

WHITCOMB JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



7TH-8TH GRADE COURSE INFORMATION

7th Grade English:

Seventh graders will begin the year exploring the big questions like: Why do people tell stories? How do stories reflect culture? How do stories change through time? We do this through a series of novels and films from around the world, including (but not limited to) *Seedfolks*, *The Whale Rider*, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, *Dogsong*, and *Scat*. Students are also introduced to a new poem each week and are expected to memorize several poems throughout the year. The primary focus is on reading comprehension, writing mastery, and creative expression of knowledge with some explicit instruction in vocabulary and grammar, with a focus on vocabulary first and third quarters. Students conclude the year with a study of one Shakespeare play.



8th Grade English:

Eighth graders explore a complex question that has defined America since the settlement period: How do we balance the rights of the individual with the needs of society? We will seek answers in a variety of texts and movies including (but not limited to) *The Giver*, *The Crucible*, *A Break with Charity*, and a piece of current young adult literature. In the second semester, we examine a non-fiction novel which coordinates with a science unit and a piece of classic American literature. Students are also introduced to a new poem each week and are expected to memorize several poems throughout the year. The primary focus is on reading comprehension, writing mastery, and creative expression of knowledge with some explicit instruction in vocabulary and grammar, with a focus on vocabulary first and third quarters. Students conclude the year with a study of one Shakespeare play.

7th Grade Math:

This course will help students learn all the important middle grades mathematics concepts and skills that prepare students for 8th grade, high school, and beyond. In this course students will develop the reasoning, problem solving, and communication skills that enable them to apply mathematics to real-life activities. Students will learn to value math and become confident in using it to make decisions in daily life. Some elements we study include: problem solving strategies, logic puzzles, data displays, sequences, exponents, probability, order of operations, evaluating expressions, and bar and line graphs.



7th Grade World Geography:

This course is designed to provide students with a basic knowledge of geographic concepts, skills, and further allow them the chance to practice these concepts and skills which they will need to become informed and involved citizens in a world that is increasingly interdependent. The first semester we will focus on the concept of culture and examine a variety of cultural regions around the world. The second semester will highlight basic geography skills, which are expected to enable students to be able to interpret and/or create maps, globes, and graphs. Long term projects may include the writing of portfolio pieces which may be used in the students' English class as well.



8th Grade U.S. History:

This course is designed to help students gain an appreciation of the United States and the varied characteristics and contributions of United States citizens. Presented for the most part in a

chronological format (from Colonial Independence through the Civil War), the units and lessons are theory based and promote active instruction in the learning process. The developers of our texts, *History Alive: The United States through Industrialism* and *The American Vision*, and I believe that students learn well by accessing multiple intelligences, and being provided with opportunities for cooperative interactions with other students. We further believe that students learn best by a process of step by step discovery.

7th Grade Life Science:

Life Science is the study of living things, how they live, and where they live. Field trips include a weekend camping trip to the ocean for a whale watch and a beach habitat study, a day excursion to a quaking bog, and a stream study.



8th Grade Earth Science

The 8th grade science curriculum is centered on the study of Earth Science including geology, oceanography, meteorology, astronomy, and the universe. Using the Scientific Method students will explore the concepts and principles of these areas of science.



7th Grade Art Exploratory:

The 7th grade art exploratory is nine weeks of studio art exploration. This includes: drawing including perspective using charcoal and pencil, color study with water color and pastels, collage, plaster work, clay intensive (includes learning how to work on an electric potter's wheel) and much, much more!

7th Grade Health: Topics covered in 7th grade health include:

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs- We will complete Project Alert, a research based drug prevention program approved by the Association of Middle Schools.

Disease, Violence, Bullying and Injury Prevention- We will focus on the prevention of injury and First Aid.

Nutrition and Physical Activity- We will explore nutrition topics in Family and Consumer Science class. We will begin exploring systems of the body. We will also be combining efforts with physical education to work on making and practicing healthy activity choices.



Family Health: Personal, Social, Mental, and Sexual- We will work on interpersonal communication skills, refusal skills, negotiation skills, developing a positive self-concept, and awareness of puberty and human growth and development issues. We will be practicing Whitcomb's Core Concepts: Trust, Share, Belonging, Respect, and Responsibility.

Community Environment and Consumer Health: We will be exploring community resources for health information.

8th Grade Health:

Topics covered in 8th grade health include:

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs - We will complete Project Alert's Booster lessons, a researched based drug prevention program approved by the Vermont Department of Education.

Disease, Violence, and Injury Prevention - We will focus on concepts around communicable and non communicable disease, read the novel The Girl Who Owned a City by O.T. Nelson, look at disease prevention skills around HIV /AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy, look at the health risks associated with teen pregnancy, stress the benefits of teenage sexual abstinence, and investigate stress reduction.

