



WESTRIDGE SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL

2020-2021

Curriculum Guide

GRADES 7-8

Philosophy

The Westridge Middle School program is based on the premise that middle school is more than a stepping stone to upper school. While our program builds the skills and habits that will be necessary in upper school, it is also designed to address the diverse developmental needs of students in the 7th and 8th grades. As girls navigate adolescence, they are immersed in a program that is designed for them and that places women and their impact at its center. Girls are encouraged to cultivate a love of learning, to develop an understanding of who they are and their values, and to learn how to explore, think, and draw conclusions. The middle school experience enables girls to enter the upper school as confident, articulate, self-motivated individuals.

Middle School

Curriculum Guide



17

FULL-TIME
FACULTY
MEMBERS

7th Grade

- Cultural Studies (English & History)
- Introduction to Algebra or Advanced Introduction to Algebra
- Life Science
- Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or Latin
- Human Development 7: It's Perfectly Normal
- Physical Education
- Music: Choir or Orchestra (one semester)
- Visual Arts 7 (one semester)
- Computer Science (one semester)
- Study Hall
- Semester Electives:
 - Theatre
 - Speech & Debate
 - Coding & Game Design
 - STEAM Projects

8th Grade

- American Studies (English & History)
- Algebra I or Advanced Algebra I
- Concepts in Earth and Physical Science
- Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or Latin
- Human Development 8: Navigating My World
- Physical Education
- Music: Choir or Orchestra (one semester)
- Visual Arts 8 (one semester)
- Semester Electives:
 - Theatre
 - Orchestra
 - Speech & Debate
 - Coding & Game Design
 - STEAM Projects

More detailed curriculum
information can be found at
www.westridge.org/middleschool



14 AVERAGE
MIDDLE SCHOOL
CLASS SIZE

1:1 Laptop Program

As part of our 1:1 laptop program each student in the Middle School is given the use of a Lenovo Yoga laptop computer, the cost of which is included in tuition and program fees. The computer is on long-term loan to the students for use at school and at home. Technology is thoughtfully integrated throughout the curriculum to enhance student learning.

Interdisciplinary Studies

Westridge's Middle School takes an interdisciplinary approach to English and history (Cultural Studies in grade 7 and American Studies in grade 8). In addition, the seventh grade engages in three separate interdisciplinary units on water, bees, and soil. Our English, history, math, and science faculty have created units that allow the students to discover the ways that different disciplines can join together to address problems that single disciplines cannot.

Retreats & Trips

Teachers take full advantage of the numerous cultural, historical, scientific, and artistic venues in the greater Los Angeles area by creating field trips designed to enhance student learning.

Arts

The arts are integral to the 4-12 Westridge program. Each year Middle School students take a semester each of visual art and music (either chorus or orchestra), and have the option to take a theatre art elective or an additional semester of orchestra.

Athletics

Middle School students compete in the Middle School Independent League in basketball, flag football, golf, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track and field, and volleyball, as well as in the Interscholastic Equestrian League. Middle School athletics provides each student the opportunity to participate on a team, and students are grouped by ability to support appropriate learning and challenge for both casual and competitive athletes.

Student Support

Providing a support system for our students' well-being as they navigate school and social situations is of great importance to us. In Middle School, student support comes in many forms. Time is built in to the schedule for conferencing with teachers, meetings with advisors. In addition, we work with students on self-advocacy, independence, and responsibility to prepare for life after middle school. A full-time school counselor and two Middle School deans are also important resources for our students.

Middle School Schedule

During a typical year of full-time, on-campus learning, all grades at Westridge operate on a six-day cycle. Days are designated as 1-6 and referred to as odd or even days.

Our block schedule means academic and elective classes meet every other day, allowing for deeper class discussions and collaboration in 70-minute class blocks.

7th Grade

The Middle School curriculum offers an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of English and history. In seventh grade, this course is Cultural Studies. Also beginning in seventh grade, students select a language (Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, or Latin) and take electives, as well as semester-long computer science, music, and visual arts courses. Once every six-day cycle, students have Human Development and Study Hall. On odd days, the last half hour of the day is dedicated to clubs, class meetings, or an all-school assembly. On even days, there is a 40-minute block mid-morning for advisory, conferencing, and other student support programming.

SAMPLE 7TH GRADE SCHEDULE

	8:00-9:10		9:25-10:35	10:40-11:30		12:05-1:15	1:20-2:35	2:40-3:10
Odd Days (1, 3, 5)	Cultural Studies (English)	Break	Cultural Studies (History)	P.E.	Lunch	Computer Science	Orchestra	Clubs
	8:00-9:10		9:20-10:00	10:05-11:15	11:20-12:10		12:45-1:55	2:00-3:10
Even Days (2, 4, 6)	Math	Break	Advisory	Science	P.E.	Lunch	Latin	Theatre

8th Grade

Continuing with the interdisciplinary approach to English and history, eighth grade students take an integrated course of American Studies. Students continue with the language chosen in seventh grade and take courses in visual arts, music, and an elective. As with seventh grade, students have Human Development and Study Hall once every six-day cycle. On odd days, the last half hour of the day is dedicated to clubs, class meetings, or an all-school assembly. On even days, there is a 40-minute block mid-morning for advisory, conferencing, and other student support programming.

SAMPLE 8TH GRADE SCHEDULE

	8:00-9:10		9:25-10:35	10:40-11:50		12:25-1:15	1:25-2:35	2:40-3:10
Odd Days (1, 3, 5)	Spanish	Break	American Studies (English)	American Studies (History)	Lunch	P.E.	Choir	Class Meeting
	8:00-9:10		9:20-10:00	10:05-11:15	11:20-12:30		1:05-1:55	2:00-3:10
Even Days (2, 4, 6)	Visual Arts	Break	Conferencing	Science	Math	Lunch	P.E.	Coding



WESTRIDGE SCHOOL

324 Madeline Drive, Pasadena, CA 91105 • www.westridge.org