



Grade Level 8 Overview

Core Curriculum Subject Areas

Reading/Language Arts:

In 8th grade English, students will hone and polish their grasp of concepts of language and literature introduced earlier in Middle School to solidify confidence in their foundations of grammar, vocabulary and literary styles while simultaneously reaching forward toward the future. They will deepen their knowledge of literary genres as they learn to write, read, and communicate at longer lengths and at more sophisticated levels that will serve them well in high school and college in all subjects. They will reinforce their knowledge of plot, characters, setting, point of view, and theme. They will advance their understanding of symbolism, foreshadowing, and other more advanced types of literary analysis. Students will be supported and encouraged to develop their own interpretations of a text and challenged to back up their ideas with evidence. They will build the “muscles” of vocabulary and “skeleton” of grammar to more easily write in support of their own opinions. They will be asked to reach into greater depths on text analysis, interpretation, and critical thinking as a class and as individuals for short stories, poetry, non-fiction and drama. Eighth graders also study Shakespeare. The class will be introduced to the Bard in the fall by attending a student matinee at a local theatre because Shakespeare’s plays were written to be performed rather than read. In January and February the class will look closely at one play and perform a portion of it. Each year we apply to participate in the Folger Theatre’s Secondary Shakespeare Festival (held in February or March.) We have had the rich experience of taking part in the past and hope to do so again. Where possible, cross-disciplinary coordination with their History, Spanish and other classes will provide intriguing opportunities for additional growth. They will leave this class with the tools to be more confident communicators in all subjects.

Mathematics:

In Geometry, students will explore the properties and applications of common geometric figures in two and three dimensions. The course will also focus on the topics of measurement, congruency, similarity, and transformation of lines, angles, polygons, circles, prisms, pyramids, cylinders, and cones. The rules of logic, both inductive and deductive, will be used to explain and prove various geometric properties. Algebra skills will continue to be used and strengthened throughout the course. Emphasis is placed on learning and using critical thinking skills to solve theoretical and real-world problems. Various tools and strategies of discovery will be used throughout the course.

Algebra I provides students an in-depth look into functions and families of functions, with emphasis on linear and quadratic functions, as well as other functions. Students will learn to model functions using multiple representations, including equations, graphs, pictures, tables, verbal descriptions and other representations. Students will ultimately learn to apply the use of functions and multiple representations to help model and solve real world situations and problems algebraically. Algebra will lay the foundation for geometry, algebra 2 and other higher level mathematical courses.

Social Studies:

In order to be good citizens, students need to know how their nation's government works. Eighth grade Civics is designed to prepare students to continue to carry democratic ideals to the next generation. Students will look at different types of government and begin to understand why government is needed. Beginning with the Code of Hammurabi, moving on to the Greek city-state of Athens, the Roman Republic, Magna Carta and the rule of law, they will investigate the roots of American democracy. Looking at early colonial governments, events leading to the writing of the Declaration of Independence, and the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation will lead to an in-depth study of the U.S. Constitution, including all 27 amendments. Examination of the amendments will culminate in a close look at the Civil Rights movement. Critical thinking will be encouraged as we examine our nation's struggle to realize the goal of "liberty and justice for all" in practice. Students will be better equipped to become informed voters as well as leaders in their homes, communities, and country in the future.

Science:

In eighth grade science, students take a course in physical science. The course utilizes two books: Introduction to Chemistry and Force and Motion. Students develop their questioning and observation skills through interactive hands-on activities. In chemistry the students learn about matter, atoms and molecules, and the periodic table and its applications. In the second book, students learn basic physics with an emphasis on practical applications, culminating in an end of the year rocketry project. A continued emphasis is placed on following the scientific method in all experimental work. The eighth grade students also participate in a science fair and the top two projects present at the MAESA Academic Fair.

Co-Curricular Subject Areas**Art:**

Students in Middle School will learn fundamental art techniques and skills while experimenting with multiple mediums. They will build confidence in creating meaningful and complete art works through a systematic approach. They will explore different cultures and learn significant art history movements. Students will create a group project to auction at the Christ Episcopal School Gala, they will participate in the 2018-2019 Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest, they will create the backdrop for the Middle School Musical and they will participate in the Arts at the MAESA Academic fair.

Music:

Students in Middle School music are learning to become proficient performers, increasing their skills and seeking outlets to share their talents. Students will learn musical concepts and terms, directly applying this knowledge to choral and instrumental performances. Other topics covered will include music history and listening to varying musical genres, as to further understand music's role in society and culture throughout history. Students will participate in seasonal concerts such as the Grandparents/Special Guest Day, the Christmas Concert, and a special Chimes performance at Graduation.

Physical Education:

8th Grade PE is highlighted by the following units as well as twice weekly trips off-campus to Freestate Gymnastics, Title Boxing, Bowl America, and various outdoor parks:

Ballroom Dance
Sportsmanship/Fair Play/Rules
Volleyball Skills
Golds Gym Fitness Classes
Soccer Skills
Basketball Skills
Flag Football
Jump Rope
Fitness/Strength Exercises
Cooperation Activities

Field Day Skills
Floor Hockey
Dodge Games
Ball Skills
Indoor Soccer
Lacrosse
Frisbee
Agility Activities
Long Walks
Kickball

Spanish:

Middle School students dive into Spanish language by taking part in a lively series of activities that give them opportunities to develop speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in Spanish. Middle school students have a greater emphasis on reading and writing by including real world reading materials, graphic novel style stories, activity pages and unit projects. Middle school students also develop Spanish grammar reference sheets they can refer to throughout their language acquisition journey. The program reinforces previous topics and themes and introduces new ones at the same time. The topics include but are not limited to school and schedules, numbers, around the house and home activities, daily routine and holiday customs, past experiences, sport and recreation and basic technology.

Field Study Trips and Curricular Highlights

- Echo Hill outdoor education overnight trip (3 days, 2 nights) - cross-curricular
- Yearbook
- Staunton, Virginia, American Shakespeare Center and Monticello trip (overnight)
- Shakespeare Performance
- Folger Theatre's Secondary Shakespeare Festival
- Eighth Grade Trip (End of the Year)
- Ballroom Dance Recital
- White Tail Ski Trip (every two years)
- Ethics Course