

ACADEMIC DECATHLON

MS. HENSHAW

general information

The Texas UIL Academic Decathlon class is designed to prepare students for the Texas UIL Academic Decathlon competition. The course will cover ten academic disciplines: Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Economics, Literature, Art, Music, Speech, Interview, and Essay. Students will also prepare for the Super Quiz, which focuses on a specific theme each year. The class emphasizes critical thinking, teamwork, and effective study habits.

preparation

Practice will be completed during class time. There may be some situations that preparation is done outside of the classroom.

communication

All communication will be conducted through Class Dojo, Skyward, and Blackboard emails. Parent access to Class Dojo and Google Classroom is available.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will:

- Master the content in each of the ten academic disciplines.
- Develop effective study and test-taking strategies.
- Improve public speaking and interview skills.
- Engage in analytical writing and critical thinking.
- Work collaboratively to achieve team goals.

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📍 Room 204

EXPECTATIONS

- **Attendance:** Regular attendance is crucial for success in this course.
- **Participation:** Active participation in discussions, group work, and practice sessions is required.
- **Homework:** Timely completion of assigned readings, practice tests, and essays.
- **Teamwork:** Students are expected to collaborate and support their teammates.

MATERIALS

1" - 1.5" binder

Notecards

EVENTS FOR DECATHLON

Super Quiz - In the Super Quiz, you and your teammates will take turns solving tough multiple-choice challenges in front of a live audience. At the national finals, you'll collaborate with two of your teammates to figure out the best answer to each question before time runs out. (You'd better have a plan for when you disagree!) The exact format of the Super Quiz varies from state to state, but it is always the last event, the loudest, and the most intense: a high-stakes celebration of all the subjects you've learned.

Interview - In the interview, you'll have seven minutes to answer questions about a subject you shouldn't need to research very much: yourself. Learning to listen closely and to present yourself in a compelling way is another skill that will benefit you for the rest of your life, whether it's during your college interviews, on the job, or at dinner with your future parents-in-law. Be ready to answer questions about your background, your interests, and your goals, and never forget to thank your judges for volunteering.

Essay - You'll have fifty minutes to write the strongest paper possible. To get ready, you'll want to practice outlining and writing compelling arguments related to six of the seven Academic Decathlon subjects—excluding only math. The more clearly you can learn to write, the more persuasive you'll be—and the more you've studied the theme, the more evidence you'll be able to cite on whatever topic you face on competition day.

Tests of Knowledge - The Decathlon is more a marathon than a sprint. To round out the events above, you'll take seven multiple choice exams, one in each of the Academic Decathlon subjects: Art, Music, Social Science, Science, Economics, Literature, and Mathematics. You'll find yourself developing better critical thinking and test-taking skills that will serve you well on everything from the SAT to your college finals. In the short run you'll also have the chance to win something much shinier: medals in every subject. The more well-rounded you are, and the further you go outside your comfort zone, the more you'll win—a chance, even in a team sport, to demonstrate individual excellence.

DECATHLON TEAM

Honor: 3.80-4.00

Scholastic: 3.20-3.799

Varsity: 3.199 and below

A team consists of nine full-time students from the ninth through twelfth grades of the same high school. Each team is made up of three Honor students, three Scholastic students, and three Varsity students in accordance with the above grade point average definitions. Contestants may compete in a higher division than their own grade point average category but not in a lower division. Each team member competes in all ten events of the Decathlon and is eligible for individual medals in all ten events. Only six scores count for the final team standing in the competition—the top two Honor scores, the top two Scholastic scores, and the top two Varsity scores. A school may therefore enter with fewer than nine members and still be eligible for team awards as long as there are at least two Honor, two Scholastic, and two Varsity members.

areas of participation

- Art: art appreciation, art history
- Business (non-skill classes)
- Computer science
- English/language arts (including humanities, journalism, and speech)
- Foreign language
- Mathematics: algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, etc.
- Music: theory, appreciation, history
- Science
- Social Science (including economics, humanities)

AFTER SCHOOL PRACTICE

Some meetings will need to be held after school for the students that are not enrolled in the class period.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____