



Monument Academy

Middle School Course Descriptions

LANGUAGE ARTS

6th Grade Language Arts:

The focus of this course is to build a solid foundation in the basic skills of reading, vocabulary, spelling, Greek and Latin roots, grammar, writing, research, and discussion. Literature is a prominent part of our curriculum as well. Projects are assigned to coincide with the requirements from the *Core Knowledge Sequence Guide* and the Colorado State Standards for education in sixth grade.

7th Grade Language Arts:

The focus of this course is to build a solid foundation in the basic skills of reading, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, writing, research, and discussion. Several types of literature will also be covered. Projects are assigned to coincide with the requirements from the *Core Knowledge Sequence Guide* and the Colorado State Standards for education for seventh grade.

8th Grade Language Arts:

The focus of this course is to build a solid foundation of reading, writing, speaking, and word study. Eighth grade students will be exposed to multiple genres of literature. Grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and root word study will be combined to provide a solid foundation in the English language. Projects are assigned to coincide with the requirements from the *Core Knowledge Sequence Guide* and the Colorado State Standards for education for eighth grade.

Honors English:

8th grade only

Requirements: Application and teacher appointed

8th Grade Honors English will consist of reading, writing, grammar, and word study with a concentrated emphasis on literature and writing. Honors students will be exposed to multiple genres of literature, including advanced-level novels. Students will synthesize and interpret text to gain contextual understanding. There will be a continual focus on refining the student's mastery of writing. Grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and root word study will be combined to provide a solid foundation in the English language.

Reading Lab: Full-year course

6-8th Grade

This course is designed for students who have reading needs that are not met by the regular curriculum or in a regular classroom setting. The Wilson Reading System is a course that utilizes multisensory, structured language techniques to teach the English language to student who struggle with decoding (reading by understanding the phonetic relationship between sounds, symbols, and syllables) and encoding (using knowledge of phonetic systems to spell words). The Wilson Reading System is designed to benefit students who may know words by sight, but have difficulty reading new words. Typically, students are able to speak and understand English, but tend to have a harder time reading and writing. Students will study sound/symbol relationships, syllable types and word construction rules. In addition, students will explore grade appropriate literature as a means to reinforce language techniques and to aid in comprehension of text. At the beginning of the school year, the students will be formally assessed using the Wilson Assessment of Decoding and Encoding (WADE). This assessment gauges how well students can identify sounds and spell words.

MATH

Math Resource:

An elective class for students who would benefit from additional guidance and support for completion of their Math work. In addition to receiving individualized assistance in completing homework assignments, students will be afforded extended practice opportunities for building proficiency, maintaining skills and increasing their understanding of, and comfort with, mathematical concepts. Enrollment in the class requires Math department approval.

Math Connects 1: Emphasis is placed on attainment of 6th grade level standards in this course. In addition to basic operations involving whole numbers, fractions, mixed numbers and decimals, Math Connects 1 includes word problem solving, numerical and algebraic expressions, ratios and rates, percents, equations, integers, exponential expressions, the coordinate plane, perimeter and area, volume, and statistics.

Math Connects 2:

Emphasis is placed on attainment of 7th grade level standards in this course. This includes: powers and exponents; add, subtract, multiply, and divide integers, fractions, and decimals; terminating and repeating decimals; mathematical properties of operations; algebraic representation and one and two-step equations, linear relationships, and inequalities; unit rates, ratios and proportions, and percent; the coordinate plane and graphing ordinate pairs; units of measure for length, angles, area, and volume; modeling geometric shapes; area, volume and surface area of two- and three-dimensional objects composed of triangles, quadrilaterals, polygons, cubes, and right prisms; the formulas for area and circumference of a circle; statistical analysis of samples as well as comparing samples and computing and predicting probabilities.

Math Connects 3:

A preparatory Pre-Algebra course that in addition to attaining 6th-7th grade level standards, includes the study of operations with real and rational numbers, proportions and similarity, percent applications, geometry, measurement and spatial reasoning, algebraic thinking, equations and inequalities, data analysis, probability and statistics.

