

Expected School-Wide Learning Results

In developing the whole child, Almaden Country School will prepare students to be:

1. Critical and creative thinkers who know, comprehend, apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate.
2. Literate individuals who demonstrate competency in reading, writing, listening and presenting in all curriculum disciplines.
3. Effective communicators who listen, demonstrate, explain and respond with clarity.
4. Healthy individuals who understand the elements of physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle.
5. Community contributors who practice respect, courtesy, service, cooperation, generosity, honesty, patriotism, good citizenship, appreciation for diversity, school spirit and team building.
6. Productive individuals who discover, develop and apply their unique gifts.
7. Contemporary learners who demonstrate knowledge and skills in mathematics, in the sciences and in the prevalent technology.

Statement of Purpose

Since 1982, the mission of Almaden Country School has been to provide a “gifted education” for every child. A gifted education is one that offers a traditional liberal arts and sciences curriculum, taught in a developmentally appropriate sequence. It focuses on the individual and includes strong academics, continuity and integration of curriculum, broad enrichment programs and a dedicated partnership between home and school.

At ACS, we value childhood. Guided by our recognition that each child has unique capabilities and learning styles, we provide a wide variety of experiences to enable children to develop their innate talents. Academic expectations are high, and with the guidance of superior faculty, students acquire and develop the necessary skills to prepare them for life.

We also strive to develop inherent values in each student, encouraging learning in an atmosphere of respect through courtesy, cooperation, patriotism, honesty, good citizenship, and appreciation of diversity. With these values at the helm of our school, we believe that faculty, students, and parents will contribute to the well-being and stability of our community and our society.

Our purpose as a school is clear: we want children to succeed in their educational, social, and personal endeavors. In the process, our students also grow into delightful people—considerate, concerned, committed, and ready to make significant contributions to the world-at-large.

Almaden Country School Curriculum

Middle School

Rigorous Academics *Focus On The Individual* *Broad Enrichment*



The middle school years at Almaden Country School are focused on developing the full potential of each student in preparation for high school.

The curriculum provides a core of strong academics, balanced by a broad selection of multi-age elective courses. The school day consists of seven fifty-minute periods with five core subjects of English language/literature, mathematics, social studies, science and physical education, along with two elective courses. The Homework Center is available for quiet study after school on four days each week. Throughout middle school, superior teachers enthusiastically share their areas of expertise with students, challenging them to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers, and to experience the joy of life-long learning.

Middle school students enjoy diverse extra-curricular activities. After-school athletics

and intramural sports promote the values of sportsmanship and camaraderie. Leadership and school-spirit is encouraged through the Community service classes and the ‘Big Buddy’ program. Individual talents are able to develop through participation in performing arts and band. Friendship and social interaction is encouraged through many fun activities, and teacher-chaperoned over-night field trips are offered each year.

Our middle school students are recognized for their unique gifts and talents in an atmosphere of mutual respect. A dynamic curriculum, the support of nurturing teachers, and a warm spirit of friendship result in happy, self-confident, well-prepared young men and women who are ready for the world of high school and beyond!

