

**Breck Middle School  
Course Guide  
2019-2020**



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# English and Language Arts

## English 5 (Grade 5)

In this course, English and history are taught as a double-period class in which the study of the core skills of reading and writing is thematically integrated with the fifth-grade history curriculum. In addition to the nonfiction reading in the history portion of the class (see History section of the course guide for history content), students read literature across genres and time periods and explore the importance of stories in their lives. Students investigate story elements and study folktales from around the world, and as a culminating project, each student adapts his own written story for the oral-storytelling stage. Through reader's workshop, specific reading skills and strategies are supported and practiced, with a strong focus on employing fix-up strategies, monitoring understanding, growing vocabulary, word attack, and building fluency. Independent reading is an important tracked component of the curriculum, reinforcing the idea that good readers read often, take risks, know themselves as readers, and analyze literature. In addition, authors are used as models in students' daily writing. Students use their journals to practice skills and techniques taught in writing workshop and to find trends in their own writing. Grammar and mechanics are embedded in workshop as a means for students to control their sentences and to vary and extend their writing.

## English 6 (Grade 6)

As in fifth-grade English/History, sixth-grade English/History are taught as a double-period class in which the teaching of the core skills of reading and writing are thematically integrated with the history curriculum (see History section of the course guide for history content). Building upon the skills and curriculum covered in Grade 5 English, Grade 6 English focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Reading comprehension and word attack skills, creative and expository writing, grammar, vocabulary, literature, and spelling are the key elements of the English course. We use a literature anthology as the core of our reading curriculum and focus on folk literature and the literary concepts of plot, conflict, setting, character, point of view, and theme. Students also read many books of their own choosing as well as selected novels to accompany the history course content. Nonfiction reading skills are developed within the context of American history. Twenty minutes of reading every night will be assigned for homework to reinforce the goal of developing lifelong reading habits in our sixth-grade students. The writing process, concentrating on solid paragraph development and moving to the longer five-paragraph essay, utilizes editing and rewriting to final form. Writing assignments are often in response to literature or relating to topics in history.

## English 7 (Grade 7)

This course continues to build upon the core skills of reading, writing, and speaking studied in sixth grade. As students read *The Outsiders* (Hinton), *Baseball in April* (Soto), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare), and a wide selection of short stories and poetry from our literature anthology, they develop their reading comprehension and text analysis skills. Additionally, students focus on the themes of identity, social justice, character development, and perspective through their study of literature. Students develop their critical thinking and writing skills through systematic instruction in grammar and mechanics, sentence writing, idea expansion, paragraph, and essay writing. Students complete a number of writing workshops throughout the year to help them improve their writing and introduce them to new writing genres. Vocabulary study in the seventh and eighth grade is cumulative, focusing on words that frequently appear in high school texts and on college entrance exams, as well as Latin and Greek roots. Finally, students practice public speaking skills through the delivery of in-class presentations and participation in Socratic discussions.

## English 8 (Grade 8)

This course follows a logical progression as the completion of Middle School English. A primary goal and focus is to prepare students for the upcoming transition to Upper School. During this year, the literature read by the class continues to focus on the themes of justice, character development, perspective-taking, and cross-cultural awareness that are explored during seventh grade. The literature selections encourage the development of both empathy and the foundations of morality. Students begin the year with a study of story structure and literary analysis, using short stories to focus on key concepts. In addition, students read complete works, such as *The Book Thief* (Zusak), *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare), and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (Alexie). Students develop their writing ability through a number of forms, including formal essays, reader responses, and creative writing. Mechanics and usage are studied in conjunction with the students' writing, and, to encourage sentence variety, students are introduced to identifying and employing different kinds of phrases and clauses, an area that becomes the primary grammatical focus in Upper School. The vocabulary unit is a cumulative study of affixes (Latin word parts) and high-level words, a continuation of the seventh-grade program. The eighth-grade year ends with a culminating speech, which is a personal reflection narrative.

## **Enhanced Language Arts (Grades 5-8)**

Supporting the skills and curriculum covered in the regular English classroom, Enhanced Language Arts focuses on strengthening the reading and writing of students who need extra literacy skill support. Reading comprehension is a major focus, and students are instructed in the use of strategies and skills such as activating prior knowledge, decoding words, using context clues, employing “think alouds,” analyzing texts, determining the main idea, differentiating supporting details, and identifying author’s purpose. Writing skills are practiced with a specific focus on the current work in the regular English classes. Reading and writing for other content areas are also supported by giving additional planning and organizing time and increased editing to finalize writing. Student study skills and organization are topics for consideration, depending on the individual needs of the particular students.

# History

## English-History (Grade 5)

In fifth grade, English and history are taught as a double-period class in which the study of the core skills of reading and writing is thematically integrated with the fifth-grade history curriculum (see English portion of the course guide for English content).

Fifth-grade history explores the characteristics of a civilization through the lens of the ancient world, studying China, Egypt, India, and Greece. The organizing principle for each unit of study is the seven traits of a civilization: stable food supply, government, social structure, religion, technology, written language, and the arts. While learning about each ancient civilization, students apply what they've learned to a variety of projects. For example, students practice emphasizing the historical setting of one of our ancient civilizations through writing a historical-fiction story. Students also use the knowledge they gain about ancient civilizations to inspire the creation of their own imaginary civilization. At the end of the year, the students study ancient Greece. During this unit, each history class becomes a city-state and engages in competitive simulations against the other history classes. These simulations require students to synthesize the historical content they've learned.

Students learn how to locate information and how to share that information in a variety of ways. Students complete projects that include expository writing, historical-fiction writing, artifact creation, and making their own text-features for a history textbook. Students are introduced to the skills of asking research questions, note-taking, paraphrasing, summarizing, and writing paragraphs using a topic sentence, evidence, and a concluding sentence (TEC). There is particular emphasis on reading nonfiction texts, using text features and structures to guide understanding.

## English-History (Grade 6)

As in fifth-grade English/History, in sixth-grade English and history are taught as a double-period class in which the teaching of the core skills of reading and writing are thematically integrated with the history curriculum (see English portion of the course guide for English content).

Sixth-grade history explores the question: Who are Minnesotans and where do you belong in the story of Minnesota? The class focuses on the skills of reading, researching, and writing, as students explore several major units of study: The Dakota and Ojibwe, Newcomers, Treaties, Statehood and Civics, the Civil & Dakota Wars, and Minnesota in the Twentieth Century. During the second semester each student engages in a more specific study of a topic of their choosing. Students study a group of people and their part in the history of Minnesota. Students present these research projects during an evening

event for parents. Finally, in the spring students write Sixth-Grade Reports on the federal government and nation’s capital as the capstone project for the year.

The theme for sixth-grade history is developing the skills of collecting information and learning to share that information in a clear and concise fashion. Students learn the skills of evaluating sources, reading, note-taking, and writing well-constructed paragraphs. There is particular emphasis on the skill of taking notes using a bullet-point format and making sure that notes reflect the student’s own voice. Students also learn when to use quotation marks, and how to properly cite a source of information. The final area of focus is writing paragraphs with a topic sentence, supporting facts and explanations, and a concluding thought.

