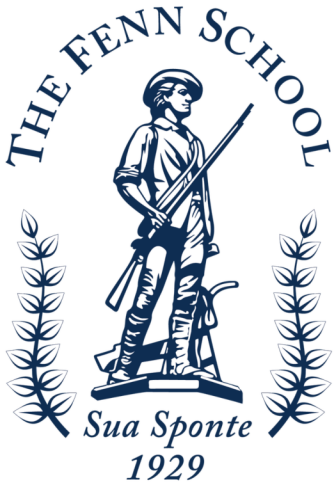


THE FENN SCHOOL

CURRICULUM GUIDE

FENN

Curriculum Guide

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CURRICULUM and PEDAGOGY

Fenn's academic program is thoughtfully tailored to boys in grades 4 through 9. The curriculum and pedagogy encourage active participation, collaboration, and hands-on learning. It is also a deliberately broad program, offering a range of learning opportunities that allow teachers to create educational experiences that motivate each boy, engage him in intellectual discovery, and build his confidence.

Our Lower School provides an intimate and nurturing environment that helps boys of all backgrounds, abilities, and interests grow their self-confidence as students and individuals. Small-group team teaching also provides individualized support or challenge.

Our Middle School boys are challenged to take responsibility for their education. We encourage them to ask the hard questions, to seek help when it is needed, and to partner with the Fenn adults to help fuel their curiosities and passions.

In our Upper School, classes increase in complexity and sophistication to prepare boys for the next steps in their educational journeys. Boys are expected to think critically and contribute substantively, and seminar-format classes and group projects require it.

This curriculum guide is intended to provide information about Fenn's mission and philosophy, the School's academic policies and requirements, and course descriptions organized by department.

We hope that you find this information helpful whether you are considering Fenn or want to be able to gain deeper insight into the offerings of our academic program.

Sincerely,

Nat Carr '97
Assistant Head of School
Head of Lower School

Kate Wade
Head of Middle School

Dave Irwin
Head of Upper School

MISSION and PHILOSOPHY

Mission

Guided by our motto, *Sua Sponte*, and inspired by our core values of honesty, respect, empathy, and courage, The Fenn School challenges each boy to take responsibility for himself, for his own education, and for the well-being of others. Our boys thrive in a diverse community that celebrates our shared humanity and embraces difference. As part of an ever-changing, interdependent world, Fenn empowers each boy to develop strong character and lead with integrity.

Philosophy

Sua Sponte
Our motto, *Sua Sponte*, challenges boys to accept responsibility for their own learning and lives and instills in them a sense of obligation to others.

Core Values
Shared values of honesty, respect, empathy, and courage provide the moral underpinnings of our school community and offer an ethical context for shaping the individual character of each boy.

With distinctive elementary, middle, and early high school programs, Fenn provides:

- A nurturing community dedicated to relational teaching that gives boys meaningful opportunities to thrive and grow into lifelong learners. Teachers and boys build personal connections within a shared community that emphasizes relationships and a mutual learning environment.

- A supportive environment where boys learn self-reliance, confidence, and resilience. Boys are encouraged to develop personal responsibility and build self-advocacy skills to prepare them for their adolescent and secondary school years.

- An understanding of the cognitive, academic, emotional, social, leadership, and character-development needs of boys, along with a recognition of their differences as individuals and learners.

- A challenging program of substantial breadth and depth in academics, the arts, and athletics that, through versatile teaching methods, teaches boys of strong intellectual ability, high academic potential, and varied learning styles.

- A stimulating curriculum that empowers boys to discover their talents, develop their intellectual curiosity, establish their essential knowledge, define their moral character, and build their leadership skills, preparing them for secondary school and beyond.

- An inclusive community that respects and celebrates the world's human diversity, including differences in culture, race, religion, gender identity, ethnicity, socio-economic background, and sexual orientation.

- Opportunities for boys to invest their time, effort, and resources in service learning, sustainability, and philanthropic activities, inspiring them to pursue ethical and empathetic global citizenship.

The Meaning of *Sua Sponte*

Since its founding, Fenn has emphasized the School motto, *Sua Sponte*, which is interpreted to each student as meaning that he, and he alone, is ultimately responsible for his own education.

The following description was written by the founder, Roger C. Fenn, who was The Fenn School's Headmaster until 1960*:*

> *In 1928-1929 when the original concept for The Fenn School was crystallizing in the minds of the founders, a mental mining operation began in search of a motto for the School.* Sua Sponte *was suggested by my father, Dean William Wallace Fenn, and promptly accepted. Applied to school life, the motto means that you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink. You cannot pour education into a child as you pump gasoline into a car, and you cannot provide him with athletic victories merely by your ever-so-skillful coaching; the job itself is up to him.*

The founder's original concept may be further clarified in light of his having included in the School seal not only the motto but also a picture of the statue of the Concord Minuteman. When the Minuteman left his plow and shouldered his gun, he showed his determination to take into his own hands the responsibility for his own government and that of his people.

Each boy receives guidance and support in accepting a continuing and growing responsibility to himself, to his fellow students, to his School, and to the larger community.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Course Program Requirements and Revisions

A student's continuation at Fenn and his being awarded a Fenn diploma at the close of grades eight or nine are contingent upon the student's successful completion of the course program stipulated by the School for each year of his enrollment.

Each student at Fenn must enroll in all the courses prescribed by the School as the standard course schedule for the grade in which he is enrolled (or in a revised course program approved by the School). The prescribed course program is subject to change, as needed, based on the School's mission and resources.

Lower School students are required to enroll in four academic courses each term, along with completing courses in the arts and participating in athletics. Middle and Upper School students are required to enroll in five academic courses each term, adding Foreign Languages to their coursework. They also must complete courses in the arts and participate in the Fenn athletic program.

Any potential change in a student's course of study must be approved by his Division Head. The School evaluates the merits of a requested revision in a student's studies based on his specific educational needs. The School grants course-of-study revisions only in circumstances that serve the individual student's educational needs while maintaining the integrity of the School's educational program. Generally, as part of their Fenn program, students are not allowed to pursue courses that are taught by non-Fenn faculty. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the respective Division Head.

Questions regarding a student's course of study should be directed to the Head of each boy's division, who will consult, as needed, with other administrators to obtain the requested information or consideration.

Good Academic Standing

In order to continue his enrollment at Fenn from year to year, a student must remain in good academic standing. Students in the Lower School must meet expectations in each subject area. Students in the Middle and Upper Schools must achieve grades of C- or higher in each subject with an overall yearly average of C. For any student who does not attain good academic standing by year-end, the School will review his performance and assess his potential for academic success in subsequent grades. The School will then make a determination regarding the student's eligibility to continue at Fenn in the next grade. Repeating a grade at Fenn is extremely rare and is done only with special permission and compelling circumstances in the judgment of the School. In the rare instance of a student whose academic needs and performance indicate that he is not being well served by Fenn, the School may require a boy to withdraw from Fenn during the course of the academic year. This action would be taken only after extensive consideration of the boy's needs and thorough communication with his parents/guardians.

