

The Middle School Curriculum

Math

Pre-Algebra (7th grade) (CP, EP, HP, TP)

This course integrates applied arithmetic, pre-algebra, and pre-geometry by building upon the essential skills of arithmetic to develop and apply algebraic and problem solving strategies to real world situations. Algebra is introduced by examining real numbers, factoring, proportional relationships, linear equations and inequalities, unit conversions, graphing on the number line and coordinate plane as well as geometric relationships and measurement. **Students are mostly 7th graders, with the exception of new 8th graders who have not completed a full year of algebra.**

Algebra (8th grade) (CP, EP, HP, TP)

The scope of this course allows students to extend their pre-algebra skills to develop fluency in writing, solving and graphing linear equations and inequalities, systems of linear equations and inequalities, exponential functions, polynomials and factoring, quadratic equations, radical expressions and equations, proportional reasoning, and probability. **Students are mostly 8th graders. A few 7th graders individually selected by 6th grade WA math teachers and new students who have successfully completed a year of pre-algebra are included.**

Geometry (8th grade) (HP)

The content of this course includes the study of postulates and theorems related to points, lines, planes, angles, circles, polygons, and triangles, logic, transformations, perimeter/area/volume, coordinate geometry, and elementary trigonometry. A significant emphasis is placed on geometric constructions and proofs. **Students are those who have successfully completed a full year of algebra.**

English

English (7th grade) (CP, EP, HP, TP)

Students refine verbal skills through the integrated study of vocabulary, grammar, composition, and literature. Vocabulary instruction focuses on the Greek and Latin roots of the English language, preparing students to discern the meaning of unfamiliar words. Grammar lessons emphasize a knowledge of grammatical structures as a means of improving writing proficiency, composition portion of the curriculum guides students through the construction of expository, narrative, descriptive and persuasive paragraphs. Students write compositions based upon experience and literary examples honed from a study of a variety of literature genres. This writing begins with the students' experience with required summer reading books. The study of literature continues during the year and includes such genres as realistic fiction, historical fiction, and fantasy. These genres are studied in the form of short stories, poetry, fables, novels, and drama.

English (8th grade) (CP, EP, HP, TP)

English in grade eight is a correlated study of language, literature, vocabulary, and composition. The course stresses the continued study of formal grammar as a tool for effective speaking and writing. Building on the seventh grade foundation, students should be able to write well-developed, unified, coherent paragraphs and recognize and use basic types of figurative language. Eighth grade students apply their knowledge of the paragraph by moving to the five-paragraph essay as they write about life experiences and the literature studied. The course emphasizes the importance of selecting different sentence types and patterns in the effective development of a clear, varied, and creative expression of ideas through a process of editing and revising. Emphasis in literature focuses on various genres, which include mystery, fantasy, folklore, comedy, and tragedy. Summer reading selections are also integrated into the curriculum throughout the year. Ideally, students increase their vocabulary through reading and the study of literature. A supplementary text provides additional practice in the area of vocabulary development.

Science

Life Science (7th grade) (CP, EP, TP)

During the year, the student develops a broad understanding of living organisms. The course begins with a processing unit to develop fundamental skills for making both qualitative and quantitative observations leading towards educated inferences. The student will conduct various laboratory activities to practice making conclusions and reporting recorded data. Moving on from processing skills, the student will progress from the basic unit of life, the cell, to explore the simple to more complex organisms. The progression begins with a microbiology unit including viruses, bacteria, and protists to fungi, plants, and animals. The course will conclude with a human body unit that investigates all body systems. Aspects of healthy habits will be addressed for each system. The course will conclude with a study of the human reproductive system and sexuality.

Physical Science (8th grade) (CP, EP, HP, TP)

The eighth grade science course is a combination of chemistry and physics. Both basic and integrated process skills mastered at the seventh grade level will be further developed. The student will conduct a study of the atom whereby the student begins with the concept of the particle model for matter as “matter is made up of tiny, moving particles.” Through daily involvement in the laboratory activities and teacher-led group discussion, the student extends the model and tests its usefulness to explain new observations. Changes are made in the model when the model cannot explain these new observations. The study concludes with a brief overview of organic chemistry. For physics, the student will begin what causes motion. This leads to Newton’s Laws of Motion which leads to momentum, work, and energy. The student will explore various forms of energy to include thermal energy, electrical energy, magnetism forces, light, and sound.

