact book that was read. For instance, when reading A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, students may take a test written for that exact book, and may not take a test on a different version of that story. **1 Book = 1 Test.**

**Bathroom/Drink breaks** - Students are expected to use the 5 break times spread throughout the day for bathroom and drink. Those times are: after Morning Prayer when we are dismissed to the classroom, the mid-morning break, right before lunch, right after lunch recess, and the afternoon recess. Students may have water bottles in the class. The bottles are to have water only, will be kept by the sink, and are to be used only during the break times.

**Birthdays** - Your child will pick a treat from the Birthday Bucket, and sit on the birthday pillow all day as birthday recognition. Birthday children also sit at the birthday table during lunch with all other students having birthdays that month. We do not have a class celebration so please do not send in treats.

As a reminder of school policy, party invitations may only be passed out at school if the entire class is invited. (Or all of the boys or all of the girls.) If your child is attending a party right after school, please notify the office of a change to your child's normal pickup schedule.

**Book Reports** - Students will have several book reports to do during the school year. Explicit instructions are reviewed in class and parents sign the grading page. Parents, please help your child meet the deadlines on these projects. As the instructions say, late work is not accepted for these projects. Instructions and grading pages are also posted in the Documents section of my class page.

**Breakfast Hosted by 6<sup>th</sup> Grade** This is a big deal! It pays for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to Boise at the end of the year. The breakfast is held the first Sunday of Catholic Schools Week, which is the end of January. I will let you know the date as soon as I confirm it. Parents and students are expected to volunteer their time or pay to cover trip expenses.

**Christmas Party** - The school has a birthday party for Jesus in celebration of Christmas. A birthday cake is purchased and shared during lunchtime. There is no separate Christmas party with treats in the classroom. If the class wishes to do a used book gift exchange we will do that. I will have details on the webpage.

**Classroom Discipline** - All children have a right to a positive and peaceful learning environment. The school has a discipline policy based on verbal warnings, timeouts, and written warnings in the form of a Parent Notification or Citation. For continued misbehavior, a timeout is given or a Parent Notification is sent home.

I measure behavior on our Student Learning Expectations Pledge that the students and staff recite every morning. In the pledge, we vow to "follow Jesus' example of love, work, and respect to God, myself, and my community". When a student's actions do not reflect the pledge, he/she will be asked to reflect on the inappropriate actions.

As a school-wide reward for good behavior and turning in assigned work, citation-free activity is planned every month for those children without a citation, or those children who do not have 3 Parent Notifications during that period. The activity is typically extra recess or an indoor game party if the weather is inclement.

In addition, students in my class will have a card to track their progress toward the sticker chest.

**Dress Code**- I will be reviewing the Dress Code with the students and having them sign a paper saying they understand particular points. Those points include that socks must be worn and need to be solid red, white, or blue; no embellishments are permitted on clothing (such as

sequins, embroidery, and ruffles); and only cardigans, vests, or crew neck sweatshirts (solid red, white, or blue) are permitted over shirts in the classroom. Please know the full student dress code as posted in the Family Handbook and on-line.

**Field Trips**- Fifth and sixth grade students will have a ski trip to Pomerelle. (There is a fee associated with this.) We will also have a science/nature related field trip. In addition, we go bowling, visit St. Edwards, and usually have reward field trips for earning AR points.

The sixth grade class has an overnight field trip to Boise. The trip is near the end of the year, but the fundraiser for this is during Catholic Schools Week in January. Parent and student participation is necessary for the success of this breakfast. Students and parents opting out of helping at the breakfast will be responsible for paying toward the trip.

Parents wishing to accompany us on the field trip will need to take Safe Environment class offered at the school.

**All Hallows Eve (Halloween)** - For you early shoppers, remember no scary or violent character costumes or accessories, including all witch costumes.

**Gala and Auction Project** - Don't faint...I actually have an idea and the material! If you want to help with the project, I will be most appreciative. Your time counts as volunteer hours!

**Grading**- Student grades will be comprised of projects, tests, quizzes and homework scores. Students receive letter grades in Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, Spelling, Grammar, Math, Math Homework, Science, Social Studies, and Religion. See the Honor Roll Section for further information.

**Half Notes**- Half Notes is a travelling choir that performs locally and is open to fifth and sixth grade students. Students will be gone during class time for performances and are expected to make up any missed work. Students must be in good academic and behavioral standing to be in Half Notes. At the time a Half Note student misses a second Citation Free Activity during the year, he/she is no longer eligible to be in Half Notes.

**Homework** - All assignments are posted on the website and students are to write them daily in a calendar that I provide for them. Expect homework every - Monday through Thursday. Only in rare cases will your child receive homework on a Friday that will be due the next Monday. However, your child may have to do school work on the weekend to complete a project or book report. It is recommended that children read 20 minutes every day. Please encourage your child to read!

The purpose of homework is to practice the concepts taught during the day. This practice is paramount to your child's success. Please be positive when talking to your child about homework. I strongly encourage you to look over your child's completed work and have him/her redo any incorrect answers.

Parents are notified of missing work with a Parent Notification. This notification is to be signed and returned the next day along with the completed assignment. (As stated above, if a child receives 3 notifications - for any reason - during a one month period, he/she loses the citation-free activity privilege for that month.)

