

2019-2020 Bishop Dunne Catholic School – Middle School Course Descriptions

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

6th Grade: Language Arts College Prep

Students in the sixth grade increase their independence as readers, practicing reading comprehension strategies as they work with texts from a variety of literary genres. Students learn the conventions of writing while developing their vocabulary, implementing these skills into the writing process as they create original works of fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry. Finally, Language Arts classes in the sixth grade provide frequent opportunities for students to develop public speaking strategies and critical listening skills. Summer reading assignments are required.

7th Grade: English College Prep

In this class, students will increase their vocabulary and apply its usage to their writing. Students will learn to recognize and write different types of paragraphs and to use grading symbols to revise their compositions. Students will improve sentence structure in their writing and will learn basics of analytical writing, focusing on topic sentences, thesis statement, and evidence choice.

7th Grade: Honors English

Prerequisite: Departmental Approval and Enrollment in 7th Grade Pre-AP Literature

This course is designed to prepare the students for English Honors. The content of this class is the same as English 7; however, more emphasis is placed on composition and deep analysis of literary work under study. In addition, more emphasis is placed on the acquisition of writing skills through exercises and written assignments. Composition will include the writing of in-class timed paragraphs with a strong topic sentence and the selection and inclusion of supporting evidence. Students are introduced to AP style assessments.

7th Grade: Literature College Prep

In this class, students will learn to read, understand, and appreciate a selection of short stories, poetry, oral tradition, and prose. While students will focus on aspects such as literary analysis, including figurative language, sound devices, and characterization, they will also work on their writing skills through composing their own poetry, myths, and short stories. Summer reading assignments are required.

7th Grade: Literature Honors

Prerequisite: Departmental Approval and Enrollment in 7th Grade Pre-AP English

This course is designed to prepare the students for Literature 8 Honors. The content of this class is the same as English 7; however, more emphasis is placed on composition and deep analysis of literary works under study. Summer reading assignments are required.

8th Grade: English College Prep

This course continues to develop necessary skills in grammar and mechanics and covers elements such as phrases, clauses, sentences, parts of speech and vocabulary. In composition students learn the fundamentals of the writing process by incorporating daily instruction in outlining, analytical voice, and refining paragraph composition.

8th Grade: English Honors

Prerequisite: Departmental Approval and Enrollment in 8th Grade Literature Honors

This course prepares students for ninth grade Honors English by building on pre-existing skills in grammar and writing mechanics. Elements covered are phrases, clauses, sentences, parts of speech, and vocabulary. In composition students learn the fundamentals of the writing process by incorporating daily instruction in outlining, analytical voice, and refining paragraph composition.

8th Grade: Literature College Prep

This course surveys prose, poetry, and drama with a focus on building a strong basis for literary analysis. While students will learn to identify literary elements within texts such as characterization, theme, and style, they will also explore the

aesthetic elements of the texts, and the emotions, experiences, and questions it arouses within them. Summer reading assignments are required.

8th Grade: Literature Honors

Prerequisite: Departmental Approval and Enrollment in 8th Grade English Honors

This course is designed to prepare the students for English I Honors. The content of this class is the same as 8th grade literature; however, more extensive reading selections will be required. Composition will include the writing of in-class timed AP style essays and multi-paragraph essays with a strong thesis and supporting evidence. Summer reading assignments are required.

MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

6th Grade: Math College Prep

Sixth grade math is an exploration of math techniques and concepts designed for students who have mastered fifth grade standards. This class is taught from a college preparatory perspective and is designed to give students superior skills in problem solving and knowledge of mathematical operations. Students who take this course could be ready to enter Pre-Algebra in the seventh grade. The course content follows the standards set forth by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas.

7th Grade: Math College Prep

Seventh grade math is designed to enhance a student's proficiency with mathematical skills by building on important concepts that have previously been taught and introducing new skills that will prepare them for success in future math courses. This class will promote problem solving, reasoning, making connections, designing and analyzing representations in addition to reinforcing concepts that are instrumental in ensuring a solid math background.

7th Grade Math Honors

This course is designed to prepare students for advanced study of math at the high school level, including Pre-AP and AP courses. This course covers all the concepts of Mathematics 7, but at an advanced rate. During the first semester, students will master mathematical operation-based concepts such as integers, decimals, fractions, rates and ratios, and problem solving requiring advanced critical thinking skills. The second semester will include an introduction to Pre-Algebra concepts. The students will use Pre-Algebra in working with problem-solving, geometry, number theory, linear equations and rational numbers. Students must have a first and second semester average of a 92 or above in sixth grade math to be considered for this class.

