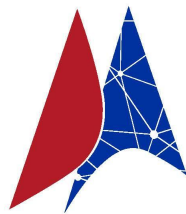


# Middle School



PROGRAM OF LEARNING



**GEMS**

أكاديمية جيمس دبي الأمريكية

Dubai American  
Academy

Revised May 2023

# Middle School (MS) - Program of Learning

## Introduction

One of the most important decisions we make is the education we choose for our child. The Dubai American Academy Middle School Program of Learning provides a documented guide to support a cohesive and integrated learning process for the middle school learner.

Our MS learning program is designed to meet the developmental needs of young adolescents as we want our students to be intrinsically motivated and truly engaged in their learning, whether it be online, in person, or any combination of the two. We offer a vigorous and holistic program which encourages increasing independence, responsibility and collaboration. We understand that in this age group students need to be exposed to a wide range of subjects, however, they also need a level of autonomy or choice in their program in order to take ownership of their learning. Therefore, in addition to core subjects students are offered exploratory and elective options throughout their middle years.

Furthermore, we are a digitally rich school and our Middle School learning program prepares our students for the next stage of their education, integrating transdisciplinary skills that will prepare them for the future.

We thank you for considering DAA's Middle School for your child.

## Middle School schedule

Middle School Schedule			
Learning block	SUN - THUR	Friday	
Block 1	07:40 - 09:00	Block 1	7:40 - 8:40
Break	09:00 - 09:15	Transition	8:40 - 8:45
Transition	9:15 - 9:20	Block 2	8:45 - 9:40
Block 2	09:20 - 10:40	Break	9:40 - 9:55
Transition	10:40 - 10:45	Transition	9:55 - 10:00
Block 3	10:45 - 12:05	Block 3	10:00 - 10:55
Lunch A	12:05 - 12:25	Transition	10:55 - 11:00
Lunch B	12:25 - 12:45	Block 4	11:00 - 11:55
Transition	12:45-12:50	Dismissal	11:55
CREW	12:50 - 13:25		
Transition	13:25 - 13:30		
Block 4	13:30 - 14:50		
Dismissal	14:50		

## Middle School Schedule Matrix (sample)

	Monday 09/04/2023	Tuesday 09/05/2023	Wednesday 09/06/2023	Thursday 09/07/2023	Friday 09/08/2023
08:00 AM	<b>Social Studies 6.</b> Mallak, Kelly Christine S56 07:40 AM - 09:00 AM	<b>English 6.</b> Brennan, Emmet S61 07:40 AM - 09:00 AM	<b>Social Studies 6.</b> Mallak, Kelly Christine S56 07:40 AM - 09:00 AM	<b>English 6.</b> Brennan, Emmet S61 07:40 AM - 09:00 AM	<b>Social Studies 6.</b> Mallak, Kelly Christine S56 07:40 AM - 08:40 AM
09:00 AM					<b>Math 6.</b> JONES, JANAURI FESUNTE S57 08:45 AM - 09:40 AM
10:00 AM	<b>Math 6.</b> JONES, JANAURI FESUNTE S57 09:20 AM - 10:40 AM	<b>Science 6.</b> Murray, Kimberly S37 09:20 AM - 10:40 AM	<b>Math 6.</b> JONES, JANAURI FESUNTE S57 09:20 AM - 10:40 AM	<b>Science 6.</b> Murray, Kimberly S37 09:20 AM - 10:40 AM	<b>Coding &amp; Robotics 6.</b> Sanchez, Ulysses S15 10:00 AM - 10:55 AM
11:00 AM	<b>Coding &amp; Robotics 6.</b> Sanchez, Ulysses S15 10:45 AM - 12:05 PM	<b>Arabic Non-native 6 - I.</b> Ali, Inas S40 10:45 AM - 12:05 PM	<b>Coding &amp; Robotics 6.</b> Sanchez, Ulysses S15 10:45 AM - 12:05 PM	<b>Arabic Non-native 6 - I.</b> Ali, Inas S40 10:45 AM - 12:05 PM	<b>French 6.</b> Baldeweck, Patricia S23 11:00 AM - 11:55 AM
12:00 PM					
01:00 PM	<b>Crew 6.</b> Hollingshead, Mandy S15 12:50 PM - 01:25 PM	<b>Crew 6.</b> Hollingshead, Mandy S15 12:50 PM - 01:25 PM	<b>Crew 6.</b> Hollingshead, Mandy S15 12:50 PM - 01:25 PM	<b>Crew 6.</b> Hollingshead, Mandy S15 12:50 PM - 01:25 PM	
02:00 PM	<b>French 6.</b> Baldeweck, Patricia S23 01:30 PM - 02:50 PM	<b>PE / Health 6.</b> Clegg, Jillian Danielle Gym 1 01:30 PM - 02:50 PM	<b>French 6.</b> Baldeweck, Patricia S23 01:30 PM - 02:50 PM	<b>PE / Health 6.</b> Clegg, Jillian Danielle Gym 1 01:30 PM - 02:50 PM	

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The MS learning program aims to promote a challenging curriculum that is rooted in real-world application and personalization. Our Middle School Learning Program ensures the following characteristics are at the heart of all learning experiences:

- **Interconnected:** Ensuring that all students have a connection and can find relevance with what they're learning at an individual, community, and global level
- **Individualized:** Advocating for and ensuring every student's right to learn and providing appropriately challenging and relevant learning opportunities for every student.
- **Inspired:** Providing all students with the knowledge and skills they need to take responsibility for their lives, to address life's challenges, to function successfully at all levels of society, and to be creators of knowledge.

The MS learning program strives to provide meaningful learning experiences for students enriched with opportunities for students to be thinkers, inquirers, innovators and responsible digital citizens. Innovative learning is integrated into the whole curriculum and structured in a way that develops the skills our students need to succeed, today and in the future. In middle school we promote student voice and choice that allows students to create stronger ownership of their learning.

A strong advisory program is integrated into our Homeroom: 'Community. Respect. Excellence. Wellbeing.' (CREW) program. This program offers opportunities for students to work on personal projects which foster a growth mindset and advanced technology

applications, as well as their project management and design thinking skills. CREW also has a strong focus on student well-being and provides an opportunity for everyone to 'check-in' with one another. A small community creates a safe space for students to learn, grow and thrive. This is also where Moral Education is integrated into the curriculum.

The MS curriculum consists of both core subjects and electives. The core subject areas include English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education/Health, Arabic and Islamic Education (for Muslim students). Electives offered include Art, Coding & Robotics, Mixed Media, Drama, Music, French, Spanish, Sports Leadership, Strength & Conditioning, Dance, Photography, & Journalism.

## STANDARDS & FRAMEWORKS

Dubai American Academy is an enriched American Curriculum School aligned to the Connecticut State Standards from Kindergarten through Grade 10. The following standards and frameworks provide a high level of achievement in which all DAA students are measured against for both progress and attainment.