GRADING PROCEDURES and HONOR ROLLS

Grading Procedures

Academic grades are given in the Middle and Upper School based on the work a student produces. The scale of academic grades is as follows:

A+/A = Excellent work **B** = Good work **C** = Satisfactory work
D = Poor work **E** = Unsatisfactory work

A+	97-100	A	93-96	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62
E	59 and below				

Lower School

Lower School students receive *Sua Sponte* grades for Observable Learning Behaviors, as well as for specific performance-based skills within each academic discipline.

Middle School and Upper School

In each Middle and Upper School academic class, an average is calculated for a student's academic work. A student receives academic grades and each teacher's assessment of three Observable Learning Behaviors: engagement, preparation, and conduct. Observable Learning Behaviors do not affect the academic grade in a class. At the middle of each semester, academic grades are also accompanied by teacher comments.

In all three divisions, grades are assigned, and report cards are made available multiple times during the year. Teachers write comments for Middle School and Upper School academic and arts courses and complete academic skills checklists and comments for all Lower School academic and arts courses. All students also receive a summary advisor letter. The timing and frequency of these comments, checklists, and letters are consistent in each division. Report cards and letters and/or course comments are available to parents/guardians shortly after the end of each semester.

GRADING PROCEDURES and HONOR ROLLS

Honor Rolls

Lower School

As the Lower School represents a time when students and their parents/guardians are expected to focus upon each boy's acclimation to Fenn and the development of the academic skills and habits he will require for success later in his Fenn career, Lower School students do not receive academic grades and therefore do not receive Academic Honors or High Honors recognition.

Middle School and Upper School

Academic Honors and High Honors are awarded to Middle and Upper School students based on their academic term grades in each class, including arts.

Academic Honors

Each course in which an academic term grade is given is assigned five (5) credits. These credits are the basis for calculating Honors and High Honors recognition. Academic Honors are determined according to the following method:

Any term grade below B- disqualifies a student for Academic Honors or High Honors.

For each course the student is taking, the course credit is multiplied by the number for its letter grade according to the following scale:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-
1	2	3	4	5	6

Their products are added, and the total is divided by the total number of course credits for all courses graded during the term.

A quotient of 3.0 or lower qualifies for Academic Honors, and a quotient of 2.0 or lower qualifies for Academic High Honors.

Fenn Scholars

In the Middle and Upper Schools, students who have achieved High Academic Honors each semester are recognized as Fenn Scholars at the end of the school year.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Diplomas are conferred to members of the graduating class by the Head of School and Trustees, with the assent of the faculty. Failing a course for the year, receiving unsatisfactory citizenship grades, not meeting attendance requirements, or having any outstanding tuition balance will jeopardize a student's graduation and may lead the School to withhold his diploma.

Diplomas for graduates are awarded with Honors and with High Honors based on two years' work: graduating ninth grade students' grades in eighth and ninth grades and graduating eighth grade students' grades in seventh and eighth grades. Students who have achieved a combination of Academic Honors and/or High Honors each term for two years graduate with Honors. Students who are Fenn Scholars in both years graduate with High Honors. Special considerations are made for graduates who only attended Fenn for one year.

Eighth-Grade Diplomas

All students who leave Fenn at the end of the eighth grade are awarded an eighth-grade diploma at graduation. During graduation week, there is a celebratory event for all eighth graders and their parents/guardians. This celebration recognizes and honors the members of the entire class—students remaining for ninth grade and those who are graduating. Every boy who attends Fenn remains a member of his class regardless of when he leaves the School.

A student who is awarded an eighth-grade diploma may not subsequently return to Fenn for his ninth-grade year. Exceptions to this policy will be considered by the Head of School only in the case of extraordinary circumstances.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: ARTS

The Fenn Arts Department fosters creativity, curiosity, and self-expression by offering a wide range of artistic disciplines, including drama, music, and studio arts. Through exploration of new artistic mediums and embracing creative risk and challenge along the way, our students come to appreciate not only the product but the process of art-making itself as an essential part of personal growth and well-being. We strive to cultivate both a skill set and mindset in our students that extends beyond the studio or stage and inspires in them a lifelong appreciation for and engagement with the arts.

Through hands-on learning, collaborative projects, and individual exploration, we emphasize process over product, allowing students to experiment, reflect, and develop their own voice. We teach a diverse array of artistic practices to provide students with a broad and enriching creative experience. Success is measured by students' growth in creativity, confidence, and commitment to art-making, as well as their ability to engage with and appreciate the world through an artistic lens.

DRAMA

Fourth-grade drama students at Fenn participate in a variety of games and exercises designed to develop skills in observation, sensory and emotional awareness, pantomime, and improvisation. Working together, students focus on the dual performance skills of speech and movement. They learn basic theater vocabulary, stage directions, and stage movement techniques, with an emphasis on ensemble work and being part of a team. Time is also spent learning how to be a positive and polite audience member. Each student will take part in a short performance at the end of each quarter for the Lower School Arts Celebration.

Following a review of basic acting techniques, **fifth-grade drama** students will participate in a short one-act play with a special focus on Ancient Greek Theatre, one of the origins of modern-day theater. Once roles have been assigned, students will personalize their parts through character analysis and design. Continuing the emphasis on ensembles, students are expected to support each other at all times, both on stage and backstage. The play, with costumes and simple sets, is presented at the Lower School Arts Celebration at the end of the quarter.

The sixth-grade drama program reviews previously learned skills and introduces students to the words and works of William Shakespeare, known fondly as the *Fenn Shakespeare Series*. Students learn historical background information about Shakespeare and his time. All students participate in scenes from well-known Shakespeare plays, including *Julius Caesar*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *MacBeth*, and more! The scripts used are adaptations that allow students to become familiar with authentic Shakespearean language, characters, and plots. The scenes are presented to a sixth-grade audience at the end of each course.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: ARTS

The seventh-grade drama program offers an introduction to the art of improvisation. During the module, students will learn about the rules of improvisation through the use of various games, activities, and strategies. They will learn how to collaborate and work as a team, how to improve their listening skills, how to take more risks and be spontaneous, and how to approach a scene without judgment and be open to different perspectives. The module will conclude with a performance for families and the entire middle school.

The Upper School drama program offers a comprehensive list of opportunities in all aspects of theater. Building on the foundation acquired in the Lower and Middle School drama programs, the pieces selected and performed in the Upper School are advanced and require artistic commitment, truthful characterization, effective ensemble work, and risk-taking. Actors receive individual attention with regard to acting skills such as character development, emotional expression, physical movement, motivation, vocal delivery, and staging techniques.

Drama offerings vary by term but include the fall drama production and the spring musical. Many of the courses require additional time commitments beyond the scheduled class periods, as well as weekend performances. Each of these courses culminates in at least one performance, and some plays are performed for audiences two or three times.

The Theater Tech program covers the technical aspects of a theater production, allowing our boys to gain in-depth experience in lighting, sound, set design, and stage management. Students are expected to learn the history and theory of various effects as well as their practical use. This course is organized so that half of the time boys are involved in 'hands-on' experience while the remainder is conducted in a lecture and discussion setting. Class members may be called upon to assist technically with the Upper School fall play, the Middle School fall play, the Fenn musical, the Upper School spring comedy, and various Lower School plays.

