

Saint Mary's Hall



Middle School Curriculum Guide 2023-2024

Contents

Middle School Course of Study	3
English Language Arts	4
Fine Arts	7
Mathematics	12
Science	14
Social Studies	16
Total Wellness and Fitness	18
World Languages and Cultures	20

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE OF STUDY

FORM 6

English Language Arts 6
Mathematics 6 or Pre-Algebra 6
Earth Science 6
Social Studies 6: The Eastern Hemisphere: “From Mesopotamia to the Modern World”
World Language and technology Rotation or Academic Reading
Art 6, Beginning Band & Strings, Theater 6, or Introduction to Robotics
Total Wellness and Fitness 6

FORM 7

English Language Arts 7
Pre-Algebra A, Pre-Algebra 7 or Algebra 7
Life Science 7
Social Studies 7: The Western Hemisphere (1 sem.) & Texas History (1 sem.)
French Language and Culture 1A, Latin Language and Roman Culture 1A, Spanish Language and Culture 1A, Accelerated Spanish Language and Culture II, Academic Reading 7/8 or Academic Writing
Art I, Concert Band, Concert Strings, Beginning Speech & Drama, Advanced Robotics
Total Wellness and Fitness 7

FORM 8

English Language Arts 8
Pre-Algebra B, Algebra 8, or Geometry 8
Physical Science 8: Chemistry (1 sem.) & Physics (1 sem.)
Social Studies 8: United States History to 1865
French Language and Culture 1B, Latin Language and Roman Culture 1B, Spanish Language and Culture 1B, or Accelerated Spanish Language and Culture III, Academic Reading 7/8 or Academic Writing
Art II, Concert Band, Concert Strings, Beginning Speech & Drama, Advanced Speech & Drama, Competitive Robotics
Total Wellness and Fitness 8

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

In the Middle School English Language Arts program, students refine and master previously learned skills in increasingly complex reading selections and written compositions. They read classic and contemporary selections, both fiction and nonfiction, and are able to apply strategies for better comprehension, analysis, and interpretation. In addition, students select and use different forms of writing for specific purposes, including blogs and other digital platforms. They learn to edit their writing based on their knowledge of grammar and usage, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions of written language. Students become increasingly more sophisticated in their writing as they learn how to compose complex sentences and use those structures in their own writing.

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

Form 6

Length of Course: 2 semesters

Texts: Core texts and selected paperbacks/novels

Course Description: This course is designed to help students become critical readers who can recognize recurrent themes and structures in literature and expressive writers who can write effectively about those structures. To facilitate this learning, English 6 explores the essential question, “How does your view of the world around you shape your understanding of what you read and what you write?” In Form 6 English, students study a wide range of fiction and nonfiction to make those connections. Students learn the meaning and significance of narrative elements, literary devices and strategies as they work to comprehend more complex reading material. Using mentor texts to guide them in the writing process, students begin the refinement of the many skills involved in effective writing. The course emphasizes the following key concepts in written language: prewriting strategies, writing processes, audience awareness, idea development, topic sentence and paragraph development, use of concrete details, organizational strategies, revising strategies, voice, diction, syntax, and language conventions. Students practice these concepts in a variety of assignments that include descriptive writing, personal narratives, journal entries, compare-contrast essays, creative writing, imitation exercises, and other expository writing pieces that help them gain experience in distinguishing “showing from telling.”

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

Form 7

Length of Course: 2 semesters

Texts: Core texts and selected paperbacks

Course Description: The goal of this course is to help students become critical readers who become passionate about literature, as well as expressive writers who can write effectively about literature and life. To facilitate this learning, this course utilizes a variety of literature (fiction and nonfiction) to explore the essential question: *How do your social connections and relationships affect how you read and how you write?* Students continue to develop their understanding of the meaning and the significance of narrative elements, literary devices, sentence structures, paragraph structures, essay

structures, and reading strategies in both reading and writing assignments. A variety of assessments are used to determine each student's level of proficiency and achievement in light of these concepts and skills. The incorporation of all aspects of the writing process, as well as substantive instructional practice in grammar, sentence structures, and paragraphing, is designed to move students along a continuum of more sophisticated writing skills. The content features a combination of selected works of fiction and nonfiction used both as literary achievements and as models for the student's own writing. Regular writing assignments are designed to develop the student's command of various modes and methods of writing. The following key concepts in the writing craft and process are emphasized: rhetorical form, syntax, sentence styles, word usage, structural elements, mechanics (including punctuation), idea development, topic sentence and paragraph development, revision strategies, and tone. Students practice these concepts in a variety of assignments, including: descriptive-narrative writing, compare-contrast writing, extended definition writing, imitation exercises, and other rich activities of writing engagement that help them gain experience in distinguishing showing from telling.

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

Form 8

Length of Course: 2 semesters

Texts: Core texts and selected paperbacks

Course Description: The study of literature develops the student's ability to understand and use the English language—its various forms and conventions—and exposes the student to a variety of historical, cultural, social and moral dilemmas, the study and discussion of which forms the foundation for character and emotional intelligence. The linguistic and emotional intelligence exemplified in great works of literature is an invaluable aid for furthering student understanding of both language and the world around them. To facilitate this learning, Form 8 English explores the essential question, “*How does the knowledge of historical, cultural, social and moral contexts shape your understanding of what you read and how you write?*” Students in Form 8 English read a variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry through two lenses, the sympathetic and the critical, expanding their understanding of the significance of narrative elements and literary devices, as well as sentence, paragraph, and essay structure. The students employ a variety of reading comprehension strategies to increase their ownership of their reading, and thus foster comprehension success, even with difficult texts. Students also learn to develop more stylistically complex sentences and paragraphs, using literary models to foster growth. Students use the writing process to develop mentor text-based compositions in a variety of expository modes—personal narrative, division & classification, cause & effect, comparison & contrast. Lessons in grammar usage and mechanics provide practice with the building blocks of language—words, phrases, clauses—to enable students to convey meaning clearly, correctly and stylistically.