**English/Language Arts:** [Common Core State Standards \(CCSS\)](#)  
**Social Studies:** [C3 Framework - Integrated Connecticut](#) and [UAE Moral, Social, and Cultural Studies Standards](#)  
**Science:** [Next Generation Science Standards \(NGSS\)](#)  
**Mathematics:** [Common Core State Standards \(CCSS\)](#)  
**Arabic:** [UAE Framework for Arabic for Learning Arabic](#)  
**French, & Spanish:** [Connecticut World Language Framework](#)  
**Islamic Studies:** [UAE Ministry of Education](#)  
**Moral Education:** [UAE Moral Education Standards](#)  
**Art Electives:** [National Core Art Standards \(NCAS\)](#) Visual Art  
**Drama:** [National Core Art Standards \(NCAS\)](#) Theatre  
**Coding & Robotics:** [International Standards for Technology Education \(ISTE\)](#)  
**Dance:** [Connecticut ARTs Standards \(NCAS\)](#) Dance  
**Mixed Media:** [National Core Art Standards \(NCAS\)](#) Media Arts  
**ELL:** [Sheltered Immersion Model \(SIM\)](#) and [WIDA Model](#) with [Focus Resources](#)  
**Health:** [Connecticut Health Standards](#)  
**PE/Sports Studies/Strength & Conditioning:** [Connecticut Physical Education Standards](#)  
**Music:** [National Core Art Standards](#)

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

In order to best prepare students for post-secondary education and a career, the Middle School utilizes a standards-based assessment, grading and reporting system to more accurately monitor, measure and communicate a student's learning, growth and academic achievement.

This system also positively affects the classroom as teachers provide clearer and more meaningful feedback for each student, based on their specific needs and goals.

A "grade" has one purpose: to communicate a student's learning. Standards-based grading is designed to do just that – clearly communicate a student's academic progress toward mastery of clearly defined curriculum standards. Curriculum standards are defined for each course and specifically indicate what the student is expected to know and be able to do.

Throughout the course, a student completes assignments and assessments that help the teacher track progress toward mastery of a curriculum standard and where students may require additional assistance.

Each assessment may target multiple curriculum standards. A proficiency level is determined for each curriculum standard targeted.

Approaches to Learning are reported separately. These "ATLs" are behavior and skill based, skills that are not covered in the content standards, are noted on the report card for every subject and twice each semester as a midterm report.

Each subject uses reporting standards to report student progress towards proficiency in the curricular standard (s) using the 4 point scale as follows:

Level	Descriptor
<b>MASTERING</b> <b>4-MST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner provides compelling evidence demonstrating the transfer of concepts, knowledge and skills as indicated by the stated learning outcome (standard).</li> <li>• Observable evidence of this level will include skills such as evaluating, justifying, synthesizing, proposing, and defending.</li> <li>• Learning is profound and students work interdependently.</li> </ul>
<b>ACHIEVING</b> <b>3-ACH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner provides sufficient evidence to securely demonstrate the concepts, knowledge and skills as indicated by the stated learning outcome (standard).</li> <li>• Observable evidence of this level will include skills such as applying, analyzing, explaining, comparing, contrasting, organizing, and connecting.</li> <li>• Learning is deep and students work independently.</li> </ul>

<p>APPROACHING 2-APP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learner provides partial evidence to demonstrate the concepts, knowledge and skills as indicated by the stated learning outcome (standard). Additional focus and practice is needed to develop and solidify the learning outcome.</li> <li>• Observable evidence of this level will include skills such as identifying, using/employing, classifying, completing, re-phrasing, summarizing, and describing.</li> <li>• Learning is appropriate to level and students are starting to work independently.</li> </ul>
<p>DEVELOPING 1-DEV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence provided by the learner has just begun to demonstrate the concepts, knowledge and skills as indicated by the stated learning outcome (standard).</li> <li>• Observable evidence of this level will include skills such as recalling, identifying and repeating.</li> <li>• Students are dependent on the teacher at this level.</li> </ul>

### Additional Codes

- NTA** Not taught or assessed during the semester  
**EX** Exempt (individual assignments)  
**L** Late (individual assignments)  
**IE** Insufficient evidence

Students are assessed using a range of instructional tools and strategies to meet the needs of all learners. Student progress will be updated regularly and can be monitored through the web-based program called **PowerSchool**.



**Accessing your child's grades:** A view of all proficiency levels have been added to the PowerSchool Unified Classroom gradebook and continue to be updated by Middle School teachers as students continue to progress through their units of learning. Instructions on how to view your child's grades on PowerSchool Unified Classroom can be found [here](#) (04:25)

## HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

### PHILOSOPHY

When homework is an engaging and relevant learning activity that is purposefully designed and connected to learning expectations, it can positively influence student learning. High quality homework assignments can:

- improve speed and accuracy with important skills and processes,
- activate prior knowledge, and/or
- extend or elaborate on new learning.

Such assignments provide students with deliberate practice, which can be tailored to the needs of individual students. Effective homework assignments cultivate positive, open school-home partnerships between teachers and parents, while providing students with opportunities to create authentic products and rehearse important academic skills. Finally,



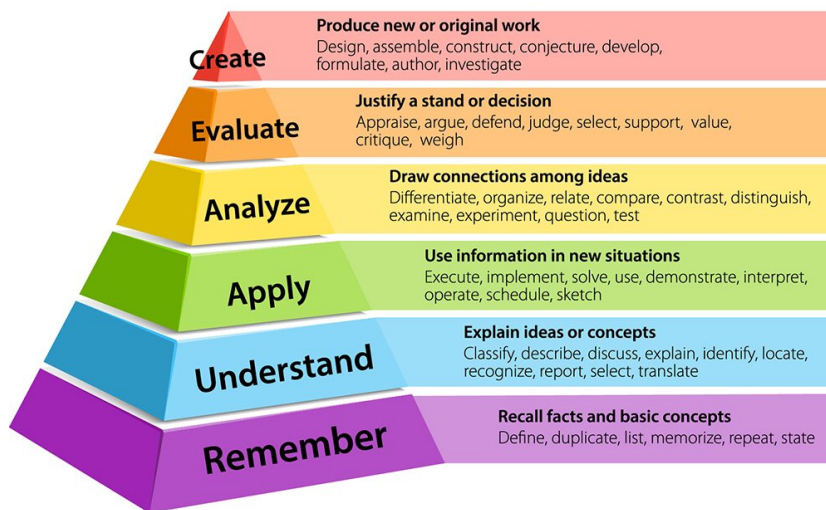
time spent on homework should be appropriately balanced with the importance of personal and family wellness.

In the Middle School we follow Marzano's 10 minute rule; that is students should be assigned no more than 10 minutes of homework per grade level. So, following that rule, a 6th grade student should have no more than 60 minutes of total homework per night, 70 minutes for 7th grade, and 80 minutes for 8th grade. Furthermore, students are encouraged to read daily at home.

In addition, teachers are encouraged to use the flipped classroom homework strategy, by inverting Bloom's Taxonomy, whereby students spend more class time on the more difficult cognitive tasks such as application and analysis and less class time on moderate tasks such as remembering and understanding, such as when a topic is being introduced.

