

SHAKER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

This booklet is designed to assist students and parents in understanding the course offerings in seventh grade. All 7th grade classes are described.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Literature and Writing 7	Page 1
English 7 Basic	Page 1
Reading-Special Class	Page 1
ELA - Special Class	Page 2
Fundamental ELA	Page 2
B. Literacy Lab	Page 2
C. Math 7 (pre-algebra)	Page 2
Math 7 Basic	Page 2-3
Math - Special Class	Page 3
Fundamental Math 7	Page 3
D. Science 7	Page 3
Science - Special Class	Page 3-4
E. Social Studies 7	Page 4
Social Studies - Special Class	Page 4
F. Foreign Language	Page 5
G. Physical Education	Page 5
H. Health 7	Page 5
Health - Special Class	Page 5
I. Art 7	Page 6
J. Family & Consumer Sciences – FACS 7	Page 6
K. Technology 7	Page 6-7
L. General Music 7	Page 7
Music Performing Groups	Page 7-8
Accelerated Credit in Music	Page 8
M. Functional Life Skills – Special Class	Page 8
N. English as a New Language	Page 8

A. ENGLISH (Required)

1. Literature and Writing 7

The English 7 course is designed to emphasize skills and strategies in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking. We use the EMC Mirrors & Windows: Connecting With Literature series plus a wide variety of novels to introduce students to the formal study of literature and literary terms.

The elements of grammar, usage, punctuation and capitalization are taught, through 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 these skills.

Effective writing techniques are emphasized and considerable time is devoted to the writing process. Most writing is done in response to literature read. In 7th grade we utilize peer evaluation, conferencing and other techniques, which are designed to improve written communication. Reading is, of course, emphasized and students will be expected to read required novels as well as independently chosen books. 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 7 Basic

The English 7 basic class is taught by a certified English teacher. This course is designed to fulfill the students English Language Arts requirement with a major focus on both core content areas of English 7 and intensive reading and language arts skills for those students who require a reading program to address significant skill deficits through a modified curriculum.

The English basic class will be limited to no more than 15 students.

3. Reading-Special Class

A self-contained reading class based upon an alternate curriculum that focuses on the instruction of basic functional literacy in conjunction with a life skills program. The curriculum is highly differentiated based upon each student's literacy abilities and their Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals. This class is graded on a pass/fail basis.

4. ELA - Special Class

A self-contained English class based upon an alternate curriculum that focuses on the instruction of basic functional literacy in conjunction with a life skills program. The curriculum is highly differentiated based upon students' literacy abilities and IEP goals. This class is graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

5. Fundamental ELA

Fundamental ELA is an Academic Intervention Service (AIS) for 7th 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 6th or 7th grade English teacher. Students enrolled in Fundamental ELA meet every other day for 20 minutes in lieu of silent reading.

B. LITERACY LAB

A course in reading/writing is required for students whose scores on standardized tests and/or other local measures indicate a need for intensive instruction in these areas. Reading comprehension, vocabulary, and other literacy skills are developed as students read and write about a variety of literary genres. Literacy Lab is taught in small classes either every day or every other day throughout the year. Parents of students being scheduled for Literacy Lab will be notified, which will be scheduled in lieu of a daily study hall.

C. MATHEMATICS (Required)

1. Math 7 (Pre-Algebra)

Seventh grade pre-algebra math is designed to prepare students to successfully complete Math 7 and the NYS math assessment and to prepare students for an algebra course in grade 8 and the Regents and/or Honors 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 (Pre-Algebra) will be on course to complete the NYS Integrated Algebra Regents exam at the end of either eighth or ninth grade.

2. Math 7 Basic

Basic Math 7 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 assessment and on future Regents exams. Students who complete math 7 basic will be enrolled in either math 8 or math 8 basic in their 8th grade year and will be prepared to pursue a Regents mathematics program at Shaker High School.

3. Math - Special Class

Math (SC-M) A self-contained math class based upon an alternate curriculum that focuses on the instruction of basic mathematical skills for activities of daily living in conjunction with a life skills program. The curriculum is highly differentiated based upon each student's math concept abilities and their Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals. This class is graded on a pass/fail basis.

5. Fundamental Math 7

Fundamental Math 7 is an Academic Intervention Service (AIS) for seventh graders who need extra assistance in mathematics. This program is for students who scored at Level I or II on the 6th grade NYS math assessment or were recommended for inclusion by their 6th grade math teacher. Students enrolled in Fundamental Math 7 meet with their regular math classroom teacher for 20 minutes every other day in lieu of silent reading.

D. SCIENCE (Required)

1. Science 7

This course will be altered from the traditional grade 7 life science class. The specific content to be covered, drawn from both life and physical sciences, are being developed but could include such topics as density, heat, light, and sound, chemical reactions, cell theory, human biology, genetics, natural selection, ecology, and the classification 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 triple beam balance. Students completing this course will be prepared to enroll in an accelerated science class in grade 8, provided certain requirements are met.

3. Science - Special Class

A self-contained alternate curriculum class that focuses on functional life and physical science concepts and the application of technology in conjunction with a life skills program. The focus includes but is not limited to such topics as the Earth, Solar System, Living Systems (food chain), basic scientific principles of discovery,

the use of technology in applying science to students' daily lives and current events. This class is graded on a pass/fail basis.

E. SOCIAL STUDIES 7 (Required)

1. Social Studies 7

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.

2. Social Studies - Special Class

A self-contained alternate curriculum class that focuses on the instruction of functional concepts to enable students with a life skills curriculum to make informed choices as citizens of a community, state and country. The focus includes but is not limited to such topics as basic geography, key topics in United States history, some World History, and current events. This class is graded on a pass/fail basis.