ACADEMIC READING

Form 6

<i>Length of course:</i>	2 semesters
<i>Prerequisite:</i>	External assessment and review conducted by licensed diagnostician
<i>Texts:</i>	Provided by instructor

Course Description: The goal of this course is to improve the reading capabilities of Middle School students who possess the characteristics of dyslexia and/or a learning disability in the area of reading. In order to facilitate this improvement one distinct phonics program will be utilized: *Rewards Phonics* for spelling, comprehension, and fluency improvement. The phonics lessons will combine and connect this program with writing and reading lessons. In addition, two strategic reading programs, Learning Strategies from The University of Kansas and Project CRISS (CReating Independence through Student-owned Strategies), will be used to assist students in becoming independent readers, writers, and thinkers across discipline-based content. Greek and Latin roots instruction, note-taking skills, and organization strategies will be woven into the assignments to assist in increased comprehension of the reading material presented. Vocabulary instruction will be introduced and reinforced throughout the school year with weekly lessons. A variety of informal and formal assessments will be used to determine understanding and mastery of the strategy being taught and the comprehension level of the material itself. Students will be able to connect strategies taught and practiced to their other content area classes.

ACADEMIC WRITING

Form 7 & 8

<i>Length of course:</i>	2 semesters
<i>Prerequisites:</i>	External assessment and review conducted by licensed diagnostician and the completion of either Academic Reading or Academic Reading 7&8
<i>Texts:</i>	Provided by instructor

Course Description: The goal of this course is to extend the student's understanding and application of strategies learned in Academic Reading or Academic Reading 7&8 with a stronger emphasis on academic writing skills. Students will continue to work with the *Rewards* phonics program not only to emphasize spelling, fluency, and comprehension but also to use writing as a tool for practice and internalization of phonics instruction. Longer writing assignments will center on the philosophy that struggling writers need support in organization, revision, and elaboration. Project CRISS (CReating Independence through Student-owned Strategies) and other writing resources such as *From Talking to Writing: Strategies for Scaffolding Expository Expression*, *Make It Real: Strategies for Success with Informational Texts*, and the class textbook *Grammar for Middle School: A Sentence-Composing Approach* will provide writing supports needed to target writing success. Additional journal writing, Greek and Latin root instruction, vocabulary instruction, and instruction in content area writing from science, math, and social studies will be woven into the weekly lessons.

ACADEMIC READING

Forms 7 & 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Prerequisites: External assessment and review conducted by licensed diagnostician

Texts: Provided by instructor

Course Description: The goal of this course is to improve the reading capabilities and fluency of Middle School students who possess the characteristics of dyslexia and/or a learning disability in the area of reading. In order to facilitate this improvement one distinct phonics program will be utilized: *Rewards Phonics* for spelling, comprehension, and fluency improvement. The phonics lessons will combine and connect this program with writing and reading lessons. In addition, two strategic reading programs, *Learning Strategies* from The University of Kansas and *Project CRISS* (CReating Independence through Student-owned Strategies), will be used to assist students in becoming independent readers, writers, and thinkers across discipline-based content. Greek and Latin roots instruction, note-taking skills, and organization strategies will be woven into the assignments to assist in increased comprehension of the reading material presented. Vocabulary instruction will be introduced and reinforced throughout the school year with weekly lessons. A variety of informal and formal assessments will be used to determine understanding and mastery of the strategy being taught and the comprehension level of the material itself. Students will be able to connect strategies taught and practiced to their other content area classes.

FINE ARTS CLASSES: Music, Visual Art, Theatre, Speech, and Debate

Most Fine Arts classes have additional costs for the purchase of materials and/or to participate in special class-related events. For example, the costs of instruments, dance attire, camera equipment and supplies, tournament registration/participation, music, costumes, and drawing materials are often the responsibility of the student. Please contact the Director of Fine Arts or the instructor of the course for more information. Cost should never serve as a barrier to participation, and additional funds are available to support families. To learn more about this financial assistance, please contact Associate Director of Admission Joe Muller at jmuller@smhall.org.

MUSIC

BEGINNING BAND & STRINGS

Form 6 & 7

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: Provided by instructor

Course Description: Students learn to perform on traditional wind, percussion or strings instruments in a large ensemble and within sections, while developing individual musical skills. Students are required to supply their own instruments. No prior musical training is necessary.

CONCERT BAND

Forms 7 & 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: Provided by instructor

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

Course Description: Students continue their individual musical development while performing traditional band repertoire. Opportunities for solo, small and large ensemble and group performances throughout the year exist for all members. Students are required to supply their own instruments.

CONCERT STRINGS

Forms 7 & 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: Provided by instructor

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

Course Description: The ensemble will prepare and perform string works including quartets, small chamber works, and chamber symphonies by some of the most important composers in history. Special attention will be paid to style and musicality throughout different musical periods and to the theoretical and historical aspects of the music being studied.

THEATRE

FORM 6 THEATRE

Form 6

Length of course: 1 semester (Paired with Art 6 or Introduction to Robotics)

Texts: Provided by instructor

Course Description: Theatre 6 is a one-semester course that covers basic acting techniques. Using a hands-on approach to learning about acting, students are guided through the process of building a character through various group and individual performances. Theatre vocabulary is also studied. The semester culminates in an in-class performance.

BEGINNING THEATRE & SPEECH

Forms 7 & 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: Provided by instructor

Course Description: The course will cover the basics of theatre through rehearsing and performing improvisation, scenes, monologues, pantomime, and Shakespeare as well as preparing for (optional) competitive Speech tournaments. Students will perform in acting showcases and may choose to compete at speech tournaments.

ADVANCED THEATRE, SPEECH & DEBATE

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: Provided by instructor

Course Description: The course will cover more advanced topics in theatre and speech as well as introduce the basics of debate. Students will perform in acting showcases and at speech and debate tournaments.

