



ASM | AMERICAN
SCHOOL
OF MILAN

Grades 6-8
2022-2023



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ASM Middle School Philosophy

The Middle School Program at ASM provides an opportunity to learn in a multicultural environment which promotes awareness and understanding of diverse cultures and supports students' emerging independence by allowing them greater levels of responsibility for their actions and achievements.

We incorporate a variety of teaching strategies and assessment techniques which focus on active, student-centered learning. We are aware that students think and learn in a variety of styles and that we must accommodate them by using diversified instructional materials and techniques; however, this does not take away from a rigorous academic program that prepares them for future success in high school and university. By problem-solving in teams, our students learn to look beyond themselves and acquire self-confidence in their abilities to contribute their unique gifts and talents to the group.

Since laptops are integral to learning at ASM, from grade 6, all new middle school students are automatically enrolled in a course called, Digital Age Learning. This semester-long class provides the foundations for building essential skills pertinent to ASM and to life as a digital citizen as well as the knowledge to learn effectively with laptop computers.

Course Descriptions

Grade 6 Course Descriptions

Mathematics 6

In Grade 6, instructional time focuses on four critical areas: (1) Arithmetic Operations including dividing by fractions; (2) Ratios and Unit rates; (3) Algebraic Expressions (4) One Step Equations and Inequalities, (5) Geometry: Area, Surface Area and Volume Problems, (6) Rational Explorations: Numbers and their Opposites and (7) Statistics.

Science 6

Students develop an understanding of key concepts to help them make sense of the earth and the universe they live in. There are six Earth and Space Science disciplinary ideas in middle school: 1) Scientific Method 2) Mapping the Earth 3) Age of the Earth 4) Rocks and Minerals 5) Plate Tectonics, Earthquakes and Volcanoes 6) Natural Resources and Climate Change. The middle school performance expectations in Earth Space Science build on ideas and skills that allow middle school students to explain more in-depth phenomena central not only to the earth and space sciences, but to life and physical sciences as well. These performance expectations blend the core ideas with scientific inquiry, developing and using models, conducting investigations, applying engineering practices and constructing explanations; and students use these practices to demonstrate an understanding of the core ideas.

English 6

This course aims to encourage children to read widely and develop strategies to deepen their understanding of texts. As writers, the goal is to support students to express themselves in a variety of written genres including personal narrative, informational writing, argument pieces and literary essays. Students will understand how content, organization, word choice, sentence structure, and mechanics support and enhance the meaning of their writing. As speakers and listeners, students will learn how to contribute effectively to a discussion, how to present to an audience and how to actively listen. Students will also review and learn age-appropriate punctuation and grammar rules. By the end of this course, students will have mastered the ability to read age-appropriate texts closely, appreciate its structure, identify the message of a text as a reader and create an argument as a writer.

Texts used:

1. Wonder by R. J. Palacio
2. The Giver by Lois Lowry
3. Day of Tears by Julius Lester
4. The Boy who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba and Brian Mealer
5. Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo

Humanities 6

In this course students explore the ancient civilizations: Egypt, Greece, China and Rome. These civilizations are analyzed through the lenses of the 10 universals of culture. The goal of the course is to develop historical skills such as how to research and appreciate that history is pieced together through the analysis and interpretation of sources. Writing skills are targeted to encourage children to make points with evidence. By the end of this course students will have a basic knowledge of ancient civilizations and an understanding of how to conduct simple research with academic integrity. The course is assessed through essay writing, discussion and project work. Essential questions include:

- How can I know the truth about what happened long ago and far away?
- Why should human beings have rights?
- How does an environment affect a culture and how does a culture affect the environment?
- How do beliefs affect culture?
- What is digital citizenship?
- How can persuasive pieces serve as vehicles for social change?
- What is power, how is it obtained and how is it lost?

Elements of the Arts (full year)

ASM values the Arts because Visual Art, Music, Film and Theater provide opportunities for students to develop creativity, imagination and find balance in an academic curriculum. During this mandatory year-long class, students will be guided to express themselves through each

medium, develop knowledge in these disciplines, and apply basic skills. Each module will last for nine weeks and will be led by a specialist teacher.

Physical Education/Health 6 (semester)

Physical Education and Health are an essential part of all students' physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. The focus is on developing students' knowledge, skills, and confidence in order to be physically active and take care of their personal well-being throughout their lifetime. Core units will include Invasion Games, Net and Wall games, Striking and Fielding games, Fundamental Movements, and International Sport. In the Grade 6 Health unit, students will learn the health-enhancing skills to support their growth and development.

