



Seventh & Eighth Grade Course Offerings 2017-2018

THE MONTGOMERY ACADEMY

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COURSE OFFERINGS

English

English 7

In English 7, students will develop their reading, writing, and interpretive skills. Students will complete fun, engaging learning exercises that address the areas of vocabulary, composition, grammar, reading, and interpreting. Students will refine their composition skills, in particular paragraph structure, writing a 5-paragraph essay, and mechanics. They will learn to read actively and to analyze both orally and in writing the literature that they read. As a major writing project, students will create children's books, a project which emphasizes the skills of writing, editing, and publishing. Additionally, students will engage in a research project modeled after Google's 20% Time. Students will research a topic of their choice, will complete a written summary of their research, will create a project based on their research, and will deliver an oral presentation to their class about their research findings and their project. Grammar study in English 7 builds on knowledge of terminology and concepts and an understanding of the necessary grammatical framework, enabling students to effectively proofread and correct their work. Students engage in a vocabulary study focused not only on memorizing the meanings of words, but on applying the words' meanings and on using the newly learned words in students' own writing. Technology, collaborative projects, and interdisciplinary units are integrated into the English 7 curriculum.

English 8

The major focus of eighth grade English involves the integration of grammar, study of literature, and emphasis on composition and critical thinking. Through the study of selected novels, emphasis is placed on paragraph development, the full essay, and correct use of mechanics. During the second semester, students are assigned a major documented paper. Grammar study expands to include grammar skills that are more sophisticated, such as use of parallel structure, verb and pronoun errors that occur most frequently in essay writing, and focus on more complex sentence construction. Also included in the curriculum is a vocabulary study. Literature that will be studied in depth include "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," "Romeo and Juliet," and "To Kill a Mockingbird."

Mathematics

Pre-Algebra

Pre-Algebra provides students with an introduction to the concepts of algebra and geometry, and reinforces basic arithmetic properties. 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.

Algebra I

Students will be placed in Algebra I in seventh grade based on a variety of metrics including teacher recommendation.

Algebra I explores linear equations and inequalities, exponential, rational, and



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quadratic functions graphically, numerically, and symbolically. In addition, operations of polynomials, radicals, and rational expressions are studied. Problem solving and applications encourage students to model patterns and relationships with variables and functions using algebraic symbols.

Geometry

Geometry is designed to help students visualize and understand Euclidean geometric properties of two and three-dimensional figures. After an introduction to logic and reasoning, students develop a thorough foundation in proof writing using theorems and postulates. Students apply their proof and problem solving skills to the concepts of measurement, congruence, proportionality, and similarity. The course emphasizes visualizing and understanding Euclidean geometric properties and mathematical relationships, making and verifying conjectures, and making connections between geometric and algebraic properties. Exploration of geometric properties is completed with a study of transformations and right triangle trigonometry. Prerequisite: Algebra I

Science

Life Science

During the seventh grade year, students will study the systems of the human body while comparing these systems to other vertebrates and invertebrates. Topics include the integumentary, muscular, skeletal, digestive, circulatory, respiratory, lymphatic, nervous, endocrine and reproductive systems. In this course, students will examine the systems of life using the human body as the framework, while identifying and classifying other organisms. By comparing and contrasting other organisms to the human systems, students will begin to understand themselves in relation to other organisms. Students will have the opportunity to conduct experiments that allow them to develop skills in forming a hypothesis, designing an experiment's procedure, collecting and recording data, and finally, drawing a conclusion.

Earth Science (with Physical Science)

Earth Science with Physical Science will give students an opportunity to learn about the planet Earth and what characteristics allow it to support life. The course will integrate life science, geology, physical science and mathematics. Topics will include the Earth's formation, Earth's interior, Earth's geologic history, plate tectonics and the Earth's dynamic surface. To aid in the understanding of earth science important physical science topics will be included. These topics include atoms and atomic structure, elements of chemistry and chemical bonding, Newton's laws of motion, energy, gravity, properties of waves and properties of light. Earth science will provide the framework for the physical science topics and give opportunities for meaningful application of the principles studied. The learning processes associated with these topics will be supported by labs and "hands on" activities. A primary goal of the course will be to develop analytical thinking skills. The students will be required to take the facts and concepts presented in the class and apply the information to new situations or problems.



