



# Greater Commonwealth Virtual School

2023-2024 MIDDLE SCHOOL LIVE COURSE LIST

THE COURSES LISTED ARE OFFERED INTERNALLY BY GCVS MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Course Name	Grade Level	Platform	Description
<b>English Language Arts</b>		Live	The Middle School's English Language Arts classes are all about discovery. Students explore their own abilities to write through reading, listening, and analyzing various fiction and nonfiction texts. A wide variety of texts are used, including books about heroes, mystery, and monsters, to literacy themes of curiosity and innovation. Students will gain the tools they need to express themselves through writing, all while developing critical analysis skills. The outcomes for students include: development of discussion skills, reading and writing for a variety of purposes, fostering creativity and discovery. Novels, short stories, drama, poetry, literature, reference books, and periodicals are utilized to meet these outcomes.
	6	Live	Through the elements of fiction (plot, setting, conflict, character), the main focus in the sixth grade develops connections between themes. Various types of rising actions are identified and analyzed through reading novels, scholarly articles, and fiction texts. An example of the core novels: <i>Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief</i> (mythology), <i>Blackbeard</i> (scholarly article). Writing in sixth grade focuses on the mastery of well-developed ideas through the use of the writing process. Students utilize brainstorming techniques, graphic organizers, and written drafts that focus on strong topic sentences, elaboration of details, and concluding sentences. The expectation is that students in sixth grade will write essays in a response to a variety of prompts.
	7	Live	In seventh grade, students will build off the writing and literacy skills they have learned in sixth grade. Seventh grade continues the focus on analysis of elements of story: plot, conflict, setting, character, mood, and theme. Units Include: short stories, poetry, analytical writing in response to literature and narrative, persuasive, and expository writing. Students read for various topics, themes, and concepts, and include: <i>Wonder</i> (contemporary fiction), <i>The Watsons go to Birmingham in 1963</i> (historical narrative). Seventh graders write for different audiences and purposes. More sophisticated introductions and conclusions are being developed. The expectations are students continue to improve their skills of revising and editing.
	8	Live	In 8th grade, students expand their writing and literacy skills to develop their own voice as a writer by experimenting with similes, metaphors, tone, mode, and themes. Students analyze fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Novels Include: <i>The Outsiders</i> (coming of age fiction), <i>Holes</i> (adventure and mystery), <i>Touching Spirit Bear</i> (realistic fiction), Ray Bradbury Stories, <i>Maus</i> (memoir, graphic novel)

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<b>Mathematics</b>		Live	From reinforcing and strengthening mathematics skills to a true understanding of higher-level concepts, the GCVS middle school mathematics program gives students the opportunity to apply number skills to real-world scenarios. Online students learn math through traditional teaching, applications, videos, games, and real-world scenarios while creating, investigating, and demonstrating knowledge. Math curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts State Frameworks incorporating the Common Core State Standards. Each grade level provides Unit tests, quizzes, and asynchronous work. These assessments are graded and form the basis of the student's grade. Extra help is available, and students are encouraged to attend when they are in need of understanding and applying math concepts
	6	Live	The sixth grade curriculum focuses on expressions and equations, number theory, ratios and proportional relationships, geometry, and statistics. Main areas of focus with expressions and equations are solving one variable and decimal operations, common factors and multiples, and using rational numbers. Ratios and proportional relationships focus on finding percent and unit rate. In geometry, students solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, volume, and surface area. In statistics, students explore data distribution, displaying numerical data in various forms, and measures of center. Problem solving is incorporated throughout applying real-world connections.
	7	Live	The seventh grade curriculum incorporates the computation of whole numbers, decimals, fractions, integers and percent with problem-solving strategies. Students extend their understanding of ratios and rates and develop understanding of proportionality to solve single- and multi-step problems. They use arithmetic of rational numbers as they formulate expressions and equations in one variable and use these equations to solve problems. They continue their work from grade 6 in solving problems involving the area and circumference of a circle and surface area of three-dimensional objects. Students solve real-world and mathematical problems as they make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
	8	Live	The eighth grade curriculum includes the study of linear equations, patterns and functions, geometry, number systems and number theory.
<b>Science</b>		Live	Middle school science at GCVS is an in-depth exploration that will inspire scientific curiosity and build a foundation for further discovery. Starting with a broad look at energy, weather, living organisms, and Earth as a whole system,

