

Sugar-Salem Junior High School  
Elective Course Descriptions

**Seventh Grade Electives**

Band (three trimesters) ***Highly recommended to take all three trimesters:***

This course is an introduction to instrumental (wind and percussion) music. Students will be taught musical terms and symbols as well as care for and tone production on wind and percussion instruments.

Dinosaurs and Mega Mammals (one trimester)

This course will study geologic time and mass extinction events, with a focus on their causes and consequences. Then, we will shift our focus to dinosaurs and how fossils form. Finally, we will look at the mega mammals that went extinct during the current ice age.

**Seventh and Eighth Grade Electives** - These courses are offered to both seventh and eighth grade students and the classes will contain a mixture of both grades.

Beginning Art (one trimester)

This course will introduce students to the basics of Art as well as new ways of thinking about Art. Students will explore and use the power of the Principles and Elements of Design to effectively communicate ideas.

2-D Art (one trimester) ***Prerequisite Beginning Art:***

This is a more technical course and is designed to help students learn to draw and shade subject from a photo or real object with a high degree of accuracy. Graphite pencil will be the primary medium. As time permits, we will introduce other mediums and explore more stylized or abstract techniques.

3-D Art (one trimester) ***Prerequisite Beginning Art:***

Students will explore and create three-dimensional art forms including the following: paper mache, clay tiles, recycled assemblages, and soap sculptures. A strong work ethic will be essential for this class. Students may need to work on their projects a lot at home and they can be very messy.

Advanced 2-D Art (one trimester) ***Prerequisite - 2D Art and Instructor Approval:***

This course is primarily a painting class. Using watercolor, acrylic, (and possibly oil). We will explore the qualities of each medium and a variety of techniques for using them to create paintings in both representational and abstract styles. **This is a TWO HOUR class and uses TWO electives.**

Digital Photography (one trimester) ***Prerequisite - 88% or higher in Beginning Art and teacher recommendation:***

This is a rigorous, dual credit course with at least two hours of homework per week during daylight hours. Students will learn how to create quality images with strong impact through understanding focusing techniques, lighting, composition, exposure and much more.

Students must supply their own digital camera, extra batteries, 16 G or larger USB drive, and camera manual. A tripod would also be helpful. Students will need these items on the second day of class. This course can be difficult for students who don't make their homework photo shoots a priority or who struggle to remember to bring their supplies each day. To earn dual credit students must earn at least an 85% in class. **(Dual Credit for 8<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Choir (three trimester) ***Highly recommended to take all three trimesters:***

Teaches students how to sing on pitch with good vocal quality. The choir performs five concerts per year.

Creative Writing through Game Design (one trimester)

This class is designed to develop writing and creative thinking skills. Students will have the opportunity to learn about and practice a variety of writing styles. This class is for everyone, whether you are a strong or weak writer. The "Game Design" portion of the class will focus on technical writing and its use in board games. Students will learn and study several games in class such as Heroscape, Carcassonne, Zombie Dice, Pictureka, etc. with the intent to create their own board games or expansions to already existing games.

Environmental Science (one trimester) **Students may only take this course once at the junior high.**

This class is the study of how living and nonliving things interact with each other. Topics include ecosystems, energy, air, the atmosphere, land use, food impact and consumption, and government policy.

Military History (one trimester)

Students examine the role of the military and conflict on both the ancient world and in modern times. Students will analyze the strategic, technical, and socioeconomic influence of warfare on human history and the development of civilizations.

**For Discovery/GT classes, class size is limited and applicants will be reviewed by a panel of teachers and administrators for final approval.**

GT Drama: (one trimester)

Students will gain strength with their on stage presence through different monologues, small group plays, and improve activities.

GT 3D Printing and Design (one trimester)

Students will learn how to use an online program where they will design objects that they will then 3D print. The objects will be geared toward solving a problem that can help someone in need.

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GT American Sign Language (one trimester) **Students may only take this course once at the junior high.**

An introduction to ASL with basic grammar, vocabulary, fingerspelling, numbers, and cultural information related to the deaf community.