Steve Hayden, Head of Schools



GRADE	Language Arts	Math	Social Studies	Science	Physical Education	Electives
6	<p>Reading and Comprehension Skills Develop reader response evaluative skills in Literature Circles; explore character, setting, theme and tone; predict plot; draw connections to personal life; create visuals for further understanding</p> <p>Library Reader's Workshop Choice of Student-Centered Reading to: enjoy independent selection; increase reading for enjoyment; practice daily reading skills; write journal response to readings</p> <p>Composition and Language Skills Increase writing fluency; introduce three-part essay format; increase grammar skills; develop vocabulary from literature</p>	<p>Mastery of four operations with decimals and fractions; explore averages, ratios, exponents, patterns, percentages, proportions and statistics; use and conversion of customary and metric units; introduction to integers; introduction to algebraic equations; introduction to formulas for perimeter, area, circumference and volume; estimation and problem solving skills throughout; think, talk and write clearly about math</p>	<p>WORLD CULTURES Content Early People and Life Ways; Cradles of Civilization; Asia's Classical Age; The Mediterranean; Rise of New Empires; Growth of Trade; The Early Modern World; Times of Rapid Change; The World At War</p> <p>Skills Map and globe skills; read a telescoping timeline; understand national symbols; form logical conclusions; act as a responsible citizen; evaluate information and sources</p>	<p>The Nature of Science · Scientific method and lab safety · Metric system and basic lab tools</p> <p>Dynamic Earth · Introduction to earth science · Earthquakes, volcanoes, rocks, minerals, and erosion</p> <p>Exploring the Universe Stars, galaxies, the solar system, earth and the moon</p> <p>Science Fair Ongoing independent investigation (culminating in a Science Fair Project)</p>	<p>GRADES 6-8</p> <p>Fitness · Cardiovascular health · Aerobic and anaerobic fitness · Resistance strength training · Flexibility</p> <p>Team games leading up to team sports · Basketball · Football · Pickleball · Soccer · Softball · Team handball · Ultimate Frisbee · Volleyball</p>	<p>GRADES 6-8</p> <p>Elective Courses A variety of elective courses are offered each Trimester. Students take at least one class from each block of electives prior to graduation from 8th grade. For example:</p> <p>Language Arts · French and Spanish* · Speech · Experiencing Shakespeare · Journalism · Creative Writing</p> <p>Fine Arts and Performing Arts · 2 & 3-Dimensional Drawing · Basic & Advanced Art & Design · Drama & Set Design · Band · Art in Nature</p> <p>Science and Technology · Environmental Studies · Introduction to Powerpoint · Touch Typing</p> <p>General Studies · Current Events · Community Service · Business Studies · Study Skills</p> <p>*French and Spanish Level A · Basic conversation · Verbs in the present tense · Country-specific culture, history, geography · Developing listening, speaking, writing and reading skills</p> <p>Level B · Continuing development of basic skills · Verbs in past tense · Introduction to literature, cinema, popular culture · Cultural- or historical-based project</p> <p>Level C · Continuing development of basic skills · Increased emphasis on literature · Advanced projects · Continuing study of culture, economy and history</p>
7	<p>Develop oral fluency; read critically and comprehend; write clear sentences and paragraphs; create effective essays and stories; develop oral communication and presentation skills; improve note taking and research methods; reinforce and apply rules of standard English; improve spelling and vocabulary; develop, evaluate, revise, and proofread written work using peers and word processor; employ useful study and life skills</p>	<p>Mastery of integers and exponents; applications of ratios, proportions, averages, percentages, volume, area and mass to real-life situations; use of fractions, decimals and integers in basic algebraic equations; introduction to multiple step equations and linear equations; applications with customary and metric measures; collect, organize and analyze data; use of tools to assist in solving problems; estimation and problem solving strategies throughout all skills; think, talk and write clearly about math</p>	<p>AMERICAN HISTORY I Content European Explorers and Colonization; Search For Freedom: Moving Toward Independence; The American Revolution; Origins & Framework of the Constitution; A New Nationalism; Age of Reform and Culture; Western Expansion; Events Leading Up To the Civil War</p> <p>Skills Identifying and analyzing point-of-view; reading & interpreting maps, graphs, tables; interpreting primary source material; identifying main idea and supporting details; forming conclusions; comparing and contrasting; outlining; writing in response to content; oral presentation; research