Spring River High School Course Descriptions

Monday - Wednesday Academic Classes

Geometry (9,10,11) – 135 hours
This course begins with analytical geometry, looking at the Cartesian coordinate system, linear equations, and calculations of slope, midpoint, and distance. Students learn the basics of Euclidean geometry, including points, lines, rays, planes, and polygons. Working with polygons, students explore triangles. Students study circles and figures in three dimensions at the end of the year.

Algebra II (10,11) – 135 hours
The focus of this course is helping students develop mathematical thinking. Students determine mathematical relationships between all operations and numbers and use this knowledge to model situations with mathematics and reason about these situations abstractly and quantitatively. The concepts students apply in the realm of pure mathematics and then model in real work situations will be real number systems, expressions and equations, graphs, functions, linear relationships, exponents and radicals, polynomials, quadratic relationships, complex numbers, linear algebra, exponential functions, transformations, and intro to trigonometry.

English I – (Grades 9,10) - 135 hours
In this course, students will focus on the development of self through literature, using the text *In Short: A Collection of Brief Creative Nonfiction* by Judith Kitchen and Mary Paumier Jones. They will begin with essential writing skills that will serve as the foundation for their growth as writers. Writing is fundamentally about communicating our sense of self and ideas about the world. The journey toward becoming a writer is one of self-discovery and recognizing the commonalities of the human experience. With this in mind, this course is designed to give students multiple ways to explore who they are and find their unique voice through writing. Once they develop the tools for understanding themselves and others, they will have the basic ingredients needed to describe their insights or argue a specific viewpoint—both key components of academic writing.

The course will include readings of novels such as *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai, which helps students understand the development of self and the power of individual action, and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, which explores themes of power, corruption, and the betrayal of ideals. Additionally, students will read short stories like "Thank You, Ma'am" by Langston Hughes and "Rules of the Game" by Amy Tan, which explore themes of kindness, trust, cultural identity, and family dynamics. Students

will also delve into "The Lady, or the Tiger?" by Frank R. Stockton, first published in 1882 and known for its surprise ending. Following these short stories, students will write sequels using the literary techniques they have studied.

Students will also study Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, gaining an understanding of the historical context, language evolution, and the elements of tragedy. They will compare Shakespeare's work to *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, a narrative poem by Arthur Brooke first published in 1562, which was a key source for Shakespeare's play. Students will end the year with a performance of Romeo and Juliet.

English II (Grades 9,10,11) – 135 hours

In this course, students will embark on a journey of self-discovery through the study of short stories, a hero's journey with both fiction and nonfiction novels, and poetry that explores nature and self-reflection. The course will begin with an emphasis on creative writing, where students will delve into the art of storytelling by exploring literary techniques through the works of various authors. They will read and analyze short stories like "The Lay of the Were-Wolf" by Marie de France and "To Build a Fire" by Jack London, gaining insights into character development, point of view, story structure, conflict, settings, world-building, plot, and pacing. Through this process, students will create their own short stories, putting into practice the techniques they have learned.

As part of their exploration of literature, students will delve into the theme of the Hero's Journey by reading and analyzing "Their Eyes Were Watching God" by Zora Neale Hurston and "Unbroken" by Laura Hillenbrand. These texts will provide rich narratives that illustrate the stages of the hero's journey, allowing students to identify and understand the universal patterns of growth, challenge, and transformation. By engaging with these profound stories, students will deepen their appreciation for the complexity of human experience and the power of storytelling.

Later in the course, students will transition to nonfiction writing, applying the creative techniques they have mastered to craft works that are expressive and purposeful. They will learn to align their writing with the topic, audience, and purpose, design and execute a research plan, interview sources, provide balanced treatments of topics, and engage their audience effectively. Additionally, students will engage in the study of poetry, with a deep exploration of "House of Light" by Mary Oliver. Through this study, students will connect with nature and themselves, further discovering their own journey while uncovering the powerful impact that words have on one's self.

Thursday & Friday Academic Classes

World History I (Grades 9,10) – 90 hours

The Age of Revolutions

During this 17-week course, students will explore three Political Revolutions – the American, French, and Chinese Revolutions, along with the notable and influential philosophers and statesmen involved..

Students will craft a presentation,incorporating an artistic component, focusing on a revolution not addressed in the course.

History Through Art
This 8-week course students will survey Art across the ages, from prehistoric times to the Renaissance. They will study the art of each era, observe visual representations, and have the chance to recreate the art they have seen. Students will be able to distinguish between different art styles during these historical periods, including Neolithic and Cave Art, Ancient Egypt and Greece, Roman art, and Early Renaissance.

Mythology
This 8-week course focuses primarily on the myths and folklore of different cultures. Students will study Greek, Roman & Asian Mythologies and Mythologies from the Americas.

World History II (Grades 9,10,11) – 90 hours
Communities and Connections: Explore the development and interactions of various cultures and societies. This course will focus on themes such as Hierarchy and Community, Migration and Exchange, Humans and the Environment, and Progress and its Consequences. Students will engage in activities that mirror historians' methods of reconstructing and analyzing the past, conducting through research, formulating intricate arguments, supporting logical stances with concrete evidence, and examining cause-and-effect relationships resulting from the decisions of individuals and groups. The course spans from the Neolithic Revolution starting in 10,000 BCE to the present day.

Science I (9,10) – 90 hours
Biology
Biology is the study of living things. This course will cover the basics of cell biology, specifically the structure, function, reproduction and biochemistry of different cell types. In addition the evolution, taxonomy and genetics of life will be taught. Students will also explore the adaptations of life in a variety of ecosystems. The curriculum includes exercises that promote comprehension and critical thinking, interactive activities, and hands-on laboratory sessions.

