



Curriculum Guide

THE PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING & LEARNING

At SF Day, we ignite curiosity. We cultivate a diverse, nurturing community that encourages learners to expand their perspectives and become their true selves. Students develop as compassionate, creative problem-solvers, prepared to thrive in an ever-changing world. SF Day believes that lifelong learning and a growth mindset are essential to the success of not only every student, but also every educator.

SF Day's Lower School's educational philosophy is grounded in foundational academic skills where students learn how to learn — metacognition — while also developing a complex sense of identity as an individual community member and learner. Students develop a range of literacies, both specific and generalizable, including language and communication, mathematic, scientific, historical, cultural, visual, and social practices and applications.

The Lower School curriculum is focused on exploring core knowledge that also incorporates variation based on a student's strengths and choice driven by their interests and passions. This approach instills competence and confidence in Lower Schoolers, giving them the tools to tackle challenges and start finding areas of passion. In these years of discovery, the process of learning and making mistakes is prioritized over simply getting the "right answer." This growth mindset and framework of academic challenge fosters both trust and a deep sense of belonging; students are celebrated in bringing their whole self to school and discovering pieces of their identity along their learning journey.

By the end of Lower School, students are fully prepared for the increased challenge and pace of work in the Middle School and beyond.

Middle School is a time of great change for students — this comes as no surprise! Academically, Middle Schoolers are ready to delve more deeply into subject areas, seek out individual courses of study, and use their understanding of themselves as learners to collaborate. Learning how to solve complex problems and think critically is a crucial part of a Middle Schooler's self-discovery, both of their intellectual interests and of who they are as people. By understanding themselves, they then can advocate for others — all while synthesizing new subjects, themes, and information.

Student voice and choice are at the center of our pedagogy. When students have agency, they make huge leaps as scholars and stay motivated as learners. Developing their authentic voice is an essential part of the transition to early adolescence and adulthood, and will help them be successful during their high school years. Students enter high school with a strong academic foundation, a solid sense of self, and a love of learning.













Dr. Kaili Hwang
Associate Head of School



Dr. Kate McCallum
Head of Lower School



Aneesha Srikar
Head of Middle School

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Our comprehensive English language arts (ELA) curriculum provides students with a wide range of learning experiences, guiding them in developing essential skills for reading, interpreting, and communicating with the world around them. Throughout their journey at SF Day, students write for diverse audiences, learn different approaches to reading for varied purposes, learn critical patterns and structures of language, and expand and enrich their vocabulary to communicate purposefully and clearly. These elements work harmoniously to equip students to transition seamlessly between thoughts and words.

Teaching in ELA goes beyond simply imparting knowledge; it is about nurturing a deep understanding that empowers students to navigate the world around them effectively. ELA inspires students to broaden their horizons, think creatively in solving intricate problems, and shape their ethical compass. Encouraging students to venture beyond their comfort zones in verbal and written communication fosters a culture of exploration, which, within a supportive environment that values experimentation and recognizes progress, allows them to embrace their individuality and explore diverse forms of self-expression.

By systematically honing reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities through evidence-based methodologies, students evolve into analytical thinkers capable of engaging with complex texts, articulating thoughts cohesively, and engaging confidently in nuanced dialogues. This approach not only enhances linguistic skills but also cultivates critical thinking skills that are essential for navigating a dynamic and interconnected world.

Reading

The SF Day educational journey cultivates a profound appreciation for reading. Students explore a diverse range of texts spanning various genres, lengths, complexities, and forms. Students refine analysis, synthesis, and critical thinking skills as they progress through each grade level, enabling them to draw informed conclusions based on robust reasoning.

Writing

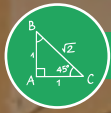
Students recognize the power of articulate and purposeful writing. Through exposure to multiple writing frameworks, students develop and refine their unique writing styles, adeptly composing writing based on the needs of different contexts. By embracing diverse writing forms and engaging in comprehensive revision processes, students harness writing as a medium for creativity, self-expression, and the fortification of critical thinking skills.

Listening

Active listening fosters empathy and comprehension. By participating in age-appropriate discussions, seminars, and interactive lessons, students learn the art of attentive listening, processing information thoughtfully, and formulating responses that respectfully challenge ideas and contribute to mutual understanding.

Speaking

Collaborative knowledge-sharing enriches the learning experience. Through academic dialogues emphasizing evidence-based arguments and interpretations, students refine their ability to present information, articulate viewpoints clearly, and communicate effectively. Students cultivate the art of persuasive communication and confident expression by engaging in structured discussions with peers.



SF Day's mathematics program fosters agile thinking in students, instilling a proactive approach toward investigating, analyzing, and efficiently resolving new problems with numerical proficiency and procedural fluency. The program equips students with the competencies, confidence, and understanding to leverage mathematics as a creative and problem-solving tool across various contexts, both inside and outside mathematics.

We nurture mathematicians who approach learning with fearlessness, depth, and curiosity by cultivating connections, utilizing visual representations, critical evaluation of work, exploring diverse strategies, and effective communication of insights. By engaging in these practices, students develop a robust foundation in mathematics that enables them to embrace challenges, experiment with different ideas and processes, and collaborate effectively in their mathematical explorations.