As part of our protocol, any work completed at home is not eligible for grading. Homework is to support learning, not complete learning. Any assessment that is graded should be done in the classroom.

## Bloom's Taxonomy



## HOMWORK RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers are responsible for:

- designing homework assignments that clearly articulate their purpose and expected outcome;
- sharing expectations for homework with students and parents early in the school year;
- timely regular communication that shares practices that will help families support their children;
- providing meaningful feedback;
- depending on the subject and the developmental needs, assigning homework that is appropriate to the student's age, learning style, skills and individual needs;
- teaching the skills necessary for the student to complete the homework independently and successfully; and
- choosing activities that promote a discussion between students and parents, when appropriate.

Students are responsible for:

- ensuring they clearly understand homework, including assignments, criteria, and timelines;
- asking for clarification and/or help when homework assignments or the expectations are unclear; and
- regularly completing assigned homework in a timely manner to the best of their abilities.

The family is responsible for:

- providing an environment, including uninterrupted time and a workplace, for homework to be done;
- providing encouragement and appropriate support without doing the homework for their child;
- providing a healthy balance between homework, co-curricular activities and family commitments;
- using discretion to determine an appropriate amount of time spent on homework (based on grade level guidelines);
- contacting the classroom teacher if their child is not consistently able to do the homework by him/herself or in a reasonable amount of time; and
- encouraging their child to develop a positive work ethic and a sense of responsibility.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW BY DEPARTMENT 2023/2024

### Middle School (MS) Core Subjects

#### English Language Arts (ELA)

##### **PHILOSOPHY**

The MS English Language Arts (ELA) program encourages students to become protagonists of their own learning journeys. Through an application of higher-order cognitive skills, students are challenged to decode a variety of texts in literature circles and through independent tactical reading. They will explore diverse genres, ranging from the literary canon to contemporary film and media in order to fully develop their understanding and appreciation of the written and spoken word. Teachers will guide students in learning cycles as they continue to encode their creative and analytical writing to reflect intended audience and purpose. Students will also be encouraged to build their confidence in articulating ideas through both formal and informal verbal responses. The participation in whole class discussions and collaborative group projects is highly encouraged, and so too is utilizing these learning partnerships to refine independent study skills.

##### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

To support explicit literacy development, all students are required to study ELA. All ELA courses are aligned to the Common Core State Standards, a set of high-quality academic standards which outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. Course objectives include macro-skill acquisition of both receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) modes, as well as the development of 21st century skills. Students will learn to analyze, evaluate, and respond to literary elements in texts as they further their understanding of text purpose, author intention and reader interpretation. All units of study are governed by overarching themes and are imbued with real world connections. Students will develop their writing skills through a variety of expository and imaginative text genres, by applying an analysis of literature and informational text. Standard American English conventions will be taught across all grade levels.

Course methods are guided by the development of learner autonomy. This consists of setting objectives, providing feedback, reinforcing effort, providing recognition and developing collaborative and independent learning skills. The use of cues, questions, graphic organizers, summarizing, note-taking, homework practice and an explicit interrogation of learning data all support students in developing an understanding of skills and content. To extend and apply knowledge, extensive digital resources and library workshops are employed which support student inquiry with effective research strategies, critical literacy, and clear communication processes. Technology and innovation is infused into the course to increase student engagement, support academic rigor and allow students to develop a robust and competitive 21st century skill set.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 6**

This one year course centers around student development, beginning with analysis and discussion of each student's identity. Students will learn the art of persuasion and will be guided on how to incorporate such skills into their writing and speech. This course also encourages students to use literature circles to investigate social issues across a variety of texts and in present society. Students will then undergo research on figures who have inspired them and will discuss the contributions they themselves could make to their community, with the aim of preparing them for Grade 7. By building upon established cognitive and language skills, students will have the opportunity to showcase their mastery of standards using a variety of verbal and written forms of communication. The course encourages innovation of ideas and incorporates Future Fluencies to promote critical thinking skills for students.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 7**

This one-year course centers around speculative futures, building upon the contemporary issues introduced in Grade 6. Students will analyze realistic and science-fiction literature for relevant themes and social commentary to explore author style, craft, and purpose, as well as hone their critical literacy and creative writing skills. They will also develop an understanding of rhetoric while preparing and performing in whole-class debates on global issues. This course fosters student development of verbal and non-verbal skills, providing enrichment opportunities for every student as they continue to develop speaking confidence.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 8**

This diverse one-year course is inspired by universal themes and aims to ensure student readiness for high school through the development of learner autonomy. By employing a gradual release model, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate critical cognitive skills in their close examination of text structure, organization and intention. They will deconstruct both literature and informational text to determine how textual features combine to make meaning and critically evaluate how and why those meanings are made. For many, this will be their first opportunity to engage with a Shakespearean text. Using a conscious blend of traditional and digital platforms, students will develop a proficiency in utilizing complex language skills to communicate across a variety of expository and imaginative genres in order to engage readers.

## Mathematics

### PHILOSOPHY

MS Math aims to encourage and enable students to improve their overall mathematical knowledge and conceptual understanding by using common core mathematical practices. Our students are encouraged to: make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly and quantitatively, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, model with Mathematics, use appropriate tools strategically, attend to precision, look for and make use of structure, as well as look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning. Our differentiated classroom learning experiences are designed to promote the use of critical thinking skills through the use of questioning and authentic real-world tasks, while providing accommodations and modifications as needed.

### COURSE OVERVIEW

All students are required to study Mathematics. All Math classes are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and a rigorous scope and sequence outlined by very strong concept based math programs.

### MATHEMATICS 6

A one year course which aims to introduce students to five critical areas:

(1) connecting ratios and rates to whole number multiplication and division, and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of numbers to the system of rational numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking; and (5) solving geometric problems involving area and perimeter.

### MATHEMATICS 7

A one year course which aims to focus on five critical areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers; (3) making sense of and working with expressions and linear equations; (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples; and (5) working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume.

### MATHEMATICS 8

A one year course which aims to focus 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.

In grade 8 there are two courses for mathematics, both receiving full credit for grade 8 math. *Grade 8 Math* covers common core 8 standards and reaches into the Integrated Mathematics 1 (IM1) course while our *Grade 8 IM1 Math* covers the grade 9 course objectives

while ensuring a base of common core 8 is strong. Students are placed in each course by triangulating multiple data points during semester 2 of grade 7 and with consultation with families.

## Science

### **PHILOSOPHY**

MS Science aims to encourage and enable students to improve their overall scientific knowledge in a variety of science content areas, including Life Science , Physical Science , and Earth Science Students are also encouraged to develop skills in the engineering design process and the ability to think, explore, and behave like scientists, with the goal for students to improve their science practices related to inquiry, design, and communication. Middle School Science emphasizes learning experiences that promote communication, collaboration, inquiry, problem solving, and flexibility, rather than memorization of facts. Classroom learning experiences are designed to include the application of concepts to everyday life-situations and the relationship among science, technology and society.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

Science is a core curriculum course aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards. This year-long course is organized into four curricular strands: Earth/Space Science, Life Science, Physical Science and Engineering. The comprehensive nature of the science program provides students the opportunity to enhance and extend their scientific knowledge of a range of topics and develop the practical skills necessary to investigate the natural and physical world.