Grade 7 Course Descriptions

Mathematics 7

In Grade 7, instructional time focuses on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of rational numbers and integers; (2) developing understanding of expressions and linear equations; (3) rational numbers and proportions, relationships and percents; 4) Statistics and probability; 5) Geometry.

Mathematics 7 Accelerated

Students will work at an accelerated pace, completing the entire 7th grade curriculum in more depth.

Life Science 7

Students develop an understanding of key concepts to help them make sense of life science. The ideas build upon students' science understanding from earlier grades and from the disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts of other experiences with physical and earth sciences. There are five life science disciplinary core ideas in middle school:

- Introduction to Life Science
- Ecology
- Cells
- Genetics and Heredity
- Evolution and Biodiversity
- Human Body

The performance expectations in middle school blend the core ideas with scientific and engineering practices and interdisciplinary concepts to support students in developing usable knowledge across the science disciplines.

English 7

The aims of this course are to further encourage children to read and develop strategies to deepen their understanding of texts, more specifically the genres of fiction, poetry, editorials,

memoirs and informational texts. As writers, the goal is to support students to express themselves in a variety of written texts, paying attention to content, organization, word choice, sentence structure, textual support and mechanics. As speakers and listeners, students will learn to engage with and deconstruct a text. Students will also review and learn age-appropriate punctuation and grammatical rules as well as learn new vocabulary. By the end of this course, students will show an ability to analyze a text closely with attention to the structure the author chose. In their own writing, students will be able to choose text types that meet their goal of expression.

Texts used:

1. Honeybee Naomi by Shihab Nye
2. Selected Poetry by Phil Kaye and Sarah Kay
3. The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien
4. The Book Thief by Marcus Zusak
5. Bomb by Steve Sheinkin
6. The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

Humanities 7

Humanities 7 seeks to build an understanding of the Medieval Age while promoting the learning of lifelong thinking skills. The course takes a chronological approach yet encourages the identification and pursuit of different themes such as cultural diffusion, religious conflict, economic opportunity, and political relationships, to name a few. Students begin by examining the changes that occurred during the late Roman Empire which gave birth the cultures of Western Europe, Byzantium, and Islam. The course finishes by looking at the forces that transformed Europe from the Medieval to that of the Early Modern period. Students use both secondary and primary sources as they work both independently and collaboratively to answer powerful questions and examine historical issues.

The units of the course are guided by essential questions that aim to stimulate students to develop the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize. Such topical essential questions include:

- How do we know what is true? How is the past different from History?
- In what ways did Roman culture affect the societies of Europe and the Middle East?
- Did Western Europe experience a “Dark Age”?
- How did Islam originate and spread?
- How are Christians and Muslims guided by the beliefs and practices of their religion?
- What geographic, cultural, political, social, and economic forces impact the development of Medieval Europe?
- How can the experiences of past societies guide the decisions of people and societies in the present and future?

Students will demonstrate their understanding of these questions through a variety of assessments including essays, scored discussions, debates, and presentations - all designed

to encourage historical thinking, skill development, and application of learning. Humanities 7 promises to be a challenging and meaningful course in which students think critically and reflect on their learning and themselves.

Physical Education/Health 7 (semester)

Physical Education and Health are an essential part of all students' physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. The focus is on developing students' knowledge, skills, and confidence in order to be physically active and take care of their personal well-being throughout their lifetime. Core units will include Invasion Games, Net and Wall games, Striking and Fielding games, Fundamental Movements, and International Sport. In the Grade 7 Health unit, students will learn the health-enhancing skills to support their growth and development.

Grade 8 Course Descriptions

Mathematics 8

In Grade 8, instructional time focuses on the following critical areas: (1) Geometry: Transformations, congruence and similarity; 2) Pythagorean Theorem and rational/irrational numbers; 3) Linear relationships; 4) Patterns of association in bivariate data; 5) Exponents and scientific notation and 6) Functions and volume.

Mathematics 8 Accelerated

Students will complete the Mathematics 8 curriculum at an accelerated pace affording the opportunity of beginning Mathematics high school units in middle school moving into exponential and quadratic functions.

Physical Sciences 8

Students in eighth grade develop understanding of key concepts to help them make sense of the physical sciences. The ideas build upon students' science understanding from earlier grades and from the disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices, and crosscutting concepts of other experiences with life and earth sciences.

In the physical sciences, performance expectations at the middle school level focus on students developing understanding of several scientific practices. There are five physical science disciplinary ideas in middle school: 1) Introduction to scientific inquiry, 2) Structure of Matter, 3) Heat, Temperature and Conduction, 4) Density, 5) Periodic Table of Elements, 6) Bonding, 7) Chemical Reactions, 8) Acids and Bases 9) Measurement and basic skills and 10) Motion and Forces and 11) Energy. These include developing and using models, planning and conducting investigations, analyzing and interpreting data, using mathematical and computational thinking, and constructing explanations; and students use these practices to demonstrate an understanding of the core ideas. Students are also expected to show understanding of several engineering practices including design and evaluation.

