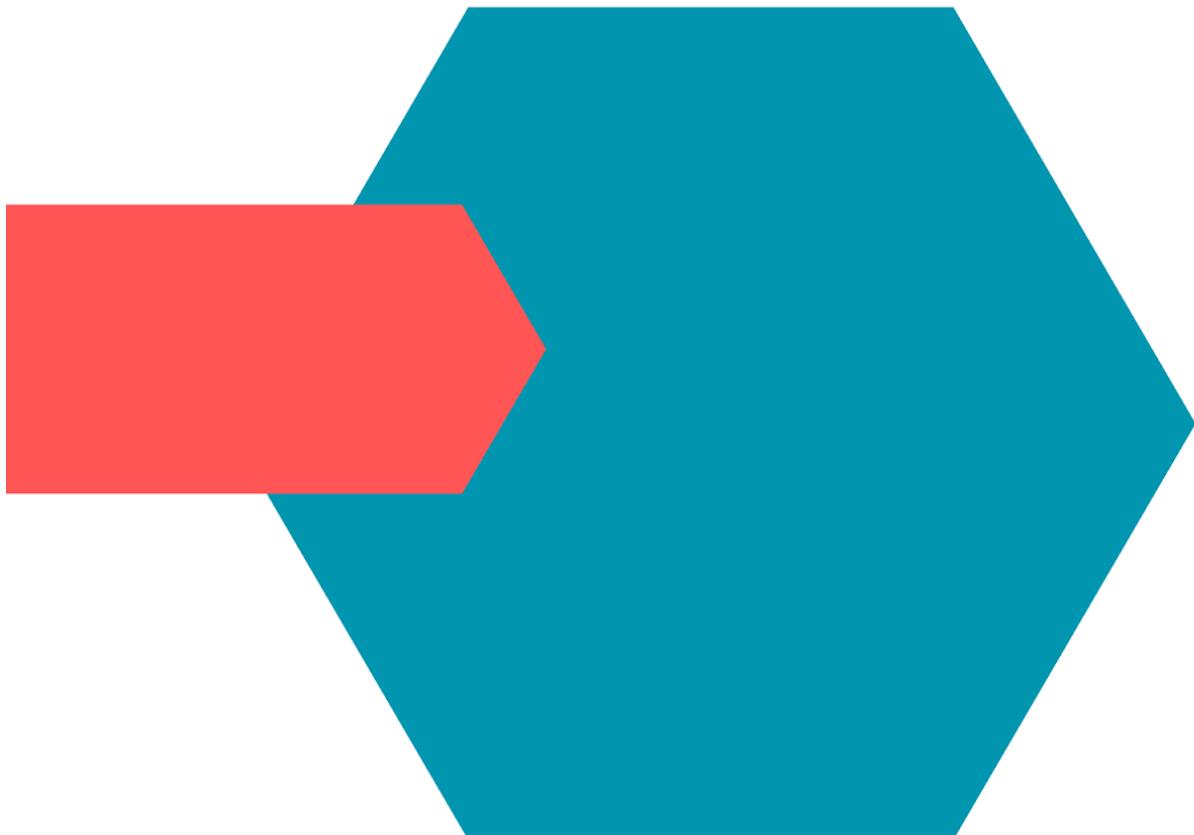




Anser Middle School

Course Descriptions

2025-2026



6th Grade

Year Long Courses

6th Grade - Math

Sixth-grade math lays the foundation for advanced mathematical thinking by building skills in five key areas: understanding and solving problems involving ratios and rates; deepening knowledge of fractions and expanding into negative numbers and rational numbers; writing and interpreting numerical expressions and equations; developing statistical thinking; and exploring geometry through shapes, area, and volume. Students also grow as mathematical thinkers by engaging in the 8 Mathematical Practices—discussing ideas, explaining their reasoning, listening to others, and critiquing arguments to strengthen their understanding and confidence in math.

6th Grade - ELA

In 6th grade, students explore the power of storytelling, innovation, and untold contributions to history through literature, research, and creative expression. In Module 1, they read *The Lightning Thief* to examine the relevance of Greek mythology today, analyze character and theme, and create their own demigod characters to insert into the story. Module 2 focuses on design thinking, using *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* to study how perseverance and innovation can solve real-world problems. Students research other global changemakers and present their findings in a Solution Symposium. In Module 4, students explore the often-overlooked contributions of Black women in space science through *Hidden Figures (Young Readers' Edition)*, analyze multiple perspectives on the Space Race, and write argument essays. They conclude with a narrative nonfiction picture book project, celebrating diverse innovators and reflecting on the broader impact of their work.

