



Middle School Academic Handbook 2025-2026

Table of Contents

MCA Mission and Vision.....3

Middle School Philosophy.....4

Academics.....5

Courseload6

Middle School Courses

Art.....7

Bible.....8

Language Arts.....9-10

Mathematics.....11-12

Music.....13

Physical Education/Health.....14

Science.....15

Social Studies.....16

STEAM.....17

World Language.....18

7th & 8th Grade Exploratory Courses.....19-20

MCA Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

We are an influential school of collaborators, innovators, and explorers grounded in Christian faith, empowering co-creators of tomorrow.

Our Culture in Action

Maranatha is not just a school, it's a community with a heartbeat and a soul. Each student and staff member breathe life into and contributes to what makes up the school's culture. Together, we commit to becoming:

- **Spirit-Driven Leaders**
- **Courageous Change Agents**
- **Compassionate Problem Solvers**
- **Impactful Innovators**
- **Critical Thinkers**
- **Kingdom Community Builders**

Accreditations and Memberships

Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
Association of College Counselors in Independent Schools
Cognia
College Board
Independent School Management (ISM)
International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA)
Minnesota Association of College Admission Counseling
Mindependent
Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL)
National Association of College Admission Counseling
National Association of Student Councils
National Junior Honor Society (NJHS)
Oral Roberts University Educational Fellowship (ORUEF)

Middle School Philosophy

At Maranatha, we believe our middle school students were created to thrive—spiritually, intellectually, and socially. Through a culture of integrity, respect, and responsibility, we equip them to embrace their God-given potential and prepare for a future that glorifies Him.

From the moment students and families step onto our campus, they feel the difference—a Christ-centered community where each student plays an essential role. Rooted in faith, we challenge our students to pursue academic excellence, think critically, and grow in wisdom and character.

Survive

My teachers are annoyed by me.

I tread lightly around my teachers.

My teachers tell me what I have to do to get good grades.

My teachers are too busy to answer my questions.

My teachers only help me during class time

My school doesn't give me any freedom.

Thrive

Maranatha's teachers enjoy engaging with me and value my ideas.

Maranatha's teachers believe I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Maranatha's teachers know my name, struggles, and passions and help me succeed in school and life.

Maranatha's teachers anticipate my questions and welcome them.

Maranatha's teachers help me beyond my academic classes and open their classroom during office hours.

Maranatha's teachers believe in giving me opportunities to grow as a learner and leader.

Academics

School Year Marking System and Grade Point Average (GPA)

Maranatha operates on a semester system. The school year consists of two semesters, each approximately eighteen weeks. After a quarter/semester, report cards are uploaded to FACTS Family Portal. The Grade Point Averages (GPA) scale below is used to award high academic achievement honor roll, National Honor Society, academic lettering, etc. To calculate a GPA, total the point for all classes and divide by the number of courses taken. To see the value of each percentage score/grade, refer to the MCA Grading Scale below.

Grade	Percentage	GPA Value
A	92.5-100	4.0
A-	89.5-92.49	3.67
B+	86.5-89.49	3.33
B	82.5-86.49	3.0
B-	79.5-82.49	2.67
C+	76.5-79.49	2.33

Grade	Percentage	GPA Value
C	72.5-76.49	2.0
C-	69.5-72.49	1.67
D+	66.5-69.49	1.33
D	62.5-66.49	1.0
D-	59.5-62.49	0.67
F	0.00-59.49	0

Schedule Changes

At the beginning of each semester, students in Grades 7–8 will have three school days to request a change to their semester elective classes. All schedule change requests must be submitted via the online form link sent to students to their school email by the College and Career team. All changes will be made through the College and Career Counseling Office.

Courseload

Required Classes	Grades			
	5th	6th	7th	8th
Art	X	X		
Bible	X	X	X	X
Library and Innovation	X	X		
Language Arts	X	X	X	X
Math	X	X	X	X
Physical Education/Health	X	X	X	X
Science	X	X	X	X
Social Studies	X	X	X	X
Spanish	X	X	X	X
High School Spanish 1 or High School American Sign Language 1				X
STEM	X	X	X	
Fine Arts				
Band (Yr.) Choir (Yr.) Orchestra (Yr.)	X	X	X	X
Semester Exploratory Courses				
Art, Current Events, Design Lab, Fantasy Literature & Writing, Historical Fiction, Lego Programming, Speech, Textile Arts, Theater, Business Exploration, Rocketry			X	X

Art

Fine Arts Vision Statement:

Expressing God's glory and creativity through visual and performing arts

Art Grade 5

Students will begin to study art history, focusing on individual artists. Students will use previous art experiences and multiple mediums, including drawing, painting, and clay, while creating projects highlighting knowledge of the artist being studied. Each project assists students in using their own God-given artistic gifts and talents.

