

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

St. Paul's Middle School, which encompasses grades five through eight, is an all-boys experience. As boys transition through the Middle School our goal is that they develop a greater understanding and application of the learning process. Our curriculum is designed so that each boy can develop a strong work ethic and the academic resiliency that will lead to ongoing academic success. During this process, boys understand their strengths, recognize their weaknesses and then develop the appropriate skills that will allow for them to take on greater academic rigor. Throughout the middle school years, each student is supported by dedicated teacher-mentors well-versed in the challenges unique to boys in these early adolescent years.

There are many essential aspects to a middle school experience: academics, athletics, arts, chapel, friendships/social learning, character building/leadership opportunities, responsibility, and learning organizational skills and processes. The St. Paul's Middle School is not about any single one of these elements; it is about all of them.

ENGLISH

The St. Paul's Middle School English faculty believe that middle school readers are empowered through choice reading. When they have control over what they read, they are more likely to find the right books and other media that will deepen their love of reading. The books they choose are used in the English classrooms as springboards for teaching the reading skills that are crucial for all middle schoolers to develop: making inferences, learning vocabulary in context, character analysis, et al, as well as studying the style of authors in order to emulate their approach in our own writing.

The choice reading program also motivates students to see that reading does not have to be some unpleasant chore or dreaded class activity. Instead, students realize that reading is a pursuit that can expand their horizons; instill empathy and compassion; and enrich their lives for the better.

5th grade

We believe fifth grade boys need to understand the benefits of a reading and writing process. Emerging readers and writers improve with exposure to worthy texts in different genres. We want each boy to embrace rich, varied novels while improving vocabulary, learning to read aloud for expression, and growing in comprehension skills. Boys also need to know the importance of grammar and the mechanics of writing, which come more easily to those who value reading. Through this year, boys will see the value and direct correlation of reading and writing.

6th grade

Sixth grade English uses a project-based approach to get boys as interested as possible in reading and writing and in developing basic skills that they will use every day of their lives. Boys learn to imitate high-interest pieces of writing in a number of genres, figuring out how they work and what makes them good, as well as what they mean and why. Each boy is challenged to see a number of pieces of his writing through the writing process until they represent his best possible work, at which point he creates his own professionally printed anthology. Additionally, they record an audiobook in which they're able to demonstrate fluency and comprehension through expressive reading for an authentic audience. Always running in the background are the nuts and bolts that are so important: vocabulary development, using appropriate writing mechanics, recognizing important literary elements, and attending to details in all that they read and write.

7th grade

Seventh grade is a year when students have the opportunity to foster a true love of reading and writing while simultaneously working towards mastery of key literacy skills in authentic ways. Seventh graders express their creativity and analytical skills through deep investment in course material and having “skin in the game” when it comes to all class activities. Guided by meaningful and thought-provoking essential questions, seventh grade English units allow students to make connections every day between authors’ messages and themes and “real-world” phenomena, something that is critical to the academic development of adolescent boys.

Throughout the school year, students engage in activities and projects that help demonstrate critical value and importance of writing as a means of communication, entertainment, and personal expression. Students rely on “mentor texts” written by professional authors and writers in order to hone their craft; develop their voice; and write with clarity, precision, and accuracy.

8th grade

Eighth grade is the year of critical thinking. The students are ready to put together all of the reading strategies and vocabulary they learned in the lower grades as they begin to tackle more complex texts--such as Elie Wiesel’s harrowing *Night* and John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men*--and participate in formal literary analysis, both orally and in writing. We get them ready—with ample practice and support—for the next level. They write across genres, focusing on audience, structure, and elaboration, and taking cues and learning moves from great writers: the authors of the books, stories and articles they read.

Eighth graders also discuss and write about world issues, short stories, and philosophical/moral questions on a weekly basis, with great focus placed on the skills of summarizing an author’s main points accurately. The students also interact with these ideas

by expressing their own opinions and building a greater conversation in the classroom. Inevitably, disagreements come up, and focus is also placed on using an inviting tone and language in written and verbal communication with the intent of inviting further conversation rather than shutting it down.

HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES/GEOGRAPHY

5th grade

The fifth grade history course, “Introduction to Geography and Ancient Civilization,” examines content on the formation of Earth through the fall of the Roman Empire. This history course surveys the development of ancient civilizations by examining them through the lens of geography, the environment, law & society, government & politics, religion, and science & technology. Following the World History for Us All curriculum, students will gain a global perspective of ancient history by examining civilizations on the six inhabited continents. While we will engage with content focusing on the cradle of Western society, the Mediterranean region, this course will also serve to broaden students’ exposure to non-Western culture and thought. Through the study of ancient civilizations, students will develop skills in reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary, public speaking and research. Some of the things students can look forward to this year are reading Percy Jackson and The Lightning Thief, conducting research projects, acting and holding class debates. This humanities course will serve as a strong base from which to leap to success in sixth grade.

6th grade

The sixth grade history course continues the progression of historical skills begun in fifth grade. By the end of the year, students will be able to examine and evaluate primary and secondary sources; answer historical questions using thesis statements supported by specific historical evidence; create and explore independent historical questions; and determine cause(s) and effect(s) of important events in U.S. history. Students will be exploring these historical skills through U.S. History topics ranging from the Revolutionary War to World War One. Students will be able to demonstrate their progression and mastery of these skills through a variety of projects including an independent President project, various classroom debates, mock trials, and a Civil War Re-enactment project. This course and curriculum seeks to further each student's progression of historical skills, and ultimately, help students to explore how history has shaped our nation of today.

7th grade

The seventh grade World Geography and Contemporary Issues course introduces students to general aspects of physical and cultural geography through the study of the interplay between the environment, natural resources, culture and government on each of the planet’s

seven continents. In this class, students will study different regions of the world based on what is currently happening there. Although current political boundaries and other map skills will be emphasized, this class will mainly deal with current happenings in the regions covered. Students take the “next step” in their reading and writing journey by analyzing materials and writing justification paragraphs that support a certain point of view. Students complete three different research projects including the summative “Adopt a Country” project at the end of the year. The course seeks to impress in each student an awareness and an appreciation for the interplay and diversity of physical and cultural geography throughout the world.

8th grade

The eighth grade History course examines American History from World War I to the present day. Skills are further developed and practiced with connection to the skills practiced from 5th-7th grade to allow each student a successful transition into the ninth grade. The exploration of US History in the eighth grade allows for a further understanding of the United States and its place in World History, which is studied in the ninth grade. Through cross curricular projects with eighth grade English, ideas such as World War II, Genocide, Civil Rights, and the United States are explored and researched. Each student will have a better understanding of American History through past and present experiences which will allow for a more well-rounded citizen as they look at American History through the eyes of the world. Students will be asked to create paragraphs and then papers supporting their own thoughts on debatable topics through research of secondary and primary sources. Students will also develop ideas and express them in well-organized projects, work with classmates towards a universal goal, and create a set of skills which will allow each student to read different types of material with a sense of understanding. Ideas studied will also be compared to current events in the United States as well as the World.

MATHEMATICS

Studies Group – Student who have ERB scores of 3 and lower & teacher recommendation. Emphasis will be placed on redo and retakes. Redo are available for tests and quizzes.

Middle Group – Students must maintain a B- or higher, ERB scores of 3 or higher & TEACHER RECOMMENDATION. Redo will be offered for tests only. Homework must be completed on time.

Accelerated Group – Students must maintain a B+ average or higher, ERB scores of 6 or higher, (High Math Olympiads), & TEACHER RECOMMENDATION. No redo tests, quizzes or assignments. Students must consistently complete homework assignments and projects.

To move up a level, a Student must maintain an A or A+ each Quarter *without* Retakes and an A or A+ on the Final Assessment, ERB's of 6 or above, plus TEACHER RECOMMENDATION.

5th Grade

Math Studies 5 and Practice

The 5th grade math class will emphasis mastering the basics of elementary school math. Key topics will be Whole Numbers, Decimals, Number Sense, Fractions, and Geometry. Real World application will be used throughout each unit. Practicing basic facts to help establish the building blocks and creativity of math.