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History

History 7: American Foundations

Semester 1: American Foundations I takes a thematic approach to the study of the United States' origins and the fundamental principles on which the nation was founded. The course begins with an examination of the motivation and ideology underlying the American colonial experience, and how that experience took Americans down the path to revolution. Other topics included will be the development of America's early government, the rise of political parties, and the growing tension between national power and states' rights. Another goal of the course is to offer a number of "hands-on" activities, enrichment exercises and cooperative learning experiences, in addition to a major research project; over the course of the year, each student will participate in frequent small-group work and will take part in a variety of special projects and activities.

Semester 2: American Foundations II serves an introduction to the basic principles and structure of the U.S. Constitution and the American system of the government. Topics include republicanism, federalism, separation of powers, check and balances, and civil liberties. Students will examine primary and secondary sources, study real-life court cases, utilize technology to analyze essential concepts, and participate in debates on significant issues in American political history.

History 8: The US and Beyond

The first semester will be a study on the social history of the United States from the Civil War to the Great Depression. The major political events will be discussed, but an additional focus will be on the social and cultural movements associated with each event and time period. This includes art, music, literature, fashion, sports, etc. Furthermore, a large portion of the semester will be devoted to studying the roles of various groups in society such as women, immigrants, Native Americans, and African Americans. The second semester will be a survey of the major events throughout the world during the 20th century. A focus will be on both World Wars, the Cold War, and the Civil Rights Movement. In both semesters, students will also examine the lives of influential Americans from each era, with great attention given to determining the qualities that helped these men and women become successful leaders. Students will study this content through a variety of methods that include: interpreting primary sources, photographs, art and political cartoons, writing essays that support a thesis, watching historical film and listening to sound clips, utilizing proper note taking, and exploring creativity with projects. The assignments are designed to help students develop their skills as students of history as well as prepare them to be competent, active, and productive citizens.

Additional Course Requirement

Physical Education

Physical Education is required for all Middle School students and our program emphasizes fitness based performance. Seventy percent of each student's week is devoted to fitness-based individual activities and topics. Basic weight training, flexibility training, running, cross training, and circuit training are major parts of these fitness based individual activities. Thirty percent of our program is devoted to team or individual sports or activities. These



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team sports or activities emphasize many of the skills in our fitness related activities. Physical Education uniforms are required.

PLEASE NOTE: Seventh grade athletes who qualify will attend a proctored study hall instead of P.E. class.

PLEASE NOTE: Eighth grade athletes who qualify for athletic study hall may still attend P.E. two days per week for work in the weight room. Athletic study hall will be offered on the remaining three days each week.

World Language Electives

Spanish IA

The Middle School Spanish program introduces the young learner to basic language training by stressing role-playing methods. Students will develop vocabulary, grammatical structures, reading comprehension and written and oral expression in Spanish through the integrated skills approach. The instructor will use a series of computer-based technologies to expand and individualize basic textbook activities. Use of the Internet and various websites provided through the textbook will reinforce and broaden concepts learned in the classroom. Digital voice recording and videotaping of student's performance are some of the course highlights. At this level, students learn to appreciate the culture and civilization of a selected group of Spanish speaking countries.

Spanish IB

Spanish IB continues the initial language training using the same technological teaching approach with the young eighth grade learner. The textbook provides the framework to further language learning through the integrated skills approach, while use of Internet and select websites broaden students' language proficiency. Students gain self-confidence in expressing themselves in the language by expanding vocabulary, verb conjugation, and reading comprehension, along with writing and speaking skills. Students continue the familiarization process of the cultural legacy of a selected group of Spanish speaking countries.

