

8TH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

HISTORY

Academic American History 8

This course is designed for students to closely examine the topics related to shaping American History from the birth of our nation through Reconstruction. Students will learn about the Constitution, Creation of a new nation, the Jefferson Era, Manifest Destiny, the Age of Reform, the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Honors American History 8

In this course, students will expand their knowledge base relative to events shaping American History from the birth of our nation through Reconstruction. Students will learn about the Constitution, Creation of a new nation, the Jefferson Era, Manifest Destiny, the Age of Reform, the Civil War and Reconstruction. Students will debate Civil War topics.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Traditional Language Arts 8

The Language Arts block (two periods) provides students with a comprehensive program that teaches the Common Core State Standards and helps students become better readers, writers and thinkers so they are better prepared for college, careers, and beyond. The major objective of this course is to develop students' ability to read and understand fiction and nonfiction text and to write, speak, and listen as ways of communicating effectively. This course moves at a slower pace to help developing learners find greater success when reading novels, plays, short stories, and poems. Writing is also a strong component in the course using the Collins Writing Program. Students will write narrative, persuasive, and descriptive pieces. Grammar and editing instruction is integrated into the processes of reading and writing. This course entails student completion of a novel based project/task, per grading period

Traditional Language Arts 8 Units of Study:

- **Narrative Writing:** Writing a thesis, writing with detail, focusing a topic, incorporating dialogue, peer revision process, conventions, and body structure
- **Novel Study:** *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. PSSA open-ended response, inferences/conclusions, character traits, motivation, conflict and vocabulary.
- **Communications and Media Study:** Narrow a topic, compose questions, interview subject, oral presentation using media.
- **Poetry Unit:** Students will analyze a series of poems by professional and student poets. Students will also write their own poetry using form, figurative language, image creation, line breaks with purpose and other poetic devices.
- **Novel Study:** *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen. PSSA open-ended response, inferences/conclusions, character traits, motivation, conflict and vocabulary.

- **Public Speaking Unit:** Students will write and deliver planned and impromptu speeches, culminating with a formal argumentative speech.
- **Short Story Study:** Selections from *Prentice Hall Literature* anthology: discussion and questions regarding literary elements, devices, and vocabulary.
- **Drama Study:** *The Governess* by Neil Simon and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (a play adaptation): comparing two texts, point-of-view, bias, propaganda, vocabulary.
- **Research Report:** Students will research a Holocaust survivor practicing note-taking, peer/self-editing for content, paraphrasing, summarizing and citing multiple sources using MLA format.
- **Novel Study:** *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain: PSSA open-ended response, author's purpose, main idea, supporting text, setting, theme, plot structure and vocabulary.
- **Argument Writing:** Students will write a literary analysis of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* citing research using argument and identifying the author's purpose for writing the novel.
- **Vocabulary:** *Vocabulary from Latin and Greek Roots: A Study of Word Families II*.
- **Grammar Study:** Analysis of proper sentence construction, types of sentence structures, sentence combining, clauses, phrases, verbals, run-ons, fragments, agreement, capitalization and punctuation.

Academic Language Arts 8

The Language Arts block (two periods) provides students with a comprehensive program that teaches the Common Core State Standards and helps students become better readers, writers, and thinkers so they are better prepared for college, careers, and beyond. The major objective of this course is to develop students' ability to read and understand fiction and nonfiction text and to write, speak, and listen as ways of communicating effectively. This course has students reading novels, plays, short stories, and poems. Writing is also a strong component in the course using the Collins Writing Program. Students will write narrative, persuasive, and descriptive pieces. Grammar and editing instruction is integrated into the processes of reading and writing. This course entails student completion of a novel based project/task, per grading period.

Academic Language Arts 8 Units of Study:

- **Narrative Writing:** Writing a thesis, writing with detail, focusing a topic, incorporating dialogue, peer revision process, conventions, and body structure
- **Novel Study:** *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. PSSA open-ended response, inferences/conclusions, character traits, motivation, conflict and vocabulary.
- **Communications and Media Study:** Narrow a topic, compose questions, interview subject, oral presentation using media.
- **Poetry Unit:** Students will analyze a series of poems by professional and student poets. Students will also write their own poetry using form, figurative language, image creation, line breaks with purpose and other poetic devices.
- **Novel Study:** *Oddballs* by William Sleator. PSSA open-ended response, inferences/conclusions, character traits, motivation, conflict and vocabulary.

