

Eighth Grade Curriculum

English ~ The eighth grade English course of study includes the domains of literature, writing, vocabulary, and grammar. Literature includes analyzing a selection of novels, short stories, poems, and plays, as well as non-fiction pieces. Literary devices and structure are heavily emphasized. In addition, students write authentic works and respond to prompts that incorporate skills from the four disciplines of study as a cohesive whole. Finally, students experience a variety of opportunities to practice speaking in front of their peers.

Reading ~ The eighth grade reading course is designed to improve and enhance reading skills. Basic reading skills such as word recognition, decoding, fluency, vocabulary development and text comprehension will be emphasized. Much of the course will be strategies-based to help students develop content area reading skills and test-taking skills. Students will use a variety of genres and types of texts to focus on higher-order reading skills such as inference, vocabulary in context, drawing conclusions and predicting outcomes, and using graphic sources. In addition, students will learn the reference and study skills needed to become more independent readers and learners.

Read to Write ~ (one period per 6 day cycle) Scheduled for all Eighth grade students. It is designed to improve students' critical reading and writing skills. The writing assignments are not meant to lead the students through the writing process toward a final draft. Instead, the students' writing should help them to connect the literature to their personal experiences; re-examine the text for various purposes; develop hypotheses, judgments, and critical interpretations; and apply ideas to new literary texts or situations.

Latin ~ (6 periods per cycle for the entire school year) It is a continuation of the Latin Grade 7 curriculum. Students who successfully complete this course of study are eligible to enroll in Latin II at the High School. *In order to continue with Latin in 8th grade, the following criteria would have to be met:*

- Final grade AND 4th quarter grade in 7th grade Latin - 73% or higher
- Final grade in 7th grade Reading - 83% or higher

Mathematics (Pre-Algebra) ~ Designed to enable students to strengthen their skills with decimals, fractions, and integers, to develop problem solving strategies, and to learn some of the basic algebraic methods & strategies in preparation for ninth grade Algebra. Students will develop a deeper understanding of percent and its applications. Other topics covered are scientific notation, ratios & proportions, statistics, probability, an extension of the traditional geometric principles that were addressed in seventh grade, area, perimeter, volume, surface area, number theory, an introduction to slope and its related topics, one- & two-step equations solved by using algebraic methods, the Cartesian Coordinate Plane, graphing equations of lines on a coordinate plane, and graphing inequalities on a number line. Calculators are used at appropriate times to enhance the learning process.

Algebra ~ The Algebra I course emphasizes signed numbers being used with the four basic operations, number theory, adding and subtracting matrices, simplifying polynomial expressions, solving and graphing linear equations and inequalities, scientific notation, slope and related topics, powers and exponents, adding, subtracting, and multiplying polynomials, factoring polynomials, simplifying rational expressions, using the Pythagorean Theorem, and solving systems of equations by using various methods. Scientific and graphing calculators are used when deemed appropriate. Numerous real-world applications are performed throughout the course.

Honors Algebra ~ The topics covered in the honors course are similar to the Algebra I course. Additional topics covered are multiplying matrices, graphing linear inequalities, and simplifying radical expressions. Questions of a more complex nature are considered in relation to many of the topics.

Science ~ This course is designed to develop an appreciation for the planet Earth using critical and scientific thought and expression to help understand the complexities of its materials, structure, processes, history, and relationships in space. An attempt is made to create an awareness of the Earth and its environment and the interaction with man through lab investigations and self-study in a course combining the fields of geology, oceanography, astronomy, and meteorology. Students will learn about rocks, minerals, oceans, stars, and weather and how man interacts with these materials and phenomena.

Social Studies (Civics) ~ (two qtrs.) The focus of the civics course will be to prepare informed, rational, humane and participating citizens committed to the values and principles of American Constitutional Democracy. The study of the course will include civics and government as well as preparing students to be responsible citizens. All students will be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate good citizenship, community service, and personal responsibility. Students will learn about the basis of the U.S. Constitution, as well as the Bill of Rights and the three branches of government. The areas will include federal, state and local governments.

Social Studies (Geography) ~ (two qtrs.) In Geography, students will learn the ways that geographers study the world. Students will also study the political and physical geography of Europe. Finally, students will study the cultural and physical geography of China and South Asia, two areas of growing importance in today's global economy. The economic interdependence between these areas of the world and the United States will be explored while students will expand upon skills such as note taking, research and writing, and critical thinking to help ensure future academic success.

Art ~ (3 periods per cycle for 1/2 year) Students explore a broad base of art activities including design, construction, crafts, painting, drawing and art history. Elements and principles of design are stressed in each lesson, along with an appreciation of one's own work and the work of others. Students are given the opportunity to work on manual dexterity and skills in handling art materials, while expressing themselves creatively.

Music ~ (3 periods per cycle for 1/2 year) This course allows students to explore music history including: the Middle Ages, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and the 20th Century. The second half of the course examines the Guitar. Students learn about the basics of the instrument, chords, strumming and look at group and solo evaluation.

Family & Consumer Science ~ (6 sessions per cycle for 1 qtr) Students explore topics such as: kitchen and food safety, measuring techniques, kitchen equipment, the Food Guide Pyramid and Dietary Guidelines, food labels, meal planning and a unit on child care. These topics are covered using a number of hands-on-activities including posters, presentations and food preparation labs. Healthy food choices are stressed in each lesson, with an emphasis on the Food Guide Pyramid. Students are encouraged to express their thoughts, opinions and facts learned in their daily journal writings.

Technology Education ~ (6 periods per cycle for 1 qtr)

The focus of this course is manufacturing. The students will spend most of their time in the shop area working on a project. From the area of design, to the finished product, the student's manual dexterity will be challenged by manipulating materials, using hand tools, portable power tools, and some machinery. Shop safety, organization, & maintenance are stressed throughout the quarter.

Computer Skills ~ (3 periods per 6 day cycle) The eighth grade curriculum focuses on digital and graphic applications and student projects. Students are able to develop web pages and explore the creative possibilities of today's technology.

Physical Education ~ (2 periods per cycle all year)

Physical education in eighth grade continues its focus on team sports. Basic skills and a general understanding of the sport, with an emphasis upon good sportsmanship & teamwork, are presented. Soccer, basketball, volleyball and floor hockey are some of the activities students will participate in to practice the team concept.