



**Class Syllabus
Seventh Grade**



The Learning Castle
&
La Cañada Preparatory
4490 Cornishon Avenue
La Canada, Flintridge, CA 91011

LANGUAGE ARTS for Seventh Grade

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to guide seventh-grade students to proficient or advanced levels of mastery of the Common Core English Language Arts Standards. Throughout the year, we will be exploring new and more advanced concepts in grammar, vocabulary, spelling, speaking and listening, writing, reading and writing poetry, and various literary genres encompassing non-fiction and fiction works from classic and modern literature as well as various current and content-related articles. I anticipate that this rigorous course will not only be rewarding but will prepare you well for your academic future and the upcoming challenges of high school English.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Meet and exceed the Common Core English Language Arts Standards for the seventh grade.
2. Analyze and understand how different literary elements influence each other and the reader.
3. Accurately apply standard English usage, syntax, and mechanics in writing and speaking.
4. Acquire new vocabulary as well as familiarity with classical word roots.
5. Plan, draft, revise, and complete formal academic essays in expository and persuasive genres.

COURSE OUTLINE

I. Language Conventions

Cobalt Class will follow Holt's *Elements of Language* curriculum with lessons, practice exercises, and unit tests. Students will continue their studies in grammar, usage, and mechanics with a curriculum that both reinforces basics and introduces new concepts. Each student will progress through this curriculum at his or her own pace.

A. Classwork

All work for the language conventions curriculum will be completed in class. Each student will have a checklist for recording assignments and monitoring progress. Students earn credit by completing chapters, just as they do in their math classes.

B. Assessments

Once a student has completed all assignments for a chapter, he or she will take the chapter test in class. With a score of 80% or higher, the student may then progress to the next chapter.

II. Vocabulary

Students will be assigned vocabulary curriculum from Sadlier-Oxford's *Vocabulary Workshop*. Each vocabulary unit will span two weeks.

A. Homework

For each new unit, students must complete practice worksheets for homework. Students are also assigned a set of synonyms, antonyms, and other relevant words which they must look up and define.

B. Classwork

During class, students will read aloud and discuss a passage with their vocabulary words. Class time will also be spent correcting their homework worksheets.

C. Assessment

Each vocabulary unit will have one test. The test will cover the spellings and definitions along with synonyms, antonyms, and sentence completions.

III. Literature

Cobalt's literary studies will encompass both fiction and nonfiction across a variety of genres. Each unit of study will examine specific literary elements and analyze their influence on one another and effects on the reader.

A. Classwork

Within the class meeting, students will be required to read the literature piece, highlight new vocabulary, and thoroughly annotate their books based on the ideas discussed. Students will further analyze the work through individual and group activities.

B. Homework

Each week, students will be assigned a portion of the text to analyze. Assignments will vary in content but will always require that students quote and cite parts of the text and then write at least one paragraph of analysis for each quote. All literature homework assignments will be graded using the Literary Analysis Rubric.

C. Assessment

A final exam will be administered at the end of each literary unit and will test students' understandings of the concepts covered in that unit. Students will also complete a project that correlates to each unit.

D. Independent Practice

All students will be assigned a required reading book each term and must submit a book report on that book.

IV. Writing

Students will investigate and practice the various genres of academic writing in order to prepare for high school and college writing requirements. Writing assignments will correlate to the literature curriculum, and essays may serve as summative assessments for literature units.

A. Classwork

Through lecture, note-taking, and guided practice, students will study specific strategies for effective academic composition. While working on term papers, students will have time in class to plan and draft their essays with the instructor's guidance. Students will also complete timed "quickwrites" in class. These spontaneous compositions, written in their

composition books, will not be graded. Instead, they will serve as an informal measure of each student's progress in writing and will afford students crucial practice in timed writing.

B. Homework

Portions of the drafting and strategic concepts of writing will be assigned as homework.

C. Assessment

Final drafts of essays will serve as summative assessments. All final drafts must be typed and completed at home.