English 8

The focus of Grade 8 English class is to prepare students for high school, and ultimately for the rigor of the IB Diploma Program. In Grade 8, the literature study will focus on the theme of coming of age. Students will explore this theme while developing their speaking and listening skills by taking part in group presentations, class discussions and regular written responses where they explore the use of literary devices, author's purpose, and general significance of the text.

Texts Used:

1. Marcelo in the Real World by Francisco X. Stork
2. Ghost by Jason Reynolds
3. Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi
4. Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

Humanities 8

The 8th grade year is the final bridge between the middle years and high school. To prepare the students, this Humanities course will use challenging content and demand students to improve their writing, researching, thinking, and speaking skills.

Each unit of study is guided by a series of essential questions that drive the course. All lessons will be aimed at understanding these overarching themes. Such questions help students see history as a study to be analyzed, questioned and reflected upon, not simply memorized. Some 8th grade essential questions include:

1. What causes historical change? Students will analyze the decline of The Mughal Empire and similar current events to help them answer this question. This unit will also include a research project that will require the student to examine how useful a method of studying causation is to a subject of their choice.
2. What are the origins of genius? This will be a comparison of Renaissance geniuses with innovators from present-day Silicon Valley to consider to what extent talent can be assisted by government policies.
3. Can history predict? Students will question whether historians can predict, discover useful patterns, or are simply limited to explaining the past. They will use the Age of Discovery and discoveries from current events as source material to answer this essential question.

Students will study relationships between history and current events throughout the year. We discuss news events in an effort to build content vocabulary, make connections between the past and present, and develop digital literacy skills. Students will be frequently asked to write, present, and debate to clearly defend positions about both history and current events. Here the emphasis is on using facts to support contentions.

By the end of the year, students should leave confident they are prepared for high school. We also genuinely hope the class will demonstrate that the critical examination of the past can be relevant to the present and useful for the future.

Physical Education 8 (semester)

Physical Education and Health are an essential part of all students' physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. The focus is on developing students' knowledge, skills, and confidence in order to be physically active and take care of their personal well-being throughout their lifetime. Core units will include Invasion Games, Net and Wall games, Striking and Fielding games, Fundamental Movements, and International Sport. In the Grade 8 Health unit, students will learn the health-enhancing skills to support their growth and development.

World Languages

Enrollment in a World Language Course (French/Italian/Spanish) at ASM:

The conditions and requirements for the placement of students in a world language course at ASM are based on the directions given by the International Baccalaureate Organization and clearly stated in the following excerpts from the IB Language B Subject Guide, 2015:

Language B courses:

- Add to the international dimension of the diploma program.
- Promote intercultural understanding and greater respect for other people
- Should provide an appropriate academic challenge for the student

Therefore, coordinators, in conjunction with teachers, are responsible for the placement of students. All final decisions on the appropriateness of the course for which students are entered are taken by coordinators in liaison with teachers using their experience and professional judgment to guide them.

Based on the IBO requirements, any student who falls into any of the following categories will not be allowed to enroll in French, Italian or Spanish as foreign language courses:

1. The course's target language is the candidate's usual language of communication at home, and/or the student is proficient in listening and/or reading and/or writing the language.
2. The candidate has studied all or a substantial part of his/her primary and/or secondary education in the target language.

Students will be assessed on their language competence by means of a language test. The final decision regarding the placement of the student in the appropriate language course will be taken by the World Languages Committee and the Diploma Coordinator.

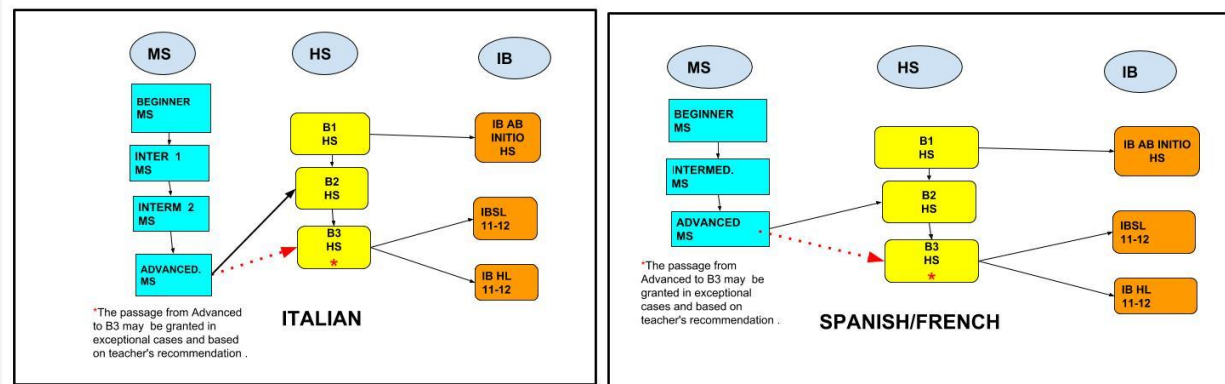
If a student is not eligible to take a World language course, he/she may choose to do the following:

Study the language as native speakers (Language A)

OR

Choose one of the other World languages (Language B) offered at ASM

World Languages Pathways



Italian

Italian language A (Italian mother-tongue speakers)

The Italian Language A course is designed for mother tongue Italian speakers and other students whose fluency in Italian is as good. It consists of a three-year program starting in grade 6 that culminates in the Diploma di Licenza Media Inferiore (Terza Media Exam).

The main goal of this course is to help students to develop their mastery of the Italian language in written and oral form and to enhance the understanding of literary texts.

Students will read extensively and they will appreciate language, content and style in age appropriate texts: at least four complete novels and a variety of other readings which include passages from a reading collection, newspaper articles, book reviews, etc.

They will become able to compare works by different authors and identify similarities and differences. Students will be reflecting on the various systems of values expressed in works of literature and participate in class discussions about moral and social issues they will become aware of through their readings.

Throughout the year, students will also work on class compositions to practice various writing styles and new vocabulary.

The grammar program will cover an extensive study of the following parts of the speech: the article, the noun, the adjective and the verbs.

Italian B Beginner

The aim of this course is to provide the non-Italian speaking students with the language skills necessary to communicate in different situations and contexts in which communication takes place.

The acquisition of the Italian language is obtained through the following skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking in real life situations. Students will learn accurate pronunciation and intonation, vocabulary and grammar structure by daily usage of conversation, class interaction, enactment of daily life situations and instructional games.

Students will be exposed to the following concepts: personal information, family, school environment, leisure time and vacation. By the end of the course they will be able to use everyday expressions and basic grammar structure to ask questions about personal details and answer them. They will be exposed to easy and short readings and will have the tools to understand and answer easy questions about them. They will create short and easy original dialogues.

Italian B intermediate (Levels 1 and 2)

The aim of this course is to provide the non-Italian speaking students with the skills necessary for effective communication in different situations and contexts in which communication takes place.

The acquisition of the Italian language is obtained through the following skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking in real life situations. Students will learn to communicate information clearly and effectively in familiar situations.

Students will be exposed to the following concepts: food, health, Italian geography, shopping, and cultural knowledge. By the end of the course they will be able to use more complex expressions and grammar structures. They will be able to interact and express their point of view in a simple way and move from sentences to short paragraphs.

Italian B Advanced

The aim of this course is to provide the non-Italian speaking students with the skills necessary for effective communication in familiar and unfamiliar situations and contexts in which communication takes place.

The acquisition of the language is obtained through the following skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking in real life situations. Students will be exposed to a wider range of grammar structure and idioms and will learn how to use them while communicating effectively information, ideas and opinions.

Students will be working on the following concepts: social problems, advertising, environment, technology, mass media, and cultural knowledge. By the end of the course they will be able to

use more sophisticated tools to support their point of view in class discussion or written assignments.

Spanish

Spanish B Beginner

The aim of the Spanish course is to provide students with the competencies necessary for effective communication in different situations and contexts in which communication takes place. Throughout the school year, students will learn the basics of the Spanish language integrating the four basic language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking, learning to apply them in real life situations.

Throughout the year, students will view the following concepts: personal information, family and friends, school environment and vacations. By the end of the course, students will be able to understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Students will have the tools to introduce themselves and others and to ask and answer questions about personal details such as where they live, people they know and things they do. Students will be able to interact in a simple way when the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help. They will be able to understand and extract basic information and texts of speeches

Spanish B Intermediate

The aim of the Spanish course is to provide students with the competencies necessary for effective communication in different situations and contexts in which communication takes place. Throughout the school year, students will learn the basics of the Spanish language integrating the four basic language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking, learning to apply them in real life situations.

Throughout the year, students will view the following concepts: Relations with others, free time & travel, shopping and cultural knowledge. By the end of the course, they will be able to understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Students will have the tools to introduce themselves and others and to ask and answer questions about personal details such as where they live, people they know and things they do. Students can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (Personal and family information, shopping). They can also communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.

