



**TALAWANDA MIDDLE SCHOOL
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
2020-2021**

Grade 6 - Course Descriptions

English/Language Arts (ELA)	(Year Long)	Grade 6	REQUIRED
Students are given a variety of opportunities, both individually and through teamwork, to demonstrate their literacy and to develop an appreciation of our language. Grammar skills are emphasized as students are taught to proofread, edit and use appropriate grammar in their own writing. Students learn research skills and strategies. Students will encounter a multitude of genres as they read for a variety of purposes. Students read both teacher and student selected material at their interest and reading level and interact with other readers to share and discuss texts and improve their reading strategies. In-class study of the school-wide vocabulary program, Power Words, builds vocabulary skills.			
Social Studies	(Year Long)	Grade 6	REQUIRED
Master the five themes of geography and apply that knowledge as you explore ancient world civilizations. Answer the question, "What does it mean to be civilized?" Embark upon archeological adventures from prehistoric times to the river civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and India. Finally, discover the wonders of the Maya, Inca, Aztec, and Mississippians.			
Math	(Year Long)	Grade 6	REQUIRED
This 6 th grade inquiry based mathematics course will give students the opportunity to learn math concepts through a problem-centered approach. The mathematical highlights in the 6 th grade include, fraction, decimal, and percent equivalents and performing operations, 2 dimensional geometry and measurement concepts, solving simple algebraic equations and simplifying expressions.			
Science	(Year Long)	Grade 6	REQUIRED
Scientific Inquiry and Ways of Knowing guide sixth graders as they move through an exciting hands-on series of investigations that include rocks and minerals and natural resources, cells and heredity, chemical//physical changes and the nature of matter, and last but not least - technology. Projects abound, but robot building is a real favorite.			
Health	(1 Semester)	Grade 6	REQUIRED
Do you want to live to be 100 years old? The information you learn in health class will help you. Students will learn about wellness, communication, character education, nutrition, physical activity, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, the decision-making process, goal setting, growth and development, and sexually transmitted diseases.			
Physical Education I	(1 Semester)	Grade 6	REQUIRED
Students develop knowledge and skills about lifetime sports and recreational activities. Students also will recognize the contribution of leisure time activities to a healthy lifetime. Some 6 th grade activities include: Ultimate Frisbee, Physical Fitness Test, Dance & Rhythm, Floor Hockey, Volleyball, and Basketball.			
Musical Studies	(Year Long)	Grade 6	
Musical Studies is a class for those students not wishing to be in a performance-based class. Students will explore music in different cultures from around the world including Africa, Egypt, Cuba, and India. We will also listen, learn, and complete projects involving Jazz, Country, Rock and Roll, and Rap. Lastly, students will learn how to play a variety of instruments including African drumming, guitar, and other percussion instruments.			
Band 6 – Woodwinds or Brass/Percussion	(Year Long)	Grade 6	
Beginning band students will have fun learning to perform music on Brass, Woodwind, or Percussion instruments with a range of different kinds of music. The 6 th grade band is open to all students who wish to learn new skills in music! Best of all, no previous experience is required! <i>This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.</i>			

Orchestra 6**(Year Long)****Grade 6**

The 6th grade orchestra is the class for those students beginning instruction on one of the bowed string instruments: violin, viola, cello, or bass. Basic performance and music reading skills are taught. Students perform several concerts throughout the year. *This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.*

Chorus 6**(Year Long)****Grade 6**

In this performance-based course, students will learn basic music fundamentals to read music. Students will also learn the mechanics of the voice as well as the proper way to sing. Students will sing a variety of songs including classical, foreign language, Broadway medleys, rounds, a cappella etc. Vocal concerts will be presented throughout the year. *This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.*

Grade 6 - Gifted and Intervention Services*

**Students who qualify for enrichment, gifted and/or intervention services will be notified and given the opportunity to be placed in the proper courses by their counselor.*

English/Language Arts 6 Gifted*

(Year Long)

Grade 6

Students are given a variety of opportunities, both individually and through teamwork, to demonstrate their literacy and to develop an appreciation of our language. Grammar skills are emphasized as students are taught to proofread, edit and use appropriate grammar in their own writing. Students learn research skills and strategies. Students will encounter a multitude of genres as they read for a variety of purposes. Students read both teacher and student selected material at their interest and reading level and interact with other readers to share and discuss texts and improve their reading strategies. In-class study of the school-wide vocabulary program, Power Words, builds vocabulary skills.