GRADING

Percentage Breakdown

Literature	30%
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Classwork (discussions & activities)	10%
Homework	5%
Assessments	15%
Vocabulary	30%
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Classwork	5%
Homework	10%
Assessments	15%
Language Conventions	25%
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Classwork	15%
Assessments	10%
Writing	15%
<hr/>	
Classwork	10%
Homework	5%



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MATHEMATICS for Seventh Grade

TEXT(S) PROGRESSION: Pre-Algebra
McDougal Littell

Algebra 1 Concepts and Skills
McDougal Littell

Algebra Structure and Method
McDougal Littell

Geometry Concepts and Skills
McDougal Littell

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Seventh-Grade mathematics will review the four basic arithmetic operations with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and positive and negative integers. Students should understand the relationship between fractions, decimals and percents. They will learn the properties of exponents, measurement conversion, and how to compute surface area and volume of basic three-dimensional objects. With some students, algebra will be covered in-depth, including manipulation of variables, detailed work with equations and graphing, and word problems.

GOALS

1. Provide the students an opportunity to work in an environment that challenges yet promotes advancements in organization, critical thinking, and analysis.
2. Take responsibility for keeping on task and learning self-direction.
3. Staying motivated and working at a level that is competitive and necessary for high school.

OBJECTIVES

1. Know the properties of, and compute with, rational numbers expressed in a variety of forms
2. Use exponents, powers, and roots, and use exponents in working within fractions
3. Choose appropriate units of measurement and use ratios to convert within and between measurement systems to solve problems
4. Compute perimeter, area, and volume of common geometric objects and use the results to find measurements of less common objects
5. Know the Pythagorean theorem
6. Express quantitative relationships by using algebraic terminology, expressions, equations, inequalities, and graphs
7. Interpret and evaluate expressions involving integer powers and simple roots
8. Graph and interpret linear and nonlinear functions
9. Solve simple linear equations and inequalities using rational numbers

COURSE OUTLINE

- I. Lecture and classwork
 - a. Every student is required to receive a lecture on all sections of the current math book they are using.
 - b. Once the student understands and can verbally repeat key points from the lecture, then they are allowed to define key terms and work on the *Guided Practice* section.
 - c. If additional reinforcement is required, supplements can and will be assigned.
- II. Homework
 - a. After the *Guided Practice* is completed, the student will be responsible for finishing the problems from their assignment list. Some sections are split into two separate assignments which can be completed over two homework assignments.
 - b. On Mondays and Wednesdays, students must complete their assigned homework and obtain a parent signature.
 - c. Failure to complete homework or signature will result in a deduction of

points and homework room during lunch.

III. Tests

- a. Once the student has finished all requirements plus review sections from their current chapters and can show a thorough understanding of the lessons, he/she will then take a chapter test.
- b. If the student does not pass the chapter test, he/she will be allowed to retake another version of the test upon additional review and corrections to their first test. The test scores will be averaged, but the highest allotted average can be no higher than 80%.
- c. In order for a student to progress to the next chapter, the average score of the original test and the retake must be a passing mark.

IV. Exams

- a. At the end of every term, the students will be required to take an exam.
- b. Exams are given cumulatively on chapters that the students have passed over that term.

V. Class Progress

- a. The class-progress grade is designated to show how close students have come to a preset term goal. Every term, a new chapter goal is set, which allows the student to earn 100 points if he/she has passed the predetermined number of chapters.
- b. The 100-point goal will depreciate if the trimester target is not reached. For example, if the by the end of a term, a student is two chapters short of the target, then the student will receive 80 points.

GRADING POLICY

Percentage Breakdown

- 40% Exams
- 30% Tests
- 15% Homework
- 15% Class progress



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WORLD HISTORY for Seventh Grade

TEXT(S): World History, Holt McDougal
Excerpts from various history and humanities reference books
Selections from art and literature

COURSE DESCRIPTION

During this three-trimester course, students will take a worldwide tour, studying the social, cultural, and technological changes that occurred in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Australia and Asia from the years 500 B.C. to today. Students will study the history and geography of great civilizations that developed throughout the world during medieval and early modern times. They will examine the growing economic interaction among civilizations and the exchange of ideas, beliefs, technologies, and commodities. They will learn about the resulting birth of Enlightenment philosophy, the new concepts of reason and authority, the natural rights of humans, the divine right of kings, experimentalism in science, and the dogma of belief systems. Finally, students will assess the political forces ignited by the Enlightenment, particularly the rise of democratic ideas, and learn about the continuing influence of these ideas today. This course was designed to meet or exceed the standards set by the California State Board of Education.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, each student should:

1. develop an understanding of Medieval–Early Modern World History, and the relationship of this history to today’s world
2. develop an understanding and appreciation of how ancient and early modern civilizations formed and developed
3. learn and improve skills in time management, and proper work and study habits
4. improve skills in critical thinking and writing
5. learn how to formulate their own opinions based on facts and other primary and secondary sources

COURSE OUTLINE

- I. Islamic Civilization (The Roots of Islam, Islamic Beliefs and Practices, Islamic Empires, Cultural Achievements)
- II. Early African Civilizations (Geography and Early Africa, The Empire of Ghana, Later Empires, Historical and Artistic Traditions)
- III. China (China Reunifies, Tang and Song Achievements, Confucianism and Government, The Yuan and Ming Dynasties)
- IV. Japan (Geography and Early Japan, Art and Culture in Heian, Growth of a Military Society)
- V. The Early Americas (The Maya, The Aztecs, The Incas)
- VI. The Early Middle Ages (Geography of Europe, Europe after the Fall of Rome, Feudalism and Manor Life, Feudal Societies)
- VII. The Later Middle Ages (Popes and Kings, the Crusades, Christianity and Medieval Society, Political and Social Change, Challenges to Church Authority)
- VIII. The Renaissance and Reformation (The Italian Renaissance, The Renaissance beyond Italy, The Reformation of Christianity)

- IX. Science and Exploration (The Scientific Revolution, Great Voyages of Discovery, New Systems of Trade)
- X. Enlightenment and Revolution (Ideas of the Enlightenment, New Views on Government, The Age of Revolution)
- XI. Revolutions and Nations (The Spread of Revolutionary Ideals, The Industrial Revolution, Nationalism and Colonial Empires)
- XII. Global Challenges (World War I, World War II, Toward the Present Day)

GRADING POLICY

Your child will earn his or her grade on the following criteria.

1. Homework and other assignments (completed/turned in on time) – 50%
2. Tests 50%



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SCIENCE for Seventh Grade

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This three-term course explores the world of life science and reviews previously learned themes in detail. Concepts covered will vary from the familiar and concrete to the less familiar and abstract within each unit. Students will learn scientific facts and laws as well as how they contribute to various fields of study.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In achieving the goals of this course, a student will.

1. develop an understanding of, and ability to apply, five basic study skills: time-management, note-taking, reading, test-taking, and research;
2. gain an awareness of the need to understand scientific facts, theories, and ideas and how they relate to everyday life;
3. participate in lab experiments and activities throughout the year;
4. develop critical thinking skills through presentation of concepts.

COURSE OUTLINE

Cell Biology

- I. All living organisms are composed of cells, from just one to many trillions, whose details usually are visible only through a microscope. As a basis for understanding this concept:
 - A. Students know cells function similarly in all living organisms.
 - B. Students know the characteristics that distinguish plant cells from animal cells, including chloroplasts and cell walls.
 - C. Students know the nucleus is the repository for genetic information in

plant and animal cells.

- D. Students know that mitochondria liberate energy for the work that cells do and that chloroplasts capture sunlight energy for photosynthesis.
- E. Students know cells divide to increase their numbers through a process of mitosis, which results in two daughter cells with identical sets of chromosomes.
- F. Students know that as multicellular organisms develop, their cells differentiate.

Structure and Function in Living Systems

- II. The anatomy and physiology of plants and animals illustrate the complementary nature of structure and function. As a basis for understanding this concept:
 - A. Students know plants and animals have levels of organization for structure and function, including cells, tissues, organs, organ systems, and the whole organism.
 - B. Students know organ systems function because of the contributions of individual organs, tissues, and cells. The failure of any part can affect the entire system.
 - C. Students know how bones and muscles work together to provide a structural framework for movement.
 - D. Students know how the reproductive organs of the human female and male generate eggs and sperm.
 - E. Students know the function of the umbilicus and placenta during pregnancy.
 - F. Students know the structures and processes by which flowering plants generate pollen, ovules, seeds, and fruit.
 - G. Students know how to relate the structures of the eye and ear to their functions.