Spanish B Advanced

The aim of the Spanish course is to provide students with the competencies necessary for effective communication in different situations and contexts in which communication takes place. Throughout the school year, students will learn the basics of the Spanish language integrating the four basic language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking, learning to apply them in real life situations.

Throughout the year, students will view the following concepts: personal experience, education, advertising and cultural knowledge. By the end of the course, students can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. personal experience, advertising and geography). They can also communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. They will be able to describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

French

Students in 6th, 7th and 8th grades begin their study of French with the goal of building the foundations needed to continue and succeed in the high school program. From the very beginning, instruction is entirely in French. Text-based theater, improvisational theater and music play an important role in the French program, highlighting the close link between the arts and language learning. The French language as well as the talent and work of the French language students are celebrated in the yearly Soirée Francophone, an evening of theater, music and poetry in French.

French B Beginner

This course is designed primarily for students who have little to no previous experience with French. There is no prerequisite for this course. Units focus on the Individual and his/her world, describing self and others, getting around school, describing their home and family and their daily routines. Focus is also placed on France and its geography as well as the cultural norms related to the units mentioned. Instruction is through Total Physical Response activities, role-plays, projects and theater-based activities that reinforce oral, written and grammatical skills.

French B Intermediate

This course is a continuation of the French Beginner course, and is designed for those students who completed that course or have had the equivalent language experience. Units focus on the individual out in the community—getting around and describing one's city, shopping for food and clothing, going out in restaurants and other public places and planning a trip or itinerary. Focus is still placed on France and francophone countries and the various points of interests one might encounter on a trip to a French-speaking country. Instruction is through informal conversations, role-plays, projects, computer activities, and theater activities that encourage or reinforce oral, written and grammatical skills.

French B Advanced

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed the Beginning and Intermediate courses. The French B Advanced course, which runs parallel to the HS French 2 course, aims to reinforce students' linguistic skills so as to communicate with more competency. Emphasis is placed on expansion of vocabulary, deepening of grammatical structures, acquisition of more complex verb tenses and of some common idiomatic expressions. The "communicative approach" based on dialogue, role-playing activities, creative

short compositions, etc. will be used. To become familiar with the French language as spoken nowadays in France, TV, audio-visual and media materials will be selected by the teacher and students. As always, the classes will be conducted entirely in French. Discussions about everyday life in the French-speaking countries provide the students with an appreciation for the role of French in the world.

Math Placement

The ASM Math placement policy is designed with students' best interests in mind. When placed in the correct Math course, students should be appropriately challenged in addition to having the skills required for success. Changing a course during the school year is disruptive to students' and teachers' schedules and is usually not possible. Therefore, our goal is to place students into the correct course from the beginning of the year. The math faculty at ASM has many years of experience with student placements and as such, their professional judgment should be respected.

Current Students in Grades 6-10:

To Enter Grade 7 Accelerated:

- Students must have a final grade of A or A+ (92-100%) in Grade 6 Math.
- Recommendation from current Math teacher evaluating Student Success Indicators (SSIs) that support their Accelerated Math placement.
- Students not recommended for Accelerated placement have the option to study during summer vacation for an exam which covers the math class content from that year. Interested students will sit for the exam the week before school begins. Achievement on this exam will determine whether students will be placed into the accelerated course.
- In June, students must notify their teacher of their desire to take Accelerated Math for the following school year. Students will fill out an [Accelerated Math Request Form](#) and submit it to their teacher prior to the end of the school year.
- Placement decisions are final for the duration of the academic year. Students can try again the following year.

To Remain in Accelerated Math Classes

- Students must maintain a minimum grade of a C+ (78%) or higher at the end of the school year.

To Enter Grades 8-10 Accelerated:

- In June, students must notify their teacher of their desire to change to Accelerated Math for the following school year. Students will fill out an [Accelerated Math Request Form](#) and submit it to their teacher prior to the end of the school year.
- Students will have the summer to prepare for an exam which covers the Accelerated Math class content from that year. Preparation materials will be provided to students. (For example, a student in Grade 8 Standard who wishes to transfer to Grade 9 Accelerated will study the content from the Grade 8 Accelerated course over the summer vacation.)

- Interested students will sit for the exam the week before school begins. Achievement on this exam will determine whether students will be placed into the accelerated course.
- Placement decisions are final for the duration of the academic year. Students can try again the following year.

Accelerated Math Placement for Transfer Students

- For initial placement, MAP scores and previous math courses along with teacher recommendations will be considered.
- Interested students will take a grade-level placement exam to determine their placement in either the Standard or Accelerated Math course.