8th Grade: Pre-Algebra College Prep

This course reinforces mathematical skills taught in the sixth and seventh grades with additional advanced computation including an emphasis on algebraic concepts. Students study fractions, decimals, percentages, integers and rational numbers. They become more proficient in using ratios, proportions and solving algebraic equations, both one and two step problem solving involving fractions, decimals, and whole numbers. Students will develop and expand problem solving skills (creatively and analytically) to solve word problems. Successful completion of this course prepares students for success in Algebra I.

Algebra I Honors

Prerequisite: Departmental Approval

Algebra I is designed to develop the student's proficiency with mathematical skills using the real number system. The course will enlarge mathematical vocabulary and enable the student to acquire the facility to apply algebraic concepts and skills and to use them in deductive reasoning and problem solving. As an honors course, each area will be covered in greater detail than in Algebra I.

Students may receive one high school math credit for successful completion of this course.

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

6th Grade: Science College Prep

Earth Science emphasizes the four branches of Earth Science, including geology, meteorology, astronomy, and oceanography. The course will include the formation processes, erosional forces, the water cycle, plate tectonics, and geologic history. Upon completion, students will understand the Earth's surface and interior, oceans, atmosphere, and the Earth's place in the universe.

Physical Science College Prep

Co-requisite: Pre-Algebra

Physical Science introduces middle school students to the world of physics and chemistry. It stresses the importance of observation of the world around us as part of the scientific method. The course includes topics from physics and chemistry, including motion, forces, waves, electricity, atomic structure, states of matter, and chemical reactions.

Physical Science Honors

Co-requisite: Pre-Algebra

Physical Science Honors introduces middle school students to concepts found in physics and chemistry. In this course, students are asked to observe the world around them as well as in the controlled laboratory environment. The course includes topics from physics and chemistry, including motion, forces, work and energy, electricity and magnetism, atomic theory, chemical bonding, and chemical reactions.

Life Science College Prep

This discovery-based course emphasizes an understanding of change, cycle patterns, microscopic organisms, plants, animals, and ecology. Cellular organization and the classification of living things are also studied, and learning through investigation is a main focus of this course.

Pre-AP Honors

Life Science Honors is a rigorous laboratory course, which emphasizes a complex understanding of change, cycles, patterns, and relationships in the living world. Students build on basic principles related to these concepts by exploring cellular organization and the classification of organisms; the dynamic relationships among organisms, populations, communities, and ecosystems; and change as a result of the transmission of genetic information from generation to generation.

Data analysis and experimentation are emphasized. The difference between the regular and advanced course lies in more advanced content, complex tasks, and in-depth independent investigations. Students are challenged to think like scientists and expand their abilities through the independent application of scientific concepts.

SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

6th Grade: World Cultures College Prep

In World Cultures, students will be introduced to the five themes of geography (place, human environment, interaction, movement, and regions), the tools of geography, introduction to world languages, and mapping and graphing skills. Students will be expected to use this knowledge to explore the cultures and languages of the continents of the world. Students will begin the process of learning critical thinking skills, basic research techniques, and reading content comprehension. Students will be expected to learn how to demonstrate their mastery of the content in a variety of ways, including test taking, project creation, and oral presentations.

7th Grade: Texas History and Geography College Prep

In Texas History and Geography, students will learn the significance of prominent individuals, movements, cultures, and events throughout the history of Texas and how each one molded and shaped Texas into what it is today. We will study

the geographic, economic, political, and social developments throughout the history of Texas. Each student will learn to think critically and evaluate information through hands-on application and in-class learning activities. Students will also learn skills such as note taking, map reading, researching, document reading, and essay writing.

7th Grade: Texas History Honors College Prep

In Texas History Honors, students will learn much the same material as in the Texas History class, including the significance of prominent individuals, movements, cultures and events throughout the history of Texas and how each one molded and shaped Texas into what it is today. Geography, economics, and politics will also be stressed. In the Honors class, more attention will be paid to primary source material, critical thinking, and communication and writing. Students will be expected to read more critically, and to be able to utilize formal thinking to create unique interpretations of Texas history.

8th Grade: U.S. History and Geography College Prep

In U.S. History and Geography, students will learn the significance of prominent individuals, movements, cultures and events throughout the history of the United States from colonization up until Reconstruction and how each one molded and shaped the U.S. into what it is today. We will study the geographic, economic, political, and social developments throughout the history of the U.S. through Reconstruction. Emphasis will be placed on the political and economic developments in U.S. history, as well as the cultural impact of institutions such as Federalism, Anti-Federalism, slavery, abolitionism, and regionalism. Each student will learn to think critically and evaluate information through hands-on application and in-class learning activities. Students will also learn skills such as note taking, map reading, researching, document reading, and essay writing.

