2023-2024

Seventh-Grade Curriculum Guide

Seventh-Grade

Islander Middle School teachers support and guide seventh-grade students in their growing independence and self-awareness. The academic program is based on an understanding of the needs of adolescents and teachers provide support, guidance, and academic challenge to assist seventh-graders in their academic progress. Students are exposed to a wide range of learning opportunities this year, including their ability to select electives. Students are provided with continuing opportunities to understand that their learning is valuable and worthwhile and to apply their knowledge to situations outside of the classroom.

All 7th and 8th grade students have a fine arts requirement to be completed over the course of their 7th and 8th grade years. Choices include at least a full year of Band, Orchestra, or Choir or the completion of a two trimester Drama (Drama I and Drama II) or Art (Art I and Art II – must be completed in same school year) sequence. Art 6 and Drama 6 do not count toward this requirement. Students may also elect to take additional fine arts courses while at IMS.

Required

Language Arts 7
Social Studies 7
Math (TBD)
Science 7
P.E. – 1 Trimester (May be waived with directed athletics. Waiver available online or in IMS Office)
Health 7 – 1 Trimester

Electives

Choose from list of Year-Long and/or Trimester-Long classes

Core/Required Courses

Language Arts 7

Literacy skills are the focus of the seventh-grade language arts program and include the teaching of reading both literary and informational text, writing, speaking, listening, and language. The curriculum is aligned with the Common Core State Standards for seventh-grade.

Reading instruction (both literary and informational) takes place through the study of a large variety of genres with particular emphasis on analytical and higher-level thinking skills, while specific foundational reading skills are intentionally taught and assessed throughout the year. Reading skills are also integrated into research and writing tasks.

Writing instruction includes the expository, argumentative, and narrative modes, and focuses this year on students incorporating information from nonfiction texts in all of these genres in order to enhance the content and logically convey ideas and provide relevant support. Students write routinely over short and extended time frames for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Speaking, listening, and language skills are practiced throughout the year and integrated into a variety of classroom discussions as well as informal and formal speaking opportunities.

Social Studies 7

The social studies curriculum incorporates all reading and writing skills within the study of Washington State history. The study of the state, from its earliest times to modern day, is examined through the four strands of social studies: history, civics, geography, and economics. Students will study the past and its connection to the present through the stories of the many individuals who helped define the uniqueness of Washington. All seventh-grade students will participate in a culminating research project utilizing language arts, social studies, and technology skills. Passing this course completes a Washington State high school requirement.

Math II (formerly called Math 7)

In Math II, students will develop several key skills, including problem-solving, communication, and algebraic thinking. They will apply concepts of ratio, proportion, percent, and geometric figures in various algebraic contexts. In addition, they will expand their knowledge of measurement formulas to include spheres, pyramids, and cones, and explore the classification of polygons and identification of special angles and angle relationships in polygons. The course will also cover data analysis and statistics, including graphing and an introduction to slope, as well as probability. By the end of the course, students will have built a strong foundation in mathematics that will prepare them for more advanced coursework in Math III, high school and beyond.

Math II/III

This challenging, fast-paced math course combines concepts from both Math II and Math III, offering a comprehensive overview of algebraic methods and functions. Through exploration of linear functions and more complex equations and inequalities, students will be introduced to the formal methods of algebra and develop their ability to model mathematical problems using graphs and equations. In contextual situations, they will learn to interpret the slope of various functions and explore the properties of geometric figures, using their understanding of sides and angles to find unknown measures. To prepare for high school-level math courses, students will also delve into key topics such as scientific notation and exponents, gaining a better understanding of the real-number system and its sets of numbers, including rational and simple irrational numbers. Throughout the course, students will hone their reasoning and problem-solving skills, moving more deeply into the symbolic world of algebra and learning to communicate mathematical ideas effectively. By making generalizations, drawing logical conclusions, and verifying the reasonableness of their solutions, they will develop a strong foundation for success in higher-level math courses.

