

Hunter Seventh Grade Survival Guide

Written by the HCHS Class of 2010

Rewritten by the Big Sibs of 2008

Welcome to Hunter! Congratulations. You've passed the rigorous Hunter test and you're probably well on your way here. To make it easier for you, some previous 7th graders and the Big Sibs of 2008 have assembled the Hunter Seventh Grade Survival Guide. Yes, we're exaggerating; you'll probably survive and thrive just fine without our help but please, humor us. We put our hearts and souls into this so don't let us find any of these lying on the floor of your hallway or in the garbage cans.

The first thing you should do is relax. You will soon find that Hunter is a great place both for learning and for fun. Hunter may be more challenging than your old school, but you'll be fine. We are! We really hope that you'll find this guide helpful but if you do happen to have any other questions, please feel free to approach your Big Sibs or any of your teachers. That's what we're for!

Now if we could only pick three things for you to take away from this guide, they would be: 1) Don't take this year for granted. Work to your fullest potential and we promise you that it will pay off. 2) Respect your elders, teachers and seniors. Really. Hunter is a six-year school and the seniors have worked hard and deserve to be respected. If you don't treat them with respect, then don't even bother expecting it when it's your turn. 3) Relax! You'll be absolutely wonderful! Remember, if you need help with anything, ask any of the Big Sibs or your teachers. They really do care.

Classes

Classes. You've been anticipating this section, worrying and doubting your abilities to keep up with a new curriculum in a new environment with new teachers. We know. We've been there. The biggest advantage of Hunter high school starting in the 7th grade is that it doesn't matter. Think of it as a practice round, a grace period for you to adapt to a new system and learn how to make the most of your potential. None of the grades that you receive in the 7th grade will go on your transcript, meaning colleges will never see them. Calm yourself though. More often than not, your performance in the 7th grade reflects how you will do at the rest of your years at Hunter. The biggest mistake you could make is to take this time for granted. Once you become accustomed to procrastinating and slacking off, it will be tough to get out of that mindset. That being said, here's what you can expect:

English: The goal in this class is to introduce to you new ways of looking at literature. You'll learn to analyze books like you've never analyzed them before. The books that you'll have to read are all extraordinary and they're all varied so you're bound to find something you'll like. The writing portion of the year-long curriculum is also designed to help you develop your own personal writing style. The books you read this year include To Kill A Mockingbird, Of Mice and Men and A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Communications and Theatre (CT): You'll quickly grow to appreciate the brief escape CT offers from the challenges of your other classes. In CT, you develop your communication skills by playing different drama games and having fun acting. If you're an extroverted person, you'll definitely flourish in this class. But don't feel doomed if you're shy. CT is the best place to break out of your shell. There's no chance of embarrassing yourself since most of the drama games leaves everyone looking like fools.

Foreign Language (French/Latin/Spanish): Seventh grade language class introduces you to the fundamentals of the language that you chose prior to the start of school. Remember, you need fundamentals to have fun. In the beginning, classes will be a little dry since you'll be drilled with basic grammar and vocabulary. No need to fret though, if you work hard in the beginning, it will definitely pay off. Keep in mind that like math, language is also cumulative—act like a sponge and absorb as

much as you can but don't let anyone squeeze you. Yes, that could've been phrased more eloquently but you get the idea. If you keep reviewing, what's to come won't intimidate the willies out of you.

Math: Please please PLEASE do not take this class for granted. Everything you learn this year will serve as the basis for everything you will learn. The curriculum covers a wide range of topics, like logic, rational and irrational numbers and a bit of algebra. You will, without a doubt, see these topics come up again so really work hard in this class. At the end of the year, you will be given the opportunity to take a test that determines which math class you'll be going into for the rest of your time at Hunter. The math curriculum from the 8th grade and on is split into two sections, Honors (H) and Extended Honors (E). If you consistently do well in 7th grade and you score high enough of the test, you'll be put into E classes. Don't be discouraged if you are an H student though; the H curriculum is already much more advanced than other high schools and E classes are only different because they work at a faster pace.

Environmental Science: Seventh grade science is focused mainly on the environment. Which should be shocking considering the course is called environmental science. You'll be learning about biomes, ecology and tons of other stuff. Seventh grade science also comes with one double-period lab each week. You'll be conducting experiments that correlate to what you're learning at the time and will have to submit a lab report at the end of each experiment. Towards the end of the first semester, you will have to create a science fair project. Everyone is required to do so and your class will hold a mini-science fair where two winners will be chosen to represent the class in the school wide science fair.

