



...PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL,

PERSONALIZED EDUCATION

Whitmore Lake Middle School Course Guide

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*In June 2010, the State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as the new standards for K-12 **Mathematics** and **English Language Arts**. These standards improved upon Michigan's current standards (the Grade Level Content Expectations and the High School Content Expectations) by establishing clear and consistent goals for learning, and allow Michigan to work collaboratively with other states to provide curricular support to schools and educators. For Questions and Answers visit - http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/FAQ_4.10.13_418299_7.pdf*

ENGLISH COURSES

Course Name & Pathway	Grade, Length, Prerequisites	Course Description
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 6 	Grade: 6 Length: Year	Core Requirement Welcome to 6th Grade ELA—where words come alive and stories become adventures! In this class, you'll dive into books that stretch your imagination, explore ideas that challenge your thinking, and learn how to use language as your superpower. We'll read, write, speak, and listen with purpose, discovering how authors use words to shape worlds—and how you can do the same. From crafting epic narratives to debating real-world issues, you'll sharpen the skills that help you think clearly, write boldly, and express yourself with confidence. Guided by the Core standards and led by Mrs. Sechrist (who believes words are magic!), this class will help you grow as a reader, writer, and thinker on your journey to becoming a lifelong learner and a wise, thoughtful human.
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 7 	Grade: 7 Length: Year	Core Requirement Seventh-grade English builds a foundation in reading and writing narrative, informational, and argumentative texts. Through analysis and production of text, students grow as readers, thinkers, and writers and will understand the distinctions between narrative, informational, and argumentative texts. We study fiction and nonfiction in a variety of formats and develop an understanding of audience and purpose when both reading and writing. The use of a writer's notebook for each unit encourages students to be independent, engaged, and empowered learners who value close reading, idea generation, drafting, and revision.
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 8 	Grade: 8 Length: Year	Core Requirement Eighth-grade English offers an in-depth study of various literary forms, as well as a challenging writing program that completes the middle school student's preparation for literary analysis and writing at the upper school level. The course is divided into several comprehensive units, each of which centers on a particular theme or genre. These thematic units also include a variety of short selections consisting of poems, essays, and articles. The goal is to provide a wealth of opportunity for students to grow as perceptive readers, critical thinkers, and competent writers.
WINNING WORDS: Delivery, Diplomacy, & Debate 	Grade: 6, 7 Length: Quarter	In this fun one-quarter class, you'll learn how to argue without fighting, think clearly, and spot bad logic when you hear it. We'll explore how to make strong points, ask smart questions, and speak with confidence. You'll even learn how to win debates (without being annoying). If you like thinking, talking, or just want to sound smarter, <i>Winning Words</i> is for you!




WRITING FOR PUBLICATIONS








Grade: 6, 7, 8
Length: Year

Ever wondered what it's like to be a real journalist, photographer, or magazine designer? In Writing for Publications, YOU get to do it all! This isn't just another class—you're creating publications that will last forever and capture all the epic moments of this school year. Students in this hands-on course will collaborate to create their middle school's annual yearbook and the middle school's newspaper, the TroJournal Jr. Throughout the year, students learn the fundamentals of journalistic writing, including interviewing, caption writing, and feature story development as well as photography, digital design, and editing. Leadership opportunities abound as students take ownership of the publications that are shared with their peers and their community. At the end of the year, you'll hold a book and newspapers YOU created that captures all the memories, friendships, and moments that made this year special. How cool is that?

MATHEMATICS COURSES

Course Name & Pathway	Grade, Length, Prerequisites	Course Description
MATH 6 	Grade: 6 Length: Year	Core Requirement Math 6 focuses on four critical areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking.
MATH 7 	Grade: 7 Length: Year	Core Requirement Math 7 focuses on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples.
MATH 8 	Grade: 8 Length: Year	Core Requirement Math 8 focuses on three main areas: (1) formulating and reasoning about expressions and equations, including modeling with solving linear equations, and solving systems of equations; (2) understanding functions and using functions to describe relationships; (3) analyzing two- and three-dimensional space and figures using distance, angles, similarity, congruence, and understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem. In addition, students will engage in mathematical practices.