VISUAL ART

ART

Form 6

Length of course: 1 semester (Paired with Theatre 6 or Intro to Robotics)

Course Description: Form 6 Art students will draw, paint and sculpt their way into the Middle School art experience. The semester long class will leave the students wanting more while setting a strong foundation in art appreciation and artistic expression. Students will be introduced to the elements and principles of design while building their art vocabulary and discovering new technical skills through a wide range of mediums. There is a materials fee.

ART I

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters

Course Description: Students in this course will focus on making art using a variety of materials. Assignments will address technical skills using both 2 and 3-dimensional media. Through class discussions, projects, and critiques, students will begin to see how the materials and processes of art can be used to make concepts and ideas real. There is a materials fee.

ART II

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Course Description: Students will further explore the elements and principles of art and how to apply them to create works of art in a variety of media. Projects will include instruction in drawing, painting, design, printmaking, book arts, sculpture, and art history. Students will develop their visual creative problem solving skills and hone their perceptual abilities to create their own unique visual statements. The course focuses on expanding technical and problem solving skills, while requiring students to think conceptually and relate their work to the contemporary world. There is a material fee.

FINE ARTS ACTIVITIES: Dance, Theatre, and Music

Non-credit arts options

DANCE

DANCE: KALEIDOSCOPE

Forms 6, 7 & 8

Length of course: After-School Activity Block*: Fall Season

Course Description: Students will have daily study in ballet and modern dance, as well as choreography. Fall semester dancers will perform in the Middle and Upper School Contemporary Dance Production *Kaleidoscope*. Winter/Spring dancers will perform in the Middle and Upper School Ballet Production. Students may elect to take a full year of dance, fall semester only, or Winter and Spring dance. Students may also register for Afternoon Dance classes. See below.

DANCE: BALLET PRODUCTION

Forms 6, 7 & 8

Length of course: After-School Activity Block*: Winter & Spring Seasons

Course Description: Students will have daily study in proper ballet and modern dance, as well as choreography. Fall semester dancers will perform in the Middle and Upper School Contemporary Dance Production *Kaleidoscope*. Winter/Spring dancers will perform in the Middle and Upper School Ballet Production. Students may elect to take a full year of dance, fall semester only, or Winter and Spring dance. Students may also register for Afternoon Dance classes. See below.

AFTERNOON DANCE:

Forms 6, 7 & 8

Length of course: 1 semester

Afternoon classes in ballet, jazz, modern, folklorico, hip-hop, and more for beginners and serious students alike. Dance classes are featured in the fall and spring productions (*Kaleidoscope* and the ballet production). Classes are fee-based. See the [SMH Dance Website](#) for more information.

THEATRE

THEATRE PRODUCTION

Forms 6, 7 & 8

Length of course: After-School Activity Block*: Winter Season

Course Description: Students will have the opportunity to actively participate in play production. Students will be assigned roles onstage or backstage. The production will be presented to an audience at the conclusion of the season. Only students who are registered for the Winter Season Drama Production are eligible to participate in the Middle School Drama Production.

FALL MUSICAL PRODUCTION

Form 8

Length of course: After-School Activity Block*: Fall Season

Course Description: Students will have the opportunity to actively participate in the upper school fall musical production. Students will attend auditions and be assigned roles onstage or backstage. The production will be presented to an audience at the conclusion of the season. Only Form 8 students who are registered for the Upper School Musical Production are eligible to participate in the production.

MUSIC

PRIVATE MUSIC INSTRUCTION

Forms 6, 7 & 8

Length of course: 1 semester

Course Description: Not-for-credit. Lessons are available to Middle School students in guitar, piano, violin/viola, and voice. Lessons are offered after school or during lunch.

Student fees for private music lessons:

- One semester of 12 30-minute private music lessons: \$498
- One semester of 12 60-minute private music lessons: \$995

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORUS CLUB

Forms 6, 7 & 8

Middle School Chorus performs in two concerts annually and performs at various school events and Chapels. Rehearsals are held during club time.

After School Activity Block Fee*

A one-time \$250 fee will be charged to your book bill for enrolling/participating.

Some Fine Arts classes have additional costs (beyond fees stated above) for the purchase of materials and/or to participate in special class-related events. For example, the costs of instruments, dance attire, tournament registration/participation are the responsibility of the student. Please contact the Fine Arts Director for more information at bbobalk@smbhall.org

MATHEMATICS

MATHEMATICS 6

Form 6

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: *Basic College Mathematics, MyMathLab, the online component and electronic textbook*

Course Description: Mathematics 6 focuses on the mastery of those arithmetic concepts introduced in the Forms 4 and 5. Computation skills used in operating with whole numbers, decimals, fractions, percents, ratio, and proportions are polished and reinforced through problem solving with real world applications. Additional units include work with metric and customary measures, probability, integers and geometry.

PRE-ALGEBRA 6

Form 6

Length of course: 2 semesters

Text: *Pre-Algebra, MyMathLab, the online component and electronic textbook*

Prerequisites:

120 or above SAI on Otis-Lennon Test

85% or above on ERB, Independent School Norms

Grade average in Form 5 math >93

Placement will be determined by a committee of math faculty and the math department chair

Course Description: Pre-Algebra 6 is a fast-paced class as students skip the review of Math 6. This course seeks to prepare students for Algebra in Form 7 by investigating essential mathematical topics with an emphasis on process and problem solving. Students have extensive practice using fractions, decimals, percents, integers, and variables. In addition, they solve proportions and multiple step equations and inequalities. Geometric concepts including surface area and volume are covered, and the students begin graphing lines on a coordinate plane. *Students are expected to maintain an 85 average to remain in the course.*

PRE-ALGEBRA A and B

Form 7 & 8

Length of each course: 2 semesters

Text: *Pre-Algebra, MyMathLab, the online component and electronic textbook*

Prerequisites: Math 6 (Form 7); Pre-Algebra A (Form 8)

Course Description: For students that are operating on level in mathematics. A 2 year sequence in Pre-Algebra seeks to prepare students for Algebra I in Form 9. Students cover the same topics as seen in Pre-Algebra. This sequence allows students time to build a better understanding of introductory algebra topics.

