

Course Outline

Humanities

MYP Level 2

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This Humanities class is a course that focuses on geography, history and culture in the Eastern Hemisphere. Students investigate geography concepts like plate tectonics and develop skills such as using latitude and longitude. By using timelines, students gain historical insight. A major connection is – Where you live determines how you live.

These concepts and skills are fundamental to the class work in units that include Asia's, History Cultures and Geography, WWII's effect on Africa, Africa Past, Present, and Future and Africa's Cultures and Geography.

This course incorporates the three *fundamental concepts of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP): holistic learning, intercultural awareness and communication*. *Holistic learning* is encouraged in many ways, including when students compare and contrast Africa's geography and history with that of the Western world. Also learning class concepts like using and measuring latitude and longitude are critical to the concepts of geography, cultures and the similarities between the two. The connections make the learning holistic. Communication skills from the research, to group work, to group presentations helps students share the experience.

Intercultural awareness is evident when the class discusses the history and cultures of Africa and Asia. We also share articles from the Upfront Magazine, or when we watch CNN student news.

Students will also exhibit the attributes of the *IB Learner Profile*. They are *critical thinkers* when they assess political cartoons and design final projects, *reflective* when they journal their responses and reactions to current events, *communicators* when they research and present topics in a written or oral format, *open-minded* when they discuss the various cultural issues, *caring* when they discuss disasters that affect people in the U.S. and in other countries, as well as *risk-takers* when they are asked to participate in oral presentations, skits, and other final projects.

II. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Please see Merrill's website for MYP objectives.

The content of this course is driven by the curricular objectives of the Des Moines Public Schools. These include geography skills, political systems, economic perspectives, historical perspectives, cultural interactions, citizenship and research.

The *MYP Aims and Objectives* create a "lifelong interest in and enjoyment of the humanities" through the acquisition of "knowledge, concepts, skills and organization and presentation." The aims of MYP blend with our district's objectives and produce inquiry, respect, cultural and environmental awareness, and understanding of change in our world. MYP aims and objectives are clearly supported by the DMPS objectives for 7th grade Social Studies, which can be found on the district's webpage.

III. ROLE OF THE IB AREAS OF INTERACTION

The *IB Areas of Interaction* “give the MYP its distinctive core.” They are a “lens” through which students are expected to develop their own personal values and sense of self-awareness. Many different *Approaches to Learning* are incorporated throughout the course to accommodate the different learning styles of students. *Community and Service* is heavily emphasized and students will be given many different opportunities to serve both the school community as well as the community at large while they develop their own sense of how and why “service” is a critical responsibility of citizens in a democracy. *Human Ingenuity* gives a way to view the impact of discovery and understand and communicate how the inventions of technology are used. *Environments* asks us to analyze issues of sustainable development and gives us a lens to study Africa and Asia.

Each IB unit is focused by an Area of Interaction.

IV. TEXTS AND RESOURCES

The primary textbook for the course is Prentice Hall: *World Studies*. Students are given their own copy of the textbook which should be brought with them to and from class throughout the year. The class should have their books every day. We will also utilize the classroom set of atlases: *Rand McNally*

CNN Student News is used daily in the class as well as newspapers, magazines and books. We will also utilize many internet based resources as well.

Educational videos/clips and guest speakers are also integrated into the class.

V. Methodology

Teaching and learning are at their best when the atmosphere is firm, fair, and friendly. Teaching of routines is equal to teaching content. Student routines include learning models that ask the student to work individually, with partners, and then large groups. Student reflection and evaluation is part of the process. Students need choice and direction as they work on projects and presentations. Students also need learning routines and working models that will advance their development. The methodology in this course encourages this growth.

VI. Assessment

Formative assessments include homework, class work, projects, class discussions, quizzes and usage of time/completion requirements. Participation and attendance are essential.

Summative assessments include three major grades/goals for each unit. Students will complete/evaluate and reflect on the set of assignments. Students will test over unit skills. Students will complete unit project or presentation demonstrating unit skills or concepts.

For IB assessment, student work is evaluated on the MYP assessment criteria as identified in the Humanities Guide. The criteria are as follows:

Criterion A	Knowledge and understanding	max 8
Criterion B	Investigating	max 8
Criterion C	Thinking Critically	max 8
Criterion D	Communicating	max 8

VII. Grading Policy, including the use of the MYP Criteria

All summative tasks will be assessed using MYP rubrics, and students will receive a copy of the rubrics to take home. Further, teachers will post each students level of achievement on Infinite Campus.

Student work will also be assessed using the Des Moines Public School's grading scale.

DMPS Grading Scale:

A	100%-90%
B	89%-80%
C	79%-70%
D	69%-60%
F	below 60%