Social Studies

World Cultures (7th grade) (CP, EP, HP, TP)

This course is designed to acquaint the student with the major cultural groups on the continents of Asia and Africa. The students will be able to recognize, label, and transfer information relating to geographical economic patterns of each area studied. Teachers place an emphasis on map and globe skills, man’s interaction with his environment, and the influence of cultural and historical precedents on the contemporary scene. The content is presented within the framework of reinforcing basic communication skills in reading, writing, speaking, and acquiring information. The honors level course

includes the objective to develop the ability to express in both oral and written fashion more detailed knowledge of issues and events and the significant relationships between them.

American History (8th grade) (CP, EP, TP)

This course is designed around thematic units intended to introduce students to trends in political, social, and economic development as well as the place of the United States on the world stage. The course is set up within a framework of skill development including values, attitudes and ethics. It provides reinforcement and extension of the general communication skills at the core of the seventh grade program.

Civics and Economics (8th grade) (HP)

The goal of the American government and economics program is to help each student become an independent thinker and responsible citizen. The first half of the course examines the American political system in such areas as the philosophy of government, the decision-making process, and the role of the individual citizen in the political process. The second half of the course focuses on developing a basic understanding of the forces at work in the economic market place. Issues such as supply and demand, the flow of money, and government involvement are studied. With a basic understanding of economic issues and the American political environment, students will be able to become effective decision-makers within democratic society.

Reading – A two year program

Reading (7th grade) (EP, TP)

Seventh grade reading is a year-long course designed to increase the student’s capabilities to translate, integrate, analyze, synthesize, extrapolate, apply, and evaluate encoded information. Reading instruction stresses a variety of literary skills and concepts, such as the development of vocabulary, literary analysis, comprehension, and reading fluency. Through direct instruction, students learn specific strategies to improve their understanding of literary terminology and practice these strategies to increase their overall comprehension. This course enables students to read a diverse selection of literature from various genres, recognize the fundamental elements of a story, study character and theme development, and identify an author’s style. The reading course also allows students to expand their ability to read expository selections that focus on the following: identifying main ideas and supporting details, recognizing authors’ purposes, forming educated inferences, summarizing and paraphrasing select passages, and varying reading speed.

Reading (8th grade) (CP, EP, TP)

The eighth grade reading class is a year-long developmental reading program designed to further skills, strategies, and interest in reading. The course is divided into two major segments. During the first semester, students focus on critical reading instruction. Selected novels, short stories, and skill books are used to review and strengthen reading skills acquired in the seventh grade. During the second semester, students continue working on critical reading; in addition, they also spend several weeks reading independently in at least four different genres. This independent reading enhances and instills an enjoyment of leisure reading beyond the academic requirements of the classroom.

Reading (8th grade) (HP)

Eighth grade honors reading is an elective, year-long course for selected students and designed to develop their maximum reading potential. Teacher recommendation, superior grades, standardized test scores, and the ability to complete assignments with minimum supervision, indicate students with the necessary background of academic skills for the accelerated pace of the curriculum. The objectives of the course are the same as the eighth grade reading class; however, the skill level of the student permits a greater variety of materials as well as a much faster pace for instruction. An essential component of the program is an emphasis on the development of the students' written responses as they analyze various literary selections.

Foreign Language – A two year program

Spanish or French (7th grade) (EP)

The two-year sequence in either French or Spanish is designed for Middle School students who begin their study of language in the seventh grade. While using the same approach and materials as the first-year course in the Upper School, the course moves at a slower pace, spreading the coverage of material over a two-year period for a greater comprehension level. The course introduces the students to French or Spanish languages with emphasis on four basic skills: speaking, reading, listening, and writing. These skills are developed through the study of pronunciation, basic vocabulary, and grammatical structures. Elementary reading selections are also used to promote self-expression and written practice of translation from English into the content language. Students are also expected to write basic essays in the content language about culture and other topics. Speaking skills are developed through structured conversation and oral communication exams.