MUSIC

Fenn provides a robust choral and instrumental music program. In addition to curricular offerings, the School offers a thriving performance ensemble roster that includes the Treble Chorus boys' choir, First Year Band, Second Year Band, Concert Band, Marching Band, Jazz Band, and String Ensemble. Instrumental lessons taught by professional tutors are also available for boys in all grades.

Lower School

The Lower School music program includes opportunities for movement, singing, percussion instruments, recorder, music literacy, world music, and performing. In addition to curricular classes, many Lower School students elect to participate in co-curricular opportunities such as the Treble Chorus or an instrumental ensemble.

In **fourth grade**, students actively participate in a wide variety of musical experiences. Emphasis is placed on movement, which includes games, rhythmic exercises, and drumming. Students learn breathing exercises and vocalizations to support proper vocal technique. Students learn solfege with kodaly hand signals, sing in unison and in rounds, and learn folk songs and songs in the Fenn Song Book. Students are introduced to Western classical music literacy through playing recorder, including reading rhythmic notations and beginning reading on the treble clef. Students perform at the end of each quarter for the Lower School Arts Celebration and have the opportunity to sing with the fifth graders. Games promote critical listening and note reading skills. Discussions and listening lessons chosen from the works of classical, popular, and non-Western musicians prepare students to apply basic musical terminology and theory to effectively critique and describe music. Music history components focus on the Baroque and Classical eras and representative composers, and non-western music is also introduced.

The fifth-grade music program utilizes a variety of classical, popular, folk, and non-Western music to build upon skills and knowledge acquired in the fourth grade. Vocal technique, music reading, listening skills, and critique are reinforced. Students sing in two part harmony. Continued keyboard instruction allows students to play simple melodies and learn basic chords. Music history elements focus on the Baroque and Romantic eras and representative composers, as well as African and African-American styles. Performance continues to be an important goal of the fifth-grade program. Students perform at the end of each quarter for the Lower School Arts Celebration.

Middle School

Sixth-grade music students build upon skills and knowledge acquired in the Lower School program. Composition and music analysis become the focus in the Middle School. Note reading skills and principles of form, unity, contrast, and texture are applied through musical composition. Students create several pieces, both collaboratively and individually, using Sibelius and GarageBand. Students present these original compositions in class and critique one another's works, applying musical terminology.

Seventh-grade music students study multiple genres of music within historical context. The course primarily focuses on the history of western music from the Middle Ages onward, but some nonwestern genres are included in the curriculum. GarageBand and Sibelius composing programs are utilized to demonstrate an understanding of musical texture, orchestration, harmony, and form. Students create and share individual and collaborative projects, including a harmonization of the famous Pachelbel Canon.

Upper School

The Upper School music program presents opportunities for composition, instrumental and vocal music, and dance. Offerings are designed to appeal to a wide variety of interests, abilities, and confidence levels. Admittance into classes is not by audition but a willingness to take risks, and a commitment to improve one's skills is expected.

Music offerings vary by term, but include Composition, Steel Drums, Dance, Introduction to Guitar, and the winter musical. In addition to the curricular music program, students may elect to enroll in one of the instrumental ensembles offered.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: ARTS

STUDIO ARTS

Studio Arts classes at Fenn develop students' creative skills primarily in the mediums of drawing and painting. We approach the creative process through the lens of the Eight Studio Habits of Mind: *Engage & Persist, Stretch & Explore, Develop Craft, Observe, Reflect, Envision, Express, and Understand the Arts Community*. This framework allows us to take a holistic approach to the development of every student's unique skill set, process, and artistic voice. Our art is often inspired by the works of visiting artists in our own Kane Gallery or from images of global contemporary artists.

Fourth-grade studio art students jump right into the creative process with games and explorations that encourage creative thinking and classroom connections. From there, we embark upon longer-term drawing and painting projects that are often inspired by the work of a contemporary artist. We use thinking routines that build our observation skills and art vocabularies as well as help us to develop ideas for our own work. Fourth graders also explore the medium of clay through handbuilding projects in the ceramics studio as part of their Studio Art experience.

Fifth-grade studio art continues to develop the skills and habits of mind introduced in the fourth grade. We gain more practice using thinking routines to engage with artwork, learning how to observe closely, make meaning, and share our questions about the artist's choices. As in the fourth grade, we progress from short explorations to multi-step drawing and painting projects. We explore handbuilding in the ceramics studio and introduce printmaking as a new form of two-dimensional art.

Sixth-grade studio art introduces students to a wide range of skills, mediums, and processes. Through drawing and painting explorations, we develop our understanding of color theory, symbolism, craftsmanship, and individual artistic voice. Mediums include graphite, colored pencil, watercolor, and acrylic paints. At the end of each major assignment, we complete self-reflections that ask us to think deeply about our process, choices, challenges, and successes.

Seventh-grade studio art focuses intentionally on the fundamentals of drawing, exploring how lines and shapes combine to create the illusion of form and depth on a two-dimensional surface. We apply our emerging understandings to technical drawings and expressive paintings alike. Mediums include graphite, colored pencil, watercolor, and acrylic paints. At the end of each major assignment, we complete self-reflections that ask us to think deeply about our process, choices, challenges, and successes.

Upper School: In the fall, students are offered a semester-long elective course called **Draw, Paint, Sculpt.** In this course, students work with a variety of media, including pencil, charcoal, ink, acrylic paint, and ceramic sculpture. The course alternates subject matter on a three week cycle, with students focusing on The Human Figure, Animals, or The Still Life. This course is meant to synthesize sculpture, drawing, and painting skills so that students can explore a full body of work and learn how a drawing or painting can inform a sculpture and vice versa.

In the spring, students are offered the opportunity to explore the art of Printmaking, an artistic process that involves transferring an image from one surface to another. Over the course of the semester, we explore three types of printmaking: monoprinting (Gelli plates, gyotaku, cyanotype), relief printing (linocut), and screenprinting (paper and fabric). Students will develop knowledge of positive and negative space, texture, line, and shape while honing their craftsmanship, technical skills, and care of specialized tools.

WOOD SHOP

Fourth grade: Roger Fenn, The Fenn School's founder, understood the value of hands-on learning for boys, and he planted the seeds of today's expansive arts program by establishing a wood shop course. For over eighty years, fourth-grade boys have built a toolbox as one of their first forays into the shop. In addition to that project, fourth-grade boys build small boxes with bird houses.

In completing both projects, students learn essential shop safety habits and elemental woodworking concepts and skills that will abide throughout their woodworking course work at Fenn: grain characteristics, wood species selection, squaring up rough stock, accurate measurement and marking, use and care of essential hand tools, the joinery techniques of driving nails and countersinking screws, and smoothing and finishing their completed projects.

Fifth-grade students construct a Shaker style pegboard or hanging shelves. The project reinforces the principles learned in fourth grade and introduces skills such as the use and care of a drill press, chisel and mallet, end vise, bench dogs, router plane, dado cutter, router template jigs, and various kinds of clamps. Fifth graders also learn how to cut and use the dado joint.

Fifth-grade students also build a small Shaker-inspired plant stand. This project reinforces basic principles learned in fourth grade and is meant to teach the boys how to use mortise-and-tenon joinery for the construction of sturdy furniture. In completing this project, boys also learn to use and care for a mortising machine, table saw, chisel and mallet, end vise, bench dogs, tapering jig, shoulder plane, and wood clamps.

