GDS

GEORGETOWN DAY SCHOOL

2024-25

COURSE OF STUDY

GEORGETOWN DAY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Georgetown Day School honors the integrity and worth of each individual within a diverse school community. GDS is dedicated to providing a supportive educational atmosphere in which teachers challenge the intellectual, creative, and physical abilities of our students and foster strength of character and concern for others. From the earliest grades, we encourage our students to wonder, to inquire, and to be self-reliant, laying the foundation for a lifelong love of learning.

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OVERVIEW

Georgetown Day School is well known for its challenging and innovative curriculum. From pre-kindergarten on, teachers seek to stimulate, challenge, and inspire students to explore the world around them and discover their place in it. This section of the Course of Study details the PK-8 curriculum.

THE ARTS

The arts program is an essential part of the Georgetown Day School Lower/Middle School curriculum, offering students an in-depth study of theater, dance, music, and the visual arts. The program provides a variety of opportunities for students to develop their interests, skills, and appreciation of the arts.

ARTS CORE CURRICULUM

Theater

The main goals of the theater program are to allow the students to develop a sense of themselves as creative and expressive individuals with responsibilities to a larger community, to be comfortable with risk-taking, to learn movement and drama skills, and to develop critical and creative thinking skills. Over the course of their stay in the Middle School, students enjoy a variety of dramatic performing opportunities.

Music

Music is an important part of every child's life at GDS. We seek to create a foundation for a lifelong love of music and to foster active audiences, accomplished performers, and musically literate students. In classes, assemblies, informal get-togethers, and evening performances students experience the joy and beauty of musical expression. Students explore the different elements of music through movement, singing, and playing instruments, gaining the foundation necessary for an intellectual understanding of music. Faculty members use several instructional techniques including Orff. Age-appropriate technology, including Noteflight and SoundTrap, are incorporated throughout the various curricula.

Visual Arts

Designed to develop the student's ability to approach creative experiences with self-confidence, the visual arts program introduces students to a broad assortment of media and techniques. Concepts are presented to make students more sensitive to the aesthetic qualities of their environment and to provide a rich source of experience from which they can draw. Teachers work hard to maintain a balance between providing formal instruction and giving students opportunities for free, creative expression. A consistent approach to working in the studio, including the proper use of materials and instruction in specific techniques, ensures that all students gain a common frame of reference. Students work with paints, a wide range of drawing materials, found objects, clay, papier-mâché, and printmaking materials.

Arts Enrichment Curriculum

Band

Beginning in fourth grade, all interested students may take woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument instruction once a week for 45 minutes. In mid-winter, beginner's band rehearsals begin and are held once a week. The fourth graders perform in May. Fifth and sixth graders have 45-minute lessons once a week and meet twice a week as an ensemble. Seventh and eighth grade students meet twice a week, by grade, for 45 minutes and once a week for 45 minutes as a combined ensemble. The Middle School band, which includes fifth through eighth grades, has a winter concert in January and a spring concert in May.

Chorus

The chorus program is offered in fourth through eighth grades. During weekly rehearsals for this elective, choral techniques, part-singing, and age-appropriate repertoire are presented and developed. Choruses perform at major assemblies and evening concerts throughout the year. Depending on the grade level, frequency ranges from one to three classes per week.

Dance

The Lower School dance program emphasizes the creative process, personal expression, and performance through movement. Dance is introduced to our students in PK/K and continues through fourth grade as a core part of the arts curriculum. Middle School students experience dance history and dance literacy and have the option of being in dance enrichment classes that focus on modern/

contemporary dance technique, improvisation, choreography, and performance. Middle School dancers perform in two Dance Showcases and dance assemblies for their peers. Depending on the grade level, frequency ranges from one to three classes per week.

Middle School Visual Arts Enrichments

Visual Arts enrichment begins in the seventh grade. In visual arts enrichment, students have an opportunity to explore a wide range of projects using a variety of materials. Enrichment classes are more akin to a studio atmosphere; students begin each project with strong technical direction and guidance and then become more self-directed as they bring their projects to completion.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAM

A focus on Health and Wellness begins in PK and continues through High School. The curriculum is guided by a vision for student development and is informed by sources such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning's (CASEL) Social Emotional Learning (SEL) framework, the National Health Education Standards, and by Learning for Justice's Social Justice Standards. These encompass intra- and inter-personal skill development, problem solving, decision-making, and identity awareness. While there are differences by division, both lower and middle school students participate in curriculum designed to promote mental and physical health.

Throughout the school year in the Lower School, counselors, the health teacher, and homeroom teachers conduct regular lessons to build students' skills with the recognition and management of emotions, communication, conflict resolution, and healthy decision making. Students engage in interactive activities, listen to stories, have class discussions, and have opportunities to practice skills that are intended to build their capacity to navigate school and everyday situations successfully.

In Middle School, the curriculum is designed to encourage health and well-being, both among individual students and throughout the GDS community. Students learn and/or have an opportunity to reinforce skills to identify, understand, and manage emotions and learn how their physical, emotional, and social wellbeing are integrally related. Emphasis is on acting with courage, learning from setbacks, creating and innovating, and caring for ourselves while caring for each other.

The health and wellness curriculum provides students with developmentally appropriate information and resources to make informed, responsible decisions with respect to their personal health and fitness, to navigate their friendships and family lives both on and offline, to understand their own and others' sexuality, and to responsibly cultivate their digital identity. The themes of personal responsibility, cultural identity, respect for the worth and integrity of each individual, and understanding and appreciating the diverse populations within our community run consistently throughout the program.

Upon completion of health and wellness programming at GDS's Lower and Middle school, students should have acquired a set of principles and competencies that will guide them to engage fully and successfully in school and ultimately lead balanced, purposeful, and joyful lives.

LOWER/MIDDLE SCHOOL INNOVATION

Our innovation program gives students learning experiences to grow their confidence and abilities to tackle complex problems affecting ethics, justice, and our collective social good. Students will be able to follow or manage problem solving frameworks when addressing new challenges, use foundational digital and innovation skills, and become self-sufficient learners. Lower School Innovation happens in grades 1 through 4, with each grade level undertaking a project in which students are exposed to problem-solving skills such as the iterative design process, computer programming, and the maker arts. Students, PK through eighth grade, also pick up foundational digital literacy skills that allow them to use technology in order to transform their learning experiences.

There are two components to Middle School Innovation programming: Innovation Studio and Hopper Design & Engineering. Through Innovation Studio, fifth and sixth grade students explore topics of innovation, design, and technology. Students acquire core skills for the "real world"—creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and agency within a STEAM and interdisciplinary approach to learning. When students complete Innovation Studio modules, they then engage in

Hopper Design & Engineering in 7th and 8th grade electives that revolve around design thinking, a problem-solving method aimed at developing students' creative potential, and fostering innovation. This adaptable approach will be applied to architectural CAD programs, 3D printing, woodworking, and various design challenge projects throughout the year. Students will also continue developing digital citizenship skills while learning about the future of artificial intelligence and its impact on society and the classroom.

LANGUAGE ARTS/ENGLISH

The GDS PK- 8th English program aims to build student fluency as readers, writers, and critical consumers of written text.

In Lower School language arts, students become fluent readers and writers, as well as effective communicators and listeners across multiple human perspectives, using different mediums for varied purposes. The language arts curriculum equips students with the skills necessary to think critically and work collaboratively in order to live healthy, happy, productive, and responsible lives.

As reading and writing proficiency increases in Middle School, the English curriculum incorporates books selected for their literary value, to provide models and inspiration for student writing, and to expose students to a broad range of literary forms, genres, points of view, and anti-racist/anti-bias themes. The standards for our writing and reading program are informed by Common Core Standards, Ruth Culham's 6+1 Traits of Writing, The Collins Writing Across the Curriculum Model, and Learning for Justice's Social Justice Standards to ensure alignment and progression through the program. Students leave the Middle School with a solid literary base, strong writing skills, and the ability to discuss a wide range of ideas in order to effect change in the world.

LIBRARY

The PK-12 library programs' goal is to develop ethical, knowledgeable 21st Century scholars able to find and evaluate and use credible sources throughout their lives. The libraries of Georgetown Day, in both the Lower/Middle and the High School, are central to the school's mission. A combined book collection of more than 30,000 volumes and 37 databases, covering all aspects of the curriculum, provides research, reference, and enjoyable reading material for the GDS community. Emily Style, in her essay, "Curriculum as Window and Mirror," advocates for "curriculum to function both as window and as mirror, in order to reflect and reveal most accurately both a multicultural [i.e., diverse] world and the student herself or himself." The LMS librarians strive to create a collection and a space where this is possible. Open throughout the school day, the library welcomes regularly scheduled weekly class visits (PK-6) and independent study, in addition to being a place for independent reading during recess for grades 3-8.

Kindergartners through fourth graders practice information literacy skills and learn how to select books and articles (both electronic and print) that suit their needs in addition to being exposed to a wide variety of books through read-alouds. During 5th grade Library classes, students work on developing and presenting GDS's unique book awards, "The Hopper Awards." All Middle School students receive instruction in efficient searching and organizing of information, how to avoid plagiarism, and creating bibliographies. In addition, professional and parenting titles are available for the community. "Destiny," the online catalog, as well as encyclopedias, databases, and teacher-approved websites for projects may be accessed from home through the GDS website (password-protected). Our librarians' primary task is to promote our students' ability to think critically, clearly, and creatively about all forms of information; while they may suggest books, they do not censor any student's reading choices.

MATH

The PK–8th grade curriculum actively involves students in "doing" mathematics. They explore and discuss ideas; justify procedures; use, describe, and represent data; investigate and solve problems; construct algorithms; develop strategies; and predict results. A variety of activities provide opportunities for tactile, auditory, and visual learning. With an eye to developing the student's mathematical thinking and reasoning abilities, teachers stress the importance of communicating ideas, developing a repertoire of strategies for problem-solving, and gaining flexibility in working with mathematical ideas. Students learn to select strategies and techniques, recognize familiar mathematical structures in unfamiliar settings, detect

patterns, and analyze data. To aid in the learning process, students use manipulatives and concrete materials, write about mathematics, and use technology tools.

Lower School Math

In Lower School, students work individually and collaboratively to tackle complex problems, enabling them to use mathematics in a meaningful and relevant way, to communicate clearly and powerfully, and to shape the communities and the world in which they live. Teachers provide an environment that develops and inspires mathematical, critical, and socially minded thinking. Math concepts are regularly applied to real-world situations and other curricular areas. Individual math topics are taught as an integrated whole and the connections among them are prominently featured.

Lower School students enjoy online subscriptions to DreamBox and IXL. These programs supplement the math program by offering targeted practice with specific skills, as well as adaptive practice that meets students where they are and offers appropriate challenges for each individual child.

Middle School Math

GDS Middle School math courses are designed to support all learners in thinking critically about mathematical processes. Students are encouraged to justify their reasoning using mathematical notation to build a deeper understanding of concepts. Course content focuses on developing students' conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and problem-solving strategies to enrich and strengthen their learning. At every grade level, students are encouraged to extend their understanding, moving from concrete tasks to more abstract problems. In each classroom, we foster a collaborative environment where all students can thrive. We celebrate persistence, strategy, progress, and learning from setbacks and successes.

WORLD LANGUAGES

The Lower/Middle School language programs at GDS prioritize proficiency and adhere to the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, which emphasize linguistic dimensions and connections across languages, cultures, and communities. Starting from PK/K, GDS offers Spanish, and from third grade, students have the option to choose between Chinese, French, or Spanish.

Our world language instruction is informed by robust research and theory on language and discourse functions. It is designed to be engaging, adaptive, compensatory, and developmental, with the overarching goal of equipping students with the linguistic and cultural tools necessary to appreciate global diversity and thrive in a multicultural world. Embedded within the program are essential 21st century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, creative problem-solving, and adaptability.

Students will immerse themselves in extensive interactions in the target language while also mastering its fundamental structures through communicative activities that use authentic media and resources. These activities focus on developing functional competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as expanding cultural knowledge. Our instructional approach includes drama, storytelling, educational trips, collaborative projects, buddy programs, songs, games, workbooks, blogs, and films—all aimed at ensuring engagement, enjoyment, and confidence in communicating in the target language.

As a result of active participation in our world language program, students will:

- Develop proficiency in their chosen language.
- Gain knowledge of world cultures, fostering a deeper understanding of both other cultures and their own.
- Cultivate the academic confidence and linguistic skills necessary to pursue future language learning and explore world literature and global affairs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ATHLETICS

GDS believes that physical education is integral to a child's development. Students learn the value of physical activity while participating in a safe, positive, inclusive, and cooperative class environment. Guided by SHAPE curriculum standards, students progress through individual and class challenges to enhance their fitness, develop their athletic skills, and improve their confidence. Students are empowered and encouraged to make good decisions about their physical, cognitive, social, and emotional health, leading them to an active, productive, and fulfilling life. An array of facilities, including a full-size gymnasium, wrestling room, outdoor sports court, and a turf playing

field, offer exceptional space for curricular and cross-curricular physical activities.

In grades PK-2, movement education is the primary vehicle to develop locomotor and non-locomotor skills, spatial awareness, body control, and the ability to manipulate objects. Students are actively engaged in class, working both independently and cooperatively. In grades 3-4, the program develops students' fitness skills through goal-oriented activities. Sports-specific skills, including modified competitive opportunities, are also introduced for individual and team sports. Emphasis is placed on participation, skill acquisition, strategic thinking, teamwork, and knowledge of rules. Modified gymnastics, fitness, and dance round out the curriculum for lower grade levels. Self-esteem, sports citizenship, safety, and fun are key objectives in each curriculum component.

The Middle School physical education program aims to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become physically active over a lifetime. Students are introduced to various fitness, strength activities, and specific skills for both team and individual competition. Fifth and sixth graders culminate each unit with an intramural program designed to prepare them for the seventh and eighth grade interscholastic athletic program. Integrated into this program are the social, emotional, and leadership lessons learned through being a team member. The Middle School physical education curriculum also includes social justice lessons encouraging students to celebrate diversity, equity, equality, and inclusion. Students research, review, and discuss how athletes can use their platform to guide others to take a stand on topics that impact our athletic community.

Seventh and eighth graders enroll in athletics. The program's primary focus is to provide all seventh and eighth grade students with various athletic experiences. The program includes team and individual sports and fitness activities. Interscholastic competitive play further develops sports skills, strategy, and team cohesion, while also helping to build self-esteem and sports citizenship. The athletic program works to prepare students with the skills and desire to continue athletics in high school.

We offer athletic programming in the following sports:

- Fall: girls volleyball, girls tennis, boys and girls soccer, robotic team competition, sports management program, cross-country training (all-gender)
- Winter: boys and girls basketball, wrestling (all-gender), squash (8th grade only), boxing training and yoga, sports management program, winter track and field (all-gender)
- Spring: girls softball, boys baseball, boys and girls lacrosse, track and field (all-gender), boys tennis, sports management program

SCIENCE

The Lower/Middle School science program seeks to ground students in life, Earth, and physical sciences essential to comprehending the world around them. The foundation for this science learning is informed by the research-based Next Generation Science Standards providing students with internationally benchmarked programming. Teachers use a wide variety of activities and materials that stimulate scientific awareness in order to develop conceptual understanding through concrete experiences and scientific experiments.

Lower School Science

In grades PK-4, students develop a love of science and science learning while asking and answering scientific questions creatively, collaboratively, and independently. Using a variety of scientific processes, skills, and tools, they employ their knowledge to address both individual and global issues.

Middle School Science

The Middle School program increases emphasis on laboratory work, applying the scientific method, and engineering design process. In fifth grade, students are given opportunities to design experiments and engineering projects in order to deepen their understanding of science content. Sixth grade science focuses on Earth, both internal and external forces. Students also explore coding and robotics to further develop their engineering skills. In seventh grade, students will dive into biology, with a major project involving the Chesapeake Bay and bettering the health of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Lastly, eighth grade science is all about the physical sciences. The first

half of the year focuses on chemistry and the second half focuses on physics. Major projects include the Elements of Social Justice (spreading awareness about the extraction of natural minerals) and the Sludge Project (using separation techniques to identify a mixture).

SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY

The social studies program strives to develop the critical thinking skills necessary in all students to deal effectively with personal, social, and political responsibilities. The social studies curriculum provides students with knowledge of historical events as well as a sense of the passage of time, the nature of change, and the common bonds human beings share.

Lower School Social Studies/History

In Lower School, students develop a meaningful understanding of, and healthy appreciation for, the world, from both contemporary and historical perspectives; view history through multiple lenses in order to think critically; and develop strength of character and empathy to reflect upon and advocate for social justice in the world.

Middle School Social Studies/History

Middle School history classes are designed to help young minds learn and practice the skills used to study the past. Our students learn that studying history is a process and themes can be examined and traced over time. Through the 5th-8th grade, students are increasingly asked to think analytically, evaluate sources, and engage in research. The curriculum takes advantage of this developmental leap to stimulate the students' understanding of history and make connections to the current times with the goal of becoming agents of change.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Throughout the LMS, students develop a solid grounding in technology ethics. The Acceptable Use Policy, signed annually by GDS students, details the rights and responsibilities of individuals who participate in the School's virtual community. The LMS community participates in ongoing technology ethics discussions, which help students understand the importance of copyright protection, best practice of internet sources, care for equipment, respect for the work of others, and personal integrity.

Our Counselors and Health team help students to understand and think critically about their media balance and well-being, digital relationships and communication, and their digital identity. By the time students complete the eighth grade, they are confident and competent technology users.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Learning specialists and counselors work to facilitate the academic achievement and emotional wellness of students throughout the grades.

The work of learning specialists in the Lower/Middle School varies by grade. In Lower School, all students are screened at the start of the academic year by learning specialists and teachers to establish a baseline for reading. The results of these screenings are carefully analyzed and used to ensure appropriate instruction and support. Additional progress checks are conducted throughout the year. In the lower grades, learning specialists primarily focus on systematic reading and writing instruction. Additionally, the math support teacher provides intervention support. Moving through the grades, the learning specialist becomes involved more broadly, supporting students' academic needs in partnership with teachers. All students in grades K, 1, and 2 receive universal screening for reading difficulty in the fall and spring (K - spring only). Results are shared with families.

When necessary, the learning specialist suggests and implements learning strategies or recommends further evaluation. The learning specialist monitors the use of student accommodations in the classroom. All learning specialists collaborate with GDS faculty, families, and outside professionals as necessary to support the growth of our students.

The Lower and Middle School counselors provide both direct and indirect support to students in classrooms and families. They also work with faculty to support existing health and wellness programs. When necessary, the counselors provide short-term support to individual students.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Assemblies

Student assemblies feature celebrations and dramatic productions. Guest presentations include storytelling, Library Theater, ballet and modern dancing, opera, puppetry, juggling, and musical performances. We also hold monthly community gatherings to catch up with one another and assemblies that highlight our GDS community/world diversity.

GDS Assemblies

GDS assemblies have a long tradition at GDS. The founders of the School felt that remembering universal messages at these times was an effective way for students in our diverse population to share cultural traditions and draw the community together.

There are five GDS assemblies during the year at GDS. Thanksgiving is our uniquely American holiday in which the theme is gratitude. At Christmas, we celebrate peace and goodwill. The message for Martin Luther King, Jr., Day is justice. In the spring, Passover's message is freedom. The Lower School Free-to-Be-Me Assembly and the Middle School Pride Assembly in late spring highlight equality and inclusion. These unique-to-GDS gatherings take many forms, but are always special for students, faculty and staff, and parents.

Theater Productions

Extracurricular theater production opportunities in the Middle School include the fall musical and the Community Production, a student-written show. Students also have the opportunity to be involved in curricular performances, which can include musical theater reviews, improvisational comedy, dramatic scenes, and film productions.

Off-Campus Learning Opportunities

Georgetown Day School teachers use a rich array of exhibits, programs, tours, and living experiences. The School's location in the nation's capital makes many historic sites, museums, galleries, animal habitats, and other places of interest readily accessible. The use of resources is not limited to destinations and artifacts; the program also benefits from the wealth of expertise available.

Complementing the strengths of the School's urban programs are grade-level trips to outdoor educational sites. Lower School students in 1st grade visit Bretton Woods to experience full day outdoor programming. Lower School students in 3rd and 4th grade have overnight trips to Bretton Woods and Camp Letts. Middle School trips include: South Mountain, PA, Sandy Hill Retreat Center, and Camp Arrowhead.

LOWER SCHOOL

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Each child's learning and development are at the core of the pre-kindergarten curriculum. Its goals are to help students feel comfortable with themselves, their teachers, and their peers in and outside the classroom; develop a sense of their own competence and self worth and learn to feel positive about themselves as independent people in the world away from home; learn to effectively and happily interact with others; and learn to resolve conflicts and find cooperative solutions. Teachers work collaboratively to ensure that students engage in meaningful, authentic learning opportunities—through a play-based approach—that foster these social and academic goals.

THE ARTS

Dance

PK students experience dance through perceiving, responding to, and performing movement. Through a series of games, challenges, and introductions to different dance forms, the PK dance curriculum assists students' social/emotional growth and space awareness development. Risk-taking and developing an understanding of what makes us unique are the underpinnings of the PK dance curriculum.

Music

The goal of the music program is to introduce and reinforce basic musical concepts through singing, movement, dancing, playing instruments, and structured listening. The concepts include melody, rhythm, dynamics, and tempo.

Visual Arts

Art projects are a part of each week's activities; a wide variety of art materials are available during free-choice times. Art is fully integrated into child- and teacher-initiated language arts, social studies, science, and math projects. Experiences are also planned for the sheer joy and excitement of self-expression through art. Students learn techniques such as painting, drawing, and making objects out of clay, boxes, and papier-mâché.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive setting for students. We support student's development by cherishing and affirming individual differences, helping them learn to live and work cooperatively, and promoting self-esteem.

The PK daily schedule provides a balance of open-ended and structured time in which our health and wellness curriculum naturally occurs. Group meetings, snack/sharing, lunch, concept time, discussion times, outside time, and interactive play present natural opportunities to learn about nutrition, family lifestyles, growth, and emotional awareness. A Lower School school counselor and our health teacher work in collaboration with the PK homeroom teachers to regularly provide lessons to help students better understand personal feelings and engage in social problem-solving.

Conflict resolution is also an important element of learning. Conflicts are a natural consequence of group living and learning. Learning the steps of conflict resolution is as much a function of the curriculum as is discovering the life cycle of a butterfly. Our health and wellness curriculum aims at creating and maintaining a setting that fosters student's social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development and that respects their dignity and their contributions in our community.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Our youngest students receive a rich variety of first-hand experiences and enjoy multiple ways to express their feelings and ideas through language. Through creative play, classroom materials, scientific observations and discoveries, arts and crafts projects, assemblies, school-wide projects (like sharing how their families celebrate holidays), and special family projects, the PK program offers a wealth of meaningful experiences.

Students discuss, draw pictures, and more to capture and communicate their experiences to diverse audiences. They are encouraged to communicate effectively by speaking in front of the class, dramatizing stories, reciting and creating

poems, singing songs, asking questions, and sharing personal experiences aloud.
Every child is an author, and each child has a story to tell. Depending on their developmental level, students draw and dictate their words to a teacher or write using "inventive" or "developmental" (phonetic) spelling. Teachers introduce alphabet letters and sounds to students through memorable concrete materials and experiences. These experiences may include art, science, math, social studies, music, or movement.

Language arts is often integrated with other subject areas. Time is invested in developing the gross and fine motor skills on which reading and writing depend. Students learn how to form letters correctly using pencils as they begin to experience writing as a process. When they enter PK, many students are just learning letter names and sounds, and some are emergent readers. A variety of instructional methods and activities introduce phonemic awareness.

Exposure to outstanding children's literature provides students with many opportunities to increase their knowledge of concepts of literacy through print, story sequence, and illustrations. They learn that words have meaning, that there is a direct correspondence between the written and spoken word, and that print flows from left to right and top to bottom. They learn to predict the outcomes of stories, begin to acquire sight vocabulary, become familiar with sentence structure, make visual and auditory discriminations about letters, and become familiar with punctuation marks. In addition, our print-rich classrooms provide opportunities for students to read a wide variety of printed matter, including their picture job charts, daily schedules, morning message, Big Books, easy-to-read books, and other library books. One of the main goals in PK is to instill in students a love of books. We target phonological skills using a variety of instructional methods, games, and activities.

LIBRARY

Through weekly visits, PK students are introduced to read-alouds and book discussions, which are interwoven with the classroom curriculum and introduce a new letter each week. Through library lessons, students learn the difference between fiction and nonfiction books and explore different genres. Students learn to choose, check out, and to be responsible for returning their books. The students acquire and practice appropriate library procedures.

MATH

The PK classroom and daily routine are designed so that students develop math concepts and skills. Students discover and explore mathematical concepts both on their own and through teacher-directed lessons. Concrete materials are carefully chosen and logically arranged to teach math concepts so that through play and clean-up, students develop the ability to classify and sort, count, compare, and match using one-to-one correspondence. Throughout the day, math is highlighted, demonstrating the vitally important role that it plays in the students' lives. The daily routine includes asking students to figure out the different periods in their daily schedule, the day of the week, the day of the month, the number of students present and absent, and the number of days we have been in school. Counting opportunities abound. Sequence and order are reinforced as each arts and crafts project is introduced through review of what to do first, second, next, and last. Every attempt is made to integrate math into all subject areas.

Basic concepts and skill practice include work with the ordering of numbers, numerical symbols, one-to-one correspondence, classifying, sorting, data collection and graphing, pattern discrimination and naming, and the numbers 1–100.

Work with identifying, naming, and comparing attributes associated with shape, size, and color further strengthens concept formation. Collecting, joining, and separating sets of objects while introducing such terms as "greater than," "less than," or "equal to" reinforces correct use of terminology and symbols. Work with blocks and Magnatiles expand student knowledge of three-dimensional space and symmetry.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In PK, students develop basic body control, explore concepts of rhythm and space, and learn how to use balls, implements, and other equipment. Classes emphasize working with partners and classmates and involvement in

basic patterns of play and games. Students also learn the importance of following directions. Students should enjoy physical activity and develop physical skills and strength by the end of the year.

SCIENCE

In PK, there are opportunities for students to observe, to ask scientific questions, to experiment, to note results, and to refine their thinking. Whether observing that cooking ingredients change with heat or constructing a ramp in the block area, for example, students explore scientific principles in their play. Teachers encourage this thinking by providing materials, plants, and animals in the classroom, by encouraging students to display their own "museum" collections, and by introducing planned units throughout the year such as planets, birds, and seeds. In the classroom, seeds sprout and caterpillars metamorphose into butterflies. A science specialist also leads hands-on activities with students as they learn to think like scientists and develop observational skills.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies centers around the question: Who am I? The topic students this age are most interested in is, appropriately, themselves. What do I look like? What foods do I like best? Who is in my family? What can I do? One major goal in PK social studies is to build each child's positive self-image and to help students learn what is unique and special about them, what they share in common, and how to function as part of a group. Who is in my family, in my school, in my community, and in my world? In order to answer these questions, we plan special activities and field trips to broaden their knowledge of the roles people play in the world of work and provide ideas for creative dramatic play in the classroom. The students also explore a variety of cultures and celebrate numerous holidays and customs, based in part on the diverse population of their classrooms. They celebrate the lives of diverse individuals who have made lasting contributions to our world. In addition to these special activities, teachers work intentionally to integrate affirmations of difference among students in our community and world.

