



CHATHAM DAY SCHOOL

2020-21

Curriculum Guide

This curriculum guide is intended to reflect the scope and sequence of our academically ambitious programs for grade four through grade eight for the 2020-21 school year. As curriculum is dynamic and ever-changing, we view this curriculum guide as a living, breathing document. Each year brings with it the opportunity to build and revitalize programs, particularly as we seek to meet the needs of our increasingly complex 21st Century and respond to the extraordinary potential of our CDS students.

Table of contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Mission Statement.....	3
MIDDLE SCHOOL.....	4
ILA/English.....	7
Mathematics.....	9
Social Studies/History.....	10
Science.....	12
21 st Century Learning.....	14
Fine and Performing Arts.....	16
Physical, Social, and Emotional Wellness.....	18
UPPER SCHOOL.....	20
English.....	22
Mathematics.....	24
History.....	25
Science.....	27
World Language.....	29
21 st Century Learning.....	31
Performing and Visual Arts.....	33
Physical, Social, and Emotional Wellness.....	35

Mission Statement

Chatham Day School celebrates and values each child as a unique learner with extraordinary potential. We offer an academically ambitious program that promotes intellectual achievement and emotional growth in a diverse and nurturing environment.



The Middle School Experience

The Middle School experience at Chatham Day School, comprised of a two-year sequence through fourth and fifth grades, is designed to foster intellectual curiosity and a growth mindset, develop strong habits of mind and character, build empathy and compassion for others, and nurture creativity and collaborative skills. Special emphasis is given to the explicit instruction of executive functioning skills.

On the brink of adolescence, students in “middle childhood” are becoming increasingly aware of multiple perspectives and the impact of viewpoint on experience and understanding. Furthermore, fourth and fifth graders are developing metacognitive skills and the ability to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as scholars and citizens within a larger community. Relationships are growing in importance as the world beyond one’s immediate circle of friends and family comes into sharper focus. Physical and cognitive growth broaden students’ horizons, enabling them to see beyond the immediate and to consider the future, including the wide array of possibilities for their own lives.

Our dynamic and engaging curriculum is designed with these age-specific cognitive, social, emotional, and physical needs in mind. We strive to expose all fourth and fifth graders to a rich and broad course of study. Exposure to a wide range of subjects is critical, as students continue to identify interests and passions and develop confidence and competence as learners in an academic setting. Mastery of the foundational skills and concepts from the lower school years allows our emerging scholars to move more deeply into their coursework.

Experienced educators who understand this developmentally critical period of middle childhood seek to appropriately challenge all learners and enable them to develop and apply problem-solving strategies. Differentiated instruction helps academically capable students achieve at high levels and allows them to think for themselves. Fourth and fifth grade teachers focus heavily on collaborative work and relationship-building, encouraging the development of active listening skills through challenging and inspiring learning experiences. Group work, in this way, is both a process and a destination, and individual students are engaged in the act of learning while teachers help them to recognize the value of studying ideas and opinions different from one's own. Ultimately, we are committed to helping students become open-minded and curious, able to evaluate perspectives with a critical eye.

Communicative competence is highlighted in all areas of the Middle School program. We strive to nurture in students an appreciation for the importance of spoken and written language and to build their toolboxes as they learn new ways to communicate their own thoughts and ideas with the larger world. An integrated approach to teaching and learning across multiple content areas fosters meaningful social connections, thinking skills, and a love of learning. Field trips, assemblies, and special programs invite students to make meaningful connections between disciplines and to recognize the link between classroom work and real-world applications.

In addition to a two-year sequence through the four "core" academic areas of science, language arts/English, social studies/history, and mathematics, students are also enrolled in daily Physical Education, fine or performing arts courses each trimester, and 1-2 21st Century Learning courses, also on a trimester basis. These co-curricular offerings, primarily hands-on and experiential in nature, seek to expose students to a wide range of subjects and skills and give them an opportunity to discover new interests and passions to pursue in greater depth in their upper school years.

Responsibility and organization are central themes throughout the fourth grade year, while leadership and self-reliance are central themes in fifth grade. To teach and nurture these skills, specific structures are put in place across the curriculum and program. Challenging and complex projects are scaffolded into manageable parts, allowing each student to be successful at each step, increasing confidence and independence along the way. Fourth and fifth graders participate in "Extensions of Learning" time two times per week. Students are able to focus on homework, differentiated assignments, or enrichment work during these blocks of time, and advisors along with grade-level teachers also set aside time to help students develop organizational skills, time management habits, and locker cleanings.

Our advisory program connects each student with one advisor, who acts as the primary point of contact between school and home and who oversees the academic and interpersonal progress of

each advisee. Daily contact time in advisory, along with one 40 minute period per week, allows for instruction in executive functioning skills that are relevant to the students' school experience: use of a daily planner, organization of papers and binders, routines of locker storage, and strategies for maintaining personal supplies and materials. Advisors and teachers coordinate efforts to teach study and research skills, time management, and organizational habits within the context of short and long-term assignments and projects. The internal CDS learning management system (MyCDS) and Google Classroom are integrated to provide students a seamless experience, and those are used as communication, collaboration, organization, and planning tools between students and teachers.

Students in the fifth grade also begin earning grades along an A-F scale with heightened levels of expectations. These expectations are clearly outlined in project rubrics and checklists, raising levels of academic excellence across the curriculum. All students in fourth and fifth grades receive written narratives of feedback from individual teachers at the end of the trimester, outlining areas of achievement as well as areas for growth, as a part of the formal report cards that are issued three times per year. This structure provides qualitative context to the quantitative assessment of letter grades.

Integrated Language Arts/English

Fourth Grade

The goals of fourth grade language arts are for students to learn how to express themselves clearly in their writing, to deepen their fluency and comprehension skills in reading, and to appreciate the value of communicating one's ideas in an organized and thoughtful way and supporting those ideas with evidence. To this end, the fourth grade ILA course includes ongoing studies in the areas of spelling, vocabulary, and writing, all of which support the budding writers' ability to share with others in meaningful and effective ways.

The Units of Study in Writing, designed by the Reading and Writing Project of Columbia University's Teachers College, serve as a curricular writing guide through the fourth grade year. The ILA teacher scaffolds the process of reading, interpreting more complex texts, and further developing skills such as inference and interpretation. They strengthen critical thinking skills as they analyze and discuss fundamental story elements such as setting, character development, plot, conflict, and theme.

Reading comprehension assignments allow students to move gradually from answering questions of "what?" (i.e., plot summary) early in the year to questions of "why?" (interpretation and analysis) by year's end. To allow for differentiation of instruction, students also participate in literature circles throughout the year that enable them to enjoy a shared reading experience of chosen works of literature.

Students closely examine the traits of quality writing using "mentor texts" and then try to emulate those traits in their own writing. Students receive explicit instruction in writing realistic fiction, composing personal and persuasive essays, and organizing informational writing. In this workshop model, students follow the steps of the writing process from planning and drafting through revising and editing before publishing a final product. Students also share their work, which enables them to help their peers and learn from them. Cross-disciplinary writing projects include a persuasive narrative that is linked with the unit in science on the human body.