Spanish or French (8th grade) (EP)

Students in the eighth grade classes are taking the second half of high school level one. Completion of the first half of a French or Spanish level one class is mandatory to enter the eighth grade program. Upon completing this class, students will enter the Upper School at level two. The Upper School at Woodward Academy requires two years of the same language, so students who being foreign language instruction in the Middle School will have a minimum of three years of a language.

Spanish or French (8th grade) (HP)

Honors level French 1 or Spanish 1 begins in the eighth grade. Honors level French or Spanish is an advanced and more in depth approach to learning the language. An honors student can synthesize concepts. The honors student has taken his or her knowledge of a foreign language to another level. Honors level classes deliver information at a faster pace and require the student to be proficient in reading, writing, and speaking skills. In addition to the requirements of the college-preparatory level, honors level French or Spanish requires the student to learn additional concepts and incorporate them into written and oral assignments. Honors level students are required to participate in the national exam in their foreign language.

Performing Arts at Woodward Academy Middle School

Band

Advanced Band (7th and 8th grade)--Prerequisite: *Audition/Director Recommendation*

This ensemble is year-long class offered to 7th and 8th Grade students who have demonstrated a high level of musical competency on their instrument. To maintain membership in the band, students are required to play their instrument within the performance expectations set for the class and attend all performances and rehearsals.

Cadet Band (7th and 8th grade)--Prerequisite: *Audition/Director Recommendation*

This ensemble is a year-long class offered to 7th and 8th grade students who have demonstrated a moderate level of musical competency on their instrument. To maintain membership in this band, students are required to play their instrument within the performance expectations set for the class and attend all performances and rehearsals.

Beginning Band (7th and 8th grade)--Prerequisite: *None*

This ensemble is a year-long class offered to any student who has an interest in learning to play a band instrument. To maintain membership in this band, students are required to play their instrument within the performance expectations set for the class and attend all performances and rehearsals.

Orchestra

Concert Orchestra (7th and 8th grade)--Prerequisite: *Director Recommendation*

This ensemble is a year-long class for 7th and 8th grade students who have had experience playing a stringed instrument (violin, viola, cello or string bass). At least one year of playing experience is required. These students are developing basic individual and orchestra skills.

Advanced Orchestra (7th and 8th grade)--Prerequisite: *Audition/Director Recommendation*

This ensemble is a year-long class for those 7th and 8th grade string students who play at a very advanced level (violin, viola, cello or string bass). Audition is required. Students will learn advanced bowings, positions and advanced literature.

Choral Music

Treble Choir (7th and 8th grade)--Prerequisite: *Audition/Director Recommendation*

This choir is a year-long class. Sight-reading and musicianship training are important elements of daily rehearsals. The choir performs a winter and spring concert. In addition, the Choir will be adjudicated at GMEA district Choral Festival. Each spring, the choir travels to participate in a national music festival. Students are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances.

Music (7th grade short course)-- Prerequisite: *None*, this course rotates with Art and Life Skills. Students will learn to recognize and value music as an essential ingredient in their lives. The seventh grade general music class is design to help students make sense of their developing musical interest by studying music styles as a vehicle to understand how music has always fulfilled basic human purposes. Students will explore musical repertoire of various cultures and times as well as discuss their likes and dislikes.

Men’s Choir (7th and 8th grade)--Prerequisite: *Audition/Director Recommendation*

This choir is a year-long course. Sight-reading and musicianship training are important elements of daily rehearsals. The choir performs a Winter and Spring Concert. In addition, the Choir will be adjudicated at GMEA district Choral Festival. Each spring, the choir travels to participate in a national music festival. Students are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances.