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			students dive deeper and deeper, and they learn more about organization and interaction between scientific phenomena and explore the properties that make up the universe around them.
	6	Live	The integration of Earth and space, life, and physical sciences with technology/engineering gives sixth grade students relevant and engaging opportunities with natural phenomena and design problems that highlight the relationship of structure and function in the world around them. Students relate structure and function through analyzing the macro- and microscopic world, such as Earth features and processes, the role of cells and anatomy in supporting living organisms, and properties of materials and waves. Students use interactive science labs and simulations and provide evidence to make claims and explanations about structure-function relationships in different STE domains.
	7	Live	Students in 7th grade focus on systems and cycles using their understanding of structures and functions, connections and relationships in systems, and flow of matter and energy developed in earlier grades. A focus on systems requires students to apply concepts and skills across disciplines, since most natural and designed systems and cycles are complex and interactive. They gain experiences with plate tectonics, interactions of human and Earth processes, organism systems to support and propagate life, ecosystem dynamics, motion and energy systems, and key technological systems used by society. Through grade 7, students continue to utilize interactive simulations and begin the process of moving from a more concrete to an abstract perspective, since many of the systems and cycles studies are not directly observable or experienced. This also creates a foundation for exploring cause and effect relationships in more depth in grade 8.
	8	Live	Grade 8 students use more robust abstract thinking skills to explain causes of complex phenomena and systems. Many causes are not immediately or physically visible to students. An understanding of cause and effect of key natural phenomena and designed processes allows students to explain patterns and make predictions about future events. In grade 8 these include, for example, causes of seasons and tides, causes of plate tectonics and weather or climate; and how atoms and molecules interact to explain the substances that make up the world and how materials change. Being able to analyze phenomena for evidence of causes and processes that often cannot be seen, and being able to conceptualize and describe those, is a significant outcome for grade 8 students.
<b>Social Studies</b>		Live	Middle school students learn about geography, economics. and the roles citizens play in their communities, as well as the story of the formation of the United States and the development of the known world, from ancient history to

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			modern time. Students learn about the contributions of different societies, from the familiar European cultures to Chinese, Mayan, and Indian contributions and more.
	6 & 7	Live	Grades 6 and 7 form a two-year sequence in which students study regions of the world by examining physical geography, nations in the region today, and selected ancient and classical societies before 1000 CE. Students in grade 6 investigate by answering questions such as <i>“How does geography affect how societies develop and interact?”</i> and <i>“How have human societies differed from one another across time and regions?”</i>
	7	Live	Grade 7 continues the sequence from 6, studying the development of ancient and classical civilizations and physical geography of Asia, Oceania, and Europe. Students study these topics by exploring guiding questions such as, <i>“How did the concept of self-government develop?”</i> and <i>“Why do empires rise and fall?”</i>
	8	Live	Eighth grade students study the roots and foundations of U.S. democracy, how and why it has developed over time, and the role of individuals in maintaining a healthy democracy. They study these topics by exploring guiding questions such as, <i>“How have concepts of liberty and justice affected the United States democratic system of government?”</i> and <i>“How can power be balanced in government?”</i>
<b>Music</b>	6-8	Live	In middle school music class, students explore and create music through a variety of methods. Students are guided in singing, dancing, and building music appreciation. They also learn to read and write music while playing games and learning about music history. Music is a semester-long class.
<b>Art</b>	6-8	Live	Middle school students learn about the principles of design, including scale and unity. These principles help them to create art that has interesting composition and tells a story or expresses an idea. Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge through small activities and through larger art projects. In the process, students gain a better understanding of how to communicate creatively. Art is a semester-long class.
<b>Computer Science</b>	6-8	Live	Computer science class at the middle school takes students on an exploration of hands-on coding experiences with an introduction to computer technology and basic coding skills. In addition, students learn practical skills, including processing documents, creating pre, developing websites, problem-solving, and more. Computer Science is a semester-long class.

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PE, Health, Wellness	6-8	Live	In this semester-long class, students are taught the benefits of participating in physical activities both now and in the future. This fitness program reinforces positive behaviors while allowing students to engage in activities that improve overall fitness, health, and wellness.