### **Social Studies and History (Grade 7)**

This course investigates how the United States has struggled to live up to the founding ideals outlined in the Declaration of Independence by examining U.S. History during periods of immigration and reform. Starting with European and African migrations and finishing with the Civil Rights movement of the mid-20th century, students examine the experiences of immigrant groups and the efforts of individuals and groups who worked to create a “more perfect union.” After studying the founding ideals that Thomas Jefferson laid out in the Declaration of the Independence and the practical compromises embedded in the Constitution, students see that not all of the ideals were granted to all citizens. Through the study of immigrant groups and reform movements, students evaluate the extent to which the country has lived up to those ideals and reformed its practices over time.

### **Social Studies and History (Grade 8)**

The eighth-grade history course is the culmination of the middle school history experience. By exposing students to current issues facing various regions of the world, they will better understand how the past informs the present and impacts the future. Students will be challenged to refine their reading, writing, and researching skills through different types of projects, essays, and discussions. Developing the critical thinking skills essential for success in Upper School will be a major focus.

#### **Semester I: Human Rights**

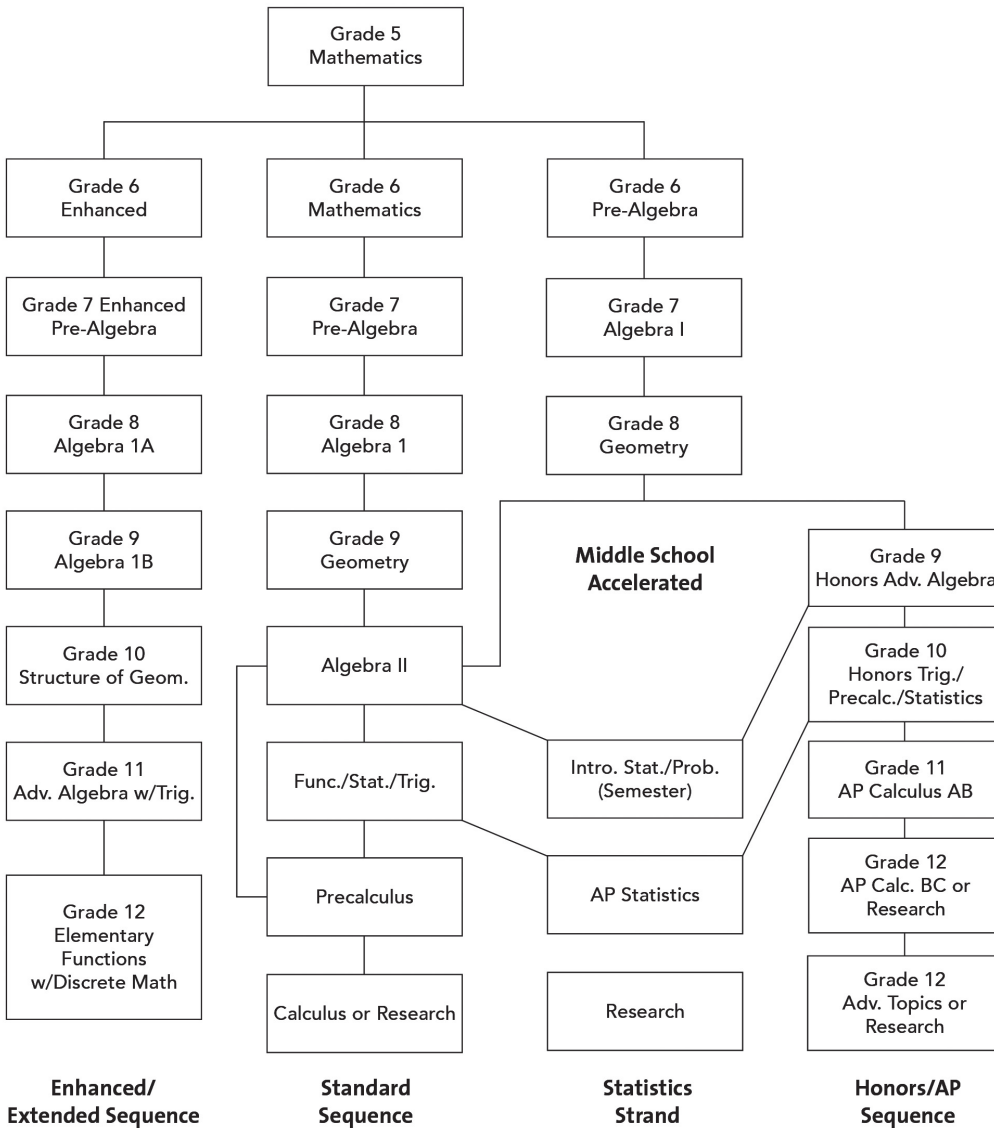
World War II  
Democracy to Dictatorship  
Government & Economic Systems  
Genocide  
Human Rights  
Nuremberg Trials  
Human Rights Museum

#### **Semester II: Globalization & Sustainability**

Case Study (Russia/Middle East/ North Korea)  
Population Trends  
Globalization  
Sustainability  
Sustainability Project

# Mathematics

Some typical sequences through the mathematics program are shown below:



## **Mathematics 5 (Grade 5)**

This course emphasizes number sense and proficiency with computation and estimation involving whole numbers, decimals, and fractions. Students work with factors and multiples, exponents, order of operations, geometry, and statistics in a problem-solving context.

## **Enhanced Mathematics 6 (Grade 6)**

The main strands in this course are problem solving, number and operations, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data analysis and probability. Each student actively participates by investigating, modeling, communicating, practicing, and demonstrating the concepts identified. This course moves at a measured pace that allows students to fully grasp the concepts necessary to succeed in future math courses. Prerequisite: Grade 5 Mathematics.

## **Mathematics 6 (Grade 6)**

The main strands in this course are problem solving, number and operations, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data analysis and probability. Each student actively participates by investigating, modeling, communicating, practicing, and demonstrating the concepts identified. Prerequisite: Grade 5 Mathematics.

## **Pre-Algebra 6 (Grade 6)**

This accelerated course provides students with a strong foundation for Algebra I and future study of geometry, probability, and data analysis. Instructional focus is on problem solving, mathematical reasoning and communication, making connections, and developing habits of mathematical thinking and study. The main strands are proportional reasoning, linear algebraic equations, inequalities and relationships, geometry and measurement, work with rational numbers, and data analysis and probability. Prerequisite: Grade 5 Mathematics.

## **Enhanced Mathematics 7 (Grade 7)**

This course prepares students for Algebra 1 and future study of geometry, probability, and data analysis. Instructional focus is on developing number sense, problem solving, mathematical reasoning and communication, making connections, and developing habits of mathematical thinking and study. Students will solve multi-step equations, study proportional reasoning in depth, be introduced to linear functions, and work with rational numbers, similarity, probability, square roots, area, and volume. This course takes a measured pace that allows time to master material. Prerequisite: Grade 6 Enhanced Mathematics or Grade 6 Mathematics.