Required

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year

MS Art Foundations Grade 6

Students will begin their artistic journey by exploring ceramics, using clay to design and construct artist-inspired teapots. This hands-on project introduces sculptural techniques while encouraging innovation, problem-solving, and creative risk-taking. Through guided instruction, students will research influential artists, analyze their styles and techniques, and apply their findings to their own unique ceramic creations.

As the course progresses, art exploration lessons will incorporate elements of art history, critical analysis, and self-assessment. Students will engage in thoughtful research and brainstorming exercises, refining their ability to interpret and respond to artistic influences. Step-by-step instruction will introduce the fundamentals of drawing and color theory, providing a strong foundation for more advanced work in painting and ceramics.

Throughout the year, students will use various artistic media to develop their technical skills and creative expression. By combining historical study with personal innovation, they will gain a deeper appreciation for the role of art in culture, history, and faith. This course encourages students to embrace their God-given creativity as a form of worship, using their artistic talents to glorify His name through unique and meaningful expression.

Required

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Bible Grade 5

Building on the Rock: Stewardship curriculum introduces biblical and unbiblical beliefs about God through Scripture, the universe, human beings, truth, and value. Students will memorize scripture, identify main points, creatively apply concepts, reflect on important ideas, and participate in class discussions surrounding Biblical Christianity as the true view of God and the world. Students build confidence in the knowledge of scriptural truths, encouragement in their personal relationship with the Lord, as well as through community worship time in the classroom.

Required

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year

Bible Grade 6

Building on the Rock: World of Worldviews builds upon concepts taught in Grade 5. Students will continue to memorize scripture, compare and contrast our Christian worldview with another worldview, reflect on important ideas, and participate in class discussions surrounding Biblical Christianity as the true view of God and the world, all while receiving encouragement in their personal relationship with the Lord.

Required

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Bible Grade 7

Light Bearers: A Biblical Worldview is a curriculum that surveys the Biblical evidence to show students a Christian view on every discipline. The disciplines that constitute the class are as follows: Theology, Philosophy, Ethics, Psychology, Sociology, Law, Politics, Economics, and History. Students learn the Christian view, discover the Biblical evidence, and compare competing worldviews in each discipline. The goal is to train students to actively live out the truth of Christianity in a culture of relativism and confusion and to keep students from being deceived by anti-Christian worldviews.

Required

Available to:
Grade 7
Length: Year

Bible Grade 8

Walking in Truth: Christianity in Action helps students understand how to live out their Christian worldview in a post-Christian culture. This three-part course begins with a focus on the application of our Christian worldview within the disciplines of theology, philosophy, ethics, psychology, sociology, biology, and history. Part two of this course focuses on the New Testament Epistles and the application of God's Word to students' daily lives. Part three is a study of John Bunyan's novel "Pilgrim's Progress", one of the most famous Christian allegories in print.

Required

Available to:
Grade 8
Length: Year

Language Arts 5/6

Language Arts Grade 5

This course incorporates writing, spelling, and grammar. We teach the basics of literary analysis, expository writing, creative writing, and poetry analysis. It includes extensive vocabulary development and an opportunity to write an MLA research paper. After this paper is completed, the students participate in a Wax Museum that brings their historical figure to life. This course focuses on proper mechanics and grammar through a variety of activities.

Required**Available to:**
Grade 5
Length: Year

Reading Grade 5

This course incorporates the reading of novels, and the Purposeful Design Reading Curriculum. This course offers a unique focus on reading comprehension, word studies, and listening comprehension. Further, students will use critical-thinking skills while reading a variety of literature that encompasses different genres and literary devices. Works will include Hatchet, Number the Stars, Derwood Inc., and Maniac Magee.