Genetics

- III. A typical cell of any organism contains genetic instructions that specify its traits. Those traits may be modified by environmental influences. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- A. Students know the differences between the life cycles and reproduction methods of sexual and asexual organisms.
- B. Students know sexual reproduction produces offspring that inherit half their genes from each parent.
- C. Students know an inherited trait can be determined by one or more genes.
- D. Students know plant and animal cells contain many thousands of different genes and typically have two copies of every gene. The two copies (or alleles) of the gene may or may not be identical, and one may be dominant in determining the phenotype while the other is recessive.
- E. Students know DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is the genetic material of living organisms and is located in the chromosomes of each cell.

Physical Principles in Living Systems

IV. Physical principles underlie biological structures and functions. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- A. Students know visible light is a small band within a very broad electromagnetic spectrum.
- B. Students know that for an object to be seen, light emitted by or scattered from it must be detected by the eye.
- C. Students know light travels in straight lines if the medium it travels through does not change.
- D. Students know how simple lenses are used in a magnifying glass, the eye, a camera, a telescope, and a microscope.
- E. Students know that white light is a mixture of many wavelengths (colors) and that retinal cells react differently to different wavelengths.
- F. Students know light can be reflected, refracted, transmitted, and absorbed by matter.
- G. Students know the angle of reflection of a light beam is equal to the angle of incidence.
- H. Students know how to compare joints in the body (wrist, shoulder, thigh) with structures used in machines and simple devices (hinge, ball-and-socket, and sliding joints).
- I. Students know how levers confer mechanical advantage and how the

application of this principle applies to the musculoskeletal system.

- J. Students know that contractions of the heart generate blood pressure and that heart valves prevent back flow of blood in the circulatory system.

Evolution

V. Biological evolution accounts for the diversity of species developed through gradual processes over many generations. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. Students know both genetic variation and environmental factors are causes of evolution and diversity of organisms.
- b. Students know the reasoning used by Charles Darwin in reaching his conclusion that natural selection is the mechanism of evolution.
- c. Students know how independent lines of evidence from geology, fossils, and comparative anatomy provide the bases for the theory of evolution.
- d. Students know how to construct a simple branching diagram to classify living groups of organisms by shared derived characteristics and how to expand the diagram to include fossil organisms.
- e. Students know that extinction of a species occurs when the environment changes and the adaptive characteristics of a species are insufficient for its survival.

Earth and Life History

VI. Evidence from rocks allows us to understand the evolution of life on Earth. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- A. Students know Earth processes today are similar to those that occurred in the past and slow geologic processes have large cumulative effects over long periods of time.
- B. Students know the history of life on Earth has been disrupted by major catastrophic events, such as major volcanic eruptions or the impacts of asteroids.
- C. Students know that the rock cycle includes the formation of new sediment and that rocks are often found in layers, with the oldest generally on the bottom.

- D. Students know that evidence from geologic layers and radioactive dating indicates Earth is approximately 4.6 billion years old and that life on this planet has existed for more than 3 billion years.
- E. Students know fossils provide evidence of how life and environmental conditions have changed.
- F. Students know how movements of Earth's continental and oceanic plates through time, with associated changes in climate and geographic connections, have affected the past and present distribution of organisms.
- G. Students know how to explain significant developments and extinctions of plant and animal life on the geologic time scale.

Investigation and Experimentation

- VII. Scientific progress is made by asking meaningful questions and conducting careful investigations. As a basis for understanding this concept and addressing the content in the other three strands, students should develop their own questions and perform investigations. Students will:
 - A. Select and use appropriate tools and technology (including calculators, computers, balances, spring scales, microscopes, and binoculars) to perform tests, collect data, and display data.
 - B. Use a variety of print and electronic resources (including the World Wide Web) to collect information and evidence as part of a research project.
 - C. Communicate the logical connection among hypotheses, science concepts, tests conducted, data collected, and conclusions drawn from the scientific evidence.
 - D. Construct scale models, maps, and appropriately labeled diagrams to communicate scientific knowledge (e.g., motion of Earth's plates and cell structure).
 - E. Communicate the steps and results from an investigation in written reports and oral presentations.

GRADING POLICY

Final grades are based on a standard scale: 100% - 90% = "A" range; 89% - 80% = "B" range; 79% - 70% = "C" range; 69% - 60% = "N" range; 59% and below = "U"

It is important to know that the grade received for each term will be determined by:

1. homework assignments – 40%;
2. lab and other work – 10%;
3. tests and exams – 50%

