

**Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School**

**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Class of 2021**

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## CURRICULUM DESIGN AND TEACHING METHODS

### AN OVERVIEW

Parker teachers design the school's inquiry-based curriculum each year around a school-wide Essential Question such as "What is community?" "What is change?" "What is balance?" "Where are the patterns?" "What really matters?" Student learning crosses disciplinary lines as the Essential Question generates sub-questions that invite active learning of both thinking skills and content-area knowledge through projects and other research. Across academic levels, Parker's curriculum emphasizes practice and progress in the same key skills: Reading, writing, oral presentation, listening, research, artistic expression, Spanish language, mathematical problem-solving and communication, scientific investigation, systems thinking, and technological literacy. Parker has four academic Domains: Mathematics, Science, and Technology (MST); Arts and Humanities (AH), Spanish language and Wellness. All curriculum development and teaching practices are guided by the Ten Common Principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools (see brochure).

### GRADUATION AND PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Parker School students progress through three Divisions, the curricular standards of which are comparable to those of seventh and eighth grades (Division 1), foundation-level high school work (Division 2), and advanced work aimed toward the graduation transition (Division 3). Each Division comprises a multi-year curricular cycle, and students of mixed ages are grouped together for the entire cycle. "Promotion" at the Parker School consists of students exhibiting readiness to move from one Division into the next in a particular academic Domain, as follows:

- Each year all Parker students assemble a Year-End Portfolio in each Domain, which serves as the basis of their Year-End Assessment report. When that Portfolio shows they are consistently meeting the Standards of the Division in a particular academic Domain, as well as making academic progress, students may advance to the next Division via the "Gateway Portfolio Exhibition."
- Gateway Portfolios are quite similar to the Year-End Portfolios, but they are accompanied by a formal exhibition before a mixed audience of students, teachers from both Domains, parents, and community members. Gateway Portfolios include a cover letter in which students sum up and reflect on their progress throughout the Division and their readiness for the next Division's challenges. Students' ability to reflect on their work and respond to audience questions is an important element of their demonstrating readiness for promotion.
- Students may proceed at different times into the next Division in each Domain; for example, students may be in Division 2 MST and Division 1 Arts and Humanities. Teachers and advisers consult with families to decide the best time for each individual student to advance into a new Division.
- Division 3 students at Parker culminate their studies with a capstone Senior Project, a topic or project they choose to explore independently with the guidance of an outside mentor, sometimes in a workplace internship. Presented to a public audience as part of a student's Graduation Exhibition, the Senior Project makes an intellectual and personal bridge between high school and the world beyond.

## ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

### DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT WORK

As well as compiling their Year-End Portfolios, Parker students demonstrate their learning through course work, major projects, and public exhibitions. Course work is assessed by both teachers and by the students themselves, using the relevant rubrics as well as narrative evaluations. Projects are presented to peers and teachers in a classroom setting. At the culmination of major projects, parents and the community are invited to public exhibitions in which students demonstrate, display, and answer questions about their work. The Gateway Portfolio Exhibition includes a mixed audience of students, teachers, parents, and community members. The written feedback and oral questioning students receive from each of these audiences is an important element of Parker's assessment process.

As students coming to Parker from other schools attest, our standards are high. Students are expected to revise their work until it meets the standards, rather than moving on after having produced work that might be considered "passing." Assessments also include an indication of whether or not students' progress is considered satisfactory. This does not equate to a pass/fail type of system. Rather, it takes into account an estimate of a student's performance relative to his/her potential. Thus, it is quite possible for a student to be given an indication that his/her progress is not satisfactory, even though it might be considered "passing" by more traditional measures such as average test scores, et cetera.

## SENIOR REQUIREMENTS

### SCHOOL SERVICE

All Division 3 students commit two hours per week to school service. Students are paired with a faculty mentor to perform a variety of school-related functions from tutoring to custodial assistance to research assisting to office work.

### SENIOR PROJECT

During their final year at Parker, students complete a Senior Project in which they must:

1. Generate an “essential question”;
2. Explore this question by:
  - a) Engaging in formal academic research;
  - b) Collaborating with people outside the Parker School (e.g. internship, interview series, job-shadowing, field research);
3. Use their findings/work to benefit the larger community;
4. Apply skills and knowledge from several disciplines to complete the project;
5. Present their project to a panel.

### GRADUATION PORTFOLIO

The Graduation Portfolio contains work from Division 3 courses which demonstrates the student’s accomplishments in at least 9 of the 12 skill areas identified in the Parker School Criteria for Excellence.