Required**Available to:**
Grade 5
Length: Year

English Grade 6

Students continue learning the basics of literary analysis, expository writing, creative writing, and poetry analysis through literature, writing, and grammar. It includes extensive vocabulary development and an opportunity to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information while writing an MLA argumentative research paper. The course focuses on proper mechanics and grammar through a variety of activities as students are given opportunities to make connections, ask questions, and authentically ideate for themselves. Students work in pairs and small groups to discuss topics, solve problems, and develop a deeper understanding of the Christian worldview. Works will include, but are not limited to: Found, A Wrinkle in Time, The City of Ember, and Where the Red Fern Grows.

Required**Available to:**
Grade 6
Length: Year

Honors English Grade 6

Honors English covers extensive vocabulary development and an opportunity to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information while writing an MLA argumentative research paper. Students will work through the writing process by literary analysis, expository writing, creative writing, analysis, and writing poetry. Students work in pairs and small groups to discuss topics, solve problems, and develop a deeper understanding of the Christian worldview. Works will include Found, A Wrinkle in Time, The City of Ember, Where the Red Fern Grows, and a variety of other novels. Honors English 6 assignments will be more complex and thought-provoking to challenge students.

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Language Arts 7/8

English Grade 7

English 7 builds on literary analysis, expository writing, and creative writing skills, and vocabulary development through the study of Greek and Latin word roots. Students write an MLA research paper for *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* unit. By reading and discussing *The Giver*, students develop a deeper understanding of Christian worldview. In-class reading of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and William Gibson's *The Miracle Worker* also introduces students to the genre of plays.

Required**Available to:**
Grade 7
Length: Year

Honors English Grade 7

Honors English 7 covers literary analysis, expository writing, creative writing, and vocabulary development through the study of Greek and Latin word roots. Students will write an in-depth MLA research paper in conjunction with *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. Students will also develop a deeper understanding of a Christian worldview by reading and discussing *The Giver*. An in-class reading of both Charles Dickens' "*A Christmas Carol*" and William Gibson's "*The Miracle Worker*" will introduce students to the genre of plays. Honors English 7 assignments will be more complex and thought-provoking to challenge students.

Available to:
Grade 7
Length: Year

English Grade 8

Incorporating literature and grammar, English 8 continues to build upon the basics of literary analysis and expository, creative, and persuasive writing while strengthening vocabulary development. Students will be introduced to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and write an MLA research paper in conjunction with Christopher Paul Curtis' *Bud, Not Buddy*. Students will also collaborate with a classmate to create a Biography of that person and then present it to the class. Additional works read: *The Hobbit*, *The Outsiders*, and *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Required**Available to:**
Grade 8
Length: Year

Honors English Grade 8

Honors English 8 incorporates an extensive study of literature, grammar, and vocab, while continuing to build upon skills taught in previous years. Students will be introduced to Shakespeare through "*Twelfth Night*," and write an MLA research paper in conjunction with Christopher Paul Curtis' *Bud, Not Buddy*. Students will also collaborate with a classmate to create a Biography of that person and then present it to the class using proper public speaking techniques. Additional works read are *The Hobbit*, *The Outsiders*, and *The Old Man and the Sea*. Honors English 8 assignments will be more complex and thought-provoking to challenge students.

Available to:
Grade 8
Length: Year

Math

Mathematics Department Vision Statement:
Demonstrating orderliness, precision and the consistency of God through mathematics.

Regular Math course track

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Math Grade 5	Foundations of Math	Pre-Algebra	Algebra 1

Advanced Math course track

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Math Grade 5	Pre-Algebra	Algebra 1	Geometry

Math Grade 5

Students are introduced to basic pre-algebraic concepts and will build upon previous math knowledge and increase new skills to help students become stronger, more confident problem solvers. Students will discover the process of finding solutions to word problems. Primary concepts include multiplying, dividing, adding, subtracting problems, and solving ratio and rate problems. These concepts are related to the biblical worldview because the Bible is truth, and we serve a God of order.

Required

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year

Foundations of Math Grade 6

Students will collaborate and connect as they are introduced to fundamental arithmetic concepts, build upon previous math knowledge, and increase new skills to prepare for Pre-Algebra. Students explore what their Christian worldview looks like in math through various activities. In the “enVision” Curriculum, concepts are broken up by topics taught throughout the year to ensure success. Primary concepts include positive rational numbers, numeric and algebraic expressions, equations and inequalities, ratio and rate, percent, area and volume, and data usage.

Required

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Math

Mathematics Department Vision Statement:

Demonstrating orderliness, precision and the consistency of God through mathematics.