Through their writing and reading studies, students broaden their fundamental knowledge of spelling, vocabulary, and grammar skills. Students also receive explicit instruction in these areas, as they practice these skills weekly and apply them in their daily writing and speech. Spelling lists are

differentiated and include words related to their studies in other subject areas. Vocabulary studies are done through the literature, as well as through the Sadlier Oxford series. The Sadlier Grammar series provides the foundation for the study of grammar usage and mechanics, with a focus on using verbs and pronouns correctly and employing proper capitalization and punctuation.

Fifth Grade

Students in the fifth grade continue to expand and apply concepts, skills, and strategies to their reading and writing while simultaneously strengthening their ability to engage in respectful classroom discussions and debates. Writing skills continue to be a major focal point as students expand their repertoire of structural and mechanical tools and increase knowledge and usage of vocabulary and grammatical rules.

As they develop increasingly sophisticated reading skills, students in fifth grade English explore new genres of science fiction, historical fiction, and mystery. Additionally, a poetry unit broadens students' horizons and offers opportunities for multicultural studies. Throughout the year, students apply their reading skills to other content areas through literature circles that focus on themes and time periods related to their studies of Ancient Civilizations.

In roundtable discussions, students learn to form, support, and defend opinions in response to the increasingly sophisticated themes within the course literature and to respond to contrasting perspectives. Teachers incorporate instruction of annotation skills into nightly reading assignments, enabling students to develop the habit of using evidence to strengthen oral and written arguments. Collaborative projects continue to guide students in developing their awareness of and fluency with individual and group roles.

In their writing, students focus on analyzing and crafting well-structured responses to literature and writing cohesive narrative and expository pieces. They develop confidence in their "writer's voice" by using a variety of sentence structures, expanding their use of descriptive and figurative language, and sequencing stories with a clear beginning, middle and ending. Fifth graders also broaden their foundational knowledge of vocabulary in their speech and writing, as well as apply proper grammar usage to their writing. Formal instruction of grammar and vocabulary continue using the Sadlier-Oxford programs. Grammar studies continue to emphasize proper usage and mechanics, such as using modifiers correctly and recognizing and revising sentence fragments.

Mathematics

Fourth Grade

The fourth grade math program continues to build on the foundation laid in the lower grades as students achieve procedural fluency with the four operations. Multiplication and division become more complex as students begin to apply these operations to calculations involving decimals and fractions. Our developing mathematicians explore geometric concepts, conduct data analysis, and experiment with probability. Students also become more familiar with proper mathematical terminology and are presented with frequent opportunities to explain the mathematical reasoning behind their work.

Manipulatives assist in bridging the gap between concrete concepts and those which are more abstract. Real-life investigations present opportunities for students to bolster number sense by relating work in the classroom to events in their own lives. In one year, how many times do you brush your teeth? Talk on the phone or send a text? The incorporation of technology bring math to life as students work to program them to travel fractional distances and turn a certain number of degrees to navigate a maze. Problem-solving is infused in daily work.

Fifth Grade

The fifth grade math program emphasizes analysis, problem-solving, and conceptual understanding while continuing to differentiate for the needs of individual students. In addition to solidifying their understanding of whole number operations, students expand their work with place value to include decimals. The relationship between fractions and decimals, as well as their relationship to the number line, are explored using manipulatives and technology. Number sense continues to be developed as students explore prime numbers, divisibility rules, factors, and multiples. Number properties and the order of operations are applied to simplify numerical expressions, and students learn to provide examples and counterexamples to justify their responses to questions. Basic geometric concepts, such as perimeter and area, are revisited, and more complex concepts such as line and angle relationships, congruency and symmetry, and a comparison of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes are explored.

The unique nature of the Saxon program provides an incremental approach in which topics are continually revisited in increasing complexity, thus improving retention and increasing students' ability to make connections across topics. Investigations provide students the opportunity to explore and make their own discoveries about geometric concepts, data analysis, and probability.

Social Studies/History

Fourth Grade

The fourth grade social studies program seeks to guide students in developing an understanding of the cultural and historical transformations that occurred during the period of early American history from early Native American Indians to the birth of our nation, ultimately helping them to appreciate the ways in which the economic, political, and cultural development of communities is shaped by the interactions of people and places, conflicts, and wars. In studying this era, students explore the impact of European arrivals and settlers and the complex relationships between indigenous peoples and migrants. Students investigate the types of government, language, food, shelter and cultural traditions of various American Indian groups. As they move into the history of our earliest colonies, students learn about the ways in which a nation's desire for new opportunities for trade and the need for new areas of settlement encouraged the migration of peoples into different regions. Through their study of subsequent events leading to the Revolution, as well as an in-depth look at the lives of the colonists, students gain insight into the major obstacles faced by our nation's founders and the economic, religious, political, historical, and cultural factors that shaped American ideals of democracy.

Our emerging historians use reading, writing, and thinking processes and skills to gain knowledge of historical and political events using chronological and spatial thinking, cause and effect, and historical interpretations by framing and evaluating questions. The students read to learn and construct meaning about social studies by using appropriate vocabulary and comprehension strategies. Within the context of the course, students develop skills in map-reading, conducting research, categorizing and summarizing information, utilizing online reference sources, note-taking, and delivering oral presentations through direct instruction and practice. As a natural link to their work in language arts, students read both historical fiction and nonfiction tied to these units of study.

Whether researching a Native American tribe, investigating the triangular trade, or discussing the dilemma of slavery, the aim is to immerse students in content that is both thought provoking and meaningful. Students can then further apply communication skills in a debate over Loyalist and Patriot points of view or "experience" life as a colonist during Colonial Day. Other creative, hands-on activities include designing a timeline of revolutionary events, participating in a wax museum presentation as a historical figure, and writing and performing a script that re-enacts historical events. Interdisciplinary work goes beyond the traditional humanities, as students complete a statistical analysis of the battles in the Revolutionary War or investigate inventions from

the time period. Field trips to Liberty Hall and Jockey Hollow highlight the historical significance of our location and the events that took place right in our neighborhood.

Fifth Grade

Fifth grade history explores the broad themes of culture and major beliefs within societies, as students think critically about why some societies grew increasingly powerful, while others did not survive. This course serves as an introduction to many of the civilizations of the past, from cave dwellers to city-states to empires. Students don their “historian hats” as they investigate Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, India and China, the Hebrews and the foundations of Judaism, and the Ancient Greeks and Romans. The study of ancient civilizations begins with the earliest humans and their transition from hunter-gatherers to creators of more sustainable food supplies. As students explore more advanced societies, they witness the development of language and trade and discover the ways people learned to govern themselves. In addition, students learn to appreciate the innovative spirit of these societies who became known for their achievements in areas such as art, literature, math, and architecture, to name a few.

