

SHAKER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

This booklet is designed to assist students and parents in understanding the course offerings in seventh grade. All required classes, as well as those that are Enriched, Exploratory or Elective, are described. Participation in the grade seven programs will prepare students for a New York State Regents Diploma or Shaker High School Diploma.

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A. ENGLISH (Required)

1. English 7

The English 7 course is designed to emphasize basic skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking. We use the Prentice Hall Literature series plus a wide variety of novels to introduce students to the formal study of literature and literary terms. The Holt Middle School Handbook is used for grammar and mechanics instruction.

The basic elements of grammar, usage, punctuation and capitalization are taught using a standard text, the student's own written work and through literature. Spelling and Vocabulary requirements are drawn from literature, published books of spelling words, and SAT prep resources or other resources. Whenever possible, an integrated approach is used in the teaching of basic skills.

Effective writing techniques are emphasized and considerable time is devoted to the writing process. Most writing is done in response to literature read. Reading is, of course, emphasized and students will be expected to read required novels as well as independently chosen books. In 7th grade we utilize peer evaluation, conferencing and other techniques, which are designed to improve written communication. Computer instruction, stressing word processing, is also included in the seventh grade language arts curriculum. Students will be prepared to successfully complete the NYS grade 7 English Language Arts assessment.

2. English 7G

English 7G is a course designed for students who have struggled with English Language Arts in previous school years. The course will focus upon the core content areas of regular English 7 and will prepare students to be successful in the English class, on the New York State Grade 7 English Language Arts Assessment and on future Regents exams. Students who complete English 7G will be enrolled in either English 8 or English 8G in their 8th grade year and will be prepared to pursue a Regents English program at Shaker High School.

The English 7G class will be limited to no more than 20 students and will be taught by a certified English teacher with the assistance of a teacher assistant.

3. English 7E (Enriched)

In English 7 Enriched the aspects described above are emphasized with a greater deal of difficulty, designed to challenge the abilities of our most capable students. Students in the 7E English class participate in a variety of enrichment units that could include poetry, novels, research skills, short stories and newspapers. The writing assignments, while similar to that of regular English program, are presented in greater depth and a higher quality of writing, including analysis and critical assessment, is expected.

Students in the enriched program are expected to work with a minimum of compulsion by the classroom teacher. In order to be considered for the participation in the 7E program, to continue in the program for the entire seventh grade year, and to be considered for the eighth grade Enriched English class, students must meet and maintain the following criteria:

- A. Students' score at or above the 75 percentile locally in both reading and total language on standardized tests.
- B. The student must have demonstrated exceptional ability in the language arts program the previous year. This ability would be demonstrated in mastery levels of both writing and reading comprehension. It is assumed that the student has maintained A's in achievement throughout the year.
- C. Students labeled as gifted will be given serious consideration for this program. Inclusion in the grade six LEP program does not automatically qualify a student, however, the quality of writing in the student's portfolio will be a major factor in determining the student's placement in this program.
- D. Students considered for this program must have effort and conduct grades of G or E. Students must have demonstrated that they are motivated to excel beyond standard expectations.
- E. The above criteria must be maintained throughout the seventh grade year for the student's continuation in this program and consideration for the 8E program.

4. Fundamental ELA

Fundamental ELA is an Academic Intervention Service (AIS) for 7th and/or 8th graders who need extra assistance in language arts. Students included generally are at risk of scoring at Level I or II on a NYS ELA assessment or are recommended for inclusion by their 7th or 8th grade English teacher. Students enrolled in Fundamental ELA meet every other day for 20 minutes in lieu of silent reading.

B. READING & WRITING

A course in reading/writing is required by the State/District regulations for students whose scores on standardized tests indicate a need for intensive instruction in these areas. Reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills are developed as students read and write about high interest, young adult novels. Study skills, as well as reading and writing in contents area courses, are also addressed. Reading/Writing is taught in small classes every day throughout the year. Parents of students being scheduled for reading/writing will be notified.

