

EIGHTH GRADE ACADEMY

What to Expect for Parents & Students

Presented by

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CENTRAL ACADEMY



Gifted Core Pathway

- Prep Academy (7th)
- Eighth Grade Academy
- 9-12 AP Core classes



IB Diploma Programme

- For Juniors & Seniors
- Challenging Concurrency of learning
- Not the same as MYP



Specialty Courses

- 7 World Languages
- Elective classes in Mathematics, English, Art and MORE
- Unique AP classes

GIFTED CORE PATHWAY

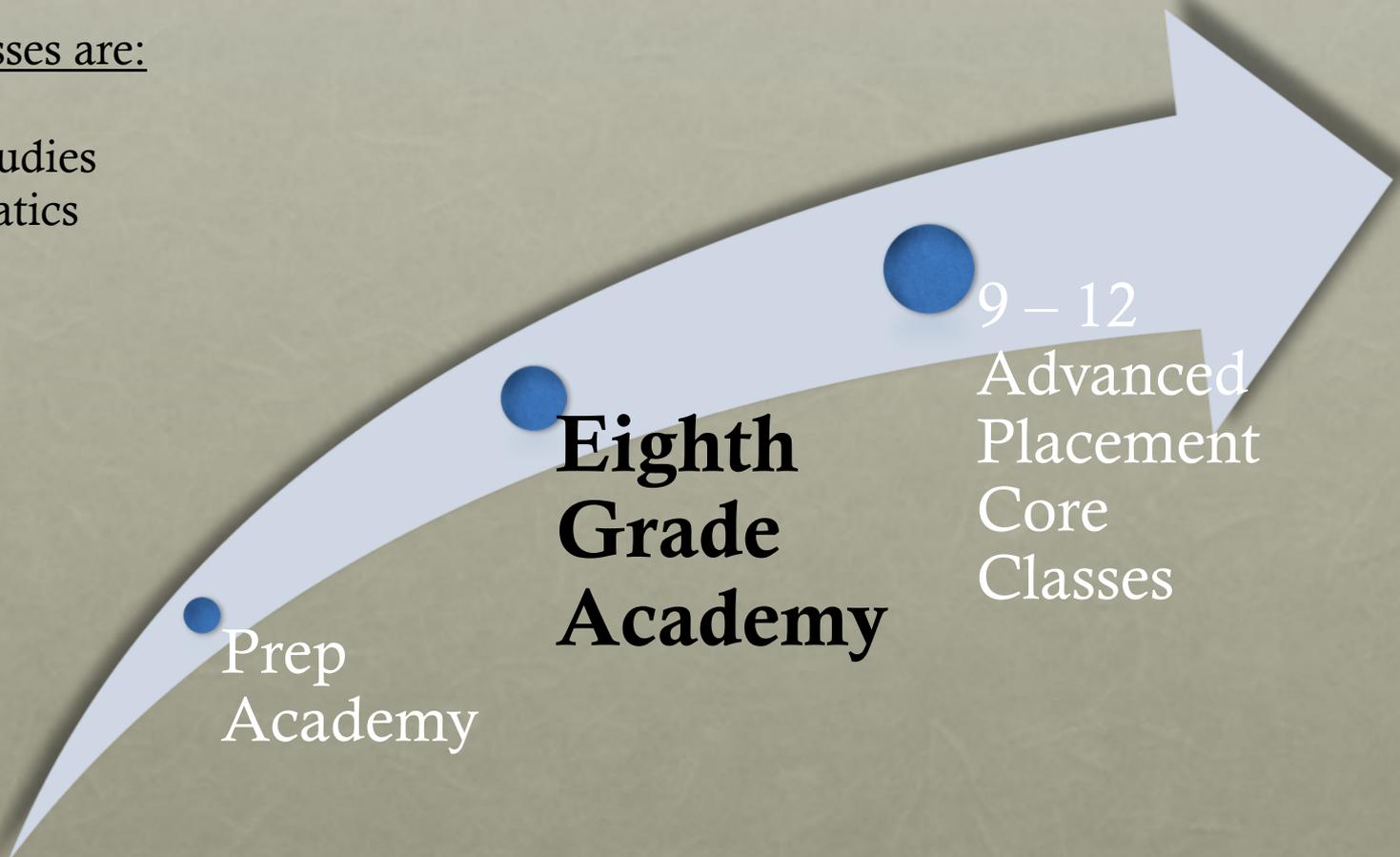
Core classes are:

English

Social Studies

Mathematics

Science



Prep
Academy

**Eighth
Grade
Academy**

9 – 12
Advanced
Placement
Core
Classes

HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

Normal Pace

Most people need about half the class time spent in review, practice and drill of new ideas and skills.

