



8th Grade Program Overview

Update: August 28, 2014



Eighth grade students in this final year of middle school often are role models of maturity for the younger students as they lead in academic and extra-curricular activities. As bodies mature and emotions play their role in adolescent development, the school provides opportunities for hands-on inquiry-based learning, projects, and physical activity. Students can choose to participate in sports tournaments, band and orchestra concerts, and drama productions. Exploratory learning is provided through an elective course each quarter.

Language of Literature provides a strong base for English studies. "Process writing" continues. Spelling and usage skills are developed through writing. Typing via computer is expected.

Depending on math placement, students will use McDougal Littell's *Pre-Algebra* or *Algebra* textbook.

Holt Science & Technology *Physical Science* is the Grade 8 science text. Holt's *United States History: Beginnings to 1877* supports the teaching of American History.

We encourage young people to use their personal *Student NIV Bible* provided by Morrison Academy for use in Grades 6-12.

Specialists teach Mandarin Chinese, art, music, physical education, and library skills. Each has a vital part in your eighth grader's week.

Language Arts

Students are created in God's image with the unique ability to communicate, create, and express ideas. The language arts develop these abilities to understand and influence God's world for His glory. Therefore, Morrison offers a balanced language arts approach that teaches students to read with fluency and comprehension, evaluate text and media with discernment, listen with understanding and compassion, speak with conviction and effect, and write with clarity and persuasion. (O'Malley 1999)

Building on previous learning, eighth grade students become convincing writers of persuasive essays. Their research skills now allow them to formulate a thesis statement, research independently and ethically, and produce a quality product that demonstrates their learning. They become effective listeners, polished presenters, and mature members of group discussions. They learn how to think critically and Biblically about the message and techniques of media.



Reading

New vocabulary: common Greek & Latin roots, prefixes & suffixes

Use all the reading strategies

Non-fiction: skim to define main idea

Fiction: describe simple relationships between story elements

Writing

Imaginative story (500-1,000 wds) or

Personal narrative (200-400 wds) with complex dialogue

Expository: 5 paragraph essay

Research project using Big 6 (10 minute presentation)

Traits of Writing

Speaking/Listening

Persuade, narrate, explain using presentation software & facial expressions

Use listening comprehension strategies

(reinforce grades 2-7)

Math

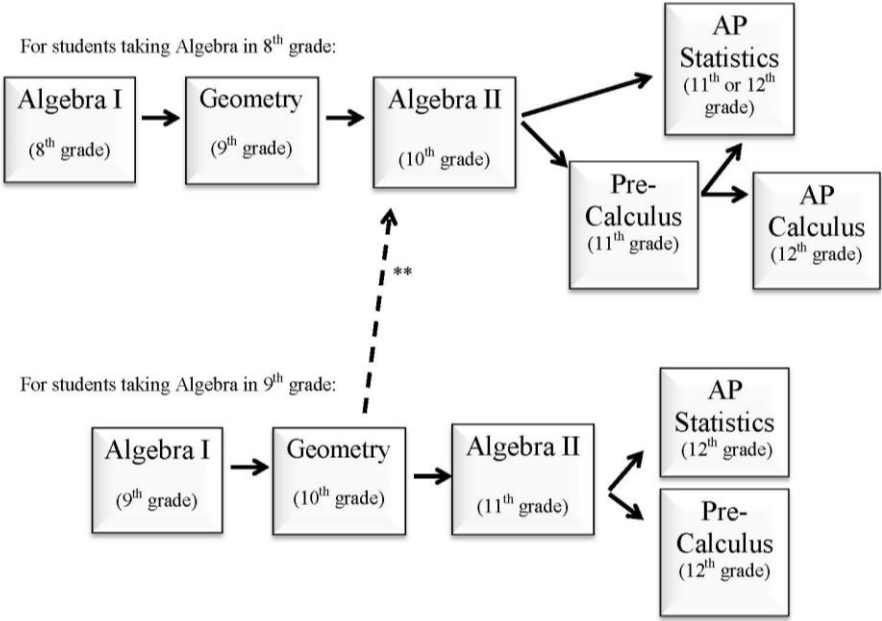
Morrison Academy strives to develop students who obtain a mastery of, and appreciation for, the content and processes of mathematics, as well as an understanding of how mathematics relates to other domains in life. While the study of mathematics occurs mostly within finite creation, it points us towards the character of an infinite God who values logic, order and consistency. Therefore, the purpose of mathematical instruction at Morrison is to develop students whose mastery of content includes insight into logical processes that will enable students to make meaningful connections to a world of order and help them transfer math concepts to other domains consistent to life. Such tangible engagement with math will help Morrison's students dynamically impact their world for Christ.

Eighth grade introduces a strand on Functions, preparing students for entry into high school algebra next year. In Grade 8, instructional time focuses on three critical areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem.