## DIVISION II Arts & Humanities

### First Sample

In this course, students in Division 2 Arts and Humanities ask the question, "How do beliefs shape identity?" as they study the history of Islam and modern Islamic countries. Students first develop a personal essay about their own beliefs and identities. They take a content assessment on which they explain key concepts and figures of Islam. They also research several Islamic nations, and collaborate on oral presentations, while practicing effective listening skills in a listening assessment based on current issues in Islam. For a reading assessment, students read the fable, *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, and analyze it in written journals and text-based seminars. During Unit Two, students ask the question, "How should we remember the Holocaust and WWII and how are they relevant today?" Students take a content assessment on the rise of Hitler and the Weimar Republic. They then read Elie Wiesel's *Night* as a reading assessment and interpret the text through written and artistic responses. Students conduct individual research into specific topics related to WWII and the Holocaust and present their findings in an oral presentation. Finally, students build scale model monuments to the Holocaust and related topics. Unit Three focuses on applying the question, "What is Revolution and what is a hero?" Students read *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez as an example of an armed Revolution in the Dominican Republic and complete a reading assessment. They examine a revolutionary case study, *India & Gandhi under the British*, and then develop an independent research question for a revolution of their choice. A formal five page thesis paper is assessed for research and writing. Finally, students create a mural depicting important themes in the revolution they study. Students continue in Division 2 next year finished with Literature Circles and a reading assessment. They choose a book to read and develop evidence of collaboration, reading skills and strategies.

### Second Sample

In this Division 2 Arts and Humanities course, we study American history and culture through the essential question "Who are we now, and how did we get here?" We focus on three periods in American history that underwent dramatic social change: The American Revolution, The Civil War, and the 1960s. We begin through a study of current events to get a sense of what issues, values, and attitudes make up America as it currently exists. We then take a step back and study colonial history, the American Revolution, and the Constitutional Convention through our reading and performance of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* and a role-play of the Constitutional Convention. In our second unit, we study the layers of social, racial, and economic conflict that divided the country. Students read fiction and nonfiction books to explore these issues, and conduct independent research on topics from the Civil War. In Unit Three, students answer the question "What Do I Carry?" by writing personal essays. These essays serve entry point into the unit's question "How were Americans transformed during the 1960s? What marks were left on the country?" We then read Tim O'Brien's *The Things They*

*Carried*, which explores soldier's experiences in Vietnam. In photography and music assessments, students explore the cultural change in the 1960s. This unit culminates with students conducting independent research and writing thesis papers on a topic of their choice from this tumultuous era. Finally, we end the year with "Lit Circles," in which students from different classes read a book of their choice and make their own creative assessments in response to the texts.

## DIVISION III Arts & Humanities

### **African American Experiences**

This course is designed to explore the experience and identity development of African Americans, focusing in particular on the period between the early 20th century and today. To that end, we will read - for example - the reporting of Ida B. Wells, the social criticism of WEB DuBois, and the story of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. We will compare the experiences of authors, activists, and thinkers over the last few decades. Finally, we will do independent research into a topic particularly relevant to the lives of African Americans today.

### **American Dream**

In this course we will explore the concept of the American Dream through the lens of literature. How have artists in fiction, non-fiction, and poetry depicted the American Dream? And perhaps more importantly, how have they critiqued this idea? Is the American Dream a myth? Is it accessible to all Americans? What, as Langston Hughes writes, "happens to a dream deferred?" Exploring these questions and more, we will start by examining a classic American novel, *The Great Gatsby*. We will continue to explore these questions when we look at minority voices and how the concept of the American Dream is complicated by issues of race, class, gender, and culture.

### **American Landscape**

In this studio art and art history course we will analyze examples of landscape paintings as an American tradition with roots as the first art movement in America. We will look at artworks through the 19th and 20th century up to contemporary forms of expression in this genre. You will practice a variety of visual arts techniques including photography and painting. You will create work based on your connection to and observation of nature. As artists we will work to incorporate our technical and content-based practice into the landscapes we create in our studio.

### **The Art of the Essay**

This writer's workshop is designed as a place for you to grow and take risks as a writer in a supportive, thoughtful atmosphere. You will engage thoroughly in the writing process, honing your skills. You will have the opportunity to develop and explore exciting and meaningful topics for essays; investigate the role of style within various essay forms; produce prose that contains sound sentences, clear tone and solid organizational structure; give helpful and balanced feedback to your peers; and practice the art and science of revision. Most of all, in this class, you will write! All the time!

### **The American West**

The West holds a unique place in American life. Steeped in lore and legend, the Old West was said to be a lawless, violent place ruled by gunslingers and sheriffs. Yet the West was never as wild as rumored, and it was far more complex than any movie or myth. And while images conjured by the term "Old West" largely involve people from the East moving into uncharted lands, the reality was that Native Americans and Mexicans in the far West had been living there for a long time. This course will begin with a reading assessment in which we will delve into the historical growth of American lands, including the tensions between white settlers and Native Americans, the impact of the Transcontinental Railroad, and the consequences of westward expansion. Next, we will choose a historical individual or group of people from the history of the West to portray in an original song, learning ukulele as part of the process. This will be assessed for Artistic Expression. Finally, we will examine the mythology and portrayals of the West in film, photos, maps, diaries, and other media, all of which will comprise a Listening and Media Analysis assessment.