Pre-Algebra

Students will study primary concepts including rational and real numbers, proportional relationships, percentages, equivalent expressions, equations, inequalities, linear equations, probability, and basic geometry. Students will collaborate and connect in the “enVision” curriculum as they go through concepts by topics taught throughout the year to ensure success. These concepts are related to biblical worldview on numbers and how to be wise with money.

Required

Available to:
Grades 6/7
Length: Year

Algebra 1

Students will collaborate and connect in the “enVision” Curriculum as they go through concepts by topics taught throughout the year to ensure success. Topics include solving linear equations; solving power properties; writing, factoring, and graphing linear functions; writing and graphing exponential functions; writing, factoring, and graphing quadratic functions and polynomials; and simplifying rational expressions. These concepts are related to how God’s creation integrates math and the biblical worldview on numbers.

Required

Available to:
Grades 7/8
Length: Year

Geometry

This course will introduce students to the foundations of Geometry, followed by instruction on postulates and theorems in a formal proof setting, with particular attention devoted to critical thinking skills. Other concepts include parallel and perpendicular lines, transformations, congruence and similarity in triangles, quadrilaterals, introduction to trigonometry, circles, and two- and three-dimensional models. Many innovative projects, such as Design-A-City, are incorporated throughout the year to enhance learning.

Required

Available to:
Grade 8
Length: Year

Music

Fine Arts Vision Statement:

Expressing God’s glory and creativity through visual and performing arts

Beginning Band

In this first year of band, students will begin to develop skills to perform on an instrument as an individual and as a group. Students will perform at the Christmas Concert and Experience Maranatha. Students are invited to the Summer Band Open House to explore instruments and decide which instrument to play. Schmitt Music will be on hand to coordinate the purchase of instruments.

Available to:
Grade 5/6
Length: Year
Required: 1
Music course in
Grade 5

Music

Choir Grade 5

Students will develop singing skills while preparing for performances. Vocal techniques, stage presence, music of varying cultures, foundations of sight-reading, musical terms, and basic theory will be taught. Students will learn to sing in two-part harmony. Performances include the Christmas Concert and the spring concert at Experience Maranatha.

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year
Required: 1
Music course in
Grade 5

Intermediate Band

Students continue to develop skills for performing on a chosen instrument as an individual and in a group. Students are expected to participate in performances during the year, including the Christmas Concert and spring concert during Experience Maranatha.

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year
Required: 1
Music course in
Grade 6

Choir Grade 6

Students will develop their singing skills while preparing for performances. Vocal techniques, stage presence, sight-reading, musical terms, and basic theory will be taught. Students will learn to sing in two-part harmony. Performances include the Christmas Concert and Experience Maranatha.

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year
Required: 1
Music course in
Grade 6

Orchestra

Students will develop performance skills in a large group setting, focusing on honing techniques and improving individual and ensemble sound. As the year progresses, students will play various music with different instrumentation and arrangements. Students are expected to participate in the MCA Christmas Concert and Experience Maranatha.

Available to:
Grade 5-8
Length: Year

Middle School Band Grades 7-8

Students continue to develop performance skills in a large group setting, emphasizing instrumental performance techniques and the development of a good overall band sound. Students are expected to participate in performances during the year, including the Christmas Concert and Experience Maranatha concerts.

Available to:
Grade 7/8
Length: Year

Middle School Choir Grades 7-8

Students will develop their singing skills while preparing for performances. Vocal technique, stage presence, solfège (sight-reading), musical terms, and beginning theory will be taught. Students will learn to sing in two- or three-part harmony. Performances include the Christmas Concert and the spring concert during Experience Maranatha.

Available to:
Grade 7/8
Length: Year

Physical Education and Health

Health Grades 7-8

This class alternates curriculum every other year. Year one focuses on health and wellness, taking charge of your health, achieving mental and emotional health, and managing stress. This class will also emphasize relationships; family, peer, and dating relationships resolving conflict; Project Alert (drug, alcohol, vaping, and cigarettes); and preventing violence.

Year two focuses on living a healthy life through proper nutrition, managing weight, eating behaviors, physical activity, and fitness. Other units covered include personal care and body systems, drugs and alcohol, and growth and development. This class also includes a dating/abstinence unit.

PE Grades 5-8

Physical Education focuses on lifetime sports, sports education, fitness, and sportsmanship. It involves strategic learning relating to overall lifetime health, fitness, sports, sports competitions, and conduct, keeping in mind to be Christ-minded in all activities. Units that may be covered include volleyball, badminton, pickleball, playground games, golf, softball/baseball, tennis, hockey, soccer, basketball, tchoukball, etc. Classes are divided by grade; the uniform is a gym shirt purchased from Branding Wearhouse.