Nutrition and Physical Activity - We will explore food safety and preparation in Family and Consumer Science classes and combine efforts with Physical Education to work on making and practicing healthy activity choices.

Family Health: personal, social, mental, and sexual - We will work on developing interpersonal communication skills, refusal skills, negotiation skills, development of a positive self concept, conflict resolution, and the characteristics of healthy relationships

Community Environment and Consumer Health - We will explore the media influences on health, complete the interactive unit Agency (about media literacy), discover the importance of a healthy environment on personal and community health, identify reliable community health resources and practice advocacy skills

7th Grade Family and Consumer Science (FACS):

Some of the topics covered in 7th grade include: nutrition, food preparation, the Real Game Online (pertaining to career choices), and housing/textiles.

8th Grade Family and Consumer Science (FACS):

Students will explore multiple roles and responsibilities in family, work and community settings; explore the significance of family and its impact on the well-being of individuals and society; demonstrate respectful and caring relationships in the family, workplace and community; identify factors that impact human growth and development; explore parenting roles and responsibilities that strengthen the well-being of individuals and families; and demonstrate nutrition and wellness practices that enhance individual and family well-being.



7th and 8th Grade Library Exploratory:

Goals for the library exploratory include becoming familiar with the following: WHS library and its resources, WHS online resources, online search techniques, internet safety, web evaluation, copyright, plagiarism, how to cite sources, and exploring Web 2.0 tools. This class also includes keyboarding.

8th Grade World Languages

8th grade students may elect to take high school credit-bearing world language courses including French 1 and Spanish 1.

7th and 8th Grade Music Exploratory:

During this 18 week course students learn the basics of reading music and use them as a foundation for composition. Students also learn how to use music software to aid in the composition process.

Junior High Band:

Anyone who has played a band instrument previously, whether at a different school or with Mrs. Kohl, is welcome to join band. You **MUST** have previous experience to be in Jr. High Band. There is rarely the opportunity to start studying a band instrument once you get to 7th grade. The Jr. High Band rehearses on Mondays as a whole ensemble. The 8th graders have a separate rehearsal on Wednesdays and the 7th graders have their own rehearsal on Thursday. Although this group of musicians rehearses separately from the 9th – 12th grade students, they often perform together.

All Jr. High Band members are required to participate in the the Halloween Parade, the HOOP BAND performance at the BEANPOT games, and the Winter and Spring Concerts. Students are also expected to march in the Vermont All State Parade and the four Memorial Day celebrations in which we participate. There are rarely any quizzes and the only homework students have is to practice the pieces we are working on in class.



All Jr. High Band members are also given a 30-minute small-group lesson on either Tuesday or Friday. The lessons are on a 4-week rotation and are during A, B, E or F block. The rotating schedule prevents students from missing the same class more than once a month. The lesson time is an extra opportunity for the student to have guided instruction from Mrs. Kohl on the music we are preparing for all of our events.

Jr. High Band members are also eligible for nomination, by Mrs. Kohl, to participate in the Winooski Valley Music Association's annual Middle School Festival and/or the Jazz Festival. Students who wish to participate in these extra events must prove to Mrs. Kohl that they can be responsible (by coming to their lessons) and respectful (during rehearsals). These nominations are due around the time of our winter concert; so, Mrs. Kohl can assess who is ready to be nominated although the 1st semester.

Once you have joined band you **MAY NOT** drop the class until after the winter concert. You must make a commitment to practice, prepare and **PERFORM**.

Junior and Senior High School Chorus:

During this year long course students learn the basics of proper vocal technique and musicianship. They prepare for and perform various genres of choral literature in at least two concerts throughout the year, the December Holiday Concert and the Spring Concert. Other performance opportunities include special events such as WNWSU Festival of the Arts, Coffeehouses, Open Houses, as well as field trips to senior centers, and caroling around the community. Auditioned and non-auditioned festival opportunities include Winooski District Music Festivals, the All State Music Festival, and college sponsored festivals in VT and NH.

Field trips to see concerts and musicals are offered and vary from year to year. For the 2012-13 year, we saw the musical, "Les Miserable" in March.

Extra Curricular Activities Open to 7-8th Grade Students:

- Soccer
- Basketball
- Softball/Baseball
- Track
- OVX (Our Voices eXposed – a leadership, safety & prevention club)
- Jr. Iron Chef
- Girls on Track
- Drama Club
- Student Council
- Class Officers
- Reading Buddies
- Special Interest Activities
- 21st Century Afterschool Program