Science II (9,10,11) – 90 hours
Chemistry I: Organic Chemistry (9 weeks)
Organic Chemistry explores the realms of living organisms. Throughout this course, students will delve into the plant life cycle to grasp the fundamentals of organic chemistry and its connection to life processes. They observe how plants rely on carbon as the foundation of their life cycle. Using carbon and water, they examine the transformation of carbon into simple sugars through photosynthesis and how these sugars make up simple to complex carbohydrates. The class will also look at different natural processes that organic materials go through to produce alcohols, acids, and esters and see how they are used by living organisms. Furthermore, students explore how plants decompose to form other organic

materials, how those materials are refined and used by humans, and the cycle of carbon returning to plants.

Chemistry II: Acids, Bases, Salts (8 weeks)
This course is designed to familiarize students with a different aspect of chemistry, where quantity plays a crucial role, reactions are rapid and measurable, often leading to instant visible outcomes, and life is not directly related. This differs from the ninth-grade block, which focuses on the chemistry of life processes.

Ecology (16 weeks)
Place-based Coastal and Marine Biology
Our Place-Based Ecology course is a journey into the intricate relationship between ecocultural landscapes and the interplay of human interaction. It delves into the co-evolution of landscapes, the profound influence of local communities in shaping and preserving these environments, and the disruptive forces impacting these delicate ecosystems. We place significant emphasis on leveraging this knowledge to enhance the efficacy and significance of restoration endeavors, enlightening our students about the complex dynamics of our environment.

Indigenous communities have historically served as stewards of diverse and flourishing ecocultural landscapes. Their stewardship, rooted in place-based values informed by Indigenous wisdom, underscores principles of equitable regard for all elements within an ecosystem and practices that uphold sustainable resource management. We advocate for integrating these place-based values into educational programs to inspire a sense of responsibility in students toward biodiversity conservation and fostering a profound connection to the land.

By drawing insights from Indigenous knowledge and marine science research, we illustrate how these values directly shape the stewardship of habitats like marshes, oak hammocks, pine forests, rivers, and waterways that flow into the ocean. By honoring and incorporating these values into our local educational initiatives, we aim to advance research on the diverse and resilient ecosystems that have thrived for generations. Our course is designed to ignite the passion of our students, who are our future innovators, problem solvers, and lifelong earth stewards.

Monday - Wednesday Afternoon Electives

Farm-to-Table/Culinary Arts (Monday & Tuesdays)
This year-long class studies all facets of agricultural practices, spanning “from farm to table.” It will compare and contrast ancient agricultural practices with contemporary ones, encompassing both large-scale industrial farming and local systems. Students will acquire valuable skills to make informed decisions regarding their nutrition, food choices and how they can advocate for food systems that will promote their well-being and benefit the environment,

Culinary nutrition will be explored by combining food science with cooking skills to craft nutritious and fulfilling snacks for the class on a weekly basis. Guest instructors from local farms and restaurants will share their knowledge and skills with the students.

This course will incorporate both artistic and practical elements, such as constructing wooden structures to support an urban garden, engaging in composting, planting, and harvesting. Moreover, students will have the opportunity to participate in planning, creating, and serving seasonal community dinners throughout the year.

Physical Education: Games and Movement (Monday & Tuesday)
The main focus of this course is to engage students on a personal level through tailored activities. To accomplish this, our class will provide physical education exercises that help students relax and expand their perspectives. Our PE lessons are concerned with life as it is experienced between two polarities: learning to fall and then regaining balance. Our carefully selected activities, like circuit training, targeted games, and mindfulness practices such as qi gong, encourage students to bond and seek inner equilibrium.

Photography (on Wednesdays)
Throughout this course, students will learn how to convey visual concepts through fundamental photographic techniques that blend historical and contemporary practices. Engaging in project-oriented lessons, each students' potential is nurtured through hands-on guidance and enjoyable assignments. The curriculum covers composition, structure, perspectives, and visual storytelling through the lens.

Students will also be given opportunities to support the creation of the Spring River Yearbook after school hours.

Music Appreciation (on Wednesdays)
Through the study of music, we refine our capacities to connect, harmonize, and resolve dissonances; we learn to think and make sound judgments. We develop our heads, hearts, and limbs by singing, playing instruments, and learning the history and rudiments of music. Music builds life skills such as listening, team building, communicating, and being flexible in the moment. Ms. Linda will also offer after school opportunities for ensemble work with orchestra and band.

Thursday & Friday Afternoon Electives
Latin I (Thursday & Friday)
Intro to Latin invites students with little to no background in Latin to immerse themselves in the language and culture of ancient Rome. Using a natural approach to Latin, students will read, act out, and translate passages each week, while also building their Latin grammar and vocabulary understanding through meaningful exercises and activities. Latin is the perfect beginner language, as it lends so much to other romance languages, such as Spanish. Studying Latin also engages the student in

critical thinking and solidifies English grammar and vocabulary skills, building a solid foundation for future learning.

2D and 3D Fine Art Electives (Thursday & Friday)

These carefully designed courses will be offered in 6–8-week blocks, allowing students to practically and artistically express a multi-perspective of themselves, the world, and others. These projects will evoke, nurture, and apply the powers of the student imagination.

- **2D Black and White Drawing**
- **2D Printmaking**
- **3D Mosaics/Clay Modeling**
- **3D Prop Design**