TECHNOLOGY

PK students use technology as a hands-on tool to enhance their' learning of reading, writing, math, science, and the everyday world. There are iPads for both individual and group work. Each iPad has apps that support classroom learning. Both students and teachers use technology tools for Morning Meeting, attendance, and to support both visual and auditory learners.

WORLD LANGUAGE

The Spanish PK program is based on the idea that the primary purpose of world language acquisition in early education is to develop the ability to communicate. The goals are to provide students with a positive experience and environment where they feel confident to express themselves orally and comprehend and reproduce memorized words, phrases, and sentences when speaking. The program promotes language acquisition through movement, art, songs, stories, and games. Students are given opportunities throughout each lesson to engage in conversations, move their bodies, practice speaking, sing songs, create art pieces, express feelings and opinions, and be immersed in the Latino and Hispanic cultures. In PK, the students explore units about greetings, colors, animals, numbers, fruit, weather, parts of the body, clothing and family.

KINDERGARTEN

Each child's learning and development are at the core of the kindergarten curriculum. Its goals are to help students feel comfortable with themselves, their teachers, and their peers in and outside the classroom; develop a sense of their own competence and self worth and learn to feel positive about themselves as independent people in the world away from home; learn to effectively and happily interact with others; and learn to resolve conflicts and find cooperative solutions. Teachers work collaboratively to ensure that students engage in meaningful, authentic learning opportunities that foster these social and academic goals.

THE ARTS

Dance

Kindergarten students experience dance through perceiving, responding to, and performing movement. Through a series of games, challenges, and introductions to different dance forms, the PK dance curriculum assists students' social/emotional growth and space awareness development. Risk-taking and developing an understanding of what makes us unique are the underpinnings of the K dance curriculum.

Music

The goal of the music program is to introduce and reinforce basic musical concepts through singing, movement, dancing, playing instruments, and structured listening. The concepts include melody, rhythm, dynamics, and tempo.

Visual Arts

Art projects are a part of each week's activities; a wide variety of art materials are available during free-choice times. Art is fully integrated into child- and teacher-initiated language arts, social studies, science, and math projects. Experiences are also planned for the sheer joy and excitement of self-expression through art. Students learn techniques such as painting, drawing, and making objects out of clay, boxes, and papier-mâché.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive setting for students. We support students' development by cherishing and affirming individual differences, helping them learn to live and work cooperatively, and promoting self-esteem.

The kindergarten daily schedule provides a balance of open-ended and structured time in which our health and wellness curriculum naturally occurs. Group meetings, snack/sharing, lunch, concept time, discussion times, outside time, and interactive play present natural opportunities to learn about nutrition, family lifestyles, growth, and emotional awareness. A Lower School school counselor and our health teacher work in collaboration with the Kindergarten homeroom teachers to regularly provide lessons to help students better understand personal feelings and engage in social problem-solving.

Conflict resolution is also an important element of learning. Conflicts are a natural consequence of group living and learning. Learning the steps of conflict resolution is as much a function of the curriculum as is discovering the life cycle of a butterfly. Our health and wellness curriculum aims at creating and maintaining a setting that fosters students' social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development and that respects their dignity and their contributions in our community.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Our youngest students receive a rich variety of first-hand experiences and enjoy multiple ways to express their feelings and ideas through language. Through creative play, classroom exploration, scientific observations and discoveries, arts and crafts projects, time with friends and fourth-grade buddies, class presentations, school-wide projects (like sharing how their families celebrate holidays at assemblies), and field trips, the Kindergarten program offers a wealth of meaningful experiences that enhance language development.

Each kindergartener maintains a journal in which they are able to communicate ideas through drawings and writing. Depending on their ability, students may draw and dictate

their words to a teacher or write using "inventive" or "developmental" (phonetic) spelling. Teachers provide whole-group and differentiated instruction to develop both technical and creative writing skills. Students practice adding details to an illustration, writing letters to represent a spoken word, using appropriate spacing and punctuation marks, and incorporating sight words into sentences to represent their ideas clearly. Students also reinforce their understanding of writing as a tool for memory as they re-read previous journal entries and present their writing to peers.

When they enter Kindergarten, many students are just learning letter names and sounds, and some are emergent readers; a few students may read with fluency. A variety of instructional methods, games, and activities introduce phonemic awareness to build and reinforce a strong foundation for reading. Through exposure to outstanding children's literature, students have many opportunities on a daily basis to increase their knowledge of concepts of literacy through print, story sequence, and illustrations. They learn that words have meaning, that there is a direct correspondence between the written and spoken word, and that print flows from left to right and top to bottom. They learn to predict the outcomes of stories, begin to acquire sight word vocabulary, become familiar with sentence structure, make visual and auditory discriminations about letters, and become familiar with punctuation marks. In addition, our print-rich classrooms provide opportunities for the students to read a wide variety of printed matter, including their job charts, daily schedules, morning message, labeled classroom materials, and easy-to-read books. All of this reading occurs in the Kindergarten classrooms every day, but students at GDS are not placed into formal reading groups until first grade. One of the main goals in Kindergarten is to motivate students to learn to read and to instill in them a love of books.

LIBRARY

Through weekly visits, K students are introduced to read-alouds and book discussions, which are interwoven with the classroom curriculum and introduce a new letter each week. Through library lessons, students learn the difference between fiction and nonfiction books and explore different genres. Students learn to choose, check out, and to be responsible for returning their books. The students acquire and practice appropriate library procedures.

MATH

The Kindergarten classroom and daily routine are designed so that students develop math concepts and skills. students discover and explore mathematical concepts both on their own and through teacher-directed lessons. Concrete materials are carefully chosen and logically arranged to teach math concepts so that through play and clean-up, students develop the ability to classify and sort, count, compare, and match using one-to-one correspondence. Throughout the day, math is highlighted, demonstrating the vitally important role that it plays in the students' lives. The daily routine includes asking students to figure out the different periods in their daily schedule, the day of the week, the day of the month, the number of students present and absent, and the number of days we have been in school. Counting opportunities abound. Sequence and order are reinforced as each arts and crafts project is introduced through review of what to do first, second, next, and last. Every attempt is made to integrate math into all subject areas.

The Kindergarten math curriculum is designed to promote critical thinking, develop cognitive flexibility, and enhance conceptual understanding for our young learners. Students tackle new mathematical concepts through problem-solving experiences—individually or with a small group of peers—and make important connections through direct instruction with a teacher and with visual models.

Students are engaged in three to four formal teacher-directed lessons each week, followed by sufficient time to explore and practice math concepts through selected manipulative materials. Basic concepts and skill practice includes counting and cardinality, numerical symbols, one-to-one correspondence, classifying and sorting, measuring, data collection and graphing, composing and decomposing numbers, and addition and subtraction. While developing essential procedural skills, K students also learn to critique their own reasoning and the reasoning of others, represent their thinking in multiple ways (e.g., graphs, pictures, equations or physical models), as well as how to effectively use precise mathematical language to express their understanding.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In Kindergarten, students develop basic body control, explore concepts of rhythm and space, and learn how to use balls, implements, and other equipment. Classes emphasize working with partners and classmates and involvement in basic patterns of play and games. Students also learn the importance of following directions. Students should enjoy physical activity and develop physical skills and strength by the end of the year.

SCIENCE

In Kindergarten, there are opportunities for students to observe, to ask scientific questions, to experiment, to note results, and to refine their thinking. Whether observing that cooking ingredients change with heat or constructing a ramp in the block area, students explore scientific principles in their play. Teachers encourage this thinking by providing materials, plants, and animals in the classroom, by encouraging students to display their own "museum" collections, and by introducing planned units throughout the year such as planets, birds, and seeds. In the classroom, chicks and ducks hatch, seeds sprout, and caterpillars metamorphose into butterflies. A science specialist also leads hands-on activities with students as they learn to think like scientists and develop observational skills.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies centers around the question: Who am I? The topic students this age are most interested in is, appropriately, themselves. What do I look like? What foods do I like best? Who is in my family? What can I do? One major goal in Kindergarten social studies is to build each child's positive self-image and to help students learn what is unique and special about them, what they share in common, and how to function as part of a group. Who is in my family, in my school, in my community, and in my world? In order to answer these questions, we plan special activities and field trips to broaden their knowledge of the roles people play in the world of work and provide ideas for creative dramatic play in the classroom. The students also explore a variety of cultures and celebrate numerous holidays and customs, based in part on the diverse population of their classrooms. They celebrate the lives of diverse individuals who have made lasting contributions to our world. In addition to these special activities, teachers work intentionally to integrate affirmations of difference among students in our community and world.

TECHNOLOGY

K students use technology as a hands-on tool to enhance their learning of reading, writing, math, science, and the everyday world. There are iPads for both individual and group work. Each iPad has apps that support handwriting, phonics, mathematics, and art. Both students and teachers use technology tools to support visual and auditory learners.

WORLD LANGUAGE

The Spanish Kindergarten program is based on the idea that the primary purpose of world language acquisition in early education is to develop the ability to communicate. The goals are to provide the students with a positive world language experience and environment where they feel confident to express themselves orally, comprehend and reproduce memorized words, phrases, and sentences when speaking, and use their language knowledge to construct their speech progressively. The program promotes language acquisition through movement, art, songs, stories, and games. Students are given opportunities throughout each lesson to engage in conversations, move their bodies, practice speaking, sing songs, create art pieces, express feelings and opinions, and be immersed in the Latino and Hispanic cultures. Students also write keywords in Spanish. Students explore units about greetings, colors, animals, numbers, fruit, weather, parts of the body, clothing and family.

FIRST GRADE

The Arts

Dance

First grade students experience creative dance through a series of movement explorations as an individual, with a partner, or in a group. Students develop their spatial awareness, movement articulation, and physical expression through a variety of improvisations. Risk-taking and developing an understanding of what makes us unique are the underpinnings of the first grade dance curriculum.

Music

The first graders become more confident and competent in their continued exploration of the elements of music. While keeping a steady beat when playing xylophones and rhythm instruments, the students also recognize rhythmic notation. Singing in tune, singing longer songs, and singing while playing games further reinforce the understanding of the elements of music.

Visual Arts

In first grade, students are introduced to the art-room experience. Emphasis is placed on the recognition and use of line, shape, color, and texture. Students learn techniques involved in painting, drawing, and collage. The three-dimensional skills learned include clay modeling, pinch-pot construction, and wood assemblage.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

As a natural extension to their social studies curriculum, first grade students partner with advocacy and outreach organizations in the DC-area. In the past, students have engaged in hands-on service by helping bag groceries that go out for monthly deliveries and learning how their work will help others.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The first grade health and wellness curriculum encompasses a variety of topics, including personal health and safety, fitness, nutrition and healthy eating, growth and development, emotional and social awareness, family life education, and conflict resolution. The curriculum is addressed, both formally and informally, in the classroom as well as in science class, physical education class, and through guest speakers. Students will build skills for effective communication, wise decision-making, understanding conflict, and building friendships. Students also learn to care for the environment. A Lower School school counselor and our health teacher work in collaboration with the first grade homeroom teachers to regularly provide lessons to help students better understand personal feelings, engage in social problem-solving, and make healthy choices. Throughout the year, we will emphasize the importance of empathy, self-advocacy, and community as we develop students—and human beings—who care deeply for themselves and for others.

LANGUAGE ARTS

The main thrust of the first grade language arts program is to teach students to read independently and confidently in a manner consistent with their skill and developmental levels. Phonics, sight-word recognition, fluency, and comprehension techniques are all taught using a comprehensive approach (a combination of Whole Language and Skills-based approaches).

Some students are in the first stages of phonics and sight-word vocabulary while others read fluently. During the first part of the language arts block, the class meets as a whole group to build and reinforce phonological awareness. This daily practice provides foundational skills so that students are able to decode words in grade-level texts with ease followed by small reading groups. In the second part of the language arts block, the class reads a wide array of texts as a whole group during teacher-led author studies that include units on folk tales and poetry. These whole group lessons focus on analyzing texts by identifying various story elements in order to build comprehension. Small reading groups further reinforce these skills and focus on the needs appropriate to the phonetics and comprehension mastery level of each child.

Oral and kinesthetic methods characterized by active participation are an integral part of small-group instruction as is fostering an enjoyment of reading. Students read aloud to refine reading fluency skills and build confidence to become independent readers. They discuss the vocabulary and content of the reading selections from various sources. These sources span a wide range of genres

and difficulty that reflect the unique interests and character of first-grade readers. A large selection of books and tapes in the classroom encourage reading competence and enjoyment.

An integral part of the language arts block is Writers Workshop. During this part of the day, students learn to develop and present their ideas in writing. Writers Workshop also entails giving and taking suggestions for story lines, enhancing the content with detailed and appropriate illustrations, incorporating new elements and changes into written pieces, and creating writers who delight in publishing and sharing their own stories.

Handwriting is taught through an integration into other subject areas, such as phonics and literacy centers.

LIBRARY

First graders visit the library weekly, and engage in lessons and read-alouds that highlight folktales from around the world in the fall, and nonfiction in the spring. In partnership with classroom teachers, students begin to develop research skills by using nonfiction book resources and online encyclopedia articles. They learn how to identify the title and author of books and online resources, and are introduced to the idea using citations in their role as researchers. They continue to use the book selection skills learned in kindergarten by choosing and checking out books.

MATH

The first grade math program incorporates games, activities, and manipulatives for hands-on math. The curriculum introduces a variety of math concepts and repeats them several times throughout the year so that students have many opportunities to practice and master math skills in order to gain fluency.

First grade math continues and expands upon the use of math for establishing the daily routines associated with maintaining and announcing the daily schedule and calendar. For example, students use our interactive whiteboards to model the number of how many days we have been in school using money, tally marks, place value sticks and base-10 blocks.

Continued work with manipulatives strengthens concepts of whole numbers, patterns, and counting by 1s, 2s, 5s, 10s, and 100s and introduces work with fractions. Students make greater use of the number line, place-value charts, the hundreds chart, and base ten blocks to develop an understanding of our number system. Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division concepts as well as ideas of equality and inequality are explored through the regular use of manipulatives. Mastery of addition and subtraction fact families through 10 is a continued focus and supported through practice. To strengthen recall of addition and subtraction facts in addition to other math skills on a differentiated level, the IXL and DreamBox online software systems are introduced and incorporated with classroom work and can be accessed from home.

Classification and sorting of attribute blocks and other objects is the groundwork for algebraic reasoning. Exploration with pattern blocks and tangram puzzles, constructing with polygons and straws, and observing a variety of models strengthens awareness of attributes and characteristics of both 2-D and 3-D geometric shapes. Students learn to measure length, temperature, and weight, as well as gather, record, graph, and interpret data. Through oral and written problem-solving exercises, students demonstrate their understanding of these key concepts.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

P.E. classes in first grade help students develop joy and satisfaction when performing basic forms of movement and body control, a sense of freedom to explore rhythm and space in gymnastics and dance, and greater control and accuracy with balls, implements, and other equipment. Students are taught in single and team-teaching situations, and classes are designed for students to work individually and cooperatively in partners or small groups. Teachers help students understand basic game strategies and how to progress to more complex tasks during activities.

SCIENCE

The science program in the first grade responds to a child's natural curiosity and interest in the physical world. Students begin to learn the skills associated with science such as critical thinking and making observations.

To start the year, Earth science is introduced through a study of weather and the water cycle. The unit is taught during hurricane season so we can tie in current events and touch on the importance of storm safety. The students then explore physics with a building technology unit using Kapla building sets, learning about building materials, the function of shape, and the importance of sound design.

In April, students have a mini-unit centered around Earth Day that connects engineering with the planning and design of parks, green spaces, and playgrounds, all of which help people foster a love of the outdoors. There is a focus on what goes into making sure those spaces are accessible to all. Students visit Great Falls National Park and a local playground with accessible playground equipment to observe and experience accessible park design. The year concludes with a study of waves in which students learn how light and sound travel and participate in a scenario where two groups get separated and must use light and sound to reunite. Throughout the year, students become familiar with such concepts as the scientific method, problem solving, and the trial and error process.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The theme of "Families/All About Me" gives first graders an opportunity to explore the full range of what the concept can mean. Students begin the year by describing their own family makeup. Through children's literature, projects, and class discussions, they become appreciative of similarities and differences in families. In addition, the students' parents can visit the class to discuss their heritage (place of birth, where they grew up, etc.) and share facts and customs of that area. Shifting focus closer to home, the students study the history and sights of the District of Columbia.

In addition to our study of families, we discuss famous Americans, the African-American experience, and special holidays and celebrations from various cultures and religions. We do an extensive study of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights movement. Students read stories, learn protest songs, and make timelines of the events and learn the meaning of Dr. King's message. This intensive study makes a smooth transition into our month-long examination of Black History. Upon completion of our study of Black History, students continue to study marginalized groups in our country who experienced injustice, such as women's suffrage and the Japanese incarceration during World War II.

Finishing the year, first graders learn all they can about the United States. They learn geography and map skills, then "travel" through the U.S., exploring regional facts and culture such as music, food, landmarks, fun facts, and climate.

TECHNOLOGY

First grade students continue regular use of technology to enhance their reading, writing, math, and social studies skills.

In the classroom, iPad apps are available to support math, handwriting, spelling, and drawing as they apply to the curriculum.

WORLD LANGUAGE

The first grade Spanish program goals are to promote speaking and listening, begin developing basic writing and reading skills, and provide students with a positive world language experience and environment where they feel confident to express themselves orally. Students continue engaging in conversations, practicing speaking, singing songs, creating art pieces, expressing feelings and opinions, and being immersed in the Latino and Hispanic cultures. In addition, they write introductory sentences and engage in daily casual conversations in Spanish. First graders explore units about greetings, colors, animals, numbers, fruit and vegetables, weather, parts of the body, clothing, family and actions.

SECOND GRADE

THE ARTS

Dance

The second grade dance curriculum is a continuation of the movement skill development from first grade. Students explore more complex movement explorations, ideas, and spatial relations. Students learn dance-specific vocabulary words and think critically about their discoveries through dance, allowing them to verbalize their dance experiences. Students also learn about the originality of movement choices, improvising with others, and musicality.

Music

Second grade students continue to develop their singing voices through ensemble singing of a familiar children's repertoire, with an emphasis on traditional folk songs, games, and dances. Students learn to read and perform rhythmic notation. Activities include movement, accompanying on xylophones, and playing rhythm instruments.

Visual Arts

Second graders continue to work with line, shape, color, and texture with increased concern for composition. The art projects isolate individual elements of design to develop students' awareness and technical skills. They use their imaginations and observe their world closely through a variety of projects. Students are encouraged to invent ways to depict what they see and think.

SERVICE LEARNING

The Second Grade Service Learning curriculum is intricately connected to the Identity Project unit of study within Social Studies. In particular, second graders collaborate with the DC Baha'i Center to gain insight into the organization's mission and its impact on individuals both within and beyond their community. Through this partnership, students delve into concepts of social justice and undertake an action project, such as sandwich making for Martha's table, to address an identified community need.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The second grade health and wellness curriculum encompasses a variety of topics including personal health and safety, fitness, nutrition and healthy eating, growth and development, emotional and social awareness, family life education, and conflict resolution. Students also learn to care for the environment. The curriculum is addressed, both formally and informally, in the classroom as well as in science class, physical education class, and through guest speakers. A Lower School school counselor and our health teacher work in collaboration with the second grade homeroom teachers to regularly provide lessons to help students better understand personal feelings, engage in social problem-solving, build communication skills, and make healthy choices. Throughout the year, we will emphasize the importance of empathy, self-advocacy, identity awareness, and community as we develop students—and human beings—who care deeply for themselves and for others.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Using a comprehensive approach, instruction focuses not only on reading and writing, but also on developing speaking and listening skills. Small group instruction provides targeted instruction based on routine assessments made in collaboration with learning specialists. Students at all levels develop decoding, fluency, and reading comprehension skills. Students grapple with structured response questions, discuss story elements, and practice reading aloud. They also share their thinking with classmates and demonstrate understanding during small group and whole group discussions.

Students write, revise, and publish a variety of genres, including, but not limited to, poetry, friendly letters, personal narratives, folktales and fables, and expository pieces while learning proper paragraph structure. Young writers collaborate with peers and teachers to give and receive feedback related to mechanics, organization, and author's craft. Throughout the school day, second grade students learn to write across the curriculum. Our study of writing conventions includes sentence structure, punctuation, grammar, handwriting, and grade-appropriate spelling.

LIBRARY

Second graders visit the library weekly, where they engage in read-alouds and lessons designed to help them explore the different sections of the lower school collection. They practice their alphabetical order skills to begin to understand how books in the library are organized, and use these skills to locate specific books independently. Additionally, students continue to develop as researchers, learning to evaluate information sources and beginning to create bibliographies.

MATH

Mathematics is differentiated to meet the varying needs of our students. Within the study of each concept, teachers reinforce skills, encourage exploration, provide enrichment, and challenge learners based on our regular formative assessments. Much of the students' mathematical exploration is done through open-ended problem solving. Online subscriptions, such as IXL and Dreambox, also supplement pencil-and-paper problem solving throughout the year.

We begin the year building upon familiar concepts of numeration, pattern recognition, explaining reasoning, and problem solving. Particular emphasis is placed on addition and subtraction strategies and fact fluency. We continue the year with units in measurement, graphs and data, multiples of equal groups, money, time, and geometry with real-life applications. Students are routinely encouraged to reflect on what they have learned by explaining their thinking.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

P.E. classes in second grade concentrate on the refinement and mastery of complex forms of movement and body control, on the ability to fully and safely explore rhythm and space in gymnastics and dance as well as individual talents, and on the improvement of throwing, catching, kicking, striking, and jump-roping skills through a variety of fitness activities and modified games. Students also participate in an orienteering and Native American games unit during the spring trimester. Classes emphasize the ability to work cooperatively with classmates in small and large groups in addition to the comprehension and application of play strategies in games, activities, and complex tasks.

SCIENCE

The second grade science curriculum emphasizes biological, environmental, and physical science. The year begins with students developing a fundamental understanding of the classification of living and non-living things. Students then focus on each class of animals through a series of hands-on activities, simulations, research, and a visit to the Smithsonian Zoo.

This unit naturally feeds into understanding the basic principles of adaptations and evolution. Students then investigate the relationship between humans and the environment around them. Students go on a trash pick up in the school neighborhood and understand how the actions of people in northwest DC can trickle down to all parts of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Students move through an engineering design process to create models of pollution solutions to remove pollution from the water or prevent it from reaching aquatic ecosystems in the first place.

In a final unit on physical science, students learn about electricity through the study of batteries, bulbs, and motors. Students develop skills of observing, measuring, comparing, predicting outcomes, and recording information.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Through our year-long Identity Project, students learn about their own identities while learning about other ways people might identify, coinciding developmentally with student interest in self and concrete descriptions of community membership. Students learn with visiting experts and through written and hands-on activities, class discussions, field trips, multimedia, community panels, and student presentations.

Students systematically begin to explore a multidimensional understanding of identity in a social, cultural context. Ongoing studies provide both a mirror for students to consider the many ways in which their identity is constructed and a window through which they

learn about and honor differences among classmates. Students move beyond generalizations and stereotypes, and nurture personal pride in their own identity. They develop empathy skills as they learn to value multiple and various identities within and among friends and to communicate across differences.

Through study of character qualities—virtues—students understand and practice what it means to be a caring individual within a collaborative community. Each week, students take ownership of a particular virtue to emphasize in their actions and observe in others. Our focused anti-bias curriculum bridges our character building and social identity explorations.

TECHNOLOGY

Second graders begin the school year with a working baseline knowledge of technology that they build on and begin learning how to become members of the digital community. Students have regular access to technology tools and iPads. Each student has individual accounts in the form of a subscription to websites that allow for home/school connectivity in literacy and mathematics.

Throughout the year, students are taught how to create and maintain a successful community where each member is valued and feels secure. The Digital Citizenship and Ethics studies expand upon this concept. Similar to the content in PK/K and first grades, second grade students are asked to imagine themselves opening up the front door of their home and heading out into the world. The conversation revolves around what choices are needed to keep the student safe, who is there to help guide the student, and how to navigate those situations. There are several discussions, online activities, videos, and written work.

WORLD LANGUAGE

The second grade Spanish program goals are to promote speaking and listening, develop basic writing and reading skills, and provide students with a positive world language experience and environment where they feel confident to express themselves orally. Students continue engaging in conversations, moving their bodies, practicing speaking, singing songs, creating art pieces, expressing feelings and opinions, and being immersed in the Latino and Hispanic cultures. In addition, they are asked to write introductory sentences, read basic texts, and engage in daily and formal conversations in Spanish. Second graders explore units about greetings, colors, animals, numbers, fruit and vegetables, weather, specific parts of the body, clothing, family, and actions.

THIRD GRADE

THE ARTS

Dance

Third grade dance curriculum is a continuation of the kinesthetic learning and thought process from second grade. Movement qualities and their relation with music and emotionality are introduced in the third grade curriculum. Students learn and perform dance phrases; basic technical elements are introduced. In-depth analysis of the relationship between movement and music is emphasized.

Music

Third graders continue to gain an understanding of music through speech, song, rhythm instruments, xylophones, and movement. Students review rhythmic notation and begin to play the soprano recorder to facilitate the learning of melodic notation. As they did in the earlier grades, the students continue to learn folk songs and age-appropriate children's repertoire.

Visual Arts

Building on previously learned concepts and skills, the third graders are introduced to elements of composition, proportion, and artistic complexity. A variety of assignments are presented in both 2-D and 3-D media. Long-term projects are introduced, incorporating imagination and observation. Projects include 3-D imaginative creatures and self-portraits.

SERVICE LEARNING

Third graders partner with Mary's Center for their Community Engagement and Experiential Learning activities. Mary's Center is a community health center that also provides education and other social services to many people, including migrants in the DC area. The partnership enhances students' study of immigration in Social Studies. Third graders learn about the needs of newly arrived migrants, building empathy and understanding of immigration stories. They collect and sort donations for Mary's Center as well.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

In the third grade, students learn about community, along with mental, social, and emotional health through a health and wellness curriculum that is implemented both formally and informally in the classroom. Topics such as personal health and safety, fitness, nutrition and healthy eating, growth and development, emotional and social awareness, family life education, and conflict resolution are explored and students also learn to care for the environment. Lessons are provided both in the homeroom classroom and in science and physical education classes. Students learn through stories, discussions, role plays, and other activities. A Lower School school counselor and our health teacher also work in collaboration with the third grade homeroom teachers to regularly provide lessons to help students increase their understanding of personal responsibility, to build communication skills, and to promote healthy decision making. Throughout the year, we will emphasize the importance of empathy, self-advocacy, identity awareness, effective communication, and community as we develop students—and human beings—who care deeply for themselves and for others.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Third graders have many opportunities to engage with reading throughout the year. Whether participating in teacher-led guided reading, gathering information from expository texts, reading independently for pleasure, or working through multi-step directions on a math assessment, the students develop their decoding, fluency, and confidence. Comprehension is emphasized, and higher-level skills such as predicting, sequencing, and inferring are practiced both in group work and independent assignments. In literature discussion groups, students read independently, write responses to their reading, and share their interpretations and theories with their peers. Students read texts across a wide range of genres including realistic fiction, fantasy, and expository and narrative nonfiction.