Global Studies: This class is also designed to familiarize you with what's to be expected. You'll be taught note-taking techniques, how to conduct research efficiently and how to write a proper paper for a Global Studies class, which is very different from what you'll be writing in English. The curriculum focuses mainly on types of government, basic economy and geography. You'll also be learning about ancient civilizations and human development, which will serve as a basis for your future Global classes.

Art: Art is one of your two half year courses. Art is divided up into two parts, history and studio. Seventh grade art history focuses mainly on non-western civilizations, such as those of China, Japan and Africa. Towards the end of the course, you will be given a museum assignment where you'll have to go to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and complete a series of short assignments will usually end up counting as much as a test would in your final grade. Art studio is always a really fun class. You'll be given projects to complete that will introduce you to and help you develop basic concepts of art. Most art teachers are cool with you listening to music and talking to your friends as long as you're productive.

Music: The semester that you don't have art, you'll have music. In music, you'll learn a bit of music theory, history and listen to some great compositions. You'll also study instruments from all over the world. It's just a very culturally rich class.

Computer Science: Computer Science is a class that had just recently been added onto the 7th grade curriculum. You work in one of the school's two computer labs to enhance old computer skills and learn new ones.

Health & Physical Education: Like most of your other classes so far, health is an introductory course. Health is a half-year course so you'll just skim the many different topics in the curriculum including self-esteem, personal hygiene and general systems of the body. Last but certainly not least is P.E. Not to be taken for granted, P.E. is a real class and the grades do matter. You're expected to show up on time and in the proper attire. Seventh grade P.E. is mostly about team sports like floor

hockey and volleyball. You will also take the Presidential Challenge Physical Fitness Test, which evaluates your physical condition. Included in the test is the dreaded mile-run around the reservoir in Central Park.

Organization and Homework Tips

Your first year at Hunter will take some getting used to. On the one hand, you will have the freedom to leave the campus whenever you do not have a class. However, this privilege comes with a more challenging workload. Your teachers realize this can be a hard transition, so they will try not to give you too much in the beginning of the school year and will generally avoid planning multiple projects or tests on the same day. The key to doing well in Hunter's environment is organization and planning your time well so that you can get your work done. Here are some tips and strategies that worked well for previous seventh graders:

1. The school hands out a free planner to all 7th graders. Use it to write down all your daily homework, due dates for projects, test days, and anything else you need to remember.
2. Keep your notes organized in binders or folders. It doesn't take a lot of effort, but it will make it easier to find homework, notes and past assignments and do well in your classes.
3. Use more than one binder. It's a great idea to have one binder for your morning classes, and one for your afternoon classes, so you don't have to be constantly running to your locker. Unorganized binders are usually heavier than neat binders, so your backpack will be easier to carry if your binder is neat.
4. You can also make your backpack a lot lighter by having a separate homework folder. At the end of school you can put everything you will need to do your homework in this folder. You can then carry only this folder home and avoid carrying any binders at all!
5. Keep your locker neat. In the morning, you can take only what you need for your morning classes and leave everything else in your locker. Then you can stop back at your locker before lunch to drop everything off before you go out. Stop by your locker again after lunch to get your afternoon binder, and then stop by once more before you go home to drop off all of your binders and get your homework folder.
6. Don't procrastinate! If you wait until the last possible day to start your project, you probably will have to stay up all night to finish it, and you won't do a very good job. Use your planner to break apart long-term assignments into manageable pieces.
7. Start with your hardest homework; it's much easier and faster to work when you are fresh than when it is 11 and you would much rather be sleeping.
8. Set your priorities. You should do your homework before you watch TV or go on AIM. We know that the TV or the computer can be pretty tempting but that's what weekends were created for.
9. Use your free time. If you get your homework done during free periods or lunch, you'll be free to spend your time after school in whatever way you choose!

Comprehending and Using Your Schedule to Help you:

Breaks: You get two breaks in the day, one between second and third, and one between 7th and 8th, except on Wednesdays. They're long breaks, but not long enough to type up a paper. You should probably use this time to go over homework and to print out the homework that you couldn't print out at home because your printer was broken. It's also a good time to socialize, but if you have homework or a test next period, forget about it. As a 7th grader, you're required to spend your morning break in your homeroom where you'll receive necessary information from your homeroom teacher and best of all, have time to socialize with your Big Sibs! Also, if you walk into class late after a break, you have no excuse unless you were talking with a counselor or at the nurse.

Time Between Classes: Is much too short to write a page about the Indus River Valley. You can try, but good luck. Use this time to get to class, because those lates rack up and can seriously pummel your grade down.