Sixth-grade students create a live edge bench. The project builds on techniques acquired in Lower School and introduces the use of a milling machine, bandsaw, power planer, mortise and corner chisel, and scraper plane. Students first consider the dimensions of the bench based on how and where their bench will be used. They then determine a design for the legs and stretcher that complement the natural curves and grain pattern of the live-edge slab of wood they selected for the seat. Boring and chiseling through mortise and locking tusk tenon to exacting measurements requires a high degree of patience and precision. Students then coax the beauty out of the wood as they sand, scrape, oil, and wax their bench to a soft luster.

Seventh-grade students make a set of Shaker-style nesting boxes. In order to complete the project, students learn about wood grain dynamics and select a proper wood species for the boxes. They then prepare their rough stock using a power planer, thickness sander, band saw, rotary disc sander, large stationary belt sander, and hand sanding blocks. Students steam bend the wood and join the boxes with clenched copper pins and then mix and apply their own milk paint, oil finish, and beeswax polish.

Upper School wood shop students have developed the skills, confidence, and work habits necessary to take on projects that are typically beyond the reach of Middle School students. Some of our more advanced projects have included building Moravian style work benches, laminated skateboard decks, ship half hulls, dreadnought and jumbo style steel string acoustic guitars, split cane bamboo fly rods, and a traditional ribbed cedar and canvas freighter canoe.

CERAMICS

Sixth-grade ceramics students focus on handbuilding projects and explore the possibilities of coil, slab, and pinch methods. Particular attention is paid to surface texture and form, both organic and geometric. Students construct expressive composite pots and sculptural animal pieces. One possible area of focus is interpreting Adinkra symbols from Ghana in sculptural form and on carved pottery.

Seventh-grade ceramics students continue to refine their hand-building skills and their understanding of possibilities in ceramics. Problem-solving skills are used to create and decode sculptural forms. Motivated students are also given the opportunity to try some experiential wheel-throwing. Students are also introduced to the work of contemporary ceramic artists.

Upper School: In the fall, students are offered a semester-long elective course called **Draw, Paint, Sculpt**. In this course, students work with a variety of media, including pencil, charcoal, ink, acrylic paint, and ceramic sculpture. The course alternates subject matter on a three week cycle, with students focusing on The Human Figure, Animals, or The Still Life. This course is meant to synthesize sculpture, drawing, and painting skills so that students can explore a full body of work and learn how a drawing or painting can inform a sculpture and vice versa.

In the spring, Upper School Ceramics focuses on wheel throwing. After initial demonstrations, the course becomes largely self-directed, with the teacher acting as a resource and guide. This course emphasizes the artistic process of trial and error. Students learn to center themselves as they center clay on the wheel. As they become more experienced and confident with the particular challenges of centering and throwing pots, they may create vases, bowls, and mugs. They might also try a hand-carved yunomi, which is a Japanese teacup. Attention to glazing and surface decoration is also emphasized.

PHOTOGRAPHY

All **Middle School** students take Digital Photography. Sixth-grade students are introduced to digital camera equipment and Photoshop. Sixth and seventh graders learn about composition theory and select on-campus subject matter that may include landscape, architecture, still life, sports practices and games, and other community activities. Boys learn to edit their digital images, often utilizing the special effect capabilities of Photoshop. The course culminates in in-class presentations and critique sessions.

Eighth and ninth grade students may enroll in the Upper School Photography elective. Boys refine their digital photographic skills and learn traditional black-and-white film photography and darkroom processing. Photo shooting sessions occur on and off Fenn's campus. Upper School Photography students develop a portfolio of work.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: ENGLISH

Fenn English students lead the way as they embark on an exploration of literature and its connection to their lives. Through active reading, students are encouraged to think critically about texts, recognizing how stories and ideas shape their understanding of the world. Discussions are central to the classroom, allowing students to make meaningful connections between the texts they read and their own experiences. As they engage with literature, students listen, share, and analyze key themes, developing their ability to interrogate, interpret, and reflect on language and its messages.

Writing is at the heart of the Fenn English experience. Students practice the writing process—drafting, revising, and editing—as they develop strong revision strategies. Through this process, students refine their ideas, learning the importance of making thoughtful changes to improve clarity and depth. From analytical essays to personal narratives, creative writing to poetry, students are given the tools to express their ideas confidently and with intention.

The English curriculum is designed to build foundational skills that students develop and refine each year. Understanding that learning is not siloed, the program allows students to engage in interdisciplinary work that promotes deeper, more integrated learning. Through these experiences, students strengthen their critical thinking, communication, and organizational skills, preparing them to be successful across all subjects at Fenn and beyond. By integrating these skills into their daily learning, students are equipped to navigate the intellectual challenges of both middle school and future academic pursuits.

The **fourth-grade English curriculum** focuses on building confidence and independence in reading and writing. Through shared texts and individual book choices, students practice strategies that enhance their understanding of story structure, strengthen comprehension, and develop writing fluency. Emphasis is placed on foundational skills such as sentence structure, paragraph formation, capitalization, and punctuation. The team-teach model creates smaller groupings, allowing for differentiated instruction to meet each student's needs. Class readings may include *Guts*, *The Wild Robot*, *The BFG*, *Number the Stars*, *Hatchet*, and *The Crossover*. Students also begin using Google Docs to save, share, and collaborate on written work, fostering a sense of community within the classroom.

The **fifth-grade English curriculum** builds on foundational reading and writing skills, guiding students toward more complex approaches that deepen their comprehension and enhance their written expression. Sentence and paragraph structure, vocabulary development, and active reading techniques are reinforced through class texts, individual reading selections, and literature circles. The team-teach model enables smaller groupings and differentiated instruction. Students develop their ability to discuss and analyze texts through book talks and group discussions. Writing experiences expand to include literary responses, creative writing, and poetry, with a focus on drafting, revising, and editing. Class texts may include *Wonder*, *Other Words for Home*, *El Deafo*, *The Trail*, and selected short stories.

The **sixth-grade English curriculum** focuses on refining reading, writing, speaking, and organizational abilities. Active reading strategies support comprehension of complex texts, encourage inferential thinking, and promote independent reading. Writing instruction emphasizes the organization of ideas in both creative and expository forms, with assignments including narratives, poetry, personal reflections, perspective pieces, and analytical responses to literature. This course works in conjunction with the sixth-grade World Cultures and Geography curriculum to provide an interdisciplinary lens, deepening students' understanding of both the texts they read and the world around them. Students also engage in projects that integrate Design Thinking and the Innovation Lab, further enriching their learning experience. Shared texts may include *The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street*, *Inside Out and Back Again*, *A Long Walk to Water*, *Crossing the Wire*, and various poems and short stories.

The **seventh-grade English curriculum** builds on skills developed in sixth grade, offering students a deeper exploration of literary genres through class texts and independent reading. Students analyze literary elements such as character development, plot structure, and theme, using critical thinking and active reading strategies to engage with more complex texts. Writing assignments include expository pieces, personal narratives, and poetry, with targeted support to help students tackle increasingly sophisticated writing tasks. Discussion, oral presentations, and group work foster collaboration and strengthen communication skills. Shared texts may include *Freak the Mighty, Flowers for Algernon*, *The Giver*, and *Brown Girl Dreaming*, along with a selection of poetry and short stories.

