
8TH GRADE EXPLORATORIES

AGRI-SCIENCE

Animals in Society

This course is designed to study the wide world of animals. We will discuss the large and small animal science industries. We will also cover the basics of reproduction and animal behavior. We will have an animal lab day to discuss issues of care and behaviors.

Aquatic Life and You

Aquaculture is the study of plant and animal life under water. This course covers the basic needs for aquatic plants and fish. We will study both warm water and cold water fish that are popular in the United States.

The students will have hands on laboratory experience to set up and create an environment suitable for plant and animal species. They will also measure water quality through various experiments and discover how it affects their environment.

Plants and the Environment

This course will explore the plant science areas that deal with agricultural and ornamental plants. The students will have the opportunity to work with plants in the greenhouse, take cuttings, transplant seedlings, test soil samples, and survey fields as our lab activities. You will have the opportunity to explore what happens in a plant's life and how they adapt to the changes of the world.

The plants that will be included in this course will be fast plants, corn, soybeans, wheat, rye, barley, various flowers and common houseplants. The class has the opportunity to tour local businesses and explore what products they provide to their customers.

ART 8

Drawing 8

In the Drawing 8 course students will be focusing on improving drawing skills. Drawings will be created to not only learn to draw what you see, but to also understand design and to express ideas visually. A wide variety of drawing materials will be utilized to investigate drawing techniques and styles. Projects created in the drawing course include two-point perspective, realism, portraiture, still life, optical illusion, landscapes, and abstraction. Materials that will be manipulated include pencil, pen and ink, oil pastel, charcoal, colored pencil, and pastel. In all of the projects students will be engaged in decision making, critical and creative thinking skills, problem solving, and expanding their art vocabulary. The principles and elements of design will be incorporated in all lessons.

Graphics 8

In the Graphics class the Adobe Photoshop program, which is used by professional graphic designers and in many other careers, will be utilized to expand students' computer design skills and advance their technical knowledge. Students will become proficient in manipulating the tools in the "toolbox," filters, layering basics, and digital images. Digital images, Internet resources, and scanners will be used for students to acquire images for their art. Beyond technical knowledge, students will begin to understand the impact of digital art in the media, on the Internet, and in advertising. Projects include designing surreal images, adjusting photos, creating ads, and writing an article and creating an image for the RVMS Valley Globe newspaper.

Painting 8

In the painting class, students will create original paintings using a variety of ideas, approaches, and materials. Thematic paintings will be created after examining the art and artists of Impressionism, Cubism, Expressionism, Realism, Abstraction, and Pop Art. Discussion and activities will focus on color mixing, styles of art, subjects to paint, and the history of painting. The elements of art and principles of design will be woven into each lesson. Students will be involved in making subject matter choices, creative thinking skills, critiquing of work (self and others), expanding artistic knowledge, making aesthetic judgments, problem solving, and applying craftsmanship to their work.

Sculpture 8

Sculpture can be created with a variety of themes, materials and styles. Students will research famous sculptures and sculptors of the past and the present. Many different materials including wire, paper mache, plaster, wood, clay, and drywall will be used to create, model, carve, construct, and assemble various styles of sculpture. Creative and critical thinking skills and the elements of art and design principles will be used as students form three dimensional art. During the creative process students will also be continually critiquing, problem solving, making decisions and making aesthetic judgments when constructing the product.

BUSINESS EDUCATION 8

Careers

This course is designed to further introduce students to the wide variety of careers available to them. Students will research and plan for their careers including preparing a class presentation. They will learn about the job process including how to find and get a job, be successful on the job, meet career goals, stay safe on the job, and manage money. Learners will analyze their interests, skills, values, aptitudes and abilities using the career software, WisCareers. Students will complete a job shadow and project related to the job shadow. Telephone and e-mail etiquette will be included in the job shadow unit. Learners will demonstrate proficient keyboarding speed as per state standards.

Fun with Keyboarding

This course is designed for students who have enrolled in the River Valley School District after sixth grade and have not had a formal keyboarding course elsewhere. The course is also designed for students who would like to improve their speed and accuracy. Students enrolled in this course will learn and/or review the keyboard using the touch-type method of keyboarding. Learners will build keyboarding speed and accuracy. They will develop and/or review formatting skills for documents that are used at the middle and high school levels. Students will also create class presentations. The Internet will be used as a supplement in this course.

Student Publications

In this course, students will review the design principles discussed in seventh grade. Learners will create various publications using the desktop publishing software, Microsoft Publisher. Students will work with photographs as well as clip art. A simulation will be incorporated to further develop design skills. Learners will have the opportunity to design some of the page layouts for the middle school yearbook, *The Fledgling*. Students will also design an end-of-the-year publication for the eighth grade class. They will further develop their scanner and digital camera skills. Students will also use the Internet in this class.

Web Page Design and Multimedia

In this course, students will learn basic hypertext markup language (html) for creating a web page. They will learn how to create web pages using Microsoft Word. Students will learn how to design page layouts as well as how to manipulate text, graphics, hyperlinks and more as they relate to a web site. Students will further work with multimedia presentations including videos to develop their communication and presentation skills. Digital cameras, scanners, and the Internet will be utilized in this course.

MUSIC/FINE ARTS 8

Drama

Drama is a nine week elective course that gives 8th grade students the opportunity to explore acting and other aspects of theater production. Class members participate in theater games using improvisation and pantomime. Students also read, direct, perform and evaluate monologs, skits and plays in the classroom. Students demonstrate understanding of the content through class participation, discussion and reflective journal writing.

