

# West Hills Middle School

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Course Descriptions**

### **REQUIRED CLASSES**

**Connection Class:** This course provides an opportunity for students to establish a positive relationship with an adult role model in the school, to engage in silent sustained reading, to participate in character education and to focus on study skills. Teachers provide students with academic support in a mentorship environment. Participation in this class will help to enhance the core curriculum and to create a more positive environment in the school. Students have the opportunity to earn .25 credits per semester based on participation in all Teacher Advisory activities. *This is a full year course.*

**Health:** This course develops the skills needed to improve the quality of life by helping students to cope with and solve problems, develop positive self-image, and make healthy decisions. The students will explore positive life styles, disease prevention, emergency procedures, media literacy, and alcohol and drug abuse prevention. *This is a semester course.*

**Intermediate Team Sports (Fitness 8):** This is a physical education course with emphasis on skills, knowledge, and participation in a variety of team sports, conditioning, and recreational activities. *This is a semester course.*

**Integrated Science 8:** Eighth Grade Integrated Science focuses on the theme of “change.” Physical, earth, and life science contents are integrated in a core curriculum. The standards to be taught relate to observations of chemical and physical change, changes in biological energy, forces, energy and motion, constructing machines, and changes in the Earth’s crust and climate. *This is a full year course.*

**Language Arts 8:** This course, based on the 8th Grade Utah English Language Arts (ELA) Core Standards, is designed for grade-level instruction reading comprehension, writing, methods of inquiry, and the processes, skills, and strategies for effective communication. *This is a full year course.*

**8th Grade Mathematics:** In 8th Grade Mathematics students will focus on formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; grasping the concepts of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; and analyzing two- and three dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean theorem. *Every student has the opportunity to earn Honors each quarter.*

**Reading 8:** This course, based on the 8th Grade Utah English Language Arts (ELA) Core Standards, is designed for students requiring basic instruction with targeted intervention in reading comprehension, vocabulary, and reading skills, to assist striving readers with literary, informational, and functional texts. *This is a full year course.* **\*Students that perform above grade level will have this class waived and will have 1.0 additional electives.**

**U.S. History 1:** United States History 1 includes events and issues in United States history from the Age of Exploration through Reconstruction, emphasizing the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Topics include, but are not limited to, American Indian life, European exploration and colonization, the Revolutionary War, constitutional issues, nation building, expansion, the Civil War, and Reconstruction. The standards can be taught either chronologically or thematically, but are organized into chronological periods. Periodization is an organizational tool historians use to make connections and draw distinctions. Periods are flexible ways of making meaning, and may overlap chronologically. Students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of each period’s key historic, geographic, economic, and civic concepts by applying those concepts to complete cognitively rigorous tasks. Whenever possible, students will be expected to make connections between

historically significant events and current issues, helping to deepen their understanding of the context and complexity of civic life and preparing them for civic engagement. *This is a full year course.*

## **ELECTIVE CLASSES**

**Art Foundations 2:** Art Foundation 2 provides an overview and introduction to visual arts through studying a variety of art tools and materials. This course builds on Foundations 1 with a more in-depth experience with fewer art forms. This course is designed to develop higher-level thinking, art-related technology skills, art criticism, art history, and aesthetics, with an emphasis on studio production. *This is a semester course. There is an additional fee of up to \$20 for this class.*

**Band 1: Woodwinds:** This is a beginning band class offered for students who wish to learn to play the flute, oboe, clarinet or saxophone. Practice outside of class time and performances are part of this course. An instrument is required. If available, an oboe or tenor saxophone may be rented at the school for a nominal fee. *This is a full year course.*

**Band 1: Percussion:** This is a beginning band class offered for students who wish to learn to play the drums, mallet keyboard instruments, and other percussion-related instruments. Practice outside of class time and performances are part of this course. Drum sticks are required. A drum kit or mallets may also be required as per teacher request. *This is a full year course.*

**Band 1: Brass:** This is a beginning band class offered for students who wish to learn to play the cornet, trumpet, French horn, baritone horn, euphonium, trombone, or tuba. Practice outside of class time and performances are part of this course. An instrument is required. If available, a French horn, baritone horn, euphonium, or tuba may be rented at the school for a nominal fee. *This is a full year course.*

