

West Valley Central School Course Elective Guide 2023

Course Elective	Credits/ Duration	Description
ELA		
Sports Literature & Journalism	.5-Half Year	In Sports Literature and Journalism students will look at the evolution of sports along with the influence sports have on today's society by analyzing texts of varying genres (fiction, biography, speeches, poetry, etc.). We will look at how the perception and responsibilities of athletes have changed over time. Students will also investigate some of sports largest controversies from fixing the World Series to changing the NFL overtime rules. Journalistic techniques will be studied when looking at magazines, social media, blogs, and sports tv networks.
Literature and Film	.5-Half Year	In Literature and Film students learn to view films as an art form and as a means of communication beyond their entertainment purpose. They are taught to "read" a film, analyzing its narrative structure, genre conventions, subtext, technical and artistic factors, and purpose. In addition, students examine how films often reflect the culture and times in which they are made, and conversely, how motion pictures sometimes help shape attitudes and values in society.
Theater Arts	.5-Half Year	Theater Arts courses focus on the study and performance of drama in its many forms. These courses review a wide range of scripted materials (such as plays, screenplays, teleplays, readers' theater scripts); dramatic criticism; techniques for creating original dramatic works; and the role of dramatic arts in society. Theater Arts courses typically require students to perform collaboratively and be involved in the critique of dramatic works.
Graphic Novel as Literature	.5-Half Year	This course will focus on the connection between art, graphic design, and literature as they are brought together in the form of graphic novels. Students will learn how to "read" a graphic novel, while analyzing its narrative structure, genre conventions, subtext, technical and artistic factors, purpose, and various forms of graphic novels including manga and comic books. In addition, students will examine this history of this genre, how it has evolved over the last decade, and how it has expanded into the wildly popular genre that it is now.
Poetry and the Poetic Novel	.5-Half Year	These courses have the same aim as general literature courses (to improve students' language arts and critical-thinking skills), focusing on one or several genres, such as poetry, essay, biography, short story, drama, film, and so on. Students determine the underlying assumptions and values within the selected works and also examine the structure, techniques, and intentions of the genre being studied. Oral discussion is an integral part of these genre-oriented courses, and written compositions are often required.

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Myths & Legends	.5-Half Year	Starting with an overview of mythology and the many kinds of folklore, students will journey with ancient heroes as they slay dragons and outwit the gods, follow fearless warrior women into battle and watch as clever animals outwit those stronger than themselves. They will explore the universality and social significance of myths and folklore and see how they are still used to shape society today. In addition to learning the culture and history of such civilizations, students will study the hero's journey in modern texts and films.
Creative Writing	.5-Half Year	Creative Writing courses offer students the opportunity to develop and improve their technique and individual style in poetry, short story, drama, essays, and other forms of prose. The emphasis of the courses is on writing; however, students may study exemplary representations and authors to obtain a fuller appreciation of the form and craft. Although most creative writing classes cover several expressive forms, others concentrate exclusively on one particular form (such as poetry or playwriting).
Public Speaking	.5-Half Year	Public Speaking courses enable students, through practice, to develop communication skills that can be used in a variety of speaking situations (such as small and large group discussions, delivery of lectures or speeches in front of audiences, and so on). Course topics may include (but are not limited to) research and organization, writing for verbal delivery, stylistic choices, visual and presentation skills, analysis and critique, and development of self-confidence.