Through their studies, students discover that the innovations of ancient civilizations are with us today and influence our lives in modern times. While studying these civilizations, students learn how to be active readers and are introduced to new, content-related vocabulary. They examine the impact of geography on these societies and strengthen map-reading skills. Interdisciplinary studies include reading biographies of key figures of the time, as well as historical fiction novels within literature circles in English classes.

Students in fifth grade history also explore current events as a structured element of their weekly lessons. With the use of Newsela, an instructional content platform, students respond to targeted writing prompts based on the content of each article. Organized written synopses to reading assignments encourage students to strengthen their informational reading skills, their ability to synthesize information and identify main ideas and supporting details, while simultaneously gaining exposure to new perspectives and issues of national and global concern.

Science

Fourth Grade

Fourth grade science focuses on three major units of study - The Human Body, Electricity and Magnetism, and Inventions - and seeks to capitalize on students' innate curiosity about the world around them and allow them to become active participants in the wondrous process of discovery. Teachers facilitate fourth graders' growing ability to pose sophisticated and thought-provoking questions and to gather information, hypothesize and experiment before drawing conclusions. As students begin to explore cause/effect and build their skills in comparing and contrasting information and ideas, they grapple with questions about how things work and how our lives and world can change with the advances of science, technology, and innovation. Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on key skills of the scientific process: identifying and wording inquiries, accurately listing and recording data, interpreting and creating appropriate graphs to present relationships between variables, observing, and evaluating. Fluency with relevant scientific terms and vocabulary enables students to engage in the investigative process with increasing authority.

Beginning with a comprehensive unit on the human body, students explore the many fascinating systems that make us who we are. Through informational reading, hands-on activities, and video explorations, students engage in an in-depth study that includes the forms and functions of bones, joints, and muscle tissue and the unique characteristics of our bodies that allow us to respond to our ever-changing environments and experiences. Students learn about the interdependence between systems and the relationship between parts and the whole. The unit culminates with an interdisciplinary unit: a meeting of the Human Body Corporation in which the students, each playing the role of a body organ, present arguments for why they should not be "fired" from the human body.

The students then "charge" on to question the role of energy in our world through an in-depth exploration of electricity and magnetism. Regular opportunities to conduct experiments encourage students to identify essential understandings about magnetism and how magnets work, how electrical currents and circuits function to provide power, and the role of electromagnetism in motion. Ultimately, students develop a working understanding of the way in which electrical and magnetic energy can be transferred and transformed.

The final unit of study looks at inventors and some of the most significant scientific inventions in history. Students have the opportunity to become inventors of their own as they devise Rube

Goldberg contraptions. A trip to the Thomas Edison National Historic Park in West Orange sets the stage for this fun and engaging unit of study.

Boston Museum of Science's Engineering is Elementary program, coordinated with our fourth grade science curriculum, invites students to become biomedical and electrical engineers who create knee braces and alarm circuits. Students learn the five-step engineering design process, and see the connection of that to their work employing the scientific method.

Fifth Grade

The fifth grade science curriculum focuses on developing scientific reasoning and facility with tools in the science classroom. The goals are for students to be able to effectively carry out the steps of the scientific method, to foster curiosity and inquiry, and to stimulate interest in the field of science. The course is grounded in hands-on experiences as students explore three major areas in depth: Animal, Plants, and their Environment; Newtonian Physics; and Astronomy.

Using an inquiry-based approach, students base their experiments and explorations on their own questions and ideas, applying the scientific method and honing their observational skills. In addition, students acquire the ability to actively read informational text and write basic lab reports. Students become increasingly able to propose explanations based on the evidence gathered from their work. Lab safety procedures are regularly reviewed through the fifth grade course, and authentic assessments include performance tasks as well as inquiry-based projects.

Engineering is integrated through the Engineering is Elementary program's aerospace unit on designing parachutes. The year culminates with the highly anticipated trip to the Buehler Challenger and Science Center, where students participate in a mock mission involving Halley's comet. Taking on various roles both in space and at mission command, students are able to apply what they have learned through their studies of physics and astronomy to this exciting and memorable endeavor.

21st Century Learning

Fourth Grade Spanish (Full-Year: 2 Class Meetings/Week)

Students in fourth grade Spanish continue to develop their reading, writing, and speaking skills through regular practice and build their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and culture. The theme of the year revolves around activities related to everyday life and activities, with a particular emphasis on activities conducted during the school day.

The course begins with a review of important concepts learned in the Lower School, such as the days of the week, the months of the year, and the weather. Students are introduced to the QTalk curriculum, which allows them to form complete sentences using a variety of verbs in each chapter. Students are able to complete reading, writing, speaking and listening exercises related to the vocabulary and grammar in each chapter, and begin communicating solely in Spanish in the classroom. Cultural studies, with a specific focus on two countries, round out the curriculum.

Fifth Grade Spanish (Full-Year: 2 Class Meetings/Week)

Fifth grade Spanish students begin the year with a review of previously learned key concepts, including an introductory project asking students to give directions to classmates to navigate from one part of the school to another. A major areas of focus for the year is grammar skill acquisition, with students learning about subject pronouns, possessive pronouns and adjectives, conjugation of basic verbs in the present tense, and proper syntax for creating sentences both aloud and in writing. Students improve their ability to ask and answer questions, and they strengthen their ability to distinguish masculine and feminine, as well as singular and plural words. In addition to their language studies, students research a Spanish-speaking country of the month, preparing a presentation and posting information for their peers on a class bulletin board. The QTALK program allows students to participate actively in the learning process and produce task recall and language production.

Grade 4 Communication (Full-Year: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Fourth grade communication builds on the skills learned in the Lower School with a more targeted emphasis on public speaking and communicative problem-solving. Students work on their presentation skills, diction, public speaking, poetry recitation, non-verbal communication, and listening skills. They are also introduced to sense memory and strategies for navigating increasingly complex social situations. Digital citizenship lessons focus on age-appropriate topics such as safety

and security of passwords, privacy, citation of sites, identification of spam, and responsible use in sharing of photos and images

Grade 5 Communication (Full-Year: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Fifth grade communication students continue with their presentational communication skills and are introduced to the structure of formal forensic presentations. Students are also instructed on the proper way to break down poems and monologues into “beats” and diagram the structure. We continue with mindfulness and citizenship skills, and we discuss ways to deal with bullying. Digital citizenship classes address cyberbullying, internet safety, and online stereotyping.

Grade 5 Global Studies (Full-Year: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

This course aims to help students understand their role as global citizens so they may contribute to creating a more peaceful and just world and recognize their own agency in making a difference in their own communities. Students will work to better understand their own culture as well as the multicultural aspect of living in the United States. In addition, students will study cultures across the globe as well as the influences of geography, climate, and environment on culture. Through group discussions, projects, and research, this course challenges students to connect classroom learning with the real world in order to help them create a future that includes economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental integrity.

