

VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
Course Descriptions
Middle School



Middle School Course Descriptions 2025-2026

Bible

Grade 6

Basics for a Biblical Worldview

Middle-school students are daily confronted with worldviews that want to win their hearts. Basics for a Biblical Worldview helps students distinguish a biblical worldview from false worldviews and equips them to live out a biblical worldview. Students learn to relate the story of Scripture to basic Christian beliefs and values as they learn what the Bible says about their identity, work, relationships, society, and belief system.

Textbook: *Basics for a Biblical Worldview, 2021*

Grade 7

Route 66: Travel Through the Bible

The *BIBLE* is our curriculum as we cover all 66 books, from Creation to the final revelation of God's glory. The student book is a helpful supplement to this survey study as we identify key biblical events and figures in each of the books.

Textbook: *Route 66: Travel Through the Bible*, Positive Action.

Grade 8

The Life of Christ

We know what Jesus did, but so often we breeze over the cultural, spiritual, and theological dynamics that defined the culture He was in. In this class, we go deep into Jewish culture, the map of Israel, and how Jesus taught the people of that time. He revealed Himself through miracles, His "I am" statements, and the Jewish festivals, and we get to know Him better as we research and discuss these passages. However, the book of John also teaches that head knowledge is not enough; we must believe this truth in our souls, so we also spend time in prayer and journaling about our hearts to God as well.

Textbook: *The Life of Christ: From the Gospel of John*, Positive Action

Social Studies

Grade 6

Heritage Studies

Ancient civilizations in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas are explored in this year's curriculum. Students discuss empires from Mesopotamia to the Dark Ages in Europe with a Biblical worldview. Students will be taught how to better understand the historical context of the Bible and how to understand the Bible as a primary source document.

Textbook: *Heritage Studies 6*, 3rd edition, BJU Press: 2012

Grade 7

World History

From the Dark Ages to World Conflicts, seventh-grade students will explore how man has or has not interacted with the God of the universe and the effects those decisions have had on the world around them. Different people groups, civilizations, and time periods highlighted throughout the year are the following: the Crusades, the Renaissance and Reformation, Mongols, European exploration, American colonization, Oceania and Australian development, empires of Eurasia, the Scientific Revolution, colonial Africa, and the growth of Islam.

Textbook: *World Studies*, third edition, BJU Press: 2011

Grade 8

American Republic History

General overview of US History from Colonization to the present. We will be studying colonial America, the American Revolution, the Constitution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Industrial Revolution, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, and the present day. Greater emphasis is placed on American history up to the Civil War. Students will be taught to use God's Word to analyze historic American events and how to see history from a Biblical perspective.

Textbook: *American Republic*, Bob Jones

Math

Grade 6

Math 6 develops solid problem-solving skills to help prepare students for math that goes beyond basic operations. Students review these basic operations on whole numbers and then extend them to include rational numbers (fractions and decimals). Ratios, proportions, and percents are applied to solve real-world applications, and students have their first exposure to algebraic expressions and equations. Integers are introduced, and the foundations of geometry are established.

Textbook: *Math 6*, fourth edition, BJU Press: 2022

Grade 7-8

Upon completion of Math 6 (or new students entering grades 7-8), students will test for placement into one of the following math courses:

Fundamentals of Math

Students will review whole number, decimal, and fraction concepts. Students will work with ratios, proportions, and percents. Integer operations are explored. Seventh-grade students will also be exposed to beginning algebra skills and solving one-step and two-step equations. As time allows, they will study geometry, and they will practice using formulas to find the perimeter, area, and volume of a variety of shapes. Using graphs to compare data sets will also be a focus.

Primary Resource: *Math 7, All Things Algebra: 2017*

Secondary Resource: *Fundamentals of Math*, third edition, BJU Press: 2022

Pre-Algebra

This course eases the transition from arithmetic to algebra. Algebraic expressions and linear equations are applied throughout a thorough review of operations on integers, fractions, decimals, percents, and radicals. Students explore relations and functions using equations, tables, and graphs. Problem-solving and real-life uses of math are featured in each chapter. As time allows, chapters on statistics and geometry extend foundational concepts in preparation for high school courses.

Primary Resource: *Pre-Algebra, All Things Algebra: 2016*

Secondary Resource: *Pre-Algebra*, third edition, BJU Press: 2023

Algebra I

Algebra I develops an understanding of algebra by justifying methods and explaining how to solve problems. Functions are explored. Concepts discussed include graphing, solving systems of equations, operations with polynomials and radicals, factoring polynomials, solving rational equations, and graphing quadratic functions. A TI-30XIIS scientific calculator is required.

Primary Resource: *Algebra 1, All Things Algebra: 2016*

Secondary Resource: *Algebra 1*, third edition, BJU Press: 2019

Science

The middle school science program at VCS has two main goals: to teach each student about the glory of God in His creation as it relates to our curriculum and to develop in each student a love and respect for science that will impact them throughout their lifetime.

