



MIDDLE SCHOOL

SEVENTH GRADE STUDIES

Overview

In seventh grade, students continue to work on a variety of skills that lead to self-advocacy and the ability to make good decisions. Organization, note-taking, developing positive peer relationships, and study skills are among the topics that are covered. Students take exams at the end of the second trimester to demonstrate their mastery of the academic curriculum in each of the five core academic courses for the first time. They also participate in interscholastic athletics with the 8th grade students. In addition to the curriculum that follows, seventh grade students may participate in these special activities:

School Council	Long-Term Projects	Middle School Drama
Advisory	Dress Down Days	After School Program
Field Trips	CTP4 Testing/Spring	Interscholastic Sports
Community Service	Study Lab Workshop	Games Club

English

The seventh grade English program is designed to develop students' ability to read, write, speak, and think critically. Assigned reading includes young adult and classic literature focusing on novels, short stories, and plays. Discussion, journal entries, essays, and creative writing provide opportunities for students to respond to the reading in a variety of ways. Students work with each other as well as the teacher throughout the writing process, from choosing a topic to proofreading a final draft. Vocabulary, grammar and spelling are addressed individually as well as in group lessons.

Pre-Algebra

This course builds upon the skills taught in the Pre-Algebra 6 class. The topics covered in this class will enable the students to make a smooth transition to the study of algebra in the eighth grade. The course is designed to maximize the acquisition of both mathematical skills and concepts and to aid in the development of abstract reasoning skills. Students continue to practice using math skills to solve word problems and to think creatively and analytically. Concepts emphasized during the year include the use of variables and equations, ratio, proportion, percent and properties of real numbers.

Please note: Placement decisions in the area of Mathematics are carefully made in order to ensure that students are given the appropriate academic environment in which to thrive. Accommodations may be made for students who would benefit from either a more accelerated or a more moderate paced approach.

History

U.S. History: Foundations of a Nation

Students study the various social, political, and economic factors that led to the formation of the United States of America. Using diaries, journals and other primary sources along with the text, students seek to identify institutions & traditions, moving chronologically through the major periods of U.S. History and stressing the following historical concepts: colonization, acculturation, compromise, competition, immigration, sectionalism, and reform. Reading, note taking, discussion, simulations, formal writing, and group activities are integral components of the course. Students work with biography, art, primary source documents, music, literature, online courses, and computer simulation software.

Science

Seventh grade science focuses on the scientific method, data collection, physics, chemistry, and fieldwork. Students learn the basic facts in various disciplines of science and develop an understanding and appreciation of a broad spectrum of scientific topics, recognizing the impact of contemporary science in their everyday lives. Students develop a literacy that enables them to search and learn on their own, utilizing various resources, allowing them to follow current research. Students work to communicate in a clear, concise manner, both verbally and in writing. Lab work encourages students to work cooperatively and challenges them to collect data accurately. Organization and attention to details is stressed on a daily basis.

Foreign Language

Spanish

We will introduce basic language skills to the beginning language student. For the student with previous exposure to Spanish, we will build upon and strengthen the basic language skills learned in previous Spanish courses taken by the student. Our text book series balances all the elements of language learning, combining vocabulary and grammar study with in-depth looks at various cultures in which Spanish is spoken, including our own. Extensive multi-media resources, including video and audio CD's, attempt to bring the students into realistic contact with real Spanish speakers and engage them in actively learning the Spanish language. By the end of the year, students will begin to develop a foundation in Spanish speaking and comprehension skills as well as a greater understanding of the world cultures in which Spanish is spoken.

Latin

Our Latin course is designed to meet the needs of Middle School students interested in the study of Latin beyond the previous introductory courses. For students who have some background in Latin, the course will delve more deeply into Latin grammar and culture; however students need not have any prior experience with Latin to take this course. During their studies of Latin grammar, students will master the basic skills and knowledge necessary to decipher Latin texts. The focus of the grammar lessons will be on reading and translating Latin texts through the study of vocabulary, analysis of sentence structure, and patterns discovered in Latin grammar.

Physical Education

Students in grades seven and eight take part in the seasonal athletic program. At the start of each season, each student indicates which sport she/he plans to play. Athletic team practices are held during Physical Education class which meets five times per week. Games against other middle schools are held after school. Seasonal sports include: soccer, cross country, tennis, basketball, volleyball (for girls), baseball, softball, lacrosse and wrestling. Students who do not choose a team sport are provided with instruction in physical education activities, such as yoga, pilates and weight training.

Music

Choir

Choir is a performance class where students learn solfeggio, sight reading, vocal technique and musical analysis through choral repertoire which includes: music of the masters, sacred and secular works. Choral students participate in two annual concerts.