Drama is a graded class. Learning occurs through consistent concentration, responsible behavior, cooperative class participation, discussion, and reflective journal writing. Students earn a specified number of points each week, depending on the level of participation and effort. Points are deducted for non-participation, lack of effort, and poor behavior. In-class assignments, quizzes, tests and any performances are also graded.

Handbells and Guitar

Handbells and Guitar is a nine week elective course for 8th grade students. Students wishing to take the class must have earned a grade of C or higher in 7th grade general music class beginning handbell and guitar units or demonstrate intermediate ability with handbells and guitar. The course is a performance based class in which students learn and perform chorded, tablature and notated guitar music and two to four octave handbell music.

Intermediate Handbells and Guitar is a graded class. Learning occurs through consistent concentration, responsible behavior, and cooperative class participation and discussion. Students earn a specified number of points each week, depending on the level of participation and effort. Points are deducted for non-participation, lack of effort, and poor behavior. In-class assignments, quizzes, tests and any performances are also graded.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE - SPANISH I

This year-long course is a parallel to the *Spanish I* course offered at the high school. It builds on students' *Exploratory Spanish* experience, continuing their acquisition of the Spanish language and knowledge of Spanish-speaking cultures.

Spanish I is designed for highly motivated students. High school credit is not given, but students would be able to reach *Spanish V* in high school and may be eligible for retroactive credits from participating post-secondary schools. Students taking this course should have received at least a "C" in *Exploratory Spanish* and *English* during 7th grade. *Spanish I* uses four exploratory segments.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION 8

Engineering Designs

In this nine week course, students will use their engineering skills to design and then build projects using computer drawing software and circuit board testers. Students will learn about the different engineering skills needed to build structures safely, accurately, and reliable. Then, students will build and test structures for strength and durability. Next, students will be introduced to the principles of electricity and electronics. They will design simple circuits to sense real world conditions and explore the implications of electricity on our lives. Through these engaging and relevant hands-on projects, students unravel the mysteries of digital circuitry.

Flight & Space

During this course, students will work on projects and assignments directly related to the areas of transportation. Some of these projects and assignments will include: model rocketry, aerospace development, designing vehicles to withstand applied forces, and researching transportation topics. This course explores the technology of aeronautics, propulsion, and rocketry. Students see connections between hands-on projects and academic subjects such as math and science.

Manufacturing

In this course, students will design and engineer products from the view point of a Mechanical Engineer. Students will be involved in the preliminary sketching process, multi-view drawings, and 3d computer modeling of products. After the design unit is completed, students will build projects using plastic, wood, and sheet metal as raw materials. Some of the projects and assignments in this course include: lab safety, measurement, mechanical drawing, 3d computer modeling, woodworking, sheet metal fabrication, and plastic processes.

Robotics & Technology

While students are in this course, they will complete lab activities in the areas of: robotics, automation, mechanisms, and design challenges. Students design and build automated systems that incorporate the principles of electrons, physics, and robotics to gain an enriched understanding of the contemporary mechanical world. Students apply scientific principles, concepts of simple machines, and energy to solve real-world problems. Some projects include building Rube Goldberg machines, air racers, and different types of robots.

8TH GRADE ELECTIVES

BAND 8

The eighth grade band continues musical growth, technique, and performance skills developed in sixth and seventh grades. The students, if they wish, also have the opportunity to develop their performance and musical skills through participation in SWMA Solo/Ensemble Festival in March. The eighth grade band participates in the SWMA Band Contest in early May. Other activities include marching with the seventh grade band at the homecoming parade as well as presenting several public concerts. Outstanding eighth grade band students are given the opportunity to play in the SWMA Honors Band in early January. Band meets three days per week with each student receiving individual or small group lessons once per week. Rehearsals and lessons are during the school day.

CHOIR 8

Class Description:

8th Grade Choir is a continuation of the skill building begun in 6th and 7th Grade Choir. New members may join choir at any time during the year. Choir meets on alternate days and is a performance based class. In addition to the large group classes, students also attend a given number of individual or small group lessons each quarter. Fundamental note reading, part singing, basic vocal technique, examination of music theory and exposure to various musical styles are some of the core content areas covered in middle school choir. Non-academic goals include promotion of self discipline and motivation, aesthetic awareness, cultural exposure, social harmony, creativity, emotional expression and appreciation of diversity. Because of the performance based nature of the class, drops are permitted only at the ends of semesters.

Required Performances:

Choir students are REQUIRED to perform in all scheduled school concerts and participate in the statewide large group festival. The dates for these events are listed on the district calendar, and will also be given to the students to bring home on the first day of class. Students will only be excused from performances for family emergencies, illness or important family events. A note or phone call (588-2556, ext. 116) from a parent is required to excuse an absence from a required performance. Report any absence as far in advance as possible so performance details can be rearranged. A phone call or note after a concert will not constitute an excused absence.

Grading:

Choir is a graded class. Learning occurs through concentration and cooperative participation during rehearsal and performance. Students earn a specified number of points each week, and are also graded for each lesson. Points are deducted for non-participation, lack of effort, and poor behavior. Concerts and other performance events are considered tests, and an unexcused absence from a required concert results in a failing score for that particular performance.

Solo and Ensemble:

All choir students have the option to participate in solo and ensemble each year. Information regarding solo and ensemble is presented each year during the winter, and students that choose to be involved prepare their solos and ensembles during a regularly scheduled weekly lesson. Though a student must be part of a school music program to participate in this music event, solo and ensemble is entirely optional and is not a part of any student's choir grade.