



# MYP Back-to-School

Alturas International Academy  
2017-2018

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# MYP CORE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## **Math 6**

In Math Level 6, building on previous skills, students will focus on these four critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate 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 number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking.

## **Math 7**

In Math Level 7, building on previous skills, students will focus on these four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

## **Math 8**

In Math Level 8, in addition to reviewing previously mastered skills, students will focus on these 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.

## **Language and Literature 6**

In Level 6 Language and Literature, students are expected to read for pleasure as well as for information in the content area. Students work collaboratively and independently to identify author's purpose in writing, locate information from a variety of sources, construe literal meaning and plausible inferences, identify and understand the use of figurative language, use literature and poetry as a means of exploring a historical period, and use fluency and expression in oral reading. Students are also expected to write formally and informally on a variety of subjects, effectively use the writing process. Students write narratives, expository compositions, research reports, responses to literature, and compare/contrast compositions. In addition, students study grammar and syntax to increase verbal and written skills. Peer feedback, personal reflection, and Socratic Seminar are used to strengthen the students' speaking and listening skills.

## **Language and Literature 7**

In Level 7 Language and Literature, students work collaboratively and independently to read, process, and personalize fiction and nonfiction material, connect literary ideas and information from text and real-life experiences, read from a variety of authors, identify parts of a novel, understand and identify author's purpose, use pre-reading techniques, and read for a variety of purposes. Students gather, evaluate, and appreciate a variety of reading materials, and begin to make personal, historical, and cultural connections between reading and the world. Students are also expected to write for different audiences using the writing process while connecting writing to interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences. Students write clearly using grammar and style in a variety of genres. Students write fictional and autobiographical narratives, responses to literature, research reports, persuasive compositions, and summaries of literature. In addition, students study grammar and syntax to increase verbal and written skills. Peer feedback, personal reflection, and Socratic Seminar are used to strengthen the students' speaking and listening skills.

## **Language and Literature 8**

In Level 8 Language and Literature, students engage in independent and group reading with an emphasis on nonfiction. Students read for pleasure, meaning, and thematic analysis of literature, make associations and connections between literature and historical events, learn to analyze different types of selections (short stories, novels, primary source documents, biographies, informational literature, and other non-fiction), and increase vocabulary skills. Students evaluate information from a variety of sources and media, investigating claims and evidence to locate fallacies or author bias.

Students are expected to self and peer edit multiple genres of writing. Students write persuasive compositions where they support their claims with evidence. Students also practice the skills of summarizing, responding to literature, and writing research reports. In addition, students study grammar and syntax to increase verbal and written skills. Peer feedback, personal reflection, and Socratic Seminar are used to strengthen the students' speaking and listening skills.

## **Spanish**

Middle school students will listen, speak, read, and write in Spanish as they incorporate Spanish grammar and acquire greater linguistic competence in this foreign language. They will learn about Hispanic cultures from authentic materials that give them the opportunity to see the similarities and differences between the Spanish language and their native language. As the middle school students advance in the study of Spanish, they will see the connections of this new language with the other disciplines as they will collaborate in interdisciplinary lessons and projects.

## **Individuals and Societies**

Individuals and Societies is offered at Alturas Academy as the social studies core class. During time spent in individuals and societies, students will:

- Have an understanding of how cultures and countries interact with each other and their environment.
- Discover the world's diverse geographic aspects within a global perspective.
- Analyze important events and issues in world civilizations, evaluate their causes and effects, and trace the history and impact of major events.
- Explore world history from the development of early civilization, the historical development of Western Civilization, and the historical development of Russia, Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
- Analyze in depth volume one of our US history curriculum of which students will study the United States from the Colonial period through the Civil War Era.

Students will have the opportunity to develop the skills needed to become productive members of society in a challenging, supportive environment where students are encouraged to be open-minded and balanced, and both communicators and inquirers.

## **Science**

Utilizing the Next Generation Science Standards, students in science will learn about the following:

- Geology on Mars
- Plate Motion
- Rock Transformation
- Earth, Moon, and Sun
- Ocean, Atmosphere, and Climate
- Weather Patterns
- Earth's Changing Climate

Throughout the course, we will use a variety of instructional methods including group discussion, independent study, lab experiments, videos, group work, and digital learning to aid inquiry.

## **Project Design**

Inquiry and problem-solving are at the heart of design. MYP design requires the use of the design cycle as a tool, which provides: the methodology to structure the inquiry and analysis of problems; the development of feasible solutions; the creation of solutions; and the testing and evaluation of the solution. In MYP design, a solution can be a model, product, or system independently created and developed by students.