Pre-Algebra:

This course is designed to prepare students for the study of Algebra. Major concepts include: operations with real and rational numbers, proportions and similarity, applications of percent, geometry, measurement and spatial reasoning, algebraic thinking, including equations and inequalities, data analysis, probability and statistics. Emphasis will be placed on attainment of grade level standards as well as strengthening the foundation for high school mathematics.

Algebra I:

A problem solving approach to Algebra concepts with emphasis on real-world applications. Major concepts include: solving linear equations, analyzing linear functions, simultaneous equations, inequalities, absolute value equations, polynomials and nonlinear functions, radical expressions, rational expressions and equations.

Geometry:

A course in Euclidean Geometry with emphasis on problem solving and logical proofs. Major concepts include: Perpendicular and parallel lines, congruent and similar triangles, inequalities in triangles, quadrilaterals and their properties, right triangles and trigonometry, and circles. Throughout the year special topics include coordinate geometry, area and volume, transformations, and geometric constructions and review of Algebra I content.

HISTORY

6th Grade History:

This is a broad and sweeping course that looks at some of the major eras of both World and American history and the connections between them. From Greece and Rome to the Enlightenment, from the French Revolution to the American Gilded Age, this course is truly broad in its scope. It also covers geography of deserts around the world and South America, as well as studying some of the major religions of the world.

7th Grade History:

This is a survey course detailing World History from Ancient times to 20th Century Europe. The focus is on Mesopotamia, Egypt, Ancient China, Middle Ages, World War I (including the Russian Revolution), and World War II. This course also offers an overview of World Geography.

8th Grade History:

This is a survey course detailing the major issues of the 20th Century through United States and World History. The main focus concerns topics such as the decline of European Colonialism, the rise of communism, the Cold War (including the Korean and Vietnam Wars), the Civil Rights Movement, social-political-economic aspects of the 1950's through the 1980's. This course also covers the Constitution and the development of the American Government. Lastly this course offers brief geographical studies of modern Asia, Europe, and North America.

SCIENCE

6th Grade Science:

Science content at Monument Academy follows the Core Knowledge Sequence and Colorado State Standards while practicing the science and engineering skills set forth in The Next Generation Science Standards. In sixth grade, students experience the following topics organized here by discipline:

Physical Science: Energy, Energy Transfer, Electrical Energy Resources, Heat Transfer and Changes in Matter

Life Science: Interdependence of Body Systems, the Immune System

Earth Science: Interdependence of Earth Systems, Plate Tectonics, and Astronomy

7th Grade Science:

Science content at Monument Academy follows the Core Knowledge Sequence and Colorado State Standards while practicing the science and engineering skills set forth in The Next Generation Science Standards. In seventh grade, students experience the following topics organized by discipline:

Physical Science: Atomic Structure, Periodic Table, Chemical bonds, Chemical Reactions, and Acids and Bases

Life Science: Cell Structure, Cell Division, Genetics, Reproduction, Natural Selection, Evolution Theory, and Ecology

Earth Science: Earth History, Geological Time Scale, Absolute Dating, Relative Dating, and Fossils.

8th Grade Science:

Science content at Monument Academy follows the Core Knowledge Sequence and Colorado State Standards while practicing the science and engineering skills set forth in The Next Generation Science Standards. In eighth grade, students experience the following topics organized by discipline:

Physical Science: motion, force, pressure, work, machines, waves, sound, and light

Life Science: metabolism, including photosynthesis and cellular respiration

Earth Science: Earth's climates, atmosphere, and weather.