Accelerated Math Track (beginning in Grade 8)

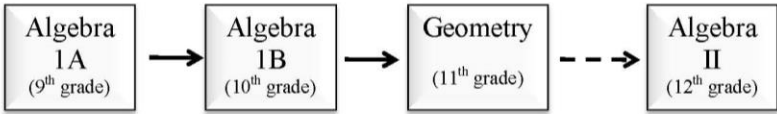
Seventh grade students who earn a 90% or higher in seventh grade math, pass the Algebra placement test (85% or greater), and have demonstrated good study habits in grade 7 math will have the option of taking Algebra 1 in their 8th grade year. Students in this track are required to score a B- or higher both in their Algebra I course and on the Algebra Exit Exam, or they may be required to repeat Algebra I in 9th grade

Mathematics Class Progressions at Morrison Academy

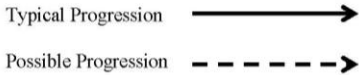


***Students in this track who want to reach Calculus by their senior year may, upon teacher approval, take Geometry and Algebra II during their sophomore year. Please see the Pacing, Sequence, and Course Offerings section of the Math Curriculum Guide.

For students taking Algebra 1A and 1B:



The first three classes in this track meet the minimum requirement for graduation. However, many universities would like students to take Algebra II before admission.



Science

Morrison's science program seeks to help students gain knowledge of God through the study of His creation. This is accomplished with an activity-oriented program where teachers and students think analytically and logically, solve problems creatively, and use technology as a tool. Morrison endeavors to help students acquire developmentally appropriate concepts and science skills to make positive contributions as Christians in an increasingly scientific and technological society.

Grade 8 - Physical Science

Physical science covers the basic concepts of chemistry and physics. Class content will give students a broad grasp of the topics of matter, reactions, the periodic table, energy, force, and motion in preparation for further study in high school science courses. Students will also participate in a problem solving project as part of this course.

Guidance

The guidance/counseling program of Morrison Academy provides a biblically-based program that is available to all students, teachers/staff and parents helping them to recognize their uniqueness as individuals in Christ. Morrison seeks to provide a primarily proactive and preventative program which enables students to fulfill God's purpose in their lives by maturing spiritually, emotionally, academically, physically and socially.

Eighth graders have made it to the end of middle school and are beginning to look ahead to high school. In this final year of preparation for high school, guidance issues focus them on this very important transition. Class time is spent understanding how high school works and how it relates to admittance into a college or university. Other topics of interest include: boy/girl relationships, personality assessment, and mental health disorders.

Physical Education

All people are creations of God designed to know and glorify Him through their lives and action. Therefore, Morrison's physical education program recognizes that our bodies are temples of God to be appropriately cared for and used in developing a mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually balanced life.

Students will continue to learn and work on advanced locomotor movements and advanced skill development by using games and drills that are age-appropriate. This will be accomplished by primarily focusing on team sports (softball, soccer, volleyball, basketball, etc...) where they develop sport specific drills, and better understand the rules for the different sports. In 6-8 PE, instruction is also directed toward incorporating physical activity into a daily routine as well as deepening a biblical understanding of exercise and being a part of a team.

Health

Morrison Academy is committed to following Christ's example of a balanced life. Therefore we desire growth in four areas: wisdom (mental/emotional), stature (physical), favor with God (spiritual), and favor with man (social). Consistent with our integrated-based philosophy of education, we strive to incorporate instruction for life-long wellness throughout the curriculum.



Visual and Performing Arts

Morrison Academy recognizes that students are made in the image of their Creator and that God has endowed them with His creativity and individual gifts. Because training in visual and performing arts is an essential component of educating the whole person, students must be given the opportunity to explore, develop, and enjoy their God-given artistic abilities. Students will learn to express their creativity by experiencing, appreciating and discerning the arts from historical, contemporary and multi-cultural perspectives. Morrison Academy's arts programs endeavor to use the arts to glorify and worship God, equip students to serve His church, and impact their world in a relevant and dynamic way.

Performing Arts

Middle School Band

Students will continue to develop individual skills on a wind or percussion instrument with increased emphasis on ensemble skills.

Middle School Choir

Students will continue to develop individual vocal skills with increased emphasis on music reading and ensemble singing.

Middle School Orchestra

Students will continue to develop individual skills on a string instrument with increased emphasis on bowing, position techniques, and ensemble skills.

Co-Curricular courses

Visual Arts

Students who complete the middle school visual arts program at Morrison Academy create art work in both second and third dimensions and use different art mediums. They know and use each of the elements and principles of art. They safely and properly handle and use a variety of art tools and materials. They communicate, through their art, their own thoughts and emotions. They appreciate the art work of their peers, the art of both historical and contemporary artists, and the art from other cultures. They are aware of the place of art and artists in society.