Middle School Electives

Academic Electives

Creative Writing (semester, grades 7 & 8)

ASM's Creative Writing course will focus on the idea of writing as an art form. Students will start to develop their unique voice as writers. The class will use real examples of published works to guide writing technique and provide inspiration. Writing workshops and peer editing will be important as students practice creating their own literary pieces including, but not limited to: travel writing, short stories, poetry and creative essays.

Environmental Action (semester, grades 7-8)

Our planet is in an ever-changing state. Recently, due to human interventions, the rate of change has dramatically increased. From ozone depletion, to biodiversity reductions, to pollution, and global climate change, it is of paramount importance that students understand the ramifications of environmental change as well as the steps necessary, from personal to global, that will be required to improve the situation for the world community. This class aims to increase awareness while inspiring positive action.

Graphic Novels (semester, grades 6-8)

The Graphic Novels course will focus on comic book techniques and will explore the literary merit of this medium. Students will learn how to 'read' graphic novels, practicing the art of analyzing a comic page and using universal narrative elements to understand and analyze the stories. We will learn about and use the correct graphic novel terminology. Students will be introduced to the importance of layout and panels and the long relationship between pictures and words. After reading a number of graphic novels, and studying comic book techniques, students will plan and create a mini-comic to entertain and communicate a certain theme to a specific audience.

International Relations (semester, grade 8)

In this course, students will be introduced to the concept of globalization, engaging insights from fields such as sociology, political science, economics, cultural studies, human geography

and many more. Students will also be exposed to various technologies to help them develop their 21st learning skills and learn how to use them appropriately. Lastly, students are encouraged to reflect critically upon the ongoing debates facing their generation and the implications of different positions.

Math Skills (semester, grades 6-8, by teacher recommendation only)

This class provides support and extra practice to students in need of remediation in math. Instructional practices used by the teacher include effective questioning, asking for explanations, and focusing on different representations and multiple approaches. Students use the additional time to apply math to situations in life outside of school, explain how they solved a problem to the class, discuss possible solutions with other students, write math problems for other students to figure out, and build their verbal and analytical skills. A variety of materials and resources are used including graphing calculators, laptop computers, graphic organizers, and manipulatives.

The Ocean (semester, grades 7 & 8)

As oceanographer Sylvia Earle once said, “With every drop of water you drink, every breath you take, you’re connected to the sea. No matter where on Earth you live.” In this middle school elective, which is part marine biology and part oceanography, we will explore one of the most important places on Earth. By taking this class, you will become an ocean-literate person who understands the big picture about our ocean, can communicate about the ocean in a meaningful way, and can make informed and responsible decisions about the ocean. A strong work ethic is needed for this class.

Panther Press (semester, grades 6-8)

What is happening in the wonderful world of Panther Middle Schoolers? In Panther Press, students will be presented the opportunity to share and report what is going on by celebrating achievements inside and outside of school, reporting on current events in the school and the world around us, spotlighting students, and so much more! Students will help to capture moments in support of the yearbook, create weekly journals, and host a variety of podcast segments. The class will introduce students to the exciting world of print, online reporting, and broadcasting. You will learn and develop skills such as reporting, writing, editing, designing, advertising, management skills, and teamwork. If you have a voice and want to use it, this is the class for you!

Songwriting (semester, grades 7 & 8)

If you have a beating heart, you’ve got songs in you, and this class is designed to give them life regardless of your level of musical experience. In this semester-long course, we will explore the craft of songwriting by listening to and analyzing songs from a wide variety of genres. The aspects considered will include the following: melody, rhythm, lyrics, rhyme scheme, chord progression, and overall structure such as elements like the chorus, verse and bridge. Using the examples as inspiration, we will then write our own songs. This course will also aim to

develop an awareness of inspiration in our everyday lives, and an appreciation of the history of songwriting.

Study Hall (semester, grades 6 - 8)

This is a scheduled time for students to work independently on a topic of their choice. The expectation is that the time will be used wisely for academic purposes. A teacher will be present to check-in with students to help them keep on task.

Terza Media Prep (full-year, grade 8 Terza Media students only)

This course is designed for mother-tongue Italian speakers and other students who have studied at the native-speaker level. The goal of this course is to prepare students to take the Terza Media Exam which is the second Italian State Exam after the Quinta Elementare exam. The course helps students to develop their mastery of the Italian language in the written and oral form and to enhance their understanding of literary texts. Students will be exposed to the study of the national curriculum, which includes: Italian literature (XVIII, XIX and XX centuries), History (from the Congress of Vienna to the post-World War II period and the fall of the Berlin Wall), Physical, Human and Economic Geography, History of Art (XIX and XX centuries) and History of Music (XIX and XX centuries). At the end of the school year, students take the state examination comprising written papers in Italian, two foreign languages (English and French/Spanish) and mathematics, followed by an oral exam in all subjects. The national test (called INVALSI) will be administered by the state school in April. Successful students are awarded their Lower Secondary School Diploma (Diploma di Licenza Media Inferiore), which has a legal value.