6th Grade - Science

Sixth-grade students will collect, analyze, and interpret data, ask questions, and construct explanations to solve problems, all while engaging in evidence-based arguments. Their focus will be on the physical science concepts of motion, energy, and waves and the astronomy concepts associated with understanding our Solar System.. Through this exploration, students will delve into essential questions such as what determines how objects move in the solar system, what causes the phases of the moon, and how is energy transferred between objects?

6th Grade - HOWLS (Habits of Work, Learning and Service)

This course is designed to help students build strong habits that support success in all their academic classes. In HOWLS students will practice key concepts from their core subjects, strengthen their study and organizational skills, and develop routines for independent learning. The class provides time and support for students to complete assignments, review challenging material, and reflect on their progress as learners.

Trimester Courses:

6th Grade - Makerspace

6th grade Makerspace class exposes students to a wide variety of projects. Makerspace is a place to explore, play, try new things, fail and succeed. Some projects include woodworking, computer programming, make-up and spa product mixing, video production, and carnival game construction.

6th Grade - Art - The Power of GRIT!

In this visual arts expedition, students will deeply explore various mediums through rigorous projects that require patience, fortitude, and flexibility. The big ideas focus on how art-making allows people to create meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences. Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be cultivated, and excellence is achieved through practice, failure, constructive critique, reflection, revision, and refining work over time. We grapple with guiding questions such as: Why do hard things? How does failure help success? How does art-making contribute to an understanding and awareness of self?

6th Grade - Reading

In 6th grade Reading, students will dive into a wide range of fiction and nonfiction texts to build strong reading comprehension, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. They will explore themes, analyze characters, identify text structures, and make connections between texts and the world around them. Through interactive discussions, reading journals, and group activities, students will learn to support their ideas with evidence and develop a deeper understanding of what they read. The course encourages a love of reading and helps students grow as independent, thoughtful readers.

6th Grade - Naturalist Class

In 6th grade Naturalist class, students will explore the wonders of the natural world through observation, inquiry, and hands-on experiences. They will learn to think like scientists by

studying local ecosystems, identifying plants and animals, recording data in field journals, and practicing environmental stewardship. Through outdoor exploration, nature-based projects, and collaborative activities, students will deepen their understanding of ecology and develop a lasting appreciation for the environment. This class fosters curiosity, respect for nature, and a sense of responsibility for protecting the world around us.

6th Grade - Outdoor Skills

In 6th grade Outdoor Skills, students will learn practical skills for safely and confidently exploring the outdoors, while building teamwork, resilience, and a deeper connection to nature. Topics include basic first aid, navigation with maps and compasses, outdoor cooking and fire making, shelter building, and environmental stewardship. Through hands-on experiences, group challenges, and time spent outside, students will develop problem-solving abilities and a greater appreciation for the natural world. This class encourages responsibility, self-reliance, and the joy of outdoor adventure.

6th Grade - Urban PE

Students are in for an exciting year with a wide range of activities and community involvement! Partnering with organizations like BSU, Safe Routes, Rugby Idaho, St. Luke's, and St. Alphonsus will provide valuable learning experiences. The 6th graders will not only explore the outdoors but also contribute to the community by picking up trash along the greenbelt and learning about greenbelt etiquette. These hands-on experiences are a fantastic way for them to learn and grow both inside and outside the classroom.

7th Grade

Year Long Courses

7th Grade - Math

Seventh-grade math will focus on (1) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; (2) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations; (3) solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; and (4) drawing inferences about populations based on samples.

7th Grade - ELA

In 7th grade, students examine how personal and cultural stories of resilience can inspire understanding and change. Students explore the experiences of the Lost Boys and Girls of Sudan through the novel *A Long Walk to Water*, informational texts, and documentaries. They analyze narrative elements and central ideas, ultimately creating original children's ebooks that share messages of hope and survival. Students also investigate the legacy of the Harlem Renaissance by studying poetry, music, visual art, and historical texts. They explore how African American artists used collaboration and creativity to overcome adversity and how those themes still resonate today. The module culminates in a student-curated museum exhibit that connects historical works with contemporary voices, celebrating the enduring impact of art, culture, and identity.