SCIENCE COURSES

Course Name & Pathway	Grade, Length, Prerequisites	Course Description
DISASTER SCIENCE 	Grade: 6, 7, 8 Length: Year	Get ready to explore the wild side of Earth! In this course, students will investigate the science behind natural disasters such as earthquakes, tornadoes, wildfires, tsunamis, hurricanes, and more. They will engage in hands-on experiments, use interactive simulations, and examine real-world events to understand how disasters happen and how people can prepare for them. Working in teams, students will solve problems, design safety plans, and think like scientists who protect communities. By the end of the course, they will understand how nature's most extreme events work and how humans can face them with knowledge and skill.
EARTH SCIENCE 	Grade: 8 Length: Year	Core Requirement In this class, students will study the dynamic systems that shape our planet and beyond. They will investigate Earth's structure, natural resources, weather and climate, and the forces that cause changes such as earthquakes, volcanoes, and erosion. Students will also explore the solar system and the role of Earth in space. Using labs, models, and projects, they will learn how Earth's processes affect daily life and how humans interact with the environment. By the end of the course, students will understand Earth as a complex system that connects land, water, air, and space.
GROSS BUT COOL 	Grade: 6, 7, 8 Length: Quarter	Our bodies have many functions that can be a mystery to us until we become brave enough to ask some of the important questions: Why do we sweat? What are the different ways that we can be infected with a disease? How many germs could possibly be on the classroom door? How does food travel through our body? What the heck is a pimple, and why do we get them? Students will explore the human body systems from the inside out through a variety of hands-on experiments and research to begin answering some of these pressing questions.
IMAGINEERING 	Grade: 6, 7, 8 Length: Year	Imagineering is an engaging course that aims to show students the real-world applications of science. Students will practice skills such as model drawing and scale modeling in order to gain an understanding of the planning and care that go into creating something magical. They will also learn the verbal and written communication skills needed to present their ideas. Students will get to dive into the role of an engineer as they collaborate, plan, propose, and model.
LIFE SCIENCE 	Grade: 7 Length: Year	Core Requirement In this class, students will explore the living world—from the tiniest cells to entire ecosystems. They will investigate how organisms are structured, how they grow and reproduce, and how they interact with each other and their environment. Topics include cells and genetics, evolution, human body systems, classification of organisms, and the flow of energy through ecosystems. Hands-on labs, projects, and real-world examples will help students see how life science connects to their own lives and the natural world around them.









PHYSICAL SCIENCE



Grade: 6
Length: Year

Core Requirement In this class, students will explore how the world around them works by studying matter, energy, motion, and forces. They will investigate what things are made of, how energy moves and changes, and why objects move the way they do. Through hands-on labs, experiments, and projects, students will discover topics like the periodic table, chemical and physical changes, and energy transfer. By the end of the course, students will see how physical science connects to their everyday lives and the world around them.