Computers, Technology & Film

Digital Age Learning (semester, required for all grade 6 and new grade 7 & 8)

Digital Age Learning is a required technology course for all 6th grade students and those middle school students who are new to ASM. This course is designed to ensure pupils become digitally literate - being able to express themselves and their ideas at a level suitable to achieve success in all subject areas at ASM and as active participants in a digital world. This subject will equip students with the study skills to use their laptops, its software, as well as online cloud-based applications to effectively, responsibly, safely and critically navigate the web. In addition, students will use their skills to create, and evaluate, different digital products (such as podcasts, infographics, presentations and blogs) using a range of technologies.

Programming and Robotics (semester, grades 7 & 8)

In this course, students will design, build and program to solve a variety of computational problems. Working with two or more programming languages, at least one of which is textual, students will work on creative projects, such as building websites in HTML and CSS, creating games in Scratch and console-based computer programs in Python, as well as applying these programming concepts to robotics using EV3 and Makeblock. Collaborative work is a key part

of this course. As the next generation of creators and innovators, students will analyze and test their programs to provide rapid feedback, which will allow for incremental design.

Technology, Innovation, and Design (semester, grades 7 & 8)

Technology, Innovation and Design positions the students as the innovative designers of digital products. In this course, students will experience the freedom of a truly iterative approach to designing before building in CAD skills to design 3D components. A practical problem-solving approach to creating connecting parts for different structures such as drones and hovercrafts is encouraged using techniques demonstrated throughout the course. Students will be required to develop a personal sense of technological potential and perseverance. Finally, pupils are encouraged to critically review and analyze their successes or failures to inform future design decisions.

Music

Beginner Band (semester, grade 6-8)

This elective is designed for the student who has not played a band instrument and is a beginner. Students will be given the opportunity to choose a band instrument in the first few weeks of class and proper playing techniques, as well as music reading, will be the main focus. Instruments on offer will be flute, clarinet, alto sax, tenor sax, trumpet, trombone, tuba, and percussion. Some instruments will be available to rent from ASM depending on enrollment numbers. Students will have the opportunity to perform at band concerts throughout the year. Students are strongly encouraged to take this class both semesters.

Band (semester, grades 6-8)

This elective is open to all middle school students who play a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument at a beginner to intermediate level. It is also open to those who would like to learn a new instrument and have no experience at all. In this class, students make music together as they explore diverse styles of music and learn to express themselves through their instruments.

Band Advanced (full year, grades 9-12, grades 7-8 by teacher recommendation only)

This elective is open to any student who plays a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument at an intermediate to advanced level. This is an ideal course for students who have already taken band class in the past and wish to challenge themselves by playing more advanced repertoire. Pieces from many musical styles will be explored and the band will have the opportunity to perform at concerts throughout the year.

Choir (semester, grades 6 - 8)

If you love music and like to sing or would like to learn how to sing, this is the course for you. Students will learn the technique of singing and will explore music from a variety of periods and styles from classical to pop! Students will have performance opportunities throughout the entire year in ASM music concerts as well as our annual choir tour!

Guitar 1 (semester, grades 6-12)

This course is open to any student who would like to play guitar with or without previous experience. This class focuses on development of playing chords, reading standard notation and performance on guitar. Students will have the time in class to work and practice individually, as well as, in a group setting. This class usually has no public performances.

Piano (semester, grades 6-8)

Have you ever wanted to learn how to play the piano? This course is for you! Keyboard skills will be emphasized as a practical look on learning how to play the piano. Students will learn the fundamentals of music theory as well as basic playing techniques. We will work on a variety of repertoires and will focus on learning how to read music so students can become lifelong musicians.

String Orchestra (full-year, grades 6 - 12)

The String Orchestra is a wonderful opportunity to play music from a classical context moving to different kinds of music (pop, folk, rock, contemporary). Violins, violas, cellos and double bass, are the core of the ensemble. In addition, other instruments will be offered such as piano, electric guitar, bass and drums in order to create a broader music repertoire. History of music and theory of music will be learned by playing and analyzing the music pieces.