Vocal Ensemble--Prerequisite: *Audition/Director Recommendation*

Group meets 2 days a week during Middle School afternoon study hall. Members must be enrolled in the Middle School Treble or Men’s Choir to be eligible. The Middle School Ensemble learns a variety of four part choral music. This group performs a winter and spring concert and one competition each year.

Dance

Dance I (7th and 8th grade)--Prerequisite: *Director Recommendation*

Introduction to ballet, modern, jazz technique, improvisation, composition, dance vocabulary and dance history. Class meets each day for one class period. Students perform in annual Spring Dance Concert.

Dance II (7th & 8th) & III (8th grade)--Prerequisite: *Director Recommendation*

(Intermediate and Advanced Level) Ballet, modern, jazz techniques, improvisation, composition, dance vocabulary and dance history. Class meets each day for one class period. Students perform in annual Spring Dance Concert.

Theater

Year-Long Drama 7: Prerequisite: Monologue audition.

This is a year-long course focused on the student actor in both musicals and non-musicals. Students will be evaluated at the mid-year for recommendation of continuing in the course. There is a strong expectation of involvement in the Spring Middle School Production, which involves after-school hours from mid-March to early May. This course will offer the student the opportunity to develop acting skills, training and experience necessary for live theatrical performance with an emphasis on acting. Exercises and games; monologue and scene work; character choices and development will be explored. In addition, the Year-Long Drama 7 student will be encouraged to participate in the Middle School spring production. This is a full year commitment.

Year-Long Drama 8: Prerequisite: Year-Long Drama 7 and/or Monologue audition.

This is a year-long course focused on the student actor in both musicals and non-musicals. Students will be evaluated at the mid-year for recommendation of continuing in the course. There is a strong expectation of involvement in the Spring Middle School Production, which involves after-school hours from mid-March to early May. This course will offer the student the opportunity to continue developing skills, training and experience necessary for live theatrical performance with an emphasis on acting. Challenging exercises and games; devised monologue and scene work; character choices and development will continue to be explored. In addition, the Year-Long Drama 8 student will be expected to participate in the Middle School spring production and become a member of Woodward Academy's Junior Thespian Troupe. This is a full year commitment.

Middle School Theatrical Production—Auditions in February

Visual Arts at Woodward Academy Middle School

Visual Arts

Introductory Art (7th grade / short course/ one semester)

Art Introduction is designed to address digital photography, ceramics, and drawing. Presentation of each of these medias is from a beginning level and a prelude to more advanced studies. In addition, classes illuminate the “elements and principles of design” for the students. *Required: Digital Camera / Recommendation: 5.0 mega-pixel digital camera with 1GB memory card (no cell phone cameras)*

Year-Long Art (7th grade / year-long course)

Year-Long Art lays the foundation for a variety of visual media. These include: drawing, computer art, photography, ceramics, and sculpture. Special emphasis is placed on rendering with pencil, charcoal, pastel, and pen. Students learn to apply the “elements and principles of design” to create interesting and original artworks. Entry into Year-Long Art is based on approval by the Visual Arts Department of a student’s art portfolio. Submissions are reviewed and conducted during spring of 6th grade. *Required: Digital Camera / Recommendation: 5.0 mega-pixel digital camera with 1GB memory card (no cell phone cameras)*

Drawing/Painting (8th grade / short course/ one semester)

Drawing/Painting provides the student exposure to an array of flat and relief forms of expression. Among these are charcoal/pastel drawing, acrylic painting, collage assemblage, and relief production. While perspective is a principle focus, the course also addresses abstract, still-life, and figurative composition.

Photography/Video (8th grade / short course/ one semester)

Photography/Video brings to light the use of technology as a tool in art. The course is divided into: 1) creation of original art with the camera and computer, and 2) review and analysis of technology and its impact in cinema. In the creation of photographs, animation, and videos, students use versions of Adobe PhotoShop software and Abode Premiere software. As part of the review and analysis of fantasy and animation cinema, students learn the basics of computer generated images and special effects, as well as the primary types of personnel involved with cinematic production. *Required: Digital Camera / Recommendation: 5.0 mega-pixel digital camera with 1GB memory card (no cell phone cameras).*

Sculpture (8th grade / short course/ one semester)

Sculpture offers the opportunity to explore the multiple-dimensions of art. Students develop and construct environmental and object sculpture with attention to the generation of concepts and interpretation of space and scale. The course addresses both abstract composition and figurative composition.

