

SHAKER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

This booklet is designed to assist students and parents in understanding the course offerings in eighth grade. All required eighth grade subjects are described, as well as courses, which are offered at an enriched, accelerated, or remedial level. The courses followed by the number '8' constitute the regular eighth grade program, which prepares students for the Regents program at Shaker High School.

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A. ENGLISH

1. English 8

The eighth grade English program is designed to provide students with a strong background in basic skills. The development of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills is stressed within the language arts classroom. Students will be required to read several class taught novels as well as independently chosen titles. Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to appreciate and to respond to quality literature through discussion and independent writing assignments. This course stresses the need for effective written expression with an emphasis placed on the writing process and the mechanics of language. Students will be prepared to successfully complete the NYS grade eight English/Language Arts assessment.

2. English 8G

English 8G is a course designed for students who have struggled with English Language Arts in their previous school years. The course will focus upon the core content areas of regular English and will prepare students to be successful in their English class, on the New York State Grade 8 English Language Arts Assessment and on future Regents exams. Students who complete English 8G will be enrolled in either English 9R or Humanities in grade 9, thus on track to complete a Regents English sequence.

The English 8G class will be limited to no more than 20 students and will be taught by a certified English teacher with the assistance of a teacher assistant.

3. English 8E (Enriched)

The English 8E program is designed to meet the needs of the most capable students within the area of language arts while addressing the same instructional objectives as English 8. Emphasis is on reading and writing skills with enrichment provided through individual and group extension projects in these components of the curriculum. Special units of study may include research, drama, poetry, and the novel.

To be considered for inclusion, and to remain in the class for the full year, a student must meet and maintain the following:

- A. The student has maintained an overall 'A' average in the area of language arts in seventh grade.
- B. The student achieved at or above the 75 percentile locally on the total language and reading subtests of the ITBS.
- C. The student must be recommended by the current language teacher.
- D. The student has demonstrated high motivation and well developed study habits.
- E. The student has demonstrated an ability to analyze literature and think critically.
- F. The student is a mastery writer, based on evaluation of the student's writing portfolio.
- G. The student has demonstrated the ability to work independently and a curiosity for learning beyond the daily classroom instruction.

Students will be prepared to successfully complete the NYS eighth grade English/Language assessment. Recommendations for ninth grade will be based upon a student's success in meeting these requirements

4. Fundamental ELA

Fundamental ELA is an Academic Intervention Service (AIS) for 7th and/or 8th graders who need extra assistance in language arts. Students included generally are at risk of scoring at Level I or II on a NYS ELA assessment or are recommended for inclusion by their 7th or 8th grade English teacher. Students enrolled in Fundamental ELA meet every other day for 20 minutes in lieu of silent reading.

B. READING & WRITING

A course in reading/writing is required by the State/District regulations for students whose scores on standardized tests indicate a need for intensive instruction in these areas. Reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills are developed as students read and write about high interest, young adult novels. Study skills, as well as reading and writing in contents area courses, are also addressed. Reading/Writing is taught in small classes every day throughout the year. Parents of students being scheduled for reading/writing will be notified.

C. MATHEMATICS

1. Math 8

Eighth grade math is appropriate for those students who plan on pursuing a Regents math sequence beginning in grade nine. Successful completion of this course prepares a student for entrance into Math 9R and the Regents mathematics program. Students will be on course to complete the Integrated Algebra Regents exam at the end of ninth or tenth grade. Topics in regular math are covered along with techniques in problem solving, algebra and coordinate geometry, transformational geometry and measurement, set theory, operations with integers, and coordinate geometry. Students will be prepared to successfully complete the NYS eighth grade math assessment in March of eighth grade.

2. Math 8G

Math 8G is a course designed for students who have struggled with mathematics in their previous school years. The course will focus upon the core content areas of regular math 8 and will prepare students to be successful in their math class, on the New York State Grade 8 Math Assessment and on future Regents exams. Students who complete math 8G will be enrolled in either math 9R or IRP mathematics in grade 9, thus on track to complete an Regents mathematics sequence.

The math 8G class will be limited to no more than 20 students and will be taught by a certified mathematics teacher with the assistance of a teacher assistant.