### **Pre-Algebra 7 (Grade 7)**

This course provides students with a strong foundation for algebra while preparing them for future study of geometry, probability, and data analysis. Instructional focus is on problem solving, mathematical reasoning and communication, making connections, and developing habits of mathematical thinking and study. Students will solve multi-step equations, study proportional reasoning in depth, be introduced to linear functions, and work with rational numbers, similarity, probability, square roots, and surface area and volume. Prerequisite: Grade 6 Mathematics.

### **Algebra 7 (Grade 7)**

This accelerated course develops first-year algebra topics with a focus on problem solving, mathematical reasoning and communication, making connections, and developing habits of mathematical thinking and study. Students study linear functions in depth, as well as systems of equations, exponential functions, multiplying and factoring polynomials, and quadratic equations. Prerequisite: Grade 6 Pre-Algebra.

### **Algebra IA (Grade 8)**

This course represents the first half of a first-year algebra course. A brief focus on expressions, properties of real numbers, and solving linear equations is followed by an intensive study of two-variable linear equations. The pace, content, and pedagogy are designed around the specific needs of the students. A focus is placed on both skill work and application. Prerequisite: Grade 7 Enhanced Mathematics or Grade 7 Mathematics and recommendation of the Mathematics Department.

### **Algebra 8 (Grade 8)**

This course develops first-year algebra topics with a focus on problem solving, mathematical reasoning and communication, making connections, and developing habits of mathematical thinking and study. Students study linear functions in depth, as well as systems of equations, exponential functions, multiplying and factoring polynomials, and quadratic equations. Connections to geometry, probability, and data analysis are included as time permits. Prerequisite: Grade 7 Pre-Algebra.

### **Geometry (Grade 8)**

This course addresses geometric relationships and applications in a context of reasoning and proof. Topics include parallel and perpendicular lines, congruence and similarity of triangles, and right triangle properties. Other areas of emphasis include quadrilaterals, transformations, properties of circles, and measurement of two- and three-dimensional objects. Prerequisite: Algebra I.



## **Advanced Upper School Math Courses (Grades 7-8)**

Advanced level courses are available for mature students in grades 7 and 8 who are academically strong, ready and willing to handle an Upper School pace, workload, and classroom discussion/participation expectations. These courses require prerequisite content, a placement exam, and a personal interview.

# Science

## **Explorations in Science (Grade 5)**

Fifth graders study earth and space science, build rockets and robots, create scale maps, use latitude and longitude, study cartography, and participate in the Alpha Prime Project. Students learn that science is completed by following a set of steps. By systematically following those steps, a scientist can be confident that their knowledge and information are accurate. By studying the earth and its systems, students will recognize how unique our planet is as well as how common and ordinary it must be given the number of known solar systems in the universe.

## **Energy (Grade 6)**

Sixth graders study energy, electricity, and simple machines. They participate in solar sprint competition, research global climate change, and investigate chemistry concepts. Students will build a solar oven, a wind turbine and a working loudspeaker. In addition, students will learn the basics of 3D Computer Aided Design (CAD). They will use their developing CAD skills to create 3D printed objects using classroom printers.

## **Life Science (Grade 7)**

Seventh graders study living things in their natural habitats and ecosystems focusing on ecology, biodiversity, and classification. Students reflect on the connections between biotic and abiotic factors in the natural world. They look at impacts, both human and natural, on biodiversity and ecosystems. Students are asked to observe deeply, think critically, develop hypotheses, and problem solve in the manner of a scientist. Students participate in remote camera, mammal biodiversity, population density, lichens, aquaponics, and invasive-species studies using the Breck campus ecosystems.

## **Earth Science (Grade 8)**

Eighth graders use topographical maps as a basis for working with the transfer of data. Graphs are created and used as a method to portray, analyze, and manipulate data. Using geologic logs of local wells, students investigate the geology and hydrology of the Breck campus and surrounding area. Students create a geologic cross-section of the area as a basis for investigating the source of their own drinking water. Furthermore, they study glaciers and glacial features, and investigate groundwater levels on campus and conduct a groundwater pumping test on wells at Breck. An introduction to the Periodic Elements, the atom, and molecules all lead into the science of climate change. Students study plate tectonics, volcanoes, and earthquakes.

# World Languages

## Grades 5-8: Spanish

### Spanish Novice A (Grades 5-8)

This course is a multi-grade course for students primarily in grades five through seven and will introduce the Spanish language and diverse culture. This course is appropriate for beginning Spanish students with little to no prior experience in the language. Upon successful completion of this course, fifth through seventh grade students will advance to Spanish Novice B and eighth graders will be placed into Upper School Spanish I.

### Spanish Novice B (Grades 5-8)

This multi-grade course is appropriate for students who have either completed Novice A or have the language proficiency to conjugate basic verbs in the present tense as well as engage in basic conversations in Spanish. Upon completion of this course, students will have a stronger understanding of irregular verbs in the present tense as well as the ability to describe themselves, others, and daily activities. Students will also possess a working understanding of the past (preterite) tense. At the end of the course, fifth through seventh graders will advance to Spanish Novice C and eighth grade students will be placed in either Upper School Spanish I or II depending upon language proficiency and readiness.

### Spanish Novice C (Grades 6-8)

This multi-grade course serves students who have either completed Spanish Novice B or have some previous experience with the Spanish language. Students should be able to construct complex sentences in the present tense with a variety of regular and irregular verbs. Students should also be comfortable engaging in conversations about daily activities as well as describing oneself and others. Upon completion of this course, students will have developed a strong understanding of the past tense (preterite and imperfect) as well as a richer vocabulary with which to communicate. At the end of this course, fifth- through seventh-grade students will advance to Spanish Intermediate A and eighth graders will be placed in an Upper School Spanish course depending upon the proficiency and readiness of each individual student.

### Spanish Intermediate A (Grades 7-8)

This course, comprised of primarily seventh and eighth graders, serves students who have either completed Novice C or have had previous Spanish experience. Students at this level enter with the ability to communicate in the present and past (preterite and imperfect) tenses about a variety of topics. Upon completion of this course students will be able to understand and discuss a variety of topics such as the Chicano Civil Rights movement, Latin American art, music, and movies. Placement into Upper School Spanish course will depend on language proficiency and readiness.

### **Spanish 5 (Grade 5)**

This is a year-long course for students with an emerging Spanish background formed through our Lower School language program or another similar language program. Students in this class have taken Spanish since preschool and upon completion of this course students will advance to Spanish 6 (Continuing).

### **Spanish 6 (Grade 6) (Not Offered 2019-2020)**

This is a year-long course and is a continuation from Spanish 5. Students in this course have a developing Spanish knowledge formed from our Lower School program or another similar language program. Students in this class have taken Spanish since preschool, have one year of Middle School Spanish 5, and will continue into Spanish 7 for their 7th grade year.