PRE-ALGEBRA 7

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters*Text:* *Pre-Algebra, MyMathLab, the online component and electronic textbook**Prerequisites:* Math 6

Course Description: Pre-Algebra seeks to prepare students for Algebra in Form 8 by investigating essential mathematical topics with an emphasis on process and problem solving. Students will have extensive practice using fractions, decimals, percents, integers, and variables. In addition, they will solve proportions and multiple step equations and inequalities. Geometric concepts including surface area and volume are covered, and the students begin graphing on a coordinate plane.

ALGEBRA 7

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters*Texts:* *Algebra I, MyMathLab, the online component and electronic textbook**Prerequisites:* A minimum grade of B (85%) in Pre-algebra 6

Placement of students new to Saint Mary's Hall will be determined by a committee of MS math faculty and the math department chair.

Course Description: Algebra 7 is a fast-paced class that begins with an in-depth study of linear functions. Key topics also include solutions of linear and quadratic equations, systems of equations, graphs of linear equations, and operations on rational and radical expressions. Students are exposed to a higher degree of abstraction and problem solving. The TI 84 Plus graphing calculator is required. *Students are expected to maintain an 85 average to remain in the course.*

ALGEBRA 8

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters*Text:* *Algebra I, MyMathLab, the online component and electronic textbook**Prerequisites:* *Pre-Algebra*

Course Description: Algebra 8 begins with the study of the structure of the real number system. Key topics include solutions of linear and quadratic equations, systems of equations, graphs of linear equations, and operations on rational and radical expressions. Problem solving is emphasized throughout the year, with a special focus on the mathematical modeling of real-world situations. The TI 84 Plus graphing calculator is required.

GEOMETRY 8

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters*Text:* *Geometry, MyMathLab, the online component and electronic textbook**Prerequisites:* A minimum grade of B (85%) in Algebra 7

Placement of students new to Saint Mary's Hall will be determined by a committee of MS math faculty and the math department chair.

Course Description: Geometry 8 is a fast-paced class. After a unit on symbolic logic, the postulates and theorems of plane and solid geometry are used to illustrate the deductive method in mathematics. The focus of the first semester is on two-column proofs related to parallelism, congruence, and similarity. Second semester topics include areas, volumes, and a brief introduction to trigonometry and analytic geometry. The TI 84 Plus graphing calculator is required. *Students are expected to maintain an 85 average to remain in the course.*

SCIENCE

EARTH AND SPACE SYSTEMS SCIENCE

Form 6

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: Provided by instructor

Course Description: Earth and Space Systems Science is an inquiry-based approach to the study of Earth and Space System science. The geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and exosphere, and the interactions between them including the universe, galaxies and stars, Earth-Moon-Sun system, components of the atmosphere, the water cycle and groundwater, oceans, weather and climate, and changes to the surface of the earth will be covered. Students learn science and engineering by designing and conducting investigations in a collaborative learning environment. Laboratory work consists of investigations and activities that cover the concepts of earth system science. Emphasis is placed on improvement of problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and scientific practices, including experimental design.

LIFE SCIENCE

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: Provided by instructor

Course Description: Life science is a foundational biology course focused on seeking knowledge about life and its interconnectedness. The course explores the study of living organisms, their characteristics and classification, basic life functions, physiology, including human biology, and ecology, along with cell biology, genetics and evolution. Students learn science by designing and conducting projects and investigations, including laboratory work, in a collaborative learning environment. Emphasis is on making connections, the development of problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and scientific practices, including experimental design.

INTRODUCTION TO CHEMISTRY & PHYSICS

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters
Texts: Provided by instructor

Course Description: Introduction to Chemistry and Physics is an inquiry-based, preparatory chemistry and physics course covering beginning concepts in chemistry and physics. The fall semester is an introduction to chemistry and includes properties and classification of matter, the structure of atoms, the development and trends of the periodic table, chemical reactions, and solutions. In the spring semester, the focus shifts to physics and includes motion, forces, work and energy transformations, electricity and magnetism, harmonic motion, heat and temperature and nuclear energy. Students learn science and engineering by designing and conducting investigations in a collaborative learning environment. Laboratory work consists of investigations and activities that cover the concepts of chemistry and physics. Emphasis is placed on the mastery of problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and scientific practices, including experimental design.

ROBOTICS

INTRODUCTION TO ROBOTICS

Form 6

Length of course: 1 semester (Paired with Art 6 or Theater 6)
Texts: None
Software: Lego Mindstorms EV3 Classroom
Prerequisites: None

Course Description: Introduction to Robotics offers students a balanced exposure and practice in both mechanical engineering and computer programming. During this course, students will be challenged to broaden their understanding on how mechanical parts move independently and jointly, as well as on the essential concepts and principles of computer programming concepts. Engineering and programming expectations and complexity will vary with the skill of the students. Throughout the semester long-course, students will be broadening their knowledge of robot-building through building challenges designed to enable the students to master the art of building. This course is task-based and will be modified on an individual basis to challenge the student based on the level of proficiency in the area of robotics. \$150 materials fee.

ADVANCED ROBOTICS

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters
Texts: None
Prerequisites: Permission of instructor.

Course Description: Advanced Robotics is intended as a continuation of Introduction to Robotics; however, participation in the introductory class, though encouraged, is not required. The advanced course is year-long with multiple emphases on engineering design and construction as well

as computer programming. The class will utilize For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Tech Challenge program as the main project and frame of study. Participation in the competition is highly encouraged. The robot will be designed and built with multiple robotic kits and some customized parts via 3D modeling and printing. Students are expected to develop a clear understanding of the engineering process during this course. Additionally, a mastery of image and video editing skills may be gained as the year progresses. Some new and/or more difficult areas of programming, such as object oriented programming via Java, will be introduced as opportunities and students' interests arise. \$150 materials fee.

