

7th Grade Honors Course Information

Participation in honors level classes at the junior high level can help students prepare for more rigorous courses in high school. These high school advanced courses, in turn, can prepare students to do better on the ACT, SAT, or other college entrance exams, as well as to succeed in high school and college course work.

Honors English is a course rich in discussion, challenging concepts, and exploration of ideas. The learning focus is on skills and content in reading fiction and informational texts. Additionally, students will expand and increase skills in argumentative, informational, and narrative writing. Students will also participate in collaborative learning, analyzing and evaluating texts and presentations, and lessons focused on the conventions of standard English. This course will go more in-depth on some activities, which will increase the pace and homework compared to traditional English.

Reading: Texts read in Honors English 7 will be complex in content and structure. Texts will be evaluated, discussed, and compared. Each text will be looked at in depth by the students and the focus will be beyond mere comprehension. Lengthier texts include science fiction, Shakespearean stage play, historical nonfiction, world literature, and realistic contemporary fiction. Shorter texts will be read in the above genres, as well as in informational and nonfiction texts such as articles, opinion pieces, biographical and autobiographical texts, and other works.

Writing: Argumentative and informational writing is stressed in this course. The topics tend to be current events and/or related to the class reading at the time of each essay. Students will use the writing process, including peer review, revising, and editing. For argumentative writing, articles of varying stances will be read, evaluated and discussed in order to formulate strong stances for each student's writing. Additionally, narrative and reflective writing will occur throughout the course.

Honors Integrated Science will have additional requirements that go beyond the basic curriculum. Below are some of the aspects that set honors apart from that of the regular science class.

- **Depth and Pacing:** Information for some topics will go into more depth. The basic science curriculum will be covered but additional information will be given in the honors course. This will increase the pace throughout the course.
- **Group Work:** Students will collaborate in groups and present material on special topics. They will also spend time researching topics and reporting on information they find. They will read scientific articles and learn to decipher information and summarize the purpose of the study.
- **Science Project:** Students will be required to complete a science project using accepted science processes. This will include selecting a topic, formulating a hypothesis, designing an experiment to test the hypothesis, keeping an experiment and data logbook, and analyzing and presenting results. Projects are expected to be District Science Fair quality. This project will be a significant portion of the grade.
- **Projects:** Students will complete individual projects related to specific topics in the curriculum. While some class time may be used to work on projects, most of them will need to be completed outside of class. Students will have options and flexibility for some of the projects throughout the course.
- **Testing:** Tests will be more rigorous, with fewer multiple choice and more written response.

Junior High Honors Courses Indicators for Student Success

Please thoughtfully consider the following criteria as you are making a decision about whether or not junior high honors level courses will provide the most appropriate learning environment for your child. Read over this form and discuss it with your child. Be confident that they can achieve at the level described. An honors student should meet the following criteria:

1. Typically, be performing at a **3 or 4 proficiency level** on the Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE) test in a specific subject area before considering enrolling in an honors level course in that subject area.
2. Consistently earn an "A" or "B" (or a "3" for 6th graders) for the subject in which they desire to take an honors course.
3. Have a **high level of interest** and **strong desire to be challenged** in the subject in which they would like to take an honors course.
4. Consistently exhibit most of the characteristics described below.
5. Typically, reading and writing at or above grade level.

Learning/Intellectual Characteristics:

- Enjoys tasks that are more challenging than average
- Has a ready grasp of underlying principles, and can quickly make valid generalizations about events, people, and things
- Tries to understand complicated material by separating it into its respective parts
- Reasons things out
- Analyzes problems and considers alternatives
- Enjoys complex concepts and processes

Motivational/Affective Characteristics:

- Becomes absorbed and truly involved in certain topics or problems
- Needs little external motivation to follow through in work completion
- Often requires little direction from teachers
- Is highly self-motivated and persistent
- Has high expectations of self and others

When deciding whether or not to enroll a student in a particular subject area honors course, please consider the following subject specific characteristics:

Math/Science:

- Is interested in numerical analysis
- Has a good memory for storing main features of a problem and its solutions
- Reasons effectively and efficiently
- Organizes data and experiments to discover patterns or relationships
- Is flexible in solving problems

Social Studies/Language Arts:

- * Has advanced vocabulary for age or grade level
- * Reads a great deal; does not avoid difficult material
- * Enjoys language (verbal or written) communication; has advanced communication skills
- * Organizes ideas and sequences in preparation for speaking and writing
- * Likes to study and research in areas of interest

We have read and feel confident that our child meets the above standards for learning.

Student Name (printed): _____

Student Signature

Parent Signature