skills</p>	<p>Cells: Building Blocks of Life Cell structure, function, process, and energy</p> <p>Human Biology and Health · Human body systems (including skeletal, muscular, digestive, circulatory, nervous, etc.) · Reproduction, development, alcohol, tobacco, and drugs</p> <p>Parade of Life: Animals In-depth study of different animal groups</p>	<p>Fitness for Life (textbook) Students in grades 6-8 will cover 4 chapters per year. The textbook work will be the same for all students in each year. Units include: · Healthy lifestyle · Body types and weight · Motivation · Balance, coordination, reaction time · Agility, power, speed · Nutrition · Disease and genetics · Heart rate</p> <p>Presidential Fitness Testing · Sit-ups · Pull-ups · Sit and reach · One mile run/walk · Shuttle run</p>	<p>· Art in Nature</p> <p>Science and Technology · Environmental Studies · Introduction to Powerpoint · Touch Typing</p> <p>General Studies · Current Events · Community Service · Business Studies · Study Skills</p> <p>*French and Spanish Level A · Basic conversation · Verbs in the present tense · Country-specific culture, history, geography · Developing listening, speaking, writing and reading skills</p> <p>Level B · Continuing development of basic skills · Verbs in past tense · Introduction to literature, cinema, popular culture · Cultural- or historical-based project</p> <p>Level C · Continuing development of basic skills · Increased emphasis on literature · Advanced projects · Continuing study of culture, economy and history</p>
8	<p>Literature Study form in all literary genre and analyze, interpret, predict, evaluate, draw conclusions, compare and contrast selections; learn and use literary terms; apply multi-purpose reading techniques, read with fluency and expression, increase vocabulary knowledge and usage; study in depth one Shakespearean play</p> <p>Grammar Analyze, parse, model, and write sentences of all constructions and types; analyze, model and write paragraphs; compose essays; create short stores and poems; research, take notes, organize and write research papers; proofread, edit and revise; spell; present orally; work individually and collaboratively; write for publication</p>	<p>Mastery of operations using integers; analyzing of data using charts, tables and graphs; application of decimals, fractions and percentages; algebraic concepts; solving and graphing equations and inequalities; geometric construction; application of formulas to determine perimeter, area and volume</p> <p>Algebra The study of properties, integers, equations, equalities, and exponents, which lead to the introduction of: polynomials; factoring; linear equations and graphs; systems of equations; absolute value; rational equations; radical equations; relations and functions; quadratic equations</p>	<p>AMERICAN HISTORY 2 & CIVICS Content The Civil War; Reconstruction; The Vanishing Frontier; The Rise of Industry / Age of Invention; Into the 20th Century - America as a World Power; World War I; The 1920's; The Great Depression; World War II; Civil Rights Movement; Framework of American Government; Rights and Responsibilities of U.S. Citizens</p> <p>Skills Identifying and analyzing point-of-view; reading & interpreting maps, graphs, tables; interpreting political cartoons; interpreting primary source material; comparing and contrasting; outlining; writing in response to content; oral presentation & debate; research skills; expanded research; Socratic discussion</p>	<p>Matter: Building Block of the Universe Introduction to chemistry</p> <p>Electricity and Magnetism Electric charges, currents, magnets, and electronics</p> <p>Motion, Forces and Energy · Work, power and simple machines · Energy forms and changes</p>	<p>Fitness for Life (textbook) Students in grades 6-8 will cover 4 chapters per year. The textbook work will be the same for all students in each year. Units include: · Healthy lifestyle · Body types and weight · Motivation · Balance, coordination, reaction time · Agility, power, speed · Nutrition · Disease and genetics · Heart rate</p> <p>Presidential Fitness Testing · Sit-ups · Pull-ups · Sit and reach · One mile run/walk · Shuttle run</p>	<p>· Art in Nature</p> <p>Science and Technology · Environmental Studies · Introduction to Powerpoint · Touch Typing</p> <p>General Studies · Current Events · Community Service · Business Studies · Study Skills</p> <p>*French and Spanish Level A · Basic conversation · Verbs in the present tense · Country-specific culture, history, geography · Developing listening, speaking, writing and reading skills</p> <p>Level B · Continuing development of basic skills · Verbs in past tense · Introduction to literature, cinema, popular culture · Cultural- or historical-based project</p> <p>Level C · Continuing development of basic skills · Increased emphasis on literature · Advanced projects · Continuing study of culture, economy and history</p>