

West Hills Middle School

8th 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. *This is a full year course.*

8th Grade Mathematics Honors: *This course is recommended for highly motivated students. It is the same standards as 7th grade mathematics, however it is fast paced and goes into greater depth with the content. This course can be self-selected by parent and student choice. In 8th Grade Mathematics Honors 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 concept 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. The Honors course includes extra depth and additional topics such as: 3-D graphing and graph theory, fair division and apportionment, sets, and voting theory. *This is a full year course.*

Secondary Mathematics 1H: *This course is recommended for highly motivated students. It is the same standards as 7th grade mathematics, however it is fast paced and goes into greater depth with the content. This course can be self-selected by parent and student choice. Students in Secondary Math 1 Honors will deepen and extend their understanding of linear relationships, in part by contrasting them with exponential phenomenon, and in part by applying linear models to

data that exhibit a linear trend. Students will use properties and theorems involving congruent figures to deepen and extend their understanding of geometric knowledge. Algebraic and geometric ideas are tied together. Students will experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes sense of problem situations. Honors students will represent quantities, model, and perform operations using vectors and use matrices to perform operations and solve problems. *This is a full year course.*

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 18th and 19th 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.*

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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.*

Band 1: Beginning: This is a course in beginning band offered for students who have had little or no previous experience in playing an instrument. Practice outside of class time and performances are part of this course. **An instrument is required.** If available, an oboe, bass, clarinet, 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 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.*

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.*

Choir 1: Mixed: 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 or 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 semester course.*

Choir 3: Women's: 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 semester 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.*

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.*

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.*

Drawing 2: This is an intermediate course in drawing that builds on the skills and concepts taught in Drawing 1. The use of value is emphasized. Atmospheric perspective and accurate shading are studied along with composition. *This is a semester course.*

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.*

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.*

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 position, tone production, fundamental technique, simultaneous playing and singing, reading music, and composing songs/lyrics. Knowledge and skills will include experiences in singing, playing, listening, and connecting to cultures. **An instrument is required for class time, as well as for practicing outside of class.** *This is a semester course.*

Guitar 2: This course is designed to provide students with more advanced strums, bar chords, and melodic picking. **An instrument is required for class time, as well as for practicing outside of class.** *This is a semester course.*

Music Connections: Music Connections is an extension of the K-6 Music Core and includes concepts and skills to integrate music into everyday life. Study will include: exploration in creating, experiments with singing/playing/reading music, development of analytical and evaluative skills in music listening, investigations of various purposes of music, and inquiry into music's impact on culture, history, quality of life, and other subject areas. *This is a semester course.*

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.*

Painting 1: Painting 1 includes wet and dry color media with processes such as transparent and opaque painting focusing on the properties of color. Techniques with color media mixing and application will be covered. 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.*

Painting 2: This is an intermediate course that builds on the skills and concepts learned in Painting 1. More complex techniques and processes are taught. Composition is emphasized as the student learns to make a clear visual statement in a painting. *This is a semester course.*

Pre-Dance Company: Audition Required

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 full year 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.*

Spanish for Native Speakers 1: This course is designed to teach elementary academic skills in reading and writing for the native speaker. The course content includes further development of reading and writing skills for students who already have a grasp of the spoken language. Opportunities to share cultural information from countries where Spanish is spoken will be available to students. *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.*

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 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 class.*

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 class.*