COMPETITIVE ROBOTICS

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: None

Prerequisites: Advanced Robotics

Course Description: Competitive Robotics class runs together with the Advanced Robotics class. Students are required to participate in FIRST Tech Challenge robotics competition. Students will choose one or more focused team roles such as researcher, engineer, programmer, driver, manager, designer, etc. In developing the skills to fulfill the team role responsibilities, the students are expected to gain deeper understanding and richer skills in their focused area. \$150 materials fee.

SOCIAL STUDIES

THE EASTERN HEMISPHERE: “FROM MESOPOTAMIA TO THE MODERN WORLD”

Form 6

Length of course: 2 semesters

Text: “*History Alive: The Ancient World.*”

Connections to Literature: *Boxers and Saints* by Gene Yang

Course Description: Students in Form 6 Social Studies focus on the geography, history and cultures of the Eastern Hemisphere, through an examination of major historical themes. Utilizing interactive learning strategies, students investigate the development of ancient civilizations in river valleys with a focus on China, the development and beliefs of major world religions and philosophies, and the Middle Ages in Europe. Students conclude the year by learning about the themes of oppression and resistance using case studies of the Boxer Rebellion in China, the Indian Independence Movement in India and resistance to apartheid in South Africa. Our connections to literature supplementary reading enriches our instruction on China by examining China's Boxer Rebellion in Gene Yang's graphic novel, “*Boxers and Saints*”. This emphasis on studying the past and twentieth and

twenty-first-century topics concurrently prepares students for the similar integration of past and present in the Form 9 Global Studies curriculum. Specific case studies, analysis of how the past informs our present and the examination of primary sources engage Form 6 students in active learning.

THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE (SEMESTER 1) & TEXAS HISTORY (SEMESTER 2)

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters

Text: McGraw-Hill- *Discovering World Geography: Western Hemisphere*
McGraw Hill- *Texas History*

Course Description: During First semester, students in Form 7 study the Western Hemisphere focusing on its major geographic features and selected historical themes. Through cross-disciplinary coordination, students' Science and Social Studies curricula reinforce students' understanding of the geology and geography of the hemisphere. Beginning with the early civilizations in Mexico, students investigate the Olmec, Maya, and Aztec, the European exploration of the Western Hemisphere and the impact of that exploration on the Old and New Worlds. Study of these units sets the foundation for additional study of Ancient Civilizations and Trans-Atlantic encounters in the From 9 & 10 Global Studies curricula.

During Semester 2, students concentrate on the history of Texas. Units examine Texas History thematically; themes serve as the essential structure in Texas History rather than chronology. Those organizing themes are conceptual in nature with students examining examples of conflict and conflict resolution, diversity and "turning points" in Texas History from settlement to the twenty-first century.

U.S. HISTORY TO 1865

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Text: McGraw Hill 2018, *"Discovering our Past: A History of the United States – Early Years"*.

Course Description: The Form 8 American History course begins with a unit on societies in pre-Columbian North America. Students learn about European exploration and colonization, the issues leading to the American Revolution, the formation of the Constitution, struggles and successes during the nation's early years of growth and expansion, and political, social and economic developments through the Civil War. The textbook is supplemented with a diverse and varied range of primary sources to view history through different voices and lenses. The introduction of a Pre-Advanced Placement (AP) skills continuum, with its emphasis on interpreting primary source documents and structuring an historical essay, assists students in their transition into Upper School social studies.

TOTAL WELLNESS

LEVELING UP

Form 6

Length of course:

Texts: Provided by instructor

Resources: Social Institute, Puberty Wonder Years, DBT Skills in Schools, McGraw Hill Teen Health

Course Description: Leveling up is a course that focuses both on physical, social, and emotional life skills. This class will help students prepare for the jump from lower school to middle school. Through topics such as organization skills, goal setting, balance, and time management. Students will get an overview of executive functioning skills through mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal effectiveness. These skills help with building relationships, dealing with conflict, peer pressure, building self-esteem, becoming aware of ineffective behaviors and how to change them, regulating our emotions, and being present in the moment. In addition, students will cover female and male anatomy, healthy vs. unhealthy relationships, boundaries, consent, bullying and cyberbullying, hormone changes through puberty, and respecting our friends: gender. Other topics that will be covered are hygiene, germs, sleep, and substance abuse prevention. Students will also cover topics about online safety, acting on your values and beliefs online, awareness about what you post, and where you get your information from online. This class is predominantly project based group work that will help with leadership skills and reflection.

STRIVING FOR GROWTH

Form 7

Length of course:

Texts: Provided by instructor

Resources: Social Institute, Puberty Wonder Years, DBT Skills in Schools, McGraw Hill Teen Health

Course Description: Striving for growth is a course where students focus both on physical, social, and emotional life skills. Students will start identifying their values, beliefs, interests, and personality types. They will get a short overview on organization and time management. Students will also cover topics about online safety, acting on your values and beliefs online, awareness about what you post, and where you get your information from online. Through puberty wonder years, students will work through real life scenarios for consent and boundary setting and refuse and report. Students will also go over reproductive health and how we show respect and acceptance of difference. Students will do a deep dive into interpersonal skills that will help with effective communication. Short overview of mindfulness and then students will lead mindfulness in classes. They will identify ineffective behavior that they would like to change throughout the class and become more aware of how they are feeling and what drives the feelings. Other topics that will be covered in this class are substance abuse prevention, nutrition and eating disorders, vulnerabilities,

and importance of physical activity. This class is predominantly project based group work that will help with leadership skills and reflection.

BUILDING CHARACTER FOR SUCCESS

Form 8

Length of course:

Texts: Provided by instructor

Resources: Social Institute, Puberty Wonder Years, DBT Skills in Schools, McGraw Hill Teen Health

Course Description: Striving for growth is a course where students focus both on physical, social, and emotional life skills. This class is a capstone class. Through this class students will teach a skill from mindfulness, interdisciplinary studies, emotion regulation, and distress tolerance. Students will get CPR and first aid, and stop the bleed. We will have speakers with Q&A for substance abuse and prevention, eating disorders and nutrition, and the importance of physical activity. Upper school students will also come and share opportunities and groups that are available when students move to upper school. We will do an overview of values, beliefs, interests, and personality. Students will come up with an advocacy project that they will put into practice. Learning to find purpose in life. This class is predominantly project based group work, live speakers, that will help with leadership skills and reflection.