Honors Science:

8th grade only

Requirements: Application and teacher appointed

Science content at Monument Academy follows the Core Knowledge Sequence and Colorado State Standard while practicing the science and engineering skills set forth in The Next Generation Science Standards. In eighth grade Honors Science, students experience the following topics organized here by discipline:

Physical Science: motion, force, pressure, work, machines, waves, sound, and light

Life: metabolism, including photosynthesis and cellular respiration

Earth: Earth's climate, atmosphere, and weather

Students enrolling in Honors Science must possess a strong work ethic, and be able to work independently. Algebraic manipulation is used frequently to explore applied mathematics used in many of our physics units. **Algebra 1 or Geometry is highly recommended.** In addition, every student will complete an independent exploration of a topic of their choice. This will be done through participation in the Pikes Peak Regional Science Fair, or completion of an independent research project.

MUSIC

Theatrical Movement: Semester course

6th-8th grade

In this course students will act through movement, practicing the basic techniques of mime, theatrical dance choreography, and safely rehearsed stage combat. Students gain confidence in purposefully moving within a space, demonstrating action and emotion without words, determining the mood in music to create artful dance, and developing a sense of awareness for others and environment. This course fulfills a P.E., Art, or Music credit, and requires a P.E. shirt and black athletic shorts, leggings, or sweatpants. Uniform P.E. shirts can be purchased through Spiritwear.

Concert Choir: Full-year commitment

6th-8th grade

No experience necessary and no audition required to join. This choir class is designed to teach students the basic elements of singing through work on proper vowels, good breathing, precise diction, and more. The goal of the class is to not only provide students with a strong foundation of vocal techniques, but to also teach them how to work in a group setting to achieve excellence.

Women's Choir: Full-year commitment

7th and 8th grade

Prerequisite: 1 Full year in Concert Choir

6th Grade students may be allowed in based on recommendation by Ms. Benz AND Vocal Audition

This class is for intermediate level female singers and it focuses on more challenging repertoire and increased development of vocal technique, music reading, and aural skills. Students will perform a variety of song selections and are encouraged to audition for various solo parts throughout the year to enhance development as an independent, confident vocalist.

Advanced Choir: Full-year commitment

7th and 8th grade

Prerequisite: Concert and/or Women's Choir

Requirements: Vocal Audition

This class is an audition-only select group of singers that focuses on challenging repertoire, high school prep work in theory and aural skills, advanced vocal techniques, and the opportunity to perform high quality music. All students are highly encouraged to audition for All State Choir to continue developing independent musicianship. The Advanced Choir as a group also has the opportunity to perform in multiple venues as an ambassador group, representing our school and choral program

Show Choir: Full-year commitment

7th & 8th grades

Prerequisite: Concert, Women's, and/or Advanced Choir

Requirements: Vocal and Choreography Auditions

This audition-only class will explore multiple genres of vocal "pop" music in the context of dance and choreography. Students must have a strong foundation of music reading and aural skills as a large portion of instruction in this class will be focused on developing dance skills. More than any other choir class, students are expected to practice their vocal parts outside of class in order to maintain the high level of music performance required for an advanced level ensemble. May be used as a PE class or a Music, but not both.

Concert Band: Full-year commitment

6th-8th grade

This class is open to any 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students who wish to play an instrument for the first time in band. All 5th grade band students will migrate to this ensemble. Students will improve the basics of playing their instruments as well as foundational musical skills which consist of rhythm, pitch, tone, balance, and blend, to name a few. Students will also perform songs at their skill level for an audience at concerts throughout the school year. The focus of this group is to prepare students for the intermediate level band.

Intermediate Band: Full -year commitment

7th-8th grade

Requirement: Audition only

This class is for musicians who have enough experience on their instruments to move from a beginning or concert level to an intermediate level. The focus of this class is on the continued learning of musical concepts and technique on your instrument by practicing and performing pieces of music at the intermediate skill level. You must already be proficient at both reading music and playing your instrument to be in this more advanced group.

Symphonic Band: Full-year commitment

7th-8th grade

Requirement: Audition only

This is the highest level large ensemble at Monument Academy. As such, expectations are demanding. Self discipline and motivation are primary factors when being chosen to participate in this ensemble. Symphonic Band will perform several times each semester, learning a large body of music along the way. Our class will often serve as an ambassador for MA, representing our school as we perform for and serve our community.