7th Grade - Justice

Seventh-grade students will engage with our overarching guiding questions: "Where do we want to see change in the world?" and "What does justice mean, and who is responsible for creating it?" They will read both informational and narrative texts to improve critical reading and thinking, research and discourse skills, and practice evidence-based writing. Using the design thinking process, students will undertake a solutionary project aimed at making a positive impact on the world. Content focus includes human rights, place and environmental ethics, real-world issues that students are passionate about, and current events.

7th Grade - Science

Seventh-grade students will collect, analyze, and interpret data, ask questions, and construct explanations to solve problems, all while engaging in evidence-based arguments. They will use the Boise River to explore the major concepts and principles of Biology: Cell Biology, Energy Flow in Ecosystems, Heredity and Genetics, and Evolution. Collecting and analyzing our own data will deepen our understanding of the intricacies of this local and vital ecosystem.

Trimester Courses

7th Grade - Creative Writing

In 7th grade Creative Writing, students will explore the power of storytelling through a variety of engaging writing projects, including short stories, poetry, personal narratives, and scripts. They will learn how to develop compelling characters, build rich settings, and craft plots that capture readers' attention. Through mini-lessons, writing workshops, and peer feedback, students will strengthen their voice, expand their vocabulary, and experiment with different styles and genres. The course emphasizes creativity, self-expression, and revision, helping students become confident and thoughtful writers.

7th Grade - Math Lab

In 7th grade Math Lab, students receive targeted support to strengthen their understanding of key math concepts and build confidence in their problem-solving skills. This class reinforces topics from the core math curriculum—such as ratios, expressions, equations, and geometry—through hands-on activities, interactive lessons, and individualized practice. Students will work in small groups and one-on-one settings to fill gaps, deepen understanding, and apply math in real-world contexts. Math Lab is designed to help students develop a growth mindset and build the foundational skills they need to succeed in their regular math class.

7th Grade - Health

In 7th grade health, students explore essential topics each trimemester with a focus on the connection between mental, emotional, and physical health with an emphasis on drug use and abuse and the importance of nutrition. . Students will examine how these areas influence one another and shape overall well-being. Through engaging discussions and activities, students will learn to make informed, healthy choices in their daily lives. The ultimate goal: to understand how everything is connected to health—and why it's one of the most important and exciting subjects to learn!

7th Grade - Art - Stories in the Making

How does knowing and learning someone's story impact how we perceive the world? What responsibilities come with the freedom to create? How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? This visual arts expedition explores how sharing our stories can foster connection, engagement, and empathy. We practice creating art that tells our own stories and examine how multicultural art promotes mutual understanding and respect between people of diverse backgrounds.

7th Grade - Makerspace

7th grade Advanced Makerspace expands on the theme of exploration by adding authentic choice. Projects will include woodworking, JavaScript programming, soap making, and 3D design. Students will have opportunities to create their own projects and launch entrepreneurship projects. Successful business plans can earn small business loans and the chance to create work independently on authentic business projects in the community.

7th Grade - Urban PE

Students are in for an exciting year with a wide range of activities and community involvement! Partnering with organizations like BSU, Safe Routes, Rugby Idaho, St. Luke's, and St. Alphonsus will provide valuable learning experiences. The 7th graders will not only explore the outdoors but also contribute to the community by picking up trash along the greenbelt and learning about greenbelt etiquette. These hands-on experiences are a fantastic way for them to learn and grow both inside and outside the classroom.

8th Grade

Year Long Courses

8th Grade - Math

Eighth-grade math builds a strong foundation in algebra, geometry, and data analysis by focusing on key concepts that prepare students for high school mathematics. Students will learn to formulate and solve linear equations and systems, model relationships using bivariate data, and understand the concept of a function to describe real-world situations. They will explore properties of integer exponents and irrational numbers, as well as analyze two- and three-dimensional figures using concepts of distance, angle, similarity, congruence, and the Pythagorean Theorem. Through these topics, students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills essential for future math success.

Integrated Algebra

Integrated Algebra guides students through a deeper understanding of key algebraic concepts by focusing on one-variable statistics, linear equations and inequalities, and systems of equations. Students will also explore functions in greater depth, learning to represent, interpret, and communicate about them in various forms. The course concludes with an introduction to quadratic equations, preparing students for more advanced algebraic thinking. Throughout the course, students develop strong analytical and problem-solving skills that form a foundation for future success in mathematics.

