



8th Grade Spectra Curriculum

Board Approved: 05/21/2026

Course Information

Middle School Full Year

Course Description:

In this unit, students will develop the ability to apply problem-solving and critical thinking skills to create and test purposeful solutions, make decisions, support decisions with facts and logic, and understand how decisions and proposed solutions impact local and global communities.

Students will develop the ability to be open to new topics and thought processes, propose multiple detailed and original ideas, expand upon the thoughts of others, and recommend inventive solutions to new or unfamiliar concepts.

Students will develop self-acceptance and self-awareness while demonstrating responsibility for their personal growth and engagement in their communities while embracing cultural and personal differences.

Students will develop effective communication skills through complex reasoning, creative thinking, and affective processing.

Transfer Goals:

- Independently analyze unfamiliar problems, generate multiple possible solutions, and evaluate which solution is most effective based on the situation.
- Independently gather and evaluate relevant facts and use them to justify their decisions, opinions, or arguments in academic and real-life contexts.
- Express complex thoughts through writing, speaking, or multimedia formats in ways that are appropriate for the intended audience and purpose.
- Select and use a variety of creative thinking tools to develop original products or solutions in academic or real-world situations.
- Experiment with different media, technologies, or resources to create products that reflect their interests, understanding, or learning goals.
- Effectively share their ideas through speech, writing, visuals, movement, or other forms, depending on the audience and purpose of the communication.
- Make meaningful connections between their strengths, challenges, and giftedness, using that understanding to shape their approach to learning and personal growth.
- Respond with integrity, recognize and express their own feelings and perspectives, and respect those of others in both personal and academic settings.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independently stay organized, prioritize responsibilities, and follow through with commitments in a timely and focused manner. |
| Curriculum Standards: Missouri Learning Standards - Gifted Learner Outcomes | |
| Curriculum Resource(s): N/A | |

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 1: Complex Reasoning

Timeframe: Ongoing throughout the year

Unit Description: In this unit, students will develop the ability to apply problem-solving and critical thinking skills to create and test purposeful solutions, make decisions, support decisions with facts and logic, and understand how decisions and proposed solutions impact local and global communities.

Enduring Understandings:

- Decision making requires a process of gathering, analyzing, and applying information and ideas.
- The decisions that we make impact others. It is important to consider the implications and consequences of personal actions.
- The development of critical thinking skills and dispositions is a life-long endeavor.
- There are different processes and strategies for solving problems. Being able to apply these processes and strategies may increase the probability of developing a successful outcome.
- Through practice, we can grow in our ability to develop effective solutions to problems.

Essential Questions:

- How do I make and defend a well thought out and reasonable decision?
- How do I use different strategies to effectively generate solutions that solve problems?
- Why is it important to be able to solve problems and explain my reasoning?
- How do my decisions impact the world?
- How can I transfer my knowledge and skills to new situations?
- How do I communicate my ideas effectively to an appropriate audience?

Unit 1 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
CR.M.1	• I can independently collect and analyze data to identify multiple perspectives and view on issues. • I can consider evidence that disconfirms ideas and assumptions about issues.
<u>CR.M.2.B</u>	• I can develop multiple possible solutions to singular and multifaceted problems. • I can identify and justify success criteria for problem solutions and evaluate the possible effectiveness of proposed solutions to problems.
CR.M.3	• I can determine and justify criteria for evaluating and selecting responses to issues; apply criteria and defend selections. • I can support my own ideas, decisions, and opinions with evidence from multiple sources; reason with logic to evaluate issues.
CR.M.4	• I can employ a student-selected problem -solving strategy and assess the effectiveness of the strategy.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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CR.M.5	I can develop, test, and refine prototypes as part of a cyclical design process, evaluate the effectiveness based on teacher-selected success criteria, and explain the reasoning behind changes made in the iteration process.
CR.M.6	- I can examine issues from multiple viewpoints while considering the implications on the community. - I can assess how my decisions can add to a potential solution within a community and global framework.
CR.M.7	I can identify and test assumptions within a system and determine where unintended consequences might arise.
CR.M.8	I can demonstrate use of thinking processes that allow for a depth of thought by evaluating and justifying data that supports logical conclusions.
<u>CR.M.9.A</u>	I can effectively communicate complex ideas in a way that purposefully meets the need(s) of the intended audience. - I can offer constructive feedback, analyze feedback received for effectiveness, and incorporate selected feedback.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 2: Creative Thinking

Timeframe: Ongoing throughout the year

Unit Description: In this unit, students will develop the ability to be open to new topics and thought processes, propose multiple detailed and original ideas, expand upon the thoughts of others, and recommend inventive solutions to new or unfamiliar concepts.

