

Central Junior High School
Course Descriptions
2025-26

REQUIRED COURSES

7th grade English

7th Grade English is designed to strengthen skills in grammar, writing, and communication while encouraging creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. Throughout the year, students will work towards proficiency in the conventions of standard English through targeted grammar instruction and real-world writing practice. Students will engage in various writing styles, including narrative, argumentative, informative, and research-based compositions. Creative writing and journaling will be woven throughout the year to help students develop their unique voice and build confidence as writers. Students will work together and with their teacher on peer reviews, discussions, and group projects. They will also create multimedia presentations to share their learning and showcase their writing. As a culminating project, each student will build a digital portfolio that highlights their growth and accomplishments over the course of the year. The goal of the class is to empower students to become thoughtful, capable communicators and prepare them for success in future academic writing and beyond.

8th grade English

This course includes the study of grammar, usage, spelling, written composition, and speaking. Students will write for a variety of purposes and audiences using conventions of standard English, grammar, and usage. They will compose arguments, informative/explanatory, and narrative pieces.

7th grade Literature

In each unit of study, students will read classic and contemporary fiction and nonfiction texts, and view/listen to media selections, all related to an "essential question." Students will use technology to interact with texts and activities. Each unit in the myPerspectives curriculum focuses on an engaging topic related to the essential question. Below are some of the essential questions explored at the 7th-grade level:

- GENERATIONS — What can one generation learn from another?
- A STARRY HOME — Should we make a home in space?
- TURNING POINTS — What can cause a sudden change in someone's life?
- PEOPLE AND THE PLANET — What effects do people have on the environment?
- FACING ADVERSITY — How do we overcome obstacles?

Students will also be reading several novels that correspond to the essential questions listed above.

7th grade Advanced Literature

Prerequisite: Students will meet the following prerequisites at the end of their 6th grade year: iReady Test scores at Late 6th grade level or above; Passed test that is given for admittance; Teacher recommendation; and/or Proficient and efficient score on IAR – ELA.

This Literature option has been designed to meet the needs of students who have already mastered the reading, writing, and speaking skills of the regular Literature curriculum. Experiences in the classroom will concentrate on in-depth analysis of literary selection through writing and discussion.

The student:

- can process abstract ideas and concepts, delving deeper into them more than the average student
- stays organized, having a sense of time management and an awareness of the need to prioritize
- is able to take adequate, concise notes
- is committed to learning and curious about a wide variety of topics and issues
- is willing to do the work and seeks help when needed
- can accept and respond to criticism
- is able to collaborate with peers AND work independently with confidence
- is eager to ask and answer questions
- can be creative on projects and in problem-solving
- understands his or her strengths and weaknesses
- thrives under pressure.

This course explores a variety of literature. The class expands the concepts of short stories, nonfiction, drama, poetry, and novels, and extensive reading.

8th grade Literature

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- RITES OF PASSAGE — What are some milestones on the path to growing up?
- THE HOLOCAUST — How do we remember the past?
- HUMAN INTELLIGENCE — In what different ways can people be intelligent?
- INVENTION — Are inventions realized through inspiration or perspiration?

Students will also be reading several novels that correspond to the essential questions listed above.

8th grade Advanced Literature

Prerequisite: Students will meet the following prerequisites at the end of their 7th grade year: iReady Test scores at late 7th grade level or above; Passed test that is given for admittance; Teacher recommendation; and/or Proficient and efficient score on IAR – ELA.

This Literature option has been designed to meet the needs of students who have already mastered the reading, writing, and speaking skills of the regular English Language Arts curriculum. Experiences in the classroom will concentrate on in-depth analysis of literary selection through writing and discussion.

The student:

- can process abstract ideas and concepts, delving deeper into them more than the average student
- stays organized, having a sense of time management and an awareness of the need to prioritize
- is able to take adequate, concise notes
- is committed to learning and curious about a wide variety of topics and issues
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This course explores a variety of literature. The class expands the concepts of short stories, nonfiction, drama, poetry, and novels, and extensive reading.

7th grade Math

This course covers topics aligned with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics in Illinois. Chapters of study include: ratios and proportions reasoning, percents, integers, rational numbers, expressions, equations and inequalities, and geometric figures.

7th grade Advanced Math

This course covers topics aligned with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics in Illinois. Chapters of study include: real numbers, equations in one variable, equations in two variables, functions, triangles and the Pythagorean Theorem, transformations, congruence and similarity, and volume and surface area. One of the main goals of this course is to prepare students for high school mathematics.

The 7th grade advanced math section is the section for students that excel at mathematics. Student attendance should also be exceptional. Students in this section will be working in an 8th grade curriculum. Because these students have effectively “skipped” a grade level of math, the

students will be expected to perform at exceptional levels as well as move at a pace that allows students to also learn any of the concepts that may have been taught in the 7th grade curriculum. (see Advanced Math placement requirements)

8th grade Math

Using the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics in Illinois, the chapters for 8th grade Mathematics include: real numbers, equations in one variable, equations in two variables, functions, triangles and the Pythagorean Theorem, transformations, congruence and similarity, and volume and surface area. This course has a student workbook that half of their work will be completed in.

