

## MIDDLE SCHOOL 09-10 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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### English

#### English Grade 7 (Year Course)

**Texts:**            *Writer's Choice: Level 9*  
Glencoe-McGraw Hill

*Wordly Wise: Book 5*  
by Kenneth Hodkinson

*Grammar and Language Workbook*  
Glencoe-McGraw Hill

*Learning to Learn*  
Incentive Publications

English 7 develops reading, writing, and interpretive skills. Study includes the areas of vocabulary, composition, reading and interpreting, and grammar. The selected novels and plays read and discussed throughout the year are *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Goodrich and Hackett), *Dave at Night* (Levine), *The Call of the Wild* (London), and *Out of the Dust* (Hesse). These readings are supplemented with various poems, short stories, and nonfiction essays and articles. Composition skills are refined in paragraph structure, methods of development, types of writing errors, and mechanics. Grammar instruction builds the knowledge of terminology and concepts and an understanding of the necessary grammatical framework which enables students to correct and proofread their work. The study of vocabulary in English 7 is based on word lists found in *Wordly Wise Book 5* and is intended to expand the students' everyday vocabulary, aid in reading comprehension, and enhance the students' writing. Finally, supplementary materials from *Learning to Learn* are used for the instruction of study skills, time management, organizational skills, note-taking skills, and test-taking skills. The second semester writing project in English 7 is the Children's Book Project. All seventh graders write, edit, illustrate, and bind their own picture books intended to teach morals to an audience of six year olds.

\*\* Summer Reading is part of the English curriculum (list will be provided later in school year and students will have opportunity to order books here at school).

## English Grade 8 (Year Course)

**Texts:**            *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (5th Edition)

by Joseph Gibaldi

*Writer's Choice : Level 10*  
Glencoe-McGraw Hill

*Grammar & Language Workbook*  
Glencoe-McGraw Hill

*Wordly Wise: Book 6*  
by Kenneth Hodkinson

*The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*  
by William Shakespeare

*To Kill a Mockingbird*  
by Harper Lee

Eighth grade English builds on seventh grade English by providing sequential and more complex exercises in reading, writing, vocabulary, interpretive, and grammar skills. Selected novels, plays, and poems are studied. Composition skills are refined through writing five-paragraph informative or persuasive essays based on collected information. Students are guided through a major research paper, including exploration of several academic libraries and varied resources, organization of notecards, and presentation of proper form using MLA guidelines in the final paper

**\*\*Summer Reading is part of the English curriculum (list is available for the Middle School Director/Counselor/Admissions)**

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## Science

### **Life Science Grade 7 (Year Course)**

**Texts:**        *Life Science*  
Daniel, Ortleb, and Biggs  
Glencoe / McGraw Hill

Life Science focuses on the organization of the biological world. The general objectives are to develop an appreciation of life, to demonstrate the interdependence of all living things, and to recognize the ecological relationships of organisms. Modern taxonomy is used, but students also become acquainted with traditional classification. Considerable effort is made to give meaning, value, and pleasure to the study of science at this level, and individual and group laboratory experiences play an important role. The year is concluded with a study of comparative anatomy, highlighted with the dissection of preserved frogs. This course is coordinated with the Upper School biology course in order to provide greater variety and depth of study.

### **Earth Science Grade 8 (Year Course)**

**Texts:**        *Earth Science*  
Glencoe McGraw-Hill

*Lost Worlds in Alabama Rocks*  
by Dr. Jim Lacefield

Earth Science is designed to give students an understanding of the Earth, its origin, its motions, its external and internal forces and its relationship to other bodies in the planetary system and the universe. Laboratory and Earth watch activities play a major role in such topics as weather, earthquakes, volcanoes, and conservation. Eighth grade Earth Science surveys the processes that shape the earth and its history. Topics of emphasis include composition of rock and minerals, continental movements, earthquakes, volcanoes, prehistoric life, landshaping processes of erosion and oceanography. In addition, students examine Earth's atmosphere and its relationship to other bodies in the solar system and the universe beyond. The learning process associated with these topics is supported daily by hands-on activities. This course utilizes an Internet web page developed by the instructor. One of the primary goals of the class is to begin to develop analytical thinking skills by means

of written, factual problem-solving exercises in which students learn to reason through simple questions of logic about Earth Science.