### **SCIENCE 6**

Grade 6 Science is a one-year course where students will study science combining Life Science, Physical Science, Earth Science, and engineering practices which align with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Learning experiences include experiments, individual and group projects, internet research, class discussions, and teacher lectures that demonstrate and support their learning. Students will explore the following topics: cells and cell systems, matter, energy and earth systems.

### **SCIENCE 7**

Grade 7 Science is a one-year course where students will study science combining Life Science, Physical Science, Earth Science, and engineering practices which align with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Learning experiences include experiments, individual and group projects, internet research, class discussions, and teacher lectures that demonstrate and support their learning. Students will explore the following topics: waves, magnetism and electricity, ecosystems, human impact on the environment and human body systems.

## **SCIENCE 8**

Grade 8 Science is a one-year course where students will study science combining Life Science, Physical Science, Earth Science, and engineering practices which align with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Learning experiences include experiments, individual and group projects, internet research, class discussions, and teacher lectures that demonstrate and support their learning. Students will explore the following topics: forces and motion, solar system and the universe, reproduction and growth, genes and heredity, atomic structure and chemical reactions, and change over time.

## **Social Studies**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The aim of Middle School Social Studies is to encourage and enable students to make sense of the world around them and their place in it. They have the opportunity to utilize their critical thinking skills to analyze sources, both primary and secondary, and to evaluate their privileges and possible biases. Students are able to create their own inquiries into Social Studies topics, learning how to make connections between the past and the present, and developing the ability to make educated predictions about the future. Students are encouraged to be open-minded and show tolerance to others' ideas in order to gain greater understanding and compassion. Social Studies provides students with relevant, current issues, as well as case studies that allow students to apply historical thinking concepts.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

Social Studies is a core curriculum course that brings historical events to life through contemporary connections and relevant comparisons. Throughout the year, students will be studying Geography, History, Economics and Civics Units through the Connecticut Standards, which are based on the C3 Framework, and the United Arab Emirates Moral, Social and Cultural Studies Standards. Furthermore, this framework goes beyond content knowledge and also teaches students how to plan inquiries and develop questions, evaluate sources, apply evidence, communicate information and take informed action. Our goal is to have students critically thinking about the past and how it affects the future. Students will be challenged to question their assumptions and hypothesize further conclusions, all the while fully explaining their reasoning using direct citations as evidence. In addition, we promote specific literacy skills in Social Studies such as CER paragraph organization (Claim, Evidence, Reasoning), DBQ (Document Based Questions), reading non-fiction, Cornell Notes, the use of primary and secondary sources and how to find quality resources. Students will be assessed using a range of different strategies and skills, in addition to informal and formal assessments that align with our unit standards.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES 6**

This course aims to investigate the four main Social Studies themes (History, Geography, Civics, and Economics) as well as the history of the United Arab Emirates. Students are introduced to the skills necessary for middle school including research, formal paragraph writing, analysis of sources, and various methods of communicating their knowledge to their peers. Each unit is designed around a guiding question for inquiry as follows:

- ***How did the ancient civilization of Mesopotamia lay the groundwork for future societies?***
  - Themes covered include: *Geography, History*
- ***What aspects of the UAE's rich heritage, from traditional practices to architectural marvels, contribute to the country's modern identity?***
  - Themes covered include: *U.A.E. History and Culture, Economics, Innovation, Geography, Politics/International Relations*
- ***How did the brilliance of Ancient Rome, containing its engineering feats, legal systems, and cultural influences, leave an unforgettable mark on the world?***
  - Themes covered include: *History (Rome), comparative studies, cause and effect through a historical perspective*
- ***How did the vast network of the Silk Road connect civilizations and facilitate the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultures across diverse regions?***
  - Themes covered include: *History (Ancient civilizations of China, India, Persia, the Middle East, Europe, and Western Africa), Geography, mapping, economic concepts (silk road, international trade, supply and demand, natural resources, barriers to trade)*
- ***In what ways did the legacy of Ancient Greece, including its democratic principles and cultural achievements, shape the course of history?***
  - Themes covered include: *Civics, Personal rights and liberties, taking action in your community, Geography, History*

## **SOCIAL STUDIES 7**

Each unit in this course is based around an Essential Question designed to guide inquiry. While each unit focuses on one of the four themes of Social Studies (History, Geography, Civics, and Economics) all units have multiple themes integrated into the curriculum framework. The grade 7 course continues to build on skills within the Social Studies discipline such as research (including making use of academic databases, evaluating and citing sources), creating compelling and supporting questions, and communicating claims by making connections to the real world. The units are as follows:

Civics Unit: *How can citizens make a difference in their community?*

- Themes covered include: **Civics, Character and Morality, and the Individual and the Community**

U.A.E. History Unit: *How did different factors influence the development of the Arabian Peninsula?*

- Themes covered include: **History, Economics and Geography**

Geography Unit: *How can cities adapt to a changing world?*

- Themes covered include: **Geography, Economics and History**

History & Economics Unit: *How can conflict lead to change?*

- Themes covered include: **Economics and History**

## **SOCIAL STUDIES 8**

Social Studies 8 goes further in depth, preparing students with the skills necessary for their future in High School. Students are:

- creating supporting and compelling questions
- examining topics from a variety of perspectives
- finding their own research sources from the library guide and critiquing them for their values and limitations
- communicating their claims clearly by making connections to real world contexts.

This course aims to investigate big ideas, each with a guiding question for inquiry:

- How does development impact culture and societies?
  - Themes covered include: *Geography, Character and Morality,*
- How have science and technology led to revolutionary changes in the ways we live and work throughout time?
  - Themes covered include: *History, Political/International relations*
- How are rights gained, used, shared and revoked?
  - Themes covered include: *Civics, Political/International relations, U.A.E. Economies*
- How do we create sound economic and business decisions within the current global landscape?
  - Themes covered include: *Economics, U.A.E. History and Culture*
- What creates a legacy?
  - Themes covered include: *U.A.E. History and Culture, Civics*

## **Physical Education and Health**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The Dubai American Academy Physical Education department is committed to fostering the healthy development and lifelong wellness of all DAA students. We strive to balance the



intellectual, social, emotional, and physical needs of our learners as they develop the character, capabilities, attitudes, and transferable skills that are associated with a healthy balanced lifestyle. We are dedicated to integrating 21st Century learning skills whilst developing students' ability to move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person.