Physical Education & Wellness

Middle School Team Sports (semester, grade 7 & 8, prerequisite PE)

Middle School Teams Sports is designed to help students develop their knowledge and skill performance in a variety of team sports. Core units will include peer-coaching, skill development, and in-class tournaments. Students will have the opportunity to develop their skills around collaboration, communication, teamwork, and leadership.

Group Fitness (semester, grades 6-8)

Group Fitness is an upbeat course for students interested in developing their individual fitness, health, and well-being while exploring a variety of activities in a positive group setting. Group Fitness encompasses any and all forms of workouts done in a group setting and led by a group instructor. Examples include: cycling, yoga, interval training, pilates, circuit training, Zumba, boxing, step aerobics, and more! These activities are designed to instill life-long fitness practices. No prior experience necessary.

Physical Education /Health G6 (semester, grade 6 - required)

Physical Education and Health are an essential part of all students' physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. The focus is on developing students' knowledge, skills, and confidence in order to be physically active and take care of their personal well-being throughout their lifetime. Core units will include Invasion Games, Net and Wall games, Striking and Fielding games, Fundamental Movements, and International Sport. In the Grade 6 Health unit, students will learn the health-enhancing skills to support their growth and development.

Physical Education/Health 7 (semester)

Physical Education and Health are an essential part of all students' physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. The focus is on developing students' knowledge, skills, and confidence in order to be physically active and take care of their personal well-being throughout their lifetime. Core units will include Invasion Games, Net and Wall games, Striking and Fielding games, Fundamental Movements, and International Sport. In the Grade 7 Health unit, students will learn the health-enhancing skills to support their growth and development.

Physical Education/Health G8 (semester)

Physical Education and Health are an essential part of all students' physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. The focus is on developing students' knowledge, skills, and confidence in order to be physically active and take care of their personal well-being throughout their lifetime. Core units will include Invasion Games, Net and Wall games, Striking and Fielding games, Fundamental Movements, and International Sport. In the Grade 8 Health unit, students will learn the health-enhancing skills to support their growth and development.

Visual & Theatrical Arts

Elements of the Arts (full year, grade 6 - required)

ASM values the arts because Visual Art, Music, Film and Theater provide opportunities for students to develop creativity, imagination and find balance in an academic curriculum. During this mandatory year-long class, students will be guided to express themselves through each medium, develop knowledge in these disciplines, and apply basic skills. Each module will last for nine weeks and will be led by a specialist teacher.

2D Art (semester, grades 7 & 8, prerequisite Visual Arts 1)

In this course, students deepen their understanding of the principles and elements of art through 2D forms (e.g. figure drawing and anatomy, painting, printmaking, encaustic painting, etc.). The development of techniques and opportunities for choice can be dependent on student and teacher collaborations. Students further develop independence with managing timelines and project decisions, studio habits, skills, and dispositions.

3D Art (semester, grades 7 & 8, prerequisite Visual Arts 1)

Students explore dimensionality in 2D drawings. They investigate a range of 3D forms such as handbuilt clay, mixed media sculpture, cloth mache' and 3D papermaking. Students create conceptual works based on issues that are significant to them. The development of techniques and opportunities for choice can be dependent on student and teacher collaborations. Students further develop independence with managing timelines and project decisions, studio habits, skills, and dispositions.

Mixed Media (semester, grades 7 & 8, prerequisite Visual Arts 1)

Students use a wide range of 2D media and materials through extensive experimentation. Topics may include book arts, marbling, papermaking, encaustic painting and collagraph

printmaking. The development of techniques and opportunities for choice can be dependent on student and teacher collaborations. Students further develop independence with managing timelines and project decisions, studio habits, skills, and dispositions.

Visual Arts 1 (semester, grades 6 - 8)

Students develop foundational skills with drawing, painting, and other 2D techniques. They develop safe and independent studio practices through topics such as pop art, fantastical beasts and surrealism. Students begin to make decisions about the time frame, content, and concepts of their artworks. They investigate the skills, habits and dispositions of studio artists.

Theatre (semester, grades 6 - 8)

In this class, students will be introduced to the basic concepts of theater arts. Exercises and scene work aim at building ensemble as well as developing self-control, concentration and freedom of expression. The course explores the foundations of improvisation that encompass creativity, spontaneity, observation and cooperation, important life skills that will make students effective learners and communicators. The course will culminate in a live performance.

Theatre 2 (semester, grades 7 - 8)

This course builds upon the theatre skills that were developed in prerequisite MS Theatre class, but adds further connection with texts and deeper processes of theatre making. Students will explore a variety of theatre traditions and practices from around the world, working cooperatively as an ensemble and using the body and voice as communicative instruments. The course will culminate in a live performance.