The **eighth-grade English curriculum** explores the question: How do people make sense of the world and themselves? Students engage in critical analysis of both classic and contemporary texts, making connections between the literature, their own lives, and their writing. Active reading strategies, including text annotation and guided discussions, strengthen comprehension and deepen analysis. Literary study focuses on themes, character development, and writer's techniques, including narrative structure and key literary elements. In writing, students refine sentence complexity, punctuation usage, and descriptive language, while emphasizing clear, structured compositions. Key writing assignments include analytical essays, personal narratives, and poetry. Oral presentations, digital portfolios, group work, and class discussions enhance communication skills. Shared experiences include reading *The Outsiders, The Poet X*, *Night*, and *The True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* and participating in an interdisciplinary Holocaust Memorial Project that integrates Design Thinking and the Innovation Lab.

The **ninth-grade English curriculum** explores the essential question, “How should I live in an imperfect world?” Students engage in the reading and analysis of diverse texts, including novels, memoirs, short stories, and poetry, to examine finding meaning and purpose amidst life's challenges. The curriculum incorporates a range of traditional, contemporary, and multicultural voices, with an emphasis on understanding complex themes and human experiences. Writing instruction focuses on expository and analytical writing, personal narratives, and responses to texts, with a strong emphasis on the writing process: drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. Informal, reflective writing precedes formal essays, while grammar and writing mechanics are reinforced throughout the year. Students write poetry, create video essays and podcasts, and contribute to a class publication. Oral presentations, Socratic seminars, group work, and class

discussions are key components of the course, all of which support the Ninth Grade Capstone Project. This interdisciplinary project integrates Design Thinking and the Innovation Lab, while also involving students in reading a fiction or nonfiction text that deepens their understanding of the work in which their nonprofit organization is engaged.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Foreign Language study at Fenn begins in sixth grade, where boys spend one semester enrolled in Spanish and one semester enrolled in Latin. In the spring of sixth grade, students select which foreign language they would like to study for the remainder of their time at Fenn. For students who enter Fenn in grades 7-9, an appropriate foreign language choice is made in consultation with family, the Admissions Office, and the Chair of the Foreign Language Department.

SPANISH

Spanish is a rich and beautiful language spoken in many parts of the world. Learning Spanish leads to an increased awareness, understanding, and acceptance of other languages and cultures, as well as an increased understanding of one's own language and culture. Fenn's Spanish program prepares students to communicate effectively in the language; to read and correctly use Spanish grammar; to develop Spanish listening comprehension skills; to learn about history, culture, geography, and people of Spanish-speaking countries; and to increase students' enjoyment and appreciation of the Spanish language and culture.

Sixth-grade Spanish (one semester) focuses on the four major areas of language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. During this introductory course, students work in a practical context, learning vocabulary and the basic elements of grammar. In addition to their study of the language, students learn about the traditions and history of Spanish-speaking countries.

In **seventh-grade Spanish**, students begin their journey into the language with *Descubre 1*, establishing a strong foundation in vocabulary, grammar, and culture. The course starts with greetings, nouns, articles, and the present tense of *ser*, progressing to telling time and describing classroom objects and activities using *-ar* verbs and interrogatives. Students also study *estar* with prepositions and numbers up to one million. They expand their understanding through family vocabulary, professions, and cultural insights such as Spanish surnames and Spain's royal family, while mastering *-er* and *-ir* verbs, along with *tener* and *venir*. The year concludes with topics on hobbies, sports, and city life, integrating the present tense of *ir*, stem-changing verbs, and irregular *yo* forms. This dynamic course not only builds essential language skills but also introduces students to the rich cultural diversity of Spanish-speaking countries.

The **eighth-grade Spanish program** at Fenn continues building linguistic skills with an engaging curriculum that spans key vocabulary, grammar, and cultural themes. Using *Descubre 1* as the foundation, students explore hobbies, sports, and city life, while mastering the present tense of *ir*, stem-changing verbs, and irregular *yo* forms. They then delve into topics related to vacations, such as seasons, emotions, and the present progressive, and refine their understanding of *ser* versus *estar*. Shopping becomes a focal point as students learn to describe clothing, negotiate prices, and use the preterite tense alongside demonstrative adjectives and indirect object pronouns. Daily routines and hygiene are emphasized through reflexive pronouns, while lessons on food and dining teach them to navigate restaurant conversations, use stem-changing verbs in the preterite, and

make comparisons and superlatives. This course prepares students to communicate confidently and effectively while deepening their appreciation for the Spanish-speaking world. Generally, students who complete eighth-grade Spanish are prepared to enter Spanish 2 at the high school level.

The **ninth-grade Spanish program** at Fenn builds on foundational knowledge with a quick review of the final chapters of *Descubre 1* before diving into more advanced material from *Descubre 2*. Students revisit key concepts like daily routines, reflexive pronouns, the preterite of *ser* and *ir*, food-related vocabulary, stem-changing verbs, comparisons, and superlatives. Moving into *Descubre 2*, they expand their proficiency with topics such as health and medical terminology, body parts, symptoms, and the imperfect tense, while mastering the distinctions between the *pretérito* and *imperfecto*. The curriculum also covers modern technology, familiar commands, and the use of *por* and *para*. Finally, students explore housing vocabulary, household chores, formal commands, and the present subjunctive, learning to express complex ideas such as wishes, doubts, and recommendations. This comprehensive course equips students with advanced language skills and cultural insights, preparing them for higher-level Spanish studies and real-world communication. Generally, students who complete ninth-grade Spanish are prepared to enter Spanish 3 at the high school level.

Fenn's **Introductory Ninth-Grade Spanish Course** is designed for ninth-grade students new to Fenn with little or no prior Spanish experience. Using *Descubre 1,* students develop a strong foundation in vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills. They learn greetings, numbers, telling time, and topics related to family, school, hobbies, food, and travel, while mastering essential grammar topics such as noun-adjective agreement, present-tense verbs, *ser* vs. *estar*, stem-changing verbs, and direct object pronouns. Cultural insights are integrated throughout the course to enhance language learning. By the end of the year, students can communicate effectively in the present tense and are prepared to enter Spanish 2 at the high school level.

LATIN

Latin is at the root of many languages, including English. Through their legacy of cultural achievements, the ancient Romans who spoke Latin have contributed significantly to American life, especially in the areas of art, architecture, political thought, and engineering. Fenn's Latin program emphasizes the reading of Latin with ease, understanding, and enjoyment. Students pursue with enthusiasm the language written and spoken by the ancient Romans, which can be learned more through reading than through speaking; develop good strategies and organizational techniques for mastering the grammar and vocabulary of Latin and other world languages; expand their understanding of English grammar and vocabulary; and appreciate aspects of their cultural background as Americans, which they inherit from the ancient Romans (and Greeks).