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Science		
Forensics	.5-Half Year	Forensic Laboratory Science courses involve the application of biological, chemical, and physical science principles to data and physical evidence related to evidence collection and analysis. The courses focus on the application of scientific knowledge and scientific principles to collect, preserve, and analyze evidence in a laboratory setting. Topics may include but are not limited to entomology, forensic anthropology, serology, and fingerprinting.
Biotechnology	.5-Half Year	Biotechnology courses involve the study of the bioprocesses of organisms, cells, and/or their components and enable students to use this knowledge to produce or refine products, procedures, and techniques. Course topics typically include laboratory measurement, monitoring, and calculation; growth and reproduction; chemistry and biology of living systems; quantitative problem-solving; data acquisition and display; and ethics. Advanced topics may include elements of biochemistry, genetics, and protein purification techniques.
Integrated Science	1-Full Year	Integrated science / service learning – Explore sustainability and healthy eating through design thinking. Help create a healthy West Valley community! Students will research and demonstrate different methods of gardening (which could include: greenhouse, hydroponics, garden beds, etc) with the final goal to engineer a working community garden at West Valley. This is a student guided project where they will work together to research different methods, host guest speakers virtually or in person to gain knowledge, create and present a proposal to stakeholders, work with Mr. Perger's class to design a garden bed, care for plants, create and execute outreach on healthy eating.
Anatomy	.5-Half Year	Anatomy courses present an in-depth study of the human body and biological system. Students study such topics as anatomical terminology, cells, and tissues and typically explore functional systems such as skeletal, muscular, circulatory, respiratory, digestive, reproductive, and nervous systems.
Astronomy	.5-Half Year	Astronomy courses offer students the opportunity to study the solar system, stars, galaxies, and interstellar bodies. These courses usually introduce and use astronomic instruments and typically explore theories regarding the origin and evolution of the universe, space, and time.
Entemology/ Animal Science	.5-Half Year	Animal Production/Science courses impart information about the care and management of companion and farm animals. These courses may cover animal nutrition, health, behavior, selection, reproduction, anatomy and physiology, facilities, product processing, research, qualitative and quantitative analyses as a basis for decisionmaking, and marketing. Students may study a particular species, or they may learn how to care for and maintain livestock as a more inclusive study.
Botany	.5-Half Year	Botany courses provide students with an understanding of plants, their life cycles, and their evolutionary relationships.

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Social Studies		
WWI/WWII	.5-Half Year	These courses examine a particular topic in U.S. History, such as particular time periods in the history of the United States, or they may focus on the history of particular U.S. regions rather than provide an overview of the subject.
Holocaust and Human Rights	.5-Half Year	This course will focus on Human Rights violations both current and in the past. A large portion of the course will focus on the Holocaust and contextualizing the causes/impact of this genocide. The class will discuss geographic, historical, literary, and psychological contexts of genocide and human rights violations. Through taking this class students will be able to recognize the necessary preconditions for genocide and human rights violations, make connections between past and present events, apply critical thinking skills, and utilize their knowledge to become advocates for human rights.
Viking Age	.5-Half Year	World Area Studies courses examine the history, politics, economics, society, and/or culture of one or more regions of the world, such as Africa, Latin America, the former Soviet Union, Far East Asia, and the Middle East. These courses may focus primarily on the history of a particular region or may take an interdisciplinary approach to the contemporary issues affecting the region. Furthermore, these courses may emphasize one particular country (other than the United States), rather than emphasizing a region or continent.
Math		
Math Made Real	.5-Half Year	Consumer Mathematics courses reinforce general mathematics topics (such as arithmetic using rational numbers, measurement, ratio and proportion, and basic statistics) and apply these skills to consumer problems and situations. Applications typically include budgeting, taxation, credit, banking services, insurance, buying and selling products and services, home and/or car ownership and rental, managing personal income, and investment.
Probabilities	.5-Half Year	Probability and Statistics courses introduce the study of likely events and the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of quantitative data. Course topics generally include basic probability and statistics: discrete probability theory, odds and probabilities, probability trees, populations and samples, frequency tables, measures of central tendency, and presentation of data (including graphs). Course topics may also include normal distribution and measures of variability.
History of Math	.5-Half Year	History of Mathematics courses include a study of the historical development of numbers, computation, algebra, and geometry. Figures critical to the development of mathematics (e.g., Pythagoras, Pascal, Descartes) or important developments (e.g., pi, decimal fractions, probability theory, calculus) often form the backbone of these classes.

