



2025 | 2026

# COURSE CATALOG

MIDDLE SCHOOL

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# COURSE OFFERINGS

	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
<a href="#">ENGLISH</a>	English 6	English 7	English 8
<a href="#">HISTORY</a>	Ancient World History	Medieval World History	Early United States History
<a href="#">MATH</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Math 6</li> <li>Math 6 Honors</li> <li>AoPS Pre-Algebra</li> <li>Pre-Algebra Honors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-Algebra</li> <li>Pre-Algebra Honors</li> <li>AoPS Pre-Algebra</li> <li>Algebra 1 Honors</li> <li>AoPS Algebra 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Algebra Foundations</li> <li>Algebra 1</li> <li>Algebra 1 Honors</li> <li>AoPS Algebra 1</li> <li>Geometry Honors</li> <li>AoPS Geometry, Counting &amp; Probability</li> </ul>
<a href="#">SCIENCE</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Earth Science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Life Science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical Science</li> </ul>
<a href="#">JEWISH STUDIES</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jewish Studies 6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jewish Studies 7</li> <li>Honors Jewish Studies 7</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jewish Studies 8</li> <li>Honors Jewish Studies 8</li> </ul>
<a href="#">WORLD LANGUAGES</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hebrew (level TBD by dept.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hebrew (level TBD by dept.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hebrew (level TBD by dept.)</li> <li>Spanish 1 (elective)</li> </ul>
<a href="#">ELECTIVES</a>	<p>Pick ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garage Band</li> <li>Visual Arts</li> <li>Journalism</li> <li>Leadership</li> <li>Vocal Music Ensemble</li> </ul> <p>Or Pick TWO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intro to Film</li> <li>Intro to Engineering</li> </ul>	<p>Pick ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Film 1</li> <li>Vocal Music Ensemble</li> <li>Garage Band</li> <li>Advanced Garage Band</li> <li>Visual Arts</li> <li>Journalism</li> <li>Leadership</li> <li>Physical Computing &amp; Robotics</li> <li>Engineering Design &amp; Modeling</li> </ul>	<p>Pick ONE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Film 1</li> <li>Film 2</li> <li>Garage Band</li> <li>Advanced Garage Band</li> <li>Visual Arts</li> <li>Journalism</li> <li>Leadership</li> <li>Vocal Music Ensemble</li> <li>Physical Computing &amp; Robotics</li> <li>Engineering Design &amp; Modeling</li> <li>Spanish 1</li> </ul>
<a href="#">PHYSICAL EDUCATION</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PE</li> </ul>

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** Tarbut V'Torah admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

# ATHLETICS/PE

## DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

Physical activity, whether individual or organized, can have a tremendous positive impact on a student's wellbeing. The department promotes the development of leaders, team players and lifelong learners.

Other goals include:

- To provide physical activity essential to optimum growth and development
- To provide a wide range of sports/activities that will contribute to the pursuit of a lifelong healthy lifestyle
- To provide opportunities for physical, mental, and social development through teamwork, strategies, conditioning, practices, and competitive games
- To provide a learning environment to strengthen work ethic, accountability, sportsmanship, and discipline
- To provide opportunities for individual sports/activities

Competition melds together physical potential and capabilities in a positive, meaningful way. Neither winning nor losing is at the heart of the class, but rather building character, self-confidence, and physical and mental toughness. The student is expected to put forth real effort and to participate with passion and purpose. TVT's goal is not to identify winners but to make winners of students on and off the field or court

Physical Education plays an important role in the TVT Middle School student's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development. This is an ideal time for students to make physical activity a regular and important part of their daily lives.

### ■ PHYSICAL EDUCATION 6

We offer our students a variety of activities including yoga, dance, and rock climbing, while offering instruction that focuses on skills development and prepares our students for lifelong participation in physical activity. The 6th grade class also contains a health and wellness component which is taught by the school counselor and school nurse.

### ■ PHYSICAL EDUCATION 7 & 8

We offer our students a variety of activities including yoga, dance, and rock climbing, while offering instruction that focuses on skills development and prepares our students for lifelong participation in physical activity.

### ■ AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS

Fall	Winter	Spring
Boys Flag Football	Boys Basketball	Boys Soccer
Girls Volleyball	Girls Basketball	Girls Soccer
		Boys Volleyball

### ■ INDEPENDENT STUDY PHYSICAL EDUCATION (ISPE)

While our primary recommendation is that all students participate in TVT's PE programs, we do offer an independent study physical education (ISPE) program to 7th and 8th-grade students (*6th-grade students MUST take PE*) who demonstrate an exceptional degree of devotion, commitment, and passion for a sport/activity outside of TVT. For students who take ISPE, they must take Learning Lab or another course to ensure that they are taking 8 courses per semester.

**Grade Level:** 7-8

**Prerequisites:** See Criteria Below:

- Participation in the sport/activity must be under the guidance of a qualified professional coach or instructor. Neither the parent nor a student is allowed to be the supervisor of the program
- Students may not participate in ISPE for a sport that is currently offered at TVT
- Students must demonstrate an exceptional degree of devotion, commitment, and passion for the sport/activity
- The coach/instructor must provide a schedule that shows activity for a minimum of 400 minutes every two weeks/ten school days while school is in session
- The ISPE program is one school year and will count towards physical education credit. If the student would like to continue within the program for the following school year, the student must re-apply for the program.