### **City on a Hill**

When you think about who you are, what role does where you are from play in your identity? What does it mean to be from New England? There are the easy answers. It means you might be a die-hard Pats, Sox, Celtics or Bruins fan. Or maybe it means you go to Pahkah Chahtah School. But sports and accents only scratch the surface of our shared New England identity. In this class, we will first explore our Puritan heritage to understand its ideals and its realities. Primary documents and Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* will be our guides on this stage of our journey. We will then time travel to 19th century

Concord and spend time with Thoreau on the shores of his favorite pond in order to get a sense of how our ideals were refined in the face of the Industrial Revolution and the on-coming Civil War. Finally, we will come to our modern time and check in on John Winthrop's initial call that we be as a "City on a Hill." Using primary documents, we will see where we are answering this call and where we have work still to do as New Englanders!

### **The Cold War**

Between 1945 and 1989, the world was bi-polar. On one side stood the Soviet Union, deeply scarred by World War II, entrenched in communist ideology and determined to prevail in any coming conflict. In the other camp stood the United States, triumphant in the wake of war, prosperous and content, convinced of its moral superiority, yet living in the shadow of the mushroom cloud. For more than 50 years, the two sides squared off in a conflict that spawned "proxy wars" like Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan, fueled a relentless arms race, and threatened to destroy all life on the planet. In this class, we will examine major moments, strategies, and cultural responses to the Cold War. We begin by learning the history of events after World War II, analyzing important turning points and strategies employed by the "superpowers". Then we conduct independent research into conflicts and proxy wars to see how societies and lives were transformed around the globe. In the final assessment we will explore the ways culture reflected the tense "us against them" mindset of the Cold War and the uncertainty of the nuclear age.

### **Conflict in the Middle East**

Israel is the world's only Jewish state - but how did we get here and why is it so controversial? Israel was created in 1948 as a result of the Jewish refugee crisis sparked by the end of World War II, but the tumultuous relationships between the Israeli's and Arab's far pre-dates that. This class will explore some of the pre-history of Israel but will focus more closely on its contemporary history and the on-going conflict with the territory of Palestine.

Over time, global influence and hegemony has exacerbated the conflicts in the Middle East. We will learn about the founding of Israel, its religious significance, and the continued attempts to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to no avail. What is life like for Jews living in Israel? For Arabs living in Palestine or occupied territories? This class seeks to attempt to understand some of the complex issues at the center of this deadly on-going conflict and how power ultimately fuels prejudice.

### **The Craft of Theater**

This is a class about literature meant for performance. Students will practice analyzing plays through three lenses – as Readers, as Directors, and as Actors. We will begin by working in class to deeply understand thematic ideas in the plays we read in the way that a Director might. Next, we will go out into the world to observe live theater and consider the choices professionals make when bringing the ideas in a script to life. Finally, we will work to create our own productions that reflect our own interpretation and understanding of a play.

### **The Creative Mind**

What does it mean to be creative? What are the habits of mind that allow some people to become innovators, to think outside the box? In this course we will explore the nature of creative thinking, learning about the creative process that allows us to solve challenging problems. We will examine a series of American innovators who have shaped our world in varying ways, seeking to understand what they did and how they did it. We will then explore creativity from the lens of poetry, reading poems from the 19th and 20th centuries in order to more richly appreciate this highly creative form. We will close the semester by working with the popular poetic form of Slam Poetry. We will watch, write and perform slam poems and end the semester by hosting a Parker Poetry Slam.

### **Crime & Punishment**

This course will investigate and debate some of the complexities and differences in administering "justice". The course will look at the judicial and penal systems through the lens of the contemporary global issue of drug use: a criminal issue, health issue, or both? Using philosophical, ethical, psychological, sociological, and other perspectives, the class will explore questions like: What is "moral" behavior? What is effective punishment? What purposes do prisons serve? Is the death penalty just? Are different ways of "administering" death just? What inequalities are found in our and in other penal systems? Why? The course will begin with a close look at several philosophers, including Kant, Bentham, Rawls, Foucault, and more. Students will examine different ethical theories and then apply them to the idea of punishment and prison. After looking at the major (and varying) justifications used for the purpose of different prison systems, students will examine some of the controversies about penal systems. Students will culminate their study by designing their own "prison" system.

## **Designed for Meaning**

Essential Questions:

*How do authors of graphic novels develop voice and perspective using narrative and the design elements?*

*What are the elements of design and how can we use them to communicate our own ideas?*

*Where do we encounter design in our daily lives and what impact does it have on us as consumers?*

*What does "Design Thinking" mean and how can we use it?*

We often think of "meaning" relative to words – both written and spoken. "What do you mean?", we ask each other. However, humans are far more visual than you might think. Authors and artists alike make design choices to tell stories, share information, and change our minds. This communication of meaning and information is not bound to text alone. All around us are images and objects that have been designed. What makes "good" design? What are its goals? What does it mean to think like a designer? In this class, we will read graphic novels to better understand the link between authorial perspective and visual design. Then, you will craft an excerpt for your own graphic novel. We will explore the components of analog and digital graphic design. You will create logos, posters, comics, and gifs!

