

Mercer County
Intermediate School



Course Description Book
2011-2012

Mercer County Intermediate School
2011 – 2012
Course Descriptions

Literature

Grades 5

Mrs. Shelley/Mrs. Olson

This course is designed to study reading strategies which will assist students with increasing their reading comprehension, application of reading strategies, knowledge of vocabulary, and understanding of literary elements. Coursework will be aligned with the Illinois State Learning Standards for reading. As they progress throughout the course, they will be able to recognize universal themes and be able to compare styles and ideas across authors and different genres. Students will explore techniques that authors use to convey messages and evoke responses. Students will be able to connect various types of literature to their own lives and daily experiences.

Invitations to Literacy: Explore Houghton Mifflin 1999

English

Grade 5

Mrs. Shelley/ Mrs. Olson

This course was designed to help students to improve writing skills necessary for daily life. The focus of this class is writing, grammar, and spelling. Along with the elements of grammar student will develop structural and creative skills necessary to produce written language that can be read and interpreted by various audiences.

Language Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich 1993

Math

Grade 5

Mrs. Gladfelter

The fifth grade math curriculum places a heavy emphasis on understanding and becoming proficient with long division and multiplication. Math computation concepts are introduced and reviewed through the use of math manipulatives, oral discussions, partner work, games, whiteboard demonstrations, and computer simulations in hope of reaching all types of learners. Fraction and decimal concepts are also covered along with interpretation of graphs, probability, and geometry. The basic concepts of algebra are reviewed with an emphasis on understanding patterns and representing mathematical situations using algebraic symbols. Students will learn to use and understand both customary and metric measurement systems. Throughout the year students will apply and adapt a variety of appropriate strategies to solve problems with and without the use of calculators.

Mathematics: The Path to Success Silver Burdett Ginn 1999

Science

Grade 5

Mrs. Swanson

This course is an introduction to many of the advanced sciences including chemistry, biology, physics, astronomy, and geology. Units consist of hands-on activities and labs reinforced with the science textbook, handouts, technology, and *United Streaming*. Topics introduced consist of cell structure, photosynthesis, Newton's Laws, forces, motion and energy, electricity, magnetism, physical and chemical changes, periodic table, bodies in space, and scientific measurement.

Science 5 Scott Foresman 2003

Social Studies

Grade 5

Mr. McNeil

Fifth Grade Social Studies provides students with their first formal study of the history of the United States. In addition to developing an introductory knowledge of the historical events that have helped shape our present, many skills relating to Social Studies will be introduced and/or extended. Reading and study skills related to locating, interpreting and recording information will be reinforced throughout the year.

Timelinks - The United States McMillan/McGraw-Hill 2009

Literature

Grades 6

Mrs. Aldinger / Mrs. Tharp

The major areas of study in sixth grade literature emphasize vocabulary development, comprehension skills, as well as writing and thinking skills. Reading is emphasized through assigned literature selections and books chosen, including both fiction and non-fiction. Students will be required to read independently throughout the school year. These activities are designed to help increase their reading rate and comprehension levels. A variety of resources, activities, and projects will be used to help further develop spelling, vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skills.

Language of Literature McDougal Littell 2002

English

Grade 6

Mrs. Aldinger / Mrs. Tharp

This course is designed to help prepare students to be able to effectively communicate both orally and through writing. Through means of narrative writing, persuasive writing, and a variety of other writing activities and projects, emphasis is given to the process of writing, including mechanics, spelling, grammar, and high-level thinking skills.

Language Network McDougal Littell 2001

Math

Grade 6

Ms. McKnight

The sixth grade math curriculum is aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards. Areas covered are number sense, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis, probability, and statistics. Problem solving is integrated throughout the year.

Middle School Math Course I Holt 2004

Science

Grade 6

Mrs. Matlick

Sixth grade science curriculum focuses on Earth and Life Sciences, with Physical Science worked in where appropriate. Units of study include: scientific method and scientists; atmosphere; weather; classification and the kingdoms of life; climate and adaptations, fossils and geologic time; ecology; freshwater and oceanography. These units are taught with a variety of resources, media, and activities. During the year, we will complete several technological design challenges, and students will complete performance assessments.