It's like learning to swim by wading in—developing skills strategically.



Accelerated Pace

Far less class time is spent in review, drill and practice of new ideas and skills.

It's like learning to swim by diving in— it works if you have some foundational skills before you hit the water!



Both methods create Great Swimmers!

ACCELERATION PARADOX

Students with Gifted behaviors need time to process and assemble their thoughts. They have so many ideas, it takes time to sort them out, arrange them and construct them into new thinking.

To support our students, we structure our lessons to provide time to do this thinking... that's what we're doing instead of review, drill and practice.

Instead of repeating concepts, we structure lessons so students are assembling concepts themselves.

Same concepts— but more complexity.

This is much more mentally draining!

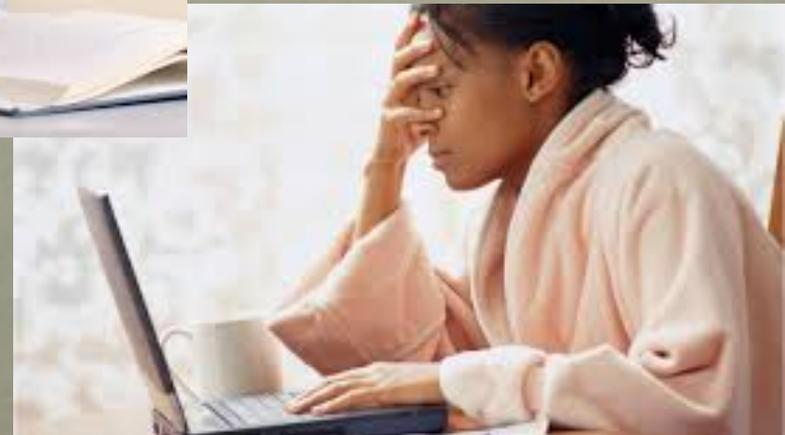


FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH ACCELERATED COURSES



“My child has never worked this hard in school before”

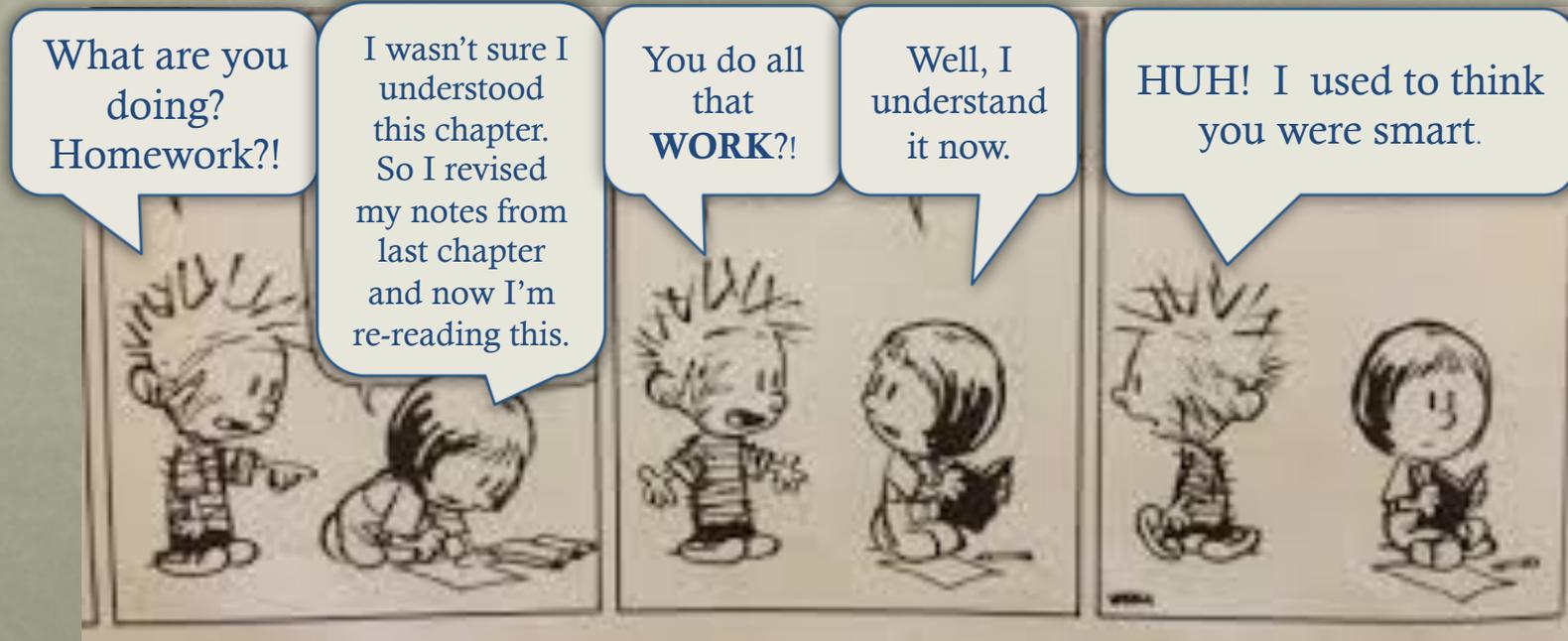
Most common
8th Grade
Academy
parent quote:



SCHOLARLY LEARNING IS HARD WORK

If a student has never had to work at learning before, it can be a shock.

Struggle builds strength.



Success without struggle is not nearly as sweet!

COMMON PITFALL: FEAR OF FAILURE

First experience
with accelerated
courses: mentally
drained by
classwork

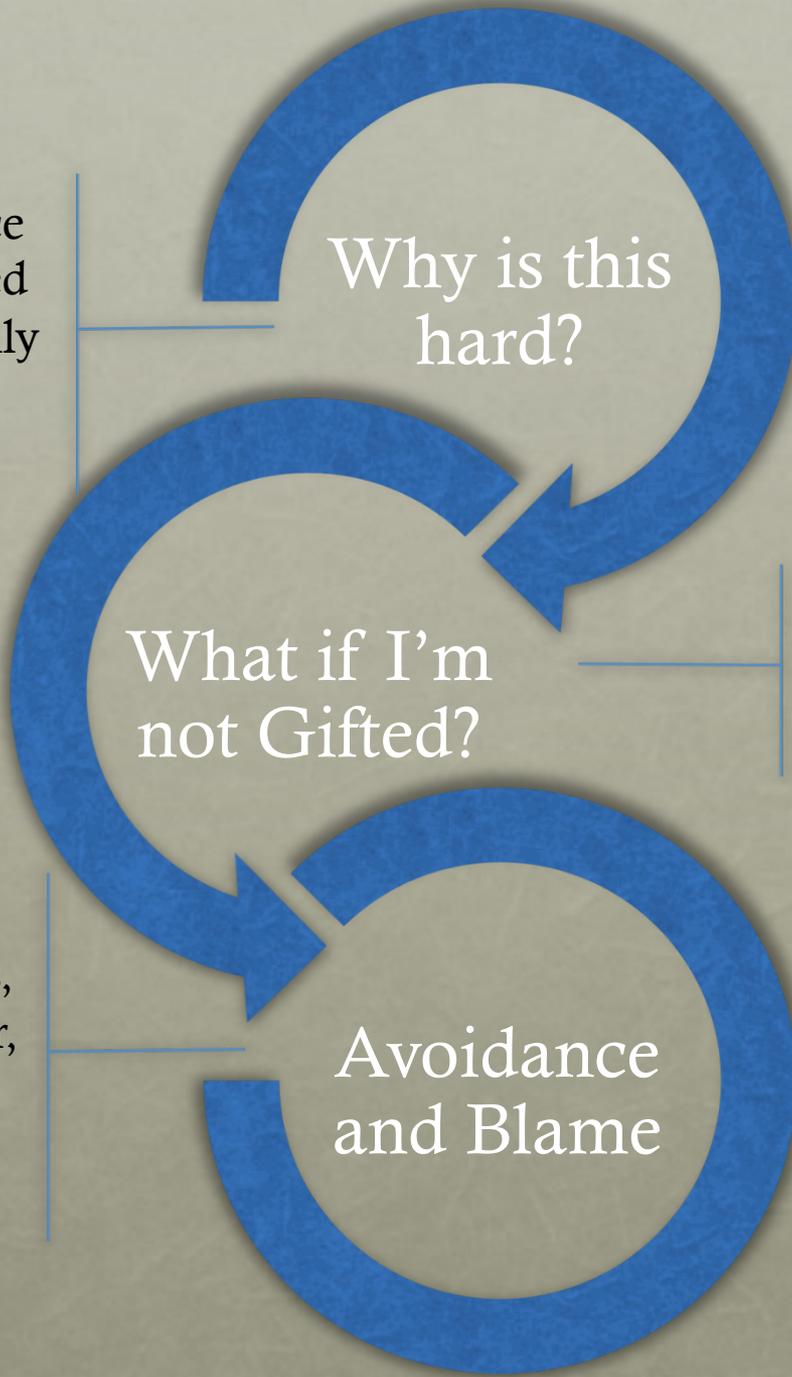
Why is this
hard?