8th Grade: U.S. History and Geography Honors

This course provides a survey of the history of the United States from initial colonization to the Civil War. Emphasis will be placed on the political and economic developments in US history, as well as the cultural impact of institutions such as Federalism, Anti-Federalism, slavery, abolitionism, and regionalism. Additional emphasis will be placed on developing the skills necessary for promotion into the AP Social Studies program. Students will strengthen reading, writing, geography, and study skills, as well as document analysis in order to prepare them for the rigors of the AP classes.

WORLD LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

7th Grade: Spanish I-A College Prep

Spanish I-A is the first year of a two-year introductory Spanish course. The completion of both Spanish I-A and Spanish I-B is equivalent to one year of high school credit. Spanish I-A allows students to become familiar with the Spanish language and to develop a working vocabulary in both written and verbal communications. Students learn to exchange information in simple terms about a variety of topics, and communication through interactive, cooperative learning is encouraged. This course introduces students to the basic principles of grammatical structure and offers an insight into the Spanish culture.

8th Grade: Spanish I-B College Prep

Prerequisite: Spanish I-A

Spanish I-B is the second year of a two-year introductory Spanish course. The completion of both Spanish I-A and Spanish I-B is equivalent to one year of high school credit. This class builds upon the basic vocabulary and grammar skills that the students acquired in Spanish I-A to help them develop more natural, complex Spanish language skills. Students will be actively engaged in the language through speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The course will expose students to a more in-depth study of Spanish culture.

Students may receive one high school Spanish credit for successful completion of Spanish I-A and Spanish I-B.

Spanish I

This course is designed for the students with some prior knowledge and experience with Spanish who are looking to boost vocabulary and reading comprehension while reviewing the fundamentals of Spanish grammar. Students typically take

this course as 8th graders as a transition course to prepare them for Spanish I Pre-AP in 9th grade. Alternatively, this course is an accelerated course for 9th grade students who need more challenge than the basic vocabulary presented in Spanish I but who are not prepared to pursue the Pre-AP track.

Students may receive one high school Spanish credit for successful completion of this course.

Spanish I Honors

Prerequisite: Department recommendation only.

This course is designed to build upon fundamental listening and speaking capabilities of students. The course will also develop and increase underlying skills in reading, spelling, and writing competency and creativity while improving overall language skills for use with mass communication and daily life situations. Summer enrichment assignment required.

Students may receive one high school Spanish credit for successful completion of this course.

Russian I College Prep

In this beginners' Russian language course, students will learn the Cyrillic alphabet and the fundamentals of Russian pronunciation. Students will acquire knowledge of the language through the use of varied activities that develop contemporary conversational, reading and writing skills. The course also provides an introduction to modern Russian culture.

Students may receive one high school Russian credit for successful completion of this course.

THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT

6th Grade: God Calls a People - Old Testament

The sixth-grade Religion program focuses on the Old Testament. A strong foundation in our Catholic Christian faith begins with the Old Testament, the canon that Jesus studied and knew well as a person of the Jewish faith. Students learn to grow in Jesus through the study of the Old Testament stories such as the story of Creation and The Ten Commandments. Further, students learn that God calls us all to holiness and faithfulness as they explore the story of the Israelites. In addition to the study of the Old Testament, young believers also learn the gift of personal prayer and reflection on Scripture, and students are introduced to the formal prayers of the Catholic Church.

7th Grade: Jesus the Way, the Truth, and the Life – Jesus Christ

The seventh-grade Religion program is devoted to the study of God's saving love as it is revealed through his son, Jesus. Students will explore Jesus through the study of the New Testament, focusing on the Gospels. Students will learn about Jesus and his message by studying Jesus' life, his preaching, the parables, and miracles stories. Students will also be encouraged to appreciate the sacraments as ways in which they can respond to the call to follow Jesus, and to live by His teachings through worship, witness, and service.

8th Grade: The Church Then and Now – The Holy Spirit/ Church History

The eighth-grade Religion program focuses on the foundation and history of the Church that Jesus founded. Students will get an appreciation for the early years of the Church under the leadership of Peter and missions of Paul, as recorded by Luke in Acts of the Apostles and the by Paul in the Pauline epistles. Students will explore the growth of the Church from its early years to today. Students will learn about the four marks of the Church, which define us and which we profess in our creed: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Middle School PE

This course will prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century by providing opportunities to attain the skills and knowledge to be physically active as part of a healthy lifestyle. Students will explore concepts of fitness, social, physical, spiritual, and mental behavior changes, rules and ethics of a variety of sports and recreational games, sportsmanship, strength and conditioning, body composition, and stretching techniques that will focus on personal improvement with respect to your gender, skill level, and ability.