Free Periods: If you really want to make the most out of your schedule, the first thing you can do is learn how to use your free periods. They can be a fun time to hang out with friends. However, they can also be a good time to do homework and to work on projects and presentations. The library and computer lab are almost always free. Also, use these to study for tests!

Clubs and Publications

Clubs: There are enough clubs in Hunter for you to join one every day of the week, maybe more, but we don't recommend it. Clubs run once a week during your lunch period and/or during a half hour activities period. There is a club for everything you could possibly be interested in, and if there isn't you can start one, although it's a long and time-consuming process. At the beginning of the year, all the clubs got together for Club Open House where you will get to see every club that Hunter has to offer. There are clubs for random hobbies, like anime, ping pong, music, movies and there is even Asian Gaming Experience (AGE) club. There are also more academic focused clubs, like the Science Club and the Art Club. Some clubs are more involved in social action. They raise money, promote specific causes, and do community service. Some clubs, like Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) work on promoting awareness of issues, while others, like 365, go out into the community and volunteer their time. There are many different causes to support, which you will see at Club Open House. Hunter is also home to numerous cultural clubs like the African American Cultural Society (AACS), the Jewish Cultural Awareness Club (JCAC), and Hunter's Organization for Latin Americans (HOLA). Most of these clubs put on a show about their culture and hold various food sales throughout the year. You don't always have to be part of the club to be part of their show; you can try out to sing, dance, act, and even show off your martial arts in the Asian Culture Society (ACS) Show.

The General Organization (G.O.): The G.O. is student-run and often works side by side with the administration. Think of the G.O. as the central government, playing a large part in everything from planning events to rewriting the school constitution. The G.O. holds the General Assembly (G.A.), a weekly meeting students and faculty use to discuss school-related issues. The G.A. is open to everyone so if you're interested feel free to drop by. G.O. elections are held towards the end of the year and there are many requirements that need to be met in order to run. Elections are open to upper-termers who have had the experience to handle such a great responsibility. If student government is something that interests you, definitely get involved and in no time you'll be running for president.

Term Council: Each term has its own government with its own faculty advisor that stays with you

through all six years of your high school career. Think of the Term Council as a state government; issues pertaining only to your grade as well as planning for grade specific events are discussed here. Weekly meetings are held and are open to everyone in the term and elections for officers are held towards the end of the year.

Publications: Hunter has a number of publications which students can write for, contribute to, and work on. These include two newspapers, which you should check out: What's What and The Observer. There are a few publications on specific topics. These include Radicals, the math magazine and Tapestry for science fiction and fantasy. Hunter has two literary magazines, which are specific to age groups. The seventh, eighth, and ninth grade magazine is called the Desk.

Events

Spirit Week: Spirit week is within the first month or so of school. Each day of the week has a different theme like superhero or pajama day, and there are different activities to participate in during lunch. Don't be afraid to go all out with your costumes because people actually do participate. In fact, the school is divided up into teams for spirit week, and if you stop by the G.O. office in your costume, you'll earn your team points.

Spirit Day: On Spirit Day, the entire school spends the day outside. You can just hang out with all your friends or you can take part in organized activities, like soccer or Frisbee, that are specific to your grade, but the main event is always junior vs. senior football.

Seventh Grade Picnic: Seventh grade picnic takes place in Central Park towards the beginning of the school year. It's similar to Spirit Day, but only 7th graders and their Big Sibs participate. It's a good way to get to know your class, but there are also inter-class activities.

Taconic Trip: Your Taconic trip is at the end of the year, usually in May. Two or three classes at a time go on an overnight trip to Taconic State Park. It's just you, your friends and a whole lot of teachers and parents who are your chaperones. The activities are centered on science (nature!) but it's not as bad as it sounds. There's a campfire, and usually a game of manhunt, and even though you stay in a cabin with a teacher or a parent, it's better than having (science) class.

Dances: Over the course of your 7th grade year, you will have two dances with the 8th graders: a Halloween dance and a spring dance. It usually costs \$5 for admission, but if you shop up in costume on Halloween, or follow similar criteria for the spring dance, it's only \$3. There's food and drinks, but you have to pay for them, and sometimes there are games. Your Big Sibs will be in attendance and the dance is usually from 4-6. Keep in mind that the dance is chaperoned and while you can get dressed up, you have to wear rubber soled shoes to get into the gym.