Middle School Financial Literacy (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Financial Literacy is essential in meeting the economic challenge of the 21st Century. Understanding and managing personal finances are key to one’s future financial success. The course begins with an overview of key terms and concepts. We then turn our attention to designing a product to “sell” internally. Students are given a maximum dollar amount they cannot exceed and are responsible for maintaining a budget. Communication and technology skills are woven throughout the larger project. An integral component of the financial literacy curriculum is the application of decision making skills that will enable students to become more responsible consumers for lifetime success.

Middle School Robotics (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Robotics is a field that, much like many areas of technology, is growing at an exponential pace. In this beginning robotics course, we will be introducing students to the concept of robotics including history, design, building, programming, and implementation. Additionally we will engage in discussions related to the application, development, and social implications as robots become more

prevalent in our world. Students will work both independently and collaboratively throughout the duration of the course as we journey through the landscape of robotics.

Middle School Chess (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

In the Middle School Chess course, students will learn how to set-up the board, how the pieces move and all the rules to the game, chess notation and how to record a game, using a chess clock, and rules for tournament play. Students will begin playing competitive games against each other and will establish a rating and begin tracking their own improvement all while developing critical thinking and decision-making skills.

Fine & Performing Arts

Fourth Grade Drama (1 Trimester: 2 Class Meetings/Week)

In this course, students learn the foundational elements required for presenting a live piece of theater. They are introduced to play script analysis, character development, character objective and intent, diction, volume, introductory staging, active listening, pacing, and stage etiquette. The focus is on the approach and execution required to tell a theatrical story as a group. This year, the students will deliver individualized performances over the Zoom platform that may be prerecorded and shared.

Fifth Grade Drama (1 Trimester: 2 Class Meetings/Week)

Building upon skills learned in Grade Four, students continue to learn the foundational elements required for presenting a live piece of theater. Fifth grade students perform a story of their choosing that is designed to challenge their comprehension and vocabulary. This year, the students will deliver individualized performances over the Zoom platform that may be prerecorded and shared.

Fourth Grade Music (Full-Year: 2 Class Meetings/Week)

Fourth grade music continues to build on music concepts from previous grades by introducing more complex rhythmic values, all tones in the diatonic scale, more notes on the recorder, and ensemble work that includes Orff instruments and recorder.

Fifth Grade Music (Full-Year: 2 Class Meetings/Week)

Fifth grade music introduces compound time, work with minor scales, basic chord progressions, and various styles of music, including Jazz, Blues, Rock and Roll, and Country. Students also begin a digital ear training course that prepares them for creating music on a Digital Audio Workstation.

Fourth Grade Art (Full-Year: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

The fourth grade art curriculum centers around the theme of self and how visual art serves as a form of self-expression, self-documentation, and self-discovery. Students will explore this concept through a variety of studio activities including drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, and sculpture to visualize and express their ideas. For each project, students learn about art historical examples to inspire their work. Students will also learn the process of art making, from conceptualizing and planning to executing and documenting their work. Throughout the course, students will strengthen their creative skills through working from observation, memory, and imagination.

Fifth Grade Art (Full-Year: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

The fifth grade art curriculum centers around the theme of time and how time can be represented, explored, and depicted through art works. Students will explore the concept of time through a variety of studio activities including drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, sculpture and performance to visualize and express their ideas. For each project, students learn about art historical examples to inspire their work and give them perspective on their place in the timeline of art history. Students will also learn the process of art making, from conceptualizing and planning to executing and documenting their work. Throughout the course, students will strengthen their creative skills through working from observation, memory, and imagination.

Middle School Folk Dancing & Creative Movement (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Middle School Movement offers students a conceptual approach to dance. Instead of just learning steps and routines, dancers are introduced to and explore one dance concept each week. Some examples include levels, pathways, weight, and flow. A typical class includes a warm-up, exploration of the week's concept, skill development, student choreography, and finally, cool down and reflection.

Middle School Choir (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

The health benefits of group singing have long been documented, and Choir offers students the opportunity to work on important life skills such as teamwork, dependability, commitment, and

respect. Basic music theory, healthy vocal technique, and exposure to a variety to musical styles are also taught.

Grade 4 Performance Arts (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

This course in Performance Arts focuses on percussion, stage tech, set design, and props. The first unit on percussion focuses on teamwork and collaboration using a variety of percussion instruments including Djembes, wood blocks, tambourines, cabasas, vibraphones, cymbals, and shakers. Students learn right/left coordination of the body by studying and practicing foundational rudiments and traditional African beats. The class also studies musical terminology and notation and practices regulating tempos, following conductor cues, and creative experimentation through games and compositions.

Physical, Social, and Emotional Wellness

Middle School Physical Education (Full-Year/Daily)

In middle school, students are able to practice previously learned activities while also being exposed to the fundamentals of new activities. Our primary focus with this age group is centered around engaging students in games that draw upon elements of play while also developing skill. Playing special CDS- invented games allows this age group to explore their physical abilities while staying attuned to their child-like wonderment. These games serve as a non-traditional platform for pushing into more traditional team sports. Two key areas of focus include reinforcing structure and fundamentals. The students are introduced to new styles of running that differentiate between speed and endurance. Teamwork and sportsmanship are emphasized while students work on strength, flexibility, agility, spacial awareness, and the process of decision-making.

Health 4 (Full-Year: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

In this course, lessons are designed to lay the groundwork for a future in which healthful bodies, minds, and relationships are valued and prioritized. Framing our approach is the classic “health triangle” - the idea that overall wellness is built through intentional care in our physical, mental, and social health domains. Students explore topics such as disease prevention through fitness, nutrition, and sleep, always trying to find meaningful ways to incorporate good habits into their day-to-day lives. Students also expand their ability to discuss feelings and manage stress, as well as practice

conflict resolution and assertive communication techniques to maintain healthy relationships with others.

Health 5 (Full-Year: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Students in the Health 5 course continue to build on the concept of the “health triangle” introduced in grade 4, especially in the context of their maturing bodies and the more complex social landscape in which they find themselves. Students learn about the endocrine system and its role in initiating puberty as well as the impact that body changes can have on daily habits, self-esteem, and relationships. Additional topics in this course include discussions about alcohol and nicotine, mental health issues, and maintaining friendships that are positive, supportive and fun.



The Upper School Experience

The Upper School program, consisting of sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, strives to cultivate in its students a lifelong love of learning, an inquisitive spirit, independence, respect for diversity, and leadership skills.

During their time as the most senior students at Chatham Day School, upper schoolers undergo numerous significant transformations of mind and body, as their time with us represents the momentous bridge between childhood and high school. The cognitive, emotional, physical, and social growth of these years heightens our adolescents' awareness of the world around them and highlights their potential to contribute to and leave a legacy in that world. As they grapple with questions of identity and self, acknowledging that there reside in each of us layer upon layer of possibility, upper school students "try on" roles as engineers, writers, entrepreneurs, historians, journalists, musicians, poets, dramatists, innovators, social activists, thinkers, and doers. As the students prepare for the next portion of their academic journeys, we seek to empower them to understand their voice and agency.