Jazz Band: Full-year commitment

7th-8th grade

Requirement: Audition only

Jazz Band is a unique class that only accepts the most dedicated and motivated music students at Monument Academy. In this class, we will learn about different styles of jazz music (from blues to funk and everything in between), as well as improvisation and other advanced playing techniques. Due to the nature of this class it is imperative that everyone put in extra effort to practice at home. Taking private lessons is **HIGHLY ADVISED**. Like the Symphonic Band, this group might occasionally have opportunities to perform outside the school for the community at large, and it is important we represent ourselves and Monument Academy as best we can.

Da Capo Orchestra: Full-year commitment

6th – 8th Grade

This is the middle school strings class for students who have played violin, viola, cello or string bass for less than one year, or who have completed one year of MA 4th OR 5th Grade Strings, or for beginning sixth, seventh and eighth grade students who may choose to learn violin, viola, cello, or string bass. No previous experience is required. Students will develop fundamental skills, including basic playing technique, music reading, listening and performance skills. Students will demonstrate progress as a group at concert performances during the school year. Students with previous experience in band, strings or choir may choose to take this class in order to learn a new instrument.

Allegro Orchestra: Full-year commitment

6th – 8th Grade, 2 sections

Requirement: MA 4th AND 5th Grade Strings, 1 year MA Allegro Orchestra, or Audition

This orchestra class is for sixth, seventh and eighth grade violin, viola, cello or string bass students who have completed both MA 4th AND 5th Grade Strings, or 1 year of MA Allegro Orchestra, or middle school students who demonstrate equivalent knowledge and skills in an audition. There will be two sections of this class. Students in this class will continue to strengthen their fundamental skills, including playing technique, music reading, listening and performance skills, and will learn to play string orchestra music in a variety of styles. Students will demonstrate progress as a group at concert performances during the school year, and may compete in a festival competition.

Lynx Orchestra: Full-year commitment

6th – 8th Grade

Requirement: MA Lynx Orchestra, or by audition

This is the top-level orchestra class at MA for violin, viola, cello and string bass students who demonstrate appropriate knowledge and skills for this level in an audition. Students in this class will continue to strengthen their fundamental skills, including playing technique, music reading, listening and performance skills, and will learn to play more complex string orchestra music in a variety of styles. Students will demonstrate progress as a group at concert performances during the school year, and may compete in a festival competition.

FINE ARTS

Intro to Drama: Semester course

6th-8th grade

A level one drama course for first year drama students

This course approaches theater through its early origins. Students will be exposed to basic terminology, stage direction, characterization, and technique. Projection and stage presence are key elements of Greek and Roman theater. Students will practice firsthand the challenge of playing to an audience in the round while also gaining an appreciation for the choral lyricism of some of history's most powerful plays. Italian theater introduces the whimsical art of pantomime, improvisation, and early melodrama. Students will focus on expressive movement instead of voice to portray character, building upon their creations through mask work, makeup, and costume. It is the perfect course for students taking their first steps into performance art, providing them a strong foundation on which to deepen their practice.

Fundamentals of Acting: Semester course

6th-8th grade

A level two drama course

Prerequisite: Intro to Drama is recommended

This course further explores performance as an artform, delving into Shakespearean drama and scene study of classic and contemporary American theater. Students will hone their acting skills through a more refined practice in character development, voice and articulation, performance critique, and monologue preparation for audition. Through meaningful study of the language of some of our greatest playwrights, active listening/responding games, and

improvisation, students will grow in their ability to deliver an authentic, honest performance. This course is strongly recommended in preparation for Monument Academy's fall and spring performances.

Drama Performance: Semester course

7th & 8th grade

A level three drama course

Prerequisite: Intro to Drama or Acting

Requirement: Teacher approval based on performance in prerequisite class. Possible teacher requested audition.