Math Studies 5

The 5th grade math class master basic skills of elementary school math. Key topics will be Whole Numbers, Decimals, Number Sense, Fractions and Geometry. Emphasis will be placed on mechanics of multiplication, division, properties, and simple fractions. Patterns will be examined. Real World application will be used throughout each unit using problem solving. Simple Algebra skills will be introduced.

Accelerated Math 5

The advanced 5th grade math class will challenge the math students through the basics of elementary school math. Key topics will be Whole Numbers, Decimals, Number Sense, Fractions, and Geometry. Real World application and problem solving will be used in every unit. Math Olympiads are one tool used in problem solving investigations Simple Algebra skills will be introduced.

6th Grade

Math Studies 6

The 6th grade math class will focus on Number Theory with all operations and relationships of numbers especially positive integers. Number sense will be emphasized with lots of repetition and manipulatives. Students will explore decimals and fractions in depth before moving onto some Geometry topics and simple algebra skills. Foundation skills will be emphasized and with problem solving investigations. Math Olympiads are one tool used in problem solving investigations

Intro to Pre-Algebra

The 6th grade Intro to Pre-Algebra class investigates math connections using manipulatives, analysis and practice. The sixth grader masters arithmetic with whole numbers, decimals and fractions. Number theory underlies the comprehension of math; prime factorization, divisibility rules, greatest common factor and least common multiple, and exponents. The system of ratio numbers including negative numbers is explored. These are the foundation of math knowledge and its understanding. The relationships of decimals, fractions and percent are explored through real-life application in word problems and through repetition. Math concepts are explored through simple problem solving to complex analysis of word problems and algebra scenarios. Math Olympiads are one tool used in problem solving investigations.

Pre-Algebra

The 6th grade Pre-Algebra class investigate math connections using manipulatives, analysis and practice. The sixth grader masters arithmetic with integers, decimals and fractions. Number theory underlies the comprehension of math; prime factorization, divisibility rules, greatest common factor and least common multiple, and exponents. These are the building blocks of math knowledge and its understanding. The relationships of decimals, fractions and percent are explored through real-life application through word problems and repetition. Math concepts are examined through simple problem solving to complex analysis of word problems and algebra scenarios. Math Olympiads are one tool used in problem solving investigations. This class will explore each unit at an in-depth level with lots of challenge problems.

7th Grade

Math Studies 7

Students will review Whole Numbers with Order of Operations. Integers and all forms of Rational Numbers are the main emphasis. Perimeter and Area of Geometric figures will be used in investigating Rational Operations. The fourth quarter will emphasis Equation solving. Practice using the foundation of math skills will be included.

Pre-Algebra

This course begins with a heavy emphasis on Integers and Order of Operations. A range of One Dimensional elements such as points, lines, and rays are explored. Two Dimensional shapes are studied and students will be able to master perimeter and area. Visual thinking and inductive reasoning skills are used to analyze these geometric figures. A strong foundation of Exponents, Expressions, and multistep Equations will be built. Rational numbers in all forms will be manipulated and the equivalent relationship between decimals, fractions, percent, ratios, and proportions will be studied. This year focuses on the layering of foundational skills.

Accelerated Pre-Algebra

This course begins with an Introduction on Finite Systems and Mathematical Properties. Students will examine a variety of sets and their relationships. A range of One, Two, and Three Dimension Geometric lessons from points, lines, rays, and angle relationships to polygons and circles to solid figures are explored. The second semester will include Evaluating Expressions, Rules of Exponents, Solving Multi-Step Equations, Literal Equations, and real World Applications. Throughout the year, students will have opportunity to demonstrate mastery of proportional relationships and operations with Rational Numbers.

8th Grade**Math Studies 8**

This course begins the year focusing on Integers, Rational Numbers, and Rational Operations. The course will also use Geometer Sketchpad to hit key Geometry topics. The second semester will focus on Rules of Exponents, Solving Equations, Linear Equations, and Real World Applications of Algebra.