FITNESS FOR LIFE

Forms 6, 7 & 8

Course Description: Fitness for strength, flexibility, and conditioning will enable students to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and maintain a health-enhancing level of health & fitness and to increase physical competence, self esteem and the motivation to pursue lifelong physical activity and wellness. Students will gain an understanding of the components of health-related fitness, training principles, and the understanding of the need for physical wellbeing. Students will participate in activities that will increase physical fitness levels and develop health practices that value physical activity. They understand injury prevention and safety.

LIFETIME SPORTS

Forms 6, 7 & 8

Course Description: Lifetime sports will enable students to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and maintain a health-enhancing level of health & fitness. They will increase movement, flexibility, self esteem, play fun games, and find joy in pursuing lifelong physical activity and wellness. Students will gain an understanding of the components of health-related fitness, training principles, and the understanding of the need for physical wellbeing. Students will participate in activities that will increase flexibility levels and develop health practices that value physical activity.

AFTER SCHOOL ATHLETIC OPTIONS

Fall Season: Girls Field Hockey
 Girls Volleyball
 Boys 6 Man Football
 Boys & Girls Flag Football (Form 6)
 Boys & Girls Cross Country

Winter Season: Boys & Girls Basketball
 Boys & Girls Soccer

Spring Season: Girls Softball
 Boys Baseball
 Boys Lacrosse
 Girls Lacrosse (Forms 7 & 8)
 Boys & Girls Golf
 Boys & Girls Track and Field
 Boys & Girls Tennis

After School Activity Fee*

A one-time \$250 fee will be charged to your book bill for enrolling/participating.

WORLD LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

Saint Mary's Hall World Languages and Cultures Mission Statement:

Language and communication are at the heart of human experience. Humans live in culture generated by language and to learn another language is an opportunity to gain profound insight into who we are. The Saint Mary's Hall World Languages and Cultures Department is dedicated to the education of students who communicate with intellect and compassion in our multicultural society.

The Middle School World Languages and Cultures Program develops confident communicators with a strong understanding of language and a deep appreciation for culture. In Form 6, the World Languages program fosters and develops citizens of the world with a breadth of knowledge of a variety of different languages and cultures. Students are introduced to the three languages offered at Saint Mary's Hall; French, Latin and Spanish in a quarterly rotation. The courses are designed to give students an introduction to the language and its culture so they can make an informed decision when selecting the language they will study for the next two years. The expectation of the World Languages Department is that the students will select a language with the goal of achieving an advanced understanding of it. Students who switch their language in the middle of the program could quite possibly be placed in the "Introductory"

level of their new language and thus take Level I in the Upper School. Students may begin a new language when they enter Upper School. However, those students who remain with one language during the two-year program in the Middle School and continue on with this same language in the Upper School have a much greater possibility of reaching the AP level than those who do not.

FORM 6 WORLD LANGUAGES AND COMPUTER LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS

Form 6

Length of each rotation: One quarter

Students will have the opportunity to study French, Latin, Spanish, and technology on a rotating basis each quarter in Form 6. These World Language and Computer Language rotations aim to cultivate empathy and appreciation for diverse perspectives, enabling students to navigate global societies as confident lifelong learners. The introductory language courses provide a comprehensive overview of the links between Romance languages, including the cultures of ancient Rome, Spain, and France. In addition to gaining a foundational knowledge of each language's vocabulary, students will discover new cultures and expand their curiosity, which will inform their future language choices in Forms 7 and 8.

The Computer Language rotation offers an introduction to computer science. Students will learn the basics of computer programming along with the basics of computer science. The material emphasizes computational thinking and helps develop the ability to solve complex problems. This course covers the basic building blocks of programming along with other fundamental elements of computer science.

FRENCH

DISCOVERY FRENCH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ROTATION

Form 6

Length of course: One quarter

Texts: Provided by instructor

Prerequisites: None

Course Description: The Discovery French Language and Culture rotation provides students with a basic introduction to the French language and Francophone cultures. The aim is to build students' listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities in French, while also learning about French-speaking countries and cultures around the globe. The students will begin to develop French conversational skills including the development of correct pronunciation, colloquial speech, and vocabulary inherent to everyday situations. A variety of methods and strategies will be used to engage, inspire, and challenge students. Students are introduced to basic grammatical structures, vocabulary for everyday conversations, and an exploration of cultural celebrations, geography, cuisine, and music. In addition to the French curriculum, students will explore a variety of video clips, songs, and

interactive games. Upon completion of this rotation, students may choose to continue on to French IA in Form 7.

FRENCH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IA

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: *D'Accord Level I, text and Cahier de l'élève (first half of the text) 2024 edition*
Supersite Plus access

Prerequisites: French Discovery or instructor permission

Course Description: French IA is the first half of a Middle School program that is the equivalent of Upper School level French I. This course reviews and recycles vocabulary and grammar seen in the French 6 exploratory course and then moves to the more complex content materials presented in the textbook, *D'Accord I*. Students also practice skills in a student workbook and online website that accompany the text, developing their proficiency in more complex grammatical structures. French is spoken in the classroom, strengthening students' aural comprehension, oral proficiency, and the basic skills necessary to function in a French-speaking environment. Through a variety of guided activities that appeal to different learning styles and encourage active participation, students develop conversational skills to prepare them for everyday situations. Students also become acquainted with the many different aspects of French culture and the Francophone world, thus leading them to a greater understanding of people and places with which they may not be familiar. A variety of activities encourage students to use simple conversation in everyday situations, and students are expected to master the application of the models of correct colloquial speech. Audio-visual materials include DVD's, video clips, online activities through the supersite, and interactive games. Students take the National French Exam in the spring. Upon completion, students will continue to French IB.