What if I'm
not Gifted?

Worry about
meeting
expectations.

Procrastination,
escapist activities,
blame the teacher,
whining,
complaining,
feeling alone

Avoidance
and Blame



AVOIDING THE PITFALL:

Support during Struggle



Even when you're growing, you will still have setbacks.

Even if the parent does not promote competition in academics, students are comparing themselves to each other.

Resilience is coping with competition.

Focus on Growth.

Winning and losing are temporary.

How to take a loss without feeling like a loser.

What happens after failure is what is important.

SUPPORT STRATEGIES

- Help keep things in perspective.
“Of course you don’t know it.
That’s why you’re taking the class.”
- Keep the thinking forward
“What are your next steps?”
- Recognize the emotion.
“That sounds uncomfortable
(frustrating, difficult).”
- Don’t alleviate the struggle.
 - “What would help you remember?”
NOT “I’ll remind you.”
 - “You’ve got to get this done. How
can I help you organize your time?”



Who is fixing the mistake?

We choose to go to the moon,
Not because it is easy,
But because it is hard.
-JFKennedy

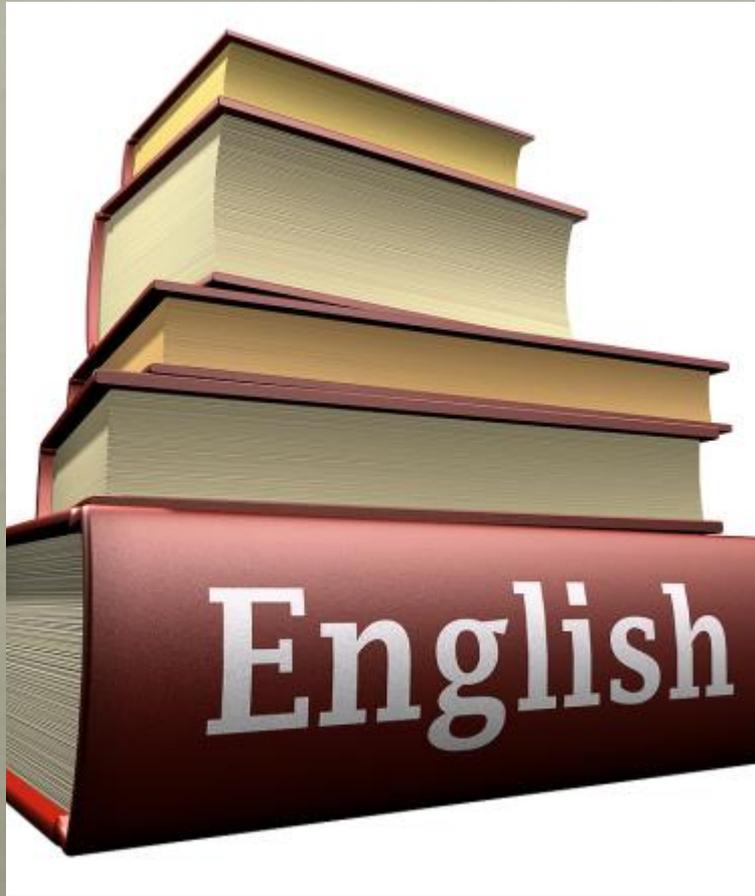
MULTI-POTENTIALITY

Students with Gifted behavior sometimes have trouble choosing between their many interests.

