



The Atlanta Academy

8th Grade Curriculum

Language Arts

The eighth grade year is devoted to insuring that students have the grammar and writing skills necessary to be successful in high school. The primary aim is to provide the tools, resources and inspiration for students to become better writers. Students are taught through a writing workshop approach, where poetry and mini-lessons will integrate grammar, punctuation, genres, and principles of writing into the writing process. The students will learn to write and publish written work in various genres, including poetry, a memoir, a short story, a book review, persuasive essay and a research paper.

Vocabulary / Literature

Students must have a good command of language in order to become good readers. Therefore, we will focus on increasing their vocabulary skills. They will master words listed in their vocabulary text. Twenty words per week will be assigned as homework each night. They will learn the definition, synonym, antonym, part of speech and sentence usage. A quiz on each unit will be given to test their study skills and mastery. These skills will be reinforced in their writing assignments.

The primary aim of the literature program is for every student to appreciate, understand and enjoy some of the classics. Reading will be taught through specifically chosen works. Students will learn to identify the author's purpose, theme, conflict, characters, settings and conclusion. They will master these skills and become discriminating critics of the written word. At the conclusion, students will be given a test on the novel. We will read from famous authors like: Golding, Steinbeck, Lee, Orwell, Hemingway, Shakespeare, and others.

Mathematics

Mathematics in the Middle School encourages problem solving, critical thinking, and mathematical inquiry. The aim is for all middle school students to become free thinkers, applying their math foundations to solve real world problems. Students will explore mathematical relations through investigation and problem solving. Through the use of graphing calculators, students will begin their exploration of the coordinate plane and graphing. Topics include solving, writing and graphing linear equations and inequalities, linear systems, exponents and exponential functions, quadratic equations and functions, as well as polynomials. Pre-Algebra, Algebra, and Algebra 1 Honors are offered. Placement is determined by the mathematics department.



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Social Studies

Eighth grade US History covers specific concepts, historical references, and periods including the following: early exploration, colonial settlements, the American Revolution, the US Constitution, manifest destiny, expansionism, Civil War, Reconstruction, reform movements, Great Depression and FDR, WWI, WWII, Cold War, Civil Rights Era, Korean and Vietnam Wars. Contemporary issues are discussed daily in class and we use the New York Times Magazine Upfront as a supplemental periodical resource. The American Journey is the student textbook.

Science

During the year students will sample the three main content areas of Science, the first being Chemistry, with an emphasis on the periodic table, the atom, chemical bonds and chemical reactions. The second is Space Science, which covers the solar system, objects in space, stars, and galaxies. The final topic introduced is Conservation; this incorporates conservation of life and conservation of resources. Students complete dissections and various labs throughout the school year which encompass all areas of Science

Spanish

This course is level II Spanish. The course covers the second half of the 7th grade Spanish. Students start using the preterit tense as well as more complex features of the Spanish language. The goal of the class is to focus on the development of communicative competence and the understanding of the Hispanic culture and civilization. The language is taught with emphasis on both writing and speaking.

Band

Open to all Middle School students regardless of experience. Each student selects their particular instrument and continues to further develop their skills all year. This is the fine-tuning stage of learning their instrument before going on to High School. Students perform at least three times each year: Grandparent's Day, Christmas and Night of the Arts.



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Media Center

Students are given a library orientation and review at the beginning of the school year. Middle School students come on an as needed basis. Students in these grades should have a continually increasing knowledge and understanding of library and research skills. Students continue to become aware of and proficient in the use of resources available for research. Students are encouraged to work independently and locate needed materials for both research and leisure reading with minimal assistance from media center staff. Informal, one-on-one teaching based upon the students needs and understanding is provided.

Technology

Students spend the first quarter using the typing program “Mavis Beacon Typing Tutor”. 2nd-4th quarters students are introduced to new computer skills while using PCs and Apple computers. Students create cross-curriculum projects using a variety of programs and applications. Applications include but are not limited to multimedia, Microsoft: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Publisher, and I-Works: Numbers, Pages, and Keynote. Applications are taught in both the PC and Apple formats.

Art

Students will be exposed to a broad range of mediums. Through drawing, painting, ceramics and mixed mediums we will develop our skills for seeing and interpreting the world around us. Students will make pottery, paint landscapes, self-portraits and much more to explore our visual world. As artists in class, students will have the freedom to find and explore their own sense of style and creativity. Through art history the class will look at how art has developed through the years, while studying specific artists and their respective movements. Students will learn the technical skills used by professional artists, while discovering their own personal style.

Physical Education

The eighth grade program builds on the fitness and health concepts initiated in the seventh grade reinforcing an emphasis on a lifetime physical activity. It also reinforces the student understanding of the rules and regulations involved in sports participation. Students participate in numerous individual and team related activities throughout the year: fitness circuits, fitness testing, volleyball, ultimate frisbee, flag football, basketball, team handball, tennis, badminton, baseball, and soccer. Students have PE twice a week for 50 minutes



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Exploratory

Students will go to exploratory class once a week. They will rotate through four different classes. Each class will last for one quarter. The music and art exploratory are in addition to the regular special classes. Some of the courses offered include:

- SSAT- 8th Grade Only
- Health
- Music (ensemble practice)
- Art- Photography (Digital Cameras)
- Community Outreach with Officer Hood which will include: discussing civil rights, making good choices, and learning about laws in the Legislative branch of government.