Algebra I

The Algebra I course emphasizes mastering essential Algebra skills. The students investigate Expressions, Equations, Inequalities, Linear Equations, Systems of Equations, Polynomials, Factoring, Quadratic Equations, Rational Expressions, and Irrationals. They also use Geometer Sketchpad to re-examine important geometry concepts from the previous two years. Finally, they work on real-world problem solving skills in preparation for the Upper School.

Accelerated Algebra I

The Algebra I course emphasizes mastering essential Algebra skills. The students investigate Expressions, Equations, Inequalities, Linear Equations, Systems of Equations, Polynomials, Factoring, Quadratic Equations, Rational Expressions, Irrationals, and Functions. They also use Geometer Sketchpad to re-examine important geometry concepts from the previous two years. Finally, they work on real-world problem solving skills in preparation for the Upper School. The Honors course works at a quick pace and ends the year investigating some Algebra 2 topics.

SCIENCE

5th Grade:

5th grade is the first year Science is introduced as a core subject. The 5th grade curriculum utilizes life science as the vehicle to introduce students to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the skills necessary to find success throughout science in the middle school. A strong emphasis is placed on working well with others and appropriately participating in group projects. Reading comprehension, note-taking, various study-skills, making observations and inferences, and organization are some of the skills practiced throughout the year. Our students learn the characteristics of living things and the classification system and are exposed to the Plant and Animal Kingdoms with a strong emphasis on the invertebrates. Hands-on activities and project-based learning are integral to the curriculum and serve to generate meaningful educational experiences for the students as they explore Cnidarians (jellyfish), Echinoderms (star fish and sand dollars), Mollusks (snails, oysters, octopus), Arthropods (insects, spiders, crustaceans). We will also be studying birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles.

6th Grade:

The sixth grade year in Health Science begins with an understanding that students are entering a stage of development where they are beginning to have more and more control over their lives. Healthy decisions and habits can be responsible for a higher quality of life. With this understanding students begin to explore the major systems of the body from a health perspective. “What can I do to promote maximum health for this body system?” is the question posed as students learn about how the overall wellness of the human organism is dependent upon good, knowledge-based choices. Students will explore the following units: Lab Safety, The Metric System of Measurement, The Scientific Method, The Generalized Cell, The Skeletal System, The Circulatory System, Civil War Field Medicine, The Digestive System, The Nervous System & PTSD Research, and will conduct a Disease Research Health Fair. Content from readings, including textbook and on-line resources, is reinforced with lab investigations and projects that reinforce the skills necessary to do science. Study skills are emphasized, and students have a variety of assessments along their unique journey. Also, note-taking is taught during research for projects following the Big 6 Research Method.

7th Grade:

The 7th grade Earth Science curriculum will be focusing on the latest NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) topics. The areas of focus will be Earth's Place in the Universe (astronomy), Earth's Systems (water cycle, plate tectonics, weather, etc.) and Earth and Human Activity (pollution, usage of natural resources, impact of population growth, alternative energy sources, etc). Practical hands-on activities will have them continue to reinforce the skills necessary to succeed at science and we will start in the fall learning about the Chesapeake Bay watershed in preparation for our field trip to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

8th grade:

Computer Science is a quarter-long introduction to computers as tools that our students utilize to create and innovate. By exploring the individual components of a typical computer system, they will be able to define what a computer is, how it operates, and what it can and cannot do. This class will focus on project-based learning that fosters the responsible use of technology and the development of a strong foundation of skills necessary for the problem-solving process. Students will use Python, a simple yet powerful programming language, to explore how computers process information and commands. They will then put their newly acquired skills to the test as they build a VEX IQ robot that responds to their commands to compete against each other in a 3 minute battle board. At quarter's end, the boys will have acquired a framework of how to function successfully in our technologically rich world. Ideally, students will feel confident using computers as tools to create solutions, a confidence they can employ in the Upper School.

Students in Physical Science endeavor to utilize the scientific method to explore and model the fundamental principles of chemistry, physics, and engineering. Most importantly they utilize the NGSS skill framework to continue building a solid foundation of success in science as they begin their first year of the three year science sequence aligned to the Upper School science department. Topics covered include: the foundations of chemical reactions, atomic theory, periodicity, classical physics, electricity, engineering design, iterative processes, and design thinking. Students reinforce content from reading and lecture through guided and open-ended investigations, as well as participate in numerous demonstrations and lab exercises.

