

## GATE CITY MIDDLE SCHOOL - COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### ENGLISH

#### ENGLISH 7

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Year-Long

In seventh grade, students continue to build upon skills previously taught in earlier grades. There is a continued emphasis on reading comprehension by comparing fiction and nonfiction texts. In fiction texts, students will identify elements of a variety of genres while focusing on an author's style. In seventh grade, there is an increased emphasis on nonfiction reading, and students will identify the source, point-of-view, and purpose of texts. The student will continue the study of word origins and roots and begin identifying connotations. The student will also plan, draft, revise, and edit writing in a variety of forms with an emphasis on expository and persuasive writing. Students will write to develop and modify a central idea, tone, and voice to fit the audience and purpose. Students will continue to deliver multimodal presentations individually and in collaborative groups. Students will also interpret information presented in diverse media formats. Students share responsibility for collaborative work, as both a contributor and a facilitator, while working for consensus to accomplish goals. The student will apply research techniques to quote, summarize, and paraphrase research findings while properly citing sources. As in earlier grades, the meaning and consequences of plagiarism will be stressed. English 7 is a year-long course. A Standards of Learning test will be administered on completion of this course.

#### ENGLISH 8

**Prerequisite:** English 7

**Time Frame:** Year-Long

In eighth grade, students continue to build upon skills previously learned in earlier grades. There is a continued emphasis on reading comprehension by comparing fiction and nonfiction texts. In fiction texts, students will explain the development of theme(s), and compare/contrast authors' styles. In eighth grade, there will be an increased emphasis on nonfiction reading, and students will analyze authors' qualifications, point-of-view, and style. The student will continue the study of word origins, roots, connotations, and denotations. The student will also plan, draft, revise, and edit while writing in a variety of forms with an emphasis on expository and persuasive writing. Students will compose a thesis statement and

defend a position with reasons and evidence. Students will evaluate, analyze, develop, and produce media messages. Students will create multimodal presentations that include different points-of-view, and collaborate with others to exchange ideas, make decisions, and solve problems. The student will apply research techniques to analyze information gathered from diverse sources by identifying misconceptions and possible bias. Students will also cite primary and secondary sources using either MLA or APA style. As in earlier grades, the meaning and consequences of plagiarism will be stressed. A Standards of Learning test will be administered (reading and writing) during this course.

### MATH

#### MATH 7

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Year-Long

The seventh-grade standards continue to emphasize the foundations of algebra. The standards address the concept of and operations with rational numbers by continuing their study from grade six. Students will build on the concept of ratios to solve problems involving proportional reasoning. Students will solve problems involving volume and surface area and focus on the relationships among the properties of quadrilaterals. Probability is investigated through comparing experimental results to theoretical expectations. Students continue to develop their understanding of solving linear equations and inequalities in one variable by applying the properties of real numbers. Students discern between proportional and non-proportional relationships and begin to develop a concept of slope as rate of change. A Standards of Learning test will be administered on completion of this course.

#### PRE-ALGEBRA 8

**Prerequisite:** Math 7

**Time Frame:** Year-Long

The eighth-grade standards continue to build on the concepts needed for success in high school level algebra, geometry, and statistics. Students will explore real numbers and the subsets of the real number system. Proportional reasoning is expounded upon as students solve a variety of problems. Students find the volume and surface area of more complex three-dimensional figures and apply transformations to geometric shapes in the coordinate

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plane. Students will verify and apply the Pythagorean Theorem creating a foundation for further study of triangular relationships in geometry. Students will represent data, both univariate and bivariate data, and make predictions by observing data patterns. Students build upon the algebraic concepts developed in the standards for grades six and seven mathematics, which include simplifying algebraic expressions, solving multistep equations and inequalities, and graphing linear functions. The grade eight standards are vital to providing a solid foundation in Algebra I for students in middle school mathematics. A Standards of Learning test will be administered on completion of this course.