# ELECTIVES

## 6TH GRADE ELECTIVE OPTIONS

Students in 6th grade will have the opportunity to select from the following options:

Pick ONE (full-year options)

- Garage Band 6
- Visual Arts
- Journalism
- Leadership
- Vocal Music Ensemble

Pick TWO (semester options)

- Intro to Film
- Intro to Engineering & Programming

## 7TH & 8TH GRADE ELECTIVE OPTIONS

Students in 7th & 8th grade will have the opportunity to select from the following options:

Pick ONE (full-year)

- Garage Band 7/8
- Advanced Garage Band
- Visual Arts
- Journalism
- Leadership
- Film 1
- Film 2
- Physical Computing & Robotics
- Engineering Design & Modeling
- Spanish 1 (8th grade)
- Vocal Music Ensemble

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS ELECTIVES

### DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The TVT Visual and Performing Arts Department provides students the ability to marry ideas to action. Whether learning to play music, make a film, or create a piece of visual art, the discipline of taking an idea to its artistic conclusion is vital. Students are challenged at all skill levels through trial and error, collaboration, revision, and execution. The most up-to-date technology and state-of-the-art facilities give students exposure to what is being used by industry professionals. The skills learned through this process can be applied to all aspects of life.

### ■ INTRO TO FILM (semester)

In this one-semester course, 6th-grade students will dive into the exciting world of film production, learning how to tell compelling stories using moviemaking tools. From brainstorming and screenwriting to shooting and editing, students will explore every step of the creative process. They will work hands-on with professional cameras, lighting, and sound equipment to produce their own short films while developing techniques like framing, editing, and visual storytelling. Along the way, students will analyze scenes from iconic films to uncover how filmmakers create emotion, engagement, and meaning. Collaboration will be key as students collaborate in teams to share ideas, solve problems, and bring their visions to life. By the end of the semester, students will walk away with a deeper appreciation for the art of filmmaking and the creative skills specific to the world of visual storytelling.

**Grade Level:** 6

### ■ GARAGE BAND 6

Welcome to the band! In this year-long (2 semester) course, 6th-grade students will be introduced to all the essential aspects of playing contemporary popular music as part of an ensemble. Students will learn about important musical works, composers, and performers, and have the opportunity to try out or further develop their skills on a variety of instruments, including keyboard, guitar, bass guitar, drum set, ukulele, and vocals. Throughout the course, students will gain familiarity with musical form, notation, and the shorthand used to communicate musical ideas. They will also build a musical vocabulary and develop the skills needed to analyze a piece of music and collaborate effectively with fellow musicians. Above all, students will learn to express and excel in their musical talents within an environment of encouragement and mentorship. The band will showcase their musical accomplishments in two major performances each year.

**Grade Level:** 6

### ■ FILM 1

This yearlong course invites students to explore the exciting world of film production. Film students will develop and write original stories and then bring those words to life by creating their own short films. By analyzing classic and contemporary films, students

will uncover the secrets of great storytelling and visual composition. They will learn the fundamentals of camera techniques, shot framing, lighting, sound, and editing to craft compelling visuals. In addition, students will dive into screenwriting basics, discovering how to turn their ideas into scripts. Collaboration and teamwork are key as students work together to plan, shoot, and edit their projects. Whether you dream of making an inspiring documentary, a gripping drama, or a laugh-out-loud comedy, this course is designed to help students build confidence and share their unique stories on screen.

**Grade Level:** 7-8

## ■ FILM 2

This yearlong course is for 8th-grade students who want to build upon their knowledge of the fundamentals of film production, refine their technical expertise, and deepen their creative visual storytelling skills. Students will explore advanced techniques in cinematography, editing, sound design, and lighting while focusing on the collaborative process of filmmaking. They will learn how to take a concept from pre-production to final cut by diving into advanced screenwriting, story development, and directing. In addition to hands-on production, students will study scenes and aesthetics from celebrated films and digital media to inspire their own work. This course culminates in the showcasing of students' original films at the annual *VAPA BLOWOUT* and *Pride of the Arts* events, celebrating their growth as emerging filmmakers.

**Grade Level:** 8

**Prerequisites:** *Film 1 and teacher approval*

## ■ GARAGE BAND 7/8

Step into the spotlight! 7th and 8th-grade musicians in Garage Band will work together to play contemporary popular music as part of an ensemble. Students will learn about important musical works, composers, and performers, and have the opportunity to try out or further develop their skills on a variety of instruments, including keyboard, guitar, bass guitar, drum set, ukulele, and vocals. Throughout the course, students will build on their understanding of musical form, notation, and the shorthand used to communicate musical ideas. They will apply a musical vocabulary to analyze works of music and collaborate with their fellow musicians. Above all, students will learn to express and excel in their musical talents within an

environment of encouragement and mentorship. The band will showcase their musical accomplishments in two major performances each year.

**Grade Level:** 7-8

**Prerequisites:** *None*

## ■ ADVANCED GARAGE BAND

Advanced Garage Band provides an opportunity for students with significant musical backgrounds to perform contemporary popular music alongside an ensemble of select musicians/vocalists while expanding upon their knowledge of repertoire and music history. Throughout the course, students will exercise their knowledge of musical form, notation, and the shorthand used to communicate musical ideas. They will apply a musical vocabulary to analyze works of music and collaborate with their fellow musicians. Above all, students will have the opportunity to express and excel in their musical talents within an environment of encouragement and mentorship. The band will showcase their musical accomplishments in two major performances each year. Instructor approval is needed to enroll in this course. Students should be familiar with contemporary popular music of the U.S. and abroad and display advanced proficiency in an instrument and/or vocals (and, in some cases, a secondary instrument and/or vocals). Students who are prepared for this course have taken private lessons on their instrument for several years, can independently interpret most symbols on sheet music (or tablature), can learn musical parts with limited assistance, have participated in musical performances outside of school, and/or have routinely achieved highly in musical certification testing programs. Successful completion of Garage Band alone does not typically constitute eligibility for Advanced Garage Band.