MYP design enables students to develop not only practical skills, but also strategies for creative and critical thinking. Throughout the course, we will Investigate, Plan, Create, and Evaluate several projects, focusing on links to Language and Literature (trimester 1), Science (trimester 2) and Individuals and Societies (trimester 3).

# MYP ELECTIVE DESCRIPTIONS

## **Sign Language**

This course is designed to introduce students to the basics of American Sign Language (ASL) and teach them about the deaf and hard of hearing culture. Students will begin developing receptive and expressive signing skills throughout the trimester. Students will be exposed to fingerspelling, morphemes, facial expressions, classifiers, and basic signs. Students must be prepared and willing to participate and practice signing skills with other students each class period.

## **Journalism/Community Project**

Students in the Journalism/Community Project class will receive hands-on experience with print and video journalism. Through designing, writing, and publishing an Alturas Newspaper, students will discover the answers to these questions: What is news? How do we find it? How do we conduct successful interviews? How do we write in the style of a journalist? Journalists are non-fiction story-tellers. As we tell stories, we discover what we care about. Using journalism as a springboard, students will work together to design a community impact project.

## **Musical Expressions**

Students will listen to, analyze, compose, and perform music from Handel to Hip-Hop. No musical experience necessary!

## **PE and Health**

This course provides students with the opportunity to learn a variety of sports and strategy as well as health and fitness related concepts. Health topics relate to nutrition, fitness, health and wellness. Emphasis is placed on active participation in a supportive and nonthreatening atmosphere where students are given a strong foundation that will empower them to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

## **World Travels**

Students will explore the wonders of the World, guided by curiosity and adventurous spirit. They will learn about a variety of customs and cultures; their food, music, dances, and way of living. They will do online tours at museums and virtual tourism in places so incredible that they never believed they were going to be.

## **Art Media**

Students will use creativity to discover or develop art skills in different Medias. Students will use a variety of skills to express themselves and the world around them.

# READING

READING is a lifelong skill. This is the time to develop your child's love for reading.

- 6th-8th requires a *minimum* of 30 minutes of uninterrupted reading a night.

When children practice reading consistently, it is very evident.

**This is the time to develop a gift that will last a lifetime!**

## READING TIPS

- **After your child has stopped to correct a word**, have him/her go back and reread the entire sentence from the beginning to make sure there is understanding of what the sentence is saying.
- **Ask your child to tell you in his/her own words** what happened in a story.
- **To check your child's understanding of what is being read**, occasionally pause and ask questions about the characters and events in the story.
- **Ask why your child thinks a character acted in a certain way** and make sure the answer is supported with information from the story.
- **Keep reading to your child even when he/she can read.** Read books that are too difficult or long for the child to read alone.

### Accelerated Reading

The students will be required to achieve a minimum level of AR points every six weeks. This first six weeks will be flexible as we train the students in this program. They may choose books one year below their reading level or at their reading level. They may not read books above their instructional levels. Please have your student take the AR quizzes at home as much as possible.

<https://Hosted255.relearn.com/5986826/HomeConnect>



# MATH

Middle School Students are required to perform accelerated math problems at home for 30 minutes each day, Monday through Friday.

## HOMEWORK TIPS

- **Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework.** Avoid having your child do homework with television, phones, tablets or in places with other distractions such as people coming and going.
- **Help your child with time management.** Establish a set time each day for doing homework. Don't let your child leave homework until late at night.
- **Be positive about homework.** Tell your child how important school is. The attitude you express about homework will be the attitude your child acquires.
- **When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers.** Giving answers means your child will not learn the material. Too much help teaches your child that when the going gets rough, someone will do the work for him or her.
- **Reward progress in homework.** If your child has been successful in homework completion, praise the effort put forth for positive reinforcement.
- **Choose a quiet place, free from distractions, for your child to do nightly reading assignments.**