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## History

### **American History Grade 7 (Year Course)**

**Texts:** *The American Vision*  
Glencoe

Unlike 10th grade U.S. History, American History 7 is a non-survey course which focuses on the development of skills necessary for success in future history courses at the Academy. Emphasis is placed on note-taking, outlining, organization, research, writing, and analysis of sources. In addition to examining what are regarded as critical events in U.S. history, the course also includes an introduction to the basic principles and structure of American government.

Another goal of the course is to offer a number of “hands-on” activities, enrichment exercises, and cooperative learning experiences. Over the course of the year, students take part in frequent small-group work and complete a variety of special projects, most notably a research project on daily life in the eighteenth century. In addition, effort is made to integrate the arts into the study of U.S. history, whenever possible. Students examine paintings, music, and literature, and see how art reflects the ideas and attitudes of the era in which it was created. Outside reading includes *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*; this work offers students exposure to a firsthand account of life in an earlier era and allows them to enjoy a sampling of historical fiction.

### **American History Grade 8 (Year Course)**

**Text:** *The American Vision*  
Glencoe-McGraw Hill

*How the Other Half Lives*  
Jacob Riis

*Night*  
Ellie Weisel

This course presents American History from Reconstruction to the present. As in the seventh grade, this historical study has a humanities

base, making use of art, music and literature to deepen student understanding of certain periods. Emphasis on skills development and projects continues; students are involved in researching immigration (using archives and cemetery records) and also have opportunities for additional projects and papers while studying World War II, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Viet Nam conflict.

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## MATH

### **Pre-Algebra and Pre-Algebra Honors Grade 7 (Year Course)**

**Text:**            *Glencoe Mathematics*  
Glencoe Publishers

*Noteables Interactive Study Notebook*  
Glencoe Publishers

Pre-Algebra Honors is offered to those whose maturity, abilities, and interests indicate readiness for this course based on the following prerequisites: (1) a 95 average for the first three quarters in 6th grade math and/or a strong ERB score, and (2) the approval of the 6th grade math teacher. Students in Pre-Algebra Honors participate in math team competitions, which are held at MA as well as at other schools when opportunities are provided.

Pre-Algebra provides students with an introduction to the concepts of algebra and geometry, and at the same time solidifies the students' grasp of arithmetic concepts and procedures. In each unit, students explore the language of algebra, geometry, and other areas of mathematics in verbal, graphical, and symbolic form. Problem-solving activities and applications encourage students to model patterns and relationships with variables and functions and to construct, draw, measure, and classify geometric figures. A student who is successful with this class should be ready to move into algebra and geometry or into an integrated mathematics curriculum.

### **Algebra I Honors Grade 8 (Year Course)**

**Text:**            *Algebra I*  
Glencoe

Algebra I Honors is offered to those whose maturity, abilities, and interests indicate readiness for this course based on performance in

previous mathematics courses (average of 90 or above in Pre-Algebra Honors in 7th or average of 95 or above in Pre-Algebra in 7th), algebra prognosis scores, achievement test scores, and the seventh grade teacher's recommendation.

### **Algebra I Grade 8 (Year Course)**

**Text:**        *Algebra I*  
                    Glencoe

Algebra I is a one-year course that prepares students for continued study in mathematics and science and culminates in a calculus course in the senior year. Algebra I implements the shift from manipulative skills to algebra as a means of representation. Students explore the language of algebra in verbal, tabular, graphical, and symbolic forms. Problem-solving activities and applications encourage students to model patterns and relationships with variables and functions.

### **Algebra IA Grade 8 (Year Course and for student with average of 85 or below in Pre-Algebra in 7th)**

**Text:**        *Algebra I*  
                    Glencoe

Students not yet ready for Algebra I take Algebra IA in the eighth grade and Algebra IB in the ninth grade. This allows more time for explanations, demonstrations, and additional practice. Students taking these courses may follow the curriculum through pre-calculus in grade twelve

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### Foreign Language

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE:** Middle School students are required in Grade 7 to begin their study of a foreign language by selecting French IA, Spanish IA, or Latin IA and then completing French IB, Spanish IB, or Latin IB in eighth grade. The two year pace is intended to provide students with a comfortable pace for

learning Level I of their chosen foreign language. This is considered a core subject; **a student may not drop a language once he/she has begun the study of that language.** In grade 9, a student will move into Level II of his/her chosen language or may begin Level I of another foreign language.