**Grade Level:** 7-8

**Prerequisites:** *Audition and teacher approval*

## ■ VOCAL MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Vocal Music Ensemble is an inspiring and dynamic course designed to cultivate musical artistry, vocal technique, and ensemble collaboration among students. This class provides a platform for students to explore and develop their singing abilities while fostering a sense of community through shared musical experiences. Throughout the course, students will embark on a comprehensive journey that covers a wide range of musical genres, from classical and jazz to contemporary and world music. The curriculum focuses on building and refining vocal skills, including breath control, pitch accuracy, vocal range expansion, and expressive interpretation. Students will engage in vocal warm-ups, exercises, and individualized coaching to enhance their singing proficiency.



Collaboration is a key component of this course, and students will work together to create harmonious and polished vocal performances. Emphasis will be placed on ensemble techniques, including blending, balance, and precision, as well as developing a keen ear for musical nuances. Through regular rehearsals and performances, students will gain valuable experience in teamwork and communication, fostering a strong sense of camaraderie among ensemble members. This course is open to students of all vocal abilities, from beginners to experienced singers. Whether you're a seasoned performer or someone looking to discover and develop your vocal talents, Vocal Music Ensemble offers a supportive and inclusive environment for all students to thrive. Join us on this musical journey, where voices unite to create harmony, passion, and a lasting love for the art of singing.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Prerequisites:** *None*

## ■ VISUAL ARTS

Students will explore a variety of artistic techniques, materials, and styles, including drawing, painting, sculpture, and mixed media. Along the way, they will learn about art history, cultural influences, and the elements and principles of design. Projects will encourage experimentation, collaboration, and individual expression, helping students build confidence in their artistic voices. Perfect for both budding artists and those discovering art for the first time, this class fosters creativity and critical thinking in a fun, supportive environment.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Prerequisites:** *None*

## ENGINEERING ELECTIVES

### ■ INTRODUCTION TO ENGINEERING & COMPUTER PROGRAMMING (semester)

Venture into Engineering and Computer Science with this dynamic introductory course. No prior engineering or computer science coursework is required – just a curious mind and a readiness to spark your passion and power up your potential! This course begins as we explore electricity and the dance of electrons. We will then channel your creativity and build your electronics skills through hands-on projects that will take you through the fundamentals of circuit design and the influence of electricity. Afterward, computer programming and codable robots await! You will show your coding prowess as you command your robot with its sensors, programmable LEDs, and technologies.

You'll learn to travel paths, skillfully avoiding obstacles, and see your programming in action.

As the semester unfolds, end-of-semester projects and activities will deepen your understanding of STEM concepts and real-world applications. This course is not just an education — it's a journey into the heart of engineering and computer programming!

**Grade Level:** 6

**Prerequisites:** *None*

### ■ ENGINEERING DESIGN & MODELING

This course focuses on design innovation. No prior engineering or computer science coursework is required as students call upon and grow their imaginations in the engineering design process. Throughout this course, you'll understand how innovation and creativity produce the products and inventions that define our modern age. Use your artistic talents as you learn to express design ideas through sketches, solid models, and CAD masterpieces. Witness the transformation of models into simulations that breathe life into real-world situations. Create data for in-depth analysis, observations, and research. Challenge yourself as you apply the skills you've learned to craft therapeutic toys, bringing joy to a child with cerebral palsy. The adventure then soars to a Flight and Space unit. You will craft, prototype, and test models to understand flight and the complexity of interplanetary travel. Your problem-solving skills will then be used to tackle real-world aviation and space challenges. And they will culminate in a model mission to the red planet, Mars.

**Grade Level:** 7-8

**Prerequisites:** *None*

### ■ PHYSICAL COMPUTING & ROBOTICS

No prior engineering or computer science coursework is required for this course where you will blend hardware design and software development. Throughout the year, you will design and develop physical computing devices, interactive art installations, and futuristic wearables. Coding microcontrollers will breathe life into physical designs, creating interactive experiences. You will dive into the world of robotics, where mechanisms merge with input and output devices, and you will learn to automate processes. Construction and programming skills are interwoven in projects that bridge the gap between the digital and physical realms.

You will then assume the role of an intern, working collaboratively in teams to identify design requirements and craft prototypes that cater to the needs of clients. Through the landscape of automation and robotics, students will solve real-life problems like



mechanical engineers, software developers, and electrical engineers. This course isn't just an exploration of computer science; it's a place where technology and innovation meet!

**Grade Level:** 7-8

**Prerequisites:** *None*

## OTHER ELECTIVES

### ■ JOURNALISM

In this elective, students will explore the fundamentals of journalism, learning the art and craft of storytelling through various media forms. This course is designed to introduce middle school students to the essential principles of journalism, fostering their curiosity and developing critical thinking skills necessary for effective communication in the digital age. Through this course, students will explore the core principles of journalism, including ethics, objectivity, accuracy in reporting, and the role of the media in society. They will practice reporting techniques, including researching, interviewing, and gathering information effectively for news stories. Students will develop their writing proficiency by crafting compelling and informative news broadcasts. They will develop a strong media and digital literacy foundation by analyzing different forms and sources of media for credibility and bias. Students will experiment with various multimedia tools to create engaging content for the TVT middle school news broadcast, TVT TV. The middle school journalism elective aims to equip students with valuable skills in communication, critical thinking, and media literacy, empowering them to be informed, responsible, and ethical contributors to the world of journalism and beyond.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Prerequisites:** *None*