**Band 2: Concert:** *(2 or more years playing the same instrument)*

This is an intermediate level band course that encourages increased technical and expressive musical proficiency through performance and study of music. Rehearsals and performances outside of class time are part of the course requirement and constitute a portion of the grade. Practice outside of class time and performances are part of this course. **An instrument is required.** If available, an oboe, bass clarinet, bassoon, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, French horn, baritone horn, euphonium, or tuba may be rented at the school for a nominal fee. *This is a full year course.*

**Band 3: Symphonic:** *(3 or more years playing the same instrument)*

This advanced course performs varied, advanced level music. Marching band may be part of the course requirement during marching season. Rehearsals and performances outside of class time are part of the course requirement and constitute a portion of the grade. **An instrument is required.** If available, an oboe, bass clarinet, bassoon, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, French horn, baritone horn, euphonium, or tuba may be rented at the school for a nominal fee. *This is a full year course.*

**Ceramics 1:** Ceramics develops basic skills in the creation of 3-D forms and pottery from clay. Techniques in hand building, wheel throwing, basic glazing, and firing are taught. With an emphasis on studio production, this course is designed to develop higher-level thinking and art-related technology skills. Some art criticism, art history, and aesthetics may be included. *This is a semester course. There is an additional fee of up to \$20 for this class.*

**Ceramics 2:** This is an intermediate course that builds upon the concepts and skills learned in Ceramics 1. Students will consistently produce quality pieces of ceramics. *This is a semester course. There is an additional fee of up to \$20 for this class.*

**Choir 1: Soprano/Alto High Key:** This is a vocal music course open to all students with soprano or alto vocal ranges. Two, three or four-part music is performed at various concerts. Primary consideration is given to part-singing, good vocal production, and rudiments of music. Rehearsals and performances outside of class time are part of the course requirements and constitute a portion of the grade. *This is offered as both a semester course and a full year course.*

**Choir 1: Tenor/Bass Low Key:** This is a vocal music course open to all students with tenor or bass vocal ranges. Two, three or four-part music is performed at various concerts. Primary consideration is given to part-singing, good vocal production, and rudiments of music. Rehearsals and performances outside of class time are part of the course requirements and constitute a portion of the grade. *This is offered as both a semester course and a full year course.*

**Choir 2: Mixed:** This is a vocal music course that is open to all students. It covers three and four-part music and a review of singing fundamentals. Approval of the instructor may be required. Rehearsals and performances outside of class time are part of the course requirements and constitute a portion of the grade. *This is a full year course.*

**Concert Choir:** This is an advanced vocal music group that is designed for students to sing advanced choral literature and build more techniques in singing. Rehearsals and performances outside of class time are part of the course requirements and constitute a portion of the grade. *This is a full year course.*

**Creative Writing:** This course, based on Utah English Language Arts (ELA) Core Writing Standards, is designed to introduce students to imaginative composition with the writing of personal experiences, character sketches, short fiction, and poetry. Students will have the opportunity to prepare manuscripts for publication, awards, and scholarships. *This is a semester course.*

**Dance 1:** This course offers basic dance techniques, fitness fundamentals, movement qualities, and rhythm with an emphasis on creativity, sequencing, and problem solving. *This is a semester course.*  
**There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.**

**Dance 2:** This intermediate course emphasizes techniques, choreography, and improvisation. Performances outside of the regular school day may be required, and they will constitute a portion of the course grade. *This is a semester course.* **There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.**

**Drawing 1:** Drawing focuses on black and white or monochromatic rendering from life, pictures, masterworks, and imagination. This course is designed to develop higher-level thinking and art-related technology skills with an emphasis on studio production. Some experiences in art criticism, art history, and aesthetics may be included. *This is a semester course.* **There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.**

**Exploring Business & Marketing:** Students will be exposed to the fundamental concepts of business and marketing. Skills include basic business concepts, organizational communication, human resources management, entrepreneurship, accounting, finance, and leadership. *This is a semester course.*

**Exploring Technology:** Exploring Technology is action-based course that introduces students to the technological systems of two or more of the following areas: energy-power technologies, transportation technologies, manufacturing technologies, and construction technologies. The course is designed around exploration in cooperative and individualized activities rather than project and skill development. *This is a semester course.* **There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.**