### **Spanish 7 (Grade 7)**

This is a year-long course for students with a strong Spanish background. Students in this class have taken Spanish since preschool and will continue in Spanish 8 for their eighth-grade year. Upon entering ninth grade, students in this course will enroll in a Spanish course, depending on their language proficiency at the end of the year.

### **Spanish 8 (Grade 8) (Not Offered 2019-2020)**

This is a year-long course for students with a significant Spanish background. Students in this class have taken Spanish since preschool. Placement in Upper School Spanish will depend upon the student's language proficiency and readiness.

### **Upper School Spanish 1 (Grade 8)**

This course is for students in grade 8 who possess strong academic and organizational skills necessary to be successful in the Upper School course with an increased rigor and workload. This course is a beginning level language course and is appropriate for students with little to no prior Spanish experience.

### **MS Advanced Program for Immersion Students and Heritage Speakers (Grades 6-8)**

This course is a mixed-grade language class taught entirely in the target language to build on the strengths students already possess as fluent speakers. The program objective is to improve students' language skills (writing, reading, speaking, listening) by expanding their vocabulary and by deepening their understanding of grammatical structures. The program is built around content-based themes, and incorporates authentic materials produced by native authors to broaden the cultural perspectives of the language learners. Students will be able to collaborate on projects with other students at their fluency levels, focusing on the development of literacy, communicative, and problem-solving skills.

## **Upper School Spanish Courses (Grades 7-8)**

Advanced level courses are available for mature students in grades 7 and 8 who are academically strong, ready and willing to handle an Upper School pace, workload, and classroom discussion/participation expectations. These courses require prerequisite content, a placement exam, and a personal interview.

## **Grades 5-8: Chinese**

### **Chinese Novice A (Grades 5-8)**

This course is a multi-grade course for students primarily in grades five through seven and will introduce the Chinese language and diverse culture. This course is appropriate for beginning Chinese students with little to no prior experience in the language. Upon successful completion of this course, fifth- through seventh-grade students will advance to Chinese Novice B and eighth graders will be placed into Upper School Chinese I. Students will start to learn the Pinyin phonetic system, correct stroke order and proportion for writing characters, and build basic conversation skills.

### **Chinese Novice B (Grades 5-8)**

This multi-grade course is appropriate for students who have either completed Novice A or have the language proficiency to conjugate basic verbs in the present tense as well as engage in basic conversations in Chinese. Students in Novice B will continue to practice both pronunciation and spelling, read and write syllables in combination and write short phrases and sentences in Pinyin. Characters are introduced using pictographs, ideographs and combinations, and students read vocabulary in character form. There is continued practice writing simple characters using proper stroke order. At the end of the course, fifth through seventh graders will advance to Chinese Novice C and eighth graders will be placed in Upper School Chinese depending upon language proficiency and readiness.

### **Chinese Novice C (Grades 6-8)**

This multi-grade course serves students who have either completed Chinese Novice B or students who have similar language learning experience. Students should know pinyin systems and basic vocabulary and sentence structure before entering Novice C. In this course students will be introduced to reading and writing conversations and text in Chinese characters. They will learn vocabulary and grammar around topics such as school, schedules, things they do outside of school and places/locations. Reading and writing dialogues/texts will be part of the focus in this class. Chinese cultural elements (poems, traditions, Chinese school systems, etc.) are introduced in this course. Upon successfully completing this class, students will be placed in Intermediate Chinese A or Upper School Chinese depending upon language proficiency and readiness.

## **Chinese Intermediate A (Grades 7-8)**

This course, comprised of primarily seventh and eighth graders, serves students who have either completed Novice C or have had similar previous Chinese experience. Students at this level learn more vocabulary and sentence structure to gain the ability to communicate in Chinese on some daily conversation topics. Students also learn reading Chinese text in characters. Upon completion of this course students will gain language competence in writing and discussion on the topics such as food, transportation, weather, and travel in modern China. Students will also gain more of an understanding of Chinese culture and modern society. At the end of the course students will be placed in Upper School Chinese depending upon language proficiency and readiness.

## **Chinese 5 (Grade 5) (Not Offered 2019-2020)**

This is a year-long course for students with an emerging Chinese background formed through our Lower School program. Students in this class have taken Chinese since kindergarten. They improve their pronunciation and understanding of the sound system through a more formal approach to phonics. Students expand their vocabulary and structural understanding, and begin storytelling and writing.

## **Chinese 6 (Grade 6)**

This is a year-long course for students with an intermediate Chinese background. Students in this class have taken Chinese since kindergarten, have had one year of Middle School Chinese 5, and will continue into Chinese 7 for their seventh-grade year. This course includes a review and study of the phonetic system, reading and spelling of phonetic system, reading of characters, writing of characters, listening, speaking, history and culture. Students raise their proficiency of Pinyin through additional exercises and practice reading and writing from dictation, and write dialogues and short stories in Pinyin and character form. They increase their recognition to about 150 characters through analysis of character components and reading vocabulary, short dialogues, short phrases and sentences in character form. Students continue to learn to read and write vocabulary in character form. They memorize dialogues and poems to present in class and present a spontaneous conversation. Through activities, games, videos, and stories, students gain an appreciation of Chinese culture.

### **Chinese 7 (Grade 7) (Not Offered 2019-2020)**

This is a year-long course for students with a significant Chinese background. Students in this class have taken Chinese since kindergarten and will continue in Chinese 8 for their eighth-grade year. Besides continuing with more complicated vocabulary and grammar, reading, conversing and writing on the topics on schooling, daily life, locations and directions, students understand more about Chinese culture and modern society in this class as well. We focused on the transition from reading and writing in Pinyin to reading and writing dialogues/texts in Chinese characters. Besides learning history and transitions, we also learn more about modern society and life as cultural study. This course aims to lay a strong foundation for more advanced study of Chinese language.

### **Chinese 8 (Grade 8)**

This course is a continuation of seventh-grade Chinese. Students in this class have taken Chinese since kindergarten and will continue Chinese in Upper School. Students are introduced to additional vocabulary words, sentence patterns and Chinese culture. They continue advancing their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in Chinese. In addition to the more complicated vocabulary and grammar on the topics such as food, traditions, transportation, weather, and traveling, they learn cultural elements of modern China. In this course, all the dialogues and texts are in Chinese characters. Students learn to read and write texts in only characters. This course aims to lay a solid foundation for a more advanced study of the Chinese language. Upon completing Grade 8 Chinese, placement in Upper School Chinese will depend upon the student's language proficiency and readiness.

### **Upper School Chinese 1 (Grade 8)**

This course is for mature students who are academically strong and ready and willing to handle an Upper School pace, workload, and classroom discussion/participation expectations. This course is a beginning level course for eighth grade.

