

## **Eighth Grade Course Descriptions**

### **ART**

#### **(20 WEEKS)**

All eighth grade students have art class once every three days for one semester (20 weeks). During this time, students will *review* the *Elements of Art*, extend and refine their understanding of color theory as they learn about new color schemes, and learn ways to group color to make a more dramatic visual work. This includes shading and tinting, using value to create a more realistic effect in their artwork, the basic drawing techniques of two-point perspective, and how to organize the seven elements of art in a piece by using the *Principles of Design*. They will utilize these concepts in their own artwork and learn how to "find" and describe them in visual imagery. Students will create three or four overall projects during their eighth grade art experience. They will also be using a sketchbook, or "visual journal" to capture their thoughts, techniques, and ideas throughout the semester. At times, students will be given sketchbook assignments to reinforce material being taught in class.

### **ELA**

English 8 is a transitional course that develops a broad range of language arts skills, such as reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, listening, and speaking. Full-length readings include novels, dramas, and short stories. Writing skills will be developed throughout the year. Students will learn organizational skills and compose essays. Students will also give at least one oral presentation (3-5 minutes). This course is designed to prepare students for the English 9 high school program.

### **FACS**

In eighth grade, Family and Consumer Science (FACS) is subdivided into two distinct sections; one focusing on preparing students for family life, work life, and careers by providing opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed in today's society, and the other focusing on adolescent and family life as well as social-emotional learning. Each section lasts 10 weeks.

### **COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS**

One 10-week unit will give students the opportunity to explore work readiness skills, explore various careers using Naviance (web-based career software), participate in a

mock job interview, and learn what goes into developing a family budget using “On Your Own” budgeting software.

### **ADOLESCENT AND FAMILY LIFE**

The other 10-week unit will give students the opportunity to develop communication and anger management skills, look at depression/suicide prevention, and discuss sexuality and abstinence.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Middle school mathematics focuses on preparing students for Algebra and is tightly aligned with the [NYS Common Core Standards](#). Each grade level builds off the previous year’s material and helps students extend and refine their understanding of mathematical principles. There are two paths of study:



### **Math 8**

In grade eight, instructional time should focus on three critical areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling an association in bivariate data with a linear equation, and solving linear equations and systems of linear equations; (2) grasping the concept of a function and using functions to describe quantitative relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angle, similarity, and congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem. Students will need a TI-34 calculator.

### **Algebra**

The fundamental purpose of this course is to formalize and extend the mathematics that students learned in the middle grades. The critical areas deepen and extend understanding of linear and exponential relationships by contrasting them with each other and by applying linear models to data that exhibit a linear trend, and students engage in methods for analyzing, solving, and using quadratic functions. Students will experience mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of

their ability to make sense of problem situations. Algebra is a full year course that prepares students for the NYS Algebra I Regents Exam. Successful completion of this course results in students earning a high school credit. Students will need the TI-Nspire CX graphing calculator.

## **Music**

### **BAND/ORCHESTRA**

Students selecting band/orchestra must currently be enrolled in their matching seventh grade instrumental performance ensemble. Students are expected to continue small group lessons once a week (rotation based on pullout, half class) and participate in evening concerts as part of their grade.

### **CHORUS**

Any student may join chorus in middle school. Many students who are in an instrumental ensemble also participate in chorus. Students are expected to be active participants in this performance-based ensemble, including during class time and evening performances as part of their course grade.

### **GENERAL MUSIC**

This is a hands-on course about creating, performing, responding, and listening to music. Students are expected to participate in a variety of class activities, including classroom performances on the keyboard and ukulele. This class is recommended for the student who is not interested in participating in a large performing ensemble.

### **JAZZ BAND**

This is a small ensemble for select instruments (trumpet, trombone, saxophone, rhythm section) that will focus on jazz music and concepts. Students must be enrolled in their large group performance ensemble to participate. Some instruments may have an audition requirement.

### **SELECT CHORUS**

Each middle school has small group performance ensembles that serve to enrich the student's singing experience. These ensembles generally require an audition that occurs prior to the end of the previous school year. Students are then selected based on their audition as well as recommendations. Please contact one of the choral teachers for more information.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students will receive a physical education program offering a variety of structured activities built upon a foundation of personal health and fitness. Through an array of individual and team sports, cooperative activities and fitness, students are exposed to many physical activities that can be enjoyed within the Webster community and throughout their lifetime. Through this experience, students will demonstrate knowledge of skills, skill levels, strategies, and rules of various team and individual sports. The program infuses key health and fitness components, and includes semester projects and assessments throughout the school year. Student learning outcomes include an increased awareness of their personal health and fitness, the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in a variety of sport experiences, and how to lead a healthy and fit life.

## SCIENCE

The middle school science program exposes students to all areas of science; Earth and Space Science, Physical Science, and Living Environment. During their study of these areas of science, students will engage in hands-on investigations as they develop and complete labs using science and engineering practices. The units of studies are designed to meet the NYS Science Learning Standards. As outlined below, there are two different paths students can pursue. The typical path includes Science 6, Science 7, and Science 8. For those students who have a strong passion for science, they can take Science 6, Science 7/8, and then Living Environment, which is a Regents class. Acceleration is based on academic performance and teacher recommendation.