Active, fun, and internationally diverse sports and games are at the heart of our learning experiences. DAA students are empowered to become responsible for their own physical health and work to integrate this learning in their involvement in the community at large.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

All students are required to take Physical Education (PE). In this year-long course, students will be introduced to basic skills and fundamentals of various team and individual sports. Physical Education strives to provide an enjoyable, satisfying, and balanced curriculum with opportunities for all pupils to develop physically, socially, morally, emotionally and cognitively. As a result of participating in Physical Education/Health classes, students will understand the need to maintain physical fitness, and possess an understanding of how to assess, develop, and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Throughout the lessons, the students will have an opportunity to develop, explore, and evaluate their current level of fitness and reflect on the best ways to improve.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6**

The PE course aims to introduce students to:

- Invasion games
- Striking games
- Net Games
- Major/Minor Games
- Target Games
- Sports Education
- Swimming
- Health : Three Dimensions of Health: social, emotional and physical, puberty and adolescents

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION 7**

This course introduces students to:

- Net Games
- Invasion Games
- Striking Games
- Target Games
- Swimming
- Health units: Health Concerns and Issues, Healthy Relationships, Social Media and Body Image

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION 8**

Is a one year course which aims to introduce students to:

- Target games
- Personal fitness/Weight room
- Net Games
- Invasion games
- Striking games
- Swimming
- Health units related to building positive relationships, fitness and nutrition, anatomy, growth and development, and personal safety

### **DANCE- SYLLABUS**

Is a semester based course to introduce students to:

- Dance performance
- Dance composition
- Dance appreciation

### **STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING -SYLLABUS**

Is a semester based course which aims to introduce students to:

- Fitness components-muscular strength, muscular endurance, functional flexibility, human anatomy, and basic human movement
- Emphasis will be placed on correct exercise technique and improvement of fitness level.
- Speed development and functional exercises.

### **SPORTS LEADERSHIP -SYLLABUS**

Is a year based course which aims to introduce students to:

- Coaching/Sport Leadership
- Officiating
- Basic First Aid
- Nutrition
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Enhancing performance – strategies and techniques

### **SWIMMING 6, 7 & 8\***

\*Swimming is a compulsory component of the Physical Education / Health curriculum.

## **Arabic (Native and Non-Native)**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

MS Arabic aims to promote a supportive environment which enables students to attain and demonstrate proficiency in Arabic in order to prepare the students for a productive role in our global community. Arabic is taught in an integrated, proficiency-oriented program that

accommodates students at beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels of language proficiency. The courses offered are skill-based, focusing on reading, writing, speaking and listening, as well as content-based, using media and literature among other tools. In order to reach a higher language proficiency, teachers implement project based lessons so that students are able to develop cross-cultural understandings, an appreciation for cultural diversity as well as the ability to use their critical thinking skills and creative habits essential to the learning process. Middle School Arabic emphasizes the use of research and technological skills necessary to access information which will enhance the students' linguistic and cultural awareness.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

The Arabic program of studies aims to build the students' communication skills from beginner to advanced levels. The courses develop reading, writing, listening skills as well as oral communication. The students explore a variety of contemporary topics that relate to the modern world. Our courses incorporate the use of a variety of resources and online materials, offering students the opportunity to practice the application of vocabulary and grammar in real-life situations. The courses prepare students to converse fluently and with confidence in Arabic.

### **NON-NATIVE LEVEL 1**

This course introduces the Arabic language and culture to Middle School learners and is intended for students with no language background. Students learn the classical Arabic alphabet and the vowel system in the language. They learn to speak, write, and read simple sentences in Arabic. The priority of this course is to enable students to use Arabic in authentic situations common to everyday social interactions. Additionally, students study Arabic culture and are provided with opportunities to better understand similarities and differences between the attitudes, values, goals, and practices of Arabs in the UAE and in the region.

The thematic units covered in this course include:

- Introductions
- My Family
- My House
- Food & Eating Out

### **NON-NATIVE LEVEL 2**

This course invites students to explore concepts of the Arabic language at an Intermediate level. The course builds upon students' knowledge of basic grammar and vocabulary to support the communicative functions of the language. Students explore new vocabulary and grammatical concepts such as pronouns, verbs conjugations, and continue developing their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in a real-life context. Activities are provided in a variety of formats such as reading texts, skits, projects, and games. Along with an introduction to Arab culture, this course begins to build the foundation necessary to help students become more proficient in their Arabic linguistic skills.

The thematic units covered in this course include:

- Daily Routine
- Celebrations & Occasions
- Clothes around the World
- Tourism

### **NON-NATIVE LEVEL 3**

This course is an extension of level 2, offering a more in-depth and advanced Arabic vocabulary and grammar structures while students continue developing their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Through a variety of thematic units based on task-based activities, students will learn how to increase their linguistic competence. In addition, this course will expose students to the history and culture of the language.

The thematic units covered in this course include:

- Jobs and Technology
- Tourism and Traveling
- Media
- Shopping
- Life in the Past and Nowadays

### **NATIVE ARABIC**

This course is developed to cover Arabic topics more in depth with an emphasis on advanced vocabulary while students continue developing their grammar, reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. In addition, students learn to summarize Arabic novels, analyze stories, read and write figurative essays as well as Arabic poetry. Students also use their linguistic skills in Arabic to debate about topics related to important events that have historical significance in the Middle East.

G6:

- My Country
- Good manners.

G7:

- Sustainability (human and the universe)
- The journey of Knowledge

G8:

- The school of life (about Technology and good manners)
- Between fact and fiction

## **Islamic (Native and Non-Native)**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

MS Islamic Education aims to enhance the understanding of Islamic values, to build and maintain a learning community which fosters leadership through faith, knowledge, academic excellence and inspiration, to provide students with an environment which enables them to achieve their highest academic and social potential, founded on Islamic

morals, and global digital citizenship, and to facilitate innovative and engaging learning opportunities for our students which effectively integrates technology.

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

Islamic Education class aims at providing students with comprehensive knowledge in the different fields of Islamic Education, enabling them to develop their learning abilities, using research and future fluency.

Islamic Education Class develops the ability of students to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning.

In Islamic Education we have two different Islamic classes. Native Islamic: is for students who registered in the school/KHDA under a Muslim and Arab nationality, while Non-Native Islamic: is for students who are now learning Arabic as an additional language. Both Islamic programs (Native & Non-Native) are important parts of our overall educational program at DAA.

## **REPORTING STANDARDS**

In Islamic Education class we will be learning and implementing knowledge of the fundamentals of different Islamic fields as required by the KHDA. And students will be assessed as per the following power standards:

Domain	Description
<b>Islamic Creed: Beliefs in Islam (Aqeeda):</b>	Develop an understanding of the Islamic beliefs.
<b>Divine Revelation:(The Holy Quran, AL-Hadeeth A-shareef):</b>	Memorizes, understands and establishes connections with selected Hadith and verses from the Quran.
<b>Biography of the Prophet (Seerah) and Personalities</b>	Develop an understanding of the prophets' stories and other personalities, and appreciate their values to Islamic history and tradition.
<b>Rules of Islam and their Purposes: Practices in Islam (Ebadat):</b>	Learn about Islamic principles and how to implement their guidance and rulings in our lives.
<b>Islamic Values and Morals:</b>	Demonstrate the values, and manners of Islam through their interactions, behavior and attitudes.
<b>Identity and Current Issues:</b>	Define a Muslim's mindset and identity. Examine the importance of leading a better and righteous life.