SOCIAL STUDIES COURSES

Course Name & Pathway	Grade, Length, Prerequisites	Course Description
SPORTS HISTORY  	Grade: 6, 7, 8 Length: Quarter	<p>Students will explore how unorganized athletic activities were transformed into spectator sports at the collegiate and professional levels. Students will study important and controversial events in sports history, the most talented and influential athletes, and the most memorable victories and defeats. Students will also understand the ways in which sports reflected and informed American culture throughout history. Course not offered every year.</p>
TIME TRAVELERS  	Grade: 6, 7, 8 Length: Quarter	<p>Time Travelers is an exciting 8th-grade social studies course that takes students on a journey through the past to uncover the people, events, and ideas that shaped our world. From ancient civilizations to modern revolutions, students will explore key moments in history through interactive projects, primary sources, and creative storytelling. Along the way, they'll develop critical thinking, research, and communication skills as they investigate how history connects to the present and future. Get ready to think like a historian, ask big questions, and travel through time—no time machine required!</p>
UNLOCKING HISTORY'S MYSTERIES  	Grade: 6, 7, 8 Length: Quarter	<p>Step into the past and become a history detective in Unlocking History's Mysteries! This engaging social studies course invites students to investigate some of the most fascinating people, places, and events from ancient civilizations to modern times. Through interactive projects, hands-on activities, primary source analysis, and collaborative problem-solving, students will explore how geography, culture, politics, and innovation have shaped the world we live in today.</p>
US HISTORY 	Grade: 8 Length: Year	<p>Core Requirement Eighth grade History is a course designed to teach our American history from the Revolutionary War through Reconstruction after the Civil War. Emphasis will be put on historical documents, such as treaties, the Declaration of Independence and Grade: 8 Length: Year the Constitution. Conflicts throughout history, such as slavery, political parties, expansion, and government control, are discussed and related to student's lives. Other issues include the Civil War, Revolutionary War, and our governmental system. The course includes a focus on Native Americans, European influences on America, colonization, and independence, to the building of our nation.</p>
WORLD GEOGRAPHY 	Grade: 6 Length: Year	<p>Core Requirement Students explore the world using the five themes of geography—location, place, human-environment interaction, movement, and region. They investigate how people interact with their environments, how regions are shaped, and how global issues connect communities. Map skills, research, and inquiry projects help students build geographic reasoning and global awareness.</p>



WORLD HISTORY






Grade: 7
Length: Year

Core Requirement In 7th-grade Social Studies, students explore the experiences of people around the globe from the earliest civilizations to the 1500s. Throughout the course, students strengthen their literacy and critical thinking skills as they examine a range of primary and secondary sources both independently and in collaborative groups. Students will build a foundational understanding of human society as they create presentations, models, and written expressions of their learning.






BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY COURSES

Course Name & Pathway	Grade, Length, Prerequisites	Course Description
CAREERS AND TECHNOLOGY 	Grade: 6 Length: Quarter	<p>By engaging in various activities, students discover interests and talents they were previously unaware of, from graphic design to public speaking. This exploration is crucial as it opens their minds to future opportunities beyond middle school. In addition, students will be exposed to (and empowered by) entrepreneurship skills.</p>
T.E.C.H. 	Grade: 7, 8 Length: 7th: Quarter 8th: Semester	<p>T: Tech E: Entrepreneurship C: Careers H: Human Skills</p> <p>Using Uncharted Learning's mxINCedu, middle school students work in teams to identify a problem to solve, create a product concept, pitch the idea, and iterate based on market learning within the e-commerce selling experience. Local volunteers from the business community mentor and support this real-world learning experience. In 8th grade, students take on more complex analysis and evaluation of product ideas. Through this process, students discover interest areas that can drive high school and even career pursuits.</p>



PHYSICAL EDUCATION & HEALTH COURSES

Course Name & Pathway	Grade, Length, Prerequisites	Course Description
BEYOND TRADITIONAL SPORTS 	Grades: 6-8 Length: Quarter	<p>This course introduces students to unique and fast-paced games such as ultimate frisbee, flag rugby, tchoukball, pickleball, and sabakiball. These activities encourage creative strategies, quick decision-making, and teamwork while giving students the chance to try something new.</p>
JUNIOR OLYMPIC SPORTS 	Grades: 6-8 Length: Quarter	<p>In this course, students will experience a variety of exciting sports inspired by Olympic-style competition, including badminton, speedball, swimming, and wiffleball. Emphasis is placed on developing coordination, agility, teamwork, and respect for different styles of play.</p>
LIFELONG FITNESS 	Grades: 6-8 Length: Quarter	<p>Students will learn and practice activities that promote health and fitness well beyond the school years. Through individual and group workouts, circuit training, yoga, and fitness challenges, students will explore ways to stay active, set goals, and track personal progress.</p>
PLAY STRONG 	Grades: 6-8 Length: Quarter	<p>A high-energy course designed to push students to their personal best, Play Strong blends team challenges, sport-specific drills, and fitness circuits. Students will build strength, endurance, and resilience while developing leadership skills through cooperative and competitive play.</p>
SPORTS ESSENTIALS 	Grades: 6-8 Length: Quarter	<p>This course introduces students to the fundamentals of popular team sports, including flag football, soccer, volleyball, and basketball. Students will develop basic skills, learn rules and strategies, and practice good sportsmanship while building confidence in a supportive environment.</p>
WELLNESS & MOVEMENT 	Grades: 6-8 Length: Quarter	<p>Focusing on the connection between physical activity and overall health, this course blends movement-based games with lessons on flexibility, balance, strength, and endurance. Students will explore ways to stay active, reduce stress, and maintain healthy habits for a lifetime.</p>