### **MS Advanced Program for Immersion Students and Heritage Speakers (Grades 6-8)**

This course is a mixed-grade language class taught entirely in the target language to build on the strengths students already possess as fluent speakers. The program objective is to improve students' language skills (writing, reading, speaking, listening) by expanding their vocabulary and by deepening their understanding of grammatical structures. The program is built around content-based themes, and incorporates authentic materials produced by native authors to broaden the cultural perspectives of the language learners. Students will be able to collaborate on projects with other students at their fluency levels, focusing on the development of literacy, communicative, and problem-solving skills.

## **Upper School Chinese Courses (Grades 7-8)**

Advanced level courses are available for mature students who are academically strong and ready and willing to handle an Upper School pace, workload, and classroom discussion/participation expectations. These courses require prerequisite content, a placement exam, and a personal interview.

## **Grades 5-8: French**

### **Upper School French 1 (Grades 7-8)**

This course is for mature students who are academically strong and ready and willing to handle an Upper School pace, workload, and classroom discussion/participation expectations. This course is a beginning level course for students in grades 7 and 8.

### **MS Advanced Program for Immersion Students and Heritage Speakers (Grades 6-8)**

This course is a mixed-grade language class taught entirely in the target language to build on the strengths students already possess as fluent speakers. The program objective is to improve students' language skills (writing, reading, speaking, listening) by expanding their vocabulary and by deepening their understanding of grammatical structures. The program is built around content-based themes, and incorporates authentic materials produced by native authors to broaden the cultural perspectives of the language learners. Students will be able to collaborate on projects with other students at their fluency levels, focusing on the development of literacy, communicative, and problem-solving skills.

### **Upper School French Courses (Grades 7-8)**

Advanced level courses are available for mature students who are academically strong and ready and willing to handle an Upper School pace, workload, and classroom discussion/participation expectations. These courses require prerequisite content, a placement exam, and a personal interview.



# Life Skills

## Project Adventure, Health, Physical Education and Religion

### Project Adventure (Grade 5)

This semester-long co-ed course is designed for fifth-grade students to participate in a variety of adventure activities including icebreakers, initiatives, trust challenges, and low ropes course. Students focus on defining what behaviors lead to good teamwork and cooperation. We look at competition and how to show respect for our opponents. Students learn how principles such as Challenge By Choice and The Full Value Contract are applied in adventure education. Students engage in reflection as a way to evaluate themselves throughout the course. Furthermore, students explore conflict resolution including effective strategies to solve disagreements.

### Project Adventure (Grade 6)

This semester-long, co-ed course is designed for sixth-grade students to participate in a variety of activities including icebreakers, deinhbitizers, initiatives, spotting, and low and high elements. Students explore what it means to be trustworthy and what behaviors in our curriculum reinforce trust. In addition, they learn the five steps of group problem solving: Ask, Brainstorm, Choose, Do, Evaluate. Students use a cooperative learning theory model in approaching the problem by working toward interdependence with members playing a variety of roles to advance the group's efforts. Furthermore, students engage in reflection as a way to evaluate themselves throughout the course. In addition, students will have the opportunity to participate in their first high element on our indoor ropes course.

### Project Adventure (Grade 7)

This semester-long, single-gender course is designed for seventh-grade students to participate in a variety of adventure activities including icebreakers, deinhbitizers, initiatives, spotting, and low and high elements. Students continue working on group problem-solving skills using a cooperative learning model. In addition, they explore diversity issues throughout the course when they process some of their adventures. Students engage in reflection as a way to evaluate themselves throughout the course. One of the highlights is their participation in two high element climbs: The Marionette and Crate Climbs. This year the groups are divided by gender; one semester will have two male groups and the other semester will have two female groups.

## **Project Adventure (Grade 8)**

This semester-long, single-gender course is designed for eighth-grade students to participate in a variety of adventure activities including icebreakers, initiatives, spotting, low and high elements. Most of the focus will be on taking risks and challenging themselves on the high ropes course. Setting goals and working to achieve them and being willing to fail in an effort to succeed are concepts covered in this curriculum. Students also engage in reflection as a way to evaluate themselves throughout the course. This is the final leg of a four-year journey that began in fifth grade.

## **Health (Grade 5)**

This is a semester-long co-ed course that meets on an A/B day schedule. The course addresses personal safety issues as they relate to strangers, acquaintances, and Internet use. Students also study how different body systems work, and how to stay healthy. The drug unit focuses on tobacco products and inhalants, but also discusses alcohol and prescription drugs. The importance of good nutrition is covered and the strong correlation between how what we eat affects our growth. Students learn about puberty and the changes they are going to experience, including body size and shape, hormones, oils, perspiration, and emotions.

## **Health (Grade 6)**

This is a semester-long co-ed course that meets on an A/B day schedule. The course addresses healthy and unhealthy relationships; how to be a good friend and how to get out of a relationship that is not positive. Discussions around family roles and behaviors are also discussed. Our drug unit focuses on alcohol use, abuse and dependency, as well as the proper use of over the counter and prescription drugs. Drugs that are currently being abused in society and are covered by the media are discussed. Basic nutrition and fitness concepts are included in the growth and development section of the course, and addresses how behaviors may affect general health and future risk of heart disease. Activities are incorporated to help students develop an understanding of genetics and the fact that he/she receives one half of their genetic makeup from each biological parent with an emphasis on the normalcy of reproductive health.

## **Health (Grade 7)**

This semester-long, single-gender course meets on an A/B day schedule. It is designed for seventh-grade students to gain an appreciation of the human body and how it works. Body image is discussed and cumulates with a project creating signs for the bathrooms throughout the building. Eating disorders are discussed as well as performance-enhancing supplements. Students learn about the origins, consequences, and what to do if you see someone exhibiting destructive behaviors. The drug unit includes a review of tobacco, inhalants and alcohol, and introduces the study of marijuana including drugs currently in the media. In much of the literature regarding lives of homosexual, bisexual, and transgender youth, the Middle School years are named as some of the most painful times in their lives. We discuss the need to treat everyone with respect and to ensure a positive learning environment for all students.

## **Health (Grade 8)**

This semester-long, single-gender course meets on an A/B day schedule. Designed for eighth-grade students, this course explores facets of alcoholism/drug dependency. Discussions include: the disease model of alcoholism, the stages of alcoholism, the dynamics in an alcoholic family and current trends including the use of date rape drugs. Students research topics of stress examining the positive and negative characteristics. In addition, they identify triggers and learn reduction strategies to deflect the harmful effects to their health. Grade 8 students receive information regarding sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancy, and the importance of abstinence at this time in their lives. Discussions occur regarding media messages and television programs that promote unhealthy sexual behaviors. Students study personal communication skills and what constitutes abusive relationships as well as healthy relationships. Next is the death and dying unit where students study the history of morbidity, traditional funerals, cultural influences, and the effects of modern medicine and technology on dying. The unit includes watching the movie, *Tuesdays With Morrie*, based on the book written by Mitch Albom. This course builds the foundation for the Upper School Health Course.