During the sixth, seventh, and eighth grader years, our students explore, master, and apply a curriculum that can be adapted to individual needs, thanks to small class sizes. Veteran teachers

encourage an inherent interest in underlying concepts and big ideas, nurturing through all efforts an intrinsic joy of learning and the solid foundation that will benefit them for a lifetime.

Discussion-based classes, inquiry-based projects, hands-on lab experiments, and creative and authentic assessments allow students to demonstrate content mastery, while also venturing in new directions and keeping students actively engaged in all aspects of their academic pursuits.

CDS Upper Schoolers take five academic courses in rotating 40 and 80-minute blocks: English, History, Mathematics, Science, and Spanish. Ours is a writing-intensive program in which analytical thinking skills and cross-curricular connections are emphasized regularly. Organizational, study, and time management skills are developed in all content areas, with teachers guiding students on a daily basis in critical areas such as note-taking, asking questions, participating in meaningful and constructive ways, and preparing for long-term assignments. To build their emerging habits of scholarship, advisors facilitate Extensions of Learning class twice each week. EOL provides students the opportunity to work with teachers one-on-one or in small groups to review concepts or further their understanding. This critical component of the students' Upper School experiences paves the way for students to move gradually from dependence to independence as they learn to self-advocate and take increased responsibility for their learning.

CDS also seeks to provide a dynamic, co-curricular course of study that epitomizes the 21st Century learner: adaptable, open, innovative, ethical and collaborative. This varied and robust series of courses reflects the interests and passions of our talented student and faculty bodies. In 2020-21, these courses will include Communication, Chess, Robotics, Financial Literacy, Media & Film Studies, Journey to High School, Test Prep, and Health.

Our advisory program fosters a sense of belonging among our students as well as a partnership between home and school. As the primary point of contact for families, advisors are able to be proactive and responsive student advocates, overseeing their advisees' academic progress and helping them to set and meet goals over the course of the school year. In daily morning meetings and weekly Class Meetings, advisors focus on areas of student wellness, group dynamics, self-advocacy, and healthy communication.

English

The Upper School English program develops students' abilities to communicate more confidently through a comprehensive and integrated study of writing and literature. Students begin by learning the structure of literature and the fundamentals of writing. Through prompts tying literature and personal growth, students gain confidence in forming and supporting opinions and sharing their ideas within the community. To develop each student's unique writer's voice, students first learn the steps of the writing process and culminate their study by creating and defending original ideas. The course of study, broken into the four areas of grammar, vocabulary, writing, and literature, aims to build each student's creative and analytical writing abilities. Additionally, the program encourages collaborative initiative between students by first teaching the skills of effective peer editing and culminating with the expectation that collaboration occurs organically, rather than didactically.

Sixth Grade

The sixth grade English course introduces students to Socratic-style discussions in which logical thinking and listening skills are of critical importance. Whether through oral or written work, students learn to develop one's authentic voice, construct meaningful and original arguments, and use textual support to defend ideas. Selected literary texts from a variety of genres and time periods encourage students to explore themes of resilience, courage, and the essence of the human condition, enabling them to draw personal connections that lead to deeper reflection and meaning.

Analytical writing increases in depth and breadth in this first year of Upper School English. Students expand their working knowledge of literary terms and analyze the chosen texts to explore the way in which language and word choice influence readers. Special emphasis is placed on careful articulation of a thesis statement and the structure of an expository essay. As readers, students learn to annotate texts and identify supporting material and are able to delve into more sophisticated discussions of characters' motivations and experiences.

The study of grammar, sentence building, and vocabulary is maintained at a deliberate pace and intertwined with the students' writing. Direct instruction strengthens students' structural knowledge and mechanical skills that support fluent writing. Weekly vocabulary units help students develop vocabulary, grow memory skills, and learn organizational strategies to complete work in a timely fashion.

Peer editing and collaboration are key components of the sixth grade English program. Active engagement in partner and small group explorations develop awareness of new perspectives and promote healthy and respectful dialogues.

Seventh Grade

With growing confidence in their writer's voice and increased knowledge of literary techniques, students in seventh grade English turn their attention to more complex and multi-layered texts that investigate the role of the individual in relation to the community. How are our beliefs and values shaped by the world around us, and how do we shape, in turn, the people and places around us? Powerful works, both traditional and contemporary, offer dynamic and engaging fodder for students to consider the ways in which individual actions, dictated by noble, inspired, or base ambitions, lead to lasting consequences.

The writing-intensive program of seventh grade provides further opportunities to fine tune one's analytical and creative work by varying sentence structure, considering transitional words, and attending to word choice. Students learn to integrate and analyze quotations to strengthen arguments. Weekly writing assignments become more complex, culminating in a research paper including MLA citations and a Works Cited page. Students are expected to consistently apply their knowledge of grammatical concepts in their writing. Students also become more adept at self and peer editing, working within small groups, all while strengthening time management and organizational skills to produce quality work in a timely manner.

Roundtable discussions focus on literature and encourage students to share their ideas in a manner that demonstrates a respect for and an understanding of the difference between beliefs, theories, and opinions. In the spring, seventh grade students study primary and secondary source documents as part of a larger multidisciplinary unit.

Eighth Grade

The eighth grade English curriculum calls for introspection as students look at literature and writing that emphasizes a responsibility to self and others. With the goal of fostering student-centered learning, students lead classroom discussions, create original literary analysis, and write a novel. The novel unit is a year-long assignment that allows students to understand the writing process in detail, not only as readers but as active authors. The project also affords a more gradual approach to defining one's writer's voice.

More advanced grammatical concepts, including phrases and clauses, are introduced to improve each student's creative, expository, persuasive, and analytical writing skills. Vocabulary studies continue, with the expectation that students incorporate newly learned words into their writing and speech. Analytical essays require more sophisticated interpretations and higher-level critical thinking skills.

Mathematics

The Upper School math curriculum focuses on three main areas: computational and procedural fluency, problem solving, and conceptual understanding. Utilizing a spiral curriculum, concepts are continually revisited in order to build mastery. Through group work, students practice communicating their ideas and strategies in a clear manner. Students learn to be creative with their problem solving strategies and increase their ability to identify if solutions are reasonable. An equal emphasis is placed on process and product, as well as the relevance and application of mastered concepts to real-world problems. Students are encouraged to maintain a growth mindset as they embrace taking risks and making mistakes as valuable components of the learning process. Course offerings vary from year to year and are determined by the needs of each individual class. Further differentiation within each course permits each student to study at a challenging pace while gaining confidence and competence.

Sixth Grade

The sixth grade math course is designed to build a solid foundation of mathematical skills, strengthen number sense, develop familiarity with the language of mathematics, and foster the development of algebraic thinking. Students further their abilities to recognize and generalize patterns as they seek to connect concepts to deepen their understanding. The content of the course is differentiated and includes: fraction and decimal operations, percentages, numerical and algebraic expressions, integer operations, basic equations, and an introduction to irrational numbers.