Reading Literacy Lab 6*

(1-2 Semesters)

Grade 6

This course will be offered in addition to the regular 6th grade ELA class. Reading Literacy Lab enables students struggling with reading to improve their reading skills and enhance higher-level comprehension skills. The goal is for the student to produce reading that feels comfortable and natural, and therefore, results in the understanding of the author's message. Through this unique approach, students work in a small-group setting to improve their reading and critical thinking skills in a relatively brief amount of time.

Math Extensions*

(1-2 Semesters)

Grade 6

This course will be offered in addition to the regular 6th grade math class. It will provide students extra assistance in learning and understanding math concepts. Students' abilities and achievement will be used in order to support and reinforce areas of need.

Math 6 Gifted*

(Year Long)

Grade 6

The goal of this course will be to provide a rigorous math challenge to those students who have demonstrated high achievement in the math area. It will cover the regular math course of study, and in addition provide enrichments and extensions.

ET/EH*

(1-2 Semesters)

Grade 6

Extra Time / Extra Help (ET/EH) provides a tutoring service for selected students. This service focuses on completion of schoolwork and improved study habits and is flexible to meet the individual needs of these students.

Grade 7 - Course Descriptions

English Language Arts (ELA) (Year Long) **Grade 7** **REQUIRED**
English/Language Arts 7 emphasizes revision and the six traits of writing. Several pieces are written and revised with focus traits in mind, and much attention is also given to crafting prompted responses. Daily Grammar Practice rounds out the program. Students will continue to practice fluency, reading strategies, and to read independently. This course includes two novel studies, and second semester, an emphasis on reading for information. In-class study of the school-wide vocabulary program, Power Words, builds vocabulary skills.

Social Studies (Year Long) **Grade 7** **REQUIRED**
Fight the Minotaur and witness the battle of ancient Troy! Ride your chariot to victory in the Roman Coliseum! Sit with the Knights of the Round Table and defend your castle against a medieval siege! Find out if you have what it takes to be a Renaissance person! Sail with the great explorers to new lands! This required course will take all seventh graders from the Ancient Greeks through the Age of Exploration. But it's not just History. Students will also learn Geography, Government, Economics, and Citizenship.

Math (Year Long) **Grade 7** **REQUIRED**
This inquiry based mathematics course will give students the opportunity to understand math concepts through a problem solving approach. During the year, students will investigate proportional reasoning, volume and surface area, linear relationships, and probability.

Science (Year Long) **Grade 7** **REQUIRED**
7th grade Science is an exploration through the biosphere. We look at the living and nonliving aspects of our world and how they work together to support life. You will study ecosystems, biomes, weather, water and the impact that humans have in each of those areas. To top it all off we take a look at energy transformations and how energy is used.

Business Fundamentals (1 Semester) **Grades 7** **REQUIRED**
Students will learn the basics of financial literacy and keyboarding. This course will provide necessary skills for students in life, school, and the workplace. It includes: learning how to type correctly, the main characteristics of our economic system, and the role of businesses, consumers and the government in the economy.

Digital Media (1 Semester) **Grades 7/8**
This course will explore various methods of creating and manipulating digital imagery. Students will get to create their own digital animation, learn how to manipulate photographs, and learn the basics of video production.

Engineering Technology (1 Semester) **Grade 7/8**
Engineering Technology is a course designed to introduce and encourage students to explore career pathways in the fields of engineering and technology. By allowing students to develop problem-solving skills and helping them to become more technologically literate they will be more prepared to meet the challenges of their future educational and career related endeavors. Projects include Rube Goldberg Machines, Solid Modeling, Computer Animation, Civil Engineering & Bridge Design, CO₂ Car Design & Data Analysis.

Life Skills (1 Semester) **Grade 7/8**
Do you want to be able to survive on your own? In Life Skills , you will prepare for independence by learning to select and prepare nutritious foods and learn to use a sewing machine.

Art (1 Semester) **Grade 7/8**
Students will explore and create in the world of Art! Have fun using your imagination by developing your ideas, improving your observation skills, learning about artists, art history, and the cultures of the world! Make your art experience exciting! Students are able to take this class during the 7th and 8th grade year. The same material will not be covered.

Physical Education II (1 Semester) **Grade 7/8**
Students will learn the importance of living a healthy lifestyle through exercise and movement. They will learn to participate in team sports including: Soccer, Floor Hockey, Volleyball, Softball, Physical Fitness Test, Basketball, Flag Football, Kickball, Aerobics and Weightlifting. Students will also learn to be fit for life with fitness activities, such as: aerobics, using weights, exercise bands.

Technology Explorations (1 Semester) **Grade 7/8**
A comprehensive study of the knowledge and processes necessary in designing, making, developing, producing, using, managing, and assessing technological systems and products.