Our writing curricula is often intertwined with our social studies units; students participate in a number of interdisciplinary writing exercises that help them to simultaneously hone their foundational writing skills while deepening their content knowledge and understanding. Third graders become more proficient at spelling and

writing mechanics. Regular word work strengthens spelling skills. Individual conferences are used to teach grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

LIBRARY

Third Grade library time is devoted to deepening students' understanding of the library and how it is organized, listening to books that broaden understanding of how literature represents people and cultures, and guided book selection. Students practice research, note-taking and responsible documentation in conjunction with the Immigration Project, among others. Time for choosing independent reading is built into weekly library time.

MATH

Third graders continue to work at understanding base-ten numbers, emphasizing place value through a million and beyond. Further work with estimation and determining the reasonableness of an answer precedes formal work with rounding. Students refine their knowledge of multi-digit addition and subtraction with regrouping. Students spend considerable time and focus on set theory, use of arrays, and repeated addition and subtraction, as well as "fair sharing" to solidify multiplication and division concepts prior to learning and mastering fact families through the twelves. Students learn several algorithms for multi-digit multiplication and long division with one-digit divisors and up to two-digit dividends.

Concept understandings of fractions are taught using a variety of manipulatives that emphasize real-world use. Students identify fractions on a number line, fractional parts of a set, and fractional parts of a region. They compare and order fractions, convert between mixed numbers and improper fractions, and find equivalent fractions. Through carefully planned explorations, students record and analyze data, noting significant patterns that lead them to discover standard algorithms for adding, subtracting, and multiplying fractions. Fraction and money comparisons and connections to decimal notation are made at each step in the learning process.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students in the third grade explore rhythm and space in gymnastics and dance and work to master and control fundamental throwing, catching, kicking, striking, and jumping skills that will be used in more organized games in later grades. Classes emphasize the ability to work cooperatively with classmates in groups of all sizes and to apply strategies in organized games. Students are taught why movement and activities are important to their physical well-being.

Students participate in basketball, soccer, stick-handling activities, and volleyball in the fall. The winter schedule includes dance, gymnastics, and wrestling. The year concludes with softball/baseball, lacrosse, flag football, and track-and-field. Many activities are adapted or modified for maximum student participation and success. Students are also challenged to consider the importance of exercise and physical fitness. The first and third trimesters include a two-day-per-week running program to improve cardiovascular fitness. Each student is encouraged to give their personal best and record the number of laps completed each day.

SCIENCE

In third grade, students continue to develop their scientific and critical thinking skills while learning about the life cycles of plants, our solar system, and our Earth as a planet in our solar system. Students begin the year by observing plants and designing experiments to test what plants need to live and how they reproduce. Discussions of evolution and adaptations take place throughout this discovery and students share their knowledge on a field trip exploring trees at a local national park.

During the winter months, students study the origins of the Universe, our galaxy, and the Solar System. They are introduced to the Periodic Table and learn about elements, atomic structure, and how to build model atoms. Discussions and activities about scale are common throughout this unit. Exploration of the planets of the Solar System, including our own planet Earth, concludes with students making a model of their chosen planet and comparing their planet to others. The winter months conclude with the Lower School STEAM Day, where students have the opportunity to build something using the

engineering design process. Past projects have included designing and building bird feeders with squirrel guards, airplanes, and telescopes.

With the coming of spring, cherry blossoms bloom and we resume observing the life cycles of plants, dissecting flowers, learning how flowers make seeds, and exploring how different plants and animals have evolved to depend on each other. A field trip to Great Falls National Park allows students to explore native wildflowers and see changes in the rocks of our local environment. By the end of the school year, many flowers have turned to seed, ready for the next generation of plants to grow, and the next generation of scientists to explore how.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The theme of 3rd grade social studies is a comparative study of movements of people to and within the current United States. Framing the year with the acknowledgement that our school is on Nacotchtank land and working to understand what that means, our students focus in on aspects of current U.S. migration, the Great Migration of the 20th Century, the Ellis Island and Angel Island waves of immigration, and the early colonial interactions of indigenous, English, and African settlers at Plimoth Plantation and Jamestown.

In each movement we examine the "push and pull" factors which drove the movement as well as both the challenges faced upon arrival in a new region and the resulting impacts of those migrations. Through our social studies curriculum, students read a variety of expository materials including nonfiction trade books, biographies, historical fiction, and primary sources. Some touchstone texts include We Came Through Ellis Island: The Immigration Adventures of Emma Markowitz, Kai's Journey to Gold Mountain, The Great Migration: Journey to the North, and The Village that Vanished.

Students complete comprehension-related activities in varied formats such as study guides, social studies log entries, concept maps, charts, and creative activities to reinforce prior knowledge. We hear first-hand accounts from guest speakers, interview first generation immigrants within our school community, read picture books, study art, music, and contributions of immigrants, etc.

TECHNOLOGY

Third graders are hands-on, energetic learners who like to figure things out and pursue new information, and throughout the academic year they expand their understanding of the wider digital world and the many activities that are or will be available to them. Third grade students like to use all kinds of digital tools, but especially the iPad that each student receives at the beginning of the school year. Throughout the year, they write and edit stories, create media, consult developmentally appropriate websites, and share schoolwork with teachers and with one another. The iPads expand the time available for teaching and learning because online encyclopedias, reference materials, primary documents, and many digital tools are right at hand instead of outside the classroom.

A range of apps and websites including GoogleDocs, First In Math, Dreambox, IXL, Britannica, and BookCreator, along with the camera, video, and voice recording iPad features, serve as foundations for learning in third grade classrooms. These digital resources offer students the opportunity to dig more deeply into every subject and create content that demonstrates their knowledge.

In the third grade immigration unit, third graders work in small collaborative teams, recording interviews with GDS community members who have immigrated to the United States, and using this first-hand source material to help them create a detailed presentation poster about each person. A digital reading resource, RAZkids, helps students fine-tune their reading skills and expand vocabulary by crafting interesting reading passages for each reader.

Because third graders are eager to explore and learn more about the digital world, the third grade curriculum includes digital citizenship lessons that concentrate on making choices and decisions, evaluating sites and digital resources, and understanding the concept of personal privacy.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Third grade students have the option of learning Chinese, French, or Spanish.

Chinese

The third grade Chinese program introduces students to this language through natural approaches and Total Physical Response (TPR) method with songs, stories, games, exercises, and cooperative group activities. Students develop an understanding of tones and pronunciation in Chinese and develop basic communication skills in listening and speaking, as well as reading and some character writing. This program uses Easy Steps to Chinese Level 1, which offers a developmentally appropriate, task-based curriculum that emphasizes oral communication. The objective is to develop communication skills in a context that is meaningful to the students and can be used in their daily activities.

French

The third grade French program introduces students to this language through songs, games, exercises, group activities, and basic reading and writing in French. This goes hand-in-hand with the acquisition of the language through the Total Physical Response (TPR) method, proven to be very successful with students this age who respond well to concrete methods such as acting, mimicry, and singing. Students also learn about French culture in France as well as in other French-speaking countries. The program uses Cap Sur 1: Le carnet de voyage de la famille Cousteau, which includes a textbook, workbook, and online visual and audio resources for listening activities and songs. Teachers use multiple resources and websites for francophone culture exposure to engage students and reinforce the vocabulary. The BBC Early Advantage's Muzzy Language Course is used as an enrichment tool to reinforce listening skills and vocabulary enrichment.

Spanish

The third grade Spanish program is a dynamic, interdisciplinary, and developmentally appropriate program for young learners, providing language development through songs, stories, games, cooperative group activities, and basic reading and writing in Spanish. The goal is to provide an environment where students feel comfortable taking risks and making the inevitable mistakes that are part of the process of learning a foreign language. The program uses the series Alba y Gael, enriched by the songs and stories from Rockalingua to immerse young learners in the Spanish language. In addition, the BBC Early Advantage Muzzy II Language Course is used as a language enrichment tool.

FOURTH GRADE

THE ARTS

Dance

The fourth grade dance curriculum focuses on developing creative problem-solving skills. Students continue exploring different dance styles and their specific techniques. Students learn longer and more complex dance phrases, which also include different movement qualities as well as an understanding of spatial relations. Students also continue to practice their improvisational skills through different dance experiences.

Music

Fourth grade students improve their musicianship through the recognition of melodic notation, singing, movement, soprano recorder, and xylophone activities. Instruments of the orchestra and several composers are studied in conjunction with listening units. In addition, fourth graders sing in chorus or play in the band.

Chorus and Band

All fourth graders have the option to take chorus as a separate class from general music classes. Students experience age-appropriate repertoire while learning foundational vocal technique along with score reading in preparation for more advanced part-singing in later grades. Students perform at all the major school assemblies, a December concert with middle and high school singers, and the Independent School Treble Festival at the Washington National Cathedral.

All fourth graders have the option to learn a concert band instrument as part of beginning band. Being the first grade-level with instrumental instruction, students take forty-five-minute lessons once a week with their section learning to put together their instrument, play with appropriate technique, and read musical scores for band. Later in the year, full band rehearsals commence in order to prepare a culminating concert for students and families in May.

Visual Arts

Fourth graders further refine their technical and organizational skills. Long-term projects are assigned with a focus on more detailed and sophisticated solutions. Emphasis is placed on individual inventiveness stressing realism through a wide range of projects that include jungle drawings, 3-D clay figures, and papier-mâché cakes.

FOURTH GRADE SERVICE LEARNING

Fourth graders are big buddies to GDS PK & K students. They visit the classrooms regularly and form close friendships with their younger buddies. Fourth graders also partner with an outside organization, SMYAL, that works to advocate for and support LGBTQ+ youth in the area. Through this partnership, students learn more about the LGBTQ+ community, as well as allyship and how to advocate for causes that are important to them. Students create resources for SMYAL to showcase what they have learned.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The fourth grade health and wellness curriculum focuses on healthy relationships and personal decision making. A Lower School school counselor and our health teacher collaborate with fourth grade teachers to ensure that students build skills related to emotional regulation, conflict resolution, safety, fitness, puberty, and hygiene. Lessons incorporate stories, role plays, discussions, and other activities to regularly engage students. Throughout the year, we will emphasize the importance of empathy, self-advocacy, identity awareness, effective communication, leadership, and community as we develop students—and human beings—who care deeply for themselves and for others.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Increased competency, interest, and comprehension are the goals of the reading program. A variety of reading materials, including novels, nonfiction, and myths, as well as books on each student's instructional reading level, is read by students individually, with partners, and in small groups. Students extend their comprehension by asking and answering questions in reading journals and discussion groups.

Teachers encourage the students to write in many genres and across all curriculum areas. They learn to express factual knowledge and creative ideas in a logical and clear fashion. Aspects of grammar and spelling are addressed

through the writing process. Throughout the year students have opportunities to improve and build confidence in speaking to different audiences through various projects, discussions, and presentations.

LIBRARY

Fourth graders spend class time solidifying their understanding of the library organizational system, layered with growing their competencies in searching the online catalog. Students develop and practice skills important to research, such as finding information in print and online databases. They also explore how authority might influence the reliability of a source. Ample time is also provided for read-alouds and browsing for independent reading.

MATH

Throughout the year, fourth graders spend time discussing what it means to be a mathematician in order to establish positive math mindsets and attitudes. They work collaboratively to solve problems, use different tools to represent their thinking, find multiple solutions, and seek to understand different strategies and perspectives. They challenge themselves to justify their answers with sound logic and precise mathematical language. Each unit emphasizes conceptual understanding of topics, fluency with procedures, and problem solving.

Fourth graders build on their place value understanding to explore patterns in the base-ten system, place value notation, comparing and ordering multi-digit numbers, and rounding to any place. Students use their place value understanding to learn the concepts and procedures for multi-digit addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Fourth graders learn to use multiplication and division to find factors and multiples of given numbers, as well as to identify whether numbers are prime or composite. They use all four operations to solve word problems, including problems with more than one step.

In addition to exploring whole numbers, fourth graders extend their understanding of fractions. Students use models and patterns to understand fraction equivalence and practice various strategies to compare and order fractions. They begin learning operations with fractions, including addition and subtraction of fractions with the same denominator and how to multiply a whole number times a fraction. They extend their place value understanding to the decimal system, gaining a conceptual understanding of tenths and hundredths and how to compare decimals.

Students in fourth grade are also introduced to data interpretation, units of measurement, algebraic patterns, and geometry concepts. They gain a basic understanding of geometric measurement, including different types of angles, and how to classify shapes based on their properties.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

P.E. classes in fourth grade apply basic fitness, agility, endurance movements, along with manipulative ball, stick, and racquet skills learned in previous grades as students are introduced to more traditional organized games and activities. They continue advanced exploration of rhythm and kinesthetics in gymnastics and dance, individually and in groups of varying sizes.

In the fall, students participate in basketball, fitness, badminton, soccer, tennis, Ultimate Frisbee, and volleyball. The winter schedule includes dance, gymnastics, and wrestling. Softball/baseball, lacrosse, flag football, and track and field are offered in the spring. Students are challenged to consider the importance of strategy and physical fitness.

SCIENCE

The science curriculum in fourth grade is designed as a culmination of topics, themes, and skills that students have learned through their first years of elementary exploration. As in the earlier years, the program is hands-on, experiential, and allows students to learn about science the same way scientists learn when exploring for the very first time. Our goal for the year is to continue to foster students' love for exploration, while refining skills introduced in prior years.

Our year-long theme is Energy. Students explore how their bodies and the bodies of all living things use energy to survive and reproduce. They explore how people use energy in their work and how different machines use

energy. Students learn about energy as a physical science, with a focus on the energy of objects in motion and energy transfer in a collision.

Students also explore the Earth to see how energy affects the Earth's structure, formation, and motion over long and short periods of time. Finally fourth graders explore energy and the environment—where does and where can energy come from? How do our choices affect our lives and our planet? Along the way, students develop skills in making accurate and detailed observations, developing and supporting hypotheses with objective evidence, designing experiments, and presenting conclusions supported by strong, numerical data. Students explore first bones, skulls, and shells of different animals and have access to an extensive rock and fossil collection.

Integrated throughout the year are computer literacy and engineering skills. Students learn and practice presentations using a variety of media, learn how to take effective scientific photos and videos, and develop proficiency with scientific tools. Projects have included building model atoms out of the materials that contain those atoms, building solar ovens, and building restraint systems for model cars. The STEAM program is both integrated into the science curriculum and a stand-alone practice. Many fourth grade units have culminating building and design projects, and students are led through engineering challenges throughout the year.

SOCIAL STUDIES

In social studies, students examine aspects of life in ancient civilizations. Students learn about the origins of civilization in ancient India, China, Greece, and Mali; the program encourages critical thinking about the ways ancient cultures influenced future civilizations. Students will explore themes of farming, inventions/innovation, leadership/power, and traditions and beliefs. Through this study, students will have an opportunity to reflect on multiple viewpoints and engage through windows and mirrors so that they are not only learning about other people's lives and experiences, but are also able to explore their own identities.

TECHNOLOGY

The goal of the fourth grade technology program is to provide both academic and social support, as students navigate the world of media at school and at home, and to assist students as they complete their long-term research projects.

Fourth grade students are given a GDS email account for the first time, use Google Drive, the internet, and iPad apps to increase their competency and broaden their understanding of the digital world. Students have regular access to technology tools,iPads, and Chromebooks. Each student has individual accounts in the form of a subscription to is subscribed to websites that allow for home/school connectivity and literacy and mathematics. These resources are used to introduce, review, and reinforce research, math, and writing skills.

The Digital Citizenship and Ethics units are structured aspects of the fourth grade curriculum. The fall focus is on appropriate email use and research skills. In the spring the focus shifts to the science curriculum, as students navigate the world of human reproduction. There are several Town Hall Meetings, small and large group discussions, online activities, videos, and written work.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Fourth grade students have the option of learning Chinese, French, or Spanish.

Chinese

The fourth grade Chinese program continues the students' study of Chinese through natural approaches and Total Physical Response (TPR) method with songs, stories, games, exercises, and cooperative group activities. Students work on understanding tones and pronunciation in Chinese. They develop basic communication skills in listening and speaking, as well as basic reading and writing with Chinese characters. Character typing is introduced this year. This program continues with Easy Steps to Chinese Level 1, a developmentally appropriate, task-based curriculum that emphasizes oral communication skills. Character typing and multimedia resources online are also introduced. The course expands the students' skills in a context that is meaningful to the students and can be used in their daily activities.

French

The fourth grade French program focuses on developing listening and speaking skills as well as cultural awareness. To enhance the latter, each student completes a project on the French-speaking country of their choice and further cultural exploration is introduced through French foods. Students are introduced to basic grammar and they learn to speak and write simple French sentences accurately. The Total Physical Response (TPR) method, proven to be very successful with this age student, continues to be used. Students enjoy learning French through singing, acting, games, technology, drawing, conversation, and writing. The program uses Cap Sur 1 and 2: Le carnet de voyage de la famille Cousteau, which includes a textbook, workbook, and online visual and audio resources for listening activities and songs.

Spanish

The fourth grade Spanish program is a dynamic, interdisciplinary, and developmentally appropriate program for young learners, fostering language acquisition through songs, stories, games, skits, cooperative group activities, and basic reading and writing practice. The goal is to provide an environment where students feel comfortable taking risks and making the inevitable mistakes that are part of the process of learning a foreign language. The program uses the songs and stories from Rockalingua, enriched by the series Alba y Gaelto immerse young learners in the Spanish language. The BBC Early Advantage Muzzy II Language Course is used as a language enrichment tool. The program's objectives are to introduce students to Hispanic American culture, to foster a positive attitude toward language learning, and to provide a solid foundation for the development of basic communication skills.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

FIFTH GRADE

THE ARTS

Fifth grade students study theater, dance, music, and visual arts on a rotating basis for their core arts. For enrichment arts, students choose band, chorus, or dance.

CORE CURRICULUM

Theatre

The fifth grade theater program focuses on performance. Students have a unit of movement improvisation, which includes both physical and combined physical and verbal improvisation. This exploration helps develop actors' physical performance skills and their spatial awareness, and also helps them understand the difference between solo and ensemble improvisation. Students further their performance skills through character development, creation and performance of original monologues, and presentation of self-directed scenes from various sources.

Music

In fifth grade music, students continue to develop performing skills on Orff instruments as they gain fluency in reading melodic and rhythmic notation. Activities include singing, playing recorder, xylophones, and percussion instruments as an ensemble, as well as movement activities, composing, and structured listening.

Visual Arts

The fifth grade curriculum fosters a deeper understanding of and familiarity with the materials and techniques used in art. Elements of 2- and 3-D design are the focus of long-term projects in printmaking, clay construction, painting, and a variety of other media.

ENRICHMENT CURRICULUM

Band

The band program continues in fifth grade with instrumental instruction once a week for 45 minutes as a section, once a week for 45 minutes as a grade-level, and once a week for 45 minutes combined with sixth grade to form an ensemble. Fifth grade band participants are members of the Middle School Band and perform in the spring concert.

Chorus

As part of the Middle School Chorus, fifth graders meet two times a week for 45 minutes: one grade-level rehearsal and one combined rehearsal with sixth grade. Students learn the fundamentals of proper vocal technique through singing a wide range of vocal repertoire. The Middle School Chorus performs at major assemblies and festivals. All participate in an evening concert held each spring.

Dance

The fifth grade dance curriculum is "The World of Dance," in which students learn a variety of dance styles and rhythms from all around the globe, including samba, hip-hop, tarantella, dhabke, among many others; students also learn formal dance styles including improvisation, acrobatics, and modern dance. They experience being part of a dance ensemble and perform in two evening showcases.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (CEEL)

Community Engagement and Experiential Learning (CEEL) is an important, ongoing component of every GDS student's educational experience. Across their four Middle School years, students take part in "GDS Corps," which connects them with opportunities to take informed action in our school, city, region and country. Through experiential exercises outside of the traditional classroom setting, they learn to be active, empathetic, and collaborative citizens and problem-solvers.

5th Grade Green Corps: In the 5th Grade CEEL program, students work on environmental justice initiatives in their own school community. They garden and improve on-campus green spaces, grow vegetables in classroom hydroponic systems, and learn about food justice issues in our neighborhood. The central theme of the Green Corps curriculum is community, which is instilled through active learning and discussion at GDS and field trips to local community partner organizations.

ENGLISH

The purpose of the fifth grade English curriculum is to improve interactive and reflective reading skills and

increase proficiency in written work. Students are challenged to view texts through the framework of windows and mirrors and reflect upon who is represented in the stories they read. The reading program includes individualized reading activities, whole group reading, vocabulary study, and grammar study.

Our texts for the year include fictional novels, nonfiction texts, poetry, and a variety of (mixed) media sources. Texts are selected with an eye toward supporting student writing, building textual relationships, providing access to a wide variety of formats and voices, and encouraging students to develop anti-racist critical thinking skills. A highlight of the curriculum is the Traveling Biographies study: an integrated unit of social studies, reading, report-writing skills, written papers, and oral recitations based on the student's choice of a historical figure.

The 5th grade grammar and vocabulary curriculum is built around mastery of 5th-grade level vocabulary and understanding the structure of a sentence. By learning parts of speech and applying the rules of grammar and mechanics, students become aware of the structure of the English language and begin a journey to becoming active participants in their own writing.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Fifth graders meet for Health & Wellness once a week, and each student rotates through five units over the course of the year, each of which addresses broadly a specific aspect of their health and wellness. In addition to providing accurate, evidence-based information, the curriculum and the pedagogy emphasizes student connection and reflection. Students engage with the material in active ways, they hone their skills by exploring how they might respond in particular age-appropriate scenarios that they are likely to encounter during their middle school journey and beyond. Throughout the year, we will emphasize the importance of empathy, courage, and character, as we develop students—and human beings—who care deeply for themselves and for others.

In this course, the emphasis is on self-awareness, healthy decision making and providing accurate, up-to-date and culturally responsive information. The major topics are: 1) Sexual Education and Relationships: Navigating Physical Development, Friendships, and Intimacy; 2) My Brain: Understanding All That It Does and Taking Full Advantage of Its Power; 3) Mental Health: Understanding and Managing My Emotions; 4) Drugs, Alcohol, and Nutrition: Making Good Choices About What Goes Into My Body; and 5) Media and Digital Citizenship: Who am I Online and How Do I Navigate the Digital World?

HISTORY

Fifth grade history has an emphasis on freedom and justice in the United States. The course covers the events leading up to the American Revolution, as well as civics, civil rights, slavery, and the American Civil War. Students explore the triumph of the human spirit in moments of adversity and injustice throughout U.S. history. Through primary and secondary sources, film/videos, and literature, students examine these issues.

Readings, discussions, projects, oral and written reports, simulations, and research skills enable students to become familiar with and experience the significance of historical events. Geography and current events are integrated into the lessons in history. At the conclusion of each unit, evaluations, activities, and projects allow students to demonstrate knowledge and discuss historical concepts.

INNOVATION STUDIO

Through Innovation Studio, 5th grade students will experience core design, prototyping, and problem-solving skills. The students will experience a broad range of topics, including, digital storytelling, fabrication, graphic design, and reverse engineering throughout the year. Using a project-based approach, our students practice a combination of technical skills, project management, and independent learning techniques all wrapped in open-ended questions. By 8th grade students have a better grasp on how to take their ideas from conception to creation.

DIGITAL LITERACY

Students in the fifth grade are eager to explore the digital world and become more knowledgeable and nimble technology users. Fifth graders use digital tools to discover and collect information, write, edit, work collaboratively, and communicate with their teachers using GDS email, the

MyGDS section of the school's website, and shared Google documents. Fifth grade students learn to use GDS online library databases, and curriculum-related websites to enrich or dig more deeply into their studies. Chromebooks and Google apps help fifth grade students become stronger researchers, innovators, and problem-solvers, whether they are figuring out the range of solutions for a math problem or learning more about the key figures in the world of social justice. Response systems such as Socrative allow students to share their knowledge on various topics and teachers to gauge how much their students know and where more work is needed.

Because they are such fearless digital world explorers, fifth graders also participate in digital citizenship activities, learning more about ethics, digital footprints, decision-making, and privacy—concepts that we encourage them to consider whenever they use technology. Our goal is to help them become more informed citizens whether they work in the digital or non-digital world.

LIBRARY

An important part of the 5th graders' work through their library classes is preparing for the Hopper Awards, a unique celebration of books run entirely by 5th grade students, and celebrated by all. To practice developing information literacy skills, fifth graders conduct research coordinated with the curriculum, most notably through a biography project. The online catalog, databases, and encyclopedias, as well as print encyclopedias and reference materials, provide students information in a variety of formats. Students learn how to use online tools to assist with creating a bibliography.

MATH

The fifth grade math course focuses on expanding students' abilities in arithmetic operations and numerical relationships while also enhancing their spatial reasoning through visual modeling and geometry. Fifth graders develop skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers, decimals, fractions, exponents, and order of operations. They also learn the basics of coordinate planes. An emphasis is placed on justifying reasoning verbally and in writing and deepening fluency. Students expand their learning through open-ended tasks and real-world problem-solving activities. Various resources support teachers in developing a comprehensive 5th grade curriculum and establishing a solid mathematical foundation to inspire students to become lifelong learners of math.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The goal of P.E. classes in fifth grade develop skills, strategy, and a sense of teamwork through games and activities. Students apply basic and more advanced fitness, agility, and endurance movements, as well as manipulative ball, stick, and racquet ball skills. They continue their exploration of rhythm and kinesthetics in gymnastics and dance both individually and in groups of varying sizes, and they learn to link moves and stunts into routines.

Students participate in cooperative and competitive activities, which increase skill, strength, and fitness. In the fall, students participate in modified or regular sports such as basketball, soccer, tennis, fitness games, Ultimate Frisbee, flag Football, and volleyball. The winter schedule includes dance, gymnastics, and basketball. The year finishes with softball/baseball, lacrosse, and track-and-field.

Teachers structure lessons to develop a sense of personal and group safety, strategies to encourage participation in a variety of situations. Students are introduced to Polar H1 heart rate monitors as a tool to help them better understand their heart health. Ultimately, the fifth grade PE program encourages students to develop an appreciation for more advanced techniques in movement and to incorporate health and wellness in their daily lives.

SCIENCE

Located in its own lab and taught by a designated science teacher, fifth grade science blends biology, chemistry, and physical science. Throughout the year, the fifth grade students participate in a hands-on science program that encourages them to develop the skills and understanding of doing science as real professional scientists would.

An emphasis is placed on the idea that for scientists to answer scientific questions they must design a fair

experiment or investigation. Hands-on projects are used to explore biology, chemistry and physical science concepts.

By the end of the year, the students will know (among other concepts) how a spring engine works and how to analyze an object by taking it apart, how much soap to use to make the biggest bubble, what makes a crayfish lift its claws, what attributes make a rocket fly best, and how to build a wind turbine to produce the most voltage from a constant amount of wind.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Chinese

The fifth grade Chinese curriculum continues to extend the skills of oral communication, reading comprehension, character recognition, and Chinese typing. This task-based curriculum emphasizes oral communication and reading fluency skills. Each lesson includes integrated readings, listening and speaking audio work, and videos. The goal is to increase students' understanding of the culture of the language and practice applying the language to their daily lives such as Chinese names, countries and languages, education, family, body parts, time, and daily routines. Students also learn grammar for accurate self-expression, both orally and in written assignments.