Math III (formerly called Pre-Algebra)

Math III extends and culminates previous math skills and concepts from Math II targets, transitioning students to the more specialized math courses of Algebra and Geometry. The formal methods of algebra introduced in Math II are extended as students explore linear functions and solve more complex equations and inequalities. Students model problems with mathematical functions represented by graphs and equations, eventually learning to interpret the slope of various functions in contextual situations. They connect measurement and geometry by exploring properties of geometric figures by solving problems involving sides/angles of triangles to find unknown measures. Students work with squares and square roots using basic geometric theorems such as the Pythagorean Theorem. They build on their experience of organizing and interpreting data, creating displays for 2 data sets in order to compare, analyze and draw conclusions. Mean, median and mode are used to summarize and describe information and students expand their work with probability to deal with more complex situations and displays. To prepare for high school level math courses, students deal with additional key topics involving numbers and operations. This includes scientific notation and exponents in expressions containing both numbers and variables. To better understand the full breadth of the real-number system, students are introduced to sets of numbers including rational and simple irrational numbers. Additionally, students refine their reasoning and problem-solving skills as they move more fully into the symbolic world of algebra. They learn to communicate mathematical ideas, to make generalizations, to draw logical conclusions and to verify the reasonableness of their solutions.

Algebra

Algebra is the first year in a three-year college prep math sequence. Algebra focuses on the structure of the real number system. This course examines symbolic representations in solving real-world problems. Linear functions, quadratic functions, systems of equations, and problem solving are some of the topics within the enriching course outline. Graphing, both as a means of displaying data and analyzing data in one or two dimensions, is an integral part of this course. A solid foundation in arithmetic and pre-algebra skills is essential for success in this course.

A scientific calculator, ruler and graph paper are required.

Algebra grades for IMS students will be automatically posted on their Mercer Island High School transcript. Students will have until the end of their junior year to keep the grades as posted or request removal of these grades. If a student chooses to remove their grades, they will not receive high school credit for the course. At that time, students also have the option of selecting a P instead of a grade mark, which would not affect their GPA and they would receive high school credit for the course.

Science 7

Seventh-grade science focuses on life and chemical science and encourages the investigation, observation, and discovery of the nature of science. Classroom activities will teach the scientific method, laboratory/experimental procedures, and scientific analysis. The 7th grade science curriculum is aligned with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements and Grade Level Expectations.
Students will have the opportunity for hands on learning activities using the STC (Science and Technology Concepts) kits: “Properties of Matter” and “Human Body”. Additional topics include Cells, Genetics, and Evolution. Students will learn the proper format for lab write-ups, generate and complete lab write-ups and journals for lab activities and science demonstrations. Students will also use models of abstract scientific concepts and nderstand the limitations of models. Students use technology by accessing the World Wide Web and computer-based software for research, enrichment, interactive learning and multimedia presentations. Expected homework includes reading assorted science selections, lab reading, and Glencoe texts.

Health 7

Health is a required course for all seventh-grade students and is one trimester in duration. The curriculum focuses on nutrition, communicable diseases, personal health care, stress management, conflict resolution, and substance abuse. Also included in the course will be the Washington State mandated teaching of HIV and AIDS education.

Physical Educations Courses (PE, Fitness, Yoga)

PE 7/8

PE is required for one trimester; classes may include both 7th and 8th grade students with focus on advanced team sports. The curriculum will meet Washington State Expectations through recreational activities and strategies. Students are encouraged to change into athletic attire or purchase an IMS uniform (free uniforms can also be provided upon request). Students are also required to wear supportive athletic shoes to decrease risk of injury. Talk with Mr. Millsap, Mr. Dupuis or Mrs. Bylsma if you would like more information on this course.

Fitness

Do you want to build strength and speed? Are you searching for workouts and training tips that will provide an edge over your competition? Do you just need a chance to move during the school day? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you should seriously consider taking this trimester length class. In addition to experiencing a variety of popular workouts, students will also enjoy some good old fashioned team games sprinkled in throughout the trimester. Students are encouraged to change into athletic attire or purchase an IMS uniform (free uniforms can also be provided upon request). Students are also required to wear supportive athletic shoes to decrease risk of injury. Talk with Mr. Millsap, Mr. Dupuis or Mrs. Bylsma if you would like more information on this course.

Yoga

Decrease stress and take deep breaths while improving strength, power and flexibility. This trimester course supports the IMS Physical Education requirement while placing emphasis on individual activity and personal health. Students may be required to change for Yoga into comfortable clothing that will support their ability to move confidently. Students should avoid wearing low cut necklines, skirts, pants or shorts with a low-waist. A yoga mat will be provided. Talk with Mr. Millsap, Mr. Dupuis or Mrs. Bylsma if you would like more information on this course.