### ■ LEADERSHIP

Have you wanted to make a difference at TVT? Do you enjoy working with your peers to create memorable, fun programming for your classmates? Then this class is for you! Through hands-on and group activities, members of the student council will work together to build school spirit and a terrific middle school experience. We will also focus on lifelong leadership skills, such as goal setting, excellent communication, and organization. The practical experience gained from this class will propel you into future leadership roles.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Prerequisites:** *None*

# ENGLISH

## DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The English program at TVT provides opportunities for students to examine essential questions about the nature of the individual and communities in order to develop compassion, an appreciation for diverse perspectives, and insights into what it means to be human. Students learn interpretive strategies that help them analyze character, point of view, setting, and other literary elements, which enhance their ability to engage deeply with complex ideas and reflect on their own thinking. They are also taught how to formulate questions and engage in respectful debate.

Students are exposed to genres such as novels, short stories, drama, poetry, and non-fiction to study literary and rhetorical strategies, discover the power of language, and find their authentic voices. Writing activities provide students with an opportunity to practice critical thinking and analytical skills, as well as opportunities for expression and self-discovery. Through peer feedback, project-based learning, and digital literacy, students hone their communication skills, work collaboratively, and learn to apply language in real-world contexts. In doing so, students develop empathy, critical thinking, and communication skills that empower them to connect across differences, think deeply, and advocate for change, all of which are essential tools for building critically engaged communities.

### ■ ENGLISH 6

In English 6, students embark on a journey to build a strong foundation in language arts. The backbone of TVT's middle school English curriculum is Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's Into Literature program, which teachers supplement with additional novel studies and project based learning. In this course, we delve into a variety of literary genres, including but not limited to fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, novels in verse, and poetry. Students will explore essential questions surrounding themes of persistence in the face of adversity, making their voice heard, and finding courage in the face of fear. Students work toward honing essential reading skills such as summarizing, analyzing, and making inferences. Students will also learn the rudiments of analyzing elements of fiction such as plot, character, point of view, and figurative language. Students will engage in meaningful discussions of author's craft and purpose to deepen their comprehension and critical thinking abilities. Additionally, writing instruction will emphasize the development of clear and organized compositions, incorporating proper grammar and punctuation. Students will expand their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Through projects and presentations, such as personal narratives, movie trailers, infographics, and

photo collages, students will not only enhance their communication skills but also cultivate a love for language that will serve as a cornerstone for future academic success.

**Grade Level: 6**

### ■ ENGLISH 7

In English 7, students will continue into the next level of HMH Into Literature, deepening their reading and language skills. One added layer is the Harkness Method, a student-centered discussion technique. This method challenges them to acknowledge multiple perspectives around a text, engage in respectful academic discussion, and support their own analysis with relevant evidence. The writing curriculum focuses on refining essay structures, argumentative writing, and research skills. Students will continue their grammar and vocabulary studies, engage in project-based learning combining research with multimedia projects, and engage in novel studies that prepare them for developing written literary analysis of characterization and theme. With an emphasis on effective communication, students will further develop their abilities to express ideas persuasively and coherently.

**Grade Level: 7**

### ■ ENGLISH 8

English 8 prepares students for upper school coursework by continuing the HMH Into Literature curriculum and participating in book clubs and project-based learning. Students will add to their grammar and vocabulary knowledge as well as continue to deepen their skills in textual analysis, writing, language, and discussion. They will continue practicing the Harkness Method, a student-centered discussion technique that is a key feature of upper school humanities courses, enhancing their ability to support their perspectives with relevant evidence from the text while engaging in respectful academic discussions. Units are designed around essential questions that explore themes such as technology's influence on our lives, finding hope in the face of tragedy, defining how people and places shape who we are, and discovering the courage to seek justice in the face of adversity. At the culmination of each unit, students will engage in performance tasks that require them to employ real-world skills.

**Grade Level: 8**

# HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCES

## DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The goal of the History/Social Sciences Department is to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and informed young adults who are also critical thinkers, critical readers, and effective communicators. Along these lines, our vision is to provide students with both the knowledge and skills needed to prepare them for the academic rigors of college and their futures as life-long learners. By creating connections between past and present, the department also aims to develop within our students a greater awareness of their place and role in local, national, and global communities.

persuasive arguments. Interactive projects and simulations will help bring history to life, allowing students to better understand the past and its impact on the present.

**Grade Level:** 8

### ■ ANCIENT WORLD HISTORY

Students in sixth-grade study Ancient Civilizations. The overarching theme is interactions and changes. The course examines the historical changes that occurred as societies shifted from nomadic lifestyles to settled agrarian communities. Students will focus on the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Greece, and Rome. The Ancient Civilizations course also provides opportunities for students to develop 21st-Century and academic, research writing skills.

**Grade Level:** 6

### ■ MEDIEVAL WORLD HISTORY

Students will learn about the social, cultural, religious, and political changes that occurred across continents from approximately 500 to 1400 CE. Students learn about the history and geography of great civilizations that were developing concurrently throughout the world during medieval times. We will examine the political, economic, and cultural interactions among and within societies. Students will grow their critical literacy and academic writing skills as they engage with primary and secondary sources. Projects will also allow students to practice their combined academic and socio-emotional skills.