## **A Different Mirror: The American "Melting Pot"**

One common view of America is printed on our money. E pluribus unum -- "out of one, many." But since the first slaves arrived in 1619, the ingredients of our so-called "melting pot" have struggled for acceptance. This class will study the American experience of six cultures -- African-American, Irish, Latino, Chinese, Jewish, and Italian. Though the cultures are very different, their "American experience" has many similar touchstones. The arrival. The alienation and rejection. The struggle to fit in. The struggle to retain the old culture. The first political power. The art and literature. The oppression. The unification. The acceptance. Using the text *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America* we will study these touchstones while sampling the different flavors of the melting pot.

## **Election 2020!**

It's an election year, and that means it's a good idea to figure out how this system we call democracy works, who's running, and why we should care. In this class, we'll start out by reviewing civics – who and what can we vote for, and what do all of those people do? Next, we'll look at the process of voting and consider potential reforms to our laws. Should we require everyone to vote? Should we switch to a parliamentary system? Finally, we'll consider the November 2020 election. What issues are at stake? Who is likely to win? What political strategies will be effective (or not effective)? We will finish this class with a mock Electoral debate in which you will take on the role of a real-life politician or journalist, play out the issues of the day, and analyze the results!

## **The Environment: Dawn and Doom of Civilizations**

Why have some civilizations come to dominate the globe, while others have collapsed? What factors allowed a group of 168 Europeans to conquer 80,000 Incan warriors in Peru in 1536? Why did the fabulous civilizations of the Maya, the Mississippian culture of the American South, and the Harappa of India crash and vanish, leaving only temples, mounds, and city ruins? And finally, what can we learn from past failures such as these as we confront the dire warnings of global climate change? We will begin by reading *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* and *Collapse*, both by Jared Diamond, to discover how geography impacted human societies. We will research various problems brought about by human activities and the modern environmental movements that have sought to address them. In a culminating LaMA assessment, we will explore how modern governments respond—or don't respond—to environmental problems, and the societal consequences.

## **Evil**

What does it mean to be evil? In this course we will explore a number of literary responses to this question across time. What was the essence of evil in Dante's allegorical poem on sin – *The Inferno*? How about Mr. Hyde in Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*? Was he really such a bad guy, and if so, what makes him so? In William Blake's poetry *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, the reader is asked to question whether evil is simply a necessary stop within the circle of life and death. And Sartre wondered in *No Exit* if Hell wasn't really just other people. Through analysis and discussion, analytical and creative writing, we will open up the dark side and come to our own conclusions about what it means to be bad.

## **Explaining the World: A History of Science**

For most of human history, explanations of how the world worked were wrong. Astrologers explained human behavior by charting the planets. Alchemists tried to turn lead into gold. The sun went around the earth, so it was said. And then

beginning in about 1600, a small group of curious scholars began questioning common wisdom and demanding proof of all knowledge. Within a century, the modern sciences were born and with them came the idea of progress. This class will chart the rise of scientific thinking in many disciplines. We will explore how Greek philosophers sowed the seeds and how Arab scientists harvested them. We will then study the works and lives of Galileo, Newton, Lavoisier, Darwin, Curie, Einstein and others. We will do a few simple experiments, study many more, and discover how discovery led to ages of industry, understanding, and wonder.

### **Exploring Propaganda**

What even is propaganda? The term propaganda has taken on a negative connotation, but how did we get here? This class begins by covering the history of propaganda in America, starting with Harold Laswell's "The Theory of Political Propaganda" in 1927, and Edward Bernays' "Propaganda" in 1928. We will move throughout history, focusing a significant amount of time on effective examples of propaganda – particularly the widespread domestic use during WWII. The course then transitions to modern propaganda – things that aren't called as such anymore but have the same desired outcome. We will look at modern instances of propaganda and evaluate the media's role in dissemination of information. We will ultimately seek to answer the following questions: What is our collective definition of propaganda? How does propaganda differ from reporting with perspective? Is there ever a time that propaganda is necessary? Why or why not? What types of propaganda do you notice in your daily life, if any?

### **Figure This – Explorations in 2D Art**

Images of the human figure make up some of the earliest known drawings by man. For thousands of years, our species has been creating likenesses of ourselves for the purpose of communication and artistic expression. In this course, we will examine how the depiction of the human figure in art has evolved over time. We will look at the figure in artwork from different cultures and investigate how we interact with figurative artwork in our own lives. Be prepared to learn the nitty-gritty of technical figure drawing, experiment with abstraction in painting, and more. Together, we will explore how you can use the figure in your own 2D artwork to express meaningful ideas, thoughts, and opinions.