Grade 6

General Science

Students will explore various areas of Earth Science, Physical Science, Life Science, and Health at an introductory level through integrated, hands-on units. In the area of Earth Science, students learn how the Earth moves below us, how that affects our lives, and how we can be good stewards of the resources God has given us. Students are introduced to the periodic table of elements, matter, and how energy works in Physical Science. In the Health Unit, students are taught about their God-created bodies, inspiring them to live a God-honoring, healthy life. Finally, the Life Science unit covers classification of animals and plants, parts of the cell and their functions, organs and systems of plants and animals.

Textbook: *Science, Level Six*, Bob Jones University Press: 2013

Health textbook: *Total Health*, ACSI/Purposeful Design Publications: 2005

Grade 7

Life Science

Students explore the characteristics and structures of microscopic and macroscopic life, including cell parts and their functions, cell reproduction, heredity, and genetics. We will also cover the debate over evolution and creation. Students learn about how organisms are classified and take a closer look at the structure of different organisms. The year ends with a look at how it all comes together in the different biospheres. Frog dissection is a part of this class.

Textbook: *Life Science*, Bob Jones Press: 2019

Grade 8

Earth Science

Students explore the composition of our Earth in regard to its geosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere. This includes the basics of geology, the origin of the Earth, the physical features of the Earth, and the processes that affect them. For example, students study how the ocean and freshwater are resources we need to use and take care of. We will also cover mountains, weather, and Earth's interactions with the moon and sun. All topics include hands-on laboratory activities as well as model-based inquiries.

Textbook: *Earth Science*, Bob Jones Press: 2018

English Language Arts

Grade 6

The student will be skilled in using correct vocabulary, appropriate grammar (verbs, direct objects, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, etc.), suitable mechanics (commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, semi-colons, etc), and literary devices in order to effectively communicate through the written word. Students will also be able to utilize the gift of language to both properly and effectively relay verbal information. Students will understand that language is a gift from God and must be used appropriately to create, communicate, inform, and edify. Writing instruction is based upon the *Six Traits of Writing*. Literature instruction is balanced between excellent current and classic books and short stories in the literary anthology.

Textbooks: *GUM Grade 6*, Zaner-Bloser: 2012
Vocabulary from Classical Roots, Educators Publishing Service: 2006
Mosdos Press Literature, Pearl, Mosdos Press: 2003

Teacher Resources: *Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for Middle School*, Scholastic
Structure and Style, Institute for Excellence in Writing: 2010

Grade 7

The student will be skilled in using correct vocabulary, appropriate grammar (verbs, direct objects, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, verbals, etc.), suitable mechanics (commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, semicolons, colons, hyphens, parentheses, etc.), and literary devices in order to effectively communicate through the written word. Students will also be able to utilize the gift of language to both properly and effectively relay verbal information. Students will understand that language is a gift from God and must be used appropriately to create, communicate, inform, and edify. Writing instruction is based upon the *Six Traits of Writing*. Literature instruction focuses on both whole-class novels, where the element of theme drives discussion. Students also have a voice and choice as they select novels for independent reading times throughout the year to build reading stamina as well as their reading stamina.

Textbooks: *Grammar & Composition I*, Abeka Book: 2017, 6th Edition
Vocabulary from Classical Roots, Educators Publishing Service: 2005
A Long Walk to Water By Linda Sue Park
The Lion, Witch, and the Wardrobe By: C.S. Lewis

Teacher Resources: *Traits of Writing: The Complete Guide for Middle School*, Scholastic
Teaching Writing: *Structure and Style*, Institute for Excellence in Writing: 2010

Grade 8

This course incorporates reading, writing, vocabulary, speaking, and language study. Grammar concepts from 6th and 7th grade are reviewed and expanded to achieve a mastery level of knowledge of all parts of speech. Students have opportunities to practice writing both formally and informally using correct grammar, proper mechanics, quality vocabulary, and diverse sentence structures. The students will write 3 papers: a story, an informative essay, and a research essay. Students will engage in research practices to broaden their depth of knowledge and expression. As a class, students read *When My Name was Keoko* and *Across Five Aprils*, various poems, folktales from around the world, and an independent historical fiction novel for our "Taking Courage" unit. The themes from these stories will be discussed, discerned through Scripture, and applied to our lives. Students also have voice and choice as they choose independent novels throughout the year to build their pleasure or reading and reading stamina.

Textbooks: *Writing & Grammar*, 4th Edition, BJU Press: 2022
Making Connections in Literature, 4th Edition BJU Press: 2023
Greek and Latin Roots, The Learning Works: 2004
When My Name was Keoko By Linda Sue Park
Across Five Aprils By Irene Hunt

Computer

Grade 6 - 8

Middle school computers utilize an integrated curriculum that is based on more than 350 literacy objectives in 10 different technology areas. Curriculum is designed to be integrated with our classroom studies so our students master the Google suite skills necessary to excel throughout their educational careers, as well as learning about various components of modern technology.