8th Grade - ELA

Across three powerful modules, students examine how stories from the past—whether rooted in folklore, history, or lived experience—can inform, inspire, and shape understanding in the present. In Summer of the Mariposas, students explore Latin American folklore and learn to modernize traditional tales through narrative and informational writing. In Maus I, students study the Holocaust through graphic literature, poetry, and survivor accounts, culminating in a narrative and visual tribute to historical upstanders. Through Farewell to Manzanar, students investigate the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, analyzing memoirs, historical texts, and activism to connect past injustices to current social issues. Each module ends with a meaningful performance task that challenges students to apply their learning, elevate marginalized voices, and engage their communities through writing, presentation, and creative expression.

8th Grade - Science

Eighth-grade students will collect, analyze, and interpret data, ask questions, and construct explanations to solve problems, all while engaging in evidence-based arguments. Their focus will be on the concepts of matter and energy, weather and climate, and the dynamic forces that shape the Earth. Through this exploration, they will investigate the essential questions: "What factors determine regional weather, and how do changes in the Earth's system impact our communities?" and "What causes the Earth's surface to change?"

Trimester Courses:

8th Grade - Urban PE

Students are in for an exciting year with a wide range of activities and community involvement! Partnering with organizations like BSU, Safe Routes, Rugby Idaho, St. Luke's, and St. Alphonsus will provide valuable learning experiences. 8th graders will not only explore the outdoors but also contribute to the community by picking up trash along the greenbelt and learning about greenbelt etiquette. These hands-on experiences are a fantastic way for them to learn and grow both inside and outside the classroom.

8th Grade - IDLA

This CTE course covers the 16 Career Clusters and occupations within them, as well as employability skills such as time management, communication, and decision making. Students will learn about their personality, personal strengths, career options, and personal network. They will use a variety of online tools and career research sites to complete a portfolio that includes their 8th grade plan, their interest inventory results, and a summary of their future goals. This course is a Quality Matters certified online course. This is a CTE Digital class. [View full syllabus.](#)

8th Grade - Math Lab

In 8th grade Math Lab, students receive targeted support to strengthen their understanding of key math concepts and build confidence in their problem-solving skills. This class reinforces topics from the core math curriculum—such as ratios, expressions, equations, and geometry—through hands-on activities, interactive lessons, and individualized practice. Students will work in small groups and one-on-one settings to fill gaps, deepen understanding, and apply math in real-world contexts. Math Lab is designed to help students develop a growth mindset and build the foundational skills they need to succeed in their regular math class.

Expedition (Trimester)

#1 8th Grade - Food for Thought

“What is the Future of our Food?”

8th graders will participate in an EL Expedition titled "What is the Future of our Food?" This interdisciplinary expedition—encompassing Social Studies, ELA, Science, and Real World Issues—is designed to enhance critical thinking, research, explanatory writing, presentation, and collaborative discussion skills. Guiding questions include: "What is the story of my food?" "What is the omnivore's dilemma?" "What journey does our food take?" and "What are the impacts of our food choices?" Our anchor text is Michael Pollan's The Omnivore's Dilemma, Young Readers' Edition.

#2 8th Grade - Exploring Self and Story on Stage

“How can we use theater and storytelling to express who we are, connect with others, and inspire our community?”

In this engaging trimester course, 8th-grade students dive into the world of theater while exploring personal growth and creative expression. Through a blend of acting exercises, character development, script work, and collaborative storytelling, students build confidence, empathy, and communication skills. The course emphasizes teamwork, self-reflection, and the creative process as students contribute their unique voices to the creation or adaptation of a dynamic play. The trimester culminates in a live performance for the Anser community, showcasing student talent and celebrating their artistic and personal development.

#3 8th Grade Capstone: Independent Passion Projects

“What happens when I take charge of my own learning to explore something I truly care about?”

In this course, students will explore a variety of hands-on, real-world projects designed to build independence, creativity, and authentic skills. Through fieldwork, service, and collaboration, students will gain the tools and inspiration to design a Capstone project of their own choosing. These independent passion projects—ranging from art installations and upcycled fashion shows to original films, plays, and entrepreneurial ventures—serve as a culminating experience during their final year at Anser. The course empowers students to take ownership of their learning as they reflect on who they are and prepare for what comes next.