Middle School students are required to take at least one quarter art course per grade per year as part of the Middle School Exploratory Courses (EC). These courses include a wide variety of mediums, and art experiences. In addition to or included in these choices, students will take a one-quarter Art Core course once during their middle school years. Middle School students develop art skills and learn new skills while creating their own original art work. Students will use art to express themselves and communicate themes, ideas, or messages. They will learn to interpret and analyze their own art and appreciate the art of their peers, and the art of historical and contemporary artists. They will have opportunity to use digital tools to create graphics, illustrations or presentations.

Social Studies

Social studies instruction at Morrison unites two important elements:

- *Acquiring a solid knowledge base of historical, geographical, civic, economic, and cultural concepts.*
- *Acquiring a social studies skill set to apply knowledge to situations using a global Christian perspective.*

Morrison's social studies program seeks to develop students who can influence the kingdoms of mankind as critically-thinking citizens of the Kingdom of God. We provide developmentally appropriate instruction through a balance of inquiry learning and direct teaching. Though implementing a United States based curriculum, we recognize the importance of a global approach to social studies curricula to meet the needs of our diverse population.

U.S. History: Beginnings to 1877

Grade 8 students will study American history from European Exploration to 1877. The course emphasizes key individuals, events, and changes prominent during this period. In effect, then, it covers the nation's origin, spread across the continent, trial and transformation in civil war, and emergence as a modern world power. In addition to academic content, students will develop the abilities to understand and distinguish cause and effect, identify and interpret primary and secondary source documents, and make connections between the past and the present.

Bible

God is the source of all truth, and the Bible is God's special revelation for all humanity. Through it we are introduced to the life of faith and the redemption offered to all in Christ Jesus. We comprehensively teach the Bible to foster biblical literacy, develop spiritual discernment, and equip students with a Christian worldview resulting in students who are transformed by the Holy Spirit and willing to be obedient to God's truth. Bible education aims to encourage each student to love God and to serve others.

The Morrison Academy Bible Curriculum: 5 strands

- *Biblical Literacy*-Students will know basic content of the Bible: stories about Old and New Testament characters, chronology, cultural and historical background, recurring themes and topics.
- *Spiritual Discernment*-Students will be able to appreciate who God is and accept one's self worth as God's creation, while distinguishing right from wrong.
- *Biblical Worldview*-Bible classes not only impart biblical and theological knowledge but use it as the basis of a biblical worldview which is used to explore the world.
- *Christian Character*-Through the teaching of the Bible we desire to see the love of God perfected in our students so that they know God, obey God's commands and love others.
- *Christian Service*-Beginning in middle school, intentional, hands-on service to local and global communities enhances students' academic learning, a natural outworking of biblical truth.

The eighth grade course will equip students not only to know about Jesus but also to know Him personally. The emphasis is on character development and personal transformation as we study the life of Jesus and His disciples. We will answer the questions: Who was He, what did He do, and what does this mean for my life?

Mandarin Chinese

God has given us the gift of language to communicate with Him, ourselves, and others. Morrison's Mandarin Chinese program is a foreign language program that equips all students to communicate more effectively in a global context to better impact their world as Christians. This is done through a unit-driven curricular program that teaches all students the four basic tenets (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) of communication as well as Chinese culture and Christian concepts.

Teachers use high yield instructional strategies, a variety of materials, teaching styles, and enriching activities that are age-appropriate, promote higher order thinking, relevant, and integrate technology and faith.

Library Media

Morrison Academy recognizes that people are gifted by God with the ability to inquire, gain knowledge, and delight in the creativity of others. Morrison Academy library program strives to equip students to enjoy information by teaching them how to use information effectively. The Library Media Center will support students by providing opportunities to become critical thinkers, life-long learners, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information

The Middle School library media classes focus on ensuring that students read widely for pleasure and information as well as understand how to use resources correctly for inquiry. Students use digital resources extensively and develop an increased awareness of the impact that technology has in their lives (both positive and negative). They learn how to evaluate and use sources ethically. They are also asked to make connections from literature to other types of media and to create their own digital resources, such as blogs, wikis, and book trailers.

How Parents Can Help

Activities That Support Learning

- Listen to your adolescent
- Model the importance of reading by being a reader yourself
- Talk with your son or daughter rather than at him/her
- Encourage keeping a writing notebook or journal
- Provide a quiet place for homework and study
- Encourage early completion of homework while allowing natural consequences of lapses
- Help your youth understand and capitalize on his/her learning style
- Allow your youth to develop independence
- Encourage asking questions and seeking answers
- Celebrate successes
- Create special times to be alone with your youth to participate in activities--camping, hiking, running, sports, concerts
- Take your youth to places and talk about the visits
- Limit time spent on computer games
- Tell your family stories, especially events that happened when you were the age of your adolescents
- Watch television with your youth and discuss the programs together; limit viewing time; choose programs with care
- Play memory and math games, vocabulary games, physical games
- Talk with your youth about the school work he/she brings home
- Give responsibilities
- Communicate your expectations regarding behavior and performance at school

"Fathers, do not make your children angry, but raise them with the training and teaching of the Lord." Ephesians 6:4 (ICB)