### **History of Money**

This is a class about different visions of how the American Economy should work and how those visions have changed and influenced each other over time. We'll learn the basics of capitalism, socialism, and organized labor, learn how the United States became the preeminent economic world power in the middle of the 20th century, and figure out why the stock market crashed in 1929 and the housing market collapsed in 2007. Along the way, we might ask some other questions, like whether or not America's economic boom times would have been possible without slavery or how much economic inequality is good for us. Eventually, all students will get to weigh in on an American Economy that makes the most sense to them.

### **History on Trial**

Should people be held accountable for actions committed in the past? If no, why not? If yes, then by what standards? And from which perspective? And can we use present-day standards of morality in viewing historical figures? Is a courtroom the proper venue for suspected perpetrators of crimes against humanity to be judged? These questions will guide us this semester in History on Trial. We will look at a handful of significant historical events that involved questionable moral decisions, violent consequences, and, possibly, war crimes. And rather than let these individuals' legacies be determined by historians and textbook writers, they will face their decisions and their victims in a court of law. You will prosecute, defend, and portray the individuals involved with these cases, and a jury will decide their guilt or innocence.

### **In the Name of Love**

Where did the term "lovesick" come from? What does it mean to be someone's soulmate? Where did our cultures' notion of monogamy and marriage come from? In this class, we will look to literature, poetry, music, art and film to better understand how love and romance have been defined and experienced across time and culture. We will uncover why it has been the subject of obsession for so many writers and artists. We will begin our exploration by unpacking where our own ideas about love and relationships come from. We will further investigate these ideas by reading works of fiction and non-fiction, explicating poems, and analyzing films. Get ready to spend the semester discussing matters of the heart!

### **Installation Art**

What is it like to walk through a piece of art? Art can do so much more than hang on a museum wall! In this class we will examine and create visual art that lives in three-dimensional space. Drawing our inspiration from installations, sculptures, and interdisciplinary work from all over the world - we will investigate artwork that invites us to do more than just look.

Together we will uncover what art can do to alter a physical space and how we move, act, and question in response. In this class, you will have the opportunity to independently and collaboratively explore new mediums that excited you. Be prepared to make artwork of your own from a variety of materials including fabric, masking tape, cardboard, found objects, and so much more!

### **Magic of Film**

In this class, we will learn about the language and techniques used by visionary filmmakers who tell stories through visuals, sounds, editing, and writing. Using these films, we'll then learn about how films are analyzed and evaluated by different critics. We will watch films in a variety of genres and styles and create reviews, analyses, and perhaps even some original art of our own! Assessments for this course will be unusual in that you will be presented with four styles of analysis after our introductory unit. You will then choose three projects to complete over the course of this class: a podcast or video essay, a live presentation, a written film review, or the creation of your own short movie. These pieces can be completed in any order.

### **Memoir**

We all have a story to tell and sharing our stories with others is one way in which we can more fully understand the vast diversity of human experiences, while simultaneously seeing ourselves in others and forging a deeply human connection. In this course, we will explore the art of reading and writing memoir. We will study how writers and artists have captured their personal identity and life experiences in their work. To start, we will read the work of important writers and examine the essential elements of their writing. We will read Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, examining significant themes like race and gender, while also carefully considering the genre of memoir and Angelou's craft. Through our analysis of her work and other memoir essays, we will identify and practice different skills necessary to convey our own personal stories. Next, we will write our own pieces of memoir, making meaning of personal experience by shaping it on the page. We will finish the semester by creating spoken word memoirs and investigate the art of oral storytelling. Be ready to spend some time thinking about YOU!

### **The Middle East**

Mention the Middle East and horrific headlines come to mind. War. Terrorism. Refugees. But this complex and fascinating region runs deep in the world's conscience and deserves a deeper look. This class will study the Middle East from Babylonian and Biblical times to the recent Arab Spring. Consider it a caravan taking us from holy days to the Crusades, then through the Ottoman Empire to the 20th century when the discovery of oil led colonial powers to carve out new countries, creating "a peace to end all peace." Finally, through the crucibles of conflict and revolution, the caravan will come to the modern Middle East, home to 370 million people in 17 nations striving to reconcile diverse heritage, religion, and custom. Texts will include excerpts from the Bible, the Torah, and the Qu'ran, *The Handbook of the Middle East*, *Persepolis*, plus short stories, memoirs, and finally, those headlines.

### **O! My Country: National Identity on Three Continents**

Find someone on the streets of the world and ask them how they identify themselves. Many might say "German" or "Korean" or "American". But that way of defining ourselves is newer and less universal than you might think. In this course, we will explore select nations from around the world to see how national identity has been created, how it has been used at various times, and how it has shaped our modern world. For instance, has nationalism stoked rivalries, and wars? How does national identity affect us as individuals? The course will include readings from a variety of non-fiction and fiction texts (assessed for Reading), developing a claim-based presentation on your findings with national identity (assessed for Oral Presentation), and a songwriting project portraying the experience of the individual within a nation (assessed for Artistic Expression). No previous experience with music is required. This course will include instruction in ukulele.