**Grade Level:** 7

### ■ EARLY UNITED STATES HISTORY

This 8th-grade U.S. History course offers an engaging overview of American history, exploring the key events, people, and ideas that shaped the nation. Students will study the history of the United States from the early days of Colonization to the Reconstruction period after the Civil War, with a focus on the theme of Cause and Effect. Throughout the course, students will develop important historical skills, such as analyzing primary sources and writing

# JEWISH STUDIES

## DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The goal of TVT's Jewish Studies Department is for students to create an authentic Jewish self. This process begins in Middle School by asking students to investigate the history of the Jewish people during times of turbulence and change. Specific attention will be paid to the transitions that the Jewish people make from desert nomads to empire builders, from Israelites to Jews, and from strict readers of Torah to flexible, expansive, and interpretive readers of Jewish text. Middle School learners emerge from their Jewish studies experience with an understanding of how the Jewish people and Judaism have evolved and adapted over time to meet the needs of God, the Jewish people, and their social context.

### ■ JEWISH STUDIES 6 — FROM EMPIRE TO EXPULSION

The Triumphs and Tribulations in Early Jewish History. After two short overview units covering the major steps in Jewish History and the narrative flow of the Torah, this core Judaics course begins where the Torah ends, covering a period of time in Jewish history from 1250 to 586 B.C.E. Through an in-depth study of the most famous selections from the books called *Neviim Rishonim*, students will travel from the banks of the Jordan river to the hills of Jerusalem. Students will then accompany the Jewish people as they walk mournfully toward the city of Babylonia into exile. During the year, students will focus on the Israelite narrative from empire to exile through the lens of their own personal transition from Elementary to Middle School.

**Grade Level:** 6

### ■ JEWISH STUDIES 7 — FROM CRISIS TO CONTINUITY: JUDAISM'S COMING OF AGE

As 7th graders come of age in the Jewish tradition, they are invited to partake in a year-long investigation of Judaism's own coming-of-age story. This process began during the Babylonian exile as the children of Israel transformed from Israelites into Jews. The process culminates with the emergence of Rabbinical Judaism which comes about as a response to the destruction of the 2nd Temple. By investigating the development of *Toshba* (Torah She Beal Peh/Oral Law), students will come to understand how Jewish life, rituals, laws, and customs were able to flourish even while Jews were denied access to their homeland. During the course of the year, students will study specific units dealing with Kashrut, Shabbat, and Jewish environmentalism. Additionally, they will investigate the theological underpinnings that allowed the interpretation and development of Jewish law to flourish. How fitting it is for 7th graders to honor their

own coming of age by charting Judaism's transformation into adulthood. Seventh graders will also mark their Bar/Bat Mitzvah year by practicing the Jewish ideal of *Tzedakah*. As a class, the 7th graders will form their very own Philanthropy Board, deciding how best to donate over \$3,000 to worthy non-profit organizations.

**Grade Level:** 7

### ■ JEWISH STUDIES 8 — TORAH 4 TODAY: USING TORAH TO INFORM OUR PRESENT AND NAVIGATE OUR FUTURE

How can we embrace an ancient book, given to a people so long ago, and make the stories and laws within meaningful and relevant to us today? This class challenges students to make space for the voice of Torah when faces that help direct our lives.

We'll explore the trajectory of our Biblical Heroes in order to understand how their successes, failures, and struggles parallel our own lives. Like the title suggests, this course strives to take Torah out of the arks of our synagogue and off the bookshelves of our home, placing the words and ideas contained within it firmly in our hearts. 8th graders also spend part of their year writing and preparing a *Dvar Torah* to share with the Middle School.

**Grade Level:** 8

### ■ HONORS JEWISH STUDIES 7

As 7th graders come of age in the Jewish tradition, they are invited to partake in a year-long investigation of Judaism's own coming-of-age story. This process began during the Babylonian exile as the children of Israel transformed from Israelites into Jews. The process culminates with the emergence of Rabbinical Judaism which comes about as a response to the destruction of the 2nd Temple. By investigating the development of *Toshba* (Torah She B'al Peh/Oral Law), students will come to understand how Jewish life, rituals, laws, and customs were able to flourish even while Jews were denied access to their homeland. During the course of the year, students will study specific units dealing with Kashrut, Shabbat, and the Ten Commandments. Additionally, they will investigate the theological underpinnings that allowed the interpretation and development of Jewish law to flourish. As an advanced JS class, students will be expected to complete weekly assignments at home. In addition, the faster pace, the emphasis on Hebrew primary source material, and the end-of-the-year oral presentation will differentiate this class from its non-honors counterpart.

**Grade Level:** 7

**Prerequisites:** *Teacher Approval*

## ■ HONORS JEWISH STUDIES 8

How can we embrace an ancient book, given to a people so long ago, and make the stories and laws within meaningful and relevant to us today? This class challenges students to make space for the voice of Torah when faced with the great decisions of today and tomorrow. During our year together, we'll mine a myriad of Torah stories for meaning, morals and guidance. During our year together, we'll pit Torah stories against each other in order to uncover eternal truths about the values that help direct our lives. During our year together, we'll empathize with the trajectory of our Biblical Heroes in order to understand how their successes and failures parallel our own. Lastly, we'll look at God's relationship with the world of nature, humans and the Jewish people to discover how God's action and interactions can inform our own forward motion in life. Like the title suggests, this course strives to take Torah out of the arks of our synagogue and the bookshelves of our home, and place the words and ideas contained within firmly in our hearts. As an advanced JS class, students will be expected to complete weekly assignments at home. In addition, the faster pace, the emphasis on Hebrew primary source material and the quarterly oral exams will differentiate this class from its non-honors counterpart.