### **French IA Grade 7 (Year Course)**

**Text:** *Bon Voyage*  
Schmidt & Lutz

*French First Year*  
Blume & Stein

French IA in 7th grade and French IB in 8th grade cover grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics to begin developing the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the classroom, students engage in participatory oral-aural activities and learn to communicate in the present and past tenses. French IA and French IB are also an introduction to the French culture, covering such topics as history, holidays, geography, government, and contemporary affairs. The courses are conducted in French as much as possible, providing students with regular speaking and listening opportunities.

### **French IB Grade 8 (Year Course)**

**Text:** *Bon Voyage*  
by Schmidt and Lutz  
Glencoe McGraw-Hill

French IB continues to cover grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics that are used to develop the four language skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. In the classroom, the student engages in active, participatory, oral-aural activities and learns to communicate in the present, past, and past perfect tenses. The course also includes a study of the French culture, covering such topics as history, holidays, geography, government, and contemporary affairs. The course is conducted in French as much as possible, providing students with regular speaking and listening opportunities.

### **Spanish IA Grade 7 (Year Course)**

**Text:** *Buen Viaje*  
Schmitt & Woodford

*Buen Viaje* (workbook)  
Schmitt & Woodford

Spanish IA in 7th grade and Spanish IB in 8th grade cover grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics to begin developing the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the classroom, students engage in participatory oral-aural activities and learn to communicate in the present and past tenses. Spanish IA and Spanish IB also introduce the Spanish culture, covering such topics as history, holidays, geography, government, and contemporary affairs. The courses are conducted in Spanish as much as possible, providing students with regular speaking and listening opportunities.

### **Spanish IB Grade 8 (Year Course)**

**Text:** *Bienvenidos*  
Schmitt & Woodford

Spanish IB continues to cover grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics that develop the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the classroom, students engage in active, participatory, oral-aural activities and learn to communicate in the present, past, and past perfect tenses. Spanish IB also includes a study of the Spanish culture, covering such topics as history, holidays, geography, government, and contemporary affairs. The course is conducted in the Spanish language as much as possible, providing students with regular speaking and listening opportunities.

### **Latin IA Grade 7 (Year Course)**

**Text:** *Latin for Americans: Units I and II*  
Cambridge University Press

*Workbook for Latin, First Year*  
Freundlich

Latin IA in 7th grade and Latin IB in 8th grade include basic vocabulary, an introduction to Latin grammar with the study of the indicative mood of four conjugations of verbs and five declensions of nouns, the translation of beginning stories, and a study of the culture, including topics such as history and everyday life in ancient Rome.

## Latin IB Grade 8 (Year Course)

**Text:** *Cambridge Latin Course, Units I and II*  
edited by Ed Phinney  
Cambridge University Press

Latin IB is the second half of the Middle School Latin course and continues the study of basic vocabulary; Latin grammar, such as a study of the indicative mood of four conjugations and five declensions of nouns; the translation of beginning stories, and a study of the culture, including topics such as history and everyday life in ancient Rome.

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## Physical Education

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION Grade 7 & 8 (Year Course)**

**Text: None**

Physical Education is required for all Middle School students, and emphasis is on physical fitness. Students develop cardio-vascular and respiratory endurance, muscular strength, and flexibility. Weight training, circuit training, jogging, stretching, and aerobics are included. In addition, students become familiar with the skills and rules of major competitive and lifetime sports. Physical Education uniforms are required.

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## Computer

### **COMPUTER APPLICATION I Grade 7 & 8 (Fall or Spring Semester Course)**

**Text:** *An Introduction to Computing Using Appleworks v6*  
Presley, Brown, Malfas, and Grassman  
Lawrenceville Press

**Computer Application I is required in 7th grade** however, any student new to Montgomery Academy in the 8th grade is required to take this class in eighth grade. This is a semester course which uses Apple-Works, an integrated software package with word-processing spreadsheet, database, and graphics applications, and includes instruction and practice in cross-platform computing (file and data transfer and

use within and between Windows and Mac OS environments); student access, privileges and responsibilities on AERIE (the Academy's electronic bulletin board system); and general computer use and network access at the Academy. Keyboard skills are emphasized throughout. A student who fails Computer I will be required to repeat this elective to ensure the necessary computer skills that are required in other coursework.

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## ELECTIVES

### **ART Grade 7 & 8 (Fall, Spring or Year Course)**

**Text: None**

Art focuses on the basic elements and principles of design and is offered in four semester units. A student may take all four units over the two-year period and never repeat the same activities. The student may choose from European Influence, Introduction to Design, American Art, or Renaissance Art. The series of classes is designed to lead students into the Upper School studio art program.