Investigations provide an opportunity to explore geometric concepts and various means of data analysis.

Seventh Grade

The seventh grade math course is designed to provide a solid foundation of pre-algebra skills and further the development of algebraic thinking and geometric reasoning. Students learn strategies for solving more complex problems mentally and using estimation as a means to assess whether solutions are reasonable. The content of this course is differentiated and includes: rational and irrational number operations, solving and graphing algebraic equations and inequalities, and applications of proportions and percents. Students may also pursue the study of functions and linear equations, systems of equations, foundations of geometry, and geometric reasoning.

Eighth Grade

Eighth grade math class is designed to solidify students' algebra foundation. Algebra I provides a formal development of the algebraic skills and concepts necessary for students to succeed in advanced courses. In particular, the instructional program in this course provides for the use of algebraic skills in a wide range of problem-solving situations. The concept of function is emphasized throughout the course. Topics include: (1) operations with real numbers, (2) linear equations and inequalities, (3) relations and functions, (4) polynomials, (5) algebraic fractions, and (6) nonlinear equations. In addition there is the continued study of the principles of Geometry.

History

The Upper School history curriculum is designed not only to explore what happened in the past, but also to understand why these events occurred, what impact they had and continue to have on the world, and how they may predict what will occur in the future. The changing landscape of physical and human geography, economics, politics, and culture provide plentiful opportunities for analysis, discussion, and debate. Students learn how to challenge claims and offer arguments in support of or against opinions in a respectful manner. They evaluate primary and secondary sources, reflecting on the perspectives of the authors and contextualizing their writings using a broader historical lens. Through active reading of text, students develop note taking, organization, and research skills, and they summarize and analyze information in writing assignments, projects, and oral presentations. As they begin to embrace their roles as global citizens in the 21st Century, students grapple with content that is increasingly complex and sophisticated, but do so in a safe, nurturing environment. Weekly current events assignments, differentiated by grade level, highlight issues of importance across a wide range of subjects that are of particular interest to the emerging adolescent.

Sixth Grade

The sixth grade history curriculum cultivates a solid foundation in early American history and politics in the 1800s through examination of primary and secondary sources. The course examines the development of a young country struggling to maintain its independence while facing domestic and foreign challenges. From the early stages of government following the presidency of George Washington to territorial expansion by other leaders, this course addresses questions such as: How justifiable was U.S. expansion in the 1800s? Or How was life in the North different from life in the South? Students examine the trials and tribulations of Americans in contrasting regions of the country, in opposing political parties, and in different races and socioeconomic classes. Through

reading, research, projects and discussions students will gain deeper understanding of the struggles America endured that eventually led to the Civil War. Questions to challenge students' understanding include: Which events of the mid-1800s kept the nation together and which events pulled it apart? And What factors and events influenced the outcome of the Civil War? By the end of the year each individual will have the foundational information necessary to understand America's advancement in politics, society, military, and economic growth leading into the 20th century.

Seventh Grade

The seventh grade history curriculum engages students in examining history from multiple angles using primary and secondary source documents. This course explores how a fledgling country grew to be a world power, and the trials and tribulations of that process. Content focuses on 20th century American history from World War I and the reasons underlying U.S. involvement, through contemporary times involving the United States and other world powers.

Additionally, the seventh grade history curriculum challenges students to examine events from multiple perspectives and integrate them to create a comprehensive understanding of history. The course explores the period in American History from the Cold War era through the Civil Rights Movement, the conflict in Vietnam, foreign policy in the post-Cold War period through to 9/11 and its aftermath. Robust conversations are stimulated by essential questions such as: Were the methods used by the United States to contain communism justified? and How did segregation affect American life in the postwar period lead to rich discourse and dialogue? Students explain how politics and society affected aspects of life both domestically and internationally and discuss their impact on the United States' rise to the status of an economic, political, and military world power.

Through hands-on projects, interactive web experiences, role-play, active reading, research, and experiential opportunities, students immerse themselves in the defining events of this time period. An extensive interdisciplinary unit of study devoted to the events surrounding the Jewish Holocaust during World War II is a hallmark of this course. Through their studies of literature, memoir, and history, students begin to explore the relationship between individuals, communities, and governments and the responsibilities of each. The ability to discuss topics such as personal responsibility, respect for diversity, and other Holocaust-specific themes assists in the development of student's critical thinking and evaluative skills.

Eighth Grade

The eighth grade history curriculum challenges students to examine events from multiple perspectives and integrate them to create a comprehensive understanding of history. The course

explores the period in American History from the Cold War era through the Civil Rights Movement, the conflict in Vietnam, foreign policy in the post-Cold War period through to 9/11 and its aftermath. Robust conversations are stimulated by essential questions such as: Were the methods used by the United States to contain communism justified? and How did segregation affect American life in the postwar period lead to rich discourse and dialogue? Students explain how politics and society affected aspects of life both domestically and internationally and discuss their impact on the United States' rise to the status of an economic, political, and military world power. A culminating project involves students collaborating to research, write, film, and edit a movie to demonstrate the knowledge acquired over their seventh and eighth grade years.

Science

The Upper School science program seeks to develop students' critical thinking skills, hone their experimental and laboratory skills, and foster a deep appreciation for science and the universe around us. The dynamic, process-driven curriculum encourages students to develop their own questions, design experiments, communicate results, and work collaboratively as scientists. They transfer their writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills to the science classroom as they engage in discussions and communicate their understanding of course content. Through scientific investigations, students are able to prove or disprove their hypotheses and provide support for their conclusions through analysis of data. Experimental and investigative work focuses on deciding what apparatus to employ, making and recording observations and measurements, and drawing conclusions. Scientific inquiry is infused into each topic, as it provides students with diverse ways to study the natural world and propose explanations based on the evidence derived from their work.

Sixth Grade

The sixth grade science curriculum uses a constructivist approach in which students are scaffolded through the learning process using a blend of directed, guided, and independent inquiry. As they broaden and deepen their scientific knowledge base, students are increasingly able to connect ideas and thus build enduring understandings. In this course, our young scientists focus on two main topics: the dynamic Earth and Earth's water and atmosphere. Students develop investigation skills as they probe essential questions. How do energy and matter move through Earth's spheres? How do weathering and erosion change Earth's surface? What is the importance of water on Earth? After exploring key ideas, students work to explain them in their own words and then extend them, often generating the next line of questioning to be pursued. Students independently design investigations to demonstrate their knowledge, such as examining the effects of both mechanical and chemical

weathering on the Earth. Laboratory skills are honed as students learn to use lab equipment and follow the scientific process.

The GLOBE program through NASA is integrated into the curriculum as students collect and analyze weather data and use it to explain everyday phenomena. Students learn how to safely and accurately use measurement tools such as thermometers and barometers, and then recognize trends and patterns to generate predictions in the form of weather forecasts. Mathematical understanding is strengthened and applied as students become increasingly familiar with the metric system and converting between units of measure.

