Thomas Jefferson Middle School

December Curriculum - Grade 8

Learning together to understand and improve ourselves, our futures, and our world.

Student Services Updates

Click the link below for contact information and office hours for our school counselors, psychologist and social worker along with important announcements:

TJMS Student Services
Newsbites

Arts

8th grade band students are using SoundTrap, an online digital audio workstation, to compose, record, edit, and mix musical performances. All 8th grade band students must submit a recording of "Seven Nation Army" by 12/18."

In 8th Grade Orchestra, students are playing solo pieces and ensemble pieces. We are learning advanced bow technique, sound production and reading skills. The students prepared a beautiful video of a South American piece called "La Paloma." We are currently learning holiday music to share with friends and family.

In 8th grade Chorus, students are working on submitting their recordings of "Let It Snow." They have the choice to record on Flipgrid or Garageband.

In 8th grade Drama, 8th grade students have been learning about Podcasting, the modern day radio drama. Each student will begin creating their own podcast this week.

In 8th grade Art students have been drawing with value, showing black, white and five grays in between. Students have worked through a series of exercises and are finishing their final artworks.

Individuals and Societies (Social Studies)

In World Geography, students are learning that individuals orient and identify themselves with their neighborhood, community, city, state, country, or world by using varied perspectives.

Students' understanding will be demonstrated by participating in the completion of many different region based activities. Our current unit of study covers the Caribbean, Central & South America Region. Students will locate and analyze physical, economic, and cultural characteristics of the Caribbean, Central (Latin) & South America. Students will learn the past and present trends in human migration and cultural interactions as they are influenced by social, economic, political, and environmental factors. In class, we are engaged in learning activities like the Regional Tour Builder, DBQ, Regional Mapping Lab, Gapminder Activity, the Country Profile Project and so much more!

Gifted Services

If your child was identified as gifted in elementary school, that identification carries over to middle school and they will receive gifted services in the appropriate cluster classes. All students identified as gifted in a core subject area receive services through the cluster model. The cluster model is an inclusive method of providing challenging opportunities for gifted students within the general education setting. This means that a cluster class has five-ten other students identified as gifted, along with general education students. This allows for the teacher to efficiently plan for differentiation and flexible grouping depending on the abilities and readiness of everyone in the class.

Contact Megan Detweiler with further questions - megan.detweiler@apsva.us

Design

Students are using computer aided design (CAD) software to create 3D objects to solve a design challenge.

In Technology Education, students are working on board drafting. This traditional technique allows us to invent and innovate using the design process later in the semester. We will explore drafting each letter neatly and cleanly on a blueprint and work on orthographic, 3 view and isometric drawings.

In Computer Applications and the internet, students will learn about the internal components of the computer and how they work together as well as how to keep their work areas safe.

In Robotics, students are using block coding to code animations and interactive games. Students develop skills in basic programming, such as variables, loops, and conditional statements

In Life Management, students are learning about following recipes, and finishing up their Thanksgiving Project. Over the break they learned to cook a favorite family recipe with a family member, and made a Google Slides presentation with pictures of what they did.

Language Acquisition (World Languages)



In French II, students are learning about Café vocabulary and how to express likes / dislikes. We read an article about a food distribution center in Marseille which has served

people experiencing poverty during the COVID-19 crisis. In all of the **Spanish** classes, we are having a fabulous time celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month by learning about various Hispanics who have lived or live in the US and around the World and who have made an important contribution to the history, culture, and achievements of the United States! We have learned about Frida Kahlo and how despite her illness as a child and her bus accident as an adult, causing her great physical pain, she was able to overcome major obstacles and become a prominent artist influencing millions of people in Mexico and around the world.

Language and Literature

In ELA 8, students are learning that societal structure has the power to promote or limit freedom, choice, and desire. As students learn about propaganda techniques and elements of dystopian societies through document, textual and media analysis, they will work to

create their own examples of propaganda connected to their selected dystopian books. Students will also write literary analysis essays in which they demonstrate their understanding of the dystopian elements in their book.

Physical and Health Education

The Jefferson Health & Physical Education Department is finishing up a 3-week rotation this week. Mr. Heath's and Ms. Pierce's classes will be switching from Health to Physical Education. Mr. Rodriguez' and Mr. Stith's classes will start health next week on Tuesday. Mr. Curran's and Ms. Patterson's classes will continue with their Physical Education lessons for the next 3 weeks. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher. If your child has any questions for their Health & Physical education teacher, they may ask questions during office hours on Mondays from 9:30 to 10:30 AM.

If you have any questions specific towards an individual teacher, please use email or questions can be answered at office hours on Monday's from 9:30- 10:30. All contact information can be found on each teacher's canvas homepage.

From the Library:

The library has been teaching monthly digital citizenship lessons during TA. This month's lesson reviews the library skills we taught during library orientation at the beginning of the year. We want to make sure every student knows how to access and use our digital resources over break.

Reminders:

- Read our weekly Library Buzz Newsletter in Canvas!
- Students have access to our great collection of digital books, audiobooks, and magazines and can put holds on print books (to pick up in the bus loop on Monday/Thursday).
- Please return library books checked out last year--we are still missing a lot of books. Return them to Jefferson during office hours.
- TAB Club continues to meet in Canvas during Thursday lunches every 2 weeks. It's not too late to join--Canvas message us!
- If you have any questions about anything, please send
 Ms. J Miller, Ms. Wall, or Ms. Rosegrant a Canvas message or email us.

Math

Pre-Algebra 8: We are finishing our 3D Solid figures unit within the next 2 weeks.

Algebra & Intensified Algebra: Students worked on solving equations, and evaluating and analyzing functions for the month of December. After break we will continue to model and explore with linear functions.

Int Geometry: Students spent time working on their mathematical communication in the form of proofs, while learning about the properties of parallel lines. Students will continue to write proofs as we explore the many properties of triangles.

Sciences

In Science, students are learning that Innovations have changed our community's relationship with materials, carrying consequences that can be reversed through meaningful interactions to promote recycling. Students are exploring questions like:

How can physical and chemical properties be used to identify an unknown substance? Why is recycling essential to communities?

Student understanding will be demonstrated through a virtual lab analysis and a plastics recycling project. This project could also become the Community Project for students interested in climate action.

Updates/Reminders

Parent/Guardian Canvas accounts are available that allow you to:

- See every course their child is enrolled in
- See all content in the course, including their child's submissions, grades*, and feedback for any assignments graded in Canvas
- Adjust their notifications and frequency communicate with teachers via the Inbox

More info and tutorial here.