Carnival: The last of the G.O. events. Usually held in early June, Carnival is a well-deserved break from crazy end of the year finals and projects. Classes are shortened to fit into half a day and the rest of the day, you spend in the courtyard where there will be booths set up by all of the clubs in the school. It's a huge event and everyone gets really into it and takes advantage of the free chill time. Our Carnival games are pretty intense and include such activities like sumo-wrestling, jousting and everyone's favorite—a dunk tank!

Performance Groups and Productions

Productions

There are a number of shows that you can take part in (in any number of ways) or attend, over the course of the year including Hunter-Musical Repertory (Rep), Hunter Theater Ensemble (HTE), The Brick Prison Playhouse (Brick), Hunter Classics (Classics), Shakespeare etc. (Shakespeare). All productions are student directed and produced by eleventh and twelfth graders so it's good to show interest early in your Hunter career. Tickets for these shows are \$10 and under (usually under) and there are usually four performances, Thursday afternoon, Friday afternoon and evening and Saturday evening. Thursday is usually the cheapest show and students' tickets cost less than adult tickets.

Also, many English teachers offer extra credit for attending performances, so even if you're not into theater, it's still worth going to see one or two performances each year.

Hunter-Musical Repertory (Rep): Rep is the only musical production. The performance is in March and the auditions are in November. Rep is the most heavily attended performance and the most difficult to get into. There are ensemble and dancing only parts available, but even if you don't get into the show it's highly recommended that you work backstage and show an interest for next year. You can also audition for Rep's band, which provides actual music for the show.

Hunter Theater Ensemble (HTE): HTE puts on a non-musical performance in November. Auditions are held at beginning of the year, and since this is also more of an upper-terminer production, the same advice applies here as to HTE.

The Brick Prison Playhouse (Brick): Brick is the only production that puts on student written plays. The process for Brick involves playwriting workshops and read-throughs so that the producers who are elected the year before, can choose a few short plays to put on in April. After the read-throughs, they choose directors for each play and then hold auditions.

Hunter Classics (Classics): Hunter Classics is not student directed, but only 7th, 8th, and 9th graders can participate with some 10th graders working behind the scenes. The performance is in late May or early June. Hunter Classics is a good place to start if you're interested in theatre.

Shakespeare etc. (Shakespeare): Shakespeare auditions are in June and the performance is in the very beginning of the year, so you can try out this year to be in it next year. There is no crew for Shakespeare.

Junior Chorus: If you like to sing, Junior chorus is definitely for you. Auditions for junior chorus are held before your school year starts, in June. If you missed the date, don't worry! You can join second semester, and possibly before then as well. The chorus teacher is Ms. Beaudry and you can usually find her in the music office or her room 233. The Junior chorus sings a wide range of songs, including modern pieces like "Seasons of Love" from Rent, jazz songs like "Paper Moon," and more traditional songs like "Pie Jesu." You'll learn the singing basics and learn to control your voice, so you can be prepared for Concert Choir in 9th grade. The Junior Chorus really needs men. Please guys.

Junior Jazz Band: Is seriously way too cool. Auditions for Junior Jazz band are held at the same time as auditions for junior chorus and junior orchestra, which are before the start of the school year, way back in June. If you missed the date, you can probably go up to Mr. Batson in the Music office or in the band room in 227 and ask him if you can audition. After you get in, he will teach you all the basics of improvisation, jazz rhythms and scales, and you'll play around 3-4 pieces. If you play the Guitar (electric/acoustic), Bass (electric/acoustic), Sax, Trumpet, piano, drums (bongos et al), or anything associated with jazz you should try out. If you're a member of Junior Jazz Band and you

enter the ninth grade, you can audition for the Blue Note Jazz Ensemble, which is the high school band.

Junior Orchestra: If you play a more traditional instrument, and we say that with hesitation because sometimes they've added electric guitars, try out for junior orchestra. Auditions are held before school starts at the same time as Junior Chorus and Junior Jazz Band. The conductor, Mr. Stratechuk can be found in the music office, room 333, or B-17. You can ask him at any time to join, but preferably at the beginning or end of a semester. Junior Orchestra has played a variety of modern pieces like The James Bond Theme, The Lord of the Rings Theme, and many classical pieces like the "Radetsky March" By Johann Strauss and "The Firebird Suite" by Igor Stravinsky. When you enter the ninth grade, if you play a string instrument, you'll join senior strings. If you play a wind instrument, you'll join concert band

Teams: Athletic and Otherwise

Because here at Hunter, we work our brains as much as we work our bodies, if not more!)

Math Team: You spend your lunch (you can eat lunch there, don't worry) solving math problems and going over them in the end. There are occasional contests, like the AMC that qualify you for higher, national tests. Math team is a great way to prepare yourself for these tests. Some teachers give extra credit if you go to math team and get some problems right!

