

ENGLISH

LOWER SCHOOL

The Lower School Language Arts program emphasizes skills in reading, writing, and speaking. In first grade, students are taught to put spoken language into written form, then in-class lessons expand and reinforce skills in the areas of composition, handwriting, and spelling. Students develop into independent readers with good silent-reading comprehension. A phonetic approach to reading and spelling is used primarily but not to the exclusion of other methods. Language arts classes in second, third, and fourth grades develop previously taught skills along with a wide range of new skills with continuing emphasis on reading comprehension, composition (including proof-reading and summarizing), vocabulary-building, grammar, and spelling. Organizational and study skills are also emphasized, and throughout the language arts program, children are exposed to good literature. In fourth grade, we begin our humanities program. This combination of language arts, social studies, and study skills is developmentally appropriate for the boys, and it also helps prepare them for further humanities work in Middle School.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Middle School Humanities curriculum is designed to help the student to achieve a global appreciation of people and society and to further develop the students' reading, writing, speaking, listening, research, and critical-thinking skills. The curriculum offers a series of perspectives from which the student can approach the diversity of human experience. Each year's study focuses on a set of themes that will allow the student to make connections across cultures, time periods, and academic disciplines in order to broaden his understanding of what it means to be human. Teachers present themselves as generalists who join with students in their quest for knowledge.

Meeting two periods a day, Humanities courses intensively develop basic composition and reading skills. Writing instruction focuses on sentences, paragraphs, short essays, poems, and stories. Formal and informal instruction in grammar and usage occurs throughout the curriculum. Study of literature occurs at all grade levels, with special effort to improve comprehension, to increase vocabulary, and to introduce analyses of character, plot, and theme. By the time a student finishes the eighth-grade course, he should have a foundation in both writing and reading that is strong enough to support the advanced work required in the Upper School.

UPPER SCHOOL

Upper School English courses reinforce and expand a student's ability to read and write. Teachers ask, and teach students to ask, increasingly complex questions about literature of several kinds: poetry, short stories, novels, plays, and essays. While senior electives are organized thematically, courses for underclassmen generally include some literature that complements the Social Studies curriculum, as well as other works which appeal to and expand students' interests. Classes are mostly discussions, although some background material may be presented in lectures. Teachers encourage students to meet ideas first-hand rather than merely learn about them. They should be able not only to articulate their ideas about life, but also to support these ideas by cogent reasoning from textual evidence. Students take the English course corresponding to their grade level. For the second and third trimesters of their senior year, students choose electives. These courses allow a student to concentrate on or to expand his interest in literature and to hone his writing.

As writers, students complete frequent writing assignments that demand complexity of thought and increasing sophistication of style. These assignments include required revision and public scrutiny.

In addition, at each grade level, every student writes a departmental essay, a coordinated writing project assigned to all students in a particular grade. The departmental essay for each grade is as follows:

Grade 9 – a literary analysis: the art of textual explication

Grade 10 – a family history: making sense of one's personal history

Grade 11 – an argument: writing to persuade and refute (a personal essay suitable for a college application)

Grade 12 – a literary research essay: the blending of argument and analysis

By the end of each year, every student in a particular grade should have written at least one successful departmental essay.

The department nominates students for English 10-H, 11-H, and 12-AP. Students who are nominated and who wish to enroll in these courses do so on their Course Selection Sheets. With the written permission of the English Department Chair, seniors may take additional electives during the second and third trimesters.

HUMANITIES 5: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE (105) GRADE 5

Full year

The course focuses on the relationship of people to their nation, with emphasis on the history and geography of the United States from the earliest times to the present. It poses the question: Who are we as Americans, as citizens of the United States? Students pursue this inquiry through fiction and non-fiction readings about people of many cultures. Extensive instruction in vocabulary, grammar, writing, reading, and critical thinking skills complements the thematic studies.

HUMANITIES 6: A WORLD PERSPECTIVE (106) GRADE 6
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Full year

By examining a variety of foreign cultures from a number of perspectives,

this course seeks to develop in its students a world view. Through a comparative study of the political, religious, economic, historic, and cultural forces at work in six regions of the globe, the course explores the similarities and differences in the ways that people make homes for themselves. Students look at six cultural regions: Russia and Eastern Europe, China, India, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. To learn about these regions, students study not just maps and textbooks, but also the music, art, literature, customs, and mores of these cultures.