**Grade Level:** 8

**Prerequisites:** *Teacher Approval*

# MATHEMATICS

## DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

TVT Mathematics Department aims to instill habits of mathematical thinking that will prepare students for further inquiry in math and to attain the computational skills needed for everyday life. Students are taught to approach mathematics from multiple perspectives, including numerical, graphical, and symbolic. In addition to simply satisfying the metrics of each course, the teachers will focus on student discovery through individual explorations. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively in groups that offer a natural context for practicing mathematical communication. Our students are not just highly skilled, but also demonstrate enthusiasm and clear understanding. The goal of TVT Mathematics is for all students to study mathematics successfully at a pace and depth appropriate to their individual needs, so courses are stage-not-age, often without grade-level designations.

## MATHEMATICS PLACEMENT

Because success in mathematics depends upon students sequentially mastering material, TVT Mathematics takes placement into its courses very seriously. Student placement is determined during Semester 2 by the entire department, which meets to discuss the individual needs of each student. Factors in placement decisions are student grades, standardized test results, teacher recommendations, and the results of placement tests.

## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HONORS & AoPS

A frequently-asked question regarding AoPS is, how is it different from Honors? The two programs are both accelerated, but the goals are different. Honors students learn the concepts of mathematics at a high level so that they can be applied in areas of science, engineering, and technology. In AoPS, students study mathematics from the depth of its foundations, proving most essential theorems, and then students are tasked with solving competition-level mathematics puzzles and riddles. In short, while Honors students enjoy math and are very good at it, students who are a good fit for AoPS are those who find they can never spend too much of their time pondering solutions to problems of intense difficulty. AoPS students are those who regularly enjoy doing mathematics outside of class.

The following chart shows the anticipated sequencing of mathematics at the middle school level (grade nine is also included in the table to show how each sequence transitions to upper school mathematics).

Grade 6	Math 6	Math 6 Honors	Pre-Algebra Honors	AoPS Pre-Algebra
Grade 7	Pre-Algebra	Pre-Algebra Honors	Algebra 1 Honors	AoPS Algebra 1
Grade 8	Algebra 1 or Algebra Foundations	Algebra 1 Honors	Geometry Honors	AoPS Geometry Counting & Probability
Grade 9	Geometry or Algebra 1	Geometry Honors	Algebra 2 Honors	AoPS Algebra 2/Trigonometry and Precalculus

NOTE: COURSES ABOVE THE LEVEL OF ALGEBRA 2 ARE LISTED IN THE UPPER SCHOOL COURSE CATALOG.

### MATH 6

Students in Math 6 complete their study of mathematics at the elementary level by strengthening their numeracy skills, especially in work with whole numbers, fractions, integers, decimals, and percentages. Considerable emphasis is placed on mastering the order of operations and beginning to understand how to apply the order of operations to more abstract situations. Students are introduced to pre-algebra concepts, including equation solving.

**Prerequisites:** *In lieu of prerequisites, placements are made based on placement exams, standardized test scores, semester grade, and teacher recommendations*

### MATH 6 HONORS

Students in Math 6 Honors encounter a fast-paced review of basic numeracy skills, especially in work with whole numbers, fractions, integers, decimals, and percents. The class then places considerable emphasis on mastering the order of operations and beginning to understand how to apply the order of operations to more abstract situations. Students are introduced to preliminary algebraic concepts.

**Prerequisites:** *Instead of prerequisites, placements are made based on placement exams, standardized test scores, semester grades, and teacher recommendations*

### PRE-ALGEBRA

Pre-Algebra develops a student's computational skills while assisting students as they develop a strong sense of the foundations of mathematics, including a strong focus on solving variable equations. Students who complete this course successfully will next take either Algebra Foundations or Algebra 1, depending on their placement at that time.

**Prerequisites:** *Math 6 or Math 6 Honors*



## ■ PRE-ALGEBRA HONORS

In Pre-Algebra Honors, students continue to master basic skills: order of operations, numeracy skills – including work with decimals – fractions, and signed numbers. At the same time, themes from Algebra, Geometry, and problem-solving are woven through each section. Students who complete this course successfully will next take either Algebra: Functions or Algebra Honors, depending on their placement.

**Prerequisites:** *Two of the following:*

1. *Teacher recommendation*
2. *Qualifying score on Pre-Algebra placement exam*
3. *Test average of 93% or better in Math 6 or 83% or better in Math 6 Honors.*

## ■ ART OF PROBLEM SOLVING: PRE-ALGEBRA

AoPS Pre-Algebra, using the methods and practices typical to Lower School Beast Academy mathematics, includes a thorough exploration of the fundamentals of arithmetic, including fractions, exponents, and decimals. Beginning topics in number theory and algebra, including common divisors and multiples, primes and prime factorizations, basic equations, and inequalities and ratios are introduced. The year ends with a focus on notions of percent, square roots, a thorough exploration of geometric tools and strategies, an introduction to topics in discrete mathematics and statistics, and a discussion of general problem-solving strategies.

**Prerequisites:** *Instead of prerequisites, placements are made based on 5th-grade AoPS placement exam and teacher recommendation, OR AoPS placement exam and interview given to Math 6 Honors student*

## ● ALGEBRA FOUNDATIONS

This class is designed to reinforce prealgebra skills while also beginning to explore basic algebra principles. Students will explore basic algebra principles and experience a spiraled layout of essential skills and key concepts such as variables, algebraic expressions and equations, algebraic inequalities, graphing & writing linear equations, and basic systems of equations. Writing and explaining the steps used to address problems and situations will be a critical aim of each unit as well. This preparation will set students up for success when they transition to the full Algebra class the following school year.

