

MILL VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL
2012 – 2013 SIXTH GRADE ELECTIVE DESCRIPTIONS

Art: Sixth grade art is a studio centered visual arts survey course giving students a wide breadth of experiences. Art making and creative self-expression are core to 6th grade curriculum. Aesthetics, art history, and art criticism are integrated into their creative process. Students have opportunities to work with a variety of materials and media in both two and three dimensional formats. Students will have the opportunity to experience ceramics, printmaking, photography, drawing, painting and crafts among other mediums.

Chorus: Chorus is open to 6th graders who like to sing and are willing to commit to a group performance effort. Participation in elementary school chorus is helpful, but not required to join the MVMS Choral Program. Students will learn choral music skills including diction, phrasing, dynamics, and producing a beautiful tone. Part-singing and sight-reading are also emphasized. A variety of literature in multiple languages and styles will be chosen at the conductor's discretion. Music will be challenging, but appropriate to the group's ability level. This course includes public performances outside of school hours (calendar to be given at the beginning of the school year.) Space is limited for this elective.

***Orchestra:** Orchestra is open to all 6th graders with at least one year of previous instruction on violin, viola, cello, or bass. In this class we learn and perform a variety of music, explore music theory, history, cover concepts of musicality and string sound, develop sight reading, and learn how to work together and rehearse as a string orchestra. This course includes public performances outside of school hours (calendar to be given at the beginning of the school year). At the end of the 6th grade year, students who continue with orchestra will be placed in the Advanced 7th/8th grade orchestra class.

***Intermediate Band / Advanced Band:** Intermediate and Advanced Band are open to any student who has at least 1 year of playing experience. Both bands will play a variety of music including Jazz, Latin, Rock and Classical. You will also study music theory, history, and the fundamentals of playing an instrument. Each band will consist of various wind instruments, three percussionists, one bass player, one guitarist, and one pianist. The ability of the student and instrumentation of each ensemble will determine where a student is placed. Placement will be made by Mr. Carnahan and students will be notified which class they are enrolled in. There will be several performances during the school year.

Beginning Band: *Students interested in beginning a band instrument for the first time will need to take Beginning Band (open to all 5th – 8th graders). This is a non-graded class for first year music students interested in playing a wind or percussion instrument. The rehearsals are on Wednesday's 2:15-3:10 and before school once a week from 7:30- 8:10 a.m. (sax- Monday; brass- Tuesday; flute- Wednesday; clarinet- Thursday; percussion- Friday). **Because the Beginning Band does not rehearse during regular school hours, it will not fulfill the elective requirement for middle school students. It is suggested that students sign up for Art as their elective during the school day. Please contact Mr. Carnahan at the start of the school year for more information on how to sign-up for this class.** There will be two performances during the school year.*

***Advanced Percussion Ensemble:** Percussion Ensemble is open to all percussion students with at least 1 year of playing experience. Students will learn to read sheet music and play a variety of percussion instruments, including the piano. While there will be some instruction time spent on the drum set, it will not be a focus of the class. There will be several performances during the school year. (*First year music students interested in learning to play the drums should sign up for the Beginning Band – see description above*).

***Beginning Guitar:** Guitar is open to all MVMS students with little to no experience playing the guitar. Students will learn to play chords, read sheet music (no tabs), and the fundamentals of playing guitar. Students must provide their own six-string acoustic guitar for class (no electric guitars will be used in class, although they may be used at home). This class also covers the history of Rock and Roll and lineage of influential guitarists. There will be two performances during the school year. Space is limited in this elective.

***All instrument classes require 30 minutes of practice per day and the student is responsible for transporting his/her instrument between home and school.**