



Middle School: Course Descriptions

Academic Core

English Language Arts

In English, you will improve your reading, writing, speaking, and listening ability in English. You will use the *Access English* textbook and other sources to explore themes such as New Beginnings, People Like Us, Becoming Who We Are, Life Journeys, Our place, and Making a Difference. You will write several types of texts including: a personal narrative, descriptive essays, expository essays, reports, persuasive essay, and writing letters.

Reading and Writing Workshop

In Reading and Writing Workshop you meet with other students to read and write for pleasure using English, mother tongue, and other languages of choice. You will read to get hooked on books. You will write a lot in your notebooks, create a portfolio, and experiment with different ways of writing. In the workshop, you will have lots of uninterrupted time to read and write. You also get to think about how you are developing into a writer who reads and a reader who writes.

Integrated Science

By studying Integrated Science at LAS you will become a critical thinker and problem solver, who has a solid grasp of scientific concepts and their real-world application. The course is taught by an inquiry-based approach aimed at developing scientific skills, values, and attitudes in order to give you a foundation on which to base your understanding of the world you live in. Content is delivered and assessed through a skills focus to develop you as an inquisitive scientist who can approach problems in an innovative way. Taking this course will expose you to topics in biology, chemistry, and physics including relationships in ecosystems, Newton's laws, electricity, chemical reactions, and bonding. By completing integrated science at LAS you will gain a foundation of skills to continue scientific pursuits.



Introduction to French

In this course, our goal will be to acquire the French language. “Acquiring” a language is very different than “learning” a language. Acquiring is something that happens to you instead of something that you make happen. When you learned how to speak your first language, you acquired it naturally by listening to other people speak it around you for a long time; not by studying it. Therefore, almost all of our class time will be spent using French - not using English to talk about French - and the focus will be on listening and reading instead of speaking and writing. Those skills will come naturally as you take in more and more French by listening and reading, but they will not be a major focus of the course.

You will enjoy French in the middle school because you will often be adopting a role in a skit or a play to communicate in French. The teacher will help you practice your roles so you can stay in French and so that over time you can carry on a conversation, in Leysin and French-speaking Switzerland, in French. Before the year ends, you will read a novel in French!

Physical Education and Health

The aim of the Physical and Health Education course is to provide an entry-level program that promotes lifelong participation and learning through the medium of sport.

The program is built around a strong ethos of participation, with additional roles that enable you to take part in all forms of recreational sports and accept coaching, officiating and managing sports roles for when participation is not available.

Mathematics

Students in middle school mathematics will work on improving numeracy skills while exploring many different mathematical concepts. It will be expected that they produce a variety of projects, from videos to posters to presentations relating to the math concepts we are studying at the time. Students will be challenged according to their ability in order to prepare them for a high school mathematics course and also enhance some of the softer skills like communication and teamwork.

Academic Exploration (2018-2019 offerings)



Adventure Science

Adventure Science takes you outside into the forest to learn how the natural world works. We'll start by talking about our planet and why it matters to us, then we'll zoom toward the specialness of Leysin itself. Most students do not know their current home, Leysin, Switzerland. The Adventure Science class will explore Leysin's natural side, with walks in the forest, art, and making scientific observations (including biodiversity, ecology, plant growth, data analysis, and data presentation). The course is heavily focused on the theme of LETS Day, when the whole school goes outside to participate in the "Local Elevation Transect Survey" that studies how climate and ecology changes from the valley below to the peaks above. These changes mimic those across latitudes - from the tropics below to the Arctic above - thus connecting Leysin to the world.

Computer Coding

In this course, you will practice typing in English using all of your fingers to improve your typing speed. You will also learn about how computers work and have a chance to try out different coding languages.

Education

Have you ever wondered why your teachers teach as they do? Why do they ask you to do certain tasks, to work in groups, to complete homework? What do teachers think is the true purpose of tests and grades? What is the best type of feedback for students, and what do students really want to get out of school? What role do parents play? What role do expectations for university acceptance play?

We will use the text "What School Could Be" by Ted Dintersmith, as well as clips from his movie "Most Likely to Succeed" to generate Socratic discussion - student-led conversations about school - to explore what school is ... and what it could be.

Engineering



Through making projects (cars, bridges, robots, etc.) you will learn the fundamentals of physical structures, mechanisms of power and movement (joints), and programming that make up our world and are used in our modern technologies.

You will also learn the basics of using agility, transparency, and self-organization as you work on your projects.

English as a Second Language

For students who are just starting out in English, small groups of 2 or 3 students focused on practical English for navigating classrooms, activities, and residential life at LAS, meet together with a teacher for highly individualized instruction.

Entrepreneurship

Have you ever wondered if you are creative enough - or can learn to become creative enough - to start your own business?

In this class you work in collaboration with a company from Spain, Tazebaez, to learn how to idea (come up with lots of ideas) and how to pick the best of your ideas for further development. You will work with the process Tazebaez has created, called Global Futurizer, to come up with creative solutions to problems real businesses face.

International Cooking

In International Cooking, you will learn about different cultures, traditions, and celebrations around the world. In addition, you will learn basic cooking and kitchen safety skills, plus appropriate hygiene while cooking in the kitchen.

Integrated Arts



Integrated Arts allows middle school students to increase their knowledge in various subject areas while fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of the fine and performing arts. Students will engage the creative process that connects music, drama, dance, and the visual arts with other content areas in order to meet various developing objectives.

Integrated Arts and Geometry

You will learn the basics of geometry, including elementary proofs using a compass and straightedge constructions. Then you will explore the connection between geometry, art, philosophy, and history, giving you new insights into how all four of these fields are connected.

Geology

Switzerland offers an incredible natural laboratory for learning about geology. You will learn the basics of geology, including plate tectonics, volcanoes, and earthquakes. These concepts are demonstrated through hands-on, visual examples both in the classroom and on the LAS campus. You will also learn about how geology shapes cultures and lives of people around the world.

Life Skills

The aim of the life skills course is to prepare you for real-life situations. These situations occur in the dorm, during lessons, in friendships, and beyond the wider scope of LAS. The course is built upon five areas: traveling, cooking/meal planning, first aid, textiles and physical activities such as first aid, biking or swimming. This course also allows you to develop and build upon interpersonal skills.

Olympics History

The aim of the Olympics history course is to allow students to learn about the history of certain olympiads and how these have impacted sport, society and the world we live in



today. Despite the focus being on the history, there will also be a focus on the future of the Olympics both summer and winter.

Project Innovate

You learn better when you are motivated to learn. In this self- directed course, you will establish your own question, on a particular topic or skill, for your independent learning project. Your teacher will act as a facilitator - providing guidance, resources, and helping your plan opportunities to support your project. The skills necessary to achieve your goal will be learned through experience. By taking charge of your own learning, you follow pursuits that truly interest you and your joy of learning.

Swiss History

In Swiss History, you will delve into history and culture through storytelling and experiential learning. You will take a look at the history of the place you live and go to school and you will broaden your view of our canton and the whole country.