Our one-semester **sixth-grade Latin course** introduces students to the language and culture of ancient Rome through *Suburani Book 1*. Students explore Chapters 1-2, building a foundation in

Latin grammar and vocabulary while engaging in hands-on projects that bring the Roman world to life. They construct working catapults to understand Roman engineering, design intricate mosaics inspired by ancient art, and create models of Roman cities, complete with forums, baths, and amphitheaters. The course also dives into the thrilling world of gladiators, with students researching and presenting on these iconic Roman spectacles. This immersive approach fosters collaboration, creativity, and an appreciation for history, making Latin an exciting and accessible subject for all.

The **seventh-grade Latin course** builds on the sixth-grade foundation, reviewing Chapters 1-2 and advancing through Chapters 3-8 of *Suburani Book 1*. Students deepen their understanding of Latin grammar and vocabulary while exploring the richness of Roman culture and history. Highlights of the course include a study of Roman architecture, where students examine the design of temples, aqueducts, and villas, culminating in creative projects like 3D models or digital recreations. The course also delves into the myths and daily life of the Romans, with students crafting Latin stories inspired by ancient legends. Along the way, they explore Roman food, clothing, and religious practices, connecting language study to the vibrant world of antiquity. This full-year course is a journey through the language and legacy of Rome, offering students a deeper connection to the ancient world and its enduring influence on our own.

The **eighth-grade Latin course** continues the journey through *Suburani Book 1*, covering Chapters 9-16. Students build on their foundational knowledge, translating longer and more complex passages that challenge their growing skills. The course introduces advanced grammatical concepts, fostering a deeper understanding of Latin syntax and structure. Through their work, students not only enhance their proficiency in the language but also gain a richer appreciation for the historical and cultural contexts of ancient Rome. This rigorous yet engaging course serves as a bridge between introductory Latin and the more advanced studies to come. Generally, students who complete eighth-grade Latin are prepared to enter Latin 2 at the high school level.

In the **ninth-grade Latin course**, students transition to *Suburani Book 2*, using it as a foundation to solidify their understanding of Latin grammar. The curriculum is enhanced by a variety of Latin readers, which introduce students to adapted passages from ancient authors. This approach develops their translation skills and prepares them for the demands of upper-level Latin courses. By reading a range of texts, students engage with the voices of the past, gaining insight into Roman literature, history, and philosophy. By the end of the year, students have mastered all major Latin grammar concepts, equipping them to enter a translation-based Latin course in secondary school with confidence. Generally, students who complete ninth-grade Latin are prepared to enter Latin 3 at the high school level.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: MATH

The Fenn Math Department strives to provide a systematic and structured approach to mathematics instruction that offers an appropriately challenging curriculum for a variety of learners. The foundation of skills students develop while moving through our various course offerings focuses on arithmetic fluency, number theory, geometric principles, and algebraic thinking. We strive to equip students with reliable quantitative and analytical tools, flexible thinking, sound logic, and critical reasoning skills as they develop their ability to solve problems and prepare for high school mathematics.

As our students learn mathematics, we guide them to sustain active engagement in classroom learning tasks, advocate for help when needed, communicate their reasoning clearly and concisely, and understand the importance of thoroughness, organization, and detail in their written work. Fenn students are encouraged to be both independent thinkers and collaborative learners, comfortable with moments of challenge as they discuss, listen, try, retry, and gain fluency with new ideas and procedures. We hope to see our students translate consistent daily learning habits, including careful completion of nightly assignments, into a robust, flexible, fusible mastery of mathematical methods they will need in high school coursework.

LOWER SCHOOL

The **fourth-grade Math program** highlights problem solving from everyday situations, facility with basic number facts, arithmetic skills, and practice through mathematical games and technology. Teachers use multiple methods for basic skill practice and review of whole number concepts including rounding, place value, and all four operations. Concepts in fractions and decimals include comparing and ordering, equivalence, addition, subtraction, and the relationship between fractions and decimals. Problem-solving skills focus on using information and mathematical concepts from the curriculum. Throughout the academic year, there is ongoing review and repeated exposure to key mathematical ideas in different contexts to improve comprehension and mastery.

The **fifth-grade Math program** explores the relationship among numbers by the study of place value, multiples and factors, prime and composite numbers, divisibility rules, and exponents. Concepts include all operations with whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and percents. The curriculum also encompasses a study of the area and perimeter of rectangular shapes as well as composite rectangular shapes. It additionally incorporates an analysis of data that is presented graphically as well as numerically - along with calculating the mean, median, and mode. Students write reflections on their strategies, use a variety of virtual manipulatives to explore one's learning, and create visual models to help them develop a sound conceptual understanding of the mathematical ideas.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Some middle school students have developed strong backgrounds in math and have the ability and interest to move at a quicker pace. With this in mind, individual students are placed according to their educational needs in **standard**, **enriched**, or **accelerated** sections. At the close of each academic year, each student is placed by his teacher and the Mathematics Department Chair in a course section that best supports his individual needs and pace of learning. Similar evaluations are completed for incoming students without prior Fenn history.

Sixth grade at Fenn offers three math tracks:

- The **Pre-Algebra I course** includes broad background work in algebra and geometry. With varying degrees of rigor and complexity, students at each level continue to develop their understanding of numeric operations, measurement, and data representation and cover topics in number theory. Students also intensify their study of algebra through work with variable expressions, patterns, and sequences, and develop algebraic skills in simplifying expressions, working with rational expressions and decimals, and solving equations.

- In the **Pre-Algebra I Enriched and Pre-Algebra I Accelerated courses,** students will also cover advanced geometric concepts including the Pythagorean Theorem and its converse, special right triangles, symmetry, areas and angle relationships in polygons and circles, similarity and proportionality, and working with the exact form of irrational values such as pi and radicals. For the **Pre-Algebra I Accelerated course**, further extensions include introductions to right triangle trigonometry, coordinate graphing, and elementary transformations of polygons on the coordinate plane.

Seventh grade at Fenn offers four math tracks:

- In the **seventh-grade Pre-Algebra II course**, visual and algebraic models are a central part of the course. Scientific calculators and iPad apps are incorporated into classroom instruction at various points to support work with computation, graphical analysis, and geometric diagrams. Students do significant work with right triangles and the Pythagorean Theorem; areas and perimeters of plane figures; surface areas and volumes of three-dimensional forms; introductory work with the coordinate system, including exploration of slopes, parallels and perpendiculars, and elementary transformations of simple plane figures; and probability. Study and organizational skills receive continued emphasis. This course provides the algebraic background for success in Fenn's eighth grade Algebra I curriculum.

- At the **Pre-Algebra II Enriched level**, seventh grade students undertake comparable study of the standard curricula, as well as more rigorous work with linear and quadratic equations, inequalities, exponentials, coordinate graphing, properties of plane figures, transformations, and introductory right triangle trigonometry.

- At the **Accelerated Introduction to Algebra 1 level**, seventh grade students complete the enriched curriculum during the first half of the year and then begin to explore Algebra 1 topics. Topics will include linear functions and systems of equations, along with one and two variable inequalities.

- At the **Honors Algebra 1 level**, seventh grade students complete a full course in Algebra 1 Honors. This course covers topics including linear and quadratic equations, systems of equations and inequalities, exponentials, polynomials, extensive work with coordinate graphing, an introduction to functions and function notation, sequences and series, and matrices. This course also explores word problems in great detail as a way to provide students with real world applications to the material.

