

Gower Middle Eighth Grade Course Selection

2024/2025

Eighth Grade Band:

Eighth grade band students will participate as leaders in the Concert Band. Concert Band students will have a variety of performance opportunities throughout the school year. Performances may include high school marching band showcase, parades, festivals, school events, concerts, and the solo and ensemble festival. Eighth grade Concert Band members will also have the opportunity to participate in Jazz Band with additional performance opportunities throughout the year. Eighth grade percussion and mallet students will have the opportunity to participate in Drumline and Percussion Ensemble. Band curriculum includes concert material and the continuation/conclusion of the Essential Technique book. Supplemental materials will be available as necessary.

Eighth Grade Foreign Language:

Spanish I and II are introductions to the Spanish language and are teacher driven courses. *Realidades 1* is the textbook used for these classes along with additional curricular and cultural resources. Students will develop listening and speaking skills. Reading and writing exercises will also be a part of these foreign language classes. Students will be introduced to actively speaking Spanish through many oral exercises. Technology is an additional tool used to enhance classroom instruction.

Spanish III is a continuation of Spanish II and is a teacher driven course. *Realidades Level 2* is the textbook used. Listening and speaking skills are stressed. Reading and writing exercises are introduced with supplementary materials. Students learn to use the language actively through extensive oral work. Technology is an additional tool used to enhance classroom instruction. The customs and cultures of Spanish speaking countries remain a central element in Spanish III.

Three consecutive years of Spanish classes (Spanish I, II, and III) are offered to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. Students must take these courses in order, but may begin to take them in 6th, 7th, OR 8th grade.

High school Spanish placement: Hinsdale South and Central High Schools will place students in the appropriate level of Spanish based on a writing sample (and possibly a multiple choice skills test). They will recommend that students who took Spanish in 6th and/or 7th grade, but are not enrolled in any Spanish class during 8th grade would choose a language other than Spanish as freshmen. They currently offer French, German, and Latin as alternatives.

German, French, Mandarin Chinese

Students can also choose to take German, French, or Mandarin Chinese (full year, online course through partnership with Middlebury Interactive Languages).

- **Online**~Students have a foreign language class period scheduled every day with a Gower staff member who is expected to serve as a facilitator as the student progresses at their own pace through the program. This course entails listening, speaking, writing, working with a Middlebury online instructor and access to an interactive community board. This course will be taken as an independent study and is student driven. The grade received in this online course will not be reported on the student's quarterly report card. Parents will have access to the Middlebury website in order to check their child's progress and grade in this course.

Eighth Grade Cycled Specials (students will take all four classes, one per quarter):

Everything Art- Eighth grade students will continue to learn and build on their techniques. They will continue to learn techniques used with drawing pencils, chalk pastel, oil pastel, clay, tempera paint, and watercolor paint to implement those skills into a successful artwork. Students' projects will promote independence, decision making, problem-solving, and creativity. Students will use a variety of materials and continue to build on their knowledge of the elements of art and principles of design.

Teen Leadership-Teen Leadership teaches leadership values such as building positive relationships, improving communication skills, strengthening character, and discussing issues that impact every area of life. The class helps students make a difference in their lives, the lives of others, and the world around them. Students will participate in group discussions and share short stories centered on a variety of topics to enhance their understanding of their role as young leaders.

Food for Life-Eighth Grade students will learn food preparation techniques as they explore food groups and prepare a variety of food products. The importance of nutrients in foods will be examined and students will develop a greater understanding and appreciation between food and a healthy body. Designing and planning healthy, colorful meals and exploring cultural foods will be included. Career exploration and entrepreneurship will also be a part of this class. Activities in this program are designed for students to demonstrate skills in teamwork, leadership, and time management.

Music In Our Lives/Guitar 2: Eighth Grade Music is a continuation of Seventh Grade Music and is again broken up into three major components: Guitar Skills 2, Music Technology, and Popular Musical Styles. Students will continue to develop their guitar skills they learned in Seventh Grade, learning new chords, strumming patterns, guitar riffs, and melodies. Students will explore how

various popular music genres have developed and changed over time through performance of different songs on guitar as well as classroom discussions and projects. They will end the quarter by developing their music composition and arranging skills using a variety of web-based programs for music composition, including Soundtrap, Incredibox, Beepbox, and Noteflight as well as using the MIDI keyboards in the classroom along with other multimedia tools, and creating a variety of projects & compositions.

Study Hall:

Year-long study hall period supervised by a Gower staff member. Study hall may be selected as an elective period in cases where a student has chosen not to enroll in Band, Foreign Language, or the quarterly cycled classes previously described. Students and parents are encouraged to consider selecting an academic course in place of a study hall to increase a student's exposure to a variety of content areas prior to middle school graduation.