Islamic Education Reporting Standards	Description
<b>Knowledge and Memorization</b>	Able to explain the meaning and infer the main ideas through visual and verbal presentation.

<b>Recitation</b>	Ability to properly recite the noble Quran, taking into account the judgments of recitation.
<b>Understanding</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts through the six pivots of Islamic Education.
<b>Application</b>	Demonstrates the rules, values, and practices of Islamic Education.
<b>Connection to Real-Life</b>	Able to connect the key concepts to individual and societal life.

## Middle School Electives

### Modern Foreign Language

#### PHILOSOPHY

MS Modern Foreign Languages aims to encourage and enable students to gain proficiency in an additional language. Students are encouraged to develop the communication skills necessary for further language learning, study, work, and leisure in a range of authentic contexts and for a variety of audiences and purposes. MS Modern Foreign Languages emphasizes recognizing and using language as a vehicle of thought, reflection, self-expression, and learning in other subjects, and as a tool for enhancing literacy. Students will develop an appreciation of a variety of literary and non-literary texts as well as creative techniques for comprehension and construction of meaning. Students are encouraged to understand the nature of language learning and language acquisition, which comprises the integration of linguistic, cultural, and social components.

#### PREREQUISITES

- French/Spanish 6 is only offered to Grade 6 students who are non-native speakers of the chosen language.
- Beginner French/Spanish is only offered to Grade 7 or Grade 8 students who are non-native speakers of the chosen language and have never previously studied the language.
- Intermediate French/Spanish is only offered to Grade 7 or Grade 8 students with approximately one previous year of French or Spanish.
- Advanced French/Spanish is only offered to Grade 7 or Grade 8 students with approximately two previous years of study in the chosen language. Students are placed in this course by recommendation and with consultation with families after discussing pathways and eligibility requirements to High School language study.

Students who have not taken French/Spanish at DAA but have some previous knowledge of the language will be permitted to take a placement test that may enable them to access the curriculum.

#### COURSE OVERVIEW

Students who choose to study Modern Foreign Languages learn context-related vocabulary and grammar by way of engaging thematic units, allowing learners to explore the target language in real world situations through the perspectives of the culture and traditions of the Francophone/Hispanic world. Students begin with a basic introduction to the language and progressively build on their knowledge each year to further develop their communicative abilities as their study of the language becomes increasingly more complex. Course activities include a variety of dynamic and innovative methods to engage students in pursuing their language learning, and different practices to develop students' listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. Interesting individual and group hands-on activities, class discussions, oral presentations, role plays, songs, poems, written compositions, and technology-based projects will complement the teaching for an enhanced learning experience. Courses will also include a range of modes of communication: interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive.

### **FRENCH/SPANISH 6**

This annual based elective course introduces the French/Spanish language and culture to Grade 6 learners and is intended for students with limited or no prior language background. Students learn the phonetics of the language and how to speak, write, and read simple sentences in French or Spanish by incorporating authentic materials, engaging activities, and elements of Francophone/Hispanic culture. Some of the foundational learning in this course includes:

- phonetics and basic mechanics of the language
- greeting people and introducing themselves
- expressing likes, dislikes, and preferences
- talking about school subjects and materials
- talking about leisure and after-school activities and pastimes
- talking about family, friends, and community members
- describing basic physical and personality traits

### **BEGINNER FRENCH/SPANISH**

This annual based elective course introduces the French/Spanish language and culture to Middle School learners in Grades 7 or 8 who have limited or no prior experience studying the language. Students learn the phonetics of the language and how to speak, write, and read simple sentences in French or Spanish by incorporating authentic materials, engaging activities, and elements of Francophone/Hispanic culture. Some of the foundational learning in this course includes:

- phonetics and basic mechanics of the language
- greeting people and introducing themselves
- expressing likes, dislikes, and preferences
- talking about school subjects and materials
- talking about leisure and after-school activities and pastimes
- talking about family, friends, and community members



- describing basic physical and personality traits

### **INTERMEDIATE FRENCH/SPANISH**

This annual based elective course follows French/Spanish 6 or Beginner French/Spanish (or one year of language study) and is intended for Middle School learners in Grades 7 or 8.

Some of the learning in this course includes:

- talking about home (daily routine - Spanish) and community/vacations
- learning about some major cultural traditions and celebrations in the French/Spanish-speaking world
- expressing opinions, preferences, and choices about food and drinks
- talking about clothing, accessories, and fashion
- designing an ideal house and talking about household chores and activities

### **ADVANCED FRENCH/SPANISH**

This annual based elective course follows Intermediate French/Spanish (or two years of language study) and is intended for Middle School learners in Grades 7 or 8 with a demonstrated knowledge of the language who have been recommended by their teacher to continue their study. In this course, students will be ready to understand and communicate events in the present, past, and future tenses making use of regular and irregular verbs.

Some of the learning in this course includes:

- navigating maps, daily places, and events in the community
- talking about daily routine (French)
- talking about specific events in the past
- narrating childhood events and memories
- learning about sustainability and global issues
- learning to express themselves in various authentic situations using present, past, and future tenses along with complex and varied vocabulary
- learning about some major cultural traditions and celebrations in the French/Spanish-speaking world.

## **The Arts**

### **FINE ARTS**

#### **PHILOSOPHY**

The aim of MS Fine Arts is to encourage and enable students to enjoy a balance between academic rigor and creative and imaginative learning. Students develop artistic skills, performance practices, and embrace the creative process. They formulate an inquiring, reflective approach to their work as well as a deeper understanding of the role of the arts in society, the world, and in their own lives. Students will reflect, evaluate and collaborate through artistic self-expression to help students develop critical thinking and creative

problem solving. This will help them to interpret, critique and use visual and aural information.

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

Students can elect to study one or more of the Fine Arts courses. In all Fine Art classes, students will study a range of skills relevant to the standards and benchmarks. Courses will include a range of language modes: oral, written and visual. There are semester based, and full year courses available.

## **VISUAL ARTS**

### **Grade 6 Art** (Semester based elective)

Grade 6 Art transitions students from their elementary art program to an expanded curriculum in which they will become more technically proficient in multiple mediums. The course helps students develop the critical thinking and fine motor skills necessary to use art tools, and to appreciate, understand, and create art. An understanding of various art styles and techniques is developed through hands-on experiences. Art appreciation and discussion of artwork are introduced.

### **Grade 7-8 Art 2D Drawing and Painting** (Semester based elective)

7-8 Art 2D Drawing and Painting is a half year intermediate course in which the student broadens studio skills in the areas of drawing, painting, digital-art, color theory and design. Observational and value drawing exercises are expanded. Color studies are reinforced using drawing media. Emphasis is on the development of visual language and artistic skills in various media. Creative problem solving and experimentation continue, maintaining a highly individualized response and expression.