8th grade Advanced Math

Using the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics in Illinois, the chapters for 8th grade Advanced Mathematics include: Expressions and Functions, Solving Linear Equations, Graphing Linear Equations and Functions, Writing Linear Equations, Solving and Graphing Linear Inequalities, Systems of Equations and Inequalities, Exponents and Exponential Functions, and Polynomials and Factoring. This section is for students who excel in math. Their attendance, as well as their organization is very important. (see Advanced Math placement requirements)

7th grade Science

In this course of study, you will learn how atoms are the building blocks of matter and how matter can undergo physical and chemical changes. You will investigate how energy, motion, force, and work are related. You will also learn about thermal energy and investigate waves and electromagnetic radiation. Finally, you will learn about electricity, magnetism, and information Technologies. This course has a student workbook, in which students will write in, as they progress through the course.

8th grade Science

In this course of study, you will study what living things need to survive, what cells are, and how the human body works. You will also learn how living things interact with the environment. You will explore how energy and matter are cycled among organisms in ecosystems. Finally, you will explore how living things reproduce and grow, how they genetic information on to new generations, and how they change over time.

7th grade Social Studies

Social Studies 7 is one of the core curriculum classes required for all seventh graders at CJHS. This class is a study of the United States, its people, and its relationship with the world from the

first migration through the American Civil War. Some of the areas of study covered in this course include early Native American life, European exploration, Colonial America, the American Revolution, westward expansion, and the American Civil War. In this course students will work to understand events, trends, individuals, and movements that shaped the history of the United States, Illinois, and the local community. Students will also examine political systems, the geography of the United States, its social system, and the U.S Constitution. Illinois law requires that all seventh grade students pass the U.S. Constitution Test in order to be promoted to the next grade level. The Constitution test is administered in February.

8th grade Social Studies

In 8th grade Social Studies, students are given a broad overview of the history of the United States from 1865- New Challenges of the 21st Century. Students will be expected to develop an understanding of how past events are relevant in our everyday lives and that “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”- Santayana. Our nation's history will be introduced to students in a variety of ways to incorporate all types of learners. Each Quarter a project will be assigned that correlates and enriches the content being covered in each of the grading periods. Students will be expected to form and voice opinions, research and present historical concepts to the class, and develop life long learning skills that will prepare them for high school and beyond.

7th grade Physical Education/Health

The junior high P.E. curriculum seeks to promote physical fitness in our students by giving them an understanding of how to improve and maintain personal fitness. Students are tested periodically in various aspects of fitness to assess their progress.

Physical and social development are also encouraged by involving the students in various games and activities intended to foster teamwork and cooperation, as well as providing fun and enjoyment. The students are tested on their knowledge of the rules of these games and activities, in addition to the skills necessary to participate in them.

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7th and 8th grade special education resource room: The 7th and 8th grade special education resource room offers individualized and small group instruction in core subjects to students with

IEPS. Collaboration occurs with general education teachers to implement IEPs and differentiate instruction that helps students succeed in the general education setting when appropriate.

ELECTIVES

STEM:

In this course, students are exposed to experiments in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. The grades will be based on completion of various experiments and activities. Examples include computer programming, experiments about potential and kinetic energy, and buoyancy.

Forensics:

In this course of study, you will learn about crime scenes, fingerprints, impression evidence, trace evidence, blood evidence, and forensic entomology. We will be doing hands-on activities as well as written activities and quizzes. You will learn how to take fingerprints, examine tire tracks, what crime scene investigators look for, and how to train your eye to look for clues and evidence from a crime scene.

Art of Math:

This course will explore the different relationships between math and art. Students will complete projects like making tessellations, creating a structure and finding its volume, and using photography to compare real life objects with photos. Students will be able to draw, color, and create art while connecting it to math. This course will let you explore some of the more fun parts of math and express your creative side.

The Science of Golf:

This course will explore the physical, environmental, and mathematical concepts involved in the sport of golf. Students will examine the principles of motion, aerodynamics, and science related to golf clubs, balls, and swings. Each week will focus on a different aspect, combining theory with practical applications. Through hands-on activities and analysis, the course will demonstrate how scientific concepts can enhance performance, improve technique, and optimize equipment. Whether you're a golf and/or science enthusiast, this course offers a unique opportunity to understand the game from a scientific perspective.

Creative Writing:

Students will explore a variety of aspects of creative writing. Throughout this course, activities may include writing short stories, a blog, graphic novels, a personal biography, song lyrics, micro fiction, and much more.

Media & Journalism:

This is a new, hands-on class where you will become a journalist! You'll write articles, conduct interviews, design the school newspaper and yearbook, and explore digital and broadcast media. You will learn how to research, report, and tell stories that matter to our school and community while using professional tools like cameras, microphones, and editing programs. Whether you dream of being a reporter, photographer, designer, or broadcaster, this class will give you the skills to create and share news in print and online!

