

NORTHFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL
Class Summary
Grade 8

Required Classes

English: Continues the development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. The study of literature includes vocabulary, writing, reading and interpreting. Selected novels and plays include *The Outsiders*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Miracle Worker*, and *The Diary of Anne Frank*. These units are supplemented with nonfiction articles and poetry. Independent reading is supported through a differentiated reading program that focuses on reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. Composition skills are developed through narrative writing, creative writing, literary analysis, and the study of grammar. Other units combining reading, writing, and speaking are short stories, poetry, and a research-based speech unit.

Geography: Students in *Geography* explore the regions of the world using geographic information from print and electronic sources. They analyze important trends in the modern world such as demographic change, shifting trade patterns, and intensified cultural interactions due to globalization. Participants learn that governments are based on different political philosophies and serve various purposes. By learning economic principles of trade and the factors that affect economic growth, students understand why there are different standards of living in countries around the world.

Earth Science: This course employs an exploratory, investigative, and inquiry based approach to study the major interacting components of the earth system: the geosphere (Earth's interior and its rocks and soils), the hydrosphere (Earth's waters), the atmosphere (Earth's air), and the biosphere (Earth's living things). This course also explores basic Chemistry and Astronomy concepts. Instructors will focus on the Minnesota Science standards in the earth and space sciences.

Math: Students are grouped for math based on teacher recommendation, previous achievement and successful completion of prerequisite courses. All students will need a scientific calculator minimally. A graphing calculator could be used but is not required.

Algebra A - This course covers the 8th Grade Minnesota math standards.

Algebra AA - This course covers the Minnesota 8th grade standards at a faster pace than Algebra A. Due to the faster pace, additional topics will be covered.

Algebra 2 - Requires mastery of 7th Grade Algebra.

Health 8: (Full year, every other day): This year long course is required for all eighth grade students. The intent of the course is to help students take responsibility for the improvement of their own personal, mental, and emotional health, as well as the well-being of others.

Physical Education: (Full year, every other day) Students should change into clothes that allow them to move and are appropriate for the weather. Students will be participating in lifetime sports (tennis, badminton, ping-pong, weightlifting, swimming, bowling, and other recreational activities), and team sports (football, volleyball, basketball, floor hockey, soccer, speedball, and softball). A locker with a lock will be assigned to each student. Written Quizzes will be given throughout the school year.

Language and Music Elective Classes

Amistades 8: (Full year, every day): This is a full year course that meets every day and is designed specifically for students who have completed the elementary *Compañeros* program, Amistades 6, and Amistades 7. This course will contain a variety of topics including more structured language study and cultural issues. A "C" average in Amistades 7 is a prerequisite for registration in this course. Students will need a "C" average grade in Amistades 8 to be eligible for enrollment in Spanish 3+ in 9th grade.

World Language (Spanish IB, French IB, or German IB): (Full year, every other day)

1b - 1B is the next step for students who successfully completed 1A. Students will engage with other students to speak, read, write and understand their chosen language. No prior knowledge is necessary. Come join us for an adventure! World language electives 1A & 1B are a two-year plan of study resulting in the student completing the equivalent of a first year high school language course (no high school credit is earned for any middle school course).

Prerequisite: Grade 7 composite GPA of "C" average or higher. Students must pass each semester of world language instruction to advance to the next semester.

Band 8: Students continue learning basic theory and technique while becoming exposed to a wide variety of musical selections of increasing difficulty. Evening concerts are presented, and students receive a weekly lesson with a band instructor. The 8th grade band tours one day each year. Students are expected to stay in band for the entire year. Students are expected to practice for at least 60 minutes per week, in addition to the full band rehearsals. If you took a year off from band or delayed joining band due to the pandemic or any other reason, please join us!! We would love to have you and will do everything we can to help you catch up to your classmates.

Prerequisite: Successful participation in 7th grade band. Students having no prior band experience are welcome to contact the director to begin lessons on a band instrument. These students will be included in band rehearsals after they have gained sufficient technique on their band instrument.