Chess Team: It's exactly what it sounds like! If you like chess, you spend your lunchtime playing chess with other Hunter chess masters and prepare for tournaments.

Athletic Teams: As a 7th grader, you'll be limited to participating in the Middle School teams. In the Fall Season, the Middle School Basketball team, for both boys and girls, recruits, trains and competes against private schools in our area. Spring is the time for soccer. Recruiting, training and competing goes on all throughout the spring. If you're interested in joining any of the teams, dates for tryouts will be posted up in your hallway.

Food

Yes, we did save the best for last. The beauty of an open-campus policy is that it allows for a variety of food at all relatively cheap prices. No need to explain the other perks to you; being allowed to go out for lunch was probably number two on your list of reasons why you should go to Hunter.

Sal's Pizza: (Madison btwn 95th and 96th) Some say that this is the worst pizza place you will ever find. Honestly, it's not poison. If you're stressed for time and you need something yummy in your tummy, Sal's is the closest place to school to get real food. If you have more time though, we do recommend that you head on over to one of the other pizza parlors in the area.

Marco Polo's Pizza: (Madison btwn 92nd and 91st) Excellent thin crust pizza here. It will cost you a little more but that'll only be because one slice of Marco Polo's pizza is rarely enough. If you don't mind sacrificing a bit more money for the cause of satisfied taste buds, then this place is perfect. Get here early though, it usually gets packed pretty quickly by other Hunter students and some other students from the schools around us.

Famous Famiglia Pizzeria: (corner of Madison and 97th) Hunter ♥ Famiglia. The pizza here is absolutely delicious, which explains why it's nearly impossible to get a table. Get here early and you will be promised with good food, good people, and good prices.

Sing's Deli: (Corner of Park and 96th) This is the deli that you pass by on your way from the 6 train to school. By the time you're a senior, the guy at the register will know your name. Best place for toasted bagels, Snapple, candy bars and ice cream. Their microwaved cookies are the ultimate for an after-school snack on your way home.

New York City Deli Park: (96th btwn Madison and Park) This place is often thought of as expensive, but it is convenient and offers the best breakfast foods. Their muffins (especially pistachio and chocolate chip) are heavenly. If you have time to stop by in the morning, the muffins are still warm too! The sandwiches are decent, and they have a great selection of drinks.

All About Food: (Madison btwn 97th and 98th) This is the best place for paninis, wraps and custom-made salads. They love us Hunter kids there and offer us a great lunch special prices. It offers a nice change from all that pizza you're bound to scarf down.

Salata: (Madison btwn 96th and 97th) Although a new addition to the neighborhood, Salata has already become a staple. Popular among the upper-terms, Salata offers pretty much the same food as All About Food for a bit more money. They have great dessert and breakfast but if you're craving a sandwich or a salad, stick with All About Food.

Yoan Ming Garden: (Madison btwn 97th and 98th) Also known as "Screaming Lady" (watch out for the woman at the register!) this place offers everything you would expect from Americanized Chinese food places. If you're up for a little more style, head over to Pick Up Stix, but don't forget to leave a tip because the lady will chase after you (even onto the street.) We're not kidding.

Subway: There are two of these famous sandwich establishments around. The closer is on 94th and Lex., while the farther is on 89th and 3rd. At both you can get a student special: a foot long, a drink, and a cookie for \$6. Great prices, great food.

Yura Company: (Madison and 92nd) Gourmet food for ridiculous prices. They have awesome soup though! And key lime pie! And rolls! Who are we kidding? We love it here but it is expensive so if you're on a budget, skip this place because you can easily find cheaper food of the same quality.

Just in Time Café: (96th btwn Lexington and Park) This place is the cheapest one around. You can get a slice of pizza for \$1.50, but the best deals are the burgers. It might get a little crowded and you can't ever sit down here, so grab your food to go and enjoy it in the courtyard.

Peter's: (Corner of Madison and 98th) Your typical diner, with all the classics like Belgian waffles, buttermilk pancakes, coffee, orange juice and toast for breakfast, or burgers, salads and sandwiches for lunch. Portions are quite generous and it kills us to tell you this because the people there are so friendly, but there have been quite a few roach sightings.

Jackson Hole: (Corner of Madison and 91st) We warn you, although this place was much better diner fare, come here only if you have time to spare. It's usually packed with people so it may take some time for them to get to your table and to make the food. The food is well worth the wait though. Make sure to bring someone, especially if you're in the mood for a burger because there's no way one person can finish a whole burger in a single sitting.