See Physical Education Uniforms below for further details.

Physical Education Uniforms

The expectation for all Physical Education classes is that students are dressed in Maranatha Physical Education attire, including a Maranatha gym performance T-shirt, athletic bottoms, and athletic shoes. This expectation will be part of the participation grade. Students not wearing correct Physical Education attire will lose participation points. Consequences will be issued if students continue to attend class without the required clothing.

Physical Education attire is available for purchase through Branding Wearhouse (maranatha.brandingwearhouse.com). Students may wear black, dark blue, or grey athletic pants (no yoga-type pants) with red, gray, or white trim—no other colors are allowed. Pants and shorts may be obtained independent of the school clothing store, Branding Wearhouse.

Required

Available to:
Grade 7/8
Length:
Semester

Required

Available to:
Grade 7/8
Length:
Semester

Science

General Science 5

Grade 5 Science class explores environmental, life, ecological, and physical sciences through a biblical worldview lens. Students will develop and use problem-solving skills: observation, classification, sequencing, measuring, and comparing/contrasting. The curriculum focuses on fundamental principles of science and presents God as the creator, sustainer, and upholder. It also includes a health unit focusing on body transitions through adolescence.

Required

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year

General Science 6

Grade 6 Science class explores life, physical, and earth and space sciences through a biblical worldview lens. Students will develop and use problem-solving skills: observation, classification, sequencing, measuring, and comparing/contrasting. The curriculum focuses on fundamental principles of science and presents God as the designer, creator, and sustainer using the diversity, structure and patterns in His creation. There is also a unit focusing on body systems and healthy choices.

Required

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Life Science

Cells, heredity, diversity of living things, the human body, ecology, and the environment—Students study different types, parts, and functions of cells. Students will explore heredity and the characteristics of bacteria, viruses, and animals. Students will also study population dynamics in communities, Earth's ecosystems and resources, and the human impact on our environment. Structures and functions of each body system and how systems work together are detailed in the unit on the human body. Students will complete hands-on laboratory experiments to explore these topics more deeply.

Required

Available to:
Grade 7
Length: Year

Physical Science

Substances, matter, motion, energy and work, sound and light, electricity and magnetism – Students study different types of matter and what it's made of. Through hands-on labs, they explore how different substances interact, are created, and change. They investigate forces and motion, learning how energy is transferred and transformed in different systems. The course also covers waves, including the properties and behavior of sound and light, as well as the fundamentals of electricity and magnetism. Students will engage in experiments, data analysis, and problem-solving activities that promote critical thinking and a deeper understanding of the physical world.

Required

Available to:
Grade 8
Length: Year

Social Studies

History Grade 5

In this class, students explore geography, different ages of exploration, Native American tribes, and the 13 colonies. The year completes with an entrepreneur unit and a fun field trip to Biz Town! Students will have the opportunity to learn how to research, use STEAM skills to create a website, give mini-presentations, and collaborate with classmates on other fun projects.

Required

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year

Minnesota History Grade 6

This class explores Minnesota's long and diverse history, beginning with its earliest inhabitants, highlighting historical markers in our state's history, and continuing to the present day. Students will be able to collaborate and problem-solve while studying Native American settlement, early European settlement and influence, and Minnesota's role in the Civil and World Wars. Students will explore how Minnesota's people and ideas helped shape the state and impact the nation, along with citizenship, economics, and the government of the United States.

Required

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Global Studies Grade 7

This course covers world regions, cultures, and global issues. Students will use skills such as civic participation, economic reasoning, geographic inquiry, and historical inquiry while exploring the world around them. Students explore the relationships between diverse cultures and the world in which they live. Students will become empathetic problem solvers as they use various print and non-print sources to analyze and suggest solutions to real-world problems and analyze global and societal issues. The course aims to provide students with an understanding and appreciation of the world's different geographical and cultural areas.

Required

Available to:
Grade 7
Length: Year

US Studies Grade 8

This class offers an interactive and comprehensive overview of the history of the United States. Students will begin reviewing the history of the European settlers in North America and will conclude with World War 1. Students will become empathetic problem solvers as they explore the content by annotating primary and secondary sources, reading historical literature, creating hands-on projects, and participating in class discussions. This course also gives a glimpse of how all of us are part of God's redemptive plan and how He wants us to be co-creators of the future. An optional summer trip to Washington D.C. will happen every other year for 7th and 8th grade students.