UPPER SCHOOL

Eighth-grade mathematics focuses on algebra and geometry. The standard offering is an Algebra I course, which prepares students to represent information in tables, graphs, and equations. Boys develop the algorithms to solve problems algebraically. At the close of the seventh grade, each student is placed by his teacher and the Mathematics Department Chair in a course section that best supports his individual needs and pace of learning. Four levels are typically offered; standard, accelerated, honors, and two-year. All students in the eighth grade will learn how to apply their algebraic knowledge to solve real-life problems. Students use iPad apps and calculators at appropriate points to explore topics such as data analysis, graphing, and patterns involved in algebraic concepts.

- The **Standard-level Algebra 1 course** covers a year of high school algebra, including solving and graphing quadratics, rational expressions and equations, and radical expressions and equations at a more deliberate pace than the accelerated level.

- The **Accelerated Algebra 1 course** covers a full year of topics in Algebra 1 and beyond, building on students' previous work with the fundamentals of algebra. Supplemental topics include Sequences and Series, Rational Exponents and Radicals, Operations with Complex Numbers, Rational Expressions and Equations, and an introduction to Exponential and Logarithmic Functions.

- The **Honors Course in Geometry and Trigonometry** is topically equivalent to a rigorous high school honors geometry course. Placement in this course is dependent upon continually strong achievement in Algebra 1 in seventh grade.

- The **two-year Algebra program** positions students to explore each topic from many different perspectives, at a modest pace and with substantial review and reinforcement, during their eighth and ninth grade years.

Ninth grade students who completed either Algebra I or Accelerated Algebra I in eighth grade will take a full year-long course of **Geometry** (in either a standard or accelerated section). Topics will include the development of geometric proofs, congruent and similar polygons, circles, coordinate geometry, and transformations. The course emphasizes the connection between geometry and the physical world and works to maintain and extend the students' algebra skills, as these skills are integrated in the explorations of the geometric concepts. Students explore and discover geometric principles through the use of a variety of approaches.

Academically qualified students (typically those who completed Honors Geometry in eighth grade) will enroll in an **Honors Algebra II** course. These students will undertake a curriculum that is topically equivalent to a rigorous high school Algebra II course. (In some rare cases, Fenn has also provided Pre-Calculus coursework to students whose math mastery suggests they are ready to tackle this advanced subject matter.)

Students who began the **Two-Year Algebra** course in grade eight continue their study in grade nine. The two-year course provides additional time for practice, assimilation, and mastery of the critical algebraic skills, which form the foundation for future mathematical studies.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: SCIENCE

Fenn Science students understand the process of science; become grounded in the various domains of science; apply skills and content of science to themselves and the surrounding world; and appreciate the awe and wonder of the sciences in generating enthusiasm for the discipline.

Science is an active way of knowing. This means that rather than unchanging, science is an on-going process – a process that involves asking questions, observing, making inferences, and testing hypotheses. The goal of science is to investigate and understand the natural world, to explain events in the natural world, and to use those explanations to make useful predictions.

The philosophy of the Fenn Science Program acknowledges that students learn best by "doing." Hands-on activities and investigations complement readings, class discussions, and multimedia presentations. They are the means to understand the natural world and generate awe, wonder, and enthusiasm. Through practice and skill building, students "live the life" of a scientist in applying the integrated content of the various domains of science.

Fourth-grade Science integrates chemistry, life science, physical science, and earth science. Students are introduced to essential science skills and begin to appreciate the awe and wonder of the scientific process. Students complete readings and simulations, and conduct experiments and activities that introduce learning about life cycles; biomes; engineering and technology; and simple machines. Students are introduced to stating claims from observations and research and supporting those claims with evidence. They maintain a field journal and participate in an annual field trip to investigate the organisms of a tide pool.

Fifth-grade Science integrates chemistry, life science, physical science, and earth science. Students are introduced to essential science skills and begin to appreciate the awe and wonder of the scientific process. Students complete readings and simulations and conduct experiments and activities that introduce learning about states of matter; earth and space; and organisms and ecosystems. Students are also introduced to the claim, evidence, reasoning format for expressing findings. Students maintain a field journal and apply the content and skills of the units to the year-long "Trout-in-the-Classroom" program, during which students maintain a fish tank and raise trout for release into the wild.

Sixth-grade Science integrates chemistry, life science, physical science, and earth science. Students complete readings and simulations and conduct experiments and activities that introduce learning about particles of matter; weather and climate; human body systems; and the energy of motion. Students express findings and apply scientific principles in writing using the claim, evidence, reasoning format. Students hone laboratory and observational skills and make connections between data and the scientific principles discussed.

Seventh-grade Science integrates chemistry, life science, physical science, and earth science. Students complete readings and simulations and conduct experiments and activities that introduce learning about properties of substances and chemical reactions; genes and evolution; and force, motion, and energy. The threat of climate change is integrated into all units. Students

express findings and apply scientific principles in writing using the claim, evidence, reasoning format. Students hone laboratory and observational skills and make connections between data and the scientific principles discussed. Additional emphasis is placed on interpreting data and graphs.

Eighth-grade Lab Science integrates chemistry, life science, physical science, and earth science. Students complete readings and simulations and conduct experiments and activities that reinforce learning about The Periodic Table of the Elements; atomic structure and chemical bonding; specific heat capacity; matter and energy; food and nutrition; and ecosystems. They express findings and apply scientific principles in writing using the claim, evidence, reasoning format. Students hone laboratory and observational skills and make connections between data and the scientific principles discussed. Additional emphasis is placed on interpreting data and graphs. Students sit for a mid-year exam and a final exam as a means to assess progress. Upon completion of the course, students are prepared for secondary school science programs.

Ninth-Grade Biology is a high school accredited biology course. Students complete readings and simulations and conduct experiments and activities that reinforce learning about cell and molecular biology; DNA, genetics, and genetic engineering; evolution, classification, and biodiversity; and comparative anatomy and human anatomy. The threat of ecology and climate change are integrated into all units. Students attend weekly, double-block lab sessions where they attain mastery of lab skills and observation skills in applying the experimental design process. Emphasis is placed on analyzing and interpreting data and graphs, and students express findings and apply scientific principles in writing using the claim, evidence, reasoning format. Upon graduation, students earn high school biology and lab science credits, and they are prepared for Honors Level or Advanced Placement (AP) science courses when qualified.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies Department at Fenn cultivates engaged global citizens through a progressive curriculum that builds from local to global understanding. Students develop critical thinking skills by analyzing multiple perspectives, evaluating diverse sources of evidence, and constructing reasoned arguments. The curriculum emphasizes media literacy and information analysis, enabling students to navigate and verify information in an increasingly complex digital landscape. Starting with ancient civilizations and expanding to contemporary global issues, students explore the dynamic interplay between geography, culture, and human experience while developing research and communication skills. Through project-based assessments, Socratic seminar discussions, analytical writing, and collaborative problem-solving, students learn to weigh competing narratives, recognize bias, and connect past events to present-day challenges. From expository paragraphs to thesis-driven essays, writing serves as a powerful tool for developing and articulating historical understanding. This comprehensive approach prepares students to be discerning consumers of information and thoughtful contributors to civic discourse.