3. Math 9R (Accelerated Math 8)

This is the same Math 9R as is offered in ninth grade. It is available to eighth grade students who demonstrate a strong ability and interest in mathematics and who plan on pursuing a five-year mathematics sequence. It is also a prerequisite for further study in mathematics and science at the Honors level. While much of this course is focused on algebra with some geometry, other areas, such as probability and statistics, transformational geometry, and trigonometric functions are also introduced. The final exam for this course is the Integrated Algebra Regents exam; students will also be required to complete the NYS eighth grade math assessment. Students successfully completing the course will receive one high school Regents credit. Please note that since this course earns a high school credit, the attendance policy in effect at the high school applies to this course as well. In effect, a student may be denied course credit based on poor attendance. Refer to the junior high student handbook for an explanation of the policy. Students will be evaluated at the end of the school year and recommended to pursue either the Regents or Honors math program in ninth grade based upon the quality of completed work. In general, a student is expected to meet the following criteria to be placed in this advanced class:

- A. The student must have demonstrated high achievement in the math 7E program.
- B. The student should be recommended by his/her present math teacher for placement into the program.

4. Fundamental Math 8

Fundamental Math 8 is an Academic Intervention Service (AIS) for eighth graders who need extra assistance in mathematics. This program is for students who scored at Level I or II on the 7th grade NYS math assessment or were recommended for inclusion by their 7th grade math teacher. Students enrolled in Fundamental Math 8 meet every day for 20 minutes in lieu of silent reading.

D. SCIENCE

1. Science 8

This course in physical science covers the main areas of physics and chemistry. The following topics are addressed during the year: force and work, moving objects, the laws of motion, electricity and magnetism, heat, light and sound, atoms, elements, compound, mixtures, and chemical reactions. Laboratory and science class skills such as safety, graphing, measurement in the metric system, use of the computer, laboratory procedure, and working with laboratory equipment are stressed. The course is based on the NYS Education Department syllabus in science. Students will be prepared to successfully complete the NYS eighth grade science assessment at the end of the year.

2. Earth Science 9A

This course is the same NYS Regents course as is offered in high school and is available to eighth grade students who demonstrate a strong ability and interest in science. Students who begin high school science in eighth grade should plan on pursuing a five-year science sequence. Students enrolled in Earth Science must also be enrolled in Accelerated Math 8. The teaching methods and approaches to laboratory investigations are designed to challenge our most able eighth grade science students. Please note that since this course earns high school credit, the attendance policy in effect at the high school applies to this course as well. In effect, a student may be denied course credit based on poor attendance. Refer to the junior high student handbook for an explanation of the policy.

Each student will be expected to complete laboratory classes, a mid-year test, and the NYS Earth Science Regents examination in June. Topics included in the study of earth science are energy and change, properties of earth material, thermal and radiant energy, moisture and energy budgets, erosional processes, formation of rocks, interpreting geologic events and astronomy. Successful completion of this course provides students with one high school Regents credit.

Students will be scheduled for and must attend one laboratory class each week. These labs may be scheduled after school, and are **in addition** to regular Earth Science classes.

In general, a student is expected to meet the following criteria to be placed in this advanced class:

- A. Students enrolled in this course must be enrolled in Accelerated Math 8.
- B. All students entering must have achieved an A average in both science 7E and Math 7E.
- C. No individual effort and conduct grade may be less than G in either of the above courses.
- D. Each student should be recommended by a consensus of his/her science 7E and math instructor, for placement in this program.

E. SOCIAL STUDIES 8

The exploration of history in eighth grade concludes a two-year study of American History. The course begins with the post Civil War Era and continues to the present including the following units: "An Industrial Society", "The United States in Interdependent World", "The United Between the Wars", "Worldwide Responsibilities", and "World War II to the Present". Students are involved in the historical, social, geographic, political, and economic themes as they relate to the people and events of this time period. Also, in June of eighth grade, students will take the NYS Social Studies Assessment, which serves as the final exam for social studies 8.

The teaching of specialized social studies skills continues in eighth grade and will include the following:

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| A. reading maps, charts, and graphs | F. computer / technology skills |
| B. interpreting political cartoons | G. study skills |
| C. reading, speaking, and listening skills | H. analyzing primary source documents |
| D. essay writing | I. analyzing current events |
| E. research skills | J. studying a given historical period or theme through an interdisciplinary lens |

F. PHYSICAL EDUCATION 8

Physical education is scheduled for all students on an every other day basis for the full school year. Students with physically disabling conditions, either permanent or temporary, are provided an adapted program designed for the individual student.

G. HEALTH

Health is scheduled for all students on an every other day basis for one semester. This course includes the study of decision-making, goal setting, self management, personal safety, substance abuse prevention, violence, dating and relationships, HIV/AIDS, and family life. The goal of the course is to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to live a healthy life.

H. FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The NYS graduation requirements mandate that all students (except those exempted by the Committee on Special Education) study for two years of a foreign language and pass the Proficiency examination at the end of eighth grade. If a student fails to pass the proficiency examination, he/she will have to pass a high school Regents level foreign language course at the end of ninth grade.