Enduring Understandings:

- Innovative thinking and creative thinking are vital to our progress as a society.
- Everyone can grow in their ability to think creatively and develop innovative ideas.
- Being open-minded when new and different ideas are proposed is an important aspect of allowing creative thought and encouraging innovation.

Essential Questions:

- What are creativity and innovation?
- In what ways is creativity important and how does creativity play a role in self-expression and culture?
- What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors support creativity and innovative thinking and what factors discourage creative risk taking?
- How do I communicate my ideas effectively to an appropriate audience?

Unit 2 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
CT.M.1	• I can appropriately discern teacher and peer feedback to revise original work.
CT.M.2	• I can use independent strategies to interpret others' works and create original products.
<u>CT.M.3</u>	• I can use a variety of materials, create an original product utilizing collaborative feedback.
CT.M.4	• I can provide and receive effective feedback leading to improvement in verbal, nonverbal, and technological communication skills.

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Unit 3: Affective Processing

Timeframe: Ongoing throughout the year

Unit Description: In this unit, students will develop self-acceptance and self-awareness while demonstrating responsibility for their personal growth and engagement in their communities while embracing cultural and personal differences.

Enduring Understandings:

- An individual's identity is a product of the dynamic interaction between personal and environmental factors.
- Intrapersonal development is understanding oneself as the foundation for self-management.
- On-going self-assessment and reflection are essential to defining and enhancing an individual's growth.
- Respect must be given to unique beliefs and experiences in oneself and others in order to develop empathy, social awareness, and leadership skills.
- Embracing giftedness and appropriately coping with stress is important to healthy, responsive interpersonal interactions and to becoming productive members of classroom communities and society.
- Lifelong learning is important to leading a life of curiosity, continued self-understanding, and global awareness.
- Executive functioning skills are the foundation of all learning and can be learned and directly taught.
- Everyone can develop the ability to manage and regulate choices (i.e.: planning, self-monitoring, time management, and organization).

Essential Questions:

- How does my giftedness impact the interactions in life that make me who I am?
- How does my giftedness impact how others see me and how I see myself?
- How do I respect others' beliefs and experiences that are different from my own?
- In what ways are executive function skills important and how does the development of my skills impact school and home life?
- What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors develop skills and what hinders my development?
- How do I communicate my ideas effectively to an appropriate audience?

Unit 3 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
AP.M.1	• I can be flexible and adapt to different social contexts and appropriately advocate as a gifted learner. • I can apply knowledge of strengths and areas of growth to personal decision making. • I can evaluate the impact of appropriate and inappropriate emotional expression and behavior on myself and others.

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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<u>AP.M.2.C</u>	• I can respond and act in a truthful manner even under adverse circumstances/peer pressure. • I can when working in groups, ensure and defend effective and ethical group decisions. • I can communicate when there is a difference of opinion and respond appropriately; detect moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions of others; and work collaboratively.
AP.M.3	• I can at an age appropriate level, identify emotions related to school tasks and self-monitor behavior choices. • I can analyze and apply motivation strategies and organization skills to persevere through difficult situations, tasks, or goals. • I can analyze how making use of school and community support can help me to complete goals and contribute to achievement in school and in life.
<u>AP.M.4.C</u>	• I can listen to and restate multiple thoughts and perspectives, and rethink my own position. • I can stay with a task even if it's challenging and meet the required goals/due dates. • I can actively participate, contribute to the team in a positive manner, help make team member assignments, and set team goals.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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