First decision:
Which 3 courses will your child take in Eighth Grade Academy?



ENGLISH



All students take English in 8th Grade Academy.

- It is the foundation for reading, writing, listening and speaking necessary for success in all the other courses.
- Analysis and argument are the primary thinking skills for the class.
- Counts as 9th Grade English. High school credit is optional.

SCIENCE



Students take one semester Environmental Science & one semester of Conceptual Physics.

- Can be taken for high school science credit (optional).
- Prepares students for 9th grade Accelerated Biology (1 year Biology in 1 semester) and Accelerated Chemistry (1 year Chemistry in 1 semester)

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students take Government and Current Issues.

- Can be taken for year of high school social studies credit including one semester of Gov't required for graduation.
- Prepares students for IB Diploma Programme.
- Learn to debate important local, state, national and international issues.



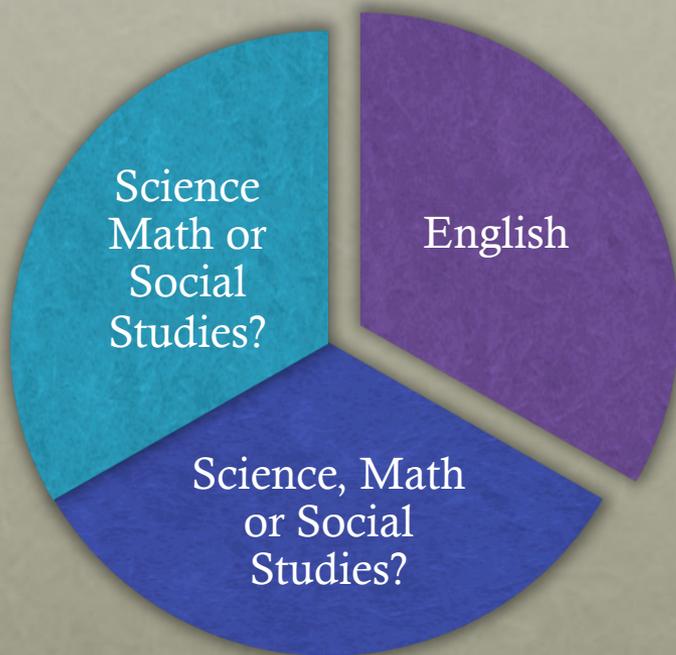
MATHEMATICS



8th Grade students may take Algebra I or higher.

- Can earn high school credit for mathematics (optional).
- Opportunities to participate in mathematics competitions and earn cool prizes!
- Must take a mathematics placement exam before enrolling in classes.

HOW TO CHOOSE:



- Which classes do you enjoy the most?
- Which classes sound most interesting right now?
- Which classes fit with your long term goal(s)?
- Look at Scheduler's Guide online:
www.ca.dmschools.org
Counseling->Scheduling

Remember: A long, healthy life will give you time to explore more interests!

A WORD ABOUT 'CREDITS'

DMPS requires 23 credits to graduate high school.

If a student takes a full load of 8 courses each semester starting in 9th grade AND passes them, they will have 24 credits by the end of their Junior year.

Taking 8th grade courses for credit is **OPTIONAL** and should not be a priority in choosing your classes.

If you are gifted in mathematics, take it here at Academy.



A DAY IN THE LIFE...

- Students attend classes at Central Academy for approximately half their day, beginning in the late morning.
- **Busing is provided at no cost to families from the students' comprehensive schools.**
- Some students eat lunch here, and others eat before they come.
- Students attend 2 classes on A-days and 2 classes on B-days
 - 3 of the classes are academic and 1 Directed Study
- **At the end of the day, a bus will take students back to their comprehensive school in time for dismissal or to stay after school for extra-curricular activities.**

HOW TO ENROLL

- Space is *very* limited
- Course requests due to Central Academy counseling office by **Tuesday, March 29th**.
 - Turned in tonight.
 - Scanned and emailed to Sandra Cloe.
 - Returned to your Middle School Counselor
- **Students must maintain an A or B in courses which are considered pre-requisites for Academy classes (Mathematics, Science, English, Social Studies)**

QUESTIONS? ANNOUNCEMENT

After Questions, will people from

Merrill

please stay behind for an
important message specific to that
school only.

WELCOME TO EIGHTH GRADE ACADEMY

Dive in!