Making Connections

By leveraging a solid grasp of numerical value, computational techniques, abstract challenges, and the integration of visual models, students apply diverse mathematical concepts to hone their problem-solving skills through interconnected reasoning and analysis.

Exploring Varied Strategies

Through mathematical fluency and a versatile toolbox of problem-solving approaches, students illuminate multiple pathways and solutions adeptly when faced with intricate mathematical problems.

Expressing Comprehension

Our students practice reflective evaluation and collaborative discussions surrounding their work and that of their peers. This process supports students in recognizing the significance of the mathematical process as a fundamental skill, ensuring precision, accuracy, and a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts.





Children demonstrate an innate curiosity toward understanding the complexities of our natural world. Through meticulous observation and hands-on exploration, students gain an appreciation for the boundless opportunities for discovery enabled by the scientific process. The study of science is a collaborative pursuit aimed at harnessing students' inherent inquisitiveness to help refine concepts and empower them to actively contribute to understanding the intricate workings of the world.

In science, students are encouraged and expected to cultivate a broad understanding of the physical universe by delving into inquiries regarding the mechanisms, identities, and phenomena around them. As they embark on this learning, students often discover new paradoxes and generate further questions, engaging in a recursive process of exploration and synthesis of new understanding. Our science curriculum helps develop essential skills and cognitive faculties among students, providing experience in practices ranging from observation, description, and prediction to hands-on experimentation, data analysis, and interpretation within the framework of purposeful scientific experimentation.

Methodologies such as collaborative initiatives, practical applications in real-world contexts, and project-based learning students utilize the scientific method to address intricate and pertinent challenges.

Students work together through structured inquiry and collaboration to tackle real-world problems and create novel solutions or inventions. Using this iterative process of research, construction, testing, and refinement, students gain a first-hand understanding of the influence and impact they might have on the world.

Real-World Applications

Students refine their scientific proficiency by questioning and exploring the dynamics of the world that envelops them. With a systematic approach to seeking, testing, and analyzing phenomena in their daily experiences, students encounter the tangible relevance of scientific principles firsthand.

Open Collaboration

By collectively navigating diverse challenges, students cultivate a scientific mindset in partnership with their peers. Sharing successes and setbacks fosters a profound understanding of the dynamic and iterative nature of the scientific process.





Social studies supports students in questioning and comprehending the dynamic world around them. Through various disciplines such as history, geography, civics, economics, and culture, students acquire profound insights into the factors influencing societies, nations, and individuals. This provides students with the necessary knowledge to effectively navigate the intricate landscape of the contemporary world and to make well-informed decisions as global citizens.

Social studies' objectives encourage a comprehensive grasp of historical viewpoints, systems and structures of governance, and diverse global cultures. Students are immersed in the diverse landscape of the socio-political context of events throughout human history. We cultivate engaged citizens who not only confront the complexities of societal issues but also strive to construct a world that embodies their core values and aspirations.

Critical Analysis of History

Students examine the consequences of historical decision-making and understand the significance of critical analysis of the past to effect change in the future. Engaging in purposeful projects empowers students to cultivate skills for autonomous research using tools such as rubrics, checklists, and feedback mechanisms.

Exploration of Varied Perspectives

Students explore the impact of personal identity and narratives on recorded history to further their self-awareness. Equipped with this awareness, they assess how diverse identities contribute to their community and beyond, aspiring to become advocates for inclusivity and understanding.

Proficiency in Assessing Primary and Secondary Sources

Determining the credibility of sources is a critical skill for students. Students learn to interpret reliable documents and research materials, analyze information critically to form their viewpoints, and evaluate sources for accuracy and potential biases. Engagement with peers enables them to refine their perspectives through constructive dialogue and debate.





The Spanish and Latin programs at SF Day enhance students' linguistic proficiency and nurture intercultural understanding. By immersing students in diverse cultures, highlighting linguistic connections, and fostering a student-centric atmosphere, we aim to empower each student to flourish as a global citizen.

Engaging with Diverse Cultures

Immersion in diverse cultures through language learning allows for the development of effective communication and cultural appreciation. Students are encouraged to engage with a variety of cultures to cultivate respect and empathy for global communities.

Emphasizing Connections Between Languages

Acknowledging the interplay between languages is key. The study of foreign languages at SF Day complements ELA education by emphasizing similarities and differences between various languages and English, enriching students' grasp of multiple linguistic realms.

Fostering a Student-Centered Environment

Creating a student-centered learning environment is pivotal in fostering language skills that endure beyond the classroom. By offering a supportive and expressive setting emphasizing the joy of language learning, students develop a lasting affinity for languages as a lifelong asset.





Innovation & Technology at SF Day empowers students with the essential skills, practical experiences, and adaptive mindset necessary for tackling challenges in an unpredictable future. Through an interactive and iterative approach to robotics, coding, and digital ethics, we encourage our students to cultivate the confidence needed to explore innovative solutions that contribute to the betterment of society.