The Air Around You Glencoe 2002

The Water Planet Glencoe 2002

Social Studies

Grade 6

Mr. Runbom

In sixth grade Social Studies, students learn and use a variety of geography skills to better understand the Eastern Hemisphere. The textbook which is used to accomplish this is MacMillan/McGraw-Hill: Our World. The textbook helps accomplish this by introducing students to the history, geography, and people of the continents of Africa, Asia, Europe, and Australia.

This course is designed to help students achieve three specific goals:

1. Students will acquire a working knowledge of the world around them by showing the effects climate, environment, and geography have on its inhabitants.
2. To help students develop and understanding of concepts that are basic to social studies.
3. To nurture the ability of students to think critically and independently.

Our World MacMillan/McGraw-Hill 2005

Physical Education

Grades 5 and 6

Mrs. Breeden

This level of Physical Education classes introduces the students to the basic fundamentals of many different sports and activities. Class participation requires the students to be physically active while learning. This combination promotes physical fitness and motor skills, while instilling the students with a lifetime understanding of the rules and concepts to a wide variety of sport activities.

Band

Grade 6

Mr. Ruggles

Sixth grade band is open to any sixth grader interested in playing a wind or percussion instrument. Full band rehearsals occur every day 1st hour. Rehearsals last approximately forty-five minutes. In addition to full band rehearsals, each student will also receive a fifteen minute small group band lesson each band lesson cycle. These groups generally consist of three-four students and one instrumental music instructor. Sign up for 6th Grade Band takes place during the first week of school. Wind instruments that can be played include: Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Alto Sax, Tenor Sax, Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Baritone and Tuba. Percussionists will be required to play both drums and bells. Some school instruments are available.

Chorus

Grades 6

Mrs. Heard

In 6th Grade Chorus, we establish the groundwork of choral singing and continue working on the basics of correct singing and good musicianship that were begun in 5th Grade general music.

The following are developed and applied in 6th Grade Chorus in daily rehearsals: good unison singing with expansion to 2 and 3-part singing, choral breathing, singing posture, proper vocal techniques (to help ensure healthy singing), listening skills, artistic expression, and sight singing (rhythm and pitch recognition and reading). Not only do students sing in the large group (Chorus), but in small groups (ensembles), and solos. Participation in ensembles and solos is encouraged but not required. Briefly, the grading for 6th Grade Chorus is based on daily participation and effort, and performance attendance. There are absolutely NO singing tests.

The 6th Grade Chorus will have performance opportunities during the school year including IMEA District Festival in the fall, winter concert, and a mini-musical in the spring.

General Music

Grade 5

Mrs. Heard

In 5th Grade general music, in addition to building on the skills developed K-4, students will experience music through many different venues such as singing, movement, classroom instruments, aural and written activities, composition, and performance. Students will also study music as it relates to world cultures and history.

Specific skills that will be focused on during the school year are as follows: identifying simple note values and corresponding rests, reading, speaking, and performing rhythmic notation, writing notation for four beat rhythm patterns, conducting patterns in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4, proper instrument technique, performing a 3-5 note song on a melodic instrument, proper vocal posture and breath support, vocally matching pitch by singing a unison song, maintaining a harmony; part while singing a round, partner song or a melodic ostinato. Students will also study the following vocabulary: symbols (*music staff, barline, double barline, measure, treble clef, bass clef, repeat sign, 1st and 2nd endings, Coda, D.S. and D.C. al Fine*), dynamics (*f, mf, mp, p, crescendo, decrescendo*), tempo (*largo, allegro, accelerando, ritardando*), and articulations (*legato, staccato, accent*).

The 5th Grade will have performance opportunities during the school year including IMEA District Festival in the fall and Opening Act Show Choir in the spring. In addition, the 5th Grade has the opportunity to attend the Quad-City Symphony “Symphony Day” which is offered each spring to area 5th Graders.

Art

Grades 5 and 6

Mrs. Trego

In this class students learn the foundation of art making, including techniques of drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, textiles and sculpture. We also study the components and principles of design to help students make informed choices in their work. Art history is also an important element in our lessons, encouraging students to open their mind to new ideas. Most importantly the class fosters independent thinking, creativity, cooperative learning and experimentation.