French

The fifth grade French curriculum continues to refine students' communication skills as third-year language students. Through the Reporters French program, which includes an integrated video to accompany each lesson, students share in the lives of dozens of young people from all over the French-speaking world. The vocabulary introduced in fifth grade emphasizes daily life. Students also learn grammar for accurate self-expression, both orally and in written assignments. This program introduces the language in an easily comprehensible manner, with useful communicative phrases and expressions. Reporters French comes in a digital format that includes a textbook, a workbook, video materials, and online resources for francophone cultural aspects, including listening, reading, and writing activities for more practice and reinforcement.

Spanish

In fifth grade Spanish, the focus is on enhancing communication skills while deepening students' understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures. Students engage in activities designed to internalize vocabulary and apply it creatively in different contexts. The curriculum uses the Reporteros series to immerse students in the Spanish language. Everyday objects, art, literature, music, rhymes, readers, and projects are uniquely woven together throughout the curriculum, making it easy to integrate language, culture, and communication into the classroom experience. Rooted in robust research on second-language acquisition, the curriculum equips students with strategies for effective communication across all language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

SIXTH GRADE

ARTS

Sixth grade students study theater, dance, music, and visual arts on a rotating basis for their core arts. For enrichment arts, students choose band, chorus, or dance.

CORE CURRICULUM

Theater/Dance

The sixth grade theater program focuses on performance. Students have a unit of movement improvisation, which includes both physical and combined physical and verbal improvisation. This exploration helps develop actors' physical performance skills, their spatial awareness, and also the difference between solo and ensemble improvisation. Students further their performance skills through character development, creation and performance of original monologues, and presentation of self-directed scenes from various sources.

The sixth grade core dance program focuses on experiencing the history of dance through musical theater. In the first unit, students learn the evolution of the use of dance in musical productions while also learning the dances themselves. Folkloric dances, Baroque dance forms, and elements of jazz dance are just a few of the dance skills students learn in the first unit. In the second unit, students choose a musical theater production, study the importance of its message, create characters in relation to that study, and recreate a dance scene for a peer performance.

Music

Students continue to develop the skills studied in fifth grade and learn more advanced concepts in melody, harmony, rhythm, tone color, and form. They are challenged to create original compositions using these skills. Singing, movement, playing xylophones, and listening activities are a constant in the music room.

Visual Arts

Sixth grade students examine formal elements of design. Positive and negative space are explored in two and three dimensions. Close attention is paid to detail, complexity, and formal composition, with emphasis on planning and execution. Students are encouraged to apply their individual creativity through assignments that include linoleum-cut printmaking, collage, painting, perspective drawing, and clay construction.

ENRICHMENT CURRICULUM

Band

The band program continues in sixth grade with instrumental instruction once a week for 45 minutes as a section, once a week for 45 minutes as a grade-level, and once a week for 45 minutes combined with fifth grade to form an ensemble. Sixth grade band participants are members of the Middle School Band, in the spring evening concert.

Chorus

As part of the Middle School Chorus, sixth graders meet two times a week for 45 minutes: one grade-level rehearsal and one combined rehearsal with the fifth grade. Students learn the fundamentals of proper vocal technique through singing a wide range of vocal repertoire. The Middle School Chorus performs at major assemblies and festivals. All participate in an evening concert held each spring.

Dance

The sixth grade dance curriculum is "The World of Dance," in which students learn a variety of dance styles and rhythms from all around the globe, including samba, hip-hop, tarantella, dhabke, among many others; students also learn formal dance styles including improvisation, acrobatics, and modern dance. They experience being part of a dance ensemble and perform in an evening showcase.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (CEEL)

Community Engagement and Experiential Learning (CEEL) is an important, ongoing component of every GDS student's educational experience. Across their four Middle School years, students take part in "GDS Corps," which connects them with opportunities to take informed action in their school, city, region and finally their country. Through experiential exercises outside of the traditional classroom setting, they learn to be active, empathetic, and collaborative citizens and problem-solvers.

6th Grade Exploration Corps: As part of their 6th-grade CEEL program, Exploration Corps students travel to all eight Washington, DC wards to learn about local history and the grade-level theme, culture. Through conversations with experts, artists, and activists, they discover a bit about what makes the nation's capital and each of its neighborhoods special, before retelling the story of DC to the rest of the Lower Middle School community.

ENGLISH

In sixth grade English, students begin the year by unpacking Rudine Sims Bishop's article, "Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Glass Doors." This becomes a critical framework as they develop their analytical reading and writing skills. An emphasis on student voice and choice empowers students to write confidently, value their authorial voice, and collaborate thoughtfully with their peers.

Our texts for the year include fiction novels, historical memoirs, graphic novels, nonfiction articles, poetry, and a variety of media sources. Texts are selected with an eye toward supporting student writing, providing access to a wide variety of formats and voices, and encouraging students to develop anti-racist critical thinking skills. In addition to engaging with diverse and rich texts throughout the year, a highlight of the sixth grade curriculum is the Family Box Project. Through this project, students hone their narrative storytelling skills with a specific focus on the use of metaphor and symbolism. The capstone for this project is a museum-style display that showcases each student's writing and the artifacts that they feel represent their family.

Our grammar curriculum throughout sixth grade covers a wide variety of topics, including the spelling of commonly confused words, understanding sentence structure, and identifying parts of speech. Students practice these grammar skills through teacher-generated practice activities and by looking critically at their own writing.

HISTORY

Sixth graders explore the theme of power by considering our driving question, "How do institutions of power develop?" In an inquiry-based class, we dig for the roots of injustices and contemplate the change in societies over time. Students consider issues of equity, equality, and justice in the context of the government, culture, and religion in ancient Egypt. Additionally, students study environmental impacts and how they sustained and changed different societies. Finally, we investigate current events related to environmental injustice and look for connections from ancient to modern times.

Throughout the year we seek to foster curiosity in an active, constructivist classroom through experiential and student-centered learning activities. Classwork includes small and large group activities, multimedia projects, written work, and authentic experiences from religions and cultures studied. Research skills focus on developing and refining questions, choosing appropriate sources, and creating a bibliography. Collaboration, creativity, and communication are stressed throughout the year as students learn to develop their historical thinking and discover patterns in experiences throughout time.

Our mission of global competence prompts us to delve not only into the history of events in civilizations around the world, but also the cultures and religions thereof. Students are tasked with considering history and beliefs from multiple perspectives and approaching new ideas from a place of understanding and curiosity instead of allowing assumptions to cloud judgment.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Sixth graders meet for Health & Wellness once a week, and each student rotates through five units over the course of the year, each of which addresses broadly a specific aspect of their health and wellness. In addition to providing accurate, evidence-based information, the curriculum and the pedagogy emphasizes student connection and reflection. Not only do students engage with the material in active ways, they hone their skills by exploring how they might respond in particular developmentally appropriate scenarios that they are likely to encounter during their middle school journey and beyond. Throughout the year, we will emphasize the importance of empathy, courage, and character, as we develop students—and human beings—who care deeply for themselves and for others.

The emphasis of the course is on self-awareness, healthy decision making, and providing accurate, up-to-date and culturally responsive information. Building from 5th grade, topics continue to include: 1) Sexual Education and Relationships: Navigating Physical Development, Friendships, and Intimacy; 2) My Brain: Understanding All That It Does and Taking Full Advantage of Its Power; 3) Mental Health: Understanding and Managing My Emotions; 4) Drugs, Alcohol, and Nutrition: Making Good Choices About What Goes Into My Body; and 5) Media and Digital Citizenship: Who am I Online and How Do I Navigate the Digital World?

INNOVATION STUDIO

In InnovationStudio, 6th grade students continue to grow skills gained in 5th grade Innovation Studio through more focused computer science activities. They continue to work on building core design, prototyping, and problem solving skills. Using a project-based approach, students practice a combination of technical skills, project management, and independent learning techniques all wrapped in open-ended questions. By the end students have a better grasp of when to use computers and computational thinking to tackle creative problems.

MATH

The sixth grade math course emphasizes expanding arithmetic skills and laying the groundwork for pre-algebra. Students learn operations with integers, rational numbers, ratios and percentages, expressions and equations, geometry, and estimation strategies. Through models and visual representations, students develop an understanding of variables and learn to simplify expressions and solve basic linear equations. Sixth graders continue to solve open-ended tasks, engage in problem-solving activities, and apply newly acquired skills to real-world situations. A strong emphasis is placed on helping students justify their reasoning verbally and in writing as we support them refine their mathematical notation skills.

LIBRARY

Sixth grade students come to the library bi-weekly through their English classes to choose books for independent reading. Additional library classes are scheduled as needed to support students through research-based projects. Skills taught include refining a research question, choosing an appropriate source and creating a bibliography.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The sixth grade program refines motor skills and game strategies and works to improve student cooperation and teamwork. Drills are designed to improve skill, strength, fitness, and general comprehension of game concepts and strategies.

In the fall, students participate in soccer, tennis/badminton, and volleyball. The winter schedule offers gymnastics, wrestling, and basketball. The year concludes with baseball/softball and lacrosse. Sixth grade students are placed on organized teams with other classmates and participate in an intramural program in preparation for the seventh and eighth grade interscholastic program. They compete against their peers in an atmosphere that promotes healthy competition. The games are officiated by P.E. faculty; however, students are responsible for their team's sports-citizenship, warm-up activities, and substitutions.

SCIENCE

Sixth grade science focuses on Earth science, and serves as an introduction to programming and robotics. Students actively explore and investigate real-world problems through hands-on activities and collaborative projects. The curriculum maintains an interdisciplinary approach and integrates the sciences with humanities and math.

In the coding and robotics curriculum, students tolerate and respond productively to failure, negotiate differences of opinions, and develop systematic approaches to problem solving. Over the course of these lessons, students learn programming basics, block-based coding, and introductory robotics. One of the tools we use is SNAP!, a block-based reimplementation of Scratch with added robotics capabilities. With the Hummingbird Robotics Kits, students make their own robots built out of a combination of kit parts, 3D printed elements, and crafting materials.

Additionally, students explore Earth science through computer simulations and hands-on activities. Students

build earthquake-resistant structures to complement their study of earthquakes; students investigate Earth's interior, plate tectonics, and volcanoes through Google Earth applications and explore themes of social justice at the intersection of climate change and poverty.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Chinese

The sixth grade Chinese curriculum continues to emphasize listening, speaking, reading, character writing, and typing. Chinese culture and oral communication skills are emphasized through the use of music, exercises, cooperative group activities such as role play and skits, as well as corresponding with students in China. Online resources including interactive flashcards, computer games, and voice recording are used to reinforce students' practice. Grammar structures are emphasized more this year to ensure accurate communication.

French

The sixth grade French curriculum continues to develop students' listening and comprehension skills. It also promotes communication skills through acquisition of vocabulary in context. There is a focus on cultural awareness of the French-speaking world through a video introduction to each lesson. There is an emphasis on grammar and verb conjugation for accurate oral and written communication. Students are given frequent opportunities for practice in guided lesson activities. This program uses Reporters French, which includes a digital format, book, workbook, and other online resources for francophone cultural aspects, including listening, reading, and writing activities for more practice and reinforcement.

Spanish

The sixth grade Spanish curriculum focuses on language and culture. The program uses the series Reporteros to immerse students in the Spanish language. This material offers students a wide range of useful, creative, and motivating tools to build language proficiency and to facilitate a smoother transition to a more advanced level. Students demonstrate speaking skills through skits, conversations, video blogs, and giving opinions and advice. Students interpret the language through a variety of media, including readings, blogs, videos, and interviews. Students produce written language by responding to articles, giving opinions, and comparing and contrasting. Students also make informational posters and brochures, as well as write in response to prompts. Through a variety of activities in meaningful contexts, students develop increased fluency in the four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

SEVENTH GRADE

THE ARTS

During seventh grade, students have the opportunity to choose two enrichment arts. Students can elect the same subject for both classes or take two different disciplines within the visual and performing arts depending on their interests. All are year-long courses.

Band

Students who have been playing an instrument continue with three weekly band rehearsals in seventh grade. As part of the Middle School Band, they perform in the winter and spring.

Chorus

As part of the Middle School Chorus elective, seventh graders meet for three 45-minute classes a week, two grade-level rehearsals, and one combined rehearsal with the eighth grade. Students learn the fundamentals of proper vocal technique through singing a wide range of vocal repertoire. The Middle School Chorus performs at major assemblies and festivals. All participate in the evening concert held each spring.

Visual Arts

This class encourages self-expression and an opportunity for students to focus on long-term projects and work at their own pace. Individual ideas are expressed through multimedia sculpture, clay constructions, painting, and graphic design.

Theater

This course focuses on the development of acting and directing skills, playwriting, and theater tech. Students participate in a variety of improvisational exercises on their own, with partners, and in a group. These improvisations are either movement-based or both physical and verbal. Students begin the study of character development through both writing and acting exercises. Students also experience scene development as actors and as directors. They learn about dramatic structure and objectives through writing, acting, observing, and directing their own self-devised scenes. Students may also explore non-scripted scenes using props, established situations, and suggestions from classmates. Spontaneity and creativity are important tools fostered through this improv process.

Dance

The 7th grade dance curriculum is "The World of Modern Dance," in which students learn and experience, through technique classes and choreography, the history of modern dance in America. Seventh grade enrichment dance students join their 8th grade counterparts as part of a dance ensemble and perform together in an evening showcase.

Hopper Design and Engineering

Through Hopper Design and Engineering, 7th grade students will work on projects that revolve around design thinking, a problem-solving method aimed at developing students' creative potential and fostering innovation. This adaptable approach will be applied to architectural CAD programs, 3D printing, woodworking, and various design challenge projects throughout the year. Students will also continue developing digital citizenship skills while learning about the future of artificial intelligence and its impact on society and the classroom.

ATHLETICS

The mission of the Georgetown Day School MS athletic program is to provide all students with the opportunity to represent the school and compete interscholastically in a wide variety of sports. It is our hope that each student athlete will experience the challenges and triumphs that are unique to sport. GDS athletics provide a supportive atmosphere in which coaches challenge the intellectual and physical abilities of our student athletes, foster strength of character, and encourage concern for others. It is our goal that the athletic experience of each student will be framed within a context that instills self-discipline, dedication, pride in performance, respect for others, and a lifelong love of sport.

In the fall the following sports are offered: girls volleyball, girls and boys soccer, girls tennis, coed cross-country. In the winter the following sports are offered: all-gender wrestling, girls basketball, boys basketball, all-gender winter track. In the spring the following sports are offered: all-gender track, boys and girls lacrosse, girls softball, boys baseball, boys tennis.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (CEEL)

Community Engagement and Experiential Learning (CEEL) is an important, ongoing component of every GDS student's educational experience. Across their four Middle School years, students take part in "GDS Corps," which connects them with opportunities to take informed action in our school, city, region, and finally country. Through experiential exercises outside of the traditional classroom setting, they learn to be active, empathetic, and collaborative citizens and problem-solvers.

7th Grade Care Corps: The 7th Grade Care Corps program centers around mental health: self and community wellness exercises and the exploration of local youth advocacy initiatives. Students consider, "how can I take care of myself while taking care of others?" and "how is self care an essential component of effective activism?" The mental health curriculum is inclusive of different identities and wellness modalities, and will center around the core theme of connection.

ENGLISH

The English program in the seventh grade consists of studies in literature, writing, and grammar. Our texts center on pivotal, historic moments through historical fiction with nonfiction articles and a variety of media sources to support students' learning. Texts are selected with an eye toward assisting writing and agency by providing access to a range of formats, mediums, and voices. Furthermore, this year encourages students to develop anti-racist critical thinking skills that are applicable in and out of the classroom. Each unit is approached through a historical and literary lens—analyzing the time the piece was written, when it was set, and how our contemporary context influences our understanding of the writing.

As we move through the year, students are challenged with a plethora of writing assignments and styles. Early in the year, they learn about the tools and techniques that contribute to advanced narrative writing. Then, students demonstrate their understanding of authorial voice and characterization by producing pieces that extend beyond the novels read. Later in the year, students learn to write within the academic register of English, unpack the organizational structures that support longer pieces, and produce coherent and well-organized writing on demand.

Our writing mechanics lessons are integrated into our units and cover academic writing style, complex sentence structure, punctuation, the use of textual evidence to support students' ideas, and citation format. Students engage in these topics through multiple angles such as direct instruction, teacher-generated practice activities, online resources, and looking critically at their own writing.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Seventh graders meet for Health & Wellness once a week, and each student rotates through five units over the course of the year, each of which addresses broadly a specific aspect of their health and wellness. In addition to providing accurate, evidence-based information, the curriculum and the pedagogy emphasizes student connection and reflection. Not only do students engage with the material in active ways, they hone their skills by exploring how they might respond in particular developmentally appropriate scenarios that they are likely to encounter during their middle school journey and beyond. Throughout the year, we will emphasize the importance of empathy, courage, and character, as we develop students—and human beings—who care deeply for themselves and for others.

The emphasis of the course is on self-awareness, healthy decision making and providing accurate, up-to-date, and culturally responsive information. The major topics continue to be: 1) Sexual Education and Relationships: Navigating Physical Development, Friendships, and Intimacy; 2) My Brain: Understanding All That it Does and Taking Full Advantage of Its Power; 3) Mental Health: Understanding and Managing My Emotions; 4) Drugs, Alcohol, and Nutrition: Making Good Choices About What Goes Into My Body; and 5) Media and Digital Citizenship: Who am I Online and How Do I Navigate the Digital World?

HISTORY

Seventh grade history examines power by considering the ways in which institutions of power can be dismantled and/or reorganized. Our larger focal point is on global

revolutions and power struggles in particular regions of the world and periods of history.

Students begin the year discussing the Haitian Revolution and considering the impact of colonization and revolution into the present day. From there, students move to the Indian subcontinent where they consider the competing philosophies of social change that led to independence and partition. Finally, students learn about the Iranian Revolution specifically how social, religious structures, and other conditions can impact different societies. Embedded between the major units are smaller investigations that focus on parallel thematic elements.

Throughout the year, we consider the impact of historical colonization on insurrections and rebellions by using essential questions to drive examination and analysis. In the study of each region, we contemplate the influences of geography and cultural exchanges and attempt to identify challenges or obstacles to stabilizing post-revolutionary societies. Students track themes embodied in the power struggles throughout the year, gathering data and information, which they will use to create their culminating "Power Project"—a year-end multimedia capstone exhibition.

Each class is a community, and we seek to stimulate curiosity and critical thinking. Class work includes small and large group discussions, analysis of primary and secondary sources, thinking routines, expository writing, special projects, simulations, debates, and research. Our goal is to foster global competence by recognizing perspectives, communicating ideas, and brainstorming solutions to current problems.

LIBRARY

Seventh grade students use the library for research across the curriculum. With the help of classroom teachers and the librarian, seventh grade students are refining their ability to craft a research question and then choose and document the appropriate sources to support that question. Students are encouraged to visit the library on their own for selection of independent reading materials, and the librarian periodically visits classes to highlight specific material to spark student interest.

MATH - PRE-ALGEBRA

Seventh Grade Pre-Algebra is an opportunity for students to explore math from multiple perspectives and apply previous understandings of mathematics. The contextual problems and applications allow students to reason abstractly while solidifying their numerical fluency. Students look for patterns and develop generalizations of them using algebraic expressions. They refine their skills with simplifying expressions and solving equations, with an emphasis on justifying and communicating their reasoning. Spatial reasoning is developed through the two-dimensional geometry concepts that are foundational to this course, including angles, polygons, circles, and the Pythagorean Theorem. Students develop flexible thinking by approaching tasks with multiple problem-solving strategies. Opportunities to interpret and analyze data and summarize findings using statistics are integrated throughout the course.

SCIENCE

Seventh grade science begins with an in-depth study of the Chesapeake Bay, which includes an overview of the geography and environmental issues of the Bay. Students test local water and soil samples to analyze their local ecosystem's health.

From the very large ecosystem of the Chesapeake Bay to the very small work of microscopy, the next unit of study delves into the tiny world of cells and the foundation of life. Types of cells, structure, and function of organelles, and Mendelian genetics are covered. Students complete a cell analogy project to concretely understand the parts of a cell. They also learn about DNA and heredity, and debate the pros and cons of genetic engineering.

The final third of the year is devoted to the study of human body systems and uses laboratory experiments and models to aid student understanding. Through these activities, students receive an overview of the human body's organ systems, explore the digestive and nervous systems in-depth, and build their science communication skills with a final creative project on an organ system of their choice.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Chinese

The seventh grade Chinese program continues to emphasize listening, speaking, character reading, and typing. This course strengthens students' grammar and vocabulary. Chinese culture and oral communication skills are emphasized through the support of music, exercises, cooperative group activities such as role-play and skits, as well as activities connecting with students in China including video chats and pen-pal letters. Online resources including interactive flashcards, computer games, and voice recording are used to reinforce students' practice.

French

This course builds a solid conversational base by developing listening and speaking skills. Classes are conducted almost exclusively in French. Reading and writing are introduced progressively and are always preceded by aural-oral drills. Grammar is presented to develop accurate oral patterns. The majority of class time is spent developing active, practical use of French, chosen for its everyday use and relevance to the students' lives and interests. The text provides information about other French-speaking cultures. Tapes of native speakers supplement the text and sharpen listening comprehension.

Spanish

The seventh grade Spanish curriculum helps students further develop speaking, reading, listening, and writing skills. The program uses the series Reporteros to immerse students in the Spanish language and is designed to provide multiple learning opportunities for language usage, phonics, and language structure. Knowledge of basic structures and vocabulary is reviewed and expanded to enable students to communicate in real-life situations at a novice high to intermediate level.

The program incorporates a full range of material, including online tutorial practices, interactive games, and an interactive textbook to meet the needs of students in today's Spanish classroom. The seventh grade curriculum teaches culture and communication through colorful geography maps, essential vocabulary, basic grammar reviews, reading and writing activities, and hands-on activities. Our goal in seventh grade is to develop the student's ability to use the target language for real purposes in culturally appropriate ways.

EIGHTH GRADE

THE ARTS

During eighth grade, students have the opportunity to choose two enrichment arts. Students can elect the same subject for both classes or take two different disciplines within the visual and performing arts depending on their interests. All are year-long courses.

Band

The eighth grade band program is the culmination of study begun in fourth grade. Students rehearse for three periods a week and perform in the winter and spring.

Chorus

As part of the Middle School Chorus elective, eighth graders meet for three 45-minute classes a week, two grade-level rehearsals, and one combined rehearsal with the sixth and seventh grades. Students learn the fundamentals of proper vocal technique through singing a wide range of vocal repertoire. The Middle School Chorus performs at major assemblies and festivals. All participate in an evening concert held each spring.

Dance

In 8th grade dance, students experience a more rigorous training in modern dance, choreography, improvisation, and performance of their "World of Contemporary and Post-Modern Dance" curriculum. Eighth graders also enjoy opportunities to perform with the HS dance troupe, Fata Morgana, and at off-campus performances as well as a regional dance festival. Lastly, 8th grade enrichment dance students join with their 7th grade counterparts as part of a dance ensemble and perform together in an evening showcase.

Visual Arts

This enrichment class provides an atmosphere that encourages self-expression and is an opportunity for students to focus on long-term projects and work at their own pace. Individual ideas are expressed through clay constructions, mixed-media sculpture, painting, and graphic design.

Theater

This course focuses on the development of acting and directing skills, playwriting, and theater tech. Students participate in a variety of improvisational exercises on their own, with partners, and in a group. These improvisations are either movement-based or both physical and verbal. Students begin the study of character development through both writing and acting exercises. Students also experience scene development as actors and as directors. They learn about dramatic structure and objectives through writing, acting, observing, and directing their own self-devised scenes. Students may also explore non-scripted scenes using props, established situations, and suggestions from classmates. Spontaneity and creativity are important tools fostered through this improv process.

Hopper Design & Engineering

In Hopper Design and Engineering, 8th grade students will continue to enhance skills learned in 7th grade Hopper Design and Engineering. They continue work on more advanced designs and learn CAD programs that align with our high school curriculum and robotics curriculum This includes 3D printing, woodworking, and architecture projects with scale replica designs. Students will also continue developing digital citizenship skills while learning about the future of artificial intelligence and its impact on society and the classroom.

ATHLETICS

The mission of the Georgetown Day School MS athletic program is to provide all students with the opportunity to represent the school and compete interscholastically in a wide variety of sports. It is our hope that each student athlete will experience the challenges and triumphs that are unique to sport. GDS athletics provide a supportive atmosphere in which coaches challenge the intellectual and physical abilities of our student athletes, foster strength of character, and encourage concern for others. It is our goal that the athletic experience of each student will be framed within a context that instills self-discipline, dedication, pride in performance, respect for others, and a lifelong love of sport.

In the fall the following sports are offered: girls volleyball, girls and boys soccer, girls tennis, coed cross-country. In the winter the following sports are offered: co-ed wrestling, girls basketball, boys basketball, co-ed winter track. In the spring the following sports are offered: co-ed

track, boys and girls lacrosse, girls softball, boys baseball, boys tennis.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (CEEL)

Community Engagement and Experiential Learning (CEEL) is an important, ongoing component of every GDS student's educational experience. Across their four Middle School years, students take part in "GDS Corps," which connects them with opportunities to take informed action in our school, city, region, and finally country. Through experiential exercises outside of the traditional classroom setting, they learn to be active, empathetic, and collaborative citizens and problem-solvers.

8th Grade Advocacy Corps: In the capstone year of GDS Corps, 8th graders select a social justice issue to spend the year studying in their history classes and through the CEEL curriculum. In the fall, they make connections to the heart of their chosen issue through conversations with individuals with relevant lived experiences. In the winter, they examine policy underpinnings, interview experts with different viewpoints, and turn in Constitutional Issue Papers. Finally, in the spring, they employ their hands in a day of action off campus supporting community partner organizations working on their issues, and by creating culminating Citizens of GDS podcast episodes to educate the broader GDS community. The hope is that by the end of 8th grade, students have a deep understanding of the grade-level theme of citizenship, and intrinsic motivation to engage as active, productive members of society.

ENGLISH

In eighth grade English, students begin the year by unpacking Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk "The Danger of a Single Story." This speech is the yearlong framework for their development as analytical readers and writers. The texts for the year include classic and contemporary fiction, short stories, nonfiction articles, primary and secondary historical sources, poetry, and other media. Texts are selected with an eye toward supporting student writing, providing access to a wide variety of genres and authorial voices, and promoting anti-racist, justice-oriented critical thinking skills.