## **Physical Education (Grades 5-6)**

This semester-long, co-ed course is designed to give fifth and sixth graders the chance to learn through a comprehensive plan. Emphasis is on manipulating objects with accuracy and speed. Students continue to work on the proper techniques for using manipulative skills: throwing and catching, dribbling, kicking and striking. Students receive instruction on basic fitness concepts and participate in a variety of activities to improve their overall fitness. Some of the specialized skills, like those associated with sports, are refined and used in small area game play. Students begin to show competence in working cooperatively with one another and identifying those activities that they enjoy. The Five for Life Fitness and Health Curriculum continues building on the foundations from Lower School.

## **Physical Education (Grades 7-8)**

This is a semester-long, single-gender course where seventh and eighth graders begin to understand and apply more advanced movement and game strategies while demonstrating competence in the modified versions of a variety of movement forms. Units emphasize team sports, cooperative games, and introduce lifetime activities while increasing overall fitness level. Students develop and explore new physical activities for personal interests in and out of class. They try new and challenging activities and recognize the social benefits of participation in physical activity. Students continue the Five for Life Fitness and Health Curriculum building on the foundations from previous years.

## **World Religions (Grade 5)**

Fifth graders gain foundational knowledge about the heritage, beliefs, customs, rituals, and ethics of world traditions such as Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, as well as Native American Spirituality. They are immersed in the traditions of each faith through experiences of prayer forms and stories of the founding narrative.

## **Hebrew Scriptures (Grade 6)**

Sixth graders study the Hebrew Scriptures. Starting with fast facts about the Bible, students then learn about the five sections, including the Torah. Their task is to analyze the messages of each story and look for parallels to modern life. To close the semester, they look at the legacy of Abraham and the three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

## **Book of Books (Grade 7)**

Book of Books is a study of scripture. The first third of the course covers Adam and Eve's discovery of good and evil, Israel's ancestral family history, the exodus from slavery in Egypt, the heroism of Esther during the Exile, and the bumbling comedy of Jonah. The second third includes stories from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Maya religion which share common themes with the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. In the third unit, we learn about the birth of Jesus, his early work as a traveling wisdom teacher and healer, and the drama of his final week. A couple of amazing stories of the early church round out the tour of the "Book of Books," an indispensable foundational text of western civilization.

## **Ethics (Grade 8)**

Eighth-grade students learn about culturally diverse approaches and the basic Western philosophical approach to moral dilemmas. They will explore these concepts through a variety of modalities including journaling, class discussion, Socratic discussion, and reflection on the ethics inherent in media, politics, current events, sports, and everyday scenarios. Students will explore and name their values. They will learn how their values inform their decisions and how their decisions inform their reputation. Students will be challenged to consider different perspectives, speak clearly about meaningful topics, and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning.

# Performing Arts

## Grades 5-6: Year-Long Courses

### Girls and Boys Choirs

The grade 5/6 Choir is a year-long courses open to all fifth and sixth graders. Students study and develop their unique adolescent singing voices within a co-ed choral setting. Students sing quality choral literature of various styles, historical periods and cultures in unison, canon and two- and/or three-part harmony both accompanied and a cappella. The course is designed to build on principles and skills learned previously while still being an accessible entry point for students new to the school or to the discipline. Goals include building confidence and comfort as singers/performers, developing efficient rehearsal skills and music-reading skills, developing a love for singing and experiencing preparation and performance at the highest level of excellence appropriate to this age level. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required as an extension of the classroom.

### Beginning Band

Beginning Band is a year-long course that is open to all fifth and sixth graders. This course teaches students fundamental concepts of being in an ensemble. Proper care and handling of the instruments is presented. Strategies for successful practicing and marked progress will be introduced. The primary textbook used in Beginning Band systematically introduces new musical knowledge in a thorough fashion. This presentation is followed by a complete review of the previously learned skills and techniques to ensure mastery learning. A weekly practice record is required as an aid to successful progress. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required as an extension of the classroom.

## **Intermediate Band**

Intermediate band is a year-long course offered to all students in fifth and sixth grades. This course is designed to provide the second-year band student with continued instruction on performing at an intermediate level. The course is designed to meet the needs of the progressing instrumental music student by imparting knowledge and experience through ensemble performance. Through repertoire study of traditional, classical and jazz idioms, appropriately graded technical/musical method study, and through scheduled performances, students will gain knowledge and skill on their instruments. The students explore composition and performance of music through theoretical applications of scales, harmony, rhythmic complexity, simple time signatures, phrasing, and performance considerations. Literature for this course is designed to provide a comprehensive investigation of the historical, multicultural, and stylistic aspects for wind bands. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required as an extension of the classroom. Prerequisite: 1 year of beginning band, or instructor approval.

## **Beginning Strings Orchestra**

The 5/6 Beginning Strings is a year-long orchestra class open to all students in fifth and sixth grades. Beginning Strings is geared for the string student who has little or no playing experience on his or her chosen instrument. Students focus on the basics of ensemble playing such as learning good practicing habits and rehearsal techniques, rhythms, and subdivisions, note reading, basic music theory, dynamics, balance, and how to follow a conductor. Weekly practice charts are required. The music will be chosen to reflect the ability of the ensemble's level. Private instruction is strongly recommended. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required. There may be occasional opportunities to perform for a Middle or Lower School Chapel.

## **Advanced Strings**

The 5/6 Advanced Strings is a year-long orchestra class open to all fifth and sixth graders. The 5/6 Advanced Strings is geared for the string student who has had some playing experience on their chosen instrument. This allows the student to focus on further developing their technical and orchestral skills. Class will consist of learning good practice and rehearsal techniques, rhythm, sight-reading, basic music theory, subdivision, note reading, dynamics, balance, and how to follow a conductor. Weekly practice charts are required. Music will be chosen to reflect the ability level of the ensemble, and private instruction is strongly recommended. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required. There may be additional opportunities to perform throughout the year.

## **Dance (Grade 6)**

Grade 6 dance is a year-long course. Students will focus on increasing their knowledge of dance vocabulary in modern, ballet, jazz and hip-hop. Class time is spent honing movement technique, creating choreography, and team building. Students gain confidence in expressing themselves using dance vocabulary from several different genres of dance. Dancers take part in technique classes which increase flexibility, strength, balance, and body awareness. There are two required performances during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required. (Space is limited.)

## **Grades 5-6: Semester-Long Courses**

### **Choir**

Grades 5/6 Choir is a semester course is open to all fifth- and sixth-grade students who wish to sing. Students study and develop their unique adolescent singing voices within a co-ed choral setting. They sing quality choral literature of various styles, historical periods and cultures in unison, canon and two- and/or three-part harmony both accompanied and a cappella. The course is designed to build on principles and skills learned previously while still being an accessible entry point for students new to the school or to the discipline. Goals include building confidence and comfort as singers/performers, developing efficient rehearsal skills and music reading skills and developing a love for singing. The student will have one required performance with the ensemble. The performance is either in winter or spring, depending on the semester in which the student is enrolled.