**Honor Roll**- Students and Third through Sixth grade are eligible for Honor Roll. St. Nicholas recognizes two levels of honor roll. The Merit Honors is for students achieving all A's and S's. Honor Roll is for students achieving a combination of A's, B's and S's.

**iPads**- We have 1 to 1 iPads for fifth and sixth grade. We will use the iPads for spelling and vocabulary tests, research, understanding vocabulary, composing presentations, taking AR tests, and enhancing/practicing math and reading skills. They are a supplemental tool that will be used along with all of our other teaching tools. Please send in a pair of earbuds/headphones for your child to fully use the apps with sound.

**Makeup Work** - Work missed due to an absence will be due two (2) days after returning. For planned absences, please see me ahead of time to get the work.

**Mass** - Mass is attended weekly and this year it is every Monday. Please have your child wear a red school shirt for Mass. Boys may not wear shorts, and girls may not wear shorts or capris. Please refer to your school handbook for more dress information. I ask that students sit together with the class. If you would like to be with your child, you are welcome to sit with our class.

**Mime Troupe**- The Mime troupe is a travelling troupe that performs a show called "The Week That Was", the passion of our Lord. Practice begins after Christmas and the performances (some during school and some evenings/weekends) are during Lent. This is a wonderful way for students to bring the gospel to others. Information regarding the Mime Troupe's practices and performances goes home in January.

**\$1 Non-Uniform Dress Day** - Once a month the school schedules a \$1.00 Non-Uniform Dress Day. Please refer to the Dress Code section of the Family Handbook to make sure dress is appropriate. Funds collected are used to purchase copy paper throughout the year.

**Parent Teacher Conferences/Progress Report** - Please watch the calendar on the website and my weekly classroom note on the website. Throughout the year, I will talk with parents on any immediate concerns I may have.

**Popsicles Sales** - Every week the school sells popsicles for 50 cents. The proceeds are donated to the poor or parish food room, or used to purchase school supplies.

**Report Cards** - Report cards go home November, February, and at the end of the year.

**Scholastic Book Orders** - We are inundated with order forms from the book companies. I will not send them all home. If you are not receiving catalogs as frequently as you would like, please let me know. Our class earns free books from our orders, but do not feel obligated to order.

You can also order from scholastic via my class page on the website. The code for my books orders is L9DQ4.

**Seesaw On-line Portfolio**- Seesaw is an on-line portfolio for students. It is a way for students to show you their work, either from a picture or file. I also send the students worksheets that or instructional videos to views. You will get information on how to log into Seesaw to see your child's portfolio. I encourage you to respond to the information sent home and create a FREE account.

**Service Project** - Each class has service projects throughout the year. Some of our service projects are taking the leadership role of Table Helper in the lunchroom and monthly cleaning of the lunchroom. Other service projects will be decided upon after school starts.

## **Subjects**

**Religion** - We alternate the years between the fifth and sixth grade materials. Students have occasional writing prompts or questions to answer as homework.

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**Reading** - We read novels in class and discuss them as we go, constructing a Reading Notebook as the year progresses. There is homework associated with the novels. In addition, students have approximately 6 book reports to write during the year.

**Spelling** - Student receive words weekly - each grade has its own words. Students will have worksheet home and have the words in their Spelling/Vocabulary notebook. The words are posted weekly in the Document section of the class page. Most of the studying is done at home. Tests are taken online in spellingcity.com. Students can also use this app at home to study.

**Vocabulary** - We alternate each year between Greek/Latin roots and Prefixes - both grades have the same words. The words are posted every week in the Document section of the class page. Students also keep them in the Spelling/Vocabulary notebook. Tests are taken online in spellingcity.com. Students can also use this app at home to study.

**Grammar** - We construct a Grammar Notebook as the year goes on. Class practice and homework is usually a worksheet.

**Math** - Expect nightly homework in math. Each grade has its own instruction.

**Science** - We research topics and do related experiments. There is occasional homework. Students prepare a project for the Science Fair every other year (alternating years with the History Fair.)

**Social Studies** - We use a textbook and alternate between early North/Central/South American history one year, and from the Declaration of Independence to current the following year. Students prepare a History Fair project every other year (alternating with the Science

Fair.) We also alternate yearly between having a Current Event story once a month or completing state crossword puzzles throughout the year.

**Supplies** - Thank you for purchasing the supplies for your child. As the school year progresses, I will send a note home when your child is running out of a school supply.

**Tardy** - Your child is tardy if he/she is not in the school by the second bell or when we finish our morning gathering. Students must get a tardy slip from the office.

**Valentine's Day** - All classes have a Valentine's Day party. The school orders pizza for the classes and students are encouraged to bring in valentines. Parents are welcome to donate money towards the pizza to serve as volunteer time.

**Volunteering** - School policy asks that each family volunteer 15 hours to the school. This can be inside the classroom or outside. I have some projects that can be done at home. Please contact me. The school depends on volunteers to fill needs that might otherwise have to be paid for. Volunteering is one means of keeping tuition in check.

**Website** - Make sure you have your account set up on our website, [www.stnicholasrupert.org](http://www.stnicholasrupert.org). Without the account, however, you can still access my classroom page, lunch menu, school activity calendar, and all the happenings at school. I post a new note every Monday morning about class information and some school information, but you are encouraged to check the website daily for homework and additional news.

I am excited to start the year and hope you are too. Please feel free to call me with concerns or questions.

Mrs. Brumley  
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