The **fourth-grade Social Studies curriculum** explores ancient civilizations and the evolution of human society, from hunter-gatherers to settled communities. Map skills, research strategies, and expository writing develop through the study of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China. Project-based assessments emphasize cultural similarities and differences, connecting historical forces to modern cultures.

Fifth-grade Social Studies builds on the ancient civilization studies through focused examination of Persia, Greece, and Rome. Research skills advance through exploration of democracy, Western artistic traditions, and enduring cultural legacies. Projects emphasize critical thinking and multimedia presentations while investigating geography, religion, government, and societal roles.

The **sixth-grade *World Cultures and Geography* course** develops essential geography and research skills through dynamic, station-based learning. Interactive regional studies of Oceania, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America strengthen data analysis, map interpretation, and Cornell note-taking techniques. Country reports and hands-on projects foster deep cultural understanding and presentation abilities. Station work provides individualized skill development while promoting engagement with diverse global perspectives.

In the **seventh-grade *The American Experiment* course**, the boys investigate U.S. history through the lens of freedom, power, and democracy. Critical analysis of multiple perspectives explores interactions between indigenous nations, European settlers, enslaved Africans, and immigrants. Contemporary connections emerge through examination of the nation's founding ideals and ongoing pursuit of "a more perfect union."

The **eighth-grade *Civics in Action* course** empowers civic engagement through exploration of governmental principles, rights, responsibilities and values, and contemporary issues. Interactive projects, including a StudentCam documentary competition, and Holocaust Memorial Exhibit, develop critical thinking about societal challenges and the fragility of democracy. Studies of

identity, community, rights, and responsibilities through government structures and Supreme Court cases prepare students for active citizenship in their communities.

In the **ninth-grade *Global Studies* course**, students engage in the analysis of the historical forces shaping the significant world regions of the Middle East and East Asia. Economic systems, sustainability, and globalization frame regional studies of geography, religion, and modern tensions. Advanced research and analytical writing skills develop through examination of social, economic, and political histories that illuminate contemporary global challenges.

PROGRAM OF STUDY: THRIVE

Fenn's THRIVE Program supports the growth of the whole child by helping boys navigate important areas of their development, including their physical and mental health, relationships, personal identity, and core values. Grounded in the principles of honesty, respect, empathy, and courage, THRIVE emphasizes social-emotional learning and well-being. Our approach encourages boys to build the skills and confidence needed to form healthy connections, make thoughtful decisions, and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

The Lower-School THRIVE Program focuses on helping students grow into their best selves. Students explore topics like identity, emotions, self-awareness, leadership, digital habits, brain health, conflict resolution, puberty, nutrition, and mindfulness. They learn how to express themselves, manage stress, communicate with empathy, and take care of their bodies and minds.

The Sixth-Grade THRIVE Program deepens students' understanding of self-awareness, emotional management, and healthy relationships. Through journaling, discussions, and reflection, students learn to navigate challenges through skill building. Lessons on brain health and mindfulness further support personal growth, helping students thrive in school and life. Students also explore the impact of technology on their relationships and accomplishments, developing strategies for maintaining a healthy tech diet.

The Seventh-Grade THRIVE Program deepens students' understanding of self-awareness, identity, and relationships. Students explore the impact of experiences on personal growth, reframe negative thoughts, and reflect on social media's role in relationships and self-esteem. They also examine the culture of comparison and develop conflict resolution skills, practice empathy, and build resilience to navigate adolescence with confidence.

The Eighth-Grade THRIVE Program focuses on emotional intelligence, healthy relationships, and personal values. Students explore their evolving identities and develop an understanding of sexuality, including boundaries and respect. They examine how social media impacts self-esteem and relationships, considering the culture of comparison. Through empathy, conflict resolution, and self-advocacy, students build the skills to navigate social dynamics and face the challenges of adolescence with confidence and resilience.

The Ninth-Grade THRIVE Program focuses on building maturity and personal responsibility, expanding on earlier lessons in emotional intelligence, relationships, and self-awareness. Students explore topics such as sexuality, consent, and establishing healthy boundaries while reflecting on the impact of social media on self-esteem and relationships. With an emphasis on resilience, critical thinking, and effective communication, students develop the tools to make thoughtful decisions and navigate complex social dynamics. As they prepare to leave Fenn and move forward into high school, they build confidence and a strong sense of self, and are ready to face the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Embedded within Fenn's academic program are important throughlines of a Fenn education. Across grade-levels and academic disciplines, Fenn's curriculum intersects with disciplines that incorporate knowledge and skills to prepare students as 21st century citizens and more fully actualize Fenn's mission.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

With the goal of honoring and uplifting human dignity, The Fenn School is committed to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In line with our core values, we foster honest dialogue, respect for people and the land, empathy for others' experiences, and the courage to stand against injustice.

The Fenn School acknowledges that systemic racism exists in our country and independent school communities; we recognize that we have an urgent responsibility to create a culture in which all members of our community are held accountable for their personal growth and treatment of others. We challenge our students and adults to disrupt and dismantle all forms of hate, injustice, and inequity at Fenn and beyond. Embracing and acting on our roles as global and local citizens, we create and sustain collaborative initiatives that serve and empower communities. Together we can create a more just world.

Human-Centered Learning

Fenn is leveraging Human-Centered Learning (HCL), an immersive and interdisciplinary approach that engages students in deeply transformational, relevant, and emotionally-threaded learning experiences. It is a roadmap for students to navigate the challenges of an uncertain world in innovative AND humane ways. Students across all grades engage in cornerstone units that feature this compelling approach.

Library and Media Studies

The Hammett Ory Library's overarching aim is for Fenn graduates to leave as competent, critical, and ethical users and producers of information and ideas. They will understand the critical importance of seeking diverse perspectives and using social tools responsibly and safely.

Service Learning

Service Learning at Fenn is an engaging program that connects students with the community. Students are introduced to societal issues through All School Meeting presentations and academic discussions appropriate to each grade level. Throughout the school year, students will participate in hands-on experiences performing vital tasks for area non-profit partners. Service Learning

fosters leadership, friendship, personal responsibility, empathy, and a stronger commitment to the community.

Sustainability

In the spirit of Fenn's motto, *Sua Sponte*, we embrace the responsibility for the well-being of our local and global environments and communities through our collective choices and actions. Through class lessons and community-based projects around ecological and social systems, students in all grades work towards an understanding of how the planet works and how humans impact its resources. Additionally, students learn how to interact with Fenn's buildings and land in responsible ways that enable the school community to reduce its footprint.

Technology

In our effort to prepare boys for a lifetime of learning, Fenn strives to balance the time a boy spends in the digital and non-digital realms, prioritizing the unmatched value of in-person, face-to-face interactions with peers, teachers, and parents. As they engage with academic technology, Fenn students become thoughtful, knowledgeable, empathetic, and critical users of technology to achieve their larger educational goals.

THE FENN SCHOOL

516 MONUMENT STREET • CONCORD, MA • 01742 • (978) 369-5800

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