Students experience all stages of producing and performing in a Monument Academy Main Stage production. The most rigorous and rewarding culmination of performance artwork is the show itself! Students will be expected to audition, rehearse with intention, participate in tech/dress rehearsals, and, finally, perform 1-2 shows for a full audience! Students enrolled for the Fall semester will be cast in a play. Students enrolled in the Spring semester will be cast in a musical and will be required to demonstrate singing ability.

Theatrical Movement: Semester course

6th-8th grade

In this course students will act through movement, practicing the basic techniques of mime, theatrical dance choreography, and safely rehearsed stage combat. Students gain confidence in purposefully moving within a space, demonstrating action and emotion without words, determining the mood in music to create artful dance, and developing a sense of awareness for others and environment. This course fulfills a P.E., Art, or Music credit, and requires a P.E. shirt and black athletic shorts, leggings, or sweatpants. Uniform P.E. shirts can be purchased through Spiritwear.

6th Grade Art Appreciation: Semester course

“The Roots of Western Art”. 1) Exemplary Lessons: Students are to choose a painting from the Sixth Grade Core Knowledge art history sequence, (Ancient Greek to Realism or late 19th century), and depict it in a collage format. Representations of the original art works will be shown alongside the students’ collages to display the departures they have taken to alter the composition. 2) Mythological Mask Project: As an interdisciplinary project with the English class, students will be inventing their own mythological creature. This involves writing the myth, inventing and drawing the mythological creature, and sculpting it out of clay followed by a coat of acrylic paint.

7th Grade Art Appreciation: Semester course

The evolution of artistic movements from Impressionism to Abstraction and from objective to non-objective subject matter is discussed. Exemplary Lessons: 1) Visual Pun: A free standing sculpture combining the concept of a literal “play on words” with the technical aspect of gravity and weight with clay. 2) 3 Part Composition: Taking a composition through three mediums to study art in terms of the compositional elements they are composed of; thus giving the students the tools to evaluate compositions; representational and non-representational, in an objective fashion. 3) Shield Project: Students create a shaped canvas which depicts, through personal symbols, their own identity. This is a self-portrait in symbols.

8th Grade Art Appreciation: Semester course

Students investigate the Modernist, Post-Modernist and Post-Impressionist art periods and create a skit which they will share with the class that describes an artist’s impact and contribution to art history and culture.

Exemplary Lessons: 1) Artist as Social Critic Painting: A study of the role of the artist as a social critic throughout history. 2) Surrealist Tone Drawing: Building on the skills acquired through perspective and tone drawing, students will compose a pencil drawing using a Surrealist approach with a surprise element. A review of the Surrealist movement will be required. 3) Clay Heads: This is the final clay project for middle school students where they design and build a clay head of their choosing.

Advanced Ceramics: Semester Course

7th and 8th grade

Prerequisite: One year of 6th or 7th Grade Art Appreciation

Students will explore hand-building and wheel-throwing techniques beyond 6th and 7th grade class work in clay. Wheel throwing will depend on the class size. An architectural study will be a primary focus of this class.

Tech and Photo: Semester Course

7th-8th grade

Tech & Photo is a iPad based course where students learn the fundamentals of composition, lighting, aperture, depth of field and editing in a variety of formats, including: portrait, landscape, forced perspective, studio and action. May satisfy a Technology or an Art but may not be used as both.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Spanish A : Full-year course

7th ~8th grades

The goal of this first year course aligns with Colorado Academic Standards for novice-level learners. Spanish A will introduce basic linguistics and structure of the Castilian Spanish language, as well as learning about and understanding cultures found within the Spanish speaking world. During the preliminary unit, a communication foundation will be laid by phonetics, word order, pronunciation, numbers, essential, everyday vocabulary, verb conjugation, and other novice-level topics. Class focus will be on immediately using and applying acquired content knowledge in real life ways (reading, speaking, listening and writing in the target language at a novice level). Grading will be a combination of Formative Assessments, Summative Evaluations and Homework. Assessments may be in the form of quizzes, tests, projects and presentations of skill.