Required

Available to:
Grade 8
Length: Year

STEM

STEM 5

5th grade STEM will continue to build on coding skills and knowledge gained from previous STEM classes. We will apply these skills and knowledge to units such as LEGO robotics and animation programming. 3D modeling is a crucial skill that will be learned to prepare students for upper school programs and expand students' thinking and creativity.

Required

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year

Design and Modeling

This hands-on course has students work to develop innovative solutions for design and engineering problems. Students design and create a tabletop game, use CAD software to create 3-D objects, and use everyday items to design different products. Communication, teamwork, brainstorming, and problem-solving are critical parts of the work in this course.

Required

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Library and Innovation - 5th Grade

Library and Innovation is an engaging course designed for 5th grade students to use technology to dive into literature. Students will increase their ability to enjoy their reading choices by collaborative or individual engagement. Examination of different genres of fiction and literary elements through innovative activities and projects will develop the essential skills that foster creativity, critical thinking and problem solving.

Required

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year

Library and Innovation - 6th Grade

Building upon Library and Innovation 5, 6th grade students will continue to explore the combination of literature and technology to delve deeper into literary genres, including nonfiction. Through collaborative and individual discussions, activities, and projects, students will develop essential literary, technological, innovative, and creative problems solving skills.

Required

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Foundations of Technology

This course will introduce foundational technology skills students need to succeed as they continue through upper school at Maranatha. Students focus on using personal devices as a learning tool and increasing student competency in a digital organization, common word processing, presentation, and educational applications. Students will learn how to utilize Schoology as a learning management system. Students will also learn what it means to be a good digital citizen and use social media and technology in a way that honors God.

Required

Available to:
Grade 7
Length:
Semester

World Language

Introduction to Spanish – 5th Grade

In this course, students will begin their academic journey into the Spanish language and culture. They will learn about colors, days of the week, telling time, family and the geography of Central America. By the end of the class, students will feel comfortable understanding basic elements of the Spanish language and their use in simple contexts.

Required

Available to:
Grade 5
Length: Year

Middle School Spanish – 6th Grade

In this course, students will build on their Grade 5 knowledge and expand their learning to include studies about the alphabet, animals, emotions, and food. Students will study the major figures in Latin American history (and present) and their contributions to society. Students will be able to show further understanding of new and old vocabulary in context.

Required

Available to:
Grade 6
Length: Year

Middle School Spanish – 7th Grade

In this final middle school Spanish course, students will learn about Latin American and Spanish cultures, countries, histories and celebrations and holidays, along with expanding conversational vocab. They will work on simple every-day phrases and use them in context, talking about the calendar, weather, time, and learning how to navigate with simple phrases in another country, including purchasing items, asking for directions, or ordering food.

Required

Available to:
Grade 7
Length: Year

Spanish 1

This Introductory course features the integration of language skills with the culture of Spanish-speaking people in a situational context. Course emphasis is on establishing the natural input and output of the Spanish language using consistent comprehension-based strategies. Students in this course will primarily learn through Spanish input, reading and listening to familiarize themselves with the language, this will progress to speaking with each other in full phrases about more complex topics by the end of the school year.

Required

Available to: Grade 8
Length: Year
Required: ASL or
Spanish 1
Credit: 1 HS World
Language Credit

American Sign Language - Grade 8

This class is designed to introduce students to the basics of American Sign Language and the culture of the American Deaf community. The focus is mainly on vocabulary and the mechanics of communicating manually instead of verbally, including fingerspelling, numbers, verbs, greetings, and introductions in ASL and basic grammar sentences. The environment of the class is designed to be both fun and educational. Songs and games will be incorporated into the curriculum to help students constantly review and practice what was learned.

Required

Available to: Grade 8
Length: Year
Required: ASL or
Spanish 1
Credit: 1 HS World
Language Credit

Grade 7-8 Exploratory Courses

Art History

In this hands-on art class, students will focus on art and cultures from Pre-historic to Baroque periods. Students will analyze each time period's historical significance and worldviews of each time-period, creating their art to reflect each culture. Students will create art with different mediums, such as drawing, painting, pottery, and calligraphy.

Offered alternating years with MS Art Design.

