

## Middle School: Grades 5 - 8

### Language Arts

Students will read, comprehend, and interpret various types of literature such as folk tales, novels, nonfiction, myths, fables, poems, and short stories. They will utilize a reading process independently by comparing and connecting prior knowledge. Students will contribute in literature circles discussing texts such as *Gossamer*, *The Upstairs Room*, *Fever 1793*, and *Out of the Dust*, *Chains*, *Forge*, *The Great Gatsby*, *For One More Day*, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, and *To Kill A Mockingbird*. They will develop independent reading strategies and skills that will help them identify literary concepts such as plot, setting, character, point of view, and theme.

### Writing

The writing program focuses on preparing the students for high school and beyond by exploring essay writing in depth. They begin with the components of a paragraph and expand from there. The basic five paragraph essay leads into expository, narrative, descriptive, and persuasive. Poetry writing and reading is introduced with students encouraged to share their work aloud. Grammar skills are reinforced in writing class. Subjects, verbs, direct objects, nouns, pronouns and many other topics are discussed and reviewed.

### Math

For Fifth Grade, the Math students utilize the Harcourt HSP text book, which is an extension of the curriculum used in Grades One through Four. The Prentice Hall Middle School Connected Math curriculum is used for the Sixth through Eighth Grades. This series provides in-depth exploration of mathematical thinking with each succeeding text building upon its predecessor. Students will complete all components of traditional Algebra and Geometry by the end of Grade 8, and are well-prepared for the rigors of the more competitive high schools. The more advanced students are offered an enrichment course in Algebra 1.

### Social Studies

Middle School Social Studies is built around the study of world history with lessons in geography, civics, government, and current events. At all grade levels, students explore history and society through primary and secondary sources, maps, time-lines, graphs, and a variety of art forms, including poetry, music, painting, photography, and film. In the first year, students study American history from pre-Columbian times to the present, with an emphasis on geography, civics, and government. The next year, students explore world history, connecting ancient cultures and civilizations to modern life, including social organizations, political structures, commerce, technology, law, religion, art, and architecture. Students return to American history for the last two years of Middle School to gain a more nuanced understanding of our country's emergence from rural communities and small cities to its place in today's complex and interconnected world. At this advanced level, students are also introduced to deeper understandings of the principles of law, economics, and political science. As they progress through Middle School, students are encouraged to engage in subject material and consider alternative viewpoints by selecting and completing research projects, preparing and delivering presentations, and organizing and participating in classroom discussion and formal debate.

### Science

The Primary Prep Science curriculum builds on Earth, Life and Physical Science from grades 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. The students explore a new branch of Science each year, as well as revisit the material from the previous year with a deeper approach. The curriculum, which correlates with state standards, is designed to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. Students explore the engineering process through designing and presenting projects and models to their peers. Each student develops a strong understanding of the scientific method when participating in the yearly Science Fair. Cooperative learning is a major part of the curriculum as students engage in weekly in-class investigations. The goal of these hands on activities is to aide in the development of higher order thinking skills through collaboration with peers. Technology is incorporated into the classroom through virtual lab activities and research based projects. Diagnostic, formative, summative, and performance assessments are given regularly to track student's progress.

### Spanish

Primary Prep's Middle School Spanish program prepares students linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in a global community. We believe every student is capable of acquiring a second language. We implement the four components of language listening: listening, speaking, reading, and writing in our endeavor to develop passionate, confident, lifelong learners. Students will develop basic competency in the Spanish language and will be encouraged to have an appreciation and understanding of Hispanic culture. Each year students will review major grammatical components presented in the previous year and be introduced to new concepts, such as the agreement of nouns and adjectives, negation, the present tense, stem-changing verbs, interrogatives, the preterit tense and reflexive verbs. Students will also broaden their knowledge of vocabulary on topics such as the home, family, sports, seasons, weather, health, and travel, as well as geographical and cultural topics.