FRENCH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IB

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: *D'Accord Level I, text and Cahier d'Exercices (second half of the text) 2019 Edition*
Supersite access (keep all resources from French 1A)

Prerequisites: French IA or instructor permission

Course Description: French IB is the second half of a Middle School program begun in form 7. It completes the course study of the textbook started in Form 7. With successful completion of the course, students should be eligible for French II in the Upper School. The French language is used exclusively in the classroom, thus strengthening the students' oral/aural comprehension and encouraging interaction among classroom peers. Developing a higher level of proficiency in the basic language skills is the focus of this year's French classes. An appreciation of the target cultures continues through cultural lessons that help to enhance global awareness. There is an emphasis on vocabulary building and using the target language in a variety of contexts. Grammar concepts studied become more complex; students are expected to use those concepts in both oral and written

work. Audio-visual materials include DVD's, video clips, online activities through the supersite, and interactive games. Emphasis is placed on the ability to use the language in a logical, thoughtful manner and to function effectively in a French-speaking environment. Additionally, students are expected to express themselves in writing, using proper grammar and spelling. Students take the National French Exam in the spring.

LATIN

DISCOVERY LATIN LANGUAGE AND ROMAN CULTURE ROTATION

Form 6

Length of course: One quarter
Texts: *Provided by instructor*
Prerequisites: None

Course Description: Discovery Latin Language and Culture is a general introduction to the language, people, culture, and religion of the ancient Roman world. Largely, the course emphasizes vocabulary building - both Latin and, consequently, derived English vocabulary. Students will develop a better understanding of relationships between Latin words and their many English derivatives. Students will also engage in discussions, games, and projects on Greek mythology, Roman culture and historical figures. As part of the Discovery syllabus students learn a variety of categorized vocabulary including: animals, art/architecture, body parts, cardinal/ordinal numbers, colors, commands, family, oral Latin, mottoes/expressions/idioms, nature, and Roman items (clothing, entertainment, housing, meals). These vocabulary topics are reinforced through a variety of media, including games, videos, and Certamen, the quiz-bowl style buzzer game.

Upon completion of this rotation, students may choose to continue on to Latin IA in Form 7.

LATIN LANGUAGE AND ROMAN CULTURE 1A

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters
Texts: *Suburani Book I and digital account, Hands-Up Education*
Prerequisites: Latin Discovery or instructor permission

Course Description: Latin IA is the first half of the Middle School Latin program, which, when completed (after Latin 1B), is equivalent to completing Upper School Latin I. Students will use the *Suburani (NA edition) Book 1*, which teaches Latin and Roman culture through the eyes of the diverse residents of the Subura, a neighborhood in ancient Rome. Students will continue with the same book in the 1B course in Form 8. Culture and language acquisition is reinforced by the extensive use of multimedia resources and interactive activities to aid, consolidate and assess understanding. Key grammatical structures covered this year are: present, imperfect, and perfect verb tenses; noun and adjective agreement; and personal pronouns. Depending on the JCL syllabus, students will learn Roman history with an emphasis on either the Empire, or the Monarchy/Republic periods. Keen students may also begin to prepare for competitive Certamen, a classical quiz-bowl game, and play against local teams. Students participate in up to four online specialized-content contests: national

exams in Latin/Greek roots, Roman civilization, Latin vocabulary, and mythology. Participation in one Junior Classical League event (either the February Area Convention or the State Convention in March) is a course requirement.

LATIN LANGUAGE AND ROMAN CULTURE IB

Forms 7 & 8

Length of course: 2 semesters
Texts: *Suburani Book I, Hands-Up Education* (keep from Latin 1A)
Suburani Book I digital account
Prerequisites: Latin 1A or instructor permission

Course Description: Latin IB is the second half of the Middle School Latin program, which, when completed is equivalent to completing Upper School Latin I. Students will increase their efficiency in reading and translating Latin. As in Latin IA, course book material is reinforced with multimedia resources and interactive activities. Building on the IA course, key grammatical structures include: pluperfect tense; all noun cases in five declensions; irregular verbs; 1st ,2nd and 3rd declension adjectives; demonstrative, personal, reflexive, intensive and possessive pronouns. Students may participate in one to four online, specialized-content contests, which are national exams in Latin/Greek roots, Roman civilization, Latin vocabulary, and mythology. They will also prepare for Level I of the National Latin Exam. Participation in one Junior Classical League event (either the February Area Convention or the State Convention in March) is a course requirement.

SPANISH

DISCOVERY SPANISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ROTATION

Form 6

Length of course: 1 Quarter
Texts: Provided by Instructor
Prerequisites: None

Course Description: The Discovery Spanish rotation aims to enhance students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities in the language, while also introducing them to the diverse cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. To achieve this, a variety of methods and strategies will be employed to engage, inspire, and challenge each student. The curriculum covers key elements of Spanish grammar, conversational development on everyday topics, and an exploration of cultural celebrations, history, art, and people. Upon completion of this rotation, students may choose to continue on to Spanish IA in Form 7 or may be recommended to take the placement evaluation for the Accelerated Spanish Language and Culture class.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IA

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters
Texts: *Descubre Nivel 1 with Prime online resources 2022 Edition* (first half)
Prerequisites: Spanish Discovery or instructor permission

Course Description: During this course, students will develop a level of proficiency in all four basic language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) with the goal of producing language in meaningful ways. Cultural lessons enable the students to attain a heightened appreciation of the target cultures and greater global awareness. Students study more complex grammatical structures and concepts, learning to express themselves in the present and in the near future tenses. More than simply enhancing their recognition of language, students will work to incorporate the new linguistic material into their active speech and written work. Throughout the year, students will also work on developing their ability to respond spontaneously and creatively to questions, situations, and visual prompts orally and in writing. The course is taught in Spanish; daily conversations and dialogues, structured pair and small group activities, computer-based exercises, and audiovisual materials provide students with ample opportunities for oral practice and listening. Supplementary reading selections expand the students' passive vocabulary.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IB

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: *Descubre Nivel 1 with Prime online resources* 2022 Edition (second half)

Prerequisites: Spanish IA or instructor permission

Course Description: The Spanish Language and Culture IB course builds upon the foundation established in Spanish Language and Culture IA. The primary focus is to enhance students' Spanish language proficiency through interactive activities, including conversations, writing assignments, and reading comprehension. The course follows a communicative and task-based approach to language learning, designed to develop students' competency in all four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In addition to language acquisition, the course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures and societies. By exploring cultural norms, values, and traditions, students will be better equipped to interact socially and professionally with native Spanish speakers. To achieve this, students will review and improve their mastery of Spanish grammar structures, particularly the present tense, and broaden their vocabulary with the introduction of new structures such as the present progressive and preterit tense, as well as direct and indirect object pronouns. Furthermore, the class will delve into Hispanic culture and society through textbook materials and real-life experiences of the Hispanic community in and around San Antonio, as well as explore the rich artistic and cultural heritage of the Spanish-speaking world.