**Prerequisites:** *Pre-Algebra or Pre-Algebra Honors*

## ■ ALGEBRA

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to algebraic concepts, including variables, expressions, equations, and inequalities. Students will learn to solve linear and quadratic equations, work with polynomials, and explore functions and their graphs. Emphasis is placed on developing problem-solving skills and understanding algebraic structures to establish the groundwork for subsequent courses.

**Prerequisites:** *Pre-Algebra or Pre-Algebra Honors + Two of the following:*

- *Teacher recommendation*
- *Qualifying score on Algebra placement exam*
- *Test average of 80% or better in Pre-Algebra or Pre-Algebra Honors*

## ■ ALGEBRA HONORS

Students in Algebra Honors encounter symbolic and graphical representations of linear and quadratic functions. They practice solving linear equations/inequalities and systems of equations/inequalities, as well as factoring and working with exponents, radicals, and polynomial expressions. Students are introduced to not only the language of mathematics but also the rigors of mathematical discourse.

**Prerequisites:** *Two of the following:*

1. *Teacher recommendation*
2. *Qualifying score on Algebra placement exam*
3. *Test average of 93% or better in Pre-Algebra or 83% or better in Pre-Algebra Honors*

## ■ ART OF PROBLEM SOLVING: ALGEBRA 1

AoPS Algebra 1 continues the problem-solving oriented instruction of AoPS Pre-Algebra. Students continue their study of algebraic expressions and equations, and are introduced to multivariable equations, systems of equations, and quadratic equations. Students also relate linear and quadratic equations to their graphs on the Cartesian plane and are introduced to the complex number system.

**Prerequisites:** *Two of the following:*

1. *Teacher recommendation*
2. *Qualifying score on Algebra placement exam*
3. *Test average of 83% or better in AoPS Pre-Algebra*



## ■ GEOMETRY HONORS\*^

Geometry Honors includes the study of logical arguments and proofs in the context of spatial problems. In the development of geometric concepts, students are introduced to challenging problems involving triangles, quadrilaterals, polygons, and circles, as well as right triangle trigonometry and three-dimensional geometry. The course uses algebra where appropriate to reinforce the skills and concepts necessary for subsequent honors-level mathematics courses.

**Prerequisites:** *Two of the following:*

1. *Teacher recommendation*
2. *Qualifying score on Geometry placement test*
3. *Test average of 93% or better in Algebra 1 OR 83% or better in Algebra 1 Honors*

## ■ ART OF PROBLEM SOLVING: GEOMETRY, COUNTING, & PROBABILITY

In AoPS Geometry, Counting & Probability, students will study in depth the concepts of planar geometry, including congruent and similar triangles, quadrilaterals, polygons and circles. They will also study three-dimensional prisms, pyramids, polyhedra, as well as curved-surface cylinders, cones, and spheres. The second part of the course addresses major topics in discrete mathematics, including counting techniques, combinatorics, and probability.

**Prerequisites:** *Two of the following:*

1. *Teacher recommendation*
2. *Qualifying score on Geometry placement test*
3. *Test average of 83% or better in AoPS Algebra*

# SCIENCE

## DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

Science at TVT emphasizes hands-on learning experiences while engaging students in the most current body of scientific knowledge and technologies.

The goal of this course is to balance academic challenges with a supportive environment, where students can envision themselves as scientists. Core subjects for this course include: Scientific Inquiry, Motion and Stability, Forces and Interactions, Energy, Waves, and Matter and Its Interactions.

**Grade Level:** 8

## ■ EARTH SCIENCE

This course emphasizes concepts necessary to be a successful student of science. You will learn how to be a critical thinker in the role of observing and analyzing science and develop the skill of using scientific language. You will begin to explore the world around us in the context of the 4 main branches of earth and space sciences: Geology, Meteorology, Oceanography, and Astronomy. In addition to covering course content, students will build on their own academic skills. The class will focus on taking notes, following directions, staying on task, working independently and in groups, and all those other skills that will make students more successful in their futures as they move on through your school and in the real world.

**Grade Level:** 6

## ■ LIFE SCIENCE

This course is an introductory course to topics in biology. With the mindframe 'How do we learn science by doing science?', this class integrates biological themes through inquiry-driven learning methods to ask and answer scientific questions and connect that knowledge to issues of societal importance and TVT's values. Students will begin to explore the world around us in the context of Evolution, Ecology, Cell Biology, and Genetics. Students are encouraged to develop habits of curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. Our goal is to balance academic challenge with a supportive environment, where students can envision themselves as scientists.

**Grade Level:** 7

## ■ PHYSICAL SCIENCE

In this course, students will explore the natural phenomena that surround them through the study of the basic principles of both chemistry and physics. With the mindset 'How do we learn science by doing science?', this class integrates physics and chemistry through inquiry-driven learning methods to ask and answer scientific questions and connect that knowledge to issues of societal importance and TVT's values. Students are encouraged to develop habits of curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration.

# WORLD LANGUAGES

## DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

At TVT we believe that mastery of Hebrew will allow students to better understand the history, culture, and traditions of the Jewish people. Proficiency in Hebrew will help to foster a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people and will help to inspire student commitment to lifelong Hebrew learning. While TVT's Hebrew program emphasizes the four major language acquisition skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, priority is placed on Hebrew speaking. In order to achieve the aim of conversational mastery, TVT's Hebrew scope and sequence are based on ACTFL's (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) designations for speaking proficiency. TVT Emphasis on Hebrew Speaking is most clearly shown in two ways:

1. TVT adopted the Ulpan Or curriculum to serve as the backbone of our Hebrew program. Ulpan Or uses technology to focus on Rapid Language Acquisition in the Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels.
2. TVT revisits the same monthly themes during the years of Hebrew, emphasizing new learning requirements based upon ACTFL "can do" designations. The themes are based on the Unit that is being taught and lead to projects that are expressive in speaking Hebrew.