VISUAL, APPLIED, AND PERFORMING ARTS COURSES

Course Name & Pathway	Grade, Length, Prerequisites	Course Description
ART DIMENSIONS 	Grade: 7 Length: Quarter	In this exciting 7th-grade art class, students explore the expressive power of color, space, and texture to bring their art to life. Through painting, mixed media, and 3D projects, they learn how artists use these elements to create mood, depth, and interest. Lessons on famous artists and styles help students build technical skills, creativity, and confidence.
DESIGN DISCOVERY 	Grade: 8 Length: Semester	What makes a work of art visually powerful and meaningful? In this dynamic 8th-grade art class, students apply the Principles of Design—contrast, pattern, movement, variety, proportion, and balance—to make their artwork intentional and expressive. Projects in drawing, painting, collage, and sculpture connect to real-world design, cultural art forms, and influential artists. The course encourages creativity, problem-solving, and artistic growth.
GARAGE BAND: ESSENTIALS OF MUSIC PRODUCTION 	Grade: 7, 8 Length: Year	Come take your first steps into the essentials of music production and using technology to create music. This 9-week course introduces students to navigating on ipads, basic note reading & piano skills, GarageBand music production software basics, music composition basics and audio recording basics.
JV BAND 	Grade: 6, 7, 8 Length: Year	This developmental full ensemble class is open to all students who have at least one year of experience playing a concert band instrument and wish to further develop their skills and confidence in an ensemble setting. Students lacking the one-year experience level may still join, with the permission of the band director. This group will perform in concerts throughout the school year. Musical skill growth targets will be discussed and selected for all members of this class based on individual goals. Group goals will be aimed at building a strong ensemble culture, learning to listen and support everyone's role within the music being performed.
SHAPING CREATIVITY 	Grade: 6 Length: Quarter	In this creative and hands-on art class, 6th-grade students will dive into the fundamental building blocks of visual art: line, shape, value, and form. Through projects in drawing, collage, and basic sculpture, students will learn how artists use these elements to create depth, movement, and expression. Students will develop their artistic voice and confidence while building the skills to both create and talk about art.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Course Name & Pathway	Grade, Length, Prerequisites	Course Description
ADVENTURES IN KNOWING 	Grade: 6, 7 Length: Semester	<p>Are you ready for an adventure? <i>Adventures in Knowing: Study Skills for Secondary Success</i> is more than just a class—it's your launchpad for middle school and beyond. In this course, you'll explore big questions like "What is real?" while learning how to stay organized, focused, and ready for secondary school. From mastering note-taking and time management to conquering test anxiety and reciting epic poems for extra credit (yes, in front of the whole school if you're brave!), this class is your chance to level up your mind and discover what it means to be both smart <i>and</i> good. Let's build the habits that help you succeed—at Whitmore Lake and wherever life takes you!</p>
ADVISORY 	Grades: 6-8 Length: Year	<p>Advisory is a daily instructional period held in both the morning and afternoon. Students meet with an assigned teacher to organize materials, review schedules, set goals, reflect on learning, and identify homework or upcoming assignments. School announcements and important information are also shared during this time. Advisory helps students build academic skills, responsibility, and readiness for learning.</p>