

Grade 7 & 8 Enrichment Course Descriptions

Building and Beyond

If you enjoy building, designing, and using tools to create, then Building and Beyond is the course for you. Here you will develop hands-on engineering and manufacturing skills by designing products, reading and creating blueprints, and constructing projects. Come work with tools from rulers and compasses to drill presses and belt sanders. You will create simple and complex projects and identify a construction project you would like to undertake to help people in our community.

Creative Connections

How does art help us to understand different people, places, and cultures? How does art make us aware of ourselves and the needs of a community and motivate us to action? In this course you will learn about the ways that people use the arts to communicate and solve big issues that are of concern to all. You will interact with visiting artists and art students from around the world that will inspire you in your own art making process. By the end of the course, you will investigate and develop your own creative plan to help a community of your choice. One innovative thinker can make a difference!

Digital Media

If you are interested in scripting, filming, editing, or producing videos, then Digital Media Productions is a great option for you. You will learn to take on different roles as you produce interviews, movie scenes, "How-To" videos, advertisements, PSAs, and a community video project. Working in groups, you will learn how to use video equipment such as cameras, tripods, and microphones to film, and programs such as MovieMaker and iMovie, to edit. Students will take ownership over all aspects of production in their approach to film and media and celebrate the viewing of each video project with classmates. Digital Media Productions: *Collaborate. Create. Capture!*

Gaming & Coding

Would you like to create your own video games, interactive stories, and animations? In this course, you will learn key programming concepts (loops, conditionals, variables, even program debugging) and then design your own programs. We will use the computer language, Scratch, developed by MIT professors, to create and design programs, pursue personal interests, and interact with peers through imaginative collaborations.

Leaders of Tomorrow

"Leaders aren't born, they are made." Everyone has what it takes to be a successful leader! In this course, you will learn how to become a positive leader in your school, in your community, and throughout your life. You will engage in a variety of team-building activities. Our Leaders of Tomorrow will first explore examples of local, national, and international leadership throughout history, entertainment, sports, and politics and then take leadership action to impact a cause you feel is important.

#LyricsLiteratureLife

Are your earbuds in all the time? Do you constantly listen to music? Do you use Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, SoundCloud, or other social media? Are you always reading Tweets and quotes that you can totally relate to? Do you love to get lost in a powerful book? Then join #lyricsliteraturelife, where you will discover how song writers and authors use words to express ideas and feelings in order to spark needed change in the ever-changing world in which we live. This course also uses popular music and social media to see how lyrics and texts have impacted and continue to impact the world around us as the words stir up our emotions. You will evaluate how songs and texts have historically made a difference in culture, and you will discover how to read and interpret lyrics and literature passionately and independently with both your head and your hearts. Ultimately, you will create a community service project of your choice, which will promote a change that you think is needed in the world today. You will be the sole or partnered Passion Project designer to put words into action. Join #lyricsliteraturelife today and be the voice of a better tomorrow!

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Math & Science Research

What color frequencies do ants detect best? How do fruit flies raised in different environments react to light? Have you ever wanted to explore your own questions about the world? In this course, you will team up with your peers and conduct an original research project in science and/or math. Working with a science and a math teacher, you will have an opportunity to learn, have fun, and enter competitions!

MindWhatMatters

Do you ever feel overwhelmed with all that you need to do or do your feelings sometimes get the best of you? Do you ever contemplate how social media can be used to change the world for the better? Would you like to experience how doing something for others can help you to feel better about yourself? Well, then this is the course for you!

Throughout this course, you will have an opportunity to engage in meaningful, hands-on activities that relate to you, the middle school student! Did you know that the brain is like a muscle? Well, in this course, you will have opportunities to explore the power of brain development; how our emotions, stress levels and ability to develop a growth mindset can have enormous impact on your total wellness! You will also have opportunities to explore many relevant issues that adolescents and teens face on a daily basis. In doing so, you will begin to develop important decision-making and self-reflective skills to deal with those issues such as social media, personal health and wellness, and building healthy relationships. You will also have an opportunity to apply those skills you have learned and help to take an active role in your community by making a positive difference for others.