Ideally, students should emerge from the course not only with a thorough appreciation of cultures different from their own, but also with the intellectual tools needed to make sense of any culture. Teachers ask each student to remain open-minded, to appreciate cultures on their own terms rather than judge them from his own cultural perspective. The course gives students an understanding of the influences of geography, history, economics, demographics, and religion on present-day conditions. The course also includes extensive instruction in reading, writing, vocabulary, spelling, and grammar. Daily writing assignments and periodic literary explorations play a significant role in the students' cultural studies.

HUMANITIES 7: A MYTHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE (107) GRADE 7

Full year

Mythological themes such as Beginnings, Coming of Age, Heroes, and The Search for Paradise (Endings) inspire the units in this course. Students explore these themes by reading a variety of myths, literary works, and nonfiction, and by relating these universal themes to their own lives and to life in today's world. The goal is to achieve better understanding of man and his place in the world, including the student's own place as a citizen of his city and state. Intertwined with the study of mythological themes is the study of Texas and Dallas, their histories, geographies, governments, and multi-cultural heritages.

During the year the students complete several research projects designed to introduce effective research techniques, including use of the latest technology available. Time magazine provides a resource for these projects and for the study of related current events. The course emphasizes critical thinking, and expository and creative writing assignments help students improve their expressive capabilities. Study skills, organization, and time management are taught, and strong emphasis is placed upon enrichment of vocabulary and upon instruction in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

HUMANITIES 8: A MORAL PERSPECTIVE (108) GRADE 8
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Full year

This course explores questions especially pertinent to young people as they think seriously about themselves and the world in which they live. The questions central to the course are What is a good society? What makes a good leader? What makes a good person? What is worth fighting for? Students explore these questions through texts such as *Lord of the Flies*, *Richard the III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Power of One*, and *Huckleberry Finn*. How these questions appear in the contemporary world is pursued through the use of *Time* magazine, newspapers, and videos. The course also aims to make young men better writers and better readers. Students work to improve their proficiency by writing both analytical compositions and creative pieces. Students improve their reading and thinking skills by learning to support their ideas both in class discussions and in written essays.

ENGLISH 9 (109) GRADE 9

Full year

English 9 is an introduction to the study of literature. In addition to reading and writing extensively, students engage in regular vocabulary study. Readings that complement the ninth-grade history cur-

riculum are *Beowulf*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Murder in the Cathedral*. Other representative readings are *Of Mice and Men*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Introduction to the Short Story*, *Le Morte d'Arthur*, *Agamemnon*, *The Odyssey*, and selected poetry and essays.

ENGLISH 10 (110) GRADE 10

Full year

English 10 emphasizes the development of reading, writing, and vocabulary skills. Weekly vocabulary study and writing assignments complement daily readings. Representative readings are *A Separate Peace*; *Our Man in Havana*; *Don Quixote*; *A Farewell to Arms*; *A Tale of Two Cities*; *Woman Hollering Creek*; *The Tempest*; *Candide*; *Henry IV, Part 1*; *The Canterbury Tales*; *Strange Pilgrims*; and selected poetry and essays.

ENGLISH 10-H (120) GRADE 10
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Full year

Designed for students with exceptional talents and motivation, this course offers intensive study of literature as well as extensive work in composition along with vocabulary study, a reading project and the family history paper. Some representative readings are *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*; *A Tale of Two Cities*; *Midnight's Children*; and *Henry IV, Part 1*. **Limitation:** Department Chair approval required.

ENGLISH 11 (111) GRADE 11

Full year

Emphasis in English 11 is on the development of competence in literary analysis and in extended expository writing. In addition, a significant portion of this course is devoted to a study of the American experience as presented in American literature. Some representative readings are *Death of a Salesman*, *Brave New World*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Leaves of Grass*, *The Catcher in*

the Rye, Billy Budd, The Glass Menagerie, Macbeth, Fences, The Great Gatsby, and selected poetry.

