



MIDDLE SCHOOL

EIGHTH GRADE STUDIES

Overview

The focus of the eighth grade program is on academic and personal independence, responsibility, and accountability. Student work involves long and short-term projects during which assistance is offered at key points, yet the majority of the work is carried out by the students in an independent setting. Throughout the eighth grade curriculum, strong emphasis is placed on classroom skills needed by the Upper School student. In addition to the curriculum that follows, eighth grade students may participate in these special activities:

School Council
Advisory
Multi-Day Trip
Dress Down Days
Games Club

Class Representatives
Interscholastic Sports
Fund-Raising
Study Lab Workshop
After School Program

Middle School Drama
CTP4 Testing/Spring
Special Event Planning
Community Service

English

The eighth grade English program is designed to review the skills introduced in the earlier Middle School English courses and begins a transition to the demands of Upper School English courses. Students move from reading young adult literature to classic novels and plays, including *Animal Farm*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Inherit the Wind*, and *Richard III*. Students analyze the reading not only for plot and character but for literary form, historical relevance, and thematic purpose as well. Whenever possible, connections between the English curriculum and those of other subjects will be emphasized. The literature becomes the inspiration for expository essays and creative writing, both of which will be evaluated for their content and their mastery of grammar, mechanics, and working vocabulary. Students are encouraged to improve their writing through conferencing, peer editing, and writing multiple drafts.

Algebra

A solid foundation in algebra is critically important for future success in advanced mathematics. This class is the study of the language, concepts and techniques of algebra that will prepare students to approach and solve problems following a logical succession of steps. It is the bridge from the concrete to the abstract within the study of mathematics. Concepts include variables, linear and quadratic equations, polynomials, factoring, ratio and proportion, systems of equations, inequalities, functions, rational and irrational expressions, and linear and nonlinear graphing. Process is stressed over algorithm. Students develop strategies to solve problems and apply those strategies to real-life situations.

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 a more accelerated or differentiated approach. Honors level Geometry is available for selected students and Algebra Explorations benefits students who need a more moderate pace.

History

The United States in the World

This course covers the history of the United States from Reconstruction (1865) to the present. It is designed to study thematically the political, social, and cultural concepts that continue to shape our country in the 21st century. Students will explore demographic trends, immigration, the history of racial and ethnic minorities, women's changing roles, urbanization, and wars. Emphasis is placed on geographic literacy, as world geography will be the framework through which students will learn about America's becoming a world power, and about the conflicts that affect the nation today.

Science

Students learn the basic facts of human anatomy and physiology and develop an understanding of various scientific topics. Students recognize the impact of science in their everyday lives, both today and in the future. They learn to use a variety of scientific equipment in a safe and efficient manner. They develop a literacy that allows them to search and learn on their own from various resources. Students work in groups to develop social and cooperative skills that help them in the future. They learn to communicate clearly and effectively in both written and verbal forms.

Foreign Language

Spanish

Spanish IA

Spanish IA will introduce basic language skills to the beginning language 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.

Spanish IB

Spanish IB is the continuation of Spanish IA and completes the study of Spanish I. This course will continue to lay a foundation in the Spanish language but at a more challenging pace. Our textbook 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 videos, CDs and CD-ROM software, 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 have a solid foundation in Spanish speaking and comprehension skills as well as a greater understanding of the places in the world where Spanish is spoken.

Spanish II

Because Rutgers Prep begins foreign language instruction on a daily basis beginning in the 5th grade, students may be ready for Level II prior to completion of the Middle School. A new student who has already completed an approved Level I program may be placed into a Level II program.

Latin

Latin IA

Latin IA is a course 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.

Latin IB

Latin IB is the continuation of Latin IA and completes the study of Latin I, enabling students who complete it successfully to move on to Latin II in the Upper School in 9th grade. The course takes up where Latin I-A leaves off and continues the adventures of the Corneli family. Grammar concepts will be reviewed before our study of new grammar concepts, vocabulary, and the cultures of the ancient world continues. Since *Ecce Romani I-B* is shorter than *Ecce Romani I-A*, students will read from many other sources including authentic Latin texts.

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

Art

Students continue to develop skills and knowledge of two and three-dimensional design through examining the role mathematics plays in art production. A strong focus is placed upon technology and using digital design as a means to explore the principles of design. Through traditional as well as digital techniques students are able to gain an appreciation for both media as well as become familiarized with the art.

Students assume the role of architect as they create perspective drawings of futuristic cities. Futuristic art is examined further as students create tessellation paintings inspired by imaginary creatures and altered landscapes. Tessellations are also digitally manipulated to create new images based on the principles of design.

Drama

Students in Drama 8 learn about the theater by exploring the work of William Shakespeare. Each quarter the class works with a different play, reading the text, improvising scenes based on the scenarios in the play, and acting out full or abridged versions of scenes. Students will be required to memorize a speech from the play, perform a narrative summary of a scene, and participate in an action sequence from the play. All of these moments, taken as a whole, create a performance inspired by Shakespeare's work, which will be rehearsed and then performed on an evening near the end of the quarter.

Multimedia and Information Literacy 8

Students will learn about how we blend technology with the middle school curriculum. Through various class projects such as researching and using library materials, interviewing, and videoing, students will gain insight into how they develop a video portfolio. Additionally, students will learn how to organize their network folders so they can become more accessible and user friendly. The quarter will culminate in a final project that represents the coursework and skills that were focused on during class.

Tomorrow's Leaders

Tomorrow's Leaders is a course designed to provide students with the opportunity to learn about and practice leadership. By using traditional classroom practices (writing, research, public speaking) as well as experiential learning exercises, students will explore the pillars of leadership, and create a sense of themselves as leaders in their school, community, family, and in their own lives. Students will practice these skills in the classroom, they will focus out and deepen their role in their community, and they will model empowered, kind, outward-focused leadership among their peers.

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.”