MODERN LANGUAGES

JAPANESE

Middle School students study both the Japanese language and culture. In 5th and 6th grades, students learn how to read and write hiragana, katakana, and they also are introduced to basic kanji from. They build on this base in 7th and 8th grades. Students learn how to communicate in a variety of different situations, such as how to offer a simple self-introduction and how to describe their vacations. Songs, mnemonics, games, and other methods are used in class to help students learn the language. Authentic Japanese artifacts are brought to class to help students practice the language and to offer tangible connections to the language and culture. Students are always encouraged to be creative and proactive. Additionally, they complete numerous projects to help develop their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Projects include creating a PowerPoint presentation of themselves in Japanese, teaching simple expressions to family or friends, and even visiting a lower school class to serve as little teachers for burgeoning Japanese students. Upper School Japanese students routinely visit class to serve as guest speakers, conversation partners, and assistants in class activities. Students enjoy exchanging diaries and cooking Japanese food with SPSG students at the end of seventh grade. In eighth grade, both SPS and SPSG students go to the Japanese New Year Festival in Washington D.C. for an exciting field trip. Students also enjoy a farewell dinner party at local Japanese restaurant to mark the end of the Japanese experience in the Middle School. Finally, the Japanese Fair that takes place every few years serves as an authentic and engaging opportunity for students and the entire St. Paul's community to learn about Japan and Japanese culture.

SPANISH

In fifth grade Spanish, our objectives are to introduce the students to the Hispanic world and culture through individual country investigations, videos and online investigations. We also hope to instill a love of learning and create a desire to further their studies. In sixth grade Spanish students will begin an in-depth study of the language in a progressive manner throughout the year at a level appropriate for a student of this age and developmental level. Students will continue their language studies in the seventh and eighth grades at a more demanding pace while building on their speaking, listening, reading and writing abilities. All material is presented in a meaningful communicative context, making it immediately useful to the students. The Standards for Foreign Language Learning provide a framework to guide the teaching and learning of foreign languages, preparing students to meet the demands for competence in their new language. A variety of instructional strategies are used in the classroom so that all students are provided with the opportunity to develop proficiency in Spanish.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

One of the essential skills for boys to develop during their middle school years is the ability to speak confidently and clearly in front of an audience. Throughout each year, various opportunities arise in academic classes, student government, the arts, and athletics for boys to speak in front of their peers. Building on those formative experiences, each eighth grader composes, revises, and prepares a TED-style speech based on a topic of his choice. The unit itself is a collaboration between the eighth grade history and English teachers, as well as the students' advisors and other members of the faculty. Starting in the 2018-19 school year, these speeches will be given during a special convention-style event that will take place each May and involve much of the St. Paul's community.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

6th grade

The sixth-grade Religious Studies course, *Exploring the Old Testament*, introduces students to the structure and content of the bible with a focus on the old testament. They learn the books of the Hebrew scriptures and how to use the resources found in the bible. The course will then cover the stories of creation and other important events and figures such as Abraham and Moses. Students also spend some time learning about Israel as a monarchy, under both the united and divided kingdoms. They also touch on wisdom literature, especially the book of psalms.

8th grade

Foundations of Faith, the quarter long course for the 8th grade, is designed to provide a basic understanding of Judeo-Christian history and traditions. Students move at a fast pace in their exploration of the Biblical narrative of the Hebrew people as presented in the Old Testament. The course then moves into the New Testament and focuses on the teachings and ministry of Jesus in the historical context of 1st century Palestine under Roman rule. The boys also learn about St. Paul and his significance to the early formation of the Christian faith. By the end of the quarter the students will understand how the Jewish and Christian religions are closely related yet unique in their beliefs and practices.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In the Middle School, the emphasis is on lifetime fitness, skill development, enjoyment of physical activity, and positive social interaction in an athletic setting. Fifth and sixth grade students focus on learning fundamental skills, rules, and strategies of different sports. Activities focus on learning and practicing sport-specific skills, learning game rules, procedures and etiquette. Within the framework of daily classes, students are pushed to improve their physical fitness. In class, students spend time practicing individual skills and engaging in practice games that help prepare them for the mental and physical challenges

that exist in team sports.