Instrumental Music (Band or Orchestra)

Students learn to play ensemble music that entails phrasing, balance, intonation, different musical styles, and articulation. They learn major key signatures, scales, and more advanced rhythms. Both band and orchestra meet daily. Beginners are welcome in band. Students need at least two years of lessons to be in orchestra. All Instrumental Music students participate in two annual concerts throughout the year. Private lessons are available after school with adjunct faculty.

Cycle Subjects

Drama

Students in Drama 7 collaborate to develop an original play based on a folk or fairy tale. As a group they determine how to illustrate abstract concepts theatrically, employing theatrical tools and improvised movement and dialogue. Adding scenes and characters allows each member of the class to have a significant performing role of his or her design, and each student also supports the play by taking notes, responding to their peers, and performing backstage tasks. The play is performed at the end of the quarter for an audience of family and friends.

Values and Choices

This course is based on the idea that teenagers are choice-makers and that, given help, they have the capacity to choose wisely. By giving honest, straightforward information, and by sharing values, we empower teenagers to make good choices that will have a positive impact on their lives. Topics include: basic values, decision-making skills, making choices and their consequences, puberty, dating, sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, teen pregnancy, birth, and planning for the future. The course includes a parent component consisting of an evening session and shared parent/child homework.

Art

Working with the theme of Public Art and its ability to transform a space, students become familiarized with the concept of parts versus a whole. Initially students work individually to develop conceptual drawings and smaller scale paintings; these preliminary works will translate into one communal mural. The murals' themes may vary but the involvement of each student is consistent. Students develop advanced problem solving skills and rendering skills with respect to large-scale image production. In addition, students work digitally to create site-specific public art installations that influence the perception and environment of a given space.

Multimedia and Information Literacy 7

Seventh grade students develop more sophisticated search procedures for the internet and the school library. They choose topics from a subject class class and research them in a variety of sources, both within the library and online. They design and upload a web page on their research subject, demonstrating a beginning understanding of the HTML scripting language. They practice computer graphics by inserting images into these documents and editing digital photographs for their web pages.

They divide most of their in-class time learning about web publishing and elementary computer programming. They study how the HTML language defines web pages, and how the LOGO language can create simple computer procedures and games. An engineering / robotics section exposes students to simple mechanics such as a gear box and constructing a basic robotic vehicle. Students then learn how to program their robotic to navigate a simple obstacle course, or perform a similar series of movements, without touching the vehicle itself.

Middle School Offerings

Fifth Grade

Daily: English 5
Mathematics 5
Ancient History
Science 5
Spanish
Physical Education
Band, Choir or Orchestra

- Cycle:
- Computer
 - Art
 - Latin
 - Creative Expressions

Sixth Grade

Daily: English 6
Mathematics:
 Pre Algebra 6 Explorations
 Pre Algebra 6
History of the Middle Ages
Science 6
Spanish
Physical Education
Band, Choir or Orchestra

- Cycle:
- Art
 - Latin
 - Multimedia and Information Literacy 6
 - Creative Writing

Seventh Grade

Daily: English 7
Mathematics:
 Pre Algebra 7 Explorations
 Pre Algebra 7
 Algebra I
American History
Science 7
Foreign Language:
 Spanish
 Latin
Physical Education
Band, Choir or Orchestra

- Cycle:
- Values and Choices
 - Art
 - Drama
 - Multimedia and Information Literacy 7

Eighth Grade

Daily: English 8
Mathematics:
 Algebra Explorations
 Algebra I
 Honors Geometry
World Geography
Science 8
Foreign Language:
 Spanish
 Latin
Physical Education
Band, Choir or Orchestra

- Cycle:
- Art
 - Drama
 - Tomorrow's Leaders
 - Multimedia and Information Literacy 8

IN ADDITION:

School Council, Class Representatives, Drama, Dress Down Days, Partnerships with other grades, After School Program, Maroon & White Teams, Advisory, Field Day, Middle School Buddies partnered with students new to Middle School, Lockers, Dining Commons, Summer Reading List, Middle School Fun Nights.

7TH & 8TH INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS PROGRAM:

Fall: Boys & Girls Soccer, Girls Tennis, Coed Cross Country

Winter: Boys Wrestling, Boys & Girls Basketball, Girls Volleyball

Spring: Boys & Girls Lacrosse, Baseball, Boys Tennis, Girls Softball

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Class Trips, Advisory Challenge

SUMMERS @ RPS:

“SummerBlast” Camp, Bridge Back to School and our Academic Summer School round out the year. For information about these and other summer opportunities visit www.rutgersprep.org and click on “Summer Programs.”