- **Public Speaking Unit:** Students will write and deliver planned and impromptu speeches, culminating with a formal argumentative speech.
- **Short Story Study:** Selections from *Prentice Hall Literature* anthology: discussion and questions regarding literary elements, devices, and vocabulary.
- **Drama Study:** *The Governess* by Neil Simon and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (a play adaptation): comparing two texts, point-of-view, bias, propaganda, vocabulary.
- **Research Report:** Students will research a Holocaust survivor practicing note-taking, peer/self-editing for content, paraphrasing, summarizing and citing multiple sources using MLA format.
- **Novel Study:** *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain: PSSA open-ended response, author's purpose, main idea, supporting text, setting, theme, plot structure and vocabulary.
- **Argument Writing:** Students will write a literary analysis of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* citing research using argument and identifying the author's purpose for writing the novel.
- **Vocabulary:** *Vocabulary from Latin and Greek Roots: A Study of Word Families II*.
- **Grammar Study:** Analysis of proper sentence construction, types of sentence structures, sentence combining, clauses, phrases, verbals, run-ons, fragments, agreement, capitalization and punctuation.

Honors Language Arts 8

The Language Arts block (two periods) provides students with a comprehensive program that teaches the Common Core State Standards and helps students become better readers, writers, and thinkers so they are better prepared for college, careers, and beyond. The major objective of this course is to develop students' ability to read and understand fiction and nonfiction text and to write, speak, and listen as ways of communicating effectively. This course moves quickly as students read novels, plays, short stories, and poems. Writing is also a strong component in the course using the Collins Writing Program. Students will write narrative, persuasive, and descriptive pieces. Additional readings are assigned in the Honors program, some as a class and some independently. Grammar and editing instruction is integrated into the processes of reading and writing. This course entails student completion of a novel based project/task, per grading period

Honors Language Arts 8 Units of Study:

- **Narrative Writing:** Writing a thesis, writing with detail, focusing a topic, incorporating dialogue, peer revision process, conventions, and body structure.
- **Novel Study:** *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. PSSA open-ended response, inferences/conclusions, character traits, motivation, conflict and vocabulary.
- **Communications and Media Study:** Narrow a topic, compose questions, interview subject, oral presentation using media.
- **Poetry Unit:** Students will analyze a series of poems by professional and student poets. Students will also write their own poetry using form, figurative language, image creation, line breaks with purpose and other poetic devices.

- **Novel Study:** *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare. PSSA open-ended response, inferences/conclusions, character traits, motivation, conflict and vocabulary.
- **Public Speaking Unit:** Students will write and deliver planned and impromptu speeches, culminating with a formal argumentative speech.
- **Short Story Study:** Selections from *Prentice Hall Literature* anthology: discussion and questions regarding literary elements, devices, and vocabulary.
- **Drama Study:** *The Governess* by Neil Simon and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (a play adaptation): comparing two texts, point-of-view, bias, propaganda, vocabulary.
- **Research Report:** Students will research a Holocaust survivor practicing note-taking, peer/self-editing for content, paraphrasing, summarizing and citing multiple sources using MLA format.
- **Novel Study:** *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain: PSSA open-ended response, author's purpose, main idea, supporting text, setting, theme, plot structure and vocabulary.
- **Argument Writing:** Students will write a literary analysis of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* citing research using argument and identifying the author's purpose for writing the novel.
- **Vocabulary:** *Vocabulary from Latin and Greek Roots: A Study of Word Families II*.
- **Grammar Study:** Analysis of proper sentence construction, types of sentence structures, sentence combining, clauses, phrases, verbals, run-ons, fragments, agreement, capitalization and punctuation.

MATHEMATICS

Math 8

The course is comprised of a traditional instructional approach with exposure to: fractions, mixed numbers, decimals, ratios/proportions, percents, algebraic problem solving, geometric figures/properties and transformations, Pythagorean Theorem, probability and statistics, volume and surface, and linear functions and number systems.

Foundations of Pre-Algebra 8

The course is comprised of instruction related to fractions, mixed numbers, decimals, ratios/proportions, percents, algebraic problem solving, geometric figures/properties and transformations, Pythagorean Theorem, probability and statistics, volume and surface, and linear functions and number systems.