While Physical Education is an important part of school, Islander realizes that many students benefit from physical activity outside of school through organized sports and other physical activities. These students can complete and submit a PE Waiver for this required course.

Electives

Aerospace

From hot air balloons to airplanes to rockets, how has humankind developed the science of flight? Where will the space age take us? Aerospace students build five major hands-on projects: hot air balloons, kites, gliders, airplanes, and rockets, as well as a multitude of other small flight experiments and demonstrations—all designed to teach and reinforce the four forces of flight and Bernoulli's Principle. Students also investigate the physics of air pressure and past and future developments in the space program. Class may include both 7th and 8th grade students, but is not repeatable. Lab/supply fee required.

Art Series: (Art I & II) (Two - one trimester classes – must be completed in same school year)

Art and Design is a comprehensive visual art course that introduces the basics of design and creative expression. Students learn to think and create like an artist. They will craft artworks by tapping into their creativity, using their imagination and learning to apply the concepts of the elements and principles of design. Art and Design takes students on an exploration of a variety of art mediums and techniques such as drawing, painting, ceramics, mixed media and photography. Each unit of study will focus on an art style from a variety of artists, cultures and times. The second trimester is a continuation of the first trimester but with more focus on the principles of design and longer-term projects that require the technical and conceptual skills learned in Art I. These courses have a supply fee.

Art III (Prerequisite - Art I and II Series and this class can be repeated)

This is a trimester-long class that continues the format of the Art I & II series in that students will work with a variety of media in ceramics, drawing, photography, and painting. Each unit of study will emphasize the creative process and critical thinking. Art III students are encouraged to pursue their artistic style of seeing and using visual imagery as a means of communication. Student input is encouraged in the selection of projects to allow for more personalized instruction. This class can be repeated because projects will be different depending on the students' interests. This course has a supply fee.

Drama I (No prerequisite)

Drama I will introduce students to many different areas of theatre, primarily through performing. Students will study basic theatre history, movement, voice acting, character development through monologue study, as well as scene development and improvisation in both individual and group exercises. This course has similar units of study to the 6th grade drama elective, but with more complex and challenging materials to expand the skills of the actors in this course. Completion of Drama I & II fulfills the fine arts requirement.

Drama II (Prerequisite-Drama I or Instructor Approval)

Drama II offers students the chance to further explore theatre. Studies will focus on scene work and performances, movement techniques, improvisation, and character work. Students will also perform Shakespearean theatre scenes, create their own scripts and perform them, explore musical theatre through listening and reading songs and lyrics, and learn about the technical elements of theatre such as makeup, costume, and set design by designing such elements for a production of a play of their choosing or design. Completion of Drama I & II fulfills the fine arts requirement.

Filmmaking

Have you ever wanted to make a movie? Do you have great ideas? Or maybe you just want to get better at tech. In this class, students will use a variety of technological tools to be part of the ever-evolving field of digital storytelling. A mix of video, audio design, and animation will be used to bring student ideas to life. Both fiction and nonfiction formats will be explored in this class. Students will work individually and in groups throughout the trimester. This is a fun class to learn how to work with others, share creative ideas, and demonstrate school spirit. Students will leave here ready to use the latest digital tools for future school projects and whenever else life calls for good storytelling. No repeats.

French 7 (Two-trimester course)

In this two-trimester class, students will complete the first two of five trimesters of French. The five trimesters are equivalent to the first year of high school level French. Students will practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in the target language along with studying the French culture in French-speaking countries around the world.

Leadership I (Trimester course)

Leadership 1 is an elective course designed for 7th and 8th-grade students who want to build their leadership skills. During this course, students will develop their own personal leadership profile (resume), learn to develop their speaking skills, develop team-building skills, and plan school and community activities. This course is recommended for students involved in student organizations in and out of school and is the prerequisite for Leadership 2.

Leadership II (Trimester course)

Leadership 2 is an elective course designed for 7th and 8th-grade students who want to take an active role in improving the climate of our school and gaining lifelong leadership skills. We will assist in planning and implementing activities and events for the entire student body. Daily class time will be utilized for student-led mini-lessons in leadership, planning and committee work, as well as continuing to look for new and innovative ways to improve the climate of our school. Students must take Leadership 1 before signing up for Leadership 2. You may take L2 multiple trimesters.