Early in the year, students explore the theme of identity through narrative writing. From there, students write creative and analytical essays using the class texts as sources of inspiration. Writing mechanics and vocabulary lessons are woven into their writing processes, addressing how to complexify and fine-tune their academic writerly voices. Throughout the school year, students also participate in Socratic Seminars to achieve a deeper understanding of the ideas and values in the novels they read. Through these seminars, they practice public speaking which engages and explores challenging topics. This format for group conversation challenges students to drive the conversation and construct meaning through disciplined analysis, interpretation, active listening, and participation.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Eighth graders meet for Health & Wellness once a week, and each student rotates through five units over the course of the year, each of which addresses broadly a specific aspect of their health and wellness. In addition to providing accurate, evidence-based information, the curriculum and the pedagogy emphasizes student connection and reflection. Not only do students engage with the material in active ways, they hone their skills by exploring how they might respond in particular developmentally appropriate scenarios that they are likely to encounter during their middle school journey and beyond. Throughout the year, we will emphasize the importance of empathy, courage, and character, as we develop students—and human beings—who care deeply for themselves and for others.

The emphasis of the course is on self-awareness, healthy decision making and providing accurate, up-to-date and culturally responsive information. The major topics are: 1) Sexual Education and Relationships: Navigating Physical Development, Friendships, and Intimacy; 2) My Brain: Understanding All That it Does and Taking Full Advantage of Its Power; 3) Mental Health: Understanding and Managing My Emotions; 4) Drugs, Alcohol, and Nutrition: Making Good Choices About What Goes Into My Body; and 5) Media and Digital Citizenship: Who am I Online and How Do I Navigate the Digital World?

HISTORY

Eighth grade history at GDS focuses on United States history. Our year begins with Indigenous American history and takes us through the mid-twentieth century. Eighth graders continue to investigate the overarching Middle School history theme of power by considering how systems of power are intentionally built within the United States and how they operate. Throughout the year, students view these events through a lens of social justice, considering how social identifiers like race, religion, gender, disability, socioeconomic status, country of origin, etc. impacted the experiences of different communities living in the U.S. throughout history.

This class covers the following topics: Indigenous America; The Revolutionary War; Civics and The Constitution; The Civil War & Reconstruction; Industrialization and The Turn of the 20th Century, including World War I and World War II. We investigate these topics through hands-on creative projects, in-class paragraph writing, thinking routines, and collaborative activities that build critical thinking skills.

Eighth grade history's biggest project is the Constitutional Issue Paper ("CIP"), which students work on throughout the year. Students will investigate a contentious Constitutional Issue and evaluate multiple perspectives of the topic in a contemporary context before they present their own conclusions and suggestions for policy changes. Students' research includes the opportunity to interview policymakers, nonprofit leaders and political organizers with careers in relevant fields.

LIBRARY

Through teacher and librarian-supported classroom-based projects, eighth grade students are refining their information literacy skills, such as in-text citations, recognizing author bias, and discerning the reliability of information. Eighth grade students are also encouraged to come to the library on their own for selection of independent reading materials. The librarian visits classes to introduce reading material that complements course topics.

MATH

Algebra I and Geometry are offered in eighth grade.

Algebra I

In Middle School Algebra, the fundamental algebraic concepts are approached from multiple perspectives to help students develop the ability to conceptualize abstract ideas and apply their learning to unfamiliar situations, thereby building confidence and a strong foundation for upper-level mathematics. Content includes exploration of linear, quadratic, and exponential equations, systems of equations and inequalities, polynomials, and exponent expressions. Students collaborate to solve problems, enhancing their communication and critical thinking skills while working independently to develop self-reliance and perseverance. An emphasis is placed on how students justify their reasoning and communicate their thinking verbally and on paper. Regular problem-solving sets allow students to use their prior knowledge to solve multi-faceted math tasks and extend their learning. A strong foundation in and mastery of all the topics, concepts, and skills of a broad-based pre-algebra program are essential prerequisites for success in Algebra I. Multiple resources, texts, and computer-based applications are used to enrich the curriculum.

Geometry

In geometry, students refine both inductive and deductive reasoning skills while applying various strategies to solve real-world problems and construct mathematical arguments using proofs. The course provides an in-depth analysis of geometric figures and their properties, requiring students to think critically by drawing connections between lines, planes, two-dimensional polygons and circles, and three-dimensional shapes. Algebra is often intertwined with the geometry curriculum, particularly emphasizing coordinate and analytical geometry. Through hands-on exploration, construction, and the use of online applications like DESMOS and Geogebra, students discover connections between geometric properties, relationships, and their engineering and scientific applications. Students learn through active participation, collaborating to uncover and build on newly introduced concepts to foster critical thinking. Self-reliance, critical and creative thinking, and the ability to justify reasoning through written work are central to the course.

Multi-faceted regular problem-solving enhances class-based investigations.

SCIENCE

Eighth grade science builds on skills taught throughout the Middle School science program. Laboratory experiments, centered on the study of matter and energy, serve as a foundation for scientific investigation and experiential learning. Students learn that mass is conserved when it changes state, and that matter has characteristic properties that can be used to identify unknown substances. Critical thinking skills are nurtured through data analysis, research, writing, and inquiry. Eighth grade science classes introduce students to the Periodic Table of the Elements, physical and chemical properties, bonding, chemical reactions, and separation techniques. At the end of the year, students are equipped to analyze, separate, and identify the different parts of an unknown mixture. Data collection, safety, analysis, and collaboration, are emphasized through laboratory experiments.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Chinese

The eighth grade Chinese program continues to develop the students' linguistic skills in listening and speaking Chinese, as well as reading and writing Chinese characters. Chinese culture and oral communication skills are emphasized by songs, retelling stories, interpersonal conversations, and in-class presentations. Besides expanding the students' vocabulary and grammatical concepts, the students will build up their interpretive, interpersonal and presentational skills by doing projects in which authentic resources from real life are used.

French

The eighth grade French program continues to expand the students' linguistic capabilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. New grammatical concepts are introduced progressively while also reviewing and reinforcing already acquired language patterns. The text captures students' interest with real-life conversational situations between young people from the French-speaking world and its cultures. The students have opportunities to work in groups on cultural and cross-curricular projects. Students have also the opportunity to develop and record their own dialogues.

Spanish

The curriculum in eighth grade Spanish completes the second half of Reporteros 2 and continues using a recursive scope and sequence to revisit themes from previous units. This natural recycling allows for essential review and re-teaching. Students expand their vocabulary, grammar, and cultural understanding as they visit each topic in greater depth and improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Reporteros 2 is an inclusive, innovative, standards-based Spanish program for middle and high school students at the introductory level. It follows a communicative approach to learning through projects inspired by real-world scenarios. The program offers authentic, engaging content that awakens students' curiosity about the Spanish-speaking world. Reporteros 2 aligns with ACTFL instructional approaches.

HIGH SCHOOL

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

RECOMMENDED COURSE OF STUDIES

The recommended course of study for the High School is:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of mathematics
- 4 years of a world language
- 3–4 years of natural and physical sciences
- 3–4 years of history and social sciences
- 1 year each of performing and studio arts
- 2 years of physical education
- 9th grade seminar

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

The minimum requirements for receiving a Georgetown Day School diploma are:

- Arts, Performing: One year of performing arts.
- Arts, Studio: One year of studio art.
- English: Four years of grade-level English.
- History and Social Sciences: 9th Grade: Communities and Change; 10th Grade: African History, Asian History, Latin American History, European History, or World History; 11th Grade: U.S. History, UL U.S. History, or American History Studies.
- Mathematics: Three successive years of math while in high school.
- Science: Three years, of which one is a life science (9th grade biology) and one is a physical science.
- World Languages: Two successive years of the same language completed in high school.
- Ninth Grade Seminar: A required course for all 9th graders.
- Physical Education/Health: Two years of physical education/health, taken 9th and 10th grades.
- Community Service: At least 60 hours of service (See guidelines under Community Service.)

COURSE LENGTH

Except where noted, most courses are yearlong (two semesters).

COURSE LOAD

The required minimum for each semester's work is five core academic courses, which may include Upper Level courses in the Arts, unless special circumstances arise. Many students elect to take additional academic, fine arts, or elective courses. GDS encourages all students to pursue their individual passions while exploring our diverse curriculum. Students who persist through our curriculum will be well positioned to gain admission to many colleges and universities. Highly selective colleges will expect students to explore beyond the minimum requirements for a diploma. All 10th to 12th grade students must have at least one free period.

COURSE CANCELLATION

At the School's discretion, any course may be canceled for various reasons, including, but not limited to, when the enrollment is fewer than ten students.

INDEPENDENT STUDY POLICY

If a student in their junior and senior years has a particular interest in a subject that is not covered in our curriculum, they may apply to complete an Independent Study. An Independent Study course is the equivalent of a regular academic course with the same level of rigor expected.

- Independent Studies will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis.
- Each Independent Study course will be limited to a maximum of three students.

In order for an Independent Study to appear on a GDS transcript the Independent Study must be:

- Supervised by a member of the GDS faculty
- Approved by a department chair
- Approved by the Assistant Principal for Academics

To be approved for an Independent Study, a student must submit an application (available in the Assistant Principal for Academics' office) that clearly and thoroughly describes the work to be completed, the resources necessary for completion of the work, the scheduled meeting times between student and faculty mentor, and an explanation for how the student work will be assessed. Copies of all assessments that are given in an Independent Study will be filed with the Assistant Principal for Academics. Proposals for Independent Study courses will not be accepted after the deadline for adding a course.

PASS/FAIL GRADING OPTION

Students in their junior and senior years have the option to take one course pass/fail each semester. A 60 or better is a passing grade.

Eligible Courses for Pass/Fail Grading
The P/F option may not be used to fulfill department requirements but could apply to courses that fulfill the five core academic courses per semester requirement. A select group of courses determined by individual departments may not be taken pass/fail. See stipulation about sequential courses under pass/fail grading (next).

Pass/Fail Grading
A 60 or better is a passing grade. In sequential courses (i.e., math, science, and language courses), a 70 or better is required to move on to the next course. Students whose average grade is between 60 and 70 may not be eligible to take the next course in the sequence without intensive remedial work as determined by the department chair and Assistant Principal for Academics.

Pass/Fail Process
Students may take one course pass/fail per semester and have at least four courses that are assessed with grades. Students may elect to take a course P/F up through the end of the first progress period. Students must request to take a course P/F from the appropriate department chair and also get approval from the College Counseling Office and the Assistant Principal for Academics.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

GDS students are expected to take part in meaningful action in support of the community beyond our school walls during their high school career. As part of this expectation, they must complete 60 hours of approved volunteer work before the second semester of their senior year. At least 20 of those hours must be completed by the beginning of junior year. All aspects of the 60-hour community service requirement are managed and approved by the GDS Community Engagement and Experiential Learning Office.

UPPER LEVEL (UL) COURSES

Upper Level (UL, marked UL) courses offer the most challenging level of coursework offered at GDS. Students in UL courses examine the material at the highest levels with sustained intellectual independence. These classes often involve increased expectations for time spent out of class.

LIBRARY • INDEPENDENT READING & INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS

The GDS library program supports the curricular mission of GDS by providing print and online collections, managing welcoming library spaces, encouraging exploration of identity via interactions with media, supporting independent reading and individualized learning, and teaching information skills. In the High School, the librarian teaches students effective research skills and information-finding strategies, including efficient searching, critical evaluation of sources, and ethical and responsible use of intellectual property. This occurs through project planning with other departments, co-teaching classes, stand-alone lessons, reference interactions, and individualized instruction. The library is available for reference, research, and readers' advisory for the entire community, encouraging lifelong habits of library use to prepare our students for life beyond GDS.

NINTH GRADE SEMINAR
DIVERSITY AND EQUITY: THE INTERSECTIONS OF IDENTITY

The 9th grade seminar will focus on identity and points of connections within and across groups. The start of high school is a key time to examine identity and how it reflects personal as well as community values. Building a campus culture that embodies equity, inclusion, and engagement is essential for equipping today's students with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully and compassionately address the increasingly complex challenges of our global society.

SENIOR QUEST

All seniors participate in a Quest, or investigation, in which they apply their curiosity, talents, interests, skills, and knowledge to a question, task, creation, or issue of relevance to the student in particular as well as to a significant constituency outside of the GDS community. Quests call for teamwork, a multi-disciplinary approach, community involvement, demonstrable social value, and presentation and communication skills. Quest proposals are due in March of senior year. Work on a Quest may begin once approval has been granted by the Senior Quest Committee, composed of GDS staff and seniors. Seniors present their Quest results to parents, staff, and invited guests at the Senior Quest Night in late May.

SEMESTER AND YEARLONG STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Georgetown Day School is a member of School Year Abroad (SYA), a nonprofit organization focused on providing immersive study abroad programs to high school students. SYA is a school fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Founded upon a yearlong study abroad model, SYA now operates three campuses in France, Italy, and Spain, and has expanded to provide full academic year, semester, and summer programs designed to develop skills for an increasingly interdependent world.

If you are interested in SYA or another study abroad program, please contact our Assistant Principal for Student Life before engaging in the application process.

ARTS: PERFORMING

Graduation Requirement: One year of Performing Arts One semester courses may be combined with any other one or two semester course to meet the full year Performing Arts credit. The two semesters do not have to be in the same academic year.

THEATER

Acting I

Practice the basic skills required to be an actor. Begin your journey with an exploration of the actor's vocal, physical, and psychological instrument while building skills and creating characters using fun exercises. Discover how theactor's body, voice, and imagination are used when creating/performing a character. Experience how warm-ups for each part of the actor's instrument help ready an actor to perform. Discuss the negative effects of performance anxiety and explore ways to release oneself from its power. Connect and embrace the power of working as an ensemble in a safe learning environment. Uncover clues an actor uses when analyzing a script.

Acting II

Prerequisite: Acting I or permission of instructor

Plunge into scene work through in-depth text analysis, concentrated partner work, and full investment in given circumstances. As the first step in the continued study of the craft of acting, students in this class explore ways to activate contemporary texts in rehearsal and performance.

Scene Study

Prerequisite: Acting II

This course allows students to apply the lessons of Acting I and II to the preparation, rehearsal, and presentation of scenes, focusing on contemporary realist plays, mid-20th century to the present. Scenes are presented in class for critique, then reworked to explore and apply the feedback. Technique exercises will be introduced diagnostically to address problems as they arise. An important course for students wishing to participate in extracurricular theater, including directing a One Act.

Directing for the Stage

Prerequisite: One course from the GDS High School Performing Arts Department acting track and permission of instructor.

This course for the advanced theater student concentrates on the vision and the methods of significant directors of American, European, and Japanese theater, including Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, G.B. Shaw, Peter Brook, Suzuki, Joseph Papp, and Craig Wolfe. Plays studied include those from the classical repertoire, including Shakespeare, Chekhov, and Brecht, as well as contemporary works by recognized playwrights such as Mamet, Fugard, McNally, and N. Shange. Students study the theatrical values in Ancient Greek theater. Students both direct and act in each other's projects and direct designers and actors from other classes in the department. Student work is performed in the Lunchbox Series and the spring theater arts showcase. Instructors include a director, acting coaches, and a variety of guest artists. Students attend several professional productions. This course is recommended for students who wish to direct a show in the Winter One Acts series.

Theater Production

Theater Production examines elements of technical theater and how the practical skills gained in that subject can apply to everyday living. This is a project-based class grounded in the different areas of technical theater: scenic, lighting, sound, props, and costumes. Students will learn about the history of each discipline and complete a project on design as well as a project on a skill from that discipline. Technical skills include drafting, understanding light plots and instruments, sound manipulation, basic sewing skills, basic power tool usage, and problem-solving, as students expand their skill sets through hands-on learning.

Advanced Theater Design and Technology (Spring)

Prerequisite: Theater Production course or equivalent experience.

This course continues the progression from Theater Production by focusing on design and advanced technical skills. In the design part of the course, each student will select a theater discipline (scenic, lights, props, sound, or costume). Through script reading, analysis, research, discussion, and presentation, students will hone their design and communication skills, following the regional theater process, from first production meeting to presentation of final designs. For the technical elements of the course, each student will work with the instructor on

an area to increase their skills. Projects will vary by discipline and will also identify real-world challenges. This process will equip students with the skills necessary to meet those challenges. Students will have access to working professionals in the field.

DANCE

Dance for Musical Theater (Full Year)
Designed for students without previous dance experience, this course introduces students to the styles of dance that make up American musical theater: ballet, jazz, modern, ballroom, and tap. Each style is approached through a particular musical.

Students study and emulate the great choreographers Bob Fosse, Agnes DeMille, Twyla Tharp, Jerome Robbins, and more; and learn to choreograph, as well as dance, in those styles. This course is recommended for students wishing to audition for the HS Spring Musical. Students will perform in the Lunchbox series.

Contemporary/Modern Dance I (Fall)
For students with little or no dance training. The class will introduce students to specific techniques, including elements of modern dance, ballet, and martial arts. Students will gain core strength and whole-body flexibility. In addition, students will learn and perform choreography and do creative work through improvisational exercise.

Contemporary/Modern Dance II (Spring)
For Intermediate and Advanced Intermediate dancers. Students will advance their skills in contemporary/modern techniques. Students will also learn and perform choreography based on the Dana Tai Soon Burgess repertoire and original dances created for them. Students will learn the fundamentals of choreography and create their own dances as well.

Advanced Contemporary Dance, Choreography, and Repertoire (Full Year)
Prerequisite: Contemporary/Modern Dance I and II
This course is designed for intermediate to advanced dancers seeking to refine their skills in contemporary dance techniques, explore innovative choreographic approaches, and expand their performance repertoire. This course offers a comprehensive blend of technical training, creative exploration, and practical application, providing students with a deep understanding of contemporary dance and the art of choreography.

MUSIC

Music Theory and Composition 𝍐(Full Year)
Prerequisite: One course from the GDS HS Performing Arts Department and permission of instructor
In this course students will learn the rudiments of musical structure and form. Topics include sound and notation, rhythm, melodic writing, ear training, and chord progressions. In addition to these theoretical concepts, students will work with the compositional elements of orchestration, balance in structure, motivic development, and setting text to music. Students will also learn keyboard technique. Students will present their arrangements and compositions at public performances.

VOCAL MUSIC

Chamber Choir (Full Year)
Prerequisite: Audition/Permission of the Instructor.
Chamber Choir is a mixed choir open to all GDS students. The curriculum includes music from the Western canon, Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Muslim world. Particular attention is paid to music literacy, music theory, music appreciation, and some form and analysis. A Spring Break performance tour may be included. Students should anticipate a rigorous concert schedule, which includes participation in GDS Singers at the final rehearsal before concerts.

TOLV (Full Year)
Requirements: For students in grades 10-12 who have completed one year in GDS's choral ensemble. TOLV is by permission of instructor and limited to 4 soprano, 4 alto, 4 tenor and 4 bass voices.)
TOLV is a highly selective, 16-voice, mixed ensemble. The ensemble explores chamber music of the Western canon, Africa, the Arab world, Asia, and Latin America. Particular attention is paid to ensemble-building, music literacy, intonation, international phonetic alphabet, and appropriate performance practice. A Spring Break performance tour may be included. Students should anticipate a rigorous concert schedule, which includes participation in GDS Singers at the final rehearsal before concerts.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Jazz Improvisation and Creative Music Lab (Introductory Level) (Full Year)
Jazz Improvisation Lab is open to all students of any instrument. The Lab provides answers to the question, "What do I play?" when asked to improvise. The course develops instrumental technique, as well as a foundation in music theory. Activities in class include reading notated music, playing by ear, improvising, and learning to read chord progressions and notation. The course includes opportunities to perform on and off campus throughout the year.

Jazz and Creative Music Chamber Ensemble (Advanced Levels II-IV) (Full Year)
Prerequisite: Jazz Improvisation. Open by audition or permission of instructor.
Jazz Chamber Ensemble is an advanced-level jazz ensemble for mixed instruments. Improvisation, written music, and ear-training/theory are incorporated into the creation and performance of arrangements of music from the standard jazz repertoire and creative music. Students will participate in several performances through the year on and off campus. Jazz Chamber Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble - Large Ensemble will combine for special events and repertoire presentations.

Jazz - Large Ensemble (Advanced Levels II-IV) (Full Year)
Prerequisite: Jazz Improvisation. Open by audition or permission of instructor.
The Jazz Ensemble is a classic big band (reeds, trombones, trumpets, guitar, piano, bass, drums) as well as other instruments (flute, clarinet, vibraphone, violin, etc.) performing music from the Swing Era and beyond. Written music, "head" arrangements, improvisation, and more culminate in performances with concerts of music by Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Sun Ra, and contemporary big band composers. Students will participate in several performances throughout the year on and off campus. Jazz Chamber Ensemble and Jazz Large Ensemble will combine for special events and repertoire presentations.

Jazz UL (Full Year)
Prerequisite: Permission of instructor
This course focuses on repertoire for small groups and on improvisation techniques. Students will hone skills acquired in previous jazz courses. Arranging, theory, and the business of making music will be explored in order to give the students a fuller picture of a music career. Students will record, tour, and participate in competitions and festivals.

ARTS: STUDIO

Graduation Requirement: One year of Studio Art

The studio art department offers a comprehensive curriculum that fosters skills and creativity in a variety of media. Students may begin their study of art in ceramics/sculpture, photography, drawing/painting, digital media, graphic design, or film and animation. Advanced courses are available once students have completed a first year in a specific course. Students are advised to begin their study of art in 9th or 10th grade in order to meet the requirement for graduation and to allow time for advanced study for those inclined. The curriculum emphasizes the study of fine arts, digital arts, and principles of design and complements these skills with research projects including museum visits and historical and contemporary artist studies.

Foundations in Ceramics & Sculpture
This course introduces students to a range of three-dimensional media, with a strong emphasis on wheel-thrown pottery. Students learn how to prepare clay, use a variety of glazes, and successfully operate a pottery wheel. During the first semester, students complete a broad range of wheel-thrown vessels, while in the second semester, the course focuses on a more hand-built and sculptural approach to form. Work will be completed using clay, plaster, plastic, wood, paper, and found objects. Projects will range from realism to abstraction. Students electing this class should expect to get messy and be challenged to be resourceful and imaginative in their art-making.

Advanced Ceramics & Sculpture
Prerequisite: Foundations in Ceramics and Sculpture
Advanced Ceramics and Sculpture is for students who are exceptionally motivated and work well independently. Students will work directly with concepts of design and articulate artwork that clearly reflects an understanding of these principles. In addition to refining skills and building their craft as potters, students will tackle more challenging assignments in sculpture. The objective will be to help students learn to articulate a cohesive vision, while producing engaging artwork.

Ceramics & Sculpture Workshop UL
Prerequisite: Advanced Ceramics & Sculpture
This course aims to help students develop who they are as an artist. Students are expected to chart an independent path while building a substantial portfolio that reflects their identity and imagination. This course aims to refine pottery and sculptural skills while helping students create a portfolio that reflects thoughtful engagement with the principles of design. Students will examine a diverse selection of artists and cultural influences in sculpture and ceramics, seeking to understand the techniques, concepts, and skills that define their artwork. Non-western examples that are often overlooked will ground our studies. Students will complete three major projects each semester that address specific prompts; one of these projects will be in coordination with the Innovation Lab. Students are expected to come to this course with clear portfolio objectives matched to a dedicated work ethic.

Foundations in Drawing & Painting
This introductory drawing and painting course offers training in basic and advanced techniques of drawing and painting. Foundational skills will include color theory, composition, proportion, value, form, brushwork, perspective, and working from life. Students work in a variety of traditional and digital methods that challenge them to see more analytically while gradually expanding their repertoire of skills. Students work toward building a portfolio of artwork that meets the criteria for advanced course work and reflects their unique vision.

Advanced Drawing & Painting
Prerequisite: Foundations in Drawing & Painting
This class is for highly motivated students who want to further their studies in fine, abstract, and conceptual art as well as prepare a portfolio for the UL Master Studio: Interdisciplinary Workshop course or college applications. Students also learn to develop a variety of traditional and multimedia skills.

Projects are designed to help students further develop their technical and conceptual skills, including landscape painting, life drawing, oil painting, technical and architectural drawing, identity-based projects, and anatomical figure studies.

Master Studio: Interdisciplinary Workshop UL

Prerequisite: Advanced Drawing & Painting or advanced skills in 2D Art

This course is geared toward students wishing to be challenged by further developing their portfolios and/or pursuing the AP exam. Highly motivated students should be resourceful, creative thinkers, and be able to work independently while experimenting with various mediums in their work. Students will experiment with prompt-based projects, themed projects, large-scale works, social justice themes, multimedia, 2D design, and digital art. Students will examine a diverse selection of multicultural artists and cultural influences in the art world. Students will learn new techniques, concepts, and research techniques to inspire their artwork. Students will also learn how to prepare high-quality college portfolios, write artist statements, develop online portfolios, apply for internships, and participate in major scholarship competitions.

Foundations in Digital Photography

This course provides a comprehensive experience in current photographic processes. It introduces students to the technical and visual processes of photography. Students examine how digital technology has transformed photography from a medium of absolute record to one of limitless manipulation of digital images with Adobe Photoshop. Assignments initially stress the essentials of the photographic process and then shift toward fostering an understanding of the expressive elements of the medium. Students follow an introductory photography curriculum that covers both technical and aesthetic aspects of this rapidly evolving medium using digital cameras in conjunction with the computer programs Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom. Students learn the essential principles of composition and design while exploring classic photographic subjects such as architecture, still life, portraiture, landscape, and social documentary. In addition, an art history research project will focus on prominent photographers. Each student is expected to develop a portfolio that meets assignment objectives and demonstrates technical competence.

Advanced Digital Photography

Prerequisite: Foundations in Digital Photography

Through a series of portfolio-building assignments, advanced photography students continue their creative, visual, and technical inquiry into traditional and/or color digital camera operation. There is a strong emphasis on the photograph both as fine art and as an interrelated extension of the students' interests and perceptions. Advanced metering, studio lighting, alternative printing techniques, Lightroom, and Adobe Photoshop manipulations are taught. Initially assignments stress the essentials of the photographic process, however as the year progresses students gain an understanding of the expressive elements of the medium. Students are expected to build a comprehensive portfolio in addition to designing and hanging two major art exhibitions for the community.

Foundations in Digital Media & Graphic Design

Students will learn the principles of design through the following projects: print materials, album covers, game covers, identity and social justice projects, posters, logos, and infographics. Students will become proficient in using Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. Students will also learn how to develop creative concepts using typography and original 2D digital graphic designs.

Foundations in 3D Modeling & Design

The course will explore the basics of digital 3D Modeling applications and use the latest in laser cutting technology and Adobe Dimensions, Photoshop, and Illustrator to create and apply realistic textures, lighting principles and techniques, and camera types and their appropriate usage. The laser cutter, 3D printer, and CNC machine in the Innovation Lab will be used to create prototypes from materials such as wood, plastic, and metal.

Foundations in Digital Film & Animation

This introductory course takes a new approach to learning about cinema and animation as an important medium for self-expression and as an art form. Students will be learning a variety of video techniques, including: scriptwriting, storyboarding, camera work, lighting, video editing, animation, and special effects. Students will create hands-on art projects with sound design and learn basic production methods of shooting and editing with Adobe Rush and Premiere. The second semester will focus on animation and using traditional tools combined with the latest animation software. Students will attend field trips to museums and watch movie screenings of current shorts and features. Students will also learn film history and appreciation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Graduation Requirement: Students must complete a minimum of 60 hours of approved social impact work during their four years at the High School.