Seventh Grade

The seventh grade science curriculum focuses on foundational concepts of biology and chemistry and expands students' ability to apply the scientific method beyond investigation and drawing conclusions to constructing explanations and designing solutions to problems. During the two trimesters of biology, students grapple with essential questions that include: What are the building blocks of organisms? How do biological communities support diversity of living things? How does biotechnology impact our world? Through models and simulations, students develop their inductive and deductive reasoning as they explore fundamental components of animal life and diversity. In addition, the authentic work of scientists in the field is highlighted as students learn about individuals who proposed key principles of cell theory, natural selection, and heredity. Lab activities provide a forum for learning the proper use of a microscope, including how to manipulate and view images and document observations. In the final trimester of chemistry, students explore atoms, elements, compounds, mixtures, and chemical interactions, as well as cause and effect relationships. They think critically and logically as they explore the relationships and patterns used to classify elements on the Periodic Table. Students explore the attractions and motion of atoms and molecules as they observe the heating and cooling of a solid, liquid, and gas. Students also look at substances on the molecular level to discover why one substance is more or less dense than another. Mathematical understanding is strengthened and applied as students learn to balance chemical equations.

Eighth Grade

The eighth grade science curriculum is divided into three trimester-based units of study in chemistry, forensic science, and immunology. The course is designed to allow students to think and work like scientists as they pose questions and seek answers through investigative processes. The importance of collaboration is highlighted as students critique, debate, and learn from one another. The course begins with an introduction to chemistry, with an emphasis on atoms, elements, compounds, mixtures, and chemical interactions. Students conduct experiments that explore cause and effect

relationships and think critically and logically as they explore the relationships and patterns used to classify elements on the Periodic Table. The trimester concludes with an introduction to food chemistry using MIT's open courseware. In the second trimester, students turn their attention to the field of forensic science, exploring the history and background of the field by discussing significant scientific discoveries that have led to the technology used in the field today. Students perform experiments that use some of the techniques forensic scientists use to assist in solving crimes and will evaluate teacher-generated mock crime scenes during the course and generate their own as well. Finally, in the third trimester, students focus on immunology with an emphasis on the human immune system and diseases.

World Language

The Upper School Spanish program is an interactive experience in which students develop skills to speak and understand the Spanish language. Students experiment with the language in a multimedia environment that allows for real-world applications of what they are learning. Activities are designed to develop and strengthen skills in the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational.

Students focus on the standards put in place by the American Council on the Teachers of Foreign Languages, known as “The Five C’s”: Communication, Connections, Cultures, Communities, and Comparisons. The goals are for students to be able to express themselves in complete sentences using a variety of vocabulary; use strategies to understand the spoken language; recognize and produce the sounds of the language; and discuss key similarities between selected American and Spanish-speaking cultures.

Sixth Grade Spanish

Sixth grade Spanish is an introductory year when students learn the building blocks of the language. Students compare the English and Spanish languages, noting that syntax differs and that some words or expressions do not have exact equivalents in the other language. Students learn to recognize and pronounce the sounds of the language, and they learn strategies to understand the spoken language, looking for clues as to where one word ends and the next begins.

Given that students come to sixth grade Spanish with varying levels of readiness, the course reviews introductory vocabulary, subject pronouns, verb conjugations in the present tense, and gender distinctions, as students learn that nouns have gender, which influence articles, adjective agreement,

and pronoun use. By the end of sixth grade, students are able to respond in Spanish to commands and questions, and they can write simple sentences.

Seventh Grade Spanish

The seventh grade Spanish course builds on what students studied in sixth grade. Students learn to make their original sentences more interesting by adding adjectives and adverbs, as well as replacing nouns with direct and indirect object pronouns to avoid repetition. Students also learn how to make affirmative commands and to use reflexive verbs. Students are able to talk about the future, and they learn the preterite (past) tense. They are expected to be able to read increasingly complex passages and understand lengthier spoken passages. As they learn new vocabulary, students develop a network of synonyms and antonyms to broaden their overall knowledge base. By the end of seventh grade, students can comfortably write a paragraph in Spanish with varied vocabulary and minimal errors.

Eighth Grade Spanish

In this course, Grade 8 students strengthen the Spanish language skills they have already acquired, and they apply those skills in more sophisticated ways in all modes of communication. Students seize opportunities to develop a store of vocabulary words and expressions that are of interest to them as they pursue projects on topics of their choosing. Regular journal writing activities also allow them to express their personal points of view while practicing targeted grammar points. Students read increasingly lengthy passages, using strategies to demonstrate overall comprehension - even when each distinct word may not have been understood. Students are attuned to the sounds of the language and are able to recognize accents from different parts of the Spanish-speaking world. Finally, they develop a deeper understanding of the lasting impact that Spanish colonization had on the people and cultures of North and South America. By the end of eighth grade, students have strengthened their Spanish 1 skills and are ready to enter high school as confident foreign language learners.

21st Century Learning

Chess, Grades 6 & 7 (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

In the Upper School Chess course, students will learn/review how to set-up the board, how the pieces move and all the rules to the game, chess notation and how to record a game, using a chess clock, and rules for tournament play. Students will begin playing competitive games against each other and will establish a rating and begin tracking their own improvement all while developing critical thinking and decision-making skills.

Robotics, Grades 4-8 (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Robotics is a field that, much like many areas of technology, is growing at an exponential pace. In this beginning robotics course, we will be introducing students to the concept of robotics including history, design, building, programming, and implementation. Additionally we will engage in discussions related to the application, development, and social implications as robots become more prevalent in our world. Students will work both independently and collaboratively throughout the duration of the course as we journey through the landscape of robotics.

Communication, Grades 6 & 7 (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Students in sixth grade communication classes continue to work on their oratory skills, but they are also introduced to Aristotle's theory of persuasion Dr. Cialdini's six principles of persuasion. We discuss the differences between ethical and unethical persuasive tactics, and students learn to identify how media messages use persuasion to sell ideas and/or products. Students are then challenged to create their own persuasive campaigns within the boundaries of ethical persuasion.

Students in grade seven communication class continue to develop their formal forensic communication skills, and they are also introduced to basics of interviewing. We discuss interview etiquette and learn techniques to build confidence and navigate complex interview situations. Students also learn about active listening, the value and of active listening and how it can be used for conflict management and resolution.

Grade 8 Communication & Capstone Project (1 Trimester: 2 Class Meeting/Week)

This year-end rite-of-passage for our graduating eighth grade students is a multidisciplinary venture that allows each individual child to pursue an area of particular interest or passion. Students design and direct their own projects, making use of the varied skills they have honed over their years at CDS or through extracurricular interests pursued outside of school. Preparation for these projects includes research, design, time management skills, practice, communication, digital literacy, and/or performance. Presentations are shared orally and in writing with an authentic audience of parents, younger students, and CDS community members.