Algebra IA

This course covers the first part of Algebra I course with focus on problems solving of various algebraic functions relative to patterns and linear functions, proportional and linear functions, computation, measurement and estimation, multiple representations, functions/number systems, reasoning and connections.

Algebra 1

This course is a more intensive approach to Algebra focusing on a variety of algebraic topics to include: linear and quadratic equations, polynomials, factoring, graphing, working with rational and irrational numbers, developing problem solving skills, etc.

SCIENCE

Academic Science 8

This course will expose students to a Physical Science component by identification and examination of atomic structure and movement, forces of motion, and chemistry.

Honors Science 8

In this course, students will expand their awareness of atomic structure and movement, forces of motion, chemistry. Students will apply knowledge of chemical testing to water quality testing of Trampmill Run through Creek Connection program.

SPECIALS

Band 7 & 8

Students enrolled in this graded course meet daily in a full concert band setting. Membership is open to all students who have successfully completed a band class in the previous year. This course will be a continuation of the technical training started in the beginning classes. Emphasis is placed on the attainment of skills necessary to meet high standards of music performance. This group will perform in the winter concert in December and the spring concert in May.

Jazz Band 7 & 8

Students enrolled in this graded course meet daily in a full jazz band setting. Membership is open to all students who play alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, bari saxophone, trumpet, and trombone and who successfully completed a band class in the previous year. Membership is open to pianists, drummers, guitarists, and bassists who successfully pass the audition at the end of the previous school year. This course will cover many types of jazz (swing, blues, Latin jazz, jazz rock) and also introduce the students to improvisation. This group will perform at the winter concert in December and the spring concert in May. (Students who play concert band instruments will also be expected to participate in the concert band portion of the concert). Additional jazz band performances will most likely be scheduled throughout the year.

Chorus

Chorus students will learn to use their vocal instrument to create a correct and pleasant singing sound. In addition to learning proper vocal production and technique, students will also learn music reading skills, sight-singing skills, listening skills, and performance skills. Chorus also offers opportunities for students to develop team building and leadership skills. This is a performance-based class. Participation in concert performances outside of regular class hours is required.

Library

The junior high library follows a flexible schedule. Free periods are allotted for students to select reading materials, which are selected by the librarian to foster a love of reading and support the school-wide Accelerated Reader program. Classes come to the library sporadically throughout the school year for instruction on topics involving library science and to research skills. Projects represent collaborative efforts between the subject teacher and the library teacher and meet PA Academic Standards within each subject's curriculum.

Instructional objectives for each grade level are as follows:

- Access professional music reviews to create student music reviews (Music Collaboration).
- Accessing primary source interviews, write a five paragraph essay about a Holocaust survivor that includes a bibliography (Language Arts Collaboration).
- Debate Union and Confederate viewpoints during the Civil War by using reliable print and electronic resources to gather evidence (Social Studies Collaboration).
- Engage in lessons about digital self-expression and identity (Digital Literacy Curriculum—CIPA).

Music 8

Music 8 is designed to enable students to explore various areas of music and covers topics such as rhythm, dictation, theory concepts, Contemporary Pop, World Music, Movies in Music, symphonies, etc. Projects are incorporated within this graded course.

Technology Education

Exploring technology is an activity-based course that introduces students to technology by examining the basic systems of communication, manufacturing, construction, transportation and bio-related areas. During the semester course, students will study the evolution of technology, invention, and innovation, impacts of technology, the systems approach, and various problem solving methods. The course incorporates computer based applications and a hands-on approach through the use of the wood shop.

Visual Arts 8

Visual Arts 8 encourages originality, development of skills in the design and media through the creative problem solving process, art criticism, understanding art history and aesthetic perception. It is essential that students be introduced to the arts as a reflection of human imagination and human achievement.

Wellness 8

The yearlong fitness- based physical education course will provide fitness education and access to help students understand, improve and maintain their physical well being with heart-rate monitoring as the critical component. Students will also be provided instruction in and practice with the concepts of nutrition and maintaining a healthy lifestyle pertaining to topics as: body systems, dental health, disease prevention and control, drug use / misuse, first aid, and safety. The traditional class instruction coupled with the daily “mini-lessons” for all students in healthy eating habits and good nutrition. The course is not designed to develop specific athletic skills.