In 8th grade, students also have the opportunity to take Spanish 1 as an elective course. Our Upper School program offers Spanish 1 through AP Spanish Literature.

### ■ HEBREW 1A

Hebrew 1A is for Middle School students with no previous experience reading and it offers a comprehensive introduction to the language. It introduces the students to the Hebrew language in a pleasant, easy, and fast way.

The course consists of building blocks that form a solid foundation for Hebrew language acquisition including learning to read and write the aleph bet in block and script letters and constructing a vocabulary base for day-to-day conversation.

The Hebrew dialogues and everyday words (for example, meeting new people, asking for directions, shopping) include interactive activities and games. It is based on a combination of grammar and vocabulary to enable basic conversation in Hebrew.

Students use Ulpan-Or's Hebrew E-curriculum, Absolute beginner level, and Novice Low units 1-5 as preparation for Hebrew 1B. They will have basic dialogue regarding shopping, meeting, and asking directions.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Prerequisites:** none

### ■ HEBREW 1B

Hebrew 1B is for Middle School students who are able to decode unfamiliar words. The content of this class adds to that of Hebrew 1A, with the assumption of Hebrew decoding proficiency, which allows for deeper exploration into the area of Hebrew conversation. Students will master the infinitive form of verbs from Pa'al subgroup 1-3 and the helping verbs: want, need, able to, and like. Students will emerge from this course with the knowledge that they too can master the Hebrew language and with the desire to continue their Hebrew studies at a higher level.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Prerequisites:** *Hebrew Decoding Proficiency*

### ■ HEBREW 2

Hebrew 2 is for students who have previously taken Hebrew 1A and 1B or for students who enter TVT reading Hebrew, with at least 2 years of Hebrew language learning. During this year of study, students will increase their active vocabulary by an additional 400-500 words, pronouns, nouns, adjectives, and expressions that are essential for everyday conversations. Communication at this Novice Mid-level revolves around familiar topics using phrases that have been practiced and memorized. By the end of Hebrew 2, students will successfully be able to enter and exit a conversation, ask simple one-to-two-word questions, answer questions with simple expressions or memorized phrases and offer basic information about themselves and others. During the year, students will master the use of the infinitive and present verbs form and Binyan Pa'al subgroups 1-6. The content of the course will include in-depth acquaintance, nouns in school numbers, members of the family, body parts, colors, clothes, fruits and vegetables, shopping in the market, items in the house, and directions. Grammatical concepts at this level will include concepts such as have/don't have, mine, yours, ours, and adjectives in the male-female and plural forms. Students that complete Hebrew 2 successfully, will continue their Hebrew studies in Hebrew 3.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Prerequisites:** *Hebrew 1B*

### ■ HEBREW 3\*

Hebrew 3 is for students who have previously taken Hebrew 2 in middle school. During this year of study, students will increase their active vocabulary by an additional 400-500 words and expressions that are essential for everyday conversations. The students will join on a journey following a boy and a girl who arrive in Israel for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Through their adventures, the students will learn rich vocabulary and expressions that are relevant to everyday life in Israel. By the end of Hebrew 3, students will see Israel through videos that accompany the texts, allowing students to learn basic grammar and structure, master the use of the infinitive and present verbs, and form the additional 4 binyanim, while experiencing Israel in a fun way. During the year, students will complete the Ulpan-Or ebook, Novice High units 1-10. Students that complete Hebrew successfully, will continue their Hebrew studies in Hebrew 4.

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Prerequisites:** Hebrew 2

#### ■ SPANISH 1 (elective)

Spanish 1 is a comprehensive course in which students face challenges in all aspects of listening, understanding, speaking, writing, and reading. Learning the Spanish alphabet is typically a quick step, and the class is expected to advance rapidly. Hispanic history and civilization are introduced in conjunction with customs as a supplement to the text.

**Grade Level:** 8

**Prerequisites:** None

*\*\*Note: Spanish 1 is a mixed-grade level Middle School/ Upper School course and must be taken in addition to Hebrew as an elective.*

# TVT LEARNING CENTER

## LEARNING LAB

**(FEE BASED - \$5,025)**

The Learning Lab is a small group, executive functions class built into the school day. It is intended to empower students to optimize their potential at TVT. This executive functions class will help students improve their study skills, stay organized, and remain on track with their classes.

### **Learning Lab objectives:**

- Creation and maintenance of an organizational plan to support homework, projects, studying, and test preparation
- Regular monitoring to assist with homework assignments being completed and turned in on time
- Ongoing communication with teachers regarding academic progress and performance in the different classes, including regular tracking of grades.
- Strategies to guide students to improve study and organizational skills to promote their academic success.
- The Learning Lab teacher is available to answer student questions related to specific assignments.
- The Learning Lab teacher will help students to review assignments/projects instructions. The Learning Lab teacher will also help students to create a plan and timeline for class projects.
- Self-reflection and self-monitoring are key components of this class to help students build independence with their studies and self-advocacy with teachers.

The Learning Center class can be taken in place of an elective in 6th grade (not PE) – all 6th-grade students *must* take PE.

The Learning Center class can be taken in the place of either PE or an elective in 7th & 8th grade.

5 Federation Way  
Irvine, CA • 92603  
949.509.9500  
**TARBUT.COM**