Physical Education

Grades 6-8

Physical Education

Students will be encouraged and enabled to maintain a healthy body for God's glory. Students will experience fitness testing with the goal of promoting cardiovascular and respiratory health and improved fitness. Students will have the opportunity to learn the skills, the rule knowledge, and the strategies necessary to participate in a variety of team sports and games while respecting differing athletic abilities of individuals, encouraging others, using teamwork, and exhibiting good sportsmanship.

Electives

MUSIC/PERFORMING ART

Choir

Middle School Choir will continue to be offered as a Fine Arts Elective. We will focus on building musicianship as well as doing a variety of repertoire in English and other world languages. Choir is open to all middle school students without an audition; please be prepared to be "voiced" (a test of vocal range).

Hand Bells

Middle School Hand Bells is a great opportunity to be involved in music making! It's so fun! Likewise, it is wonderful for community outreach (synonym for field trips) as well as deepening your musical skills and truly learning to perform as an individual, but also as part of a team. **Participating students must have signed media-release forms. Teacher permission is required to enroll in this class.**

Email Miss S. at kschwarzenbart@vcneenah.com.

Worship Team

Worship Team will be a 0-Hour class this year. It will be offered as service hours based on how frequently you are scheduled. Please understand that scheduling will not be equal. Unlike band and choir, there is no training component; you must practice on your own and come ready with your parts each week. **Teacher permission, an application, and an audition are required to take this class.** Please email Miss S. at kschwarzenbart@vcneenah.com with your intent to participate.

Cadet Band (Beginner Band)

The Cadet Band is designed for any student in grades 6 through 8 who is starting a band instrument for the first time. No prior music or instrument experience is required. In addition to regular band class, students receive a weekly 20-minute small group lesson focused on learning techniques for their specific instrument. Students will learn how to play their instrument, understand basic music vocabulary, and take part in musical activities. Students will learn from our lesson book, *Measures of Success: Book 1*, and rehearse standard beginning band repertoire. The band performs in the middle school concerts once per semester. Cadet band is a one-year commitment, although exceptions can be made if approved by Mr. Peterson.

Textbook: Measures of Success: Book 1

Warrior Band (Intermediate Band)

Warrior Band is open to all instrumentalists in grades 7 and 8 who have previous experience in band or with instrumental music. In addition to regular band class, students receive a weekly 20-minute small group lesson focused on learning techniques for their specific instrument. The Warrior Band is a one-year commitment, although exceptions can be made if approved by Mr. Peterson. Students will continue to learn how to play their instrument, understand further music vocabulary, and take part in musical activities. In addition, students will learn from our lesson book, *Rubank Intermediate Methods*, and rehearse standard middle-level band repertoire. The band performs in the middle school concerts once per semester, and interested students will have the opportunity to perform in Solo and Ensemble as well.

Textbook: Measures of Success Book 2

A prerequisite of previous band experience (Cadet Band or other) is required unless approved by Mr. Peterson.

Musical Theatre Production

Students meet weekly in the classroom and will participate in one large-scale Broadway-style musical production. Students will audition for desired roles, practice during class time, attend required after-school and weekend rehearsals, and be present to perform in all the shows. In addition, each student will evaluate his/her own performance and the performance of the class as a whole. The main goal of the course is to teach young people self-confidence, responsibility, and life skills through the performing arts, and to give the students an opportunity to share a message that impacts their community.

No prerequisites are required.

Reader's Theatre

Do you enjoy reading? What about acting, role-playing, or performing? Reading story scripts through reader's theater may just be the elective course for you! Learn about story, characterization, and developing voice through the lens of script reading. Open to 6th-8th graders. Semester II

FINE ARTS

3D Art

Students will be working on pinch pots, slab building, and freehand sculpture techniques while also learning the science of ceramics and glazing. The class work will be done from the perspective of an artist mentoring young artists needing to acquire the necessary skills to appreciate and produce art for life. Students will learn pinch building, coil building, clay, slab building, and sculpture. All students are challenged, encouraged, and expected to push their ideas and their work to a higher level each semester.

No prerequisites are required.

Drawing and Painting

This course is constructed around learning the basics of drawing and painting. Drawing class focuses on teaching drawing, starting with basic shapes in space, to learning how to draw parts of a human figure, and finally, putting it all together in order to draw the entire human figure. Charcoal is the main medium that we have the students use. During the second half of the first semester, the class is introduced to pastels and color. Painting consists of using the skills learned in drawing to create paintings in color. The class work will be done from the perspective of an artist mentoring young artists needing to acquire the necessary skills to appreciate and produce art for life. All students are challenged, encouraged, and expected to push their ideas and their work to a higher level each semester.