To enable students to meet the NYS graduation requirements there are basically two programs available, the Regents level courses in four languages and the General program in two languages. Students who have completed the seventh grade foreign language program may elect the eighth grade Regents program in French I, Russian I, German I, Spanish I, or the General program in Spanish or French. Please note that since these courses earn a high school credit, the attendance policy in effect at the high school applies to these courses as well. In effect, a student may be denied course credit based on poor attendance. Refer to the junior high school student handbook for an explanation of the policy.

A Note of Caution:

German IR and Russian IR (Regents) are offered in eighth grade only. Therefore, a student failing either of these two courses in eighth grade will be required to begin study of a different foreign language in ninth grade in order to fulfill the foreign language requirements. In the other foreign languages, French and Spanish, students have the option of repeating the level one course if necessary.

General Regents (G) indicates that a student is enrolled in a Regents level program where the expected range of achievement is between 65-85.

Regents (R) indicates that a student is enrolled in a Regents level program where the expected range of achievement is between 75-100.

Students pursuing an Advanced Regents diploma via the foreign language option must complete three years of study in foreign language with passage of the Regents examination.

I. TECHNOLOGY

All students are required to take one unit of technology by the end of eighth grade. The emphasis in this course is on process and problem solving. Students design and construct solutions to challenging problems. In eighth grade students receive twenty consecutive weeks of technology study on an every day basis.

J. HOME AND CAREERS

By the end of eighth grade all students are required to complete a $\frac{3}{4}$ unit in the study of home and career skills. As in technology, the emphasis in this course is on process, problem solving, decision-making, and management. The topics include personal development, resource management, and career planning. Students receive home and career instruction for ten consecutive weeks on an every day basis.

K. ART 8

The eighth grade art program builds on a foundation of skills presented during the seventh grade curriculum. Two and three-dimensional concepts are taught as they relate to the elements and principles of art and design. Students will solve a variety of problems involving sculpture, drawing, printmaking, ceramics and computer generated art. Art appreciation and history, as well as art criticism is part of the eighth grade curriculum. Art homework and sketchbook assignments will further enhance the program. Art is provided on an everyday basis for a 10-week period.

L. ACCELERATED STUDIO IN ART 8

Studio in Art, a high school level course, is an introduction to a variety of art disciplines. Although drawing is a major focus, painting, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, advertising and electronic media are integral parts of the curriculum. Art history and appreciation, as well as art criticism round out the program. Studio Art is required of all students planning a high school art sequence, and it meets the art requirement for graduation. Homework and sketchbook assignments are required. When taken in eighth grade, admission is based on a teacher and guidance recommendation, as well as permission of the department supervisor. ***An art sequence commitment is expected for high school, including Drawing, which will be scheduled for the ninth grade year.*** Please note that since this course earns a high school credit, the attendance policy in effect at the high school applies to this course. In effect, a student may be denied course credit based on poor attendance. Refer to the junior high handbook for an explanation of the policy.

M. GENERAL MUSIC

Eighth grade students are scheduled for one semester (twenty weeks) of General Music, which is divided into four units. The goal of this program is to develop an understanding and appreciation of the elements and history of music, with particular focus on Rock-n-Roll. In these two units, students will learn the history behind Rock-n-Roll music, and will also learn how to identify different styles and performers through listening exercises, completing various projects, and by using the technology equipment available in the music classroom, computer labs, and the library.

In the two instrument units, students will review the skills they learned in seventh grade, and learn new skills that will allow them to perform on the two instruments (electric keyboard and acoustic guitar) at a more advanced level. Students will learn these skills through performing individually, in small groups, and as a class. Students will play a mixed repertoire of folk and rock music on each instrument.

N. MUSIC PERFORMING GROUPS

In the junior high school, Band, Chorus, and Orchestra rehearse every other day during the school day. On the opposite day, students in a performing group would have a study hall. Band, Chorus, and Orchestra perform in two school concerts per year and may have other performance opportunities. In addition, students in these performing groups are the only ones eligible to audition for Jazz Ensemble, Select Band, Girl's Chorus, Select Chorus, Syncopella (all male chorus), and Scherzo. Students are encouraged to be in both a choral and instrumental group, since the two musical experiences complement each other.

Students in Band and Orchestra will also have a small-group lesson once each week. In lessons, students learn technique and work to improve their individual skills. Private lessons, while encouraged, are not substituted for school lessons at the junior high level.

Students who wish to participate in a performing group must indicate their decision on the eighth grade Course Selection Form distributed from the junior high school. When selecting a performing group, students are committing to participate for an entire year and to perform in all scheduled concerts. The decision to drop a performing group will only be made under extenuating circumstances and with the guidance counselor, administrator, and director.