7th/8th Grade Choir: 7th/8th Grade Choir builds on prior knowledge, however beginners are welcome. This vocal music course is for students who have a desire to take their skills in learning, singing and performing music to the next level. This course focuses on vocal technique, singing as a member of an ensemble, reading music, developing part independence, and singing with expressiveness and confidence. Our 7th/8th Grade Choir performs at evening concerts, Winter Walk in December and at the District Choral Festival during the school day in February. A small ensemble of 7th/8th Grade Choir members also performs at Northfield elementary schools, nearby nursing homes and other local events. Choir is a great place to make new friends! All team members are valued and work cooperatively every day. If you have any questions about choir at NMS please contact Ms. Bendett at mbendett@northfieldschools.org.

Orchestra: Eighth grade orchestra is designed to be a learning experience as well as a time for preparing for performances. Students continue to learn and review the following: scales and etudes, shifting, vibrato, tuning, solos and rhythmic patterns. Each group strives to achieve a balance of sound, good tone, and the ability to play together musically. Music is chosen to give students a well-rounded background of many composers and musical styles. Each student receives orchestra lessons, has an opportunity to participate in an orchestra festival, and may audition for an extra-curricular chamber orchestra that meets outside of the school day. Evening concerts are presented during the school year.

Prerequisite: Successful participation in 7th grade orchestra or consent of the instructor. Students having no prior orchestra experience are welcome to contact the director to begin lessons on an orchestra instrument. These students will be included in rehearsals after gaining sufficient technique on their instrument.

Additional Elective Classes

Exploratory Art: Creating expressive cardboard/papier mâché masks, drawing self-portraits, producing large scale paintings, and making stop motion films are just a few of the approaches students will take to increase their artistic skills. Students will have the opportunity to utilize a range of media and methods to increase their confidence in expressing themselves visually while receiving exposure to influential artists and art movements. The course goal is to have all students realize that they can create great artwork!

Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS): Do you learn best by *doing*? In a FACS class, students will have many hands-on experiences to develop their culinary skills, design and create projects, and practice independent living skills. Students will explore a variety of Family and Consumer Science topics such as baking, cooking, nutrition, sewing, design, relationships, money management, and being a consumer in today's economy. Students will also practice working in teams and problem-solving. All of these topics can be applied to life *right now*! And, maybe lead to a future career.

Robotics & Making: This course explores all that is Robotics! We begin by exploring electricity and electronics by building and testing circuits. This unit wraps up with a hands-on **SOLDERING** project they will take home. Students will use our **Glowforge Laser** and an **Arduino Microcomputer** to build and program a Robot! **VEX Robotics Equipment** is then used to explore **Mechanisms**. Students will learn how to use and manipulate mechanisms to change speed, torque and type of movement. We use the VEX equipment to build some machines and program them using a C-based computer **programming** through **RobotC**. We end the year exploring **Fluid Power**, where students will use the woodshop to build a **Fluid Power Project**. This course is a very hands-on, fun, project-based class.

Engineering, Design & Woodworking: This course studies and applies the Engineering Design Process as it pertains to product design. Students will learn an industry standard 3D design software package called **Autodesk Inventor**. They will complete assignments with Inventor as they learn different features of the program. Student will use the **MakerBot Replicator 3D printer** and **Laguna Tools IQ CNC Router** to complete some of their projects. Students will learn how to communicate and collaborate with their classmates to solve design challenges in a project based environment. Both woodworking Hand Tools and Power Machines will be used to build projects students design.

Technology for Success: This grade 7 and 8 elective course will teach students how to use their iPad to maximize success, show students how to use different computer programs that are used in many careers, explore how technology can be used to stay organized, and teach students proper technology etiquette. Students will also learn keyboarding skills.

Drop/Add Policy: Withdrawal from courses requires parental consent, and must be done the first few weeks of school.