



Secondary School

Grade 8

Curriculum Handbook

2019-2020

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Our Educational Philosophy

The mission of TLC International School is to plant seeds of knowledge that can grow to equip students academically, socially, physically, and spiritually for temporal and eternal success.

Our vision is to provide the best in education, partnering with parents to prepare students for life with academic tools, character training, development of social skills and spiritual mentoring.

Education is more than intellectual development. True education develops the mind, body, spirit and social skills of the child. Children at TLC learn cooperation, integrity, respect, creativity, and self-discipline. Positive values and behavior are rewarded in an environment that provides a safe haven for children to attempt new challenges without fear of failure.

An Introduction to Grade 8

The 8th grade school year is an important school year for students. 8th grade represents the last transition year before high school where students must begin earning credits toward graduation. With this in mind, classes become more rigorous as teachers prepare the students' minds. The 8th grade year also helps students to develop in their leadership as they are the leaders of the middle school. This leadership is important in developing the minds and attitudes of 8th graders before entering high school.

In middle school, students transition to a new class each period. They will have a separate teacher for each subject: including math, language arts, reading, science, social studies, art, computers, Mandarin, and PE. Students are given more freedom in moving between classes but must take care of their belongings and time. Middle school students have a harder work load with many projects and assessments.

The TLC middle school believes in growing students in every aspect of learning. Therefore, students have opportunities to learn through field trips and community outreach opportunities. Middle school students may also sign up for school sports teams such as soccer, basketball, and volleyball. Additionally, the students attend a weekly assembly focused on enhancing character development.

AERO Standards

“AERO provides a framework for curriculum consistency across grades K-12 and for stability of curriculum in overseas schools, which typically have a high rate of teacher turnover. AERO’s resources, workshops, and professional consultation services help overseas schools implement and sustain standards-based curricula. This effort is in alignment with research-based trends in the development of curriculum worldwide, and particularly with the Common Core initiative in the U.S.”

Retrieved from: <http://www.projectaero.org/>

Expected Student Outcomes

Our Students will be...

Truth Seekers

Who...

- understand absolute truth exists
- discern by questioning

Reading and Writing Specialists

Who...

- discover the world and themselves through the art of reading and writing
- who communicate effectively

Independent Thinkers: Critical and Creative

Who...

- analyze and apply knowledge across content areas and in the world around them

Nurtured Worldview: Global Thinkers

Who...

- respect and appreciate all cultures, customs and mindsets
- work collaboratively in diverse groups

Innovative Learners: Multiple Intelligences

Who...

- are aware of and use to their advantage their own learning styles
- develop other learning styles

Technologically Capable

By...

- competing in the ever growing, highly innovative technological front

Yielding Exceptional Results

By...

- striving for excellence in every aspect of their spiritual, academic, physical and social lives

Understanding by Design

“Our lessons, units, and courses should be logically inferred from the results sought, not derived from the methods, books, and activities with which we are most comfortable. Curriculum should lay out the most effective ways of achieving specific results... in short, the best designs derive backward from the learnings sought.”

- Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe in their book Understanding by Design

UBD (Understanding by Design) is a technique of delivering content introduced by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. The methods laid out in this educational technique offer a way of designing courses and delivering content through “Backward Design”. Students at TLC participate in units of study that cover standard driven topics determined by the AERO standards. TLC uses the UBD methods of teaching to ensure courses taught at TLC cover a series of standard based units. These units are designed in a way that ensures quality understanding is provided to all students enrolled in courses at TLC. Content delivery then includes a variety of quality teaching strategies and assessment techniques while keeping a standard based focus in every classroom. This unit-based planning approach follows a 3-stage process of Backward Design.

Stage 1 - Identify Desired Results

In order to determine if our students are achieving our desired results we must determine the what the desired end result is. If we teach with this in mind, we make sure that everything that occurs in each course is bringing students closer to that goal.

Stage 2 – Determine Acceptable Evidence

It is very important that before we teach we determine what assessments and indicators we will use to determine if students are progressing to an understanding of each standard covered in the courses taught. Evidence may be gathered through projects, questioning, quizzes, papers, group projects, lab projects, written tests, discussions and more.

Stage 3 – Plan Learning experiences and Instruction

After determining the end goal and identifying the evidence that will determine student achievement the daily lessons are determined. Daily lessons are carefully planned and carried out by teachers to support and reach those desired results. Each day students are given a clear objective that lines up and supports the mastery of the goals determined and indicated by the standards covered in each unit.

This approach ensures there are no gaps in the curriculum and all standards are covered in TLC International School’s courses. The aim is to ensure the best possible method of content delivery is given to all TLC students. The students’ learning and understanding is the focus in UBD’s ‘Backwards Design.’ Through this method of ‘Backwards Design’ we can ensure that the indicators of student learning are achieved in every single course offered at TLC.

The Gradual Release Model

The Gradual Release model, developed by Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey, is a broadly recognized approach for moving classroom instruction from teacher-centered to student-centered. This model includes 4 steps: “I do it”, “We do it”, “You do it together”, and “You do it independently”.

During the “I do it” step, the teacher plays an important role in the delivery of the content. Explicit teaching, modelling, and ‘think aloud’ are common strategies used by the teacher during this step.