### **Grade 7-8 Art Mixed Media** (Semester based elective)

7-8 Art Mixed Media is a half year intermediate course in which the student broadens specified studio skills in the areas of collage, printmaking, sculpture and textiles. Emphasis is on the development of artistic skills in various media. Creative problem solving and experimentation continue with an aim to begin development of personal style in preparation for High School.

### **Grade 7-8 Art Sculpture** (Semester based elective)

7-8 Art Sculpture is a half year intermediate course in which the student broadens skills creating sculptures with various art media. Emphasis is on the development of artistic skills in various media. Creative problem solving and experimentation continue with an aim to begin development of personal style in preparation for High School.

### **Grade 7-8 Photography** (Semester based elective)

A semester course designed to give a foundational understanding of Photography from its inception and now fruition as a domain of art. The course provides a comprehensive introduction to digital cameras, camera settings, composition techniques, lighting, and photo editing. Students will also have the opportunity to explore portrait and landscape photography, as well as creative techniques to express themselves through their work.

### **Grade 7-8 Intermediate Art** (Annual based elective)

Intermediate Art is a full year beginners course in which the students develop studio skills in all artforms. Students will explore drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and mixed media. Students are introduced to ceramics and produce sculptures in this form. Emphasis is on the development of visual language and artistic skills in various media. Creative problem solving and experimentation continue, maintaining a highly individualized response and expression.

### **Grade 7-8 World Art** (Annual based elective)

World Art is a full year advanced course in which the students focus on specific countries and look at the traditions within them concerned with fine arts. Students learn about the different materials and techniques traditionally used in these countries, research artists and create artworks applying these methods. Creative problem solving and experimentation continue with an aim to begin development of personal style in preparation for High School. It is recommended that students take this course after completing Intermediate full year Art the previous year.

## **MUSIC**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The Middle School music program aims to inspire students to play music, to foster a love of music, and develop the workplace skills of teamwork, problem-solving and perseverance. All ensembles will engage in independent study, small group projects and large ensemble pieces, with a culminating performance at the end of each semester.

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

### **Grade 6 Beginner Band** (Semester based elective)

This course is for students who wish to learn a wind instrument. Students will go through a process to learn about and try different instruments to find their own "best fit". Students who put in the time and effort will have a very rewarding experience within the band programme. Students will learn music, but more than that, they will learn important life skills that they can and will use in the classroom and in their daily lives, such as teamwork, responsibility, and problem solving.

### **Grade 6 Choir** (Semester based elective)

This course is for students who enjoy singing. Students who put in the time and effort will have a very rewarding experience within the Choral programme. There will be opportunities for honor ensembles and trips for dedicated students. Students will learn music, but more than that, they will learn important life skills that they can and will use in the classroom and in their daily lives such as teamwork, responsibility, and problem solving.

### **Grade 7-8 Beginner Band^** (Annual based elective)

This course is for students who wish to learn a wind instrument. Students will go through a process to learn about and try different instruments to find their own "best fit". Students who put in the time and effort will have a very rewarding experience within the band

programme. There will be opportunities for honor ensembles and trips for dedicated students. Students will learn music, but more than that, they will learn important life skills that they can and will use in the classroom and in their daily lives such as teamwork, responsibility, and problem solving. This course leads into the High School music programme.

**Grade 7-8 Intermediate Band<sup>^</sup>** (Annual based elective)

*<sup>^</sup>Prerequisite: Prior Concert Band Instrument experience, please speak to the music dept for further information.*

This course is for students who have already started to learn a wind instrument. Students who put in the time and effort will have a very rewarding experience within the band programme. There will be opportunities for honor ensembles and trips for dedicated students. Students will learn music, but more than that, they will learn important life skills that they can and will use in the classroom and in their daily lives such as teamwork, responsibility, and problem solving. This course leads into the High School music programme.

**Grade 7-8 Contemporary Music** (Semester based elective)

*Prerequisite: Students must own and know how to play their instrument, Macbook laptop, wired headphones*

This course is for students who have an interest in creating their own songs AND already play an instrument (Wind instruments, Piano, String instrument or Percussion). This project based class will use Garageband app on the student Macbook to create, edit and record music.

**Grade 7-8 Concert Choir** (Semester based elective)

This course is for students who enjoy singing. Students who put in the time and effort will have a very rewarding experience within the Choral programme. There will be opportunities for honor ensembles and trips for dedicated students. Students will learn music, but more than that, they will learn important life skills that they can and will use in the classroom and in their daily lives such as teamwork, responsibility, and problem solving.

**DRAMA**

**Grade 6 Intro to Drama** (Semester based elective)

This course introduces the basics of Drama through non-verbal communication, including tableaux, mime, and clowning. Students will learn how to use facial expression, gesture, and body language to communicate effectively and develop self-confidence to perform for a group. The course concludes with a showcase performance. By the end of the course, students will have gained foundational knowledge of Drama and the skills to communicate through non-verbal means.

**Grade 7-8 Media and Technology in Drama** (Semester based elective)

This course explores technical theater and media's role in drama, including acting for film and voice. Students will use the podcast studio and green screen to create projects, and learn to edit with iMovie and Garageband. Topics covered include lighting, sound, and video production, and the creative process of media for drama. Through hands-on projects, students will gain practical skills for careers in theater, film, and television production.

### **Grade 7-8 Theater Performance in Drama** (Semester based elective)

Drama in Theater is a course that explores the fundamental aspects of acting on stage. Students will learn how to use their voice, body, and emotions to create and present a character. They will be introduced to the basics of acting, character analysis, and script interpretation. Students will learn and practice various techniques, including voice and speech exercises, physical warm-ups, and improvisation. Students will also learn how to memorize scripts and bring life to the characters they portray.

The course will also focus on building self-confidence in performance. Students will be required to perform on stage, allowing them to gain experience in front of an audience. By the end of the course, students will have a solid understanding of the fundamentals of acting, including vocal and physical expression, character development, and improvisation.

## **INNOVATION in MEDIA and DESIGN**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

Media literacy will form the bedrock of the course, allowing students to grow into responsible, safe, and fluent users of the formats they consume. The aim of MS Mixed Media is to expose students to a range of contemporary media while simultaneously developing key crossover skills on a practical and theoretical level. Students will use and apply technology effectively as a means to access, process and communicate information, model and create solutions, and to solve problems. This will develop an appreciation of the impact of media innovations for life, environments and develop a respect for others' viewpoints and appreciate alternative solutions to problems.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

#### **Grade 6 Innovation in Media Introduction** (Semester-based elective)

A semester course where students will learn basic coding, digital design/editing skills, intro photography, and video production. It has a strong focus on the appropriate application of a range of software programs and aims to build a strong balance between practical skills and evaluative, analytical media literacy.

#### **Grade 7-8 Innovation in Media Intermediate** (Semester-based elective)

A semester course where students begin to expand their digital art, photography, and video production skills and further develop the notion of media literacy introduced in Grade 6. The course allows students to gain a keen insight into the power and influence of media on targeted audiences by focusing on both movie posters and trailers. It will also teach students the processes and fundamental practical and conceptual principles of photography and videography, lighting, framing, and editing.