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Music		
History of Rock and Roll	.5-Half Year	Music History/Appreciation courses survey different musical styles and periods with the intent of increasing students' understanding of music and its importance in relation to the human experience. Music History/Appreciation courses may focus on how various styles of music apply musical elements to create an expressive or aesthetic impact.
Select Choir	.5-Half Year	Vocal Ensemble courses help students develop vocal techniques and refine their ability to sing parts in small ensembles (e.g., madrigal, barber shop, gospel). Course goals may include helping students develop their solo singing ability and emphasize one or several ensemble literature styles. These ensembles may include both instrumental and vocal music.
Music Theory	.5-Half Year	Music Theory courses provide students with an understanding of the fundamentals of music and include one or more of the following topics: composition, arrangement, analysis, aural development, and sight reading.
Music Composition/ Production	.5-Half Year	Composition/Songwriting courses prepare students to express themselves through creating music. These courses may use conventional or nonconventional notation and may include instrumental and vocal music. Along with musical instruments and vocals, technology may be used for creating, recording, and performing music.
Visual Arts		
Studio Art	1-Full Year	Visual Art—Comprehensive courses enable students to explore one or several art forms (e.g., drawing, painting, two- and three-dimensional design, and sculpture) and to create individual works of art. Initial courses emphasize observations, interpretation of the visual environment, visual communication, imagination, and symbolism. Courses cover the language, materials, media, and processes of a particular art form and the design elements used. Advanced courses encourage students to refine their skills while also developing their own artistic styles. Courses may also include the study of major artists, art movements, and styles. Introductory 9th grade course for Visual Arts education.
Painting & Drawing	1-Full Year or .5 Half-Year	Visual Arts—Drawing/Painting courses provide a foundation in drawing and painting using a variety of media and techniques, emphasizing observation and interpretation of the visual environment. These courses typically include applying the elements of art and principles of design, along with a study of art and artists from a worldwide perspective, and instruction in the critique process. Advanced courses may encourage students to refine their creative process and develop their own artistic styles.
Glass Making	.5-Half Year	A half year course designed to introduce students to a variety of art techniques utilizing glass. Includes stained glass, glass slumping, and glass fusing.

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Crafts	.5-Half Year	Crafts courses help students apply elements of art and principles of design to the materials and accompanying aesthetics of crafts. These courses may survey a wide range of crafts or may focus on only one type of craft; some possibilities include calligraphy, quilting, silk-screening, cake-decorating, tole-painting, mask-making, knitting, crocheting, paper-making, and so on.
Digital Art	.5-Half Year	Digital Imaging courses explore the creative and conceptual aspects of designing and producing digital imagery, graphics, and photography. Students study the techniques, genres, and styles from multiple mediums and forms. Topics may include aesthetic meaning, appreciation and analysis; composing, capturing, processing, and programming of imagery and graphical information; their transmission, distribution, and marketing; and contextual, cultural and historical aspects and considerations.
Graphic Design	.5-Half Year	This course explores the commercial aspects of art. Techniques include freehand drawing, lettering, painting and computer-enhancement for commercial advertising, posters and illustrations.
Ceramics	.5-Half Year	Ceramics/Pottery courses provide students with a foundation in the history of ceramics, with an emphasis on critique, aesthetic inquiry, and creative production. These courses provide knowledge of ceramic techniques (e.g., kiln firing and glazing) and processes, with a focus on creative design and craftsmanship. Courses may include clay modeling, hand building, coil building, casting, and throwing on the potter's wheel.
Sculpture	.5-Half Year	Visual Arts—Sculpture courses promote creative expression through three-dimensional works. These courses explore real and abstract sculpture through subtractive (carving), additive (modeling), and assemblage techniques in one or more media. Visual Arts—Sculpture courses typically include the production of real and abstract sculptures while incorporating elements of art and principles of design, along with a study of historical and contemporary sculpture and sculptors from a worldwide perspective. These courses also provide instruction in the critique process.
Photo & Printmaking	.5-Half Year	Photography and Printing Technology courses expose students to the tools, materials and processes involved in mass production of photography and printing. Types of printing covered in the course may include intaglio, relief, planographic, screen processes printing, silk screening, serigraphy processes and thermograph. Additional topics may include the use of cameras, composition, imposition, presswork, and computer aided publishing.

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Technology Education		
Industrial Arts	1-Full Year	Industrial Arts courses expose students to the tools and equipment that they may encounter in manufacturing-related occupations and enable them to develop the skills they need to use these tools in various applications. Course topics typically include (but are not limited to) planning and design, electricity and electronics, materials properties and testing, basic materials processing, and power technology. These courses typically cover general safety and career exploration as well. Introductory 9th grade course to technology education courses.
Carpentry	1-Full Year	Carpentry courses provide information related to the building of wooden structures, enabling students to gain an understanding of wood grades and construction methods and to learn skills such as laying sills and joists; erecting sills and rafters; applying sheathing, siding, and shingles; setting door jambs; and hanging doors. Carpentry courses may teach skills for rough construction, finish work, or both. Students learn to read blueprints, draft, use tools and machines properly and safely, erect buildings from construction lumber, perform finish work inside of buildings, and do limited cabinet work. Carpentry courses may also include career exploration, good work habits, and employability skills.
Woodworking	.5-Half Year	Woodworking courses introduce students to the various kinds of woods used in industry and offer experience in using selected woodworking tools. Students design and construct one or more projects and may prepare a bill of materials. Correct and safe use of tools and equipment is emphasized. As students advance, they focus on learning the terminology necessary to use power tools successfully, developing skills to safely use these tools in the workshop and becoming familiar with various kinds of wood-finishing materials. Advanced students typically design a project, prepare bills of materials, construct, and finish proposed projects.
Building Trades	.5-Half Year	Construction—Comprehensive courses provide students with basic knowledge and skills required for construction of commercial, residential, and institutional structures. These courses provide experiences and information (typically including career opportunities and training requirements) regarding construction-related occupations such as carpentry, cabinetmaking, bricklaying, electrical trades, plumbing, concrete masonry, and so on. Students engage in activities such as reading blueprints, preparing building sites, starting foundations, erecting structures, installing utilities, finishing surfaces, and providing maintenance.