### **Dance**

Dance is a semester course open to all fifth and sixth graders. Students will learn fundamental dance technique, increase flexibility, strength, balance, and sense of body awareness. Students will focus on modern dance and fundamental ballet technique with an exposure to Jazz, Ballet, African, and Hip-Hop. Dance history, dance traditions, and dance vocabulary will be introduced. Opportunities to create dance phrases will encourage growth in creativity and personal expression. This course is a movement class requiring daily participation. The semester culminates with a required final performance that is either in winter or spring, depending on the semester in which the student is enrolled.



## **Theater**

Theater is a semester course open to all fifth- and sixth-grade students: study includes aspects of acting and technical theater. Students will learn improvisation techniques and use them for acting games and developing scenes. They will work on developing presence and expression while advancing their theater voice. Students will also receive hands-on experiences with the equipment in the Cargill Theater as an introduction to technical theater work. This course is intended as an overview of dramatic and theatrical arts and incorporates basic elements and principles of theatrical performance and technologies as well as the process of constructive critique. The students will have one required performance with the ensemble. The performance is either in winter or spring, depending on the semester in which the student is enrolled.

## **Grades 7-8: Year-Long Courses**

### **Chamber Singers**

Middle School Chamber Singers is an auditioned, year-long course available to all seventh- and eighth-grade students. Students study and develop their unique adolescent singing voices within a gender-based choral setting. They sing challenging choral literature of various styles, historical periods and cultures in unison, canon and two, three, and four-part harmony both accompanied and a cappella. Students in these ensembles are expected to demonstrate solid rehearsal etiquette, a free breath-energized vocal tone, excellent pitch, musicality and part independence. Students will experience preparation and performance at the highest level of excellence appropriate to this age level. Minnesota state honor choir opportunities will be made available to group members. This course will prepare the serious singer for participation in advanced Upper School choral ensembles. Students will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required. There may be additional opportunities to perform throughout the year.

### **Choir**

Choir is a year-long course open to all seventh- and eighth-grade students who wish to sing. Students study and develop their unique adolescent singing voices within a gender-based choral setting. They sing quality choral literature of various styles, historical periods and cultures in unison, canon and two- and/or three-part harmony both accompanied and a cappella. The course is designed to build on principles and skills learned previously, while still being an accessible entry point for students new to the school or to the discipline. Goals include building confidence and comfort as singers/performers, developing rehearsal skills and music reading skills and developing a love for singing. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required.

## **Intermediate Orchestra**

Intermediate String Orchestra is an auditioned year-long course geared for the string student that has had several years of playing and orchestral experience on their chosen instrument. Students focus on further developing their technical and ensemble skills. The class will consist of learning good practice and rehearsal techniques, rhythm, sight-reading, basic music theory, subdivision, balanced dynamics, and how to follow a conductor. Weekly practice charts are required. Music will be chosen to reflect the ability level of the ensemble. Private instruction is strongly recommended. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required.

## **Advanced Orchestra (Grades 7-8)**

Advanced String Orchestra is an auditioned year-long course open to students in seventh and eighth grades. This course is geared for the string student that has achieved advanced technical and musical skills. The pace of the class moves quickly and students are expected to learn notes before coming to rehearsals. Most of the class time is spent studying the musical aspects of the repertoire. The class will consist of learning good practice and rehearsal techniques, rhythm, sight-reading, basic music theory, dynamics, subdivision, balance, and how to follow a conductor. Weekly practice charts are required. Music will be chosen to reflect the ability level of the ensemble. Private instruction is strongly recommended. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required. There may be additional opportunities to perform throughout the year.

## **Concert Band**

Concert Band is a year-long course offered to seventh- and eighth-grade students who have been playing their instrument for two or more years. This course is designed to meet the needs of intermediate level students by imparting knowledge and experience through ensemble performance. Weekly practice is required as an aid to successful progress. Playing tests will be assigned throughout the semester to assess, as well as track individual student progress. Repertoire study of traditional, classical and popular idioms, appropriately graded technical/musical method study, small-group lessons and sectionals, and scheduled performances will help students gain valuable experience to prepare them for continuation of study in the Upper School Instrumental Music Program. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required as an extension of the classroom.

## **Wind Ensemble**

Wind Ensemble is an auditioned year-long course offered to seventh- and eighth-grade students. Its purpose is to provide more advanced instruction and experience for the serious instrumentalist. Repertoire will include traditional, classical and popular idioms, as well as appropriately graded technical/musical works. Literature for this course is designed to provide a comprehensive investigation of the historical, multicultural, and stylistic aspects for wind ensembles. Weekly practice is required. Playing tests are assigned throughout the semester to assess, as well as to track individual student progress. This course prepares students for continued study in the Upper School Instrumental Music Program. The student will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required as an extension of the classroom. There may be additional opportunities to perform throughout the year.

## **World Music**

World Music is a year-long music course offered to seventh- and eighth-grade students. Students sing, create, and play a wide variety of percussion and world instruments such as djembe, doumbek, riq, and xylophone. The music of Brazil, the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East are explored. This class draws on students' prior experiences with world music and extends the learning through composition, research, and performance. Students present their work at a community meeting at the end of the semester.

## **Digital Music**

Digital Music is a year-long course open to all seventh- and eighth-grade students. Students compose, arrange, record, edit, and notate music of their own creation using Digital Audio Workstations, sequencers, and notation software on their computers. Students are asked to think like composers, recording engineers, and DJs as they work on individual and group projects such as film/television scoring, music composition, and music for live ensembles/soloists. As part of this course, students create electronic portfolios containing all of their work, which will be suitable for public performance. Student compositions are shared during a Middle School Community Meeting.

## **Advanced Dance**

Advanced Dance is an auditioned year-long course for seventh- and eighth-grade students. Students develop techniques in ballet and modern dance styles with further study in jazz, hip-hop, and African. Additionally, students develop creativity and imagination and have the opportunity to expand their choreographic skills. Dancers in this class experience what it is like to be in a dance company. As a member of a community-based class, each dancer is one of a whole, dedicated to a “team,” while also being encouraged to grow and develop as an individual artist. Students will have two required major performances with the ensemble during the year; a winter concert and a spring concert. Attendance at all concerts is required. There may be additional opportunities to perform throughout the year.

## **7/8 Theater**

The 7/8 Theater course incorporates a semester each of Stagecraft and Drama. (These classes are taken in succession, but in no particular order.) This class continues the study of the world of theatrical design, lighting, sound, and properties in the Stagecraft portion of the course. Students will receive hands-on experiences with the equipment in the Cargill Theater. We will examine current technology in use, including modern state-of-the-art equipment. In the Drama portion, students learn to use voice, mind, and body through acting and improvisation games and they prepare scenes through which they develop ensemble and individual performance skills. Students deepen their understanding and application of dramatic and theatrical technique in preparation for performance. Key to success in this year-long course is active engagement in the process of constructive critique and collaboration. The students will have two required performances with the ensemble: winter and spring.