#### **Grade 8 Innovation in Media Advanced** (Semester-based elective)

**^prerequisites required - teacher recommendation**

A semester course where students explore deeper into their digital art, photography, and video production skills, learning advanced skills and techniques. Students must demonstrate prior expertise in Media class. Students will develop the ability to fluently

'read' and analyze a range of media and explore the denotations and intended connotations using a range of posters, trailers and advertisements. Students will also explore the processes and fundamental practical and conceptual principles of audio recording and editing used in podcasts and professional social media users.

## **CODING AND ROBOTICS**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

Middle School Coding and Robotics aims to encourage and enable students to build knowledge, skills and understanding of a variety of robotics platforms and coding languages. Students are encouraged to combine their creativity skills with engineering, technology and problem solving. MS Coding and Robotics will help students develop inquiring minds and a reflective approach to their work, and foster a deeper understanding of how coding and robotics influences the world around us. Students will act with integrity and take responsibility for their actions, developing effective work ethic and resilience.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

These courses will focus on introducing students to a variety of new robotics platforms and their coding languages. It will prepare students to recognize the impact robotics and coding has on their lives and the world around them. It provides students opportunities to explore and gain knowledge in practical technological skills and critical thinking skills. Students will use their knowledge to engineer and code solutions to real world problems.

#### **Grade 6 Coding and Robotics (Semester based elective)**

In Grade 6 Coding and Robotics, students will embark on an exciting journey to explore the world of engineering, technology, and problem-solving. This course aims to nurture their creativity while introducing them to the fascinating world of robotics and coding. Students will use the higher order thinking to tackle various challenges involving different technological platforms. Throughout the course, they will document their learning process, building essential skills in problem-solving and logical thinking.

#### **Grade 7-8 Coding and Robotics Intermediate (Semester based elective)**

In Grade 7 Coding and Robotics, the students will be challenged to apply their creativity skills with engineering, technology and problem solving skills. They will use the solution fluency cycle to work through challenges involving different robotics platforms (Ozobots, Spheros, Spike Prime, Microbit) and document their learning process. Students will be introduced to block-based coding languages and how they can be applied to robotics and basic program development.

#### **Grade 7-8 Coding and Robotics Advanced (Semester based elective)**

In Grade 8 Coding and Robotics, the students will build upon their knowledge, skills and understanding of robotics platforms and coding languages. They will use the design cycle to work through challenges involving different robotics platforms (Ozobots, Sphero, Hummingbird, Spike Prime, Microbit) and document their learning process. Students will

develop their understanding of coding constructs such as arithmetic, decomposition, branching, debugging, and algorithmic thinking using a script-based coding language (Python).

## STUDENT WELLBEING & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

### Philosophy and Structures

Students learn best when they feel safe and secure. Young adolescents have an increasing need for autonomy but they also seek peer acceptance. Each pod in a grade level is supported by a Heads of Grade (HoG) with overarching responsibility for student wellbeing and management. This team reports to the Middle School Leadership Team.

Students are assigned to both a core class and a CREW (Community, Respect, Empathy, Wellbeing) class. For example: A student in pod class 6A1 (Grade 6/Pod A/Class #1) could be assigned to 6JJ (Grade 6 / Mr. Janauri Jones) for a CREW class of approximately 17 students. The structure creates smaller communities within the Middle School.

### Student Management

Students are guided and supported through tiers of wellbeing layers to make sure all members have staff to go to in times of need and are supported to make choices based on the values associated with respect in the community. Students are reminded of our Behavior Policy from the MS Student Handbook and are given opportunities to learn from their mistakes from a restorative practice approach rather than a punitive consequence.

All behavior infractions are managed appropriately in accordance with our behavior policy. Student behaviors are managed in the classroom, then depending on the behaviors, are escalated to the Heads of Grades, the Assistant Principal, and if necessary, the Principal. We work with all stakeholders, including the students themselves, to rectify the actions and their impact on them as an individual, their peers and the community.

### Adolescent Development

The DAA Middle School wants every student to feel safe and supported as they journey through these fluid and unpredictable years. It has been our experience that students do not learn as effectively if their social-emotional needs are not met. To that end, the Middle School has a Counselor for each MS grade (3 in total), to help students navigate the intricacies of being a middle school student. School Counselors help with a variety of social-emotional and academic issues including student schedules, transitions to and from MS, learning plans, new student/family orientations, parent outreach and training, and supporting students with any communication, self-advocacy, problem-solving, decision-making, and conflict resolution issues they might be having. The MS Counselors



are a welcome place of support for MS students, parents, and teachers. Please feel free to make an appointment with the appropriate grade level School Counselor as needed.

Grade 6 Counselor - Mira Nasr - [m.nasr\\_daa@gemsedu.com](mailto:m.nasr_daa@gemsedu.com)  
Grade 7 Counselor - Mark Gaffney - [m.gaffney\\_daa@gemsedu.com](mailto:m.gaffney_daa@gemsedu.com)  
Grade 8 Counselor - Christina Demers - [c.demers\\_daa@gemsedu.com](mailto:c.demers_daa@gemsedu.com)

## ACTIVITIES

### Week Without Walls

Middle School students participate in a Week Without Walls (WWW) expedition each year. Whether students choose to be involved on a school trip, an expedition within the UAE or one abroad these experiential trips outside the normal classroom setting provide our students with many learning opportunities in respect of personal growth, development of new skills and/or contribution to wider society.

Some of the benefits may include:

- The opportunity to volunteer, by serving others and contributing either locally or globally.
- The opportunity to be away from family for the first time helping to develop independence and responsibility.
- The opportunity to work with different students and to explore new friendships.
- The chance to apply their classroom learning in a real-world setting

\*Please note: Trip options may change annually.

Week Without Walls experiences provide students with opportunities to implement their ATL Skills (Approaches to Learning). They are **Self Management, Collaboration and Social Skills, Critical Thinking Skills and Communication skills**.

For more information, please contact our Activities Coordinator Mr. Forbes - [i.forbes\\_daa@gemsedu.com](mailto:i.forbes_daa@gemsedu.com)

### Past Trip Examples:

Thailand\*



Kenya\*



Hatta Fort\*



## After School Activities

The school offers a wide range of activities outside school hours. These range from athletics to academics and contribute to the education of the whole child by developing their knowledge and interests and pushing them outside their comfort zone to extend their skills. The programs offered vary seasonally, as well as from year to year depending on supply and demand. A few of the more specialized clubs may require a fee, but many are provided within the school framework at no extra charge.

- Model United Nations
- Islamic Art
- Origami
- Podcasting
- Pilates/Body Balance
- Arabic Homework Club
- Book Club
- Intramural Sports
- Knowledge Masters
- Pottery
- Harry Potter Crafts
- Creative Expression
- Arabic Extension
- Math Homework Help
- Choir/Band

\*External After School Activities are also available with paid service providers, through ESM. For more information, please contact our Activities Coordinator Mr. Forbes - [i.forbes\\_daa@gemsedu.com](mailto:i.forbes_daa@gemsedu.com)