World Cultures (1 Semester) **Grades 7/8**
Students are introduced to world languages through the reading and writing of simple conversations in Spanish and French using fun activities. Cultural activities are incorporated in order to familiarize students with the wide variety of countries that make up the Spanish and French-speaking world. This course is designed to enable students to make an informed decision on the choice of world languages in the future.

Band 7 (Year Long) **Grade 7**
Continue the journey with the second level of Band at TMS! This group offers a more advanced and creative level of music for students' enjoyment and progress as they continue to develop their musical skills. *This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.*

Orchestra 7 (Year Long) **Grades 7**
The 7th grade orchestra builds on skills learned in 6th grade and prepares students for the THS Orchestra. Students perform several concerts and attend contests throughout the year. *This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.*

Chorus 7 (Year Long) **Grade 7**
In this performance-based course, students will learn basic music fundamentals to read music. Students will also learn the mechanics of the voice as well as the proper way to sing. Students will sing a variety of songs including classical, foreign language, Broadway medleys, rounds, a cappella etc. Vocal concerts will be presented throughout the year. *This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.*

Grade 7 – Enrichment, Gifted and Intervention Services*

**Students who qualify for enrichment, gifted and/or intervention services will be notified and given the opportunity to be placed in the proper courses by their counselor.*

Gifted English Language Arts 7*

(Year Long)

Grade 7

English/Language Arts 7 emphasizes revision and the six traits of writing. Several pieces are written and revised with focus traits in mind, and much attention is also given to crafting prompted responses. Daily Grammar Practice rounds out the program. Students will continue to practice fluency, reading strategies, and to read independently. This course includes two novel studies, and second semester, an emphasis on reading for information. In-class study of the school-wide vocabulary program, Power Words, builds vocabulary skills.

Reading Literacy Lab 7*

(1-2 Semesters)

Grade 7

This course will be offered in addition to the regular 7th grade ELA class. Reading Literacy Lab enables students struggling with reading to improve their reading skills and enhance higher-level comprehension skills. The goal is for the student to produce reading that feels comfortable and natural, and therefore, results in the understanding of the author's message. Through this unique approach, students work in a small-group setting to improve their reading and critical thinking skills in a relatively brief amount of time.

Math Extensions 7*

(1-2 Semesters)

Grade 7

This course will be offered in addition to the regular 7th grade math class. It will provide students extra assistance in learning and understanding math concepts. Students' abilities and achievement will be used in order to support and reinforce areas of need.

Math 7 Pre-Algebra*

(Year Long)

Grade 7

This advanced math experience is inquiry based, giving students the opportunity to understand mathematics on a deeper level. Students will investigate linear relationships, proportional reasoning, volume and surface area of prisms, cones, pyramids, and spheres, the Pythagorean Theorem, and probability.

Science Discoveries*

(1 Semester)

Grade 7

Science Discoveries is an elective semester course that will immerse students in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) activities that promote creative problem-solving, communication, and teamwork skills. Students will be engaged in Space Challenge Lego Activities (Mindstorms EV3) including activities in understanding gears, simple machines, physics, and elements of design engineering. This experience also includes exploration of current advances in scientific knowledge through exploration of current events articles.

Bel Canto

(Year Long)

Grade 7/8

Bel Canto, is an audition based group comprised of 7th and 8th grade girls. Students will learn and sing a variety of songs including foreign language, show tunes, classical, etc. Students will have 3 concerts a year and will compete at Music in the Parks and OMEA competitions in the spring. Other performances or competitions may be added. *To qualify for the course students must audition in front a panel of judges. This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.*

ET/EH*

(1-2 Semester)

Grade 7/8

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Grade 8 – Course Descriptions

English Language Arts

(Year Long)

Grade 8

REQUIRED

English/Language Arts 8 emphasizes effort on long-term projects while practicing the six traits of writing. Two multi-genre projects are included, one in the fall and one in spring. A major research paper, an I-Search paper on a career selected by the student, is the winter project. This includes real-life experiences - interviewing people who work in the selected career and a day of job shadowing. Daily Grammar Practice rounds out the program. Students will continue to practice fluency, reading strategies, and to read independently. Emphasis is placed on reading for information and inspiration for writing. In-class study of the school-wide vocabulary program, Power Words, builds vocabulary skills.

Social Studies

(Year Long)

Grade 8

REQUIRED

American History is the 8th grade Social Studies class. This class will cover the events that led to the creation of the United States through the American Civil War and beyond. Students will specifically study topics such as the Thirteen Colonies, French and Indian War, American Revolution, Creation of the Constitution, First Presidents, War of 1812, Jacksonian Democracy, Westward Expansion, Manifest Destiny, Causes of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Math

(Year Long)

Grade 8

REQUIRED

This pre-algebra math experience will give students the opportunity to become engaged listeners and confident responders as they interact with algebraic content for the first time. Students will investigate linear, exponential, and quadratic relationships, discover the Pythagorean Theorem, and understand how to interpret data using a variety of graphic representations.

