

Accelerated Comprehensive Literacy 8 Course Description

Rationale: *The accelerated language arts program is a transitional link between the curriculum and enrichment activities of the elementary school and the academic opportunities at the high school level, which for many students will include classes at Juniata College where they will need highly developed language skills much sooner than students who continue through the regular high school program. The middle school gifted program is a catapult to provide the preparation and acceleration needed for students to be prepared to accomplish vigorous goals at the high school level.*

This course is a study of communication in its various forms. It has as its foundation a curriculum that encompasses the Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The content is covered at an accelerated rate, allowing time for a higher level of development than the regular eighth grade curriculum. In addition, this acceleration provides time for enrichment opportunities both at the group and individual levels.

As the culminating phase of a three-year program, the eighth grade curriculum extends the development of communication skills to the synthesis and evaluation levels of the critical-thinking hierarchy. A strong focus is placed upon taking the information acquired through language analysis and utilizing it to create more effective and refined means of communicating that are unique to each student's style.

The class meets for two periods each day. One class period focuses primarily on the production aspect of communication, writing and speaking; and the second class period is more directly involved with the reception of communication, reading and listening. The writing and reading focuses identified by the Huntingdon Area School District are also incorporated into the program.

The goal of instruction is to provide students with an awareness of the responsibilities of both producers and receivers of language in the communication process. As skills in each area are developed and refined, the focus then shifts to the integration of these skills in meaningful communication experiences.