Art Design

This is a hands-on art class in which students will learn about the different elements of design: line, shape, color, space/ form, and texture. The students will learn about each of these design elements in depth and will complete projects using each of these elements. Students will work with drawing, painting, sculpture, and many other creative materials.

Offered alternating years with MS Art History

Business Explorations

In Business Explorations, students will get the opportunity to discover potential business and career paths and learn practical life skills to set them up for success in high school and beyond. Some topics include career exploration, business and management concepts, marketing, and email and calendar organization. Throughout each unit, students are shown how their God-given gifts can be used to glorify Him in their future jobs and how working within a business can reflect the Church of Christ.

Current Events

This course focuses on current issues affecting students' everyday lives. Students learn how to detect media bias, embrace exploration by researching current topics, and learn how to lead with empathy, and become empathetic problem solvers by listening to different perspectives. Additionally, students will conduct interviews, participate in class discussions, and bring current news to the class. Above all, students will learn how to ground themselves in Christian faith amidst the various conflicts of the world.

Grade 7-8 Exploratory Courses

Design Lab

Students will learn, design, and create different moving mechanisms in this hands-on course. Students will explore mechanical systems, energy transfer, and machine automation, use CAD software, explore computer programming, and build toys. Problem-solving, tinkering, and teamwork are a part of this course. Students will learn how to design using CAD software, do introductory coding with Python, practice entrepreneurship, as well as develop their engineering and problem-solving skills through hands-on activities.

Fantasy Literature and Writing

Students will study fantasy literature as a genre and learn how to write fantasy stories. The main novel read throughout the semester is *Alice in Wonderland*, but many excerpts from other books, such as *The Return of the King*, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, and *Catching Fire* will also be read/studied. This course will cover from early fantasy tales found in Greek mythology and the legend of King Arthur to modern-day fantasy written by well-known authors such as Brandon Sanderson and Rick Riordan.

Historical Fiction

This course offers a unique and comprehensive introduction to the historical fiction genre. Students will read examples of the genre and discover new glimpses of the past. The course texts in this class are “The Boy in the Striped Pajamas” and “The Travelers Gift”. Using these texts and conducting research with primary and secondary sources, students will craft an original work of historical fiction.

Lego Programming

Students in this course build and program Lego EV3 Mindstorm, starting with constructing a robot vehicle and programming its movements to navigate a maze. Students are challenged to build and program robots or machines to solve problems through different missions and objectives. In this hands-on course, students work together, use the design process, solve problems, and explore physical computing.

Grade 7-8 Exploratory Courses

MS Speech

This introductory course in public speaking will give students opportunities to develop skills in preparing speeches and delivering them with confidence. Students will be exposed to various speech types, including impromptu, informative, and persuasive. This class will also equip students with the presentation skills needed to succeed in High School courses.

Textile Arts

Using the medium of textiles: threads, strings, cloth, etc., along with the possibility of dyes, paper, paint, and other media, students will create two- and three-dimensional works of art such as collages, soft sculptures, and functional pieces like backpacks, ties, vests, bracelets, string bags, weaves, Macramé hangings, bags, aprons, and totes. Students will also learn simple hand stitches and practical sewing skills. In addition, students may incorporate used articles of clothing and other recyclables and upcycle them into new works of art for decoration or function. Students will also learn simple “fix it” projects to repair rips, holes, hems, etc.

Theater

Students learn the basics of acting through improvisation, acting games, exercises, sketches, short lessons, and scripts. The goal for students is to experience a learning process that enhances lives and develops skills used in the world beyond. Theatre contributes to developing 21st Century learning skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and other life skills that will serve students well in school and beyond. Students participate in a one-act play or variety show to showcase their new skills at the end of the semester. Also required is attending a theatrical production within the semester (Maranatha productions do count).

Rocketry

Students will be challenged to think critically and creatively by building and launching model ‘air’ rockets in order to test nose cone and fin designs. Next we will move on to a model rocket kit and investigate the history of rockets, Newton’s Laws of Motion, rocket and fin design, and much more. Students will collaborate to design, build, and launch a rocket they have engineered using the knowledge and skills they have acquired. We will read the novel, *Rocket Boys*, by author and rocket scientist Homer Hickam. This book was the inspiration for the movie *October Sky*. Students may have an opportunity to meet with Mr. Hickam to ask questions and learn more about his and the other *Rocket Boys*’ lives today.

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