Financial Literacy, Grade 6 (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

Understanding and managing personal finances are key to one's future financial success. Students will apply the knowledge learned in this course to financial situations encountered later in life.

Students will learn how to make informed financial decisions related to budgeting, banking, credit, insurance, taxes, and career exploration. An integral component of the financial literacy curriculum is the application of decision making skills that will enable students to become more responsible consumers for lifetime success.

Media & Film Studies, Grade 7 (2 Trimesters)

Students will learn how to tell a comprehensive story using the medium of film. They will learn the fundamentals of the filmmaking process including: cinematography, lighting, audio, composition, project management, scene design, direction, editing, and effect. Students will come away with a better knowledge of how to control and create a specific vision of their choosing.

The focus of the first trimester is on learning the equipment used for filmmaking, understanding story structure, learning how to stage shots, learning how to plan for and control environmental factors (light, sound, set, location, and the unanticipated). Students will also begin structuring their primary film project which includes outlining, writing, storyboarding, casting, planning, and organizing all that they will need to create a short, 1 minute, film based on a single emotion and to communicate an idea or feeling. In the second trimester, with their concept developed, outlined, and planned, each student will commence shooting their content and editing clips for their final project. Once the final film is produced and exported, each movie will be viewed in class, followed by open peer-to-peer critique as well as instructor-provided input. Feedback is a major component of the final assessment of each student's film, offering many opportunities for critical input and reflection.

Performing and Visual Arts

Introduction to Western Theater (1 Trimester Elective)

In this exciting drama class, students will have the opportunity to explore theatrical arts on both an academic and kinesthetic level. CDS Upper School students will learn the basics of Western Theater History beginning with the founding philosophies of Greek theater all the way through our modern American stages. As a class, we will read through famous plays across western genres, and we will put portions of these plays “on their feet.” Students will also learn principles of play-script analysis, and will have the opportunity to write and perform their own short scripts, and/or practice classic scenes for members of the school community. Throughout this process, students who are both new and returning to the stage will learn theater vocabulary and will have the opportunity to practice stage skills through a wide variety of games, exercises, and projects.

Digital Imaging 101: Transforming Your Photos into Masterpieces (1 Trimester Elective)

“A picture is worth a thousand words,” stated Frederick Barnard in 1927. Or was it a “look,” as he said in 1921? Or did the Japanese state that proverb? Was it a Chinese saying? Truthfully, it doesn’t matter. What matters is that images speak volumes, and each person can create a work that will be viewed by someone else who interprets the image different than the creator intended. THAT is the beauty of art. In this class, students will explore the creation and manipulation of images with the use of digital technology. Throughout the course of the semester we will introduce best practices in digital image workflow, tools for creating and editing existing images, guided lessons to produce specific projects, structured assignments that allow students to explore, and more. In the end each student will have a basic understanding of the tools and functions of image editing software, a working vocabulary of digital photography, and a small portfolio of completed assignments (guided and independent). Photography experience is not required, but it is a helpful benefit in this class.

Advanced Film Studies (1 Trimester Elective)

In this elective class, students will be introduced to advanced filming, editing, and camera acting techniques that include visual green screen effects, color keying, compositing, foley arts, lighting, camera crane operation, A roll and B roll, and acting in close-up. Additionally, the students will learn many of the “tried and true” visual effects that have been used in Hollywood productions for decades, and they will be introduced to the job titles and responsibilities of a primary film crew.

Students will have the opportunity to work off of existing scripts, and they will create a final product of their own design to be presented at an informance at the end of the semester.

The seventh grade Film and Media Studies course is **not** a prerequisite for taking this exciting new class.

Musical Theater (1 Trimester Elective)

This course offers students the opportunity to explore American musical theater. Through a variety of activities including character analysis, acting exercises, physical and vocal warm-ups, group observation and peer feedback, and individualized instruction, students will develop their singing, acting, and movement skills. The course will also delve into the history of musical theater through readings and viewings of performances.

Individual and Group Vocal Music (1 Trimester Elective)

This course offers students the opportunity to make and learn about music through singing. Students will learn healthy vocal technique, including the basic mechanism of singing, projection, breath support, flexibility, and range. Students will be able to work on material individually, in pairs, or in small groups. Students will also practice sight singing, and, if applicable, practice singing and accompaniment. Other topics include music history, the elements of music, and music careers.

Physical, Social, and Emotional Wellness

Upper School Physical Education - Full-Year

Upper school Physical Education combines the values of practicing learned activities (to build confidence and technique) with the values of introducing new activities (to encourage growth and development). With the primary goal of developing physically fit adolescents, this course in physical education is directed at engaging students in traditional team sports, innovative group games, and individual skills. Daily instruction is provided in warm-up stretching that is specific to the current game. Aerobic exercise is demonstrated through various forms of running and movement exercises. Students are encouraged to practice form and function in tasks that call upon their strength, flexibility, agility, endurance, speed, spatial awareness, and process of decision-making. Upper school students are exposed to more specialized units of movement such as Intro to Dance, Yoga, HIIT (high intensity interval training) as well as student-selected units varying from aerobic kickboxing to walks on the fitness & nature trail. These students are equipped with various skills so they can continue the process of physical activity in high school.

Upper School Health

Upper School health classes are designed to lay the groundwork for a future in which healthful bodies, minds, and relationships are valued and prioritized. Framing our approach is the classic “health triangle” - the idea that overall wellness is built through intentional care in our physical, mental, and social health domains.

Health 6 (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

In this course, students will embrace their budding independence and explore their agency in making choices that support their overall health and wellbeing. Students will take an inventory of their strengths and learning styles, and they will look closely at dimensions of their executive functioning so they can optimize their ability to learn. Grade 6 students will also discover how proper care of our physical health has a positive impact on our mental health. They will learn how to discuss mental health issues, which can be extremely important not only for their own personal wellbeing, but also for the health of their friends and peers since students of this age can often be a “first responder,” noticing when a friend is struggling and may be in need of help.

Health 7 (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

In the Health 7 course, students will discover that the choices they make at this stage of their lives will directly affect the architecture of their brain. They will explore how the teen brain is wired to encourage risk-taking behavior, but in the modern world, this can be perilous. Students learn about the brain's reward system and how chemicals such as nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, and other drugs can hijack the brain's ability to function properly -- and also create addictions. In a similar vein, the brain rewards things like eating fatty foods and the instant stimulation of technology, although overuse can lead to adverse effects on physical, mental and social health.

Health 8 (1 Trimester: 1 Class Meeting/Week)

In this course, students explore the challenges they are experiencing as they prepare to transition to high school. Of particular importance to 8th grade students is how stress can serve as a motivator, but high levels of chronic stress can have negative effects on overall health and well-being. They explore the foundations of healthy relationships and look at how shifts in power and control can place a healthy relationship in jeopardy. The concept of being a "first responder" for friends in crisis is also discussed. Topics related to body image, dating, and how to approach discussions about consent in physical relationships help to further prepare students for the more sophisticated social landscape in which they will find themselves shortly.