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Small Engine Mechanics	.5-Half Year	Small Engine Mechanics courses provide students with the opportunity to learn how to service and recondition small engines, typically emphasizing two- and four-cycle engines. These courses provide students with opportunities to troubleshoot and repair speed controls, lubrication, ignition, fuel, power transfer, cooling, exhaust, and starting systems; use hand, power, and overhaul tools; and read and interpret service manuals and parts' catalogs. Applications may include lawn mowers, tractors, tillers, power tools, and so on.
CAD	.5-Half Year	Frequently offered as an intermediary step to more advanced drafting courses (or as a concurrent course), CAD Design and Software courses introduce students to the computer-aided drafting systems available in the industry.
Physical Education		
Fitness and Nutrition	.5-Half Year	Lifetime Fitness Education courses emphasize acquiring knowledge and skills regarding lifetime physical fitness; content may include related topics such as nutrition, stress management, and consumer issues. Students may develop and implement a personal fitness plan.
Power Lifting	.5-Half Year	Weight Training courses help students develop knowledge and skills with free weights and universal stations while emphasizing safety and proper body positioning; they may include other components such as anatomy and conditioning.
LOTE: Spanish		
Spanish Culture	.5-Half Year	Spanish Conversation and Culture courses provide students with an introduction to the Spanish language and the culture(s) of Spanish-speaking people, placing greater emphasis on speaking and listening skills while deemphasizing writing and reading the language.

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Miscellaneous		
Food and Nutrition	.5-Half Year	Formerly known as Food and Nutrition, Food Preparation and Health Management courses provide students with an understanding of food's role in society, instruction in how to plan and prepare meals, and information about the nutritional and health benefits of minimizing processed and prepared food and prepackaged/prepared meals from one's diet. These courses not only build on the basic skills of food preparation but also address financial considerations and recipe conversion to make foods healthier. Some courses place a heavier emphasis on a balanced diet, while others concentrate on specific types of food preparation (such as low sodium, low fat, or increased whole foods). These courses will also address current issues such as organic foods and vegan cooking.
Business	.5-Half Year	Introductory Business courses survey an array of topics and concepts related to the field of business. These courses introduce business concepts such as banking and finance, the role of government in business, consumerism, credit, investment, and management. They usually provide a brief overview of the U.S. economic system, small businesses, and corporate organizations. Introductory Business courses may also expose students to the varied opportunities in administration, accounting, management, and related fields.
Business Ownership	.5-Half Year	Entrepreneurship courses help students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to own and operate their own businesses. The course content typically covers topics from a number of fields: economics, marketing principles, human relations and psychology, business and labor law, legal rights and responsibilities of ownership, business and financial planning, finance and accounting, communication, information management, risk management, and strategic management. Several topics surveyed in Business Management courses may also be included.

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College Level Courses		
Houghton Writing	Half-year	3 credits, dual enrollment
Houghton Literature	Half-year	3 credits, dual enrollment
Syracuse U.S. History 101	Half-year linked	3 credits, dual enrollment
Syracuse U.S. History 102	Half-year linked	3 credits, dual enrollment
JCC Algebra	Half or Full year	4 credits
JCC Pre-Calculus	Half or Full year	4 credits
JCC Statistics	Half or Full year	3 credits
JCC Calculus	Half or Full year	4 credits
Syracuse Animation	Half or Full year	3 credits
Syracuse Personal Finance	Half	3 credits
Hilbert College Spanish 4	Full Year	3 credits
JCC Chemistry	Full Year	3 credits
Houghton College Psychology	Half-year	3 credits
Houghton College Sociology	Half-year	3 credits