### **Out of the Dust**

The Great Depression was not an era of our history that rests quietly in the past. Since the now-called Great Recession of 2008 and 2009, in fact, the Great Depression has been examined in the media and by the government frequently. One purpose of this course is to help us better understand this period in our history in order to better understand the world of today, which, with our issues of income disparity and protectionism, bear a striking, albeit pale, resemblance to the early 1930s. Our work together will also include an examination of how history is reflected and shaped by the art that is created out of it. Through a comparative study of literature, film, drama, folk music and documentary photography, on the one hand, and primary sources and historical documents, on the other, we will try to tease out how art impacts our perceptions of

ourselves and our past. As one of the most disastrous and multi-faceted crises ever to face our country, the Great Depression has much to teach us about our strengths, our weaknesses, and our perceptions.

### **Out of (South) Africa**

How do you fall in love with someone who, by law, must treat you as subhuman? Can you overcome oppression and learn that love exists? How does joy persist and flourish in spite of oppression? In this course we will take a closer look at South Africa, including its history, music, literature, comedy, and art. We will also explore its attempts at post-Apartheid Truth and Reconciliation, the pros and cons of that endeavor, and where the country stands today, politically, economically, socially, morally and artistically. Throughout the course, we will come to understand how a country built on racial cruelty and subjugation can reinvent and ‘save’ itself from all its angry ghosts.

### **Photography**

Essential Questions:

*How has the invention of photography changed the way we see, communicate, share information, and make art?*

*How can we use photography to effectively communicate our own ideas, beliefs, and opinions?*

In his book *Camera Lucida*, Roland Barthes writes of the advent of photography: *"The age of the Photograph is also the age of revolutions, contestations, assassinations, explosions, in short, of impatiences, of everything which denies ripening."*

The invention of photography created a ripple that made waves in the worlds of science, art, philosophy, and beyond. Today, we encounter photographic images in an almost continuous stream of visual information that has completely saturated our lives. In this class, we will take a step back and examine the science and history behind the invention of the photograph and how the ability to freeze time changed the way we communicate, think, and see the world. We will learn what it means to “read” an image and investigate photographs made by artists and photojournalist from all over the world. Together, we will explore what it means to be a thoughtful creator and consumer of photographs.

### **Pop Culture in American Society**

This course will focus on the dynamic between American society and popular culture. We will begin with an overview of American history to provide solid context. Next, in a Listening and Media Analysis assessment, we will examine a collection of “cultural artifacts” (written texts, images and sounds) and connect them to different historical eras, identifying themes in the material. In the second unit we will look at how sports have both reflected and affected society by reading several athlete biographies. This work will be assessed for Reading. Next, we will explore the role that toys and games have played in America, focusing on the themes of gender, class and race/ethnicity. You will complete a group project where you will learn about the history of a toy/game and analyze it through these three themes. The culmination of the course will be an individual research project. You will select an aspect of popular culture of your choice and develop a thesis around the course’s essential questions. This final portion will be assessed for Research.

### **Problems (and Solutions) in American Democracy**

Today we often hear that American democracy is broken -- but what would a healthy democracy look like? How has American democratic governance functioned in the past, how has it changed over time, and what does this mean for the nation's political and economic health? This course approaches American history with thematic questions in mind: tyranny of the majority, who is included in We the People, limits of democracy, and more. The course will be taught by the Harvard Business School case-method. Each week, we will be introduced to a different narrative-style critical episode in the development of American democracy, from the drafting of the Constitution to contemporary fights over economic and social policy, each ending with cliffhangers. We will teleport ourselves throughout time, into the shoes of the men and women whom we will discuss. We will then offer solutions to the questions democracy itself has posed and will continue to pose, to each generation of Americans, while also learning about what historical decisions were made.

### **Project Citizen**

We will start this course by learning about the different political systems – what type of government we have, how it operates at different levels, and the limitations of those levels. We will use this information to begin thinking about what constitutes civic participation. We will look at different instances of “activism” and develop our own definition of it. We will learn about the political process, and in doing so, in groups, will focus on a current issue that is important to us and begin to understand not only how to participate in solving the problem, but also coming up with legislative solutions ourselves. This semester-long project will engage us with all the intricacies of government, developing and enacting policy, and civic duty. You will be responsible for researching your issues in relation to level of government, previous (if any) legislation, and thinking critically about who the stakeholders are (we’ll discuss this term early in the semester), all represented in a website

so others can access our well-thought out arguments, ideas, and solutions. Toward the end of the semester, each group will do a short oral presentation of their “panels” – the problem, the solution, the stakeholders, and alternative approaches.