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION - HEALTH

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION - HEALTH 7

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester or Year-Long

Students in grade seven continue to develop competence in modified versions of various game/sport, rhythmic, and recreational activities. They vary movement during dynamic and unpredictable game situations. Recreational pursuits become an additional curriculum option, broadening lifelong physical activity options. The ability to analyze skill performance through observing and understanding critical elements (small, isolated parts of the whole skill or movement) is increasingly apparent, as is the application of basic scientific principles of anatomical structures, movement principles, energy balance, and personal fitness. Students relate the importance of physical activity to health, focusing particularly on obesity and stress. Students achieve and maintain personal fitness standards and create plans by setting reasonable and appropriate goals for improvement or maintenance of health-related fitness. Students continue to develop social skills and cooperative behaviors by demonstrating problem solving, conflict resolution, communication skills, appropriate etiquette, integrity, and respect for others. Health learning outcomes include topics on body systems, nutrition, physical health, disease prevention, substance misuse prevention, safety and injury prevention, mental wellness, violence prevention, community and environmental health, and family life. This course will be year-long if band is selected as an elective.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION - HEALTH 8

**Prerequisite:** Physical Education 7

**Time Frame:** Semester or Year-Long

Students in grade eight demonstrate competence in skillful movement in modified, dynamic game/sport situations and in a variety of rhythmic and recreational activities. They transition from modified versions of movement forms to more complex applications across all types of activities. The grade-eight student applies knowledge of major body structures to explain how body systems interact with and respond to physical activity and how structures help the body create movement. Students will explain the relationship between nutrition, activity, and body composition to deepen understanding of energy balance. They will demonstrate socially responsible behavior as they show respect for others, make reasoned and appropriate choices, resist negative peer pressure, and exhibit integrity and fair play to achieve individual and group goals in the physical activity setting. Students are able to set goals, track progress, and participate in physical activities to improve health-related fitness. They have a repertoire of abilities across a variety of game/sport, dance, and recreational pursuits and begin to develop competence in specialized versions of lifelong game/sport activities. Health learning outcomes include topics on body systems, nutrition, physical health, disease prevention, substance misuse prevention, safety and injury prevention, mental wellness, violence prevention, community and environmental health, and family life. This course will be year-long if band is selected as an elective.

### SCIENCE

#### LIFE SCIENCE 7

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

The Life Science standards emphasize a more complex understanding of change, cycles, patterns, and relationships in the living world. Students build on basic principles related to these concepts by exploring the cellular organization and the classification of organisms; the dynamic relationships among organisms, populations, communities, and ecosystems; and change as a result of the transmission of genetic information from generation to generation. Inquiry skills at this level include organization and mathematical analysis of data, manipulation of variables in experiments, and identification of sources of experimental error. Metric

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units (SI – International System of Units) are expected to be used as the primary unit of measurement to gather and report data at this level.

### **PHYSICAL SCIENCE 8**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

The Physical Science standards continue to build on skills of systematic investigation with a clear focus on variables and repeated trials. Validating conclusions using evidence and data becomes increasingly important at this level. Students will plan and conduct research involving both classroom experimentation and literature reviews from written and electronic resources. Research methods and skills highlight practical problems and questions. Students will share their work using written reports and other presentations and will continue to use metric units (SI – International System of Units) as the primary unit of measurement for gathering and reporting data. The Physical Science standards stress an in-depth understanding of the nature and structure of matter and the characteristics of energy. The standards place considerable emphasis on the technological application of physical science principles. Major areas covered by the standards include the organization and use of the periodic table; physical and chemical changes; nuclear reactions; temperature and heat; sound; light; electricity and magnetism; and work, force, and motion. A Standards of Learning test will be administered on completion of this course.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

### **CIVICS & ECONOMICS 7**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

Standards for Civics and Economics examine the roles citizens play in the political, governmental, and economic systems in the United States. Students will examine the foundational documents and principles with which the constitutions of Virginia and the United States were established, identify the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens, and describe the structure and operation of government at the local, state, and national levels. Through the economics standards, students will compare the United States economy to other types of economies and consider the government's role in the United States economy. Students will investigate the process by which decisions are made in the American market economy and explain the government's role in the United States

economy. The standards identify personal character traits, such as patriotism, respect for the law, willingness to perform public service, and a sense of civic duty, that facilitate thoughtful and effective active participation in the civic life of an increasingly diverse democratic society. A Standards of Learning test will be administered on completion of this course.