As the students begin to acquire the new skill or information, the responsibility of learning begins to shift from teacher-directed instruction to student-centered activities. During the “We do it” stage, the teacher uses strategic questions, prompts, and cues to guide students towards mastery of an objective.

“You do it together” is where students collaborate, and depend on other classmates to meet objectives. During this time of instruction, the teacher will move among groups to clarify any misconceptions.

Finally, the full responsibility of learning shifts to the student during the “You do it alone” step. During this independent practice, students rely on their notes and classroom activities to work alone. This is a great opportunity for teachers to evaluate student work and provide further feedback.

Grading

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 59 and below
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Class Grading Scale

- **Tests/Projects:** 45%-50%
- **Class work:** 50%-55% (such as homework, participation and quizzes)

Subject specific information

English Language Arts

Course Description

The goal of 8th grade English Language Arts (ELA) is to prepare students for reading and writing in high school and beyond by exposing them to a wide range of texts and writing styles. In 8th grade ELA, students will practice reading informational texts and drawing conclusions, practice new vocabulary, experience literature about different cultures and historical eras, and explain how we connect to characters in our everyday lives. They will also practice narrative, persuasive, and informative writing. Students will also spend time exploring grammar topics like parts of speech and sentence structures.

Course Outline

- Unit 1: Short Stories and Narrative Writing
- Unit 2: Greek and Roman mythology and Narrative Writing
- Unit 3: Survival Fiction Book Clubs
- Unit 4: Non-Fiction and Informative Writing
- Unit 5: Fantasy Novel Study and Persuasive Writing
- Unit 6: Coming-of-Age Book Clubs and End of Year Project

Social Studies

Course Description

In 8th Grade, students are studying US History starting at the end of the 18th Century. Students will be starting with the United States Civil War and moving towards the Modern Era. Students will be discussing forms of government and defining documents dealing the human rights, development of culture, as well as conflict within a changing society.

Course Outline

First Semester

Unit 1

- Branches of Government

Unit 2

- The Civil War and Reconstruction

Unit 3

- Industrial Revolution and Westward Expansion

Unit 4

- Modernization and Global War

Second Semester

Unit 5

- World Wars and the Great Depression

Unit 6

- Late 20th Century

Unit 7

- Introducing the Modern Era

Unit 8

- The Present

Mathematics

Course Description

Grade 8 Mathematics is about formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modelling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; analysing two- and three- dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean theorem.

Course Outline

Module 1: Integer Exponents and Scientific Notation

Module 2: Concept of Congruence

Module 3: Similarity

Module 4: Linear Equations

Module 5: Examples of Functions from Geometry

Module 6: Linear Functions

Module 7: Introduction to Irrational Number Using Geometry

Science

Course Description

8th Grade science will primarily be focusing on earth science this year. This includes states of matter, making maps, energy sources, rock cycle, mining, unique characteristics of earth, how the earth formed, and more.

Course Outline

- Scientific method
- Matter
- Chemical Reactions
- Motions and Stability
- Energy and Machines
- Heat and Electricity
- Nuclear Energy
- Waves
- Electromagnetic Radiation

Physical Education and Health

Course Description

This course is for students to come to an understanding on the basic skills used for a variety of sports as well as the knowledge of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and physical fitness. It also helps in the development of fitness to perform everyday tasks and activities.

Primary Resource

Glencoe Teen Health 2014

Course Outline

Health

- Body Systems
- The Development of the Baby/ Life Cycles
- Drugs and using medicines wisely

Physical Education

- Cooperative Games
- Basketball
- Soccer
- Volleyball
- Badminton
- Fitness
- Flag Football
- Various Team Games

Mandarin

Curriculum	
First Language 第一语言中文课	Second Language 第二语言中文课
The curriculum we use is called: 教材 FL-G7 《Chinese 7》 《语文-七年级上, 下册》	The curriculum we use is called: 教材 SL-HSK3
Class	
These are the criteria for determining which class we would place the students: 分班情况 第一语言的学生: First language students: 1) 父母一方母语为中文, 并在日常生活中运用中文为主要的交流手段, 而且在中文学习上能给予孩子适当的帮助。 One of the parents is a native Mandarin speaker and uses Mandarin in daily life as the main means of communication, and can give children proper help in learning Mandarin. 2) 在 TLC 入学前, 孩子在中国学校上课并接受第一语言中文课教育 Before coming to TLC, children attended Mandarin classes in Chinese schools and received first-language Chinese lessons 3) 孩子符合以上 1 或 2 的条件, 都须通过相对应的第一语言的水平测试	

No matter children are in 1st or 2nd condition, they must be able to pass the corresponding level of the first language test

第二语言的学生:

Second language students:

1) 父母双方母语为非中文的其它语言

Parents are non-Chinese Speaker.

2) 如果学生的水平低于正常年级水平, 通过水平测试后, 他们将会被分配到较低水平的中文班级 (HSK 2 or CFL: HSK I & HSK2)

If the students' level is below the normal grade level, they will be assigned a lower level Mandarin class through the level test. (HSK 2 or CFL: HSK I & 2)