**ENGLISH 11-H
(121) GRADE 11**

Full year

Intended for students who are passionate about the written word and have demonstrated excellence in reading and writing, this course offers elaborate examination of verbal artistry in various works of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. Much of the course is a preparation for the Advanced Placement Examination in Language and Composition. In addition, students engage in an extended study of the American experience as presented in selected American works. Representative readings include *The Scarlet Letter, Death of a Salesman, Macbeth, The Great Gatsby, The Stranger, The Essays of Emerson, the Complete Stories of Flannery O'Connor,* and selected poetry and essays. **Limitation:** Department Chair approval required.

**ENGLISH 12
(112) GRADE 12**

1st Trimester only

English 12 completes the non-specialized sequence of courses in reading literature and writing about it. It presents students with works of some difficulty and of established reputation. The daily reading assignments are often intensive rather than extensive. Some special attention is given to themes common to the readings. Writings consist primarily of analytical essays, but some classes write creative papers as well, often modeled on the works read. Students in English 12 may take the Advanced Placement Examination in English Literature if they wish. Representative readings are *Heart of Darkness, Lords of Discipline, Oedipus Rex, Hamlet, King Lear, Antigone, The Sound and the Fury, Crime and Punishment,* and *Dubliners.*

**AP ENGLISH
(122) GRADE 12**

Full year

The department selects students with superior ability and demonstrated competence for this course. Students who accept selection for AP English should have a strong interest in literary analysis; they should expect to contribute frequently to the serious discussion of literature in class; they should be willing to prepare additional readings, oral reports, or similar assignments to extend their understanding of material; and they should be prepared to take the Advanced Placement Examination in English Literature in the Spring. Representative readings are *Oedipus Rex, Hamlet, Antigone, Heart of Darkness, A Streetcar Named Desire, The Sun Also Rises, Othello, Crime and Punishment, A Portrait of the Artist As a Young Man,* and *Patterns of Exposition.* **Limitation:** Department Chair approval required.

**SENIOR HUMANITIES
(123) GRADE 12**

Full year

Senior Humanities meets the requirements both of AP English and of AP European History. (See the separate department descriptions of these courses in their respective departments.) The literature used in the course will reflect the time period and content of the historical era being discussed. Students will be expected to take both the AP English and AP European History exams. The texts include *Palmer-Colton, A History of the Modern World, Hamlet, Don Quixote, Tartuffe, The Prince, Emile, Classics of Philosophy Vol. II, Heart of Darkness, A Doll's House, An Enemy of the People, Doctor Zhivago,* and *The Tin Drum.* **Limitations:** Approval of the Department Chairs of both English and History required; by application only.

**TWENTIETH-CENTURY DRAMA
(130) GRADE 12**

2nd Trimester only

This course introduces students to the major authors and major themes of twentieth-century drama. The aims are to study the various contemporary plays and to determine how they reflect the intellectual and cultural climates from which they were created. Representative plays might include *Equus, Six Degrees of Separation, Marvin's Room, Conversations with My Father,* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Students will write several short papers and take one or two tests throughout the trimester.

**CREATIVE WRITING
(132) GRADE 12**

2 Trimesters: 2nd & 3rd only

In this course regular writing workshops provide young writers time to develop original poetry and fiction. The course gives students practice in using techniques recommended in Natalie Goldberg's *Writing Down the Bones* and Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way.* Individual conferences with the writing coach help writers evaluate, revise, and edit their own work. Student writers exchange ideas about their own imaginative projects and about the writers who inspire them. Students who have not already done so begin to keep a portfolio of their work. They are required to submit their work for publication.

**RESEARCH & WRITING
(153) GRADE 12**

1 Trimester: 2nd trimester only

This senior elective course helps students develop advanced research and writing skills using three or four project-based, independent study assignments. The course sharpens critical thinking, reading, and writing skills and develops the students' understanding of both traditional and technological research techniques. Class time is split between writing instruction, research method instruction,

and actual research time in the Green Library. The instructor teaches in close conjunction with the Library & Information Services faculty. Students complete three or four research projects, which they will present as written essays and/or a lecture presentation. Students have a wide range of possible topics for their research projects (example: an event, an invention, a person), but are graded in terms of the mechanics, style, and content of their final products, as well as on the creativity, completion, and thoughtfulness of the research methods applied. Students present at least one project orally using electronic presentation programs (e.g. PowerPoint). Students are also tested and quizzed over instructional material covered on research and writing.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY SHORT FICTION & POETRY
(134) GRADE 12