Mandarin Chinese 7 (Two-trimester course)

Students will learn the basic fundamentals of the written and oral Chinese language. Students will explore the language through hands-on activities as well as through Chinese text. Students who successfully complete Chinese 7 will be prepared to take Chinese 8 as an 8th grader. In this two-trimester class, students will complete the first two of five trimesters of Chinese.

Marine Biology

Our oceans are one of the last frontiers of exploration. Current issues that affect our oceans will eventually impact us all. In this course, students investigate, research and discuss topics including ocean exploration, ocean water chemistry, the impact of society on oceans, and of course, marine life. Through hands on activities including several dissections, students will learn about plant and animal forms ranging from microscopic plankton all the way up to some of the largest animals on earth. If you are fascinated by life at sea and the blue abyss, this course is for you! This course is open to both 7th and 8th grade students, but is not repeatable. Lab/supply fee is required

Music (Year-long courses)

Band, Choir, and Orchestra

The seventh-grade music program is a continuation of the program which started in the elementary and sixth-grade. Seventh-grade music is taught daily as a part of the regular school day and is a year-long class. Fee may be required.

Band 7

The seventh-grade Band is offered for students who have participated in the sixth-grade band. The seventh-grade Band curriculum builds upon the heavily skill-based curriculum of the sixth-grade, to include more performance literature and less technique building material. This class is typically a much larger ensemble than the divided sections of the sixth-grade thereby creating the appropriate opportunity to develop ensemble skills—i.e. communication with the conductor, balance and blend, etc. Active and focused participation in the ensemble learning process is essential for success in this course. Theoretical and structural understanding and expressive techniques become a central focus of student learning. Interested seventh-grade band students have the opportunity to play in smaller chamber groups in addition to the full band experience.
Fee: shirt and binder.

Choir

Students who enroll in Choir develop fundamental skills in choral singing such as breathing, posture, music reading, three- and four-part harmony, performance technique, etc. No previous singing experiences or voice training is required, rather the desire and joy of learning a variety of songs in a fun, disciplined class setting. Choir participates in the school's music concerts, choral festivals, district wide Showcase concert, as well as special school assemblies. Classes may include 6th, 7th and 8th grade students.

Orchestra 7

7th Grade Orchestra meets on a daily basis. There is an increased sophistication of literature and performance skills. Students participate in many activities and concerts throughout the year.

Photo/Film/Music

This course will provide opportunities for students to further appreciate the mass media forms of photography, film, and music. Students will be given experiences in creating digital photography, gain further understanding about components of film and movies, and understand the significance of music in our modern society. **NOTE: This course does not meet the criteria for completion of IMS's fine arts requirement.** No repeats.

Introduction to Computer Programming

Learning how to write computer code is one of the best skills a middle school student can have. Plus, it's a lot of fun! This course provides an introduction to coding in Python. Students master basic coding concepts common to all programming languages, such as statements, conditionals, and loops, and are additionally introduced to: libraries, procedural graphics, and complex input. Students develop coding-related skills such as decomposition of large programs, debugging, and analyzing code written by others. Students will be able to create games, animations, and other interactive programs in Python upon completion of the course.

Intermediate Computer Programming

Note: Introduction to Computer Programming is a pre-requisite for this class. You can take a challenge test with Ms. Olson if you haven't taken the course.

In this course, we will work with advanced Python commands to create animations and visual games. Students learn to use images from outside their program to create sprites and sprite-based animations for use in graphical programs. Students explore more in-depth coding concepts such as the list data structure and functions. Students completing this course will be able to create graphical, sprite-based games using custom images, and can write dense, well-organized code. Students may repeat this class with teacher approval.

Introduction to Robotics

In this class, students will learn how to build and program EV3 and SPIKE robots. Students will utilize the engineering design process to construct robots which will perform basic movements and use sensors to navigate through obstacle courses. They will build dragster robots to maximize gear ratios for speed and will create battle bots to "fight" other bots by pushing them off a platform. In addition, students will work in teams to create a synchronized dance and end with a final robot designed to make a difference in the world.