At least 20 hours must be completed by September of junior year. The 60-hour community service requirement must be completed and logged in MobileServe (our community service dashboard) by the beginning of second semester of senior year. As part of our goal to have students engage in their local communities, at least 20 hours must be completed in the DMV, meaning no more than 40 hours earned on a service trip, camp, or experience outside the DMV will count toward the requirement.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT GDS

Community engagement has been a bedrock of GDS's educational mission since the school's founding. We firmly believe that independent community service and activism help prepare GDS students for life beyond our school walls. Students who interact within and outside of their communities, who have engaged with—and learned about—a variety of individuals, and who have had to think critically about real-world problems, leave GDS prepared for the future with better communication and collaboration skills, an ability to think creatively about the world's challenges, and tools that empower them to address the systemic inequities that exist in the world.

INDEPENDENT ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Community service and action work must be:

- Approved before the work begins
- Completed in an unpaid capacity with established nonprofit organizations or at the School
- Free to the organization's consumers
- Local, at least in part
- Focused on social and/or environmental justice and increasing equity of opportunities, rights, and resources for all
- Unique to this requirement (the service must be done for this requirement and not also applied for a scout project, court ordered, or for another organization), and
- Supervised by someone unrelated to the student

Students must track their approved action work and submit experiences for credit through MobileServe. The entry process requires a written reflection, as well as verification from a supervisor by email and/or proof of service through a certificate, timesheet, etc. More information can be found on our website: https://www.gds.org/academics/community-engagement.

GDS STUDENT-LED COMMUNITY SERVICE CLUBS

GDS students find participation in student-led community service clubs particularly rewarding. Students can receive community service credit for ongoing involvement in a service club. Current service clubs include teaching and tutoring, environmental work, and more.

ENGLISH

Graduation Requirement: Four years of grade-level English

It is in the shared encounter with literature that we reflect on our deepest humanity, broaden our sense of empathy, discover our most inventive thinking, and hone our powers of articulation (both written and spoken) in order to participate in the most crucial conversations about the world and our place in it.

English 9

English 9 serves as an introduction to literature and composition. Common texts include the Book of Genesis (selections), Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Yang's *American Born Chinese*, Homer's *The Odyssey*, and a Shakespeare play (*Romeo and Juliet* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*). Individual teachers supplement these texts with works of their own choosing, including Woodson's *Red at the Bone*, Proulx's *Brokeback Mountain*, Mengestu's *The Beautiful Things that Heaven Can Bear*, Lin's *The Unpassing*, Gluck's *Meadowlands*, and Brontë's *Jane Eyre*.

English 9 texts focus on journeys—both metaphorical and physical—in which the protagonists adolesce as they struggle toward the formation of tested and tempered identities. The readings and discussions introduce students to basic literary concepts pertaining to epic, dramatic, and narrative forms. Class discussion generally focuses on the assigned reading and emphasizes the interdependence of close attention to textual detail and sound interpretive generalization.

Students write poems, stories, tests, and extended critical essays, all of which constitute "major assignments"—but the abiding focus of the writing project is the five-paragraph essay. Beginning with single paragraphs in response to relatively narrow writing prompts, students are guided toward an essay whose thesis unfolds like a short, discursive sonata. The format enables students to present a long thought in an efficient and logically satisfying array. Once students have mastered this paradigm—and have felt the momentum that coherent and efficient presentation can give to their thinking—this model can guide them to more sophisticated argumentative designs.

Along with the writing project, there is a good deal of grammar instruction. Formal grammar lessons are reinforced by teachers' extensive notations in the margins of student compositions and by one-on-one meetings with students as they plan drafts and revisions. Teachers work to deliver their students to tenth grade with a firm grasp of the mechanics of strong writing, together with an alertness to the accent of mature prose.

English 10

In the readings and discussions of English 10, we carry the ninth-grade theme of identity formation into more problematic terrain, attending to the ways in which identity can be compromised by its social and cultural context. We also pay more attention to intertextuality, to the ways in which parallels and symmetries between texts—even texts so far afield that they could not have influenced each other—can open rich, interpretive terrain.

Reflecting this new level of complexity in text and discussion, the writing project of English 10 tackles increasingly complex issues of form in both analytical and creative writing. Analytical essays move beyond the boundaries of the five-paragraph essay to explore diverse argumentative forms that respond organically and nimbly to the textual issues at hand. Creative writing becomes increasingly investigative of and responsive to the literary work being studied, while still honoring the student's powerfully individual writing voice.

Our shared texts are the Gospel According to Mark, Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Smith's *Life on Mars*, Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*, Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*, and English Romantic poetry. These texts are supplemented by a variety of works chosen by individual teachers, with a particular emphasis on texts with protagonists resisting tidy coherence. These might include Gyasi's *Homegoing,* Stew's *Passing Strange*, Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*, and Ewing's *Electric Arches*.

English 11

The first semester of English 11 is a writing course that we call "Argument." Our shared texts include the Declaration of Independence, Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience," King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail," "Alcatraz Proclamation," Morrison's *Playing in the Dark*, Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, "Declaration of Sentiments," "Woman-Identified Woman," and essays by bell hooks. Other texts might

include essays by Frederick Douglass, James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, and Shirley Chisholm.

These works are supplemented by a wide variety of readings on contemporary issues of the day—for instance, transgender rights, immigration, and the criminal justice system—along with some classical models of persuasive discourse, all chosen to bring the students' argumentative skills into contact with questions beyond our standard literary topics. In the readings and in discussion, there is a strong focus on issues of social justice and on the logical skills and habits of mind that enable one to take well-grounded and effective stands in the conversations that shape our national life.

The second semester focuses on the figuration of American identity in American poetry and fiction. Our shared texts include poems by Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, and Elizabeth Bishop; short stories and novellas by Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Edgar Allan Poe; and one novel, lê's *The Gangster We Are All Looking For.* Additional texts might include Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals*, Orange's *There There,* Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper,* DeLappe's *The Wolves,* Harjo's *Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings.* and Parks' *The Red Letter Plays.*

English 12

English 12 serves as the culminating experience of a student's progress through the GDS English curriculum. Common texts include Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Morrison's *Beloved*, a contemporary text with a global perspective such as Cha's *Dictee* or Herrera's *Signs Preceding the End of the World*, and a Greek tragedy (Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* or Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*). These are supplemented by such texts as Brontë's *Wuthering Heights,* Fornés' *Fefu and Her Friends*, Glaspell's *Trifles*, Rankin's *Citizen*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous,* and Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying.*These texts are chosen for the richness and intensity of their disruptions and for the ways in which they challenge their protagonists to find some sort of decency and fulfillment in worlds where the moral compass seems to be spinning, but also for the ways in which they challenge the students to find interpretations sufficiently capacious and stable to honor the scope and integrity of the works.

The writing assignments include both creative and critical responses to the reading. Following the trajectory of the three previous courses, they hold the students to high standards while giving them room for aspiration and self-expression. While students are reading Faulkner, for instance, and studying the signature Modernist technique of "stream of consciousness" narrative, they're asked to write narratives of their own, in which they attempt to capture the deflected monologue of a mind guided by surprise, both expressing and taking in the converging streams of sensation and reflection. Literary analysis, however, continues to be the course's center of gravity and a realm of particular growth. In class, students focus intensely on the page, with a view to stirring up interpretive possibilities to be explored in the writing, where audacity and originality are encouraged and acknowledged, even as we continue to reinforce the protocols of lucid, logically coherent, and intellectually responsible prose.

The final writing assignment is the Senior Paper. The paper is a work of original critical inquiry on a text not included in the grades 9-12 curriculum. The project, a sustained act of "guided autonomy," gets under way in March with a proposal naming the text to be studied and stating the questions that will guide the student's reading and thinking. The writing begins in earnest after Spring Break. Regular classes convene less often, and students meet one on one at least once a week with their teachers to present their work in progress, meeting internal deadlines, until the final draft arrives on the teacher's desk on the last day of Senior classes.

JUNIOR AND SENIOR ENGLISH ELECTIVES

All English electives are offered as semester-long courses each semester. The content for each semester will be independent of the other; one semester is not required in order to take the other, and students may take both semesters without having material repeat.

Contemporary Literature and Art in Conversation UL (Fall & Spring)

In an exciting cross-disciplinary dive into contemporary fiction and visual art, we'll place some of today's most provocative writers and artists in dynamic conversation. The literature and art filling our semester will be especially concerned with diminished voices and disempowered bodies, and together, we'll explore how literature and art grapple with their promise of empowering transformation. The projects in this course will range from close-readings of literature and art, to exhibition proposals, to

presentations of independent research. (No previous knowledge of art is required.)

Our fiction reading may include Paul Beatty's *The Sellout*, Morgan Talty's *Night of the Living Rez,* Robin Coste Lewis's *Voyage of the Sable Venus,* Jericho Brown's *The Tradition*, Soula Emmanuel's *Wild Geese*, Anthony Veasna So's *Afterparties*, Oyinkan Braithwaite's *My Sister, the Serial Killer*, Daphne Palasi Andreades's *Brown Girls*, and Jenny Offill's *Dept. of Speculation*. Our visual artists may include Kara Walker, Mickalene Thomas, Binh Danh, Titus Kaphar, Zanele Muholi, Kehinde Wiley, Cindy Sherman, Catherine Opie, Mona Hatoum, James Luna, Glenn Ligon, and Fred Wilson. Essay and theory writers may include Zadie Smith, Olivia Laing, Fred Moten, and Saidiya Hartman. Films may include *We Are the Best!* and *La Haine.*

Creative Writing UL (Fall & Spring)
Creative Writing is an elective which, on some days, will look like other literature classes, with focused and searching discussions of iconic texts, but most days will be a workshop for young poets, playwrights, and storytellers. We will be writing frequently, but each of the writing assignments will begin with reading. Our texts will be *The Norton Anthology of Poetry,* drama and short fiction anthologies that will vary from year to year, and several anthologies of short plays where we will find models, thematic cues, and a tradition of English poetry, drama, and fiction that we can't help but join, and modify by our own contributions to it.

In this class, however, we'll try to be particularly mindful of the ways in which the work we're doing relates to the work of artists who have written before us. Writing will be due every week or so, which should give us time to read and discuss each other's work in class, and at the end of the semester each student will submit a portfolio of finished work that reflects in some integral way the student's response to the notes she has received on work in progress, but also reflects the student's own developing taste and artistic motives. (In each semester, we'll be exploring different genres. The emphasis of the first semester will be poetry. The emphasis of the second semester will be playwriting.)
The course's UL designation reflects expectations that are somewhat unusual even in our school's very rigorous English program. As in most courses, the readings in Creative Writing will be frequent and challenging, but each set of readings will invite a written response in which the student, instead of commenting on the artistry of the authors we're studying, will actually be trying to meet those authors' artistic standards. This is not a low bar, and will require a commitment to revising every major assignment—and to showing in those revisions a thoughtful engagement with critiques offered both by the instructor and by fellow students. Critical writing, therefore, will also be a significant part of the course, with the critical skills you've honed in other English courses—interpretive ingenuity supported by meticulous close reading—working to deliver your classmates to their best creative work, but also sharpening your own critical practice in ways that will be useful throughout your career as an English student.

Literature and the Environment UL NEW (Fall & Spring)
Climate change is one of the most pressing concerns of our time. What role can literature play in creating a culture with a different approach to and understanding of the environment? To answer this question, you will examine both fiction and nonfiction as well as poetry and film. You will also read works of science, social science, and philosophy that inform contemporary approaches to the environment, grounding your work in ecocriticism, ecofeminism, and ecojustice. Central topics include environmental racism, indigenous knowledge, and global perspectives. You will write environmentally informed analytical essays about fiction and, after doing research into topics of your choice, will try your hand at nonfiction nature-writing and at environmental fiction.

Novels might include Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms*, Megan Hunter's *The End We Start From*, and Nathaniel Rich's *Odds against Tomorrow*. Poetry might include Forrest Gander and John Kinsella's *Redstart: An Ecological Poetics*, Ed Roberson's *To See the Earth Before the End of the World*, and selections from Melissa Tuckey's *Ghost Fishing: An Eco-Justice Poetry Anthology*. Nonfiction readings might include such works of nature writing as Brian Doyle's *One Long River of Song* and Camille T. Dungy's *Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden*, and such works of popular science writing as Merlin Sheldrake's *Entangled Life* and Ed Yong's *An Immense World.* Works of criticism and theory might include Lawrence Buell's "Uses and Abuses of Environmental Memory," Garret Hardin's "Human Ecology: The Subversive, Conservative Science," Donna Harraway's "Anthropocene,

Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin," Timothy Morton's "Here Comes Everything: The Promise of Object-Oriented Ontology," and Karen Jarratt-Snider and Marianne O. Nielsen's "Indigenous Environmental Justice."

Philosophy and Literature UL (Fall & Spring)
"No one is needed to tell us that poetry and philosophy are akin," Wallace Stevens declares in *The Necessary Angel*. "Truth is the object of both." Are literary texts vehicles for philosophy? What are the advantages of each way of driving at truth? How can we best understand the world and our place in it? We'll examine the possibilities of philosophy and literature as ways of knowing and wondering.

We'll take up several questions—what can we know? what is death, and should we fear it? how should we live ethically? and more—and see how philosophy and literature each address them. Plato banished poets from his ideal city (but elsewhere praised them); Philip Sidney considered poetry to unite the best qualities of philosophy and history. So even as literary writers ask philosophical questions, they wonder whether and why literature is the right mode in which to do so. We'll wonder along with them. Philosophical texts may include Plato, Aristotle, Lucretius, Descartes, Berkeley, Kant, Anthony Appiah, and Charles Mills. Literary texts may include Mary Shelley, Fyodor Dostoevsky, W.B. Yeats, Wallace Stevens, Ralph Ellison, Marilynne Robinson, Don DeLillo, and Rebecca Goldstein.

Shakespeare! UL NEW (Fall & Spring)
Immerse yourself in some of the most exciting plays written in the English language. Each semester, we'll explore a variety of Shakespeare's works on the page and stage, chosen in tandem with the upcoming theater seasons of such DC theaters as Roundhouse, Studio Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, and the Folger Theater. We'll also delve into the historical, cultural, religious, and theatrical contexts in which Shakespeare's work developed. We'll visit the Folger Shakespeare library as well as local theaters and universities where Shakespeare's plays are often featured. Writing will include creative and analytical responses to Shakespeare's work, theatrical reviews, production pitches, blog posts, and more. All are welcome, from beginners to seasoned theater makers, from lovers of history to lovers of a good, rich story.

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Graduation Requirement: 9th Grade: Communities and Change; 10th Grade: African History, Asian History, European History, Latin American History, or World History; 11th Grade: U.S. History, UL U.S. History, or American History Studies

The GDS HS History and Social Science department seeks to confront, interrogate, and connect issues of race, equity, and diversity throughout our wide-ranging curriculum, uses of scholarship, and approaches to learning. As we explore diverse historical, economic, and political developments, teachers and students are grounded by the spirit of inquiry as they actively work together as antiracist practitioners to make connections, discern patterns, and perceive the contingencies of the past. Through thinking, speaking, writing, research, and analysis, we strive to see the past as not a litany of progress but as a series of fits and starts that both respond to and are shaped by the individuals within it. Together, our work in understanding the past helps to inform our understanding of the present as we seek to bring our ideas and actions to bear upon current inequities and matters of social justice, both within and beyond our school community.

History 9: Communities and Change
This dynamic course allows students to actually "do" history as they develop key skills in historical analysis, writing, and research and confront the challenges of applying historical concepts to the world around them in a variety of ways. Students begin by examining the communities that comprise and surround Washington, DC, using historical records, archival newspapers, oral histories, and other sources to explore long-held assumptions and little-known facts about life in the nation's capital. Special attention is paid to the thriving Black community in DC and its persistence, despite challenges, over time. Questions regarding politics and socioeconomics, race and ethnicity, insiders and outsiders, and continuity and change will be explored as students learn to extract, synthesize, and analyze information in order to come up with conclusions about historical patterns and processes. In the second semester, students move to the wider world as they examine current global conflicts in places of origin for many of DC's newer residents. Throughout the year, students will produce regular research and position papers and comparative essays, and they will have many opportunities to engage in discussions and debates about current events and their connections to those of the past.

The following courses are also available for seniors as electives provided they have already taken one of these offerings as a sophomore.

African History (Grade 10, also open to Grade 12 as an elective course)
This survey history course uses a seminar approach to investigate all corners of Africa. The course begins with an exploration of Africa as the cradle of civilization as we examine early humans and new developments in that field. Issues of ethnicity and race emerge in an examination of ancient Egypt and Nubia, along with the ways that western historians have chosen to spin the histories of these civilizations. Much of the course is concerned with Africa's history before the arrival of Europeans; the arc of Africa's great kingdoms and the variety of political, religious, and economic life across the range of the continent are explored through discussion, debate, inquiry activities, and research. The second half of the year examines the impact of the European incursion, colonialism, and the struggle for independence. Special focus will be given to the social-cultural, political, and economic transformations that occurred in Africa during this time. As they move from topic to topic, students engage with the material and practice historical analysis in a variety of ways, using literature, art, and music along with primary and secondary sources to develop their active understanding of content and context.

Asian History (Grade 10, also open to Grade 12 as an elective course)
This survey course is an introduction to the history, languages, politics, and culture of the world's largest continent. The course will cover the history of Asia from early settlements and culture groups to our contemporary period where Asian powers have come to dominate the global marketplace. While we will focus on the Central, Southern, and Eastern portions of Asia, other regions will also be studied. We will emphasize the immense complexity of the continent and its inhabitants. Special care will be taken to explore themes of imperialism and colonialism, dismantling pre-existing "Western" sentiments that prevail in our culture and reframe how Asia should be understood as one of the core regions of human civilization. Using new schools of thought and the most

recent historiography, students will be presented with a more nuanced view of the continent and learn how to grapple with old ways of thinking. Students will be introduced to and learn to master key historical concepts such as chronological thinking, historical comprehension, and intersectionality, among others. Furthermore, students will gain valuable skills including analytical writing, historical research, and critical thinking. By the end of the course, students will have a deeper understanding of the historical evolution of the Asian continent and the countries that inhabit it today.

European History (Grade 10, also open to Grade 12 as an elective course)
This survey course examines the political, social, and ideological changes in Europe from the Renaissance to the modern era. In addition, the course provides practice in historical analysis through formal writing, research, debate, discussion, and a host of other activities. Topics include the Renaissance and Reformation, the Age of Exploration, the Scientific Revolution, the development of absolute monarchies, the rise of nation states, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, nationalism, imperialism, industrialization, the two World Wars, the Cold War, and the rise of the European Union. The course emphasizes the importance of how perspectives on the past should be understood because of their continuing role in influencing the present.

Latin American History (Grade 10, also open to Grade 12 as an elective course)
This survey course is an introduction to the history, politics, and cultures of Latin America. The course will examine Latin American history from its pre-contact Native American civilizations to the modern nation-states struggling to become mature democracies. The course will emphasize that Latin America is one of the world's most diverse and complex regions, using the discipline of history to show students how that came to be. Influenced by the newest historiography in the field, the course will confront common misconceptions about the region and the notion of a monolithic Latin America. Special care will be taken to show how the region was created and influenced in innumerable ways by the interweaving of its Native American, European, African, and Asian peoples.

World History (Grade 10, also open to Grade 12 as an elective course)
This dynamic course provides students with a wide-ranging look at the history of the world, focusing on the lived experience of individuals and groups in a variety of settings. Beginning with notions of power and developing webs of relationships and ending with modern expressions of action and agency in response to both internal and external pressure, the course allows students to actively engage with a variety of sources as they develop understandings of the ways that history manifests politically, economically, and culturally in different settings. Students will employ case studies in order to develop understandings of both commonalities as well as distinct and singular developments throughout the world, exploring routes of engagement as well as agency and action within specific societies. Throughout the course, students will engage in activities designed to develop skills in researching and using evidence to support their ideas, use available technology to present their understanding, and build key competencies in historical writing, thinking, and analysis.

U.S. Gender History (Grade 11)
This course is designed to provide a broad overview of American history, from the 17th century to the present day. Unlike a traditional American history course, however, it approaches this narrative with a critical eye toward issues of gender, women, and sexuality. In addition to studying broad political and economic trends, this course focuses on changes in the private sphere, including family life, constructions of masculinity and femininity, and the history of sexuality. This perspective will allow us to focus on stories, people, and questions that have often been overlooked in the past. Students will pay careful attention to how gender is connected to other identities, including race, class, geography, and sexuality. At the end of the year, students will have developed a stronger sensitivity and critical understanding of issues of gender not only in history but also in the world around them.

U.S. Immigration History (Grade 11)
This course approaches American history through a critical examination of American identity and the impact of immigration from the 17th century through to our present moment. While we will construct an overall arc of American history, do not expect a broad survey course. Paramount in our studies will be issues of citizenship, belonging, exclusion, and community. The "immigrant" has alternately been embraced and disparaged through the

American narrative. The "land of opportunity" has never been accessible to all immigrants, and mainstream American identity has never included all people living in the United States. We will build foundational historical understandings that allow for entry into the fraught present debates around identity and immigration. At the end of the course, students will be able to promote a more just, inclusive future for Americans of all origins.

U.S. History (Grade 11)
This U.S. History survey course is designed to allow students to interact with a variety of sources as they explore, encounter, and confront the array of challenges associated with the American story. The course centers the experience of people of African descent, using Berry and Gross' acclaimed *A Black Women's History of the United States* as its core text. From the start of the course, students take on a variety of narratives, exploring the ways that indigenous peoples constructed complex societies and nations and examining how the European incursion changed long-held calculuses of power. Students will examine the rise of systems of enslavement in the Americas and explore the ways these systems played a role in the development of the U.S. as well as how race-based laws and policies after the Civil War and into the 20th century contributed to ongoing inequity and racism today. Throughout the course, students explore how power is distributed, but also claimed, as they use inquiry-based methods and experiential learning to explore the lesser known aspects of U.S. History. Many students in U.S. History don't come into the class regarding themselves as "history people," but they often become them through their own experiences of "connecting the dots" in new ways.

U.S. History (Grade 11) UL
This survey course takes a comprehensive approach to American history by exploring intellectual and social history along with political and economic developments. Together, students and teachers investigate the American past at the highest levels of scholarship, research, writing, and thought. Students in U.S. History[UL] should be prepared to engage in deep research as they explore and challenge the ways that historians have shaped historical narratives and understandings to serve the needs of their own biases and time periods, often using these to minimize or eliminate the significant contribution of diverse groups and people who are integral to a better understanding of the American story. In the process, students will sharpen key skills in historical thinking, writing, and original research, exploring monographs, articles, and primary sources on their own and in focused study groups. Special attention will be paid to lifting up Black people and Black voices as integral to the development of all of these components. Meanwhile, students will make important connections between the past and the present as they explore the historical roots of current issues and events.

U.S. Political History (Grade 11)
This course will focus on the historical development of our current political system and how our institutions and political practices have changed since colonial times. This examination will include elections, current and historical, the expansion of the right to vote, the development of our system of political parties, changing roles and expectations of and for the presidency and congress, and the courts. Students will participate in a citywide model court program in the spring.The changing role of the media will also be covered, as well as public interest groups and lobbyists as political influencers. Students will complete analyses, profiles, and projects, on all or most of these topics. Current political issues will serve as the subject of many of our discussions. Students enrolled in this course are advised not to take an additional 11th grade U.S. History course, and to postpone U.S. Government until senior year.

ELECTIVES IN HISTORY

The following courses have been designed to allow students to explore select topics in greater depth than can be covered in the required courses. Electives are open to juniors and seniors.

YEARLONG ELECTIVE

Topics in Contemporary Psychology UL
This is an overview course with a university level rigor. It introduces students to the major concepts, theories, and methods of the social science of psychology. Topics covered include, but are not limited to: fields of study in psychology; research design and ethics; learning; theories of personality; psychological disorders; treatment for psychological disorders; motivation and emotion; stress; group dynamics; attraction; cognition; empathy; moral development; identity; and others. It will have a strong focus on experiential learning and will include opportunities to participate in psychological research. The

course leads to increased self-awareness, improved communication and social skills, and a better understanding of self and others.

SEMESTER ELECTIVES

20th Century Authoritarianism: The Rise and Rule of Dictatorships (Fall) UL

This class primarily examines dictators from different world regions in the 20th century. The main focus of the course explores the "emergence" phase to full "consolidation and maintenance" of power by authoritarian regimes. In class, we will cover the conditions that facilitated the rise and rule of these dictatorships, as well as the methods used by parties and leaders to take and hold power. We will further uncover party opposition and the methods used to suppress and eliminate opponents of these regimes. Additionally, there will be careful study answering the extent to which authoritarian state economic, political, cultural, and social policies were successful.

The topics will be an in-depth comparative study of various authoritarian leaders alongside independent studies of student-selected dictatorships in other regions (e.g. Stalin, Zedong, Hitler, Peron, Nasser, Franco, Mussolini, Sukarno, Castro, Pot, Pinochet, etc.).

Students will develop historical skills of analyzing sources, historiography, and perspective alongside enjoying class discussions and debates. While this course emphasizes a historical focus, 21st century authoritarianism will be a relevant theme throughout the semester.

21st Century Power: Today's Geopolitical Conflicts (Spring) UL

This course focuses on the dynamics of power between and among states and how it is manifested and legitimized at various levels. Students will learn the nature and types of power through contrasting international relation theories, the evolution of state sovereignty and its legitimacy, and the function and impact of international organizations and non-state actors in global politics (e.g. UN, EU, NATO, etc.). This class will also delve into what peace, conflict and violence mean, how conflicts emerge and develop, and what can be done to build a lasting peace.

These concepts will be analyzed primarily through the lens of two current major geopolitical conflicts: China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong (Far East) and Russia and Ukraine (Eastern Europe). Additionally, smaller and current case studies throughout the world will be examined to gain a deeper and broader understanding of course concepts. With a targeted goal of understanding a multitude of political perspectives and theories, students will also analyze sources, discuss, debate, and overall, gain a deeper understanding of power in today's geopolitical climate.

African-American Studies (Fall) UL

African-American Studies will provide students with a rigorous treatment of African-American history and culture beginning with the turn of the 20th century. Key topics will include in depth coverage of: African-American participation in U.S. wars, i.e Spanish American War, WWI, WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam, The Harlem Renaissance, The Civil Rights Movements, creative responses to Jim Crow, African-American Intellectual History, and African-American Cultural production including art, sports, film and literature, and the African-American Church. We will use a project-based model for assessing students' learning and mastery of course content. This course will ask students to move beyond the textbook (tertiary source) and into more nuanced treatments of African- American history and culture through monographic literature (secondary sources).

Students will create projects using innovative interpretations that remain true to primary sources. These projects will engage professionals in the history profession. While thematic in scope, this course will provide students the opportunity to piece together, create and compare competing narratives of African-American history and culture while imagining, planning, and executing projects that illustrate their mastery of the content.

American Civil War (Fall) (Not offered in 2024-2025)

The course will explore the war to end slavery from a variety of perspectives—social and political as well as military—to help seminar participants evaluate how and why the war came, how and why it was fought in the manner in which it was, and how and why the war continues to be a "living" conflict in American culture, society, and politics. Students will explore military history in a broad sense to note not just the tactical and strategic movements of soldiers but also the larger contexts of social and political history that motivated those soldiers'

collective decisions to fight. To that end, the class will focus on seminar-style discussion of primary and secondary sources and culminate in a research project that incorporates scholarly research in both primary and secondary source materials. Hands-on activities will include seminar discussion, primary source research, walking tours of DC's circle forts, and a visit to a Civil War battlefield.