### SCIENCE 8

Building upon the content covered in grades six and seven, students tackle a new set of topics and concepts to prepare them for the NYS 8th Grade Science Exam. Topics such as matter, mass, volume, and density as well as physical and chemical changes

are covered in the beginning of the year. As the year progresses, eighth grade science switches to more of an Earth Science course. Students will dive into the layers of the Earth, rock types, and mineral identification. Lastly, students will be introduced to the concept of evolution as well as build upon their elementary knowledge of ecology including human impact on the environment.

### **LIVING ENVIRONMENT**

This course provides students with an awareness of the natural world and an understanding of biological processes and concepts. The course consists of basic units of study including biochemistry, cell biology, animal and plant physiology, reproduction and development, genetics, evolution, and ecology. Students will be required to complete at least 1,200 laboratory minutes, as required by the New York State Education Department, to be eligible to take the Living Environment Regents Exam. This course will be part of the student's high school transcript, and successful completion of it results in the student earning a high school credit.

### **SOCIAL STUDIES**

#### **SOCIAL STUDIES 8**

Eighth grade Social Studies is the second year of a two-year sequence examining the history of the United States and New York State. In eighth grade Social Studies, students will continue to examine the geography of the United States and New York State and then focus on the Era of Reconstruction through to the United States in the modern era. Although the course emphasizes the skill of chronological reasoning and causation, the course also integrates the skills and content from geography, politics, economy, and culture into the study of history. Additionally, local history will be emphasized where appropriate.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

All students in eighth grade take Technology for a full year. Technology is the fifth core class, linked to each student's color house. The course is divided into three units: physical technology, information/communication technology, and biotechnology/energy. Each unit runs approximately 13 weeks and meets in a different technology lab. Through these different units, students are introduced to many of the multiple parts of technology. Students design and build projects, use power tools, process materials, learn problem-solving skills, and use various computer programs. They are given a wide exposure to the many technologies that exist in our world today. Many of the topics

correspond with High School Technology Education electives, allowing students to study areas of interest at a deeper level after they leave middle school.

## **WORLD LANGUAGES**

Webster Central School District begins language studies in seventh grade and continues through 12th grade. The seventh and eighth grade years constitute Level 1 of language study, earning one high school credit. Students have the opportunity to learn Spanish, French, or German at the middle school level. The quarter averages of the two-year course are included in GPA calculations.

Successful completion of the Level 1 course in middle school (passing the class AND the final) meets the minimum NYS World Language requirement for graduation. Through the continuation of language study at the high school level, students are eligible to earn the NYS Seal of Biliteracy and/or college credit with the CLEP exam or AP exam.

The foundation laid in seventh grade paves the way for students to build and expand on their language study for eighth grade and beyond. The listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills learned are transferable to other content areas as well as general life skills and knowledge. The cultural connections established prepare students to be active members of a global community.

### **FRENCH**

Eighth grade French is a continuation of the two-year course begun in seventh grade. This introductory course meets two out of three days per rotation. The curriculum follows the NYS syllabus for Modern Languages as well as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) guidelines. Students will focus on listening, reading, speaking, and writing in each unit. Students are continually assessed throughout the year in each of these areas to ensure they are progressing toward the standards. This class regularly uses authentic texts and technology to better understand the structure of the French language. Students will also explore the French culture.

Specifically, students will study clothing, community and neighborhood, education, family life, food and meals, health and welfare, house and homes, leisure and pastimes, personal identification, professions, shopping, and travel. Additionally, students will make personal connections with the language and culturally compare lifestyles and interests to those living in French-speaking countries and communities. Upon

successful completion of the course, students will be prepared to enter French Level II in high school.

### **GERMAN**

Eighth grade German is a continuation of the two-year course begun in seventh grade. This introductory course meets two out of three days per rotation. The curriculum follows the NYS syllabus for Modern Languages as well as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) guidelines. Students will learn the foundations of communication in German through listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Students will also explore the German culture and develop a better understanding of the structure of the German language. Students are continually assessed throughout the year in each of these areas to ensure they are progressing toward the standards. This class regularly uses authentic texts and technology to better understand the structure of the German language. Students will also explore the German culture.

Specifically, students will study clothing, community and neighborhood, education, family life, food and meals, health and welfare, house and homes, leisure and pastimes, personal identification, professions, shopping, and travel. Additionally, students will make personal connections with the language and culturally compare lifestyles and interests to those living in German-speaking countries and communities. Upon successful completion of the year, students will be prepared to enter German Level II in high school. Students are encouraged to join our German club that meets monthly at both middle schools for fun enrichment activities!

### **SPANISH**

Eighth grade Spanish is a continuation of the two-year course begun in seventh grade. This introductory course meets two out of three days per rotation. The curriculum follows the NYS syllabus for Modern Languages as well as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) guidelines. Students will focus on listening, reading, speaking, and writing in each unit. Students are continually assessed throughout the year in each of these areas to ensure they are progressing toward the standards. This class regularly uses authentic texts and technology to better understand the structure of the Spanish language. Students will also explore the Spanish culture.

Specifically, students will study clothing, community and neighborhood, education, family life, food and meals, health and welfare, house and homes, leisure and pastimes, personal identification, professions, shopping, and travel. Additionally, students will make personal connections with the language and culturally compare lifestyles and

interests to those living in Spanish-speaking countries and communities. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be prepared to enter Spanish Level II in high school.