Conditioning

Athletic Conditioning is a physical education course focusing on the skills and techniques of weight training and aerobic conditioning.

Drill Team

Fall Semester

This course is designed for current 7-12th graders who are chosen from May tryouts. The course consists of major grade performances at football and basketball game performances and self-choreographed routines. Quiz grades consist of knowledge of routine and dance styles. Lastly, daily grades are taken for class participation, appropriate dress, conditioning, attitude, and leadership. Grades are pass/fail.

Middle School Yoga

Semester Course

Yoga is a form of exercise that gets one in tune with the body's muscles, improves posture, expands breathing capabilities, and aids in physical and mental well-being. Focused in developing strength, balance and flexibility, the semester-long course will help increase concentration levels and vitality as well as decrease stress and improve mental clarity. This class is geared towards beginners.

Middle School Dance

Semester Course

Dance I is an introduction to contemporary, lyrical, hip hop, jazz, and modern dance technique. Students will learn conditioning exercises, basic dance warm ups and stretches, and perform lyrical and jazz combinations as a class. Students will also learn dance terminology, choreography, and history.

TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

8th Grade: Multimedia

Semester Course

The Multimedia course is a hands-on, 8th grade elective offered for high school credit, designed to challenge the advanced, computer-savvy student, as well as the relative novice. The focus will be on gaining an understanding of the language used in computing, and the basic elements of business software applications, graphics, video, and animation software. In particular, this course will concentrate on the integration of various software suites, storyboarding and sequencing, formatting of pages, file and folder management, developing problem-solving skills, and applying those skills. As a prerequisite, Multimedia requires that students have some experience in the basics of computing.

Students may receive one half high school Technology credit for successful completion of this course.

FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT

7th Grade: Art

Semester Course

The 7th grade art course is an introductory art course that focuses on the exploration of media through a study of art elements. Students will be introduced to art history, aesthetics, and art criticism throughout the semester while focusing on problem solving and creative thinking.

8th Grade: Introduction to Art

Semester Course

Art I is an introductory studio drawing course with emphasis on developing basic drawing skills and fundamental design and composition concepts. In addition to technical skills, an exploration of creative thinking, problem solving, and critical analysis will be studied. Students will be encouraged to develop an expression of individual style.

Students may receive one half high school Fine Art credit for successful completion of this course.

Theater Arts I

Semester Course

Theater Arts I introduces students to mime, improv, storytelling, and stage acting.

Students may receive one half high school Fine Art or Speech credit for successful completion of this course.

Choir

Semester Course

Choir is an introduction to music course designed to develop basic singing techniques, sight-reading skills, and music theory concepts. Students will perform at various important school functions throughout the year.

Students may receive one half high school Fine Art credit for successful completion of this course.

HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT

6th Grade Band

This class is for 6th Grade only; the focus is on beginning band fundamentals. Students with prior experience may be given additional/more difficult assignments, based on ability. Completion of this class should yield mature, informed, disciplined, and competent young musicians, prepared for intermediate band.

Intermediate Band

This class is for all 7-8th grade band students, focusing on improved fundamentals and technique, using early level literature. This is open to beginners in the 7-8th grades; however, extra effort will be required to perform at the same level as the other musicians. Completion of this class should yield mature, informed, disciplined, and competent young musicians, prepared for advanced and marching band.

Students may receive one half to one full high school Fine Art credit for successful completion of this course.

Marching Band

Fall semester

Marching Band is for experienced 9-12th grade musicians and interested and capable 8th grade musicians; this is the most active and well known of the ensembles, performing at football games, parades, marching contests, etc. This is a class for a grade, and it will meet on Tuesday/Thursday at 7:00 a.m.-7:50 a.m. Extra rehearsals may be called as needed. Students who have participated in this class in the fall will be expected to participate in any marching events during the spring semester, such as the Mardi Gras parade and others. Completion of this class should yield mature, informed, disciplined, and competent young musicians, prepared to enter the college marching and pep band levels by the end of their senior year.

Students in marching band may receive one half high school physical education credit

Strings

This course is for the student who wishes to begin and learn one of the four orchestral string instruments (violin, viola, cello, or string bass). Students will learn how to read music, basic musicianship concepts, and how to play their string instrument. No previous musical experience is necessary. The class will also perform as a string ensemble at the Christmas and/or Spring concert(s). Students must rent or own their own instrument.

Students may receive one half to one full high school Fine Art credit for successful completion of this course.