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 examination that is aligned to the Checkpoint A learning standards for Languages Other Than English (LOTE) 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.

During the course, the students learn basic vocabulary and grammar and begin to develop the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the classroom, they engage in a variety of participatory activities and learn to communicate in the target language using simple conversational patterns. In addition, the course introduces students to the target culture, covering such topics as history, geography, customs, foods, holidays and family traditions.

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 enrollment, every effort will be made to accommodate a student's first choice. However, the first choice cannot be guaranteed. 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 (Required)

1. Health 7

Health is scheduled for all students on an every other day basis for one semester. This course includes the study of personal wellness, communication, goal setting, decision-making, gateway drugs, HIV/AIDS, and adolescent changes. The goal of the course is to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to live a healthy life.

2. Health - Special Class

A self-contained alternate curriculum in conjunction with a life skills class that exposes students to a variety of health and safety related topics. This class fulfills the requirement for participation in a health curriculum by providing an alternative program to expose students to simplified health concepts such as smoking, personal hygiene, and nutrition. This class is graded on a pass/fail basis.

I. ART 7 (Required)

In seventh grade art students explore creative concepts utilizing the elements and principles of art and design to develop strong visual compositions. Students solve a series of art problems by using a variety of two and three-dimensional media, such as drawing, painting, ceramics and digital arts. Instructional technology is also a valuable part of the art room experience. Art history, art appreciation and analyzing visual imagery are emphasized. Drawing and problem solving skills are enhanced through a series of sketchbook assignments. Art is provided every day for a 10-week period.

J. FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES: FACS 7 (Required)

Important life lessons and 21st century skills are covered in this hands-on and engaging course.

The 7th grade nutrition unit explores food safety and sanitation. Students will use the government website known as ChooseMyPlate.gov and will learn the importance of a well-rounded diet. Students will participate in various cooking labs to reinforce food preparation skills taught in this course. They will also be taught the importance of etiquette and manners when they host a healthy meal for Shaker Junior High staff members!

The Careers unit includes activities and projects that allow students to discover their abilities, values, interests and personality traits. This information is then compiled into an electronic portfolio that will be revisited in the 8th grade and will be useful during high school for making college/career choices.

The childcare unit will help students learn how to be a safe sitter as the physical, emotional and social development of a child is discussed. Students will learn how to create fun and safe activities for children and also proper procedures to follow before accepting a babysitting position. Finally, clothing management is taught in order to foster independence and self-management.

Seventh grade students will attend FACS class every day for one quarter of the school year.

K. TECHNOLOGY 7 (Required)

Technology 7 is the first half of the one unit NYS “Introduction to Technology” curriculum. This course meets every day for twenty weeks or one half year.

Technology 7 introduces students to human resources, technological processes and creative problem solving. The course is taught through a number of hands on

activities and design challenges. Students will use their knowledge of materials, machines and available resources to solve technical problems. These activities develop critical thinking and decision-making skills vital to employment success in the twenty first century.

L. MUSIC (Required)

1. General Music 7

Seventh-grade students are scheduled for one semester (twenty weeks) of General Music, which is divided into three units: Guitar, Keyboard and Musicals. In the two instrument units, students will review basic note-reading skills and learn new skills that will allow them to perform on the two instruments (electric keyboard and acoustic guitar). Students will learn these skills while performing individually, in small groups, and as a class. Students will play a mixed repertoire of music including folk, classical and blues styles.

In the Musical unit, students will complete an in-depth study of a famous work in musical theater, including various learning activities and a culminating project. Students will use the technology equipment available in the classroom, library, and computer labs to further explore the subject.

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, Treble Makers (for Soprano and Alto voices), Select Chorus, Syncopella (for Tenor and Baritone voices), and Scherzo. Students are encouraged to be in both a choral and instrumental group, since the two musical experiences complement each other. Students enrolled in Science 7E and two performing groups will have their Science 7E Lab scheduled after school.

Students in Band and Orchestra will also have a required small-group lesson once each week. This is a class that students must attend. In lessons, students learn technique and work to improve their individual skills. A rotating schedule of lesson times is planned so that no student should be excused from the same class more than once in each four weeks of school. 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 seventh grade Course Selection Form distributed from the junior high school. A student must already play an instrument to play in an instrumental group. When

selecting a performing group, students are committing to participate for an entire year, to attend their school lesson, and to perform in all scheduled concerts. The decision to drop a performing group will only be made under seriously extenuating circumstances by the guidance counselor, administrator, and director.

3. Accelerated Credit in Music

Students can earn ½-unit of high school credit in music while enrolled at the junior high. Those who seek to apply for this accelerated credit in music must successfully complete two years in the Shaker Junior High School band, chorus, or orchestra. They also must perform a solo on a band or orchestra instrument, piano or voice at a level 3 or higher as ranked by NYSSMA, and have achieved at least a score of Excellent (21 or higher) on that solo by the end of eighth grade. If the student has met the necessary requirements, he/she will turn in a completed application form to the music teacher by early June of the eighth grade year. If it has been signed by the parent and approved by the teacher and principal, the student will receive ½-unit of high school credit.

M. FUNCTIONAL LIFE SKILLS – SPECIAL CLASS

A self-contained alternate curriculum that focuses on functional daily living skills. The focus includes meal planning and preparation, home/environment maintenance, self-care skills, and community environment orientation. This class is graded on a pass/fail basis.

N. ENGLISH AS A NEW LANGUAGE (ENL)

ENL services are delivered through a co-taught Literature and Writing 7 class and/or stand alone ENL classes depending on individual students' needs based upon the NYSITELL assessment. The co-taught ELA class is taught by an English teacher and an ENL teacher. The class includes both identified English Language Learners and non-English Language Learners. The curriculum mirrors the curriculum of the Literature and Writing 7 class.