

## PACE Humanities 6-8

The middle school gifted program emphasizes the PACE Humanities class, which meets daily. Depending upon the campus, Humanities is either in the English or the social studies class. Humanities compacts the TEKS and the general education curriculum and adds special units drawn from a study of the humanities as well as frequent divergent instruction; extension of prior learning; advanced critical thinking skills; problem-solving; creative interpretation and expression; advanced oral, written and visual presentation skills; and self-directed study.

### Why should a student decide to stay in PACE after elementary?

- General education classroom has limitations for G/T student
  - a. Class pacing could cause student to lose interest, become bored
  - b. Student could begin a pattern of underachievement due to less intellectual stimulation
  - c. At 6-8, students less likely to have the skills to self-supplement learning in general education
- Secondary PACE
  - a. keeps brain functioning at high levels daily
  - b. promotes active learning vs. passive knowledge acquisition alone
  - c. aims at self-discovery and meta-cognition emphasized when possible
  - d. desires student to be the architect of the learning experience – student choice in guiding some independent learning and research
- Secondary PACE provides
  - continuity in learner/teacher relationship for 2-3 years
  - opportunities for mentor relationships over extended period are fostered (a G/T need)
  - daily experiences with intellectual peers rather than weekly elementary pull-out
  - a facilitated learning environment with a trained G/T specialist

### Academically what does Middle School PACE provide?

- A setting that meets the special needs of the gifted, providing students a safe haven to be themselves and take intellectual risks
- A setting that allows students to develop confidence and leadership
- A program for academically gifted and talented students in a classroom setting of intellectual peers
- A program that develops Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS)
- A program that integrates history and language arts (humanities), raising cultural awareness and student's ability to see beyond themselves and their local environment
- A program that strengthens understanding of concepts, rather than rote-learning and memorization
- A college preparatory environment that seeks
  1. growth & development in an interdisciplinary environment
  2. preparation for AP/IB-skills needed in 9-12
- A creative and challenging classroom couched within a specific content area that emphasizes:
  1. spontaneity
  2. safe competition
  3. acceptance
  4. student driven choices
  5. current events
  6. depth and complexity
  7. challenging academic rigor
  8. sophisticated classroom dialogue

### What does PACE provide students that an honors program does not?

- Honors programs are geared towards student with abilities in one subject vs. PACE which is designed for student's with abilities in various areas
- Honors typically functions at high end of grade level or slightly above. PACE seeks to elevate challenge significantly above grade level with college readiness in mind.
- PACE is a special needs program based on defined and assessed quantitative and qualitative data
- PACE focus is critical thinking above and beyond skills rehearsal and preparation
- PACE focuses on the integration of multiple subjects versus attention to one
- PACE asks students to control their learning choices