Ceramics (8th grade / short course/ one semester)

Ceramics provides a format for working with clay through hand-building techniques. Students learn and experience the use of various commercial glazes, glazing methods, and firing techniques. The course stresses an understanding of ceramic vocabulary, history, and styles.

Combination Art (8th grade/ year-long course)

Combination Art introduces the basics of two-dimensional and three-dimensional arts. Two-dimensional focuses on the fundamentals of hand drawing and digital photography. Three-dimensional focuses on sculpture, ceramics, and 3D printing. Integrated into the course agenda is a review of the creation and production of art in the business world. All class work is reviewed through formal class critiques. Entry into Combination Art is based on approval by the Visual Arts Department of a student's art portfolio. Submissions are reviewed and conducted during spring of 7th grade. *Required: Digital Camera / Recommendation: 5.0 mega-pixel digital camera with 1GB memory card (no cell phone cameras)*

Advanced Art (8th grade/ year-long course)

Advanced Art encompasses an in-depth experience in a vast array of the visual arts. Among these are drawing, 3D printing, photography, ceramics, and sculpture. Students are introduced not only to the hands-on production but the philosophy and business of art. With all projects, an understanding of conceptual development and product development processes are stressed. All class work is reviewed through formal class critiques. Entry into Advanced Art is based on approval by the Visual Arts Department of a student's art portfolio. Submissions are reviewed and conducted during spring of 7th grade. *Required: Digital Camera / Recommendation: 5.0 mega-pixel digital camera with 1GB memory card (no cell phone cameras)*

PE and Other Short Courses at Woodward Academy Middle School

PE

Personal Fitness (7th and 8th grade, Boys and Girls)

This course is designed to help student athletes develop strength, power, and speed for team and individual sports while focusing on preventing injuries. Students will participate in regular weight-training and running to develop athleticism.

PE (7th and 8th grade, Boys and Girls)

This course is designed to develop the skills necessary for a healthy, active lifestyle and a basic knowledge of rules for many individual and team sports. Students will participate in field sports, net/target sports, invasion sports, fitness development, aquatics/CPR training and gymnastics/tumbling (girls only).

Life Fitness: (7th and 8th grade, Girls) This course has a fitness club feel, incorporating cardio, core strengthening, aerobics/dance, light weight training, stretching and body toning. Students will take away appreciation of the importance of being fit for life: proper exercise techniques and skills, nutrition, anatomy/physiology, and injury prevention. This course is designed for students who do not care to play traditional team sports or to concentrate on athletic strength, power, and speed development.

Other Short Courses

Life Skills (7th grade) This course rotates with Art and Music short courses.

This course encourages self-knowledge and personal growth. Students take time to look at their own values, feelings, and beliefs. Grades are based on weekly quizzes and three projects- a book report, a movie review, and a personal scrapbook.

Web Technology (8th grade)

Web Technology is a semester course offered to students in grade eight as an introduction to the Internet, and how it can be used by students to aid in their education. Students will learn advanced techniques with PowerPoint. Students will also learn basic HTML and how to use the Macromedia Studio MX to construct websites.

Books to Blockbuster (8th grade)

In this semester long course, students watch and analyze contemporary movies using critical thinking skills. Many topics are introduced, approached, and discussed throughout the course. The class is focused on themes and issues that many middle school students are faced with such as: friendship, loyalty, death, love, overcoming adversity, relationships, and other “coming of age” topics.

Video Production (8th grade)

In this course students will brainstorm, develop, write, film and edit a weekly, short program highlighting major events in the MS. Students will work on aspects of the video yearbook including organizing and producing. Students will become proficient with the iPad, Mac, and PC; and they will learn how to make screencasts and tutorials in order to be able to assist other students and teachers with common iPad issues.