

OVERVIEW OF NEW YORK STATE CURRICULUM FOR GRADES 7-8

The following is a general overview of content most commonly found in middle and junior high school curricula. Its purpose is to give an idea of some of the major concepts and skills addressed and is by no means a comprehensive description of the curriculum. The best resource for curriculum information is the curriculum coordinator or middle school/junior high principal in the home district.

English/Language Arts

Development of skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking continues. During these grades students should be easily reading young adult literature and be fairly independent in utilizing common reference materials. Student writing demonstrates an understanding of different types of genre as well as the effective use of language structures. Essays, skits, short stories, reports, newspaper ads/articles, and business correspondence are some examples of the kinds of writing that are practiced.

Mathematics

Skill development in the seven content areas introduced at the elementary level continues. Basic computation skills are mastered as well as competency in using a calculator. The vocabulary associated with the various disciplines of math is used to describe problems and pose solutions. Activities continue to emphasize real world applications of math skills and concepts.

Science

Laboratory experiences utilize the basic concepts and skills developed during the elementary years to understand and explain scientific phenomena. Content includes organisms and micro-organisms, human systems, earth, weather and climate, astronomy and aerospace, energy and motion, chemistry of matter, and science, technology and society. Instruction frequently involves projects that clarify the relationships among the various science disciplines and mathematics.

Social Studies

In New York State, junior high school social studies is a two-course sequence that traces the human experience in the United States from pre-Columbian times to the present. Major political, economic and social trends in United States history are tied to parallel trends and time frames in New York State history. Connections are made to Canada and Mexico where relevant.

It should be noted that American history is the content focus in grades 4, 8, 9, and 11. Therefore, grades 7-8 are a vital link to high school courses since they build on and reinforce the skills, concepts and content introduced in the elementary grades.

Technology Education and Home and Career Skills

A 1985 revision of the Commissioner's Regulations changed the practical arts requirement to technology education and home and career skills. It should be noted that all students take **both** courses. In middle schools they are often included in the sixth grade curriculum. These subjects are defined as follows: [CR 100.4 (a)]

Technology Education means a program of instruction designed to develop an understanding of systems in fields such as production, transportation, construction, communications and agriculture by emphasizing applied activities through working with tools, machines, and devices used in the home and the work place.

Home and Career Skills means a program of instruction primarily through applied activities designed to prepare students to meet their responsibilities and understand their opportunities as parents or other members of families, consumers, home managers and wage earners.

Health

In grades 7-8 health instruction emphasizes developing good health habits that include grooming, nutrition, and the prevention of disease and accidents. The Commissioner's Regulations were recently amended to include instruction specific to HIV/AIDS, alcohol/drug/tobacco abuse, and child abuse. HIV/AIDS instruction focuses on prevention, emphasizing the communicable nature of the disease and the drug abuse connection. Safety education is easily integrated into health instruction.

Time is spent in studying human growth and development and the function of various body systems. The importance of developing a healthy life style is emphasized at this level also.

Visual Arts and Music

Study in the arts provides children throughout the K-12 grades with experiences that enable them to develop skill in expressing ideas through an artistic medium. By performing and analyzing the work of others, children can understand that individual styles are created by using artistic elements in different ways.

Physical Education

Physical fitness and teamwork are emphasized in the physical education curriculum throughout the K-12 experience. Activities involving rhythms, dances, exercise, and games for both individual and group participation are included.

GRADES 7-8

<u>Subject Requirements</u> (public/registered non-public schools)	<u>Units</u>	<u>Instructional Requirements</u> (Yearly Total = 990 hours)
English/Language Arts - Reading - Writing - Spelling - Speaking/listening	2	180 minutes per week
Mathematics	2	180 minutes per week
Science (includes life and physical science)	2	180 minutes per week
Social Studies (includes citizenship and patriotism) - Geography - NYS history and constitution - US history and constitution - Economics	2	180 minutes per week
Health (including HIV/AIDS, alcohol/drug/ tobacco abuse, fire/ highway/ bicycle safety education, child abuse		Regularly
Music	1/2	90 minutes per week
Visual Arts	1/2	90 minutes per week
Technology	1	180 minutes per week
Home and Careers	1/4	45 minutes per week
Library Skills	1/4	45 minutes per week
Physical Education		120 minutes per week

Unit Explanation

1 unit = 180 minutes per week (3 hours) for 1 year or 90 minutes per week for two years

1/2 unit = 90 minutes per week for 1 year or 45 minutes per week for two years

1/4 unit = 45 minutes per week for 1 year or 90 minutes per week for 1/2 year

Notes: 1) Library Skills should be taught within the context of subject areas.

2) Bilingual education or English as a second language should be provided where a need is indicated.

3) Although some subjects may be taught in integrated fashion (e.g., science/health), the IHIP must show content taught in each subject.