### **Riots, Rebellions, and Revolutions**

This course will focus primarily on revolutions in three distinct geographic regions during distinct time periods: France (18th century), China (20th century), and Cuba (20th century). This course will seek to examine what precipitated these revolutions and what the ramifications of overthrowing an established government entail. We will set out to understand how a riot or rebellion becomes (or doesn't become) a full-scale revolution and which social circumstances have precipitated revolutions. Through reading revolutionary literature (essays, books, and lectures by revolutionaries), examining social contexts and historical events, we will hopefully understand more deeply what causes societies to rupture and to (usually) resort to violence as a means of affecting change. The course will culminate with a research project that examines a revolution of your choice – whether that be a physical overthrowing of a government or a more ideological revolution is up to you!

### **Sculpture**

What is the impact of three-dimensional artwork? What is possible with any given material? In this class, we will explore a variety of sculpture-making techniques. We will let materials guide our work as we investigate the limits of clay, wood, recycled materials, and more. By studying the works of other sculptors and the role of sculpture in different cultures, we will deepen our own creative process and artwork. Be prepared to spend the semester experimenting, building, constructing, and sculpting.

### **Senior Seminar**

Senior Seminar is a yearlong course dedicated to developing and fostering critical thinking, inquiry, collaboration, and personal achievement. In addition to its curricular function, the Senior Seminar provides structure and continuity in preparation for Life After Parker, as well as the locus for the Senior Project. Seminar teachers act as advisors to seniors for all aspects of their senior year, including the Senior Project.

### **Shakespeare**

Shakespeare's words have been performed hundreds of thousands of times, are often quoted and misquoted, have been printed, reprinted, acted and analyzed. And they have endured for nearly 500 years! Why have they remained a cultural touchstone for so long? Are they still relevant today? What can you, as high school students in Devens, MA in 2019, glean from these centuries' old texts? How might they relate to your world and the world around you? What themes do they delve into and questions do they cause you to ask? How might you reimagine them in today's landscape? Together, we'll examine these questions and more as we delve into these rich stories. We will puzzle through the density and complexities of Shakespeare's language. We'll strive to give these plays new life by asking complex questions, engaging in robust conversation, making fools of ourselves acting out parts, and imagining how we might envision a play from the directorial chair.

### **Supreme Court**

We will start this course by learning about the basics of the Supreme Court – why it was created, what its powers are, and how it operates – and thinking about the role that it plays in American government and our own lives. We will use role plays and simulations to understand how a judge thinks and what qualifications are important for a Supreme Court Justice. We will learn about the history of the Court and important decisions it has made, using videos, podcasts, and actual case decisions as our main texts. You will then get to choose a legal/constitutional issue that you are interested in and research what the Supreme Court has ruled on this issue and its impact. After these projects, we will look at the cases that the Court is hearing and deciding this term. You and a partner will select one of these cases and learn about it. You will then play the role of either the petitioner or respondent, writing a speech and delivering it before a guest Justice. This oral argument will be run as if it were a real Supreme Court argument, meaning that while you will use your speech as a guideline, you will be interrupted with questions from the Justice at any point. This is a simulation-based course.

### **Teenage Wasteland: Coming of Age in Literature**

This course will examine that at once exhilarating, confusing, exuberant, baffling, messy time we call adolescence. What does it mean to grow up? What can we learn about identity through the transition from childhood to adulthood? How is the growing up process complicated by issues of race, class, gender, and culture? Through an examination of novels, short stories, and your own writing, we'll explore these questions and more, gaining a greater understanding of the enduring genre

of coming of age narratives, how they can help us better understand ourselves, and how they might help us make sense of our relationship to the world around us.

### **Through Our Eyes**

What factors shape identity? In this course we will look examine identity and study representations of difference and “otherness” through literature and varied forms of media and art. We will begin by grappling with Shakespeare’s Othello, exploring how issues of race and gender are constructed and the potential damage and conflict that arises when our identity is partially determined by those around us. We will next examine identity through a more contemporary lens examining literature, art, and film that invite us to consider questions like What parts of our identities do we choose for ourselves? What parts are determined for us by others, by society, or by chance? What dilemmas arise when others view us differently than we view ourselves?

### **True Lies**

Fake news. Post-truth. Truthiness. We’re living in an era where fake narratives can be difficult to distinguish from real ones; “post-truth,” after all, was the 2016 Word of the Year. But where is the line that separates falsehood from fiction, or libel from (poetic) license? In this course, we will examine the border between our reality and the representation of that reality in language, paying particular attention to the moral dimension of that representation across philosophy, literature, and history. What makes a short story, a news article, a history, “good”? What makes it “true”? And how can we tell what to believe? In this course, we will combine rigorous class discussion and debate with creative and analytical writing to deepen our understanding of these questions.

### **Urban Life**

In this course, we will start by looking at what Americans think about cities and urban life, using videos, music, articles and other media. We will then create an interview questionnaire that digs into people’s beliefs about and attitudes towards cities, and you will conduct a series of interviews with people, testing out a hypothesis and looking for themes in their responses. This first project will be assessed for listening. We will then learn about the history of cities in America, starting with theoretical questions of why cities exist and how they develop and becoming more specific about where, when, and how cities in America evolved. We will use Lowell as a case study, using field trips and guest speakers to gain first-hand experiences of these places. You will report your findings in an oral presentation. We will then focus on how cities and urban life have been portrayed in literature by reading *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* and an independent reading book, analyzing how the authors represent the city and life within it.