The seventh and eighth grade Physical Education curriculum reviews the basic fundamental skills students learned in fifth and sixth grades before teaching sport-specific group skills. The group skills include two-on-one breaks, three- on-two breaks, zone and man defensive techniques, understanding passing lanes as well as offensive and defensive strategies. A unit on heart rate is included in which students use heart rate monitors to assist them in understanding key training principles.

ARTS

The Arts program in the Middle School is designed to challenge and captivate students through a comprehensive range of curricular and extra curricular offerings. Students in grades five through seven study visual art, (including painting, drawing, ceramics, and additional 2D and 3D forms), Theatre, music, and woodworking, while eighth grade students have the opportunity for advanced study in two of these four disciplines. On any given day, for example, you may find students rehearsing the Middle School production, crafting a wooden sculpture in the Woodworking shop, learning stage combat in one of our two black box Theatres or the Ward Center Theatre, attending a choral festival off campus, presenting at an arts exhibit at a local museum, or working with guest artists from the greater Baltimore community.

VISUAL ART

The Middle School Visual Art program encourages students to explore art through various media, to engage in creative problem solving, to take risks and challenge themselves and to understand and appreciate the process of making art. Through a series of assignments that explore different art forms, students are exposed to the basic elements of art: line, form, shape, texture, color, space, and value. They are also introduced to the principles of balance, pattern, contrast, rhythm, emphasis, unity, and movement, which are also integral aspects of art making.

Students engage in projects that encourage individual expression and reflection, and foster the ability to think more creatively and broadly about the visual world. Evaluation is a key component to each art project where personal effort, engagement with the material, and progress in the studio will form the basis for assessing skills and knowledge of various art techniques.

5th grade

Fifth grade Visual Arts introduces the concepts of color theory, emphasizing creative expression along with technical skills. Students will be confident in understanding how different elements of art contribute to their overall work.

Art History Focus: Survey of Art History

6th grade

Sixth grade Visual Arts reinforces elemental concepts previously learned and additionally introduces more advanced concepts. Through guided questions, students are encouraged to actively participate in creating purpose in their work.

Art History Focus: The Ancient World

7th grade

Seventh grade Visual Arts introduces advanced techniques and skills to encourage individual exploration and growth. Students will become confident in discussing and critiquing works of art. Students will study realism in both 2D and 3D forms.

Art History Focus: The Italian Renaissance

8th grade

Eighth grade Visual Arts is the culmination of incorporating previously learned concepts and skills through advanced techniques based on individual encouragement of exploring, discovering, and experimenting. Meaning and method will play a fundamental role in the creation of student work.

Art History Focus: Modern Art-Post Modern Art

WOODWORKING

Woodworking classes are designed to introduce students to wood as a natural resource, as a building material, and as a medium for artistic expression. An awareness of environmental concerns, plant biology, math, engineering, historical context, sequencing, problem solving, design, and conceptual creativity are all introduced as necessary components for successful work. In particular, the projects students undertake emphasize the "how to" aspects of working with wood as well as the creative opportunities such projects offer. There is also an emphasis on respect for tools and their safe and appropriate use. Regular exhibitions of student work on campus, as well as the welcoming of guest artists into our courses, are a capstone of our program.

5th grade

Fifth grade Woodworking is designed as an introduction to wood, hand tools, and craftsmanship. The projects incorporate very basic joinery and serve as a foundation for future work.

6th grade

Sixth grade Woodworking is designed to reinforce the lessons taught in the 5th grade, but challenges students further through the scope of the projects given. New tools are also introduced, including some basic power machinery.

7th grade

While continuing to hone the basic skills acquired in previous course study, the seventh grade Woodworking class emphasizes design process and quality craftsmanship. Projects are open to broader interpretation and allow for a variety of techniques to be explored.