Orchestra - Beginning or Intermediate (three trimesters) **Highly recommended that students take three trimesters**

Beginning Orchestra: No prior experience needed for students in grades 7 & 8. Students will learn to play a string instrument; violin, viola, cello or bass. They will perform a variety of styles of music including folk, pop, jazz and classical. Music is level I. They will also learn the fundamentals of music, how to properly care for their instrument and music and how to participate in an orchestra community. Students will perform in concerts and music festivals. Students playing in this group will have the opportunity to participate in the Music in the Parks festival at Lagoon.

Intermediate Orchestra: One-year prior experience is needed for students in grades 7 & 8. Students will perform a variety of styles of music including folk, pop, jazz and classical. Music is level II. They will grow in their knowledge of the fundamentals of music, learn to tune and care for their instruments and contribute to the orchestra community. Students will perform in concerts and festivals. Students playing in this group will have the opportunity to participate in the Music in the Parks festival at Lagoon.

Beginning Spanish (one trimester)

This introductory level course will acquaint students with the vocabulary, grammar, and syntax in Spanish with the goal to be conversationally fluent. (Prerequisite: B average or higher letter grade in each trimester of language the previous school year)

U.S. History-Discovery through Civil War (one trimester)

This class provides an overview of the history of the United States from the discovery through Civil War Reconstruction. Political and military developments are examined in depth.

U.S. History—Reconstruction through 21<sup>st</sup> Century (one trimester)

This class provides an overview of the history of the United States from Civil War Reconstruction through the present. Political and military developments are examined in depth

World History/Geography (one trimester)

This class prepares students to compete in the Geography Bowl by broadening the knowledge base about geography and history.

Cheerleading (trimesters 1 and 2)

This is a class where participants must try-out for selection. Emphasis is on tumbling and gymnastic skills as well as positive presentation. Participants who are selected will demonstrate cheer and dance skills at athletic events as well as three competitions held on weekends.

## **Eighth Grade Electives**

Band (three trimesters) **Highly recommended that students take three trimesters**

Concepts of instrumental music are developed, including ensemble playing, intonation, and proper tone production. Advanced key signatures and scales emphasized. This is not an introductory course.

Botany/Horticulture (one trimester)

The study of plants, their structure, identification, genetics and their relation to the environment.

Introduction to Wildlife Management This course introduces students to best practices of wildlife and habitat management in Idaho.

Fitness Training

This course is designed to give students the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of weight training, strength training, aerobic training, and overall fitness training and conditioning. Students will be empowered to make wise choices, meet challenges, and develop positive behaviors in fitness, wellness, and movement activity for a lifetime.

**(This does not supplant Junior High P.E. requirement)**

Personal Finance (one trimester)

This course teaches students the fundamentals of money management and what happens to earned money as a paycheck is received, spent, or invested.

Reading (one trimester) **Prerequisite: 85% in all three seventh grade language arts, eighth grade language arts, and placement test score.**

Reading is a dual credit course designed to help all readers become more proficient readers. The main objectives of this course are to, give students the reading skills essential to completing their academic courses, and guide students toward becoming lifelong readers. A wide variety of reading strategies will be taught and put into practice. In addition, students will learn Greek/Latin prefixes, roots, and suffixes. Students will be required to read **five** books from a variety of authors and genres during the trimester. Students will read one hour per day from Monday-Friday at home and fill out a reading log in addition to daily homework. They will also complete AR tests with a score of 80 percent or higher, and they will prepare and present three book talks to the class. **To earn dual credit students must earn at least an 85% in class. (Dual Credit)**

Spanish I (one trimester) **Prerequisite - 77% or higher in Beginning Spanish:**

Students learn pronunciation, comprehension, speaking vocabulary, and some writing and fundamental structure of the language. **(Dual Credit)**

Zoology (one trimester)

The study of animals and animal life, including study of structure, development, classification, and physiology. Dissection will be included in lab and coursework.