French IA

French IA is an introduction to French language and culture. The course focuses on communication; specifically the development of students' abilities to negotiate meaning, use circumlocution and accept ambiguity. This is achieved through a variety of activities, games and authentic texts. In class activities are conducted in the language and focus on all skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students are challenged to participate and be creative. Those who successfully complete IA will be fully prepared for the more grammatically demanding level IB course.

French IB

French IB is the continuation of the French IA course. An even greater emphasis is placed on comprehending grammar concepts, negotiating meaning in authentic situations, and creative writing. The program re-enters IA vocabulary, grammar



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structures, and familiar activities while adding new concepts and encouraging the construction of more complex discourse. At the end of French IB, the successful student will be prepared for the rigor and pacing of French II.

Latin IA

Latin IA is the first half of the Latin I course. It includes basic vocabulary with English derivatives, an introduction to grammar, the translation of beginning stories, and a study of Roman culture. Culture units include Roman sports and entertainment, the house, and foods, with each unit relating Roman culture to modern culture. There are weekly vocabulary quizzes, periodic tests with sections on vocabulary, grammar, and translation, and a project with each culture unit.

Latin IB

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 and Pompeii.

Chinese IA

Chinese IA is the first level of a year one study of Mandarin Chinese language and culture. We are partnering with the Confucius Institute of AUM to begin our course offering in Chinese. Only students in seventh grade may enroll for 1A for the 2017-2018 school year. Eighth graders will be eligible to enroll in Chinese in ninth grade, 2018-2019.



Arts Electives

Chorus

Middle School chorus focuses on excellence in choral music. This is achieved through daily exercises which include demonstrating proper breath support, and developing good vocal tone and correct vowel pronunciation. The chorus performs for student assemblies and presents two concerts each year. Students also participate in the all-state choral festival, young voices festival, and choral performance assessments. The Middle School chorus consists of students in both seventh and eighth grades. *A Middle School student may enroll in two consecutive semesters of Chorus within one academic year.

Art

In Middle School Art, students focus on developing skills, which include drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, and collage. They have the opportunity to experiment and refine skills using a variety of art media. Each lesson is reinforced with our continuous study of the elements of art and the principles of design, which improve each student's image making skills as well as their artistic vocabulary. Art history is a very important part of this course, and provides students with inspiration for their own work. Students are educated in the necessary skills of the critique where they must intelligently discuss and assess their peers' artwork as well as their own. *A seventh grade student may not enroll in two consecutive semesters of art within one academic year.

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Theatre

Theatre is open to seventh and eighth graders as an elective. This one-semester survey of performance techniques includes acting as well as some of the history of the theatre around the world. In addition to putting students on their feet and on stage, students explore the literature, performance practice and influences of important periods in theatre history. They also participate in creative non-performance projects. The class may be repeated, since different periods and skill sets are emphasized each year. *A Middle School student may not enroll in two consecutive semesters of theatre within one academic year.

Speech & Debate

Middle School Speech & Debate introduces seventh and eighth grade students to the various speech and debate activities that are available to the members of the Upper School Speech & Debate 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 Speech & Debate within one academic year.

Technology Elective

STEM Lab

This course will explore a broad range of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math topics. Students will engage in project based learning in the areas of robotics, computer programming, computational thinking, and beyond. They will also engage in a variety of multimedia applications to demonstrate their understand of the full scope of STEM. Resources may include Lego Robotics, codecademy, Game Maker, and a suite of applications suitable for the iPad program. *A Middle School student may not enroll in two consecutive semesters of STEM Lab within one academic year.

Additional Elective

Study Hall

Study Hall is a proctored time for students to complete homework and prepare for projects and test. No student may have more than one study hall period during a school day. If a student has chosen a study hall as an elective, then he/she is not eligible for the athletic study hall.





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and the pursuit of excellence.*