8th grade

Eighth grade Woodworking challenges students to tackle more complex issues of sequencing and joinery while maintaining a high level of craftsmanship. Some projects focus on technique and attention to detail while other projects allow for a less structured, more intuitive interaction with the material.

MUSIC

The choral music tradition at St. Paul's School is the primary focus of our comprehensive Middle School Music program. Students are also exposed to instrumental performance, as well as music theory, sight-singing, and improvisation in a variety of musical genres. An extra-curricular ensemble, the Crusader Choir, is an auditioned group of boys from all grades (five through eight) who maintain a highly active performance schedule in various venues throughout the region and at an adjudicated festival each year.

5th grade

Fifth grade Music students receive instruction in vocal technique, music theory, stage deportment, and musical interpretation as they engage in the preparation of a concert performance as a choral ensemble at the end of each semester. They will encounter numerous elements of music theory (dynamics, musical expression, tempo, time signature, etc.) and will encounter Kodály-based sight-reading examples. Students will perform repertoire from a variety of genres, cultures, and time periods.

6th grade

In addition to their continued development as performing singers, sixth grade Music students are also introduced to hand bells. This instrumental offering builds the sense of ensemble while also gaining independence and responsibility. The boys continue to have

extensive studies with vocal technique and sound production while also be exposed to training in music theory and sight-reading.

7th grade

Seventh grade singers expand their knowledge of choral repertoire, focusing on classical, multi-cultural, pop, and Broadway selections. Students learn the stylistic adaptations, as well as vocal techniques, that are necessary for successful performances. Vocal instruction will address the emerging male voice, and help students discover all the vocal possibilities that a young man can sing. Students also learn more advanced repertoire for handbells.

8th grade

Eighth grade students take their skill development to a deeper level in preparation for continuation as performers in our internationally-acclaimed Upper School choral program. More subtle elements of musical expression and increasingly challenging music theory are incorporated into instruction. Kodály-based sight-reading continues to be a hallmark of the program. Together, these many elements serve to round out the Middle School musical experience in the eighth grade year.

THEATRE

Theatre classes give our students the opportunity to experience leadership and teamwork in a different way than they might in the academic classroom or on the athletic fields. There are many exercises and improvisations designed to encourage the boys to work together efficiently, think creatively, and explore the concept of empathy in order to better understand the world around them and discover the range and depth of possibilities that are inherent in the Theatre arts. Students have the unique extra-curricular opportunity to audition for our Middle School Musical, produced in collaboration with the St. Paul's School for Girls.

5th grade

Theatre 5 focuses on the basic building blocks of storytelling and starts at the beginning of Theatre in the Western tradition: Greek drama. Students work on many projects throughout this quarter-long class, bringing newspaper stories, Aesop's fables, *Oedipus Rex* and (in conjunction with our Williamsburg trip) and *The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere* to life through readings, scenes from the original texts, and student-written skits.

6th grade

Theatre 6 focuses on self-observation, from journal work to class games to recreating moments of everyday life, following Method acting technique. As the students look inward, they study the first play written about an everyday person in extraordinary

circumstances: *Dr. Faustus*. This play examines the push and pull between good and evil, explores the natural and the supernatural, and continues the Theatre history progression established in Theatre 5. Students end the quarter with a parallel study of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, with accompanying advanced-age and injury makeup technique.

7th grade

Theatre 7 has a heavy emphasis on performing for an audience, from the filmed audition for class judges at the beginning of the quarter, to the Abbott and Costello puppet performances, to scene study, and to the class film that concludes the quarter. Students write their own material and work with many different American plays from the twentieth century. Teamwork and improvisations are integral components of the course.

8th grade

Theatre 8 is a semester long course that incorporates many elements of previous Theatre classes. With a sampling of Theatre history, students work on Shakespeare, Molière, Gilbert and Sullivan, and modern comic playwrights David Ives, Arthur Kopit and others. Creative thinking is emphasized in each class meeting through collaborative efforts that are designed to emphasize student teamwork, memorization speed challenges, and the creation of original skits incorporating new skills of stage combat and juggling. This course culminates in an evening performance of scenes for families and friends.