# PARENT INVOLVEMENT

- **Try reading books with chapters** and talk about what is happening in the story. Encourage your child to make predictions and connect characters or events to those in other books and stories.
- **Take turns reading a story.** Don't interrupt to correct mistakes that do not change the meaning.
- **Talk about the meaning of new words and ideas** introduced in books. Help your child think of examples of new concepts.
- **Ask your child to tell why a character might have taken a specific action.** Ask for information from the story to support the answer.
- **Give children extra opportunities to read.** Let them read the directions for a game or for putting model airplanes together. Ask them to "help you" by reading the cookie recipe or traffic signs.
- **Set a good example as a reader.** Read every day at home even if it is a magazine or newspaper. Have a family reading time.
- **When parents are involved in their children's education at home,** they do better in school. And when parents are involved in school, children go farther in school - and the schools they go to are better.
- **The family makes critical contributions to student achievement** from preschool through high school. A home environment that encourages learning is more important to student achievement than income, education level or cultural background.
- **Reading aloud to children is the most important activity** that parents can do to increase their child's chance of reading success. Talking to children about books and stories read to them also supports reading achievement. When children and parents talk regularly about school, children perform better academically.
- **Three kinds of parental involvement at home** are consistently associated with higher student achievement: actively organizing and monitoring a child's time, helping with homework, and discussing school matters. The earlier parent involvement begins in a child's educational process, the more powerful the effects.
- **Positive results of parental involvement include:** improved student achievement, reduced absenteeism, improved behavior, and restored confidence among parents in the children's schooling.

# SHARING

We encourage all students to explore writing at home and share experiences with their classmates. These writings can be about any topic. They need to be written neatly or typed with correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. They will love sharing about their favorite experiences, memories, or interests. We would encourage students to do one sharing a month. This is a great way to improve their writing as well their presentation skills. Each sharing will be read and shared in front of the class.

# GRADING

Alturas International Academy will be using standards-based grading. A standards-based report lists the most important skills students should learn by instructional level in each subject. For example, a second-grade report card might list these skills:

- Writes in a complete sentence
- Uses capital letters, periods, question marks, and quotations marks correctly
- Uses the writing process (prewriting, first draft, revision, and final draft)

The students are working towards skill mastery; therefore, their daily class work will not be graded. Their classroom work is preparing them for assessments. Their assignments are corrected as they work through skills in groups. Therefore, there will be about six grades recorded for each subject. These grades will reflect mainly summative assessment. They will receive a 1-4.

**4- Exceeding Standards**

**3- Meeting the Standards**

**2- Progressing towards the Standards**

**1- Not Yet at Grade Level**

# IB Learner Profile

## **Inquirers**

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others.

We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

## **Knowledgeable**

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

## **Thinkers**

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

## **Communicators**

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

## **Principled**

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

## **Open-Minded**

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

## **Caring**

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

## **Risk-Takers**

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

## **Balanced**

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

## **Reflective**

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

# VOICE LEVELS

Alturas fosters an environment of learning by regulating the noise levels in different parts of the school. Below is a chart that can be found in all the classrooms:

0- No talking

1- Whisper--only your partner can hear

2- Table Talk--only your table can hear

3- Conversation Voice-- For class discussion

4- Presentation Voice, the entire class can hear you

The lunch room and halls requires a level 2 voice while the classrooms are level 1 or 0.

# CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Students will enter the classroom quietly and immediately begin working.

Students and teachers will only discuss what they are learning in the classroom.

Students and teachers will create a caring community in which all students feel valued.

Cell phones will be in backpacks and turned completely off during the entire school day.

Place the bathroom pass on desk if you leave to use the restroom.

Teachers will come to students. Students do not go to the teacher.

Students will use appropriate voice levels at all times.

Students will receive assistance by:

- 1) Collaborate with their partner.
- 2) Collaborate with their group
- 3) Ask an older group for help.
- 4) If students still require assistance, students circle the problem and wait for the teacher to come to them. Students will show proof that they have tried.

Students will show presence.

Students will take responsibility for their learning.

Chromebook procedures:

Carry with two hands.

Place on a table, not a lap or the floor.

When replacing the Chromebook, place in cart with the spine down.

End of the day procedures:

Room is clean and organized including, tables, buckets, and floors.

# RULES

Backpacks are zipped; coats and backpacks are hanging at all times.

No litter on floors.

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No litter on floors.

Permission to text, call, etc. must come from the classroom teacher (cell watches, etc).

No saving seats at lunch or in the classroom.

Bullying of any type will not be tolerated.

Hallway voice is level 1 unless the teacher designates a lower level.

Water is the only beverage allowed in the classroom.

All chair legs will be on the floor when students are seated.

No food or drink may be brought from the lunchroom to the classroom.

Students do not lay down, even during silent reading.

On the school campus, there will be no evidence of boyfriend/girlfriend relationships.

Students will not say "No" to another student when they are asked for help.

No hats (only exceptions are for medical reasons).

Sports at boundary school.

Take roll every hour.