ACCELERATED SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE PROGRAM

Criteria for acceptance into the Accelerated Spanish Language and Culture Program for continuing SMH students:

- Strong recommendation from Form 5 Spanish teacher based on student progress, participation, attitude in class, and enthusiasm for the language.

- A strong ability to understand spoken Spanish and to be able to produce the language. This is evaluated through review of student work and during an oral interview by the Middle School Curriculum Coordinator and Spanish teachers.
- A strong ability to write in Spanish, demonstrated through review of student work and the writing task on the placement assessment.
- An ideal ASLC student is highly motivated, possesses strong study skills and embodies a true passion for the language and culture

Criteria for acceptance into the Accelerated Spanish Language and Culture Program for students new to SMH:

- A strong performance on the placement assessment given by the ASLC teacher, the Curriculum Coordinator and/or one of our MS Spanish teachers.
- A solid record as a student who is highly motivated, possesses strong study skills and embodies a true passion for the Spanish language and culture.
- A strong ability to understand spoken Spanish and to be able to produce the language. This will be evaluated by an oral interview.

Please note: Once accepted into the ASLC program, the student must maintain an 85% average to remain in the class and/or have teacher recommendation and approval. If not, the student will be moved into the regular Spanish program either at semester or the following academic year.

ACCELERATED SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE FORM 6 ROTATION

Length of course: One quarter

Texts: *Provided by instructor*

Prerequisites: Acceptance into the Accelerated Spanish Language and Culture Program for SMH students is contingent on the criteria listed above.

Course Description: This portion of our World Languages and Cultures rotation course is for the student who not only possesses speaking proficiency but who also demonstrates capacity for understanding the Spanish language, and a true passion for the language and culture. The student will be able to elaborate and be spontaneous in conversation covering a wide variety of material deriving from everyday situations to literary themes. Particular emphasis is placed on grammar, writing, and vocabulary, listening and reading comprehension. The ASLC course provides authentic material from a variety of resources that include art, music, cuisine, film and literature. The student has the opportunity of reinforcing Spanish skills through fun activities, such as role-playing, games and hands-on activities. In addition, the rotation offers a more advanced reading and writing program. Daily conversations, dialogues, group projects and presentations provide the student with ample opportunities for oral practice to improve pronunciation. From the very beginning of the course, the instructor and the students will use only Spanish in the classroom. Upon completion of

this rotation, students may be recommended to continue on to Accelerated Spanish Language and Culture II in Form 7 or they may choose to take French IA or Latin IA.

ACCELERATED SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE II

Form 7

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: *Descubre 1B with Prime Supersite digital access* 2022 Edition

Prerequisites: ASLC I or placement test and permission of instructor.

Course Description: ASLC II is the second year of the full immersion program that continues in Form 8. This course continues to build students' knowledge of Spanish structure through exercises that reinforce and expand grammar comprehension and it will help develop a higher level of proficiency in all four basic language skills. Particular emphasis continues to be placed on grammar, writing, expanding vocabulary, listening and reading comprehension. The ASLC III course provides authentic material from the student text and a variety of supplemental resources that include art, music, cuisine, film and literature. The course offers a strong reading and writing program; through literary study, the students will learn about different countries and cultures and the people that live in them thus leading the students to a better understanding of the Spanish speaking world. The reading program provides the student with a taste of genuine Hispanic tradition through *¡Gol! II* and other supplemental texts. ASLC II uses *Descubre 1B* as the textbook to provide the student with grammar lessons, structure usage and continue to teach them the essentials of both the Spanish and Latin American civilizations. Titles such as *Marcelino pan y vino* and *Gol II* will be used as part of the reading program.

ACCELERATED SPANISH LANGUAGE & CULTURE III

Form 8

Length of course: 2 semesters

Texts: *¡Exploremos! 2, ¡Exploremos! 2 Workbook*

Prerequisites: ASLC II or placement test and permission of instructor.

Course Description: ASLC III serves as the last course of the full immersion Accelerated Spanish program in Middle School. During this course, students will achieve an advanced level of proficiency in reading, writing, listening and reading comprehension, attaining a more sophisticated level of communication in their speech and written work. More complex grammatical structures and concepts will be taught at this level; as a graded progression course this will allow students to effectively communicate in Spanish in realistic situations, elaborating dialogue covering a wide variety of materials. The course also helps prepare them to interact socially and professionally with native Spanish speakers by helping them understand the cultural assumptions of the Spanish-speaking world, cultural norms of these diverse societies, and their growing importance in the community. A large variety of activities, such as research projects, oral presentations, and writing assignments, continue to develop language acquisition and perfection. Additionally, the course continues to offer a strong reading and writing program. Through literary study, the student will learn about different

countries and cultures and the people that live in them thus leading the student to a better understanding of the Spanish speaking world. Readings and other authentic materials give students ample opportunities to compare and contrast various Spanish speaking cultures and provide the students with the strategies and knowledge necessary to develop an understanding of the Spanish and the Hispanic culture. ASLC III continues to use *¡Exploremos! 2* as the textbook. Titles such as *Cuentos de la selva* and *Tocando el vacío*, will be used as part of the reading program.