

LSU Laboratory School Eighth Grade

Eighth grade is a pivotal transition year from Middle School to High School. Research and writing in the content areas are a primary focus throughout the curriculum.

Prior to entering 8th grade, students should:

- have respect for the educational process
- demonstrate the ability to use critical thinking skills
- exhibit proper work ethic, time management, and organizational skills
- read proficiently
- be able to compose a multi-paragraph essay
- have mastery of basic math computations (whole numbers, fractions, decimals)
- possess basic science skills (observations, inferences, analyzing data, drawing conclusions)
- be knowledgeable of U.S. historical events from Colonization to Reconstruction

Students are expected to do approximately 20 minutes of homework per subject each night. On average, this means that students work on homework about 1 ½ to 2 hours nightly. Homework assignments are used to preview material in preparation for class or review material that was presented in class so that the ideas move from short-term to long-term memory. Active study methods are highly encouraged. In addition to other homework, there is a standing assignment in RWW to read 30 minutes nightly.

Courses

FOREIGN LANGUAGE: Spanish I or French I

Spanish I and French I are a continuation of the middle school foreign language curriculum. Students study Spanish/French through oral, written, and listening activities involving material beginning in the 6th and 7th grades. Students with no prior foreign language instruction receive supplemental aid to facilitate rapid advancement in the early stages of the course. Students have the opportunity to receive high school credit for Spanish I/French I upon the successful completion of 8th grade course.

Math: Integrated Algebra/Geometry or Algebra I or Geometry

Integrated Algebra/Geometry:

This course is designed for 8th grade students not developmentally ready for Algebra I. The class counts as a high school credit. Students will review operations with all types of rational numbers and different types of graphs. They will also review many topics from Pre-Algebra to help them be completely ready for Algebra I in the 9th grade. Some of those topics include operations with integers, solving equations and inequalities, probability, and linear equations.

Algebra I: Algebra I is a high-school level math course, which counts for high school credit. Course material prepares students for Algebra II and Geometry, while laying the foundation for all higher mathematics courses. Students are expected to practice and properly perform certain skills, explore and discover mathematical ideas and apply ideas and skills in problem situations. Algebra I focuses on skills and procedures such as writing, simplifying and evaluating algebraic expressions, writing and solving equations and inequalities, and the in-depth study of relations and functions. Another primary goal is to focus on the linear pattern as it is found in certain situations, and how it can be represented in different ways (tables, graphs, and equations). The concept is then applied to real-world problems. Finally, the course focuses on the quadratic pattern with an emphasis on the skills necessary for dealing with a higher-level pattern.

Geometry: Geometry is the highest-level math course offered in the 8th grade. It counts as a high school credit. Geometry is the study of patterns and the use of these patterns to describe the physical universe. Students will utilize inductive reasoning to make conjectures about the relationships in geometric figures and use deductive reasoning to confirm these conjectures. After discovering or deriving relationships, students use their ideas to problem solve real-world and algebraic problems. The major emphases of the course are Euclidean geometry, coordinate geometry, and transformational geometry.

READING WRITING WORKSHOP:

One of the main purposes of RWW is to foster in students an appreciation for literature as both reader and creator. We will read and respond to a variety of novels, short stories, poems, essays, and non-fiction selections. Students will have a lot of choice in what they read, but will also encounter certain selections of literature together as a class. Writing, in a variety of forms, will take place on a daily basis. Class activity will be composed of a combination of lecture, discussion, writing workshop, and group work. Outside reading will be a daily assignment. One of the primary goals is to develop students' ability to read critically and analyze different genres of literature for both literal and figurative meaning. Student performance will be measured through vocabulary and spelling quizzes, homework assignments, periodic reading log and journal checks, projects as assigned by the instructor, writing assignments completed in and out of class, tests and quizzes used to measure long term understanding, and a daily grade for class participation.

SCIENCE:

This continues the comprehensive curriculum for science as mandated by the state department of education. The eighth grade year focuses on earth and space science allowing the students to see the interrelationships in the natural world. The students study a series of units designed to help them understand important science concepts, processes and ideas; develop higher order thinking skills; develop problem-solving skills and apply scientific principles; and promote communication and social skills. The units include topics such as science process skills, chemistry, forces and motion, weather and atmosphere, environmental resources, basic geology with emphasis on Louisiana, and astronomy and space exploration.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Louisiana History

In becoming more aware of the history of their state, students will develop a deeper appreciation and understanding of the culture that surrounds them. Global learning will be brought home, connecting the world to the individual. Student and teacher work together to discover the essential understandings of each unit and the course. In order to come to these understandings students will engage in discussions, individual and group investigations, readings, debates, document analysis, and writings about the environment and economy, our link to the first inhabitants, the effect of colonization, the trials of becoming a state, our governmental system, and the far reaching effects of historical eras such as Reconstruction and the Great Depression.