C. MATHEMATICS (Required)

1. Math 7

Seventh grade math is designed to prepare students to successfully complete Math 7, the NYS math assessment in March of grade 7 and for the NYS Regents high school math program. Topics covered in regular math include techniques in problem solving, operations with rational numbers, operations with integers, number theory, probability and statistics, computer awareness, algebra, geometry and measurement. Most students who are enrolled in Math 7 will be on course to complete the NYS Integrated Algebra Regents exam at the end of ninth grade.

2. Math 7G

Math 7G is a course designed for students who have struggled with mathematics in previous school years. The course will focus upon the core content areas of regular math 7 and will prepare students to be successful in their math class, on the New York State grade 7 math assessment and on future Regents exams. Students who complete math 7G will be enrolled in either math 8 or math 8G in their 8th grade year and will be prepared to pursue a Regents mathematics program at Shaker High School.

The math 7G class will be limited to no more than 20 students and will be taught by a certified mathematics teacher with the assistance of a teacher assistant.

3. Math 7E (Enriched)

The 7E mathematics program is designed for those students who demonstrate excellence in elementary mathematics. Students who successfully complete 7E Math are typically recommended to enter our accelerated math course (Math 9R) in grade eight. Topics from both seventh and eighth grade regular math programs are covered along with techniques in problem solving, probability and statistics, algebra, coordinate geometry, graphing equations and inequalities, transformations and constructions, computer awareness, geometry and measurement. These students will be prepared to complete the NYS math assessment and the Integrated Algebra Regents exam at the end of the eighth grade. It is expected that students entering math 7E will complete a five-year high school mathematics sequence by graduation.

To be considered for participation in the 7E program, students should have maintained an A average in grade six mathematics, high achievement on the grade 6 NYS Assessment, and achieved at least the 70th local percentile on the IOWA Test of Basic Skills Math subtests and Cognitive Abilities Test in sixth grade. Teacher recommendations, student motivation and parent input will also be considered in making recommendations for placement.

D. SCIENCE (Required)

1. Science 7

This course in life sciences addresses the following topics during the year: cell theory, human biology, genetics, natural selection, ecology, classification and survey of major phyla of organisms. It also develops skills such as organization, inference, problem solving, observation, and measurement in the metric system. As identified by the New York State Education Department syllabus, students must also learn to properly manipulate science equipment such as microscope and tripe beam balance.

2. Science 7E (Enriched)

The Science 7E program is designed for those students who demonstrate excellence in elementary science. Students who successfully complete this program are typically recommended to enter our accelerated Earth Science class in grade eight. A requirement for Science 7E is enrollment in Math 7E (enriched). Instructions will include the areas of life science and physical science. In order to be considered for participation in the Science 7E program students should have maintained an A average in sixth grade science and have scored at or above the 75th percentile (local percentile) on the IOWA Test of Basic Skills and the Cognitive Abilities Tests for sixth grade. Teachers' recommendations and student motivation will also be considered for placement.

E. SOCIAL STUDIES 7 (Required)

Beginning in seventh grade, a two-year study of American History is initiated. The Social Studies 7 course is a chronological exploration of American History from the pre-Columbian era through the period of Reconstruction. The units of instruction include "America Prior to 1500", "Exploration and Colonization", "A New Nation", "Experiments in Government", "Life in the New Nation", and "Division and Reunion". Important historical, economic, geographic, and governmental features of this period are studied.

As part of this program, specialized social studies skills are taught. They include the following:

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| A. reading maps, charts, and graphs | F. computer / technology skills |
| B. interpreting political cartoons | G. study skills |
| C. reading, speaking, and listening skills | H. analyzing primary source documents |
| D. essay writing | I. analyzing current events |
| E. research skills | J. studying a given historical period <i>or</i>
theme through an interdisciplinary lens |

The teaching of lifelong skills is an important part of the social studies program.

F. FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The NYS graduation requirements mandate that all students (except those exempted by the Committee on Special Education) study two years of a foreign language and pass the Proficiency examination by the end of eighth grade. The seventh grade foreign language program is the first full year of language study and the first step in preparing for this exam.

After completion of the elementary foreign language program, students will identify their first and alternate choices for their 7th grade language selection. Based on yearly enrollments, every effort will be made to accommodate a student's first choice. Students will study this one language during seventh and eighth grade, and, given successful completion of the Proficiency exam, continue and expand this study in the high school.

G. PHYSICAL EDUCATION 7 (Required)

Physical Education is scheduled for all students on an every other day basis for the full school year. Students with physically disabling conditions, either permanent or temporary, are provided an adapted program designed for the individual student.

H. HEALTH 7 (Required)

Health is scheduled for all students on an every other day basis for one semester. This course includes the study of self-esteem, decision-making, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, personal safety, HIV/AIDS, and family life. The goal of the course is to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to live a healthy life.

I. ART 7 (Required)

In seventh grade art students explore creative concepts utilizing the elements and principles of art and design. Students will solve a series of art problems by using a variety of two and three-dimensional media. Computer generated images will also be examined. Art history, appreciation and criticism are emphasized. Drawing and problem solving skills are enhanced through a series of sketchbook assignments. Art is provided everyday for a 10-week period.

J. HOME AND CAREERS 7 (Required)

The seventh grade Home and Careers program is designed to help the students improve their quality of life by preparing them to meet their present and future responsibilities as family members, consumers, home managers, and wage earners. Seventh grade students will attend home and career classes for fifteen weeks.

The goal of the curriculum is to develop skills, which lead to effective decision-making, problem solving, and management in all areas of daily living. They include the following:

- A. Personal Development – awareness of self and relationship with others.
- B. Personal and Family Resource Management – consumer skills and money management, nutrition, clothing, and personal environment.
- C. Career Planning – an overview of work, awareness of their interests, abilities, and values related to work and a career, and look at tentative career plans.

K. TECHNOLOGY 7 (Required)

Seventh grade technology is the first half of the one unit junior high technology program. The emphasis in this course is on the history of technology, the resources of technology, and the components or subsystems that make up larger technological systems, students will use tools and machines to solve technology related problems. Seventh grade students will attend technology for fifteen weeks on an everyday basis.

L. MUSIC (Required)

1. General Music 7

Seventh grade students are scheduled for one semester (twenty weeks) of General Music, which is divided into four units. In the Jazz unit, students will be involved in listening to and identifying styles of Jazz and studying the history of Jazz. Students will also complete various projects and activities in the Jazz units using the technology equipment available in the classroom, library, and computer labs to further explore the history of Jazz.

In the two instrument units, students will review the skills they learned in sixth grade, and learn new skills that will allow them to perform on the two instruments (electric keyboard and acoustic guitar). Students will learn these skills through performing individually, in small groups, and as a class. Students will play a mixed repertoire of music including folk, classical and jazz styles.

2. Music Performing Groups (Elective)

In the junior high school, Band, Chorus, and Orchestra rehearse every other day during the school day. On the opposite day, students in a performing group would have a study hall. Band, Chorus, and Orchestra perform in two school concerts per year and may have other performance opportunities. In addition, students in these performing groups are the only ones eligible to audition for Jazz Ensemble, Select Band, Girl's Chorus, Select Chorus, Syncopella (all male chorus), and Scherzo. Students are encouraged to be in both a choral and instrumental group, since the two musical experiences complement each other.

Students in Band and Orchestra will also have a small-group lesson once each week. In lessons, students learn technique and work to improve their individual skills. Private lessons, while encouraged, are not substituted for school lessons at the junior high level.

Students who wish to participate in a performing group must indicate their decision on the eighth grade Course Selection Form distributed from the junior high school. When selecting a performing group, students are committing to participate for an entire year and to perform in all scheduled concerts. The decision to drop a performing group will only be made under extenuating circumstances and with the guidance counselor, administrator, and director.