3rd Trimester only

This course introduces the student to the major authors and literary themes of twentieth century short fiction and poetry and examines how these stories and poems reflect the contemporary intellectual and cultural climates. Representative authors might include John Cheever, Alice Walker, Ralph Ellison, James Joyce, Norman Mailer, Elizabeth Bishop, Wallace Stevens, Philip Larkin, Theodore Roethke, and Richard Wilbur. There will be opportunities for the students to create their own works of short fiction or poetry and to express their understanding of the literature through expository essays.

WORLD LITERATURE I: FAR AWAY PLACES
(141) GRADES 11-12

2nd Trimester only

This course focuses on literature from Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, and the South Pacific. Its purpose is to expose students to non-Western cultures and writers. Although novels, plays, and poetry are the primary materials, class

discussions extend beyond purely literary concerns. The format includes student-led discussions, lectures, films, and class excursions. Students read and write essays on seven to eight literary works. Participants earn credit for English or Social Studies.

WORLD LITERATURE II: FAR OUT TRAVEL
(142) GRADES 11-12

3rd Trimester only

Travel narratives contain a wealth of culture, geography, and reflections on the human condition. They are filled with romantic derring-do, unadulterated characters, and wondrous suspense at each bend of the road. The tales resound with first-hand awe and disbelief. Writers have been recounting their wanderings since the age of *The Odyssey* and *The Travels of Marco Polo*. Despite varying the means of travel from camels and bicycles, to trains, boats, and one's own feet, travelers often have the same goal in mind: to discover humanity in all its exotic forms. This course entails reading travel books, writing critically about them, and doing our own bit of peregrinations. The Greek poet Cavafy said, "When you start on the journey to Ithaki, pray that the road will be a long one, full of adventure, full of things to learn." This course is a sedentary journey to such a land.

ENGLISH 12: SHAKESPEARE
(133) GRADE 12

1 Trimester: 3rd only

Students read extensively both familiar and unfamiliar plays. They write analytical essays, developing ideas found in quotations from the plays. The reading is primarily in unfamiliar plays, but near the end of the course, students will be able to use this new perspective to re-examine some old favorites. Readings include comedy, history, and tragedy. Specific plays include *Othello* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

ENGLISH 12: GENDER STUDIES IN LITERATURE
(143) GRADE 12

1 Trimester: 2nd or 3rd only

This course offers students an opportunity to investigate the issues of gender relations, gender stereotypes, and gender biases. Students investigate fiction, non-fiction, and a variety of media forms with the specific intent of identifying and understanding the various gender issues suggested within the works. In addition, students will write argumentative essays, expository essays, and a personal philosophy essay as a part of our investigation into these issues. Representative readings are *Men and Women in Conversation: You Just Don't Understand*, *A Choice of Heroes: The Changing Faces of American Manhood*, *A Heroine's Journey*, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, and *Lord of the Flies*.

ETHICS I
(553) GRADE 12

1 Trimester – 2nd only

See description on page 29.

ETHICS II
(553) GRADE 12

1 Trimester – 3rd only

See description on page 29.

BEGINNING JOURNALISM
(160) GRADES 9-12

Full Year

This course teaches students the journalist's tools for strong writing. The primary focus is on creating clean, lively, informative news copy that engages the reader with a compelling story. The class covers the fundamentals of reporting – from interviewing to fact-checking. Students also learn to write for public consumption, as some class assignments will end up being published in *The ReMarker*.

ADVANCED JOURNALISM (161) GRADES 10-12

Full Year

This course, designed to prepare editors of student publications, is about discovering the language's power and potential. Through intensive study and practice of journalism, students learn to craft narrative voice, hook a reader, create tension and suspense, and control mood and tone in their writing. *Newsweek*, the *New York Times*, *Sports Illustrated*, and the *Onion* will make for textbooks. News judgment, ethics, the limits of objectivity, and the media's role in society are topics of class discussion. No assignment is complete until it is publishable. **Prerequisite:** Beginning Journalism or instructor's permission.