Newsroom

Broadcasting live from Commack Middle School! Are you interested in current events? Proud of your Commack community? Curious about the behind the scenes of news casting or want to experience being in front of the camera? Then come on into the Newsroom! You will have the opportunity to broadcast and deliver school, community, and global news to the middle school building through blogs, podcasts, and video announcements. Using web programs and audio/video equipment, students will produce written and audio/video news presentations. This course is great for anyone interested in the ins and outs of a newsroom. Newsroom: reporting on the pulse of Commack - our school, our community, and our news.

Objective Detectives: Forensics

Have you ever wondered how experts solve mysteries, perhaps even catch and convict criminals? In this course, we will investigate the basics of forensic science and how it is used to study, evaluate, and analyze crime scenes to unlock hidden clues and solve cases. Students will master investigative skills to determine and control a crime, design an examination plan, process physical evidence, and solve mysteries through the amazing world of forensic science.

Project Invention

Are you creative? Do you like to make new things? Tinker with different materials? Do you like to solve problems? Then this course is for you. This is a hands-on course that will provide you with a place to use your creativity in solving problems and challenges. You will have opportunities to tinker, research, design, create a prototype, test ideas, and share your ideas in a variety of formats. This course allows for both independent and group challenges. Shark Tank-like activities, Break-out challenges, and Fashion Design are just some areas to explore in this fun course.

Robotics

Imagine it, design it, build it, and code it! Come explore the exciting world of robotics! You will learn concepts and gain skills that are needed to use the technology of the future. In this course, we will problem-solve while working in groups with three different robotic systems: Moss Robotics, littleBits, and NAO. Bring your creativity and imagination and prepare to have fun!

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Science-History Through Popular Cinema (New for 2019-20)

Did that really happen? Is that really possible? Have you ever watched a movie or a popular TV show and wondered if what you were seeing was fact or fiction? Is the transportation system in *Black Panther* the wave of the future? Can we invent flying cars like in *Back to the Future*? Will we be able to say, "Beam Me Up" in a few decades or fly through space like in *Guardians of the Galaxy*? Do scientists really believe there is an "Upside Down" as described in *Stranger Things*?

In *Science and History Through Popular Cinema*, you will have the chance to watch parts of scientific and historical videos, analyze and research the evidence presented, and share your findings. In the movie *First Man*, there is a scene in which astronaut Neil Armstrong pilots an X-15 rocket plane into the stratosphere. Is it possible for a plane to exit the atmosphere and safely return? If so, was it depicted accurately in the movie? What do science and history say? Take this enrichment course and find out!

S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)

Would you like to explore real-life problems then research and use your knowledge of science, technology, engineering, and math to create solutions? In this hands-on course, you will learn and use your abilities to design, test, and evaluate original products of your own.

Theater: The Performing Arts

Do you love to act, sing, dance, or direct? Have you always wanted to be a part of a play or musical? Well, then Theater: The Performing Arts is the class for you! Acting and performing are exciting ways for you to express yourself and develop a meaningful understanding of your world. This class allows a form of expression where you will reach your audience through storytelling, movement, design and interaction. You will have opportunities to perform both individually and in groups. You will perform group musical numbers (singing is not required), monologues, scenes, and more.

The Writers Studio

What is your story, your message, your passion? In the Writers Studio, there are no wrong answers and no limits to what you can create. You have the freedom to write about what interests you. Together we will explore stories, movies, anime, editorials, poetry, fiction, or any genre you are passionate about. Through Writers Studio you will self-publish a book that you can take home and add to your bookcase. Imagine how it would feel to be a published author... what will your voice be?

World Activists

"It is in *your* hands to make a difference." - Nelson Mandela.

World Activists is a course that will provide you with the unique opportunity and the resources to make a positive change in the world. Together we will address, discuss, and create action plans to find solutions for worldwide needs and issues. Through technology and social media, we will communicate with international pen pals and foster relationships with teens all over the world. In this class you will experience various cultural traditions, cuisines, music, and rituals, as well as examine and reflect on your own cultural customs in order to grow into an open-minded citizen of the world. Come be a world activist and use your leadership skills to make your voice matter. It is your turn to change the world.