Intermediate Robotics

Note: Students must have taken the Introduction to Robotics as a pre-requisite.
In Intermediate Robotics, students will utilize their knowledge of the engineering design process to construct and program robots at a high level. Students will learn how to program the robots using basic Python and block coding. They will begin by learning advance programming techniques with the SPIKE robots. Students will compete in teams to create advanced builds with the EV3 robots such as the Elephant, Stair Climber and Tug of War bot. Students' culminating project is a design of their own to complete a complex task.

Social Justice – Race/Ethnicity, Sex/Gender, Sexual Identity

This course examines the role that identity and privilege play in everyone's lives, specifically examining the areas of race/ethnicity, sex/gender, and sexual identity. The class gives students a chance to learn about what goes on in our country and to empathize with people from many different backgrounds—starting with the other students in the class. You will have opportunities to create group projects, conduct individual investigations, and participate in group discussions about society and our place in it. If you love learning about our communities, our rights, each other, and the differences we can make together, then this is the class for you!

Social Justice – Socioeconomic Status, Ability/Disability, Mental Health, Appearance

This course examines the role that identity and privilege play in everyone's lives, specifically examining the areas of socioeconomic status, ability/disability, mental health, and appearance. The class gives students a chance to learn about what goes on in our country and to empathize with people from many different backgrounds and in many different life situations—starting with the other students in the class. You will have opportunities to create group projects, conduct individual investigations, and participate in many group discussions about society and our place in it. If you love learning about our communities, our rights, each other, and the differences we can make, then this is the class for you!

Spanish 7 (Two-trimester)

In this two-trimester class, students will complete the first two of five trimesters of Spanish. The five trimesters are equivalent to the first year of a high school level introductory Spanish course. Students learn the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Students are introduced in a variety of ways to the diverse cultures of Spanish speaking countries, including, but not limited to, geography, customs and holidays. Student are expected to communicate in the Spanish language as they progress in the Spanish language program.

Student Mentor

Student Mentors help peers with special needs by participating in electives, working on academic skills and assisting in social settings. Student Mentors will explore issues involving diversity and leadership skills. Assignments include: goal setting and a final reflective essay. Motivation, compassion, initiative and responsibility are characteristics needed by student mentors.

Teacher's Assistant

Teacher's Assistant - Business Center, Library, Teacher
(One Trimester; Pass/Fail Grading)

Business Center TA - log in all students coming in and out of the Business Center and assist students to print documents from thumb drives, server and email. Students will routinely troubleshoot issues, including jammed printers, new printer cartridges, etc. Students may also inventory and clean technology equipment in classrooms and iBook carts, fix iBook carts, check power cords and replace when necessary, replace missing keys from keyboards, check printer for tone, and may assist with rebuilding laptop and desktop computers.

Teacher TA - work in an assigned classroom. Routine tasks may include preparing handouts, creating bulletin boards, organizing classroom papers, running errands, correcting papers, filing, or other duties as assigned.

Library TA - staff the circulation desk, where they check books in and out of the library and provide basic library information to library users. Other duties include shelving books, processing library materials, and keeping the library tidy and clean.
Being a Library TA requires an aptitude for detail-oriented work:

* Ability to learn library shelving systems
* Ability to alphabetize
* Consistent attention to detail
* Ability to work independently
* Initiative to identify and complete tasks

A Library TA is expected to perform their duties in a courteous and helpful way. They act as positive role models for other students by following library policies and regulations at all times. The best candidates for this job are enthusiastic about books and reading. A Library TA will learn how to use libraries well, and develop lifelong skills.

Creative Writing

Do you want to become a better writer and have a bit of fun doing it? If so, this class is definitely for you. In Inspired Writing we will combine critical reading and purpose driven writing to help you to write powerfully and mindfully. We will inform, persuade, and entertain a variety of audiences through our writing of poetry, essays, memoirs, and many other writing forms. No repeats.

Yearbook **(Trimesters one and two)**

Want to know the theme, or better yet, *pick* the theme of the yearbook? Want to publish a real book, take photographs, and write creative stories? Want to learn software you can use the rest of your life? Seventh and eighth grade students will work collaboratively on theme, page layout and design, photography, interviewing, and copy/caption writing in order to produce this historical document.
Familiarity with photo-based and publishing-based computer software programs is helpful; however, Pixler and OnLine Design will be taught. Returning yearbook students are encouraged to apply as editors for the new yearbook staff. This elective is challenging and requires each student to take responsibility for meeting real deadlines for a real publishing company, but it is also very fun!