No prerequisites are required.

Art 101

This course will introduce students to a variety of different art practices, including but not limited to the following: drawing, sculpture, cartoons, and multimedia. Students will learn different art principles and techniques as they relate to different art mediums, and should come prepared to explore, create, and learn how art can be used to give glory to God. All students are challenged, encouraged, and expected to push their ideas and their work to a higher level each semester. **No prerequisites are required.**

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Fitness

This elective will be focused on building full-body, functional fitness and strength. It will introduce a variety of body weight training: kickboxing, boot camp, tabata, and a variety of CrossFit. It will be focused on being educated in fitness and learning how to live a healthy lifestyle. This course will be for the beginner who wants to learn about fitness and the athlete who wants to compete at a high level. No matter what level of experience, the main intention in this course is to learn overall fitness and how to work out in a fun way!

No prerequisites are required.

Lifestyle Sports

This class is designed to introduce students to user-friendly lifetime activities and lots of fun. Students will learn the skills, techniques, tactics, and rules of many different games and activities, including: disc golf, badminton, yard games, pickleball, aerobic walking, jogging, etc.

No prerequisites are required.

PE 101

Join this class to enjoy all the great elements of PE class! We will practice skills for many different sports and athletic activities and play all the exciting PE games. A wide variety of skills and activities will be introduced, practiced, and improved. Join classmates from the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades to compete against each other and your own skill level in this fast-paced elective.

MATH

Number Ninja

NO HOMEWORK for this elective! Discover the patterns of God's design in how numbers work together as you learn strategies for mental math. As you get comfortable with these patterns and strategies, your efficiency and fluency will overflow into your regular math class! Each class will begin with a fact review, and each week, a new mental math strategy will be introduced and practiced. These strategies build throughout the year, starting with operations on whole numbers, and then extending to fractions and decimals. (Grade is based on daily participation and effort) **No prerequisites are required.**

Number Ninja Masters

Who needs a calculator when you can be a Number Ninja Master? This course is a continuation of the fall Number Ninjas course. The strategies will build upon those from the previous course, and as time allows, may extend to include integer operations. Students will continue to exercise their mental math muscles and extend their Number Ninja training!

Prerequisite– *Number Ninjas* Fall semester

LANGUAGES

Spanish

This course will introduce you to Spanish language basics and give you a foundation for HS Spanish. Learn to greet your friends, talk about what you like (and don't like), and other

topics of interest through conversation, listening, games, songs, and more. Expect to get some cultural lessons as well as learn about what it is like in some of the countries where Spanish is spoken; who knows, maybe we can even have a fiesta!!!

No prerequisites are required.

German

Way more than Lederhosen, Bratwurst, and Fussball (soccer)- German culture and language are rich, interesting, and fun! In this course, you will learn the basics of the German language (introductions, colors, numbers, hobbies, weather, time), learn fun facts and history about the country of Germany, and get a taste for German culture (from a real German!).

No prerequisites are required.

STEM/STEAM

Science Exploration/STEAM

Passionate about learning? Curious about the world that God has given us dominion over and how things work? Wanting to explore certain areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, or Math - How does a hot air balloon work? Why can water bugs walk on water? What is the latest exploration mission in space? How do roller coasters work? Following the Engineering Design Process, students will explore different topics guided by their passions and interests. Once they are done, they will share their findings with their class and beyond (if they want to).

No prerequisites are required.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Heroes of Faith

The apostle Paul told the Corinthians, "Be imitators of me as I imitate Christ." The question we can ask today is, "Who should I be imitating now?" This class, "Heroes of Faith," will provide many excellent examples of people who have lived out their faith. Some of them even died for their faith. Students will be encouraged by the lives of great men, women, and young people; such as Billy Graham, Jim and Elizabeth Elliott, Reggie White, Rachel Scott, Steph Curry, and many others. The interactive discussions will allow students to explore ways and specific situations in which these heroes chose to live by faith in a Living God, rather than be influenced by the world.

No prerequisites are required.

EVERY DAY LIVING

Make. Bake. Create.

Did you know reading recipes can be fun? Whether you are making slime or baking a pie? From creation to concoction, it will be hands-on and learning through play all the way. This class will explore creative ways to make food art from nutritious foods and some sweet treats as well. Maybe fruit parrots or apple frogs, and who knows how much more! Students may also create bubble mixtures and experiment with their creations. If you want to play with recipes, this class is for you!

Outdoor Skills

This elective will feature elements of outdoor skills that include hunting, fishing, camping, survival, trapping and canoeing. Learn how to fish on your own ,from tying knots to cleaning your catch. Be able to set up camp properly and start a fire. Make a trap for small game and so much more! This elective will take place in the classroom and outdoors.

No prerequisites are required.