Spanish B: Full-year course

8th grades

Prerequisite: Spanish A

The goal of this second year course aligns with Colorado Academic Standards for Novice-High language students. The goal of the course is to advance a student's ability to the Intermediate low level. This course builds on the structures acquired in Spanish A and introduces more advanced grammatical structures, and expands high frequency vocabulary. We will continue to use these structures in class discussions, stories and cultural explorations. During the year, we will read some novice-mid level novels.

Students who successfully complete this course might be able to test out of High School Spanish I.

Global Trek: Semester Course

6th-8th grade

Students in this course will book multiple “trips” to global destinations. While planning trips, students will learn about the history, culture, and geography of each location. They will cook and share local foods, record experiences, and connect to classrooms around the world. Sign up and start earning passport stamps and sampling delicious food next semester! **Does not satisfy Foreign Language requirement.**

TECHNOLOGY

Technology: Semester course

Required for 6th grade

Tech 1 is designed to teach every middle school student at Monument Academy the necessary technology skills that will enable them to succeed in school and beyond. Topics include: keyboarding, Google Drive, productivity apps and basic coding.

Tech and Photo: Semester Course

7th-8th grades

Tech & Photo is a iPad based course where students learn the fundamentals of composition, lighting, aperture, depth of field and editing in a variety of formats, including: portrait, landscape, forced perspective, studio and action. May satisfy a Technology or an Art but may not be used as both.

Claymation: Semester course

6th-8th grade Class Size Limit is 20

Prerequisite: Technology I

Complete the course with your very own short films! Create your own sets, characters, and stories to tell through the “Claymation-style” of animation. Students will experiment with all aspects of stop motion animation using clay, as well as paper animation. Students will write scripts, create storyboards and manipulate clay to create the characters for their films. Students will work to create a variety of animations from quick clips to mini-films. We will end this course with a grand red carpet premiere starring your films.

Yearbook/Journalism: Full-year course

Elective for 8th grade

Prerequisite: Technology I

Requirement: interview and instructor permission

This cross-disciplinary class teaches writing skills, layout and design, advanced computer skills, teamwork, photography, and media literacy. The major concentration is producing a yearbook for the middle school. The students will also produce articles for the middle school's newsletter, along with other media projects.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education 6th-8th grades: Semester course

6th-8th grade

Requirement: All students must take PE a minimum of one semester each year.

Can be used as an elective for another semester

The Monument Academy Middle School PE course is designed to focus on four basic goals. Great care is taken by the PE Department to ensure the course is always in alignment with the core curriculum, state standards, as well as the character traits of MA. Team sports, individual sports, health, hygiene, and nutrition are some of the main methods of reaching the four basic goals.

Students that participate in the Middle School Physical Education program at Monument Academy will learn to:

- Be skillful while performing various movements
- Be physically fit in order to do required activities in all areas of life
- Enjoy the benefits of being physically aware and physically fit
- Develop a healthy lifestyle and the core knowledge to maintain one

Theatrical Movement: Semester course

6th-8th grade

In this course students will act through movement, practicing the basic techniques of mime, theatrical dance choreography, and safely rehearsed stage combat. Students gain confidence in purposefully moving within a space, demonstrating action and emotion without words, determining the mood in music to create artful dance, and developing a sense of awareness for others and environment. This course fulfills a P.E., Art, or Music credit, and requires a P.E. shirt and black athletic shorts, leggings, or sweatpants. Uniform P.E. shirts can be purchased through Spiritwear.

WORK EXPERIENCE

S.T.A.T (Student Technology Assistance Team): Semester Course

7th or 8th grades

Prerequisites: Tech 1

Requirement: Director of Educational Technology permission

Assist MA technology department with iPad troubleshooting, basic helpdesk issues, and software and hardware installation and repair. Responsible students who can work independently, are tech savvy and are problem solvers are encouraged to apply.