The Renaissance: This studio course focuses on the Renaissance and its major contributions which continue to influence our lives today. Students learn about the visual arts, artists, and major advancements of the period while gaining a hands-on experience with a variety of art media. Examples of areas the students will work are colored pencil drawing, watercolor painting, ceramic sculpture, printmaking, tempera painting, and pencil drawing. Students also continue to explore the elements of art and the principles of design.

\*\*Offered second semester of odd years.

European Influence: European Influence is a course that is designed to introduce students to the many art forms and traditions which have been passed on to us. The heritage and influence of art movements that have been developed in European countries is of utmost importance in modern art. Students will study art movements such as Neoclassicism, romanticism, Realism, Impressionism, and Post-Impressionism, just to name a few. The experiences that the students will have in the studio will be varied, ranging from drawing and painting to printmaking, and sculpture to collage. Students will also continue to study the art elements and design principles.

\*\*Offered second semester of even years only

American Art: This course is one that is centered around the accomplishments and innovations made by American artists. The work that we will view in our study of American art history will serve as inspiration for our very own works of art. The students will work in a plethora of media, including drawing with color pencils, painting with tempera paints, collage, watercolor paints, clay sculpture, printmaking, and others. The class will look at the work of American movements, such as the Hudson river School, Ash Can School, Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, and Photo Realism. Students who take this course will be traveling to the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts to view its extensive collection of American art. This field trip will provide an excellent opportunity for the students to learn more about the intriguing work of artists from our great nation.

\*\*Offered first semester of even years only

Introduction to Design: Students are led through a history of design movements ranging from Art Nouveau to Post Modern Design. With each period of design that we study, the students will work in the studio with a variety of media, including collage, painting, drawing, printmaking, and sculpture. This is an especially good course for students who are considering architecture as a career choice. The art elements and design principles will be closely studied in order that the students can have a deeper understanding of the processes and tools necessary in creating two-and three-dimensional art.

\*\*Offered first semester of odd years only

### **Chorus Grade 7 & 8 (Fall, Spring or Year Course)**

**Text:** None

Chorus is a general course offered on a semester basis. Students work with all styles and musical genres. They may also work independently on the rudiments of music theory. The Middle School Chorus consists of students in both seventh and eighth grades.

## **Computer Applications II Grade 7 & 8 (Fall or Spring Course)**

**Text:** None

Computer Applications II, a semester course, is open to seventh or eighth graders who have taken Computer Applications I. It is a project-based course expanding on the topics introduced in its prerequisite and emphasizing creative problem-solving, using AppleWorks. Longer-term projects are undertaken than are possible in the survey context of Computer Applications I. Comparisons are made between various software packages to familiarize students with choices of software tools to accomplish common tasks. Multimedia topics are introduced and keyboard skills are improved throughout the semester. The Middle School newspaper is produced in this course.

## **Theatre Grade 7 & 8 (Fall or Spring Course)**

**Text:** None

Theatre is open to seventh and eighth grade students. This one-semester survey of history of the theatre includes hands-on projects. Students explore the literature, performance practice, and influences of important periods in theatre history. They also participate in creative performance and non-performance oriented projects. The class may be repeated, since different periods are emphasized each year.

## **Forensics Grade 7 & 8 (Fall or Spring Course)**

**TEXT:** None

Middle School Forensics introduces 7th and 8th grade students to the various speech and debate activities that are available to the members of the Upper School Forensics Team. Through the process of learning about speech and debate, students gain essential organizational, analytical, and presentational skills that will help them in the remainder of their upper school careers and beyond. Class activities include prepared and impromptu speeches, public reading of prose and poetry, individual and team debate, and mock-Congress.

\*\*A Middle School student may not enroll in two consecutive semesters of forensics within one academic year.

### **Study Hall Grade 7 & 8 (Fall, Spring or Year Course)**

A student may choose a study hall as an elective under certain circumstances:

(1) **A student cannot have more than one study hall during a school day.** Students who play on sports teams are given Athletic Study Hall in lieu of Physical Education during the time they are playing a sport. Once the season has ended, students return to their regular physical education class. If a student has a previously scheduled study hall as an elective, then he/she is ineligible for athletic study hall.

(2) During the semester in which the student is taking Computer I, he/she would not be eligible for an elective study hall because of scheduling constraints.