### **Utopian and Dystopian Visions**

If you could create the “perfect community,” what would it look like? How would it be run? What would daily life be like? This course will explore the concept of utopias, and their flip side, dystopias. We will think about human nature, needs and desires to help us think about the essential aspects of community and culture. We will learn about real-life attempts to create utopian communities, using the Shaker settlement at Fruitlands as a case study, and analyze why they succeeded and/or failed. We will also experience literature and film depictions of utopias and dystopias, interpreting and critiquing the authors’ and directors’ visions of society and human nature.

### **What’s So Funny**

Like many human experiences, humor is complex. What makes a joke funny? Why does some humor make one person feel a sense of mirth, while it makes another squirm with discomfort or anger? In this class we are going to explore how humor works and how it has been used in Western society to create societal change. We will take a journey through time, stopping along the way to examine literary humor in its historical context. What was Aristophanes doing with his racy Ancient Greek comedy *Lysistrata*? Why was irony such an important tool for Chaucer in his very amusing collection of tales during the Middle Ages? We will also explore some examples of modern satire, focusing on the current favorite vehicles – television and the internet. During this course we will study a variety of works to understand the tools of humor and its purposes, using close reading and analytical writing as our means.

### **Wicked Good**

*“Here in New England, the character is strong and unshakable.” – Norman Rockwell*

When you think about who you are, what role does where you are from play in your identity? What does it mean to be from New England? There are the easy answers. It means you might be a die-hard Pats, Sox, Celtics or Bruins fan. Or maybe it means you go to Pahkah Chahtah School. But sports and accents only scratch the surface of our shared New England

identity. In this class, we will explore our Puritan legacy and wonder how the writings of Hawthorne, Thoreau, Frost and others have shaped our collective consciousness. We will look at how our granite-strewn terrain has contributed to our sense of self. Finally, we will look at the darker side of our sense of identity, which has sometimes been created through the exclusion of others.

### **World Religions**

With eighty-four percent of the world's people belonging to one religion or another, we might wonder, why do humans across cultures believe in a higher power? This course will focus on how different religions address some of life's most relevant and thought-provoking questions. We will think about what exactly a "religion" is and what it means to be "religious." We will seek to understand modern society's view of religion, how relevant it is in people's lives, and how much it affects their actions, both big and small. Then we will explore Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in depth. Finally, we will apply our understanding of world religions to a real-world individual or fictional character. *Please note: You need not be religious to take or appreciate this course. You will never be pressured or forced to share your personal beliefs in class, and the focus of the class will be on the religions themselves rather than our personal views or beliefs.*

## **DIVISION II Math, Science, and Technology**

The Division 2 MST program is a two-year integrated math and science course. The integrated mathematics curriculum includes **algebra, geometry, and introductory statistics and probability**. Integrated science curriculum is **laboratory based** and includes the equivalent of a full year of **biology** along with a full year of work in the physical sciences as well (introductory **chemistry and physics** concepts). Where possible, math and science topics are aligned and integrated to enhance understanding. To demonstrate their mastery of the skills in this two year course, students conduct independent investigations and give formal presentations of their findings to an audience of faculty, family, and peers.

### **First Sample**

In math, students studied probability and modeled outcomes of different events. In algebra, they investigated function families, which led into a detailed study of quadratic functions and algebraic techniques for solving quadratic equations, including factoring and the quadratic formula. The geometry work this year included in-depth work with logic, formal proof and deductive reasoning to solve problems using parallel lines and triangle congruence. The year concluded with the study of angles and linear regression to model the bending of light.

In science, students began the year with the study of cell division, Mendelian genetics, and inheritance. They then simulated how natural selection can lead to changes in the genetics of a population, which led to the in-depth study of the fossil evidence, anatomical evidence, and genetic evidence that support the theory of evolution. Further study in biology focused on anatomy and physiology, with a series of organ dissections to explore the relationship between structure and function and the study of how organisms maintain homeostasis. Physical science topics included the study of chemical reactions, with lab work aimed at creating a specific amount of product from a reaction. The final topic of the year was the study of the physics of lenses and optics.

### **Second Sample**

In math, students started the year with statistical analysis; In-depth work in algebra included a focus on linear equations, systems of equations, and inequalities. Students also studied exponential functions and exponent rules. The geometry topics for this year included work with the areas and volumes of different figures, triangle similarity and right triangle trigonometry.

In science, students studied ecology and ecosystems with the investigation of the impacts of an oil spill. Included in this work was a detailed study of photosynthesis and cellular respiration. In the study of disease and immunity, students investigated pathogens, DNA replication, bacterial transformation, protein synthesis, and the immune response