## **Grades 7-8: Semester-Long Courses**

### **Choir**

Choir is a semester class open to all seventh- and eighth-grade students. Students study and develop their unique adolescent singing voices in a gender-based choral setting. They sing quality choral literature of various styles, historical periods and cultures in unison, canon and two- and/or three-part harmony both accompanied and a cappella. The course is designed to build on principles and skills learned previously, while still being an accessible entry point for students new to the school or to the discipline. Goals include building confidence and comfort as singers/performers, developing rehearsal skills and music reading skills, and developing a love for singing. This course may be repeated for credit. The student will have one required performance with the ensemble. The performance is either in winter or spring, depending on the semester in which the student is enrolled.

### **World Music**

World Music is a year-long music course offered to seventh- and eighth-grade students. Students sing, create, and play a wide variety of percussion and world instruments such as djembe, doumbek, riq, and xylophone. The music of Brazil, the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East are explored. This class draws on students' prior experiences with world music and extends the learning through composition, research, and performance. Students present their work at a community meeting at the end of the semester.

### **Intermediate Dance**

Intermediate Dance is a semester-long class open to all seventh- and eighth-grade students. Students work on modern dance technique with exposure to Jazz, Ballet, African, and Hip-Hop. Students investigate dance history, dance traditions, and develop dance vocabulary. Students develop creativity and imagination in this class, and have the opportunity to create their own dances. This course is a movement class requiring daily participation. The semester culminates with a required final performance that is either in winter or spring, depending on the semester in which the student is enrolled. Students may request to repeat this course for a second semester as space allows.

## **Drama**

Drama is a semester class open to all seventh- and eighth-grade students. Students learn to use voice, mind, and body through acting and improvisation games and they prepare scenes through which they develop ensemble and individual performance skills. This course is intended to build on skills learned in fifth- and sixth-grade, but may be taken without previous experience. Students deepen their understanding and application of dramatic and theatrical technique in preparation for performance. Key to success in this course is active engagement in the process of constructive critique. This course may be taken in conjunction with Stagecraft (Grades 7-8) for a year-long course of study. The student will have one required performance with the ensemble. The performance is either in winter or spring, depending on the semester in which the student is enrolled.

## **Stagecraft**

Stagecraft is a semester course open to all seventh- and eighth-grade students. This class continues the study of the world of theatrical design, lighting, sound, and properties. Students will receive hands-on experiences with the equipment in the Cargill Theater. We will examine current technology in use, including modern state-of-the-art equipment. Students will also learn and develop the basic skills needed to think outside the box and apply that knowledge to the design and creation of a theatrical prop. This course may be taken in conjunction with Drama (Grades 7-8) for a year-long course of study. The student will have one required performance with the ensemble. The performance is either in winter or spring, depending on the semester in which the student is enrolled.

# Visual Arts

## Grades 5-6: Semester-Long Courses

### Media Art (Grades 5-6)

Media art is a semester course open to all students in fifth and sixth grades. Students in Media Art create art using graphic design, video editing, digital photography, and web design. Students use their computers, pencil and paper, video cameras, GoPro cameras and microphones to create movies, public service announcements, Gifs, animations, how-to videos, infographics and illustrations for student-created stories. Students also learn how to become literate consumers of media.

### Visual Arts (Grade 5)

The fifth-grade visual art class is a semester long course. Students are introduced to a variety of materials and techniques while exploring the elements of art: line, shape, space, texture, and color. Students will develop their visual awareness, aesthetic appreciation of the arts, creativity, and craftsmanship through an introduction to relief printmaking with a focus on painting and 3D sculpture as well. They are expected to maintain a sketchbook to develop their observational drawing skills, and their artwork will be displayed in the Middle School Commons and Chapel Gallery.

### Visual Arts (Grade 6)

The sixth-grade visual art class is a semester-long course. Students explore the art-making process with an emphasis on encouraging and developing his or her visual perception and understanding of the use of materials, while they expand the vision and value of their own experiences. Students investigate different ways of expressing the basic elements and principles of design through the experience of drawing, painting, portraiture, 3D design and working with a sketchbook.

## Grades 7-8: Year-Long Courses

### Creative Design (Grade 8)

The Creative Design class is a year-long art course for eighth-grade students. The course prepares students to create and learn the theory of design principles, and to apply these concepts as they draw, paint, explore digital media and work with materials in a 3-D design process in preparation for more advanced art courses in the Upper School. Taking this class in Middle School fulfills the prerequisites for all Upper School visual arts classes. Students must fill out an application to be considered for this course.

## **Grades 7-8: Semester-Long Courses**

### **Visual Arts (Grade 7)**

The seventh-grade visual art class is a semester long course. Art in the seventh grade is designed to help the student learn and build upon visual awareness, perceptual sensitivity, design consciousness, aesthetic appreciation, art verbalization, creativity, craftsmanship and life application and visual enjoyment.

### **Visual Arts (Grades 7 and 8)**

The seventh/eighth-grade visual art class is a semester long course with a curricular focus on the concept of art as a reflection of society and recorder of people's history and individual attitudes. Because it is possible for a student to take this course in 7th grade, and again in 8th, the course has a two-year rotation of themes. Students focus on technique and composition, line, color, harmony, texture, volume, rhythm, and balance. Students work with a variety of mediums with emphasis on drawing, painting and clay. Sketchbooks are maintained for research and to develop observational drawing skill.



# Information Literacy

## **Library and Media (Grade 5)**

This course helps fifth graders develop keyword searching skills and use a variety of information formats, including the online catalog, subscription databases, and the Internet. Students participate in book talks and the Maud Hart Lovelace Reading Project. We continue the discussion of academic integrity and define all types of plagiarism.

## **Library and Media (Grade 6)**

Sixth graders learn to search for materials using the online catalog, subscription databases and the Internet, and learn to use a variety of information formats. Students participate in book talks and the Maud Hart Lovelace Reading Project. We continue discussions of academic integrity and plagiarism.

## **Library and Media (Grade 7)**

Seventh graders learn to search for materials using the online catalog, subscription databases and the Internet, and learn to use a variety of information formats. Students participate in book talks. We continue discussions of academic integrity and plagiarism. Students learn to differentiate between uses of natural language vs. keyword vs. subject searching, and use primary sources and differentiate between primary and secondary sources. Students learn to utilize proper bibliographic formats for citation, and are introduced to Chicago citation style for history research.

## **Library and Media (Grade 8)**

Eighth graders learn to search for materials using the online catalog, subscription databases and the Internet, and learn to use a variety of information formats. Students participate in book talks. We continue discussions of academic integrity and plagiarism. Students learn to utilize subscription databases to gather information and to use primary sources and differentiate between primary and secondary sources. Students utilize proper bibliographic formats for citation and participate in genre studies.







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