**FACS Exploration:** This Family and Consumer Science course provides students with essential life skills. The course allows students to develop skills in two or more of the following areas: food and nutrition, childcare and safety, interior design and care of a home, clothing construction and style,

consumerism, family relationships, personal responsibility, and job-related skills. (Local schools can determine the areas of emphasis from the above curricula where multiple sections may be offered). *This is a semester course. There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.*

**Guitar 1:** This course provides opportunities for students to develop their musical potential and aesthetic understanding through learning to play a guitar. Emphasis will be placed on playing. *This is a semester course. Students need to provide a guitar. A limited number are available on a rental basis.*

**Orchestra 1:** This course is designed to assist individuals interested in playing a violin, viola, cello, or string bass. Students work in group situations suitable to their ability. Emphasis is on growth in technical proficiency, orchestral literature, and performance. **An instrument is required.** Rehearsals and performances outside of class time are part of the course requirement and constitute a portion of the grade. *This is a full year course.*

**Orchestra 2:** *(2 or more years playing the same instrument)*

This is an intermediate-level orchestra class focusing on intermediate-level literature for orchestra. Rehearsals and performances outside of class time are part of the course requirements and will constitute a portion of the grade. Practice outside of class time and performances are part of this course. **An instrument is required.** If available, a viola, a cello, or a string bass may be rented from the school for a nominal fee. *This is a full year course.*

**Racket/Net Sports:** Improved fitness is a goal of each individualized Lifetime Activities course. The curriculum provides diverse offerings to meet the individual needs of all students to develop competency in specific activities, but not limited to: pickleball, tennis, speedminton, ping pong, racquetball, etc. Students will be able to apply basic/advanced skills, strategies and rules using standardized guidelines or rubrics to be successful in their class. *This is a semester course.*

**Spanish 1:** This course is designed to teach elementary skills in listening, speaking, reading, and spelling. The curriculum covered in this course will give students the skills to communicate in culturally-appropriate ways in the target language. By the end of this course, student skill level should be at novice-mid level according to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) standards. Students will develop an appreciation for the culture of the countries where the language is spoken. *This is a full year course.*

**Spanish 2:** This course is designed to teach intermediate skills in listening, speaking, reading, and spelling. The curriculum covered in this course will give students the skills to communicate in culturally-appropriate ways in the target language. By the end of this course, student skill level should be at novice-mid level according to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) standards. Students will develop an appreciation for the culture of the countries where the language is spoken. *This is a full year course.*

**Sculpture 1:** Sculpture is an overview of basic skills used to create 3-D works of art. Both additive and subtractive techniques will be taught. With an emphasis on studio production, this course is designed to develop higher-level thinking skills and art-related technology skills. Some art criticism, art history, and aesthetics may be included. *This is a semester course. There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.*

**Study Skills:** This course is a course in which students learn and apply social and academic skills and strategies. This class may cover the following areas: Organization, time management, stress management, reading strategies, test taking strategies, study strategies, note taking, academic tracking, team work, communication and goal setting, learning and interest assessments. *This is a semester course.*

**Theatre 1:** This is an introductory course in theatre with an emphasis on performance and playwriting. No previous experience is necessary. The course will include, but not be limited to,

improvisation, monologues, characterization, movement, playwriting, and work with voice projection and diction. Other skills learned and developed include critical thinking, rehearsal skills, plot structure, reading, writing, and cooperative group work. *This is a semester course.* **There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.**

**Theatre 2:** This is an intermediate course in theatre with an emphasis on performance and playwriting. The course will include, but not be limited to, playwriting, characterization, monologues, and scenes from plays, movement, voice projection and diction, and improvisation. Other skills learned and developed include critical thinking, rehearsal skills, plot structure, reading writing, and cooperative group work. *This is a semester course.* **There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.**

**Musical Theatre:** This is a performing arts elective course focusing on musical theatre productions. **There is an additional fee of up to \$15 for this class.** *This is a semester course.*

**Yoga:** This class focuses on structural alignment, increase of and flexibility. It will deepen student's awareness of breath and role it has in generating energy and stamina in one's mind and body. The course will also incorporate techniques for stress relief, and enhance one's physical performance by teaching students how to connect breath, organ systems, physiology and anatomy all together. *This is a semester course.*