



RAINARD

Houston's School for Gifted Children



School Curriculum

Three unique, year-long learning themes are woven into the school year to add depth to each subject and establish relevance for gifted learners.

Under the umbrella of each theme, students engage with Reading, Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies through a different lens each year. As students grow and develop, the subjects grow with them in complexity. Gifted learners thrive in an educational environment that establishes relevance and depth of subject matter; this is one of our many tools to engage gifted students.

Development of core content and themed learning both support continuous progress and extends learning further than a singular focus on traditional grade level expectations.

SCHOOL-WIDE
FOCUS

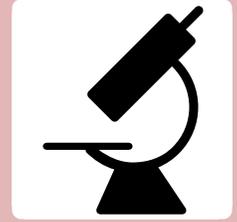
ALIGNED FIELD
LESSONS

PROJECT BASED
LEARNING

Strong Community
of learners across all
age levels

Relevant
experiences build
connections to
content

Extended learning
is student-led and
teacher supported



UNIQUELY HUMAN

What makes humans unique? An in-depth look at life sciences and ancient history.



FREEDOM

How is freedom a driving force? An in-depth look at physical science and modern history.



SPACESHIP EARTH

How does our planet work? An in-depth look at Earth Science, Geography and current events.



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Themed Curriculum

To extend the study of core concepts and provide a common learning experience across age groups; Rainard school uses a proprietary set of three rotating school-wide learning themes. Reading and Language Arts skills are learned and applied while studying the topics. Basic Math and Foreign Language skills are enhanced through project based learning. As students re-encounter the subjects in later years, the depth and complexity they explore within each topic will grow with their abilities.

Uniquely Human

What makes human's unique among life forms? This year has a particular focus on Life Sciences and Ancient History up through the Middle Ages.

Freedom

How does this driving force affect us? This year delves in to Modern History, from the Renaissance forward. Physical sciences, especially machines and Physics are explored in-depth and applied to inventioneering and other creative productions.

Spaceship Earth

How does our planet work? This year is all about Earth Sciences and a focus on Geography and Current Events.

School-wide Alignment

Every class at Rainard conducts in-depth explorations of topics and questions related to each theme. In this way, when the child advances to the next class and studies under the same theme again, the topics and foci are unique, but build upon what's been taught in earlier classes.

Because the school is approaching the same theme, it is easy to share materials and performances across all levels so that each students individual strengths and weaknesses can addressed and school-wide enthusiasm is generated.

Field lessons are conducted to learn more about topics outside of the classroom. Rainard School is fortunate to be located in Houston where a wealth of resources are available in all topics. As students get older, the trips range further out, visiting corners of Texas and the broader United States.



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School Curriculum: Guiding Principles

Gifted learners require and thrive in a specialized learning environment. Learning environments at Rainard are created based on the following principles.

Intellectual Engagement

Gifted students need intellectually challenging activities that are:

- Complex, requiring the linking of multiple disciplines and intellectual areas
- Invoke the need to use higher-level thinking skills
- In-depth, allowing students to explore a subject in detail and develop highly technical skills.
- Offer opportunities for creative production, students are producers, not just consumers of knowledge
- Respectful of gifted person's capacity to work at a faster pace and to skip tedious repetition

Responsive Environment

Gifted children frequently experience atypical and asynchronous development. This requires a responsive environment that understands:

- The child's interests, physical and emotional development, and social skills are not necessarily at the same levels as their intellectual skills, so instruction and expectations must be adjusted accordingly.
- A student may show brilliance in one area but may have skills and interests typical for his age in other areas, so expectations must be adjusted for peaks and valleys.
- Gifted students can have learning challenges, such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, central auditory processing problems, attention deficiencies, Asperger's, etc.

Social-Emotional Learning

Gifted children tend to have highly responsive nervous systems, which often manifest themselves in emotional intensity, high physical energy, obsessions, sensitivity to noise, distractions, smells, etc. Concurrent needs can be addressed through:

- Smaller class size, proactive social-emotional learning, frequent breaks and outdoor time, places to be away from other children, and opportunities to be flexible with respect to level of student engagement in an activity.
- Special care must be taken to balance exposure and participation in a rich and stimulating environment with adequate time to rest and reflect.