Science

(Year Long)

Grade 8

REQUIRED

Prepare to think BIG in eighth grade science! The course takes a "physics first" approach beginning with the concepts of motion, light and sound, and their applications to the study of earth and beyond. Large-scale topics and events are included such as astronomy, space exploration, plate tectonics and mountain building. Highlights include model rocketry, GPS geocaching, and a wide variety of scientific experimentation designed to help students enlarge their understanding of earth in the universe.

Digital Media

(1 Semester)

Grades 7/8

This course will explore various methods of creating and manipulating digital imagery. Students will get to create their own digital animation, learn how to manipulate photographs, and learn the basics of video production.

Engineering Technology

(1 Semester)

Grade 7/8

Engineering Technology is a course designed to introduce and encourage students to explore career pathways in the fields of engineering and technology. By allowing students to develop problem-solving skills and helping them to become more technologically literate they will be more prepared to meet the challenges of their future educational and career related endeavors. Projects include Rube Goldberg Machines, Solid Modeling, Computer Animation, Civil Engineering & Bridge Design, CO₂ Car Design & Data Analysis.

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(1 Semester)

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Band 8 (Year Long) **Grade 8**
The most advanced level Band at TMS! The focus of this band is excellence in musical performance and enjoyment! While students continue to develop a lasting enjoyment of music making, they also can prepare for their future as musical students at THS! *This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.*

Orchestra 8 (Year Long) **Grade 8**
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Grade 8 – Enrichment, Gifted and Intervention Services*

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Gifted English Language Arts 8*

(Year Long)

Grade 8

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Reading Literacy Lab 8*

(1-2 Semesters)

Grade 8

This course will be offered in addition to the regular 8th grade ELA class. Reading Literacy Lab enables students struggling with reading to improve their reading skills and enhance higher-level comprehension skills. The goal is for the student to produce reading that feels comfortable and natural, and therefore, results in the understanding of the author's message. Through this unique approach, students work in a small-group setting to improve their reading and critical thinking skills in a relatively brief amount of time.

Social Studies Explorations 8*

(1 Semester)

Grade 8

This class will focus on US and global perspectives in relation to current events. There will be open discussions on geopolitical issues and subjectively analyzing, researching and writing about them. Some topics slated for discussion include: the Middle East, Russia in transition, Africa's many crises, Asia's economic growth and the Europe Union as a new superpower.

Math Extensions*

(1-2 Semesters)

Grade 8

This course will be offered in addition to the regular 8th grade math class. It will provide students extra assistance in learning and understanding math concepts. Students' abilities and achievement will be used in order to support and reinforce areas of need.

Algebra I (HS credit)*

(Year Long)

Grade 8

This advanced 8th grade math experience will give students the opportunity to become engaged listeners and confident responders as they interact with algebraic content on a deeper level. Students will investigate inverse, linear, exponential, and quadratic relationships, interpret data through a variety of means, master the Pythagorean Theorem, and be challenged to derive many basic algebraic formulas.

Spanish I (HS Credit)

(Year Long)

Grade 8

Spanish I is designed to provide the student with basic skills in areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Emphasis is on speaking and listening to the language. Cultural activities are incorporated into the class. Students are expected to communicate in the target language during in class activities and with each other. Students must maintain a "C" average. This class will be printed on the student's high school transcript.

LINKs*/ LINKs ELA*

(Year Long)

Grade 8

Connections is a career-based intervention program. Expected outcomes for students include: increased attendance, reduced suspensions, improved academic performance and grades, improved achievement test scores, development of broad school and career goals, and improved behavior. Students will have a period of English/Language Arts and a period of Connections.

Bel Canto***(Year Long)******Grade 7/8***

Bel Canto, is an audition based group comprised of 7th and 8th grade girls. Students will learn and sing a variety of songs including foreign language, show tunes, classical, etc. Students will have 3 concerts a year and will compete at Music in the Parks and OMEA competitions in the spring. Other performances or competitions may be added. *To qualify for this course students must audition in front a panel of judges. This is a performance-based course and students are required to attend all performances.*

ET/EH****(1-2 Semesters)******Grade 7/8***

Extra Time/Extra Help (ET/EH) provides a tutoring service for selected students. This service focuses on completion of schoolwork and improved study habits and is flexible to meet the individual needs of these students.