### **20TH CENTURY HISTORY**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

Students investigate significant events, individuals, developments, and processes during the 20th century. Students develop and use the same skills, practices, and methods employed by historians: analyzing primary and secondary sources; developing historical arguments; making historical connections; and utilizing reasoning about comparison, causation, and continuity and change over time. The course provides six themes that students explore throughout the course in order to make connections among historical developments in different times and places: humans and the environment, cultural developments and interactions, governance, economic systems, social interactions and organization, and technology and innovation.

## **ELECTIVES**

### **ART 7**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

The standards for Grade Seven Visual Arts continue the exploration, analysis, and investigation of the creative process. Students apply elements of art and principles of design to solve artmaking challenges using various processes. They develop critical thinking skills and expand their vocabulary as they explore the meaning of works of art through the evaluation of subject matter, themes, and symbols. Students develop an increased awareness of their relationship to art and investigate visual arts careers.

### **ART 8**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

The standards for Grade Eight Visual Arts continue the exploration, analysis, and investigation of the creative process. Students apply elements of art and principles of design to solve artmaking challenges using various processes. They develop critical thinking skills and expand their vocabulary as they

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explore the meaning of works of art through the evaluation of subject matter, themes, and symbols. Students develop an increased awareness of their relationship to art and investigate visual arts careers.

### **BAND 7**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Year-Long

The standards for Middle School Instrumental Music, Beginning Level enable students to begin receiving instruction on a wind, percussion, or string instrument of their choice with guidance from the music teacher. Instruction may begin at any middle school grade level. Students identify parts of the instrument and demonstrate proper instrument care, playing posture, instrument positions, fingerings, embouchure (if applicable), and tone production. Students apply emerging music skills to create and notate original work. Music literacy skills are emphasized as students read, notate, and perform music. Students use critical thinking skills to respond to, describe, interpret, and evaluate works of music as performers and listeners. Students identify opportunities to engage with music beyond the classroom. Opportunities are provided for students to participate in local, district, and regional music events as appropriate to level, ability, and interest.

### **BAND 8**

**Prerequisite:** Band 7

**Time Frame:** Year-Long

The standards for Middle School Instrumental Music, Beginning Level enable students to begin receiving instruction on a wind, percussion, or string instrument of their choice with guidance from the music teacher. Instruction may begin at any middle school grade level. Students identify parts of the instrument and demonstrate proper instrument care, playing posture, instrument positions, fingerings, embouchure (if applicable), and tone production. Students apply emerging music skills to create and notate original work. Music literacy skills are emphasized as students read, notate, and perform music. Students use critical thinking skills to respond to, describe, interpret, and evaluate works of music as performers and listeners. Students identify opportunities to engage with music beyond the classroom. Opportunities are provided for students to participate in local, district, and regional music events as appropriate to level, ability, and interest.

### **DRAMA/THEATER ARTS 8**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

Students build ensemble skills, focus on the psychological and emotional dimensions of characters in action, and collaborate on more complex projects. Students conduct character analysis to research, develop, and present a scripted character, explore technical theatre and production concepts, and write critiques. They refine their analytical, collaborative, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills that are necessary to make artistic decisions and present unified productions. This course prepares students for theatre arts studies at the high school level.

### **TECHNOLOGY 7**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

The seventh-grade standards emphasize constructing programs and utilizing algorithms to accomplish a task. Students continue to decompose larger problems into smaller tasks and recognize the impacts of computing and computing devices. Students in seventh grade explore processing data as well as its transmission over networks. The accurate use of terminology as well as the responsible use of technology will continue to be built upon. The foundational understanding of computing and the use of technology will be an integral component of successful acquisition of skills across content areas. Technology 7 may be taken in either the fall or spring semester.

### **TECHNOLOGY 8**

**Prerequisite:** None

**Time Frame:** Semester

The eighth-grade standards emphasize constructing programs and utilizing algorithms to accomplish a task. Students continue to decompose larger problems into smaller tasks and recognize the impacts of computing and computing devices. Students in eighth grade continue to work with data including how it can be vulnerable and how it can be protected. The accurate use of terminology as well as the responsible use of technology will continue to be built upon. The foundational understanding of computing and the use of technology will be an integral component of successful acquisition of skills across content areas. Technology 8 may be taken in either the fall or spring semester.