American Government (Fall) UL

This course will be an introduction to the study of the American political system. It will introduce the institutional structures, political actors, and constitutional debates in American government and politics. The course will begin with the constitutional underpinnings of the U.S. political system and then discuss how the government operates in practice. By looking at current issues in the American political system, students will come to know more about: the role of campaigns and elections; the influence of political parties, interest groups and the media; the institutions of the federal government; and recent and longer term changes in the powers and expectations of the Office of the President. The course will also examine the role of race and gender in American politics. Overall, this course will enhance students' ability to think critically about politics, political choices, political institutions, and public policies. *Students enrolled in this course may not also enroll in U.S. Political History.*

Comparative Politics (Spring) (Not offered in 2024-2025)

Comparative Politics at GDS involves an integrated approach to political systems and structures throughout the world. The course employs the case study model to examine issues relating to power, privilege, and political structures in 8-10 countries, while making use of the rich resources available in Washington, DC to drill down into these questions even further. Students produce position papers, engage in debates, and travel to think tanks and universities to experience the kind of work that is done by experts in these areas.

Conflict Analysis and Resolution (Fall & Spring)

This interdisciplinary course will introduce students to core concepts and processes in conflict resolution, drawing from the fields of psychology, political science, public policy, history, anthropology, sociology, economics, and other disciplines. Students will learn conflict-specific theory and research, as well as procedures and interventions aimed at preventing, diminishing, and resolving conflict. Students will have the opportunity to interact with our Lower and Middle School students in the development of peer mediation initiatives, along with other projects.

Contemporary Issues (Spring)

This course, the first to be proposed and designed primarily by students, allows juniors and seniors to engage with contemporary issues through a variety of critical lenses. Using the range of available media and through the creation of a bimonthly online interactive journal that analyzes emergent issues in depth, students will gain a better understanding of events as they occur at the local, national, and international levels and a better appreciation of the connection between past and present. Collaborative teaming, discussion and debate, and media literacy provide consistent structures for a course whose content will reflect the ever-changing news landscape and national discussion. Further, the bimonthly journal will provide additional content for the second-semester 9th grade history course, which focuses on the experiences and challenges of international immigrants to the greater Washington area and the recent history of their places of origin, including Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America.

Cultural Anthropology (Spring)

Cultural Anthropology considers the nature of culture through customs and beliefs including language, subsistence, families and kinship, religious beliefs, and art in non-Western societies. The second half of the course concentrates on a number of American subcultures, such as religious cults, ethnic or racial groups, and regional subcultures. Choices of subcultures will be based on class interest. Students also have the opportunity to examine specialized monographs and articles as well as to develop research projects using non-textual sources.

From Freedom Rides to Floyd: Civil Rights in America (Spring)

This course is intended to provide students with much more than a merely academic view of the civil rights battles of the mid-20th century. Topics will include the Freedom Rides of 1961, integration of the University of Alabama and University of Mississippi, the historic march from Selma to Montgomery in March 1965, the rise of the Black Power movement, and many others. Linking past to

present, our focus for the second half of the course will be current civil rights issues, including police use of deadly force in dealing with people of color, racial disparity in policing activities more generally, and racial disparity in the criminal justice system (particularly the administration of the death penalty), among many others. Most importantly, we hope that the course will inspire students to continue to advocate for civil rights and social justice throughout their lifetime in whatever way most aligns with their beliefs, values, and interests.

Introduction to Economics (Fall)
This course covers the basics of economics, including the micro-foundations of consumer behavior and allocating scarce resources, as well as the macro-level of complex market interactions in an economy such as that of the United States. Significant components of the American economy, such as socio-economic inequality and the stock market, get special attention and will be a focus of research. Students also examine economic development in nations where traditional rules of the marketplace may not easily apply.

Europe Between the Wars (Fall) UL
This class will examine Europe from the end of World War I to the beginning of World War II through multiple lenses (e.g., political, social, economic, and cultural). To what extent did the interwar period reflect dissatisfaction with, and the disintegration of, the mid-to-late 19th century European order and the values associated with that order (e.g., reason, science, faith in human progress, balance of power)? How did political, social, and cultural developments during the interwar period reflect (or contribute to) this disintegration? How are the events of the interwar period relevant to developments in Europe today (e.g., rise of right-wing nationalist, homophobic, anti-Semitic governments in Hungary and elsewhere; and Brexit), as well as to our own country's employment of the ideas, rhetoric, and symbols that emerged during that period? These are just some of the questions that will be addressed in this course, which uses primary sources and written fiction, along with film, painting, architecture, and other artistic forms to help find the answers.

Gender Studies (Fall)
This class introduces students to the complex interdisciplinary field that is gender studies today, bringing together women's and feminist studies, men's and masculinity studies, and LGBT/Queer studies. While primarily U.S.-based, the course will explore how different definitions and representations of gender and sexuality spread via immigration and media. The goal of the class is to explore key concepts in gender studies through the lens of critical theory, to understand the ways in which critical theorists have engaged, critiqued, and developed the work of other philosophers, and to build understanding of how these philosophies connect to the students' own lives. Topics include the debate between nature versus nurture, feminism, masculinity, gender-based violence, and social institutions such as family, education, sport, and religion.

Hip Hop and Social Justice (Fall & Spring)
This course will examine the history of how Hip Hop Culture has created and facilitated social justice movements to address issues such as police brutality, inner-city violence, racism and discrimination, poverty, inequity in education, and more. The course places at its core the dismantling of White Supremacy and all other forms of discrimination as they are represented through individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural forms of oppression. This course will highlight the strategies of resistance used by Hip Hop Practitioners in order to provide prominent examples for our students to emulate and build upon.

Historical Research Seminar: Race, Place, and Real Estate (Fall & Spring) UL
This UL course provides an opportunity for students to develop essential skills in historical research, thinking, and writing while exploring the role that race and place play in creating, sustaining, and curtailing opportunity. Students will work with archival newspapers, census data, and other records as they explore neighborhood change, collective pushes and pulls, national themes, and the ways and degree that these integrate with their own family stories. Throughout the course, students will interrogate the data they find, making use of the most current scholarship to help interpret and give weight to their research. Students' end product is a thesis-driven research paper that evaluates the impact of race and place in their family histories.

International Relations (Spring) UL

This course involves a survey of major principles and an investigation of key topics in international relations, including security, trade, cooperation, and conflict. With a primary focus on current events as they unfold around the world, the course offers students a chance to investigate not only the key differences among nations, but to interrogate their own understandings of the world and the role the U.S. plays in its relationships with foreign nations.

Law & Constitutional Rights (Spring) UL
This course is designed to give students a sampling of the meaning, operation, and significance of law in recent American history and government. We begin the course with a full-length case study of a legal issue as it makes its way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Thereafter, we focus on various aspects of American law (depending, in part, on the interests of the students). Topics covered in the past include criminal law, the law of search and seizure, and the rights and legal protections of various minorities. In each case, our purpose is to learn substantive law in that area and understand how it develops through precedent and legislation. Main ideas in the philosophy of law may also be covered. Finally, we engage in a simulation—perhaps a mock trial or moot court—in order both to expand our understanding of a substantive issue and to experience one aspect of the legal process.

The Middle East (Fall)
The course begins with an overview of the founding and spread of Islam, with some exploration of the Umayyad, Abbasid, and Ottoman Empires. Students will study the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and examine the rise of Arab nationalism and Zionism, as well as the rise to power of Shah Reza Pahlavi in Iran. The strategic and economic importance of the region is studied along with the founding of Israel; the continuing conflict among Jews, Arabs, and Christians; and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. Particular emphasis will be placed on understanding the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Middle East Since World War II (Spring)
The course will be based on the events that shook and shaped the greater Middle East and include a focus on the two main themes of colonialism and nationalism. The various ideologies that grew out of these themes, such as pan-Africanism, will also be addressed. This course will deal with a multicultural and diverse political, social, and environmental milieu. Basques, Berbers, and other ethnic groups that are frequently overlooked by mainstream courses will also be explored. Throughout the course, a variety of methods will be used to ensure that student learning styles and preferences are addressed, supported, and developed in a way to produce flexible thinkers and active writers.

Politics & Policy (Fall)
This course introduces students to various aspects of foreign and domestic public policy. Students learn how various aspects of the system of the U.S. government affect public policy—the Congress, the presidency, and the courts, as well as regulatory agencies, the federal bureaucracy, and state and local governments. Students also explore the ways in which private citizens, civil society, lobbies, and non-governmental organizations affect local and international public policy. There will be special attention given to the president's State of the Union address, and there will be guest speakers on various aspects of public policy. Students engage in two major policy research projects, as well as debates, discussions, and class presentations.

World War II (Spring)
This examination of WWII asks students to consider the interplay between battlefields and the social, political, technological, and ethical considerations of the conflict. More than just following military tactics and battles, this course explores roles played by racial and ethnic minorities and women in the war, both in battles and on home fronts. The goal of the course is to create an advanced history seminar, and to that end the class will focus on seminar discussion of primary and secondary sources and research that incorporates scholarly materials. Field trips to the Udvar-Hazy Center, the National Museum of American History, and the National Museum of the Holocaust will offer hands-on activities, as will seminar discussion and workshop opportunities for student writing.

INNOVATION & COMPUTER SCIENCE

Foundations in Programming (Fall & Spring)
In this one-semester, introductory computer programming course, students will develop logic, problem-solving, and programming skills using the Python programming language. Students will then use this knowledge to control and work with a variety of different microcontrollers such as Raspberry Pi and Arduinos. This course represents an awesome opportunity for students new to programming to experience computer science in a collaborative, hands-on, and fun environment. After completing this course, students will be prepared to explore other opportunities within the department.

Foundations in Creative Engineering (Fall & Spring)
This is a hands-on laboratory course involving an introduction to the Engineering process. Utilizing a wide variety of tools in the Innovation Lab, including 3D printing and laser cutting, students will discover how to brainstorm, research, prototype, and construct a final build. Additionally, students will be introduced to concepts of mechanical and electrical engineering, as well as advanced CAD design and foundational programming. This is considered an introductory level class, and all are encouraged to join.

Foundations in Programming: Video Games Concentration (Full Year)
In this project-based, introductory computer programming course, students will develop coding skills by building video games. They will learn the Godot game engine and GDScript programming language (which is almost identical to the Python language). Students will work collaboratively in a studio environment to design unique characters, stories, and game mechanics for several small projects and a final, semester-long game of their own design.

Concepts covered include coding fundamentals, graphics, sound, artificial intelligence, world-building, and design. After completing this course, students will be prepared to explore other opportunities within the department.

Foundations in Entrepreneurship (Full Year)
This course is an introduction to designing a socially responsible business or nonprofit using influential emerging technologies. Students will interview innovators, users, and ethics advocates in a field of their choosing, develop a business plan, and learn to use innovation lab equipment and software tools to build a prototype for a real market.

This course emphasizes entrepreneurial tools such as product research, marketing, and finance, and technology. Students will also learn high-performance teamwork, including project planning, giving feedback, and persuasive pitching. Throughout the course, students will reflect on the ethical impact of their project, preparing to confidently shape how emerging businesses and technologies affect our shared future.

Advanced Programming for Robotics (Fall)
Prerequisite: One semester of Foundations in Programming or permission of instructor
This course covers how robots perceive, think, and act in the world. Starting with pre-built robots, students will implement fundamental algorithms including computer vision, sensor integration, navigation, manipulation, and mission-planning. The course will include hands-on labs, guest lectures, and a final project to program a ground robot to navigate the GDS campus. This course requires programming experience, but not robotics experience.

Advanced Data Structures & Algorithms (Spring)
Prerequisite: One semester of Foundations in Programming or permission of instructor
This course introduces the common data structures and algorithms that will enable you to grow as a programmer and problem solver. We will perform mathematical analysis of data structures as well as hands-on implementation and measurements. At the end of this course, you will be able to identify and implement appropriate algorithms for a wide variety of problems. Topics covered include: Hash tables, trees, graphs, and algorithms such as sorting, path-planning, and dynamic programming.

Coding for Social Impact (Full Year) UL
Prerequisite: One semester of Foundations in Programming or permission of instructor
How does technology perpetuate inequities in our community and in society at large? And how can it be a catalyst for positive change? Students in this course will engage in deep user-research and use their findings to develop web and mobile technologies to meaningfully address a relevant issue. This course emphasizes the

importance of the design process. Students will engage external stakeholders to develop a deep understanding of their values as potential users. They will work collaboratively in a studio environment to create a shared understanding of the people they design for (and with).

Projects depend on student interest, but may include: using data science to investigate local air quality, producing virtual reality documentaries, and leveraging web/mobile platforms for voter registration research, mail routing for people experiencing homelessness, health/wellness tracking, and more.

Concepts covered include design thinking, interaction design, and advanced web and mobile software development in React.

Music Production & Audio Engineering (Fall and/or Spring)
This course will dive deeply into the combinations of science and art involved in the production of a contemporary audio recording. Students will grow their understanding of music production by experiencing the process in three distinct roles: studio musician, audio engineer, and record producer. Students will analyze, consume, and perform acoustic and electronic music, learn the basic concepts of working with MIDI, explore the use of microphones, employ classic recording techniques, and learn just what it is a music producer actually does in the music business of today.

Students will glean information from foundational instructional texts that include *Modern Recording Techniques*, *The Mixing Engineer's Handbook*, *Zen and the Art of Producing*, various podcasts, interviews, and video sources, as well as the firsthand experiences of their wizened-yet-not-totally-jaded instructor, an active professional musician, engineer, and producer. Students will have the opportunity to sing and play instruments in this course, but proficiency as a vocalist or instrumentalist is in no way required for participation.

INTERDISCIPLINARY

The goal of our interdisciplinary courses is to have students move beyond subject-specific boundaries, while offering opportunities to expand their understanding of a particular topic that no one discipline offers. We seek to develop an all-inclusive approach to learning with an emphasis on the connections found among disciplines as a unifying thread. Ultimately, the coalescence of knowledge and learning are key in any learning community, and at GDS we view this as part of our larger commitment to a progressive teaching philosophy.

Conflict Analysis and Resolution

The course will introduce students to core concepts and processes in conflict resolution. This interdisciplinary field will draw from psychology, political science, public policy, history, anthropology, sociology, economics, and other disciplines. It also generates conflict-specific theory and research, as well as procedures and interventions aimed at preventing, diminishing, and resolving conflict. Students will have the opportunity to interact with our Lower and Middle School students in the development of peer mediation initiatives along with other projects.

Neuroscience

In this two-semester elective course, students will be introduced to the biological underpinnings of behavior, particularly when it comes to areas of brain dysfunction. While students will gain a solid grounding in the discipline of neuroscience, it is our deeper hope that through collaborative projects focused on specific topics that are likely to impact their lives (i.e. Anxiety and Depression, Alzheimer's, Autism, Learning and Memory, Schizophrenia, the Adolescent Brain, PTSD, etc.), students will gain a real understanding of how the brain works, how sometimes it doesn't, and what we can do both on an individual and a collective level to help those who need support. In what we think seems like an extraordinary opportunity, we plan to leverage myriad resources here in the DC area to challenge students to be more than consumers of information, but rather active learners and researchers who will, in turn, use their skills to advocate on behalf of others. Throughout the process, students will take the lead in the discovery process, learning not only about a particular body of information, but also developing a skill-set that would enable them to present their learning in a purposeful, sophisticated manner. Ultimately our hope is that students will not only grasp the essential underpinnings of neuroscience but also be able to apply their understanding and to advocate on behalf of those impacted by the various conditions.

The neurobiology perspective of the course will complement the behavioral approach by offering a physiological explanation for normal and pathological behavior. Throughout the year, students will explore the cellular basis of brain function, investigating neural communication, both within a single neuron and between neurons. Our exploration will ground students in a molecular perspective that will foster understanding of neuronal proteins, ion channels, neurotransmitter receptors, and signal transduction. Finally, the brain will be seen as a large organization of neural networks with potential for both extraordinary function and dysfunction. In addition to a number of laboratory investigations, the course will include visits with local experts and some hands-on collaborative work with area institutions and organizations.

Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) UL

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor

YPAR (Youth-led Participatory Action Research) is an opportunity for students to engage in studying and improving school culture at GDS. This course teaches students how to conduct action research, which includes formulating research questions, conducting focus groups, writing surveys, and making recommendations.The course culminates with a written proposal to improve the student experience, which is presented to GDS administrators.

MATHEMATICS

Graduation Requirement: At least three sequential years of math at the high-school level.

The Mathematics Department believes every student can develop a high level of skill and deep understanding of mathematics principles. To facilitate this, we offer a wide range of opportunities for each child. We work carefully to construct numerous course offerings and sequences with wide ranges of challenge, varied teaching approaches, and different assessment strategies in order to help each student find their path to success. When offered a variety of approaches, opportunities to adjust challenge from year to year, and varied opportunities to demonstrate knowledge, students will develop enthusiasm, confidence, skill, and comprehension in our math classes.

To provide maximum opportunity for students to learn at their optimal pace and to offer appropriate challenge and support to develop each student's potential, the math department divides several courses into levels. Extended and Honors sections spend less time introducing or reviewing topics and more time extending ideas and working on more difficult problems. While all of our sections include significant problem-solving, Extended sections often approach new topics through applications, while Honors sections delve more deeply into the theoretical underpinnings of topics and proof.

PLACEMENT

Placement of students in classes is determined through a cooperative approach toward consensus among the student, the current teacher, the department, the student's family, and the advisor. The math department engages students in the course selection process in order for students to learn how to make informed and appropriate decisions about their education. Yet it is often challenging for students to decide which course is right for them. It can be particularly challenging for students to know which level of a course is appropriate when they have not had experience in that course. The teachers in the math department have a broader perspective about our curriculum and the level that would be the best fit for the student, but they may not know the larger context of each student's schedule and interest. This is why we believe it is essential for the registration process to be a conversation among teacher, student, family, and advisor.

Students sometimes want to sign up for an Extended or Honors course to 'try it out,' believing that they can drop down at any time if the course does not work out. Our goal is to ensure that students are registered for the appropriate courses initially, because switching courses or levels during the school year is usually not an easy process. A change in a course or level may require a substantial change in a student's schedule, or it may not be possible at all.

Level changes must first be discussed with the teacher of the course. After the initial discussion, the department chair and the Assistant Principal for Academics will be brought into the conversation to determine if such a move is possible and in the student's best interest. When a student switches levels after the semester has begun, any grades earned in the initial level will be included in the semester grade in the new level. After changing levels, students may need to catch-up on academic content in the new level, but they will not be eligible to take any make-up assessments. The deadline for switching to a more challenging level is the course drop date. A student may not change to a less challenging level within the last four weeks of the semester.

SUMMER OR EXTERNAL COURSE WORK

We believe that the mathematical maturation students develop over the course of a school year can rarely be fully attained in an abbreviated, condensed summer course. The only external math course we recognize for advancement in our course sequence is Geometry. Although summer courses vary widely both in approach and content, we have found that they often focus primarily on skills to the detriment of a deeper understanding of concepts. Our curriculum goes beyond skills to emphasize mathematical inquiry, discovery, critical thinking, problem solving, and making connections among concepts and skills—all of which require a full year of synthesis and development. Accelerating through the curriculum by taking Geometry over the summer is only encouraged in certain cases, and if a student decides to take a summer Geometry course with the hope of advancing in our sequence, they must:

- Inform their math teacher and High School math department chair by the end of the school year.
- Keep a portfolio of all summer work (assessments, assignments, syllabus, etc.) to turn in to the department chair in August (if taking the summer course outside of GDS)

- Pass the GDS summer course OR, if taking the course elsewhere, take and earn a satisfactory grade (B- or above) on the corresponding GDS midterm and final exams.

Important notes about taking Geometry over the summer:

- Summer courses not taken at GDS will appear on GDS transcripts in a special notes section.
- Students are responsible for completing all content and concepts covered in the GDS course, even those not covered in their summer course.
- Taking a summer course does not guarantee that a student will move on in the GDS course sequence. The department chair will consider the student's portfolio of work as well as her performance on the GDS semester exams.

THE MATH CENTER

The Math Center offers assistance to students in all math subjects through one-on-one conferences on a drop-in request or referral basis. Students seeking help with assignments, concept comprehension, skill refinement, or study techniques are encouraged to visit the center. The Math Center is open during all class periods and is staffed by a math teacher.

USE OF CALCULATORS

Calculators can be useful tools for learning and are used throughout the math curriculum for ease of extended accuracy, for the opportunity to manage complex operations, for data analysis, and for graphing and other visualizations. Understanding the mathematics behind solutions to problems is a principal goal for students in the mathematics program. The calculator can provide solutions to problems without fostering understanding of underlying concepts and therefore is not always used during class or on assessments. The Math Department provides all ninth graders and new students with a graphing calculator.

Algebra I

Algebra introduces variables into the operations of mathematics. Topics include linear and quadratic equations, inequalities, polynomials, exponents, formulas, and functions, with a strong emphasis on problem solving and graphing.

Geometry

Prerequisite: Algebra I

The study of geometry concerns the discovery, understanding, and proof of plane and space relationships based on the logical use of definitions and deductive reasoning. Topics include proofs, angle relationships, parallel and perpendicular lines, polygons, congruence, right triangle trigonometry, volume, and area. Use of algebra is integral to this course, and the course will include a review of algebra.

The extended level of this course is accelerated, includes a minimal amount of review, and moves steadily through the topics. The extended level requires increased independent thinking and a greater time commitment for homework and reflection.

Algebra II

Prerequisites: Algebra I and Geometry

This course focuses on functions and operations with functions, including transformations, inverses, composition, and functions as mathematical models. Students study algebraic and graphical representation of equations and inequalities in one and two variables, and perform operations with rational expressions, radicals, rational exponents, and complex numbers. The functions covered include linear, quadratic, exponential, logarithmic, and polynomial.

The extended and honors levels of this course are accelerated, include minimal amounts of review, and move steadily through the topics. The honors level is more abstract and focuses on the theoretical bases of the material. A demonstrated mastery of previous course material, a greater time commitment for homework and reflection, and increased independent thinking are essential.

Precalculus

Prerequisite: Algebra II

This course continues the study of advanced algebra, trigonometry, and other topics necessary for the study of calculus and statistics. Topics include exponential and logarithmic functions, trigonometry, and introductory probability and statistics. Depending on the level, other topics may include parametric equations, polar equations, conic sections and limits, sequences, and series and rational functions.

The extended and honors levels of this course are accelerated, include minimal amounts of review, and move steadily through the topics. The honors level is more abstract and focuses on the theoretical bases of the material. A demonstrated mastery of previous course material, a greater time commitment for homework and reflection, and increased independent thinking are all essential.

Statistical Analysis and Applications
Prerequisite: Precalculus or permission of department
This course covers the concepts and procedures in descriptive and inferential statistics of one and two variable data. The main topics are data organization, inferential statistics, probability as it relates to distribution of data and the use of regression in mathematical modeling. Students engage in discovery of characteristics of data and in open-ended problem-solving through group work and projects. Students will use software, such as Excel, enabling them to analyze larger sets of data.

Statistical Analysis and Applications UL
Prerequisite: Precalculus or permission of department
This course covers all the content in Statistical Analysis and Applications in addition to delving deeper into the mathematical foundations and theory of inferential statistics. This course requires strong analytical skills and a significant amount of reading and writing.

Calculus
Prerequisite: Precalculus
These courses cover the foundational topics and skills of differential and integral calculus of one variable. Topics include distance, velocity, and acceleration relationships, slope functions and linearizations, area functions, differentiation techniques, and optimization. Calculus will explore applications from various fields, including physics and economics. The approach will be concept-driven, with open-ended problem solving playing a major role in the class.

Calculus UL
The extended and honors levels of Calculus are accelerated, include minimal amounts of review, and move steadily through the topics. These levels will cover more topics in integration, and the honors level covers additional topics including parametric equations, polar coordinates, sequences, series, and Maclaurin and Taylor polynomials. The honors level is more abstract and focuses on the theoretical bases of the material. A demonstrated mastery of previous course material, a greater time commitment for homework and reflection, and increased independent thinking are essential.

UPPER LEVEL SEMESTER ELECTIVES IN MATH

Linear Algebra (Spring) UL
Prerequisite: UL Calculus and permission of the department
This course follows calculus and requires a good deal of rigor and abstract reasoning. It includes the following topics: matrix arithmetic, dot products and cross products, inner product spaces, fundamental spaces of matrices, eigenvalues and eigenvectors, and linear transformations.

The Mathematics of Statistics: An Introduction to Data Analysis (Fall) UL
Corequisite: UL Calculus Honors
This fast-paced course will be a survey of data analysis, probability theory, and statistics. There will be an emphasis on the underlying theoretical mathematics of statistics and how to make use of statistical tools in real-world situations. This course will give students a solid understanding of the mathematics behind descriptive (one and two-variable) and inferential statistics.

Differential Equations (Spring) UL
Prerequisites: UL Calculus
This course teaches the techniques of how to solve a variety of differential equations from those of the standard first-order and higher to other types requiring a more sophisticated and integrated approach. Necessary topics from calculus and linear algebra not covered in other courses will be taught as needed. Students should be comfortable working independently and be disciplined problem-solvers.

Multivariable Calculus (Fall) UL
Prerequisite: UL Calculus
The course continues the study of calculus begun in UL Calculus. Topics include partial derivatives, directional derivatives, vector-valued functions, maxima and minima of functions of several variables, double and triple integrals, line and surface integrals, and Green's and Stokes Theorems.

Mathematics Seminar (Spring) UL

Prerequisite: Calculus or UL Calculus or permission of the department

This course will introduce students to a variety of topics outside of the typical high school curriculum, including several usually found in college-level mathematics elective courses. Topics might include, but are not limited to, point-set topology, paradoxes, group theory, and formal logic. The course will emphasize the power and beauty of mathematics through the study of these topics and by encouraging exploration and self-discovery of some of the important ideas. Students are expected to complete weekly problem sets as well as complete a presentation on an independent topic outside of the curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

Graduation Requirement: Two years of physical education/health

The goal of the Physical Education Program is to teach students the knowledge and skills necessary to live a healthy life: to embrace physical activity, to think critically, to cooperate across difference, and to solve problems rationally. Health education is integrated into both ninth grade P.E. and P.E. II.

The High School Health curriculum is a skills-based approach to health education. Content areas include mental health topics like stress and anxiety, healthy choices like phone use and sleep, social justice issues like addiction and maternal mortality, drug and alcohol misuse, healthy relationships, consent, and human sexuality. These topics are taught by supporting skill development such as decision making, communication, advocacy, goal-setting, and resource finding.

Ninth and tenth grade health cover similar topics, content, and skills. While the first year offers a foundational understanding, students dive deeper into topics during the second year. The Health curriculum is taught with a focus on factors of identity, acknowledging that students learn about these topics and make choices and decisions about their health through the lenses of their identity.

Physical Education/Health I
All 9th grade students participate in physical education. The main goals of this program are to develop problem-solving skills, increase self-confidence, encourage group cooperation, and teach lifetime health and movement skills and knowledge. These goals are met through the Project Adventure Curriculum, which includes cooperative games, group problem-solving activities, and individual and group trust and initiative activities. Students are introduced to a wide variety of team and individual sports, methods of physical conditioning, CPR, and first aid. Grades are based on effort, improvement, positive attitude, and cooperation. Various health topics are covered as well, including nutrition, sexuality, drugs and alcohol prevention, and social, emotional, and mental health.

Physical Education/Health II
All 10th grade students complete a second year of physical education. The program focuses on the maintenance and improvement of health-related physical fitness; e.g., cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition. Students acquire the skills, knowledge, and positive attitude necessary to assess and improve upon one's own level of health and wellness. Stress management and intervention techniques such as biofeedback, yoga, and nutritional education as related to sport performance and body composition are integrated with sport, dance, and exercise as the means to achieve and maintain health and wellness.

SCIENCE

Graduation Requirement: Three years, to include one life science (9th grade biology) and one physical science.

The goal of courses in the science department is to help students gain a sophisticated understanding of the natural world using the scientific method of hypothesis-driven inquiry and mathematical description. Science literacy requires both an understanding of the fundamental concepts that underpin all of nature and the investigative skills necessary for their discovery. Ideally, the students' selection of science courses should combine the broad scope of scientific disciplines with an in-depth comprehension of at least one field. The introductory biology course required for all ninth-grade students provides the foundation of scientific concepts and skills for the other science courses. Courses in the life sciences, physics, and chemistry at the intermediate level offer an investigation of relevant concepts in much greater depth. Finally, Upper Level courses in science offer students the opportunity to learn science at the most intense and comprehensive level. Students enrolled in courses at these levels are expected to possess a keen interest in the subject matter and a willingness to delve deeply into a topic area. Upper Level courses typically have an additional lab component and expect that students enrolled can work independently and devote additional attention to work assigned outside of class.

LIFE SCIENCE OFFERINGS

Biology 9 (Grade 9)
This introductory course for all ninth grade students emphasizes student-centered, active learning. The course covers many aspects of biological organization, beginning at the molecular level and progressing in complexity all the way up to interactions at the level of the biosphere. Main topics will investigate biomolecules, cell structure and transport, genetics and ecology. Integrated into the course are basic biological themes including evolution, unity and diversity of living things, homeostasis, and the relationship between structure and function. Additionally, the course exposes students to the basic laboratory techniques required for further study in the sciences and introduces the skills involved in scientific writing.

Anatomy, Health, and Social Justice
Prerequisite: Chemistry
This course will take a holistic approach to anatomy, public health, and health literacy. The curriculum will consist of scientific, legal, and social complexities in both the urban developed world and the developing world. Students will explore human anatomy and common health concerns related to those systems. Integrated into each unit will be cross-cultural understanding and basic medical interventions, including: measuring blood pressure, heart rate, pulse, respiration rate, height and weight and calculating BMI and blood-glucose level. Cross-cutting themes of the course will be social determinants of health, systems of oppression, and poverty. The course will use case studies that focus on maternal and infant mortality rates in Washington, DC and malnutrition, diabetes and hypertension rates in the indigenous highlands of Guatemala in order to provide students with an opportunity to explore the complex scientific, cultural, social, and environmental factors that affect health and quality of life around the world.

Cellular & Molecular Biology UL
Prerequisite: Chemistry
This lab-intensive course will give students a comprehensive and rigorous overview of foundational topics in the discipline of cellular and molecular biology. Students will conduct an in-depth exploration of the cell as a dynamic center of complex processes such as cell proliferation, differentiation, signaling, DNA Replication, and Protein Synthesis. This course will also include a significant lab component, where students will have opportunities to design experiments, collect data, apply mathematical routines, and refine testable explanations and predictions. Students will engage with protocols and techniques associated with the units of study that provide varied opportunities to explore real-world challenges, learn about careers in biotechnology and health, and address bioethical questions. Engaging in open-ended investigations will emphasize and develop critical thinking skills. A strong background in chemistry is necessary.

Environmental Science: Analysis of Science and Policy UL
Prerequisite: Chemistry
This laboratory course allows students to delve into not only the science but also the politics, policies, and laws behind major environmental topics. Topics may include,

but are not limited to, climate change, population growth, air and water pollution, nutrient cycles, and field and stream ecology. Field studies that emphasize a hands-on, interdisciplinary approach to environmental assessment will enrich the classroom experience.

Genetics and Evolutionary Biology
Prerequisite: Biology 9
This course is designed for students with a keen interest in biology from an evolutionary viewpoint. The content of the course will begin with an exploration of Darwin's Theory of the Origin of Species, the basis for an understanding of the complexity and richness of life on earth. This course will be divided into the following themes: the historical framework of evolutionary biology and, more substantially, the organic framework of evolution, which includes cell division, genes and chromosomes, Mendelian genetics, molecular genetics, origins of variation, genetic basis of microevolution, patterns and processes in macroevolution, and the origins and diversity of life. In the first semester, molecular genetics will be the underlying principle. In the second semester, controversies surrounding the origins of life on Earth will be discussed and students will examine the phylogeny of six Kingdoms in depth. The capstone of the course will focus on human evolution.

Neuroscience
See listing under Interdisciplinary Department.

Research in Biology (Grade 12) UL
Prerequisites: A second life science, Chemistry I Extended or permission of the department
This research methods course teaches students how to think like a scientist through hypothesis-driven inquiry and authentic research investigations. Specific skills taught include understanding scientific literature, designing experiments, conducting contemporary biotechnological methods, using statistical and graphical analysis of data, and writing professional scientific reports. The first semester consists of conducting long-term, open-ended investigations in which these skills are learned and applied. The students will learn to write an effective research proposal on a topic of their interest, which is then conducted in the second semester. Their discoveries will be presented in a scientific manuscript suitable for publication in a professional journal.

Applied Research in Environmental Science
See listing under science electives.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE OFFERINGS

Levels in Chemistry
To provide the maximum opportunity for students to learn at their optimal pace and to offer enough challenge and support to develop each student's potential, Chemistry I and II are divided into two levels each: Chemistry I or Chemistry I Extended, and Chemistry II or Chemistry II UL.

Each level builds a solid foundation of chemistry and covers the subject matter that is required for students to continue in the science curriculum. However, the Extended and UL Chemistry sections spend more time understanding concepts and models in a more in-depth manner in addition to focusing on math-intensive problems. Students in the Extended and UL courses should feel comfortable spending less time practicing problems in order to move through the material at a more accelerated pace. Students should select levels based on the recommendation of their current teacher and the science department.

Chemistry I or Chemistry I Extended
In chemistry, we seek to understand what matter does by understanding how electrons, atoms, and molecules interact. This is accomplished through a study of atomic theory, stoichiometry, gas laws, thermodynamics, and equilibrium. In addition, students will apply these concepts through experimentations in the laboratory. The learning in both the classroom and the laboratory includes an environment of self-discovery and discussion.

Chemistry II
Chemistry II Prerequisite: Chemistry I or Chemistry I Extended
This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to explore chemical principles as applied in the real world. Chemistry concepts will be examined in the context of various themes, such as forensic science, art, cooking, and environmental science. This course also entails an introduction to organic chemistry and biochemistry, which includes hydrocarbons, organic functional groups, carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, enzymes, and nucleic acids.

Chemistry II UL

Prerequisite: Chemistry I Extended or permission of the department

The goal of this course is for students to understand the key fundamentals of chemical structure and reactivity, and to be able to interpret data at the molecular level. This course is designed to provide a more in-depth study of key chemical principles such as chemical bonding theory, thermodynamics, kinetics, equilibrium, electrochemistry, colligative properties, and an introduction to organic chemistry. Students will also study acid-base chemistry, valence bond theory, molecular orbital theory, experimental design, and data analysis. Students will be expected to master analytical techniques and develop technical writing skills in the form of lab reports.They will also develop their own procedures and design their own experiments to collect, analyze, and interpret data.

Electricity and Magnetism UL

Coerequisite: Calculus UL

Prerequisite: Mechanics or Corequisite: Mechanics UL

This course covers electrostatics, conductors, capacitors, dielectrics, electric circuits, magnetic fields, and electromagnetism. Calculus is used throughout the course to formulate physical principles and apply them to physical problems. The primary focus is on improving the student's analytic problem-solving skills. Students are encouraged to take Mechanics before taking this class or take Mechanics UL in conjunction with this course.

Physics

Corequisite: Algebra II

This course uses observation and inquiry to develop physical concepts. Students observe phenomena, model it mathematically, and use models to predict outcomes. The course emphasizes a conceptual understanding of the laws of physics with a moderate amount of mathematical problem-solving, relying on skills developed in Algebra II. Topics include selections from kinematics, force, energy, momentum electricity and magnetism, optics, light, heat, waves, and circuits.

Physics I Extended/Mechanics

Corequisite: Precalculus

Mechanics is an introductory physics course that systematically uses observation and inquiry to achieve a thorough understanding of Newtonian Mechanics. Students observe phenomena, model them mathematically, and use those models to predict future outcomes. This non-UL course is designed to introduce students to physics with a thorough understanding of Newtonian Mechanics and provide them with the necessary foundation upon which the UL Physics courses rely. Mechanics assumes that students are proficient at using algebra and trigonometric functions with minimal support, allowing the class to explore how objects rotate and move linearly. Topics include kinematics, force, energy, momentum, center of mass and rotational motion.

Physics Mechanics UL

Corequisite: Calculus UL

This course provides a systematic development of the main principles of physics, emphasizing problem-solving and helping students develop a deep understanding of physics concepts. Specifically, the class will cover kinematics, Newton's laws, work, energy, power, linear momentum, circular motion and rotation, oscillations, and gravitation. Strong emphasis is placed on solving a variety of challenging problems, some requiring calculus; the class will include a laboratory component.

SEMESTER ELECTIVES IN SCIENCE

Applied Research in Environmental Science—Field Ecology (Fall)

This course is designed for students who wish to engage in the scientific study of ecology and environmental science through extensive field investigations and experiments in the laboratory. We will explore topics such as water quality, biodiversity, and forest ecology, within the context of our need to feed, house, and provide energy for a growing global population. While there will be a significant amount of fieldwork and hands-on investigations over the course of the year, we will also spend a considerable amount of time discussing current events relating to these topics. Students will have the opportunity not only to build skills in the use of the scientific method, critical analysis, and the interrogation of data, but also to design and carry out their own experiments in the laboratory and in the field. One overnight trip is likely to be included as part of the course depending on student availability and scheduling.

Applied Research in Environmental Science—Climate Science and Environmental Justice (Spring)

Similar to the fall semester (see description above), this course will also use a hands-on approach to build the skills enumerated above, but the topic will be narrowed to the

science behind climate change and its relationship to social justice. If time permits, we will also learn about toxicology —another topic that is at the forefront of the social justice movement—through various laboratory and field experiments as well as case studies (e.g., Flint, Michigan).

Astrophysics (Spring)
Prerequisite: Algebra II
This course focuses on how physical laws determine the structure and evolution of stars, galaxies, and the universe as a whole. Emphasis is placed on understanding how observational evidence allows us to understand the universe. Topics will include the evolution of stars, galaxies and the universe as a whole. We will dig deep into the topics of gravity and spectroscopy to understand these cosmic processes. Students will analyze real data taken from astronomical objects. This is a fast-paced course that often uses algebra and trigonometry to model our universe and its laws. Facility and comfort with these mathematical topics is a must. Note: This course does NOT fulfill the physical science requirement.

Forensic Science (Fall and Spring)
Forensic Science is the application of scientific methods and techniques to gather and examine information used in a court of law. This is a lab-based, hands-on course that will explore the work of forensic scientists. Students will learn how forensic scientists collect and document physical evidence, conduct laboratory analysis, and present results during testimony in a court of law. During each semester, students will be introduced to topics such as the collection and sorting of crime scene evidence; blood spatter identification; DNA fingerprinting; biometric identification, ballistics, entomology, toxicology, and forensic anthropology. Students will be expected to solve staged classroom crimes using these techniques. The psychology of criminal activity and the legal implications of crime scene investigation will also be discussed. The program will examine actual case histories of crimes and requires students to apply basic understandings of physics, chemistry, biology, psychiatry, math, and more to reveal the whole story of a crime. Students are expected to work independently on both individual as well as group projects. The content for each semester will be independent of the other; one semester is not required in order to take the other, and students may take both semesters without having material repeat. Please note: Forensic Science does NOT fulfill the physical science requirement.

Game Theory (Fall)
Prerequisite: Algebra II
This semester-long course is designed for students to develop their ability to make and analyze strategic decisions during interactions (or as we call them: games). Students will learn to solve classic games, such as "chicken," while refining their strategies for more complex games, such as the repeated prisoner's dilemma. As we progress through the semester, we will study more advanced ideas such as strategic moves, ultimatums, Nash equilibriums, and strategic irrationality. The semester will conclude with a discussion of how to relate our understanding of game theory to real-life situations, ranging from navigating the internet to decision making during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Waves and Optics UL (Spring)
Prerequisite: Precalculus, Physics Mechanics, or Physics Mechanics UL
This semester-long course studies wave and light phenomena that is designed so students can answer questions like, "why can you see the screen you're looking at right now?" We will investigate the motion and interactions that both mechanical and electromagnetic waves experience and use that understanding to explain the wave phenomena that we experience in the world around us. We will analyze tools such as musical instruments, telescopes, and color-changing ink that we've created to take advantage of them. This course requires a strong foundation in algebra and trigonometry.

Quantum Mechanics UL (Fall)
Prerequisite: Calculus, Physics Mechanics, or Physics Mechanics UL
The motion and behavior of objects that are very small do not follow the rules of classical mechanics that we learned in introductory physics. Particles like protons and electrons do not have a definite position or velocity when examined closely. Instead the behavior of small particles, like atoms and molecules, is fundamentally statistical. Since all of us are made up of small particles, understanding their motion is key to understanding most small scale phenomena, like spectra and bonding. Additionally, quantum mechanical phenomena underlie many new devices in our world like MRI and quantum computers, and the influence of quantum mechanics will only become larger with increased miniaturization. In this course we will learn the rules of quantum mechanics, how to apply them, and look at

applications in the real world. This course has extensive problem solving which requires students to apply many different areas of mathematics and learn some new ones.

Modern Physics UL (Spring)
Prerequisite: Physics Mechanics or Physics Mechanics UL
Corequisite: Calculus
Introductory physics courses only teach concepts that were discovered before 1900, like motion, electricity, magnetism, and optics. Though those concepts are important, many of the technologies and problems in our world are rooted in modern physics. This course introduces students to modern physics concepts of nuclear physics, radioactivity, particle physics, and relativity, and explores their impact upon our world. Nuclear physics is the study of the nucleus of the atom from which great power can be extracted and relativity studies what happens to objects when they travel near the speed of light. Students will learn about the applications of these concepts like nuclear power, nuclear bombs, medical treatments, and interstellar travel.

WORLD LANGUAGES

Graduation Requirement: At least two successive years of the same language completed in high school.

The World Languages Department offers necessary courses, from introductory to upper level, across four language programs: Chinese, French, Spanish, and Latin. As students progress in their language study, they gain competency in auditory and oral skills, in reading and writing, and sociocultural awareness connected to the themes studied. Following the guidelines from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), students will demonstrate their language proficiency across the three communication modes (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational) and the five World Readiness Standards for language learning (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities).

The World Languages Department seeks to have students sufficiently proficient to ensure successful passage to the next sequential course. While a student with a low passing grade may advance to the next level, under such a circumstance the department strongly recommends that such students pursue significant remedial study prior to beginning a new course. Questions regarding study options may be directed to the department chair.

PLACEMENT

Initial placement of new-to-GDS students in language classes is determined by a language placement test given by the department. The placement test includes a written and an oral component. The goal is to determine the course that best develops each student's potential and continued growth, while also providing an environment in which the student is comfortable taking the academic risks that are essential to that growth.

Foundations I in Chinese
This course is designed both for students who have had no previous work in Chinese and those who need to perfect their novice-level skills before proceeding to Foundations II. Students strive for pronunciation accuracy by learning Pinyin romanization and tones. The course helps students develop basic communication skills by building a strong foundation of introductory vocabulary, phrases, and sentence structures. While the instructional emphasis is on oral communication, we introduce and engage in the reading and writing of simplified Chinese characters at this time. Authentic resources such as Chinese music, film, and videos provide comprehensible input to expand interpretive skills, while the use of varied in-class tasks and presentations promote communicative output. Chinese culture is one of the core elements in this first year of study.

Foundations II in Chinese
While continuing to focus on the development of oral/aural skills in communicative contexts, students work to improve their tonal precision, expand their vocabulary, and add to their library of key structures. Through focused practice in listening, speaking, reading and writing, students broaden their interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational skills. Reading selections, music, art, videos, and hands-on experiences further familiarize students with the culture of China.

Chinese Language & Culture
In this intermediate course, students continue to develop proficiency in speaking/listening and reading/writing on a wide variety of current themes and issues by learning advanced vocabulary and grammatical structures. The course's audio/visual material introduces students to everyday situations and to cultural traditions in the Chinese-speaking world. Great emphasis is placed on developing the students' skills in writing and presenting in Chinese.

Chinese Language & Culture II
Prerequisite: Chinese Language & Culture
This class is designed for students who have completed Chinese Language & Culture I. Students continue to work with the Far East Chinese for Youth series and to hone their ability to discuss cultural topics with greater proficiency in the target language. Technology plays a key role in teaching, learning, practicing, and developing outreach projects, including a pen pal program, video conferences, multimedia resources for the use of learning, and computer-based assessments.

Advanced Topics in Chinese Studies
This college-level course will focus on Chinese history, philosophy, literature, and culture. Students will explore Chinese history, culture, philosophy, and society as it has been presented in the 20th and 21st centuries through the

medium of film and literature. By engaging the contemporary uses of the Chinese language, students will work to improve their skills in the language and to broaden their awareness of its roots in a very rich and ancient past as well as the current issues of our day.

Advanced Topics in Chinese Studies II UL
This course aims to help students continue building a solid foundation of four basic skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—in an interactive and communicative learning environment. Organized in eight units by cultural themes over two semesters, students will have ongoing and varied opportunities to acquire extensive language skills and broad cultural exposure that reflects the rich diversity of Chinese language and culture. With a focus on current events and contemporary Chinese culture, the course deepens students' grounding in linguistic and cultural competencies and prepares them for advanced college-level study of Chinese.

Foundations I in French
This course is designed both for students who have had no previous work in French and those who need to perfect their novice-level skills before proceeding to Foundations II. It is geared toward proficiency-oriented language instruction. The three modes of communication—interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive—are reinforced throughout the year, providing students with tools to communicate effectively using the target language. Reading selections and videos introduce students to the geography and culture of France and other French-speaking areas of the world, encouraging students to reflect on their own culture and identity. This course is taught primarily in French.

Foundations II in French
This course is designed for students who have completed the French Foundations I course or have demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency. While continuing the development of oral-aural skills, students undertake a comprehensive study of grammatical concepts and build a large practical vocabulary. Students are also introduced to the narrative voice in the present and past. This course is geared toward proficiency-oriented language instruction. The three modes of communication—interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive—are emphasized to provide students with tools to communicate effectively using the target language. Reading selections and videos introduce students to the geography and culture of France and other French-speaking areas of the world, encouraging students to reflect on their own culture and identity. This course is taught primarily in French.

French Language & Culture
This course is designed for students who have completed the French Foundations II course or have demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency. At this level, students undertake a comprehensive study of advanced grammatical concepts and build a large practical vocabulary. Students continue to develop the narrative voice using varied and complex tenses. This course is geared toward proficiency-oriented language instruction. The three modes of communication—interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive—are emphasized to provide students with tools to communicate effectively using the target language. Reading selections such as articles and literary excerpts and videos introduce students to the geography and culture of the Francophone world. Such sources encourage students to make connections and comparisons between their perspectives and between other cultures. This course is taught entirely in French.

Introduction to French Literature
This course is designed for students who have completed the French Language and Culture course or have demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency. This course introduces students to the study of major French literary works and authentic videos to develop their reading and listening comprehension skills. Through the discussion of literary texts, videos, and cultural themes, students will recognize, review, and expand grammatical concepts in a cohesive manner and acquire an extensive vocabulary. Students are encouraged to speak and write more critically and analytically, thereby demonstrating a higher level of oral and written proficiency. This course is taught entirely in French.

Advanced French Language and Culture
This course is designed for students who have completed the Introduction to French Literature course or have demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency. It is a rigorous course, taught entirely in French, which requires students to improve their proficiency across three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. Students communicate while raising their self-awareness and appreciation of the world beyond their

own community. This course seeks to analyze themes related to historical and contemporary contexts, such as the current state of the planet and the environment, family and social relations, innovation and the ethical use of science, and identity formation.

Francophone Literature & Culture III
This upper-level course, taught entirely in French, is designed for students who have completed the Advanced French Language and Culture course or have demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency. It focuses on the Francophone world while further developing language skills and imparting a greater facility in speaking, reading, and writing in French. Following a historical introduction of the Francophone diaspora, this course explores the diversity of Francophone cultures and voices through the works of writers from Canada, the French Antilles, and western and northern Africa. This course seeks to analyze themes related to historical and contemporary contexts such as loss, exile, identity, and gender.

Foundations I in Latin
This course is designed both for students who have had no previous work in Latin and those who need to perfect their novice-level skills before proceeding to Foundations II.. Students learn Latin by reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This course covers the Cambridge Latin Course (CLC) Units 1 and 2, introducing students to a nuanced understanding of Roman daily life in ancient Pompeii and Britannia. During this first year, great emphasis is placed upon building a strong vocabulary and the fundamentals of the Latin noun and verb systems.

Foundations II in Latin
This course is designed for students who have completed Foundations I or who have demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency. Foundations II introduces students to more complex constructions of Latin, especially to its very flexible verb system and love of subordinate clauses. Building strong vocabulary and comprehension skills remain primary goals. Students pick up where they left off at the end of CLC Unit 2 in Roman Egypt, and continue their study of Britannia in CLC Unit 3. Students learn about and discuss Roman religion, military life, and various power dynamics and imbalances across the Empire.

Latin Language & Culture
This course completes the student's introduction to the Latin language. Students continue developing proficiency with a focus on comprehension, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills. Picking up in the middle of CLC Unit 3 and continuing with CLC Unit 4, students learn about the city of Rome, its rulers, and inhabitants, as well as expand their knowledge of Latin verbs and uses of nouns to prepare them to read and discuss authentic Classical Latin literature the following year.

Introduction to Latin Literature
This course introduces students to the study of ancient Latin poetry and prose by authors such as Ovid, Catullus, Horace, Vergil, and Pliny, among others. Students complete their work in CLC Unit 4 before moving on to adapted Latin literature. Focus is placed on reading and translating authentic Latin texts of increasing complexity, in addition to discussing and analyzing the cultural, historical, and mythological contexts of those texts. Students will review and expand grammatical concepts, acquire an extensive vocabulary, and be introduced to different meters and literary devices of Latin poetry in order to improve their interpretive reading skills. Through the critical lens of social justice and anti-oppression, students will analyze both authentic Latin literature and secondary Classical scholarship in order to broaden their perspective and engage ethically with the ancient world.

Advanced Latin Literature (Not offered in 2024-2025)
This course offers students the opportunity to read a variety of authentic ancient Latin poetry and prose by authors including Ovid, Catullus, Horace, Vergil, Livy, and Pliny, among others. Focus is placed on reading and translating authentic Latin prose and poetry, in addition to discussing and analyzing the cultural, historical, and mythological contexts of those texts. Driven by inquiry, students will explore some of the great themes of ancient civilization that continue to confront us such as gender and social inequality, the place of religion, civic duty, and morality. Building upon their work in Introduction to Latin Literature, Advanced Latin Literature students will continue to analyze both authentic Latin literature and secondary Classical scholarship with the critical lens of social justice and anti-oppression in order to broaden their perspective and engage ethically with the ancient world.

Foundations in Spanish
This course is designed both for students who have had no previous work in Spanish and those who need to perfect their novice-level skills before proceeding to Integrations. Students learn how to communicate on very familiar topics using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences. Through various media, students encounter aspects of diverse cultures of the Spanish-speaking world, building respect and openness to practices and perspectives beyond their own. The three modes of communication–interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive–are reinforced throughout the year. This course is taught primarily in Spanish.

Integrations in Spanish
Designed for students who have completed Foundations or demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency, this course continues building all four competencies (listening, reading, speaking, and writing). Through a series of simple sentences in given contexts, students navigate everyday situations and begin creating personal meaning with the language. Emphasis is placed not only on students' further engagement with materials from Spanish-speaking cultures but also on cultural comparisons between students' own backgrounds and those of the Hispanic world. This course is taught primarily in Spanish.

Applications in Spanish
Designed for students who have completed Integrations or demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency, this course continues strengthening all modes of communication: interpreting, conversing, and presenting. Students practice maintaining conversations with one another, as well as understanding and expressing information, both in greater detail and across multiple time frames, on a variety of topics. These include aspects of everyday life, personal interests, and cultural practices within the Spanish-speaking world. This course is taught entirely in Spanish.

Spanish Language & Culture
This course is designed for students who have completed Applications or who have demonstrated the equivalent level of proficiency. Emphasis is placed on developing more advanced structures in various timeframes and expanding vocabulary, applied to more extensive oral and written presentations, both individually and in groups. Students explore in greater depth socio-cultural, historical, and literary topics, often addressing issues of social justice and marginalization through authentic supplementary resources. This course is taught entirely in Spanish.

Introduction to Literature & Film in Spanish
This course is designed for students who have completed the Spanish Language & Culture course or have taken a specific placement exam to demonstrate the equivalent level of proficiency. This course introduces students to the study of modern and contemporary writers and filmmakers from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain. Focus is placed on literary texts and films that cover a range of diverse cultural, historical, and social themes. Students expand their vocabulary and refine their oral and written expression through class discussions, presentations, creative compositions, and persuasive and analytical essays. Additional authentic resources such as interviews, short videos, and articles enhance students' interpretive skills and help deepen their analysis. This course is taught entirely in Spanish.

Advanced Topics of the Spanish-Speaking World
This course is designed for students who have completed Introduction to Literature & Film in Spanish. Works by authors from Spain, Latin America, and the Caribbean provide a base for cross-cultural exploration and discussion of cultural, historical, literary, and sociopolitical issues. Students further integrate critical thinking skills with their language proficiency to examine topics related to cultural identity, immigration, gender issues, contemporary political trends, race, indigeneity, and others. The course stresses proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking at an advanced level through various cultural genres, including music, film, literature, and journalism. Emphasis is placed on advanced vocabulary expansion and acquisition.

Advanced Literature and Culture in the Spanish-Speaking World UL
Prerequisite: Permission of the department
This course seeks to take students beyond Advanced Topics and into academic inquiry regarding major literary, sociocultural, and historical trends of the Spanish-speaking world. For those students who have fulfilled the sequence of courses already offered at GDS, UL Spanish allows students to continue their journey of inquiry into the Spanish-speaking world by focusing on literature and culture. As such, this course seeks to use literature as a

vehicle for inquiry into language and culture. Students will further develop their interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational skills by delving into profound analysis of a major work of literature from the Spanish-speaking world. Thus, students will better appreciate the diversity of the Spanish-speaking world through its varied array of literatures.

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