A Comprehensive Curriculum

Our dynamic curriculum at SF Day integrates hands-on labs where students showcase computational proficiency, design thinking capabilities, and foundational computer science principles. This immersive educational approach nurtures students into adept media literates and tech-savvy digital citizens.

Promoting Media Literacy

Empowering students with the critical skills to navigate today's digital landscape is imperative. Through guidance and structured activities, students learn to analyze, create, and interact with media content responsibly, fostering a heightened awareness of digital influences and ethical considerations.

Culture of Innovation

Within our Innovation Lab, students are encouraged to approach real-world issues by fostering a culture of experimentation, learning from setbacks, and embracing a continuous cycle of improvement. Through this iterative process of experimentation, failure, reflection, and design, students deepen their confidence and openness to try new things.





The SF Day library stands as the cornerstone of the academic framework, actively engaging and enabling students in their intellectual and creative endeavors within and beyond the confines of the classroom. By refining their library proficiency and research acumen, critiquing and responding to literary works, and fostering a deep appreciation for literature, we empower students to ethically harness ideas and information.

Library Proficiency and Research Acumen

A library is a place of exploration where students delve into diverse ideas, perspectives, and cultures. Library personnel are there to help students navigate library resources, equipping them with the skills to extract valuable insights from reliable sources for their research endeavors.

Critical Analysis and Engagement with Literature

Engaging in reading, discourse, critical assessment, reflective writing, and sharing insights on a wide variety of texts is a critical part of our students' literacy journey. Our expert library staff curates a book collection that resonates with both the academic syllabus and the individual reading preferences of students, making the library a space of both learning and joy. This is one of the many spaces and curricula at SF Day that help students nurture a lifelong affinity for the written word.





Our music program introduces students to a universal language, fostering an enduring appreciation for musical expression. Through an emphasis on in-depth study of at least one instrument starting in the elementary years, students build their musical aptitude and engage in frequent opportunities for performance. Upon graduating from SF Day, students leave with both the skill of creating their own music and a deep appreciation for the effort and perseverance needed to do so.

Comprehensive Instrumental Study

Diving deep into the study of at least one instrument equips students with practical musical skills that complement their theoretical understanding, providing them with a well-rounded foundation in music.

Versatile Musical Development

Students actively participate in listening exercises, improvisation, ear training, and exploration of diverse musical traditions, enhancing their musical versatility and appreciation for a wide spectrum of musical genres and styles.

Regular Performance Opportunities

Emphasizing regular sharing of musical talents across various platforms, students develop the ability to perform with grace, readiness, and assurance in diverse settings. These consistent performance experiences instill in students a sense of poise, preparedness, and self-assurance essential for musical expression and communication.





Art serves as a platform for students to bring their unique and imaginative concepts to life, encouraging them to view art as a form of communication intertwined with history, society, and cultural narratives. Our art program encourages creativity through play, discovery, and experimentation with a diverse range of traditional and unconventional art materials. Over the course of their learning, students interpret various artistic traditions, explore multiple techniques, and express their artistic voice.

Exploration of Diverse Artistic Expressions

Students are encouraged to move beyond the works of renowned artists and explore the diverse styles, methodologies, and cultural inspirations spanning different eras and regions. Through initiatives like the Artist of the Month program, students across grade levels engage with a new artist each month, enriching their understanding of artistic expressions.

Adaptability in Techniques and Mediums

From painting to ceramics and other mediums, students refine their artistic skills by experimenting with varied techniques and materials, fostering a holistic view of visual expression's transformative power.

Encouraging Individual Artistic Voice

With a solid foundation in technical skills and art theories, students are motivated to view art creation as a platform for authentic, open, and genuine self-expression. This approach nurtures students' ability to visually communicate and channel their creative intellect into meaningful and personal artwork.





Physical Education at SF Day instills a lifelong appreciation for physical activity, health, and wellness. We emphasize a growth mindset in developing wellness practices and athletic skills, establishing feasible goals, wholehearted engagement, and participation in a supportive setting. Our primary objective is to develop fundamental skills, a keen interest in physical well-being, an understanding of and respect for various team and individual sports, and the self-assurance and motivation to engage in a wide range of physical endeavors.

Skill Development and Confidence Building

Exposure to a diverse array of individual and team sports equips students with vital skills such as spatial awareness, movement coordination, teamwork collaboration, empathy, and specialized sports knowledge. This comprehensive approach prepares them for opportunities in high school and beyond, fostering a well-rounded athletic approach.

Empathy and Sportsmanship

Embraced within a culture that values honesty, compassion, and perseverance, students are guided toward embodying a healthy perspective on competition, teamwork, and sportsmanship. This nurturing environment encourages students to approach physical activities with integrity, kindness, and a spirit of fair play.



San Francisco Day School

350 Masonic Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94118

www.sfday.org

Main Office

Tel: (415) 931-2422
Hours: 8:00 am-4:00 pm
(Mon-Fri)

Admission Office

Tel: (415) 568-3611
Email: admission@sfday.org