Art:

This introductory course offers seventh and eighth-grade students an introduction to the world of visual expression. Through hands-on exploration of various mediums including drawing techniques and painting, students will develop fundamental skills in art with an emphasis placed on fostering creativity, critical thinking, and self-expression. We will spend time exploring the Elements of Art and Principles of Design in a supportive environment. Students will learn links to art history, experiment with different art techniques, and create their own art, while improving their artistic skills.

Band:

Step into the lively world of junior high band class where students explore the magic of music together. From learning different instruments to playing in harmony, this class is all about enjoying music and teamwork. We have exciting rehearsals and performances where students develop their skills and passion for music. We encourage practicing at home to make our ensemble shine. Throughout the class, students will be graded on how well they prepare, behave, understand the content, and perform individually. Plus, get ready for group performances outside of regular school hours, where we'll show off our teamwork and musical talents!

Requirements: At least one year of band experience or private lessons. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis with instructor approval.

Choir:

Step into the joyful world of junior high choir where students dive into the wonders of singing together. From harmonizing melodies to perfecting vocal techniques, this class is all about embracing the magic of music and teamwork. With lively rehearsals and captivating performances, students not only refine their vocal skills but also foster a deep love for singing together. We encourage practicing at home to enhance our choir's collective sound. Throughout the course, students will be assessed on their preparedness, behavior, understanding of the material, and individual performance. Plus, get ready for

group performances outside of regular school hours, where we'll showcase our unity and musical prowess!

Geography:

This quarter-long elective class may be taken by 7th or 8th graders interested in traveling around the world in a desk. In the course, we first examine local geography and how it shapes and makes boundaries for our town and state. Each week in class we introduce the region to be studied for the week. Class time is used to discuss the people and their culture in these areas, then each student is assigned a city or country to present and research. We encourage the use of technology and student presentations to further understand areas around the world. We spend time in the computer labs each week to accomplish these assignments, where students will be introduced to Powerpoint, slide rocket, Prezi and other presentation tools. The students are required to provide pictures and examples of culture, language and sites to see and then present findings to the class.

Current Events:

In the one quarter version of class, we examine news from a multitude of sources and determine significant events and other important aspects of the busy world around the students. Each week we give a homework assignment to write a brief summary of a news story. Then we will attempt to determine whether it came from a credible source and examine if there could be bias in the story. Other typical class days will involve a discussion of what is happening in the news, then we may look deeper and research a particular story to develop a sense of further understanding. Every other week we will take a quiz on the events from the week. At the end of the quarter, the class breaks into groups and will pick their most favorite story throughout the quarter. Each group has to do a news report and report as if the story is just breaking.

Local History:

Local history is an elective semester class. Local history covers the history of Illinois from early Native America up through recent times. An emphasis is put on Southern Illinois and the communities of Frankfort and West Frankfort. Students will also study the book *Bloody Williamson* in the second part of the course. Some of the areas of study covered in this course include Native Americans of Southern Illinois, the history of West Frankfort, John A. Logan, and Charlie Birger. In this course students will work to understand events, trends, individuals, and movements that shaped the history of the United States, Illinois, Franklin County, and the local community. Students will also examine the geography of Illinois as well as the social and economic systems of the state.

Character in Action: Service Learning for a Purpose:

This nine week course will focus on values and virtues that we all share and use every day including integrity, perseverance and courage. Skills covered include strategies for understanding and getting along with others in our diverse world and making good choices when confronted with different types of situations. Instruction will focus on the 6 Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Fairness and Citizenship. Students will demonstrate citizenship, empathy, and kindness toward others while developing an investment in their school and town. Students will complete a needs assessment, plan projects, allocate resources, carry out their activity and evaluate their plan as part of the course.

DUSO: (Developing and Understanding Self and Others)

This nine week course will help students develop a better understanding of not only themselves but others as well. We will discuss The 6 Pillars of Character: Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship, Fairness, Caring, and Trustworthiness. Students will learn about the differences among age groups and those with disabilities. The class will be given the opportunity to interact with different age groups and children with disabilities. This will be a hands-on course in which students must be willing to participate in all activities. Students will attend a Special Olympics competition as long as they have met the requirements.

Diplomacy & Leadership:

This class is designed to assist students in learning and applying the skills of: Building and maintaining positive relationships, effective communication, conflict resolution, organization, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, social awareness, resilience, mindfulness, and empathy, the ability to consider and understand their own emotions, thoughts, values, and experiences and how these can influence and shape their actions, and interactions with others.

Students will practice strategies and activities that can help manage stress and anxiety, self-consciousness, self-esteem, attentiveness, self-control, and social interactions.

Activities may include self-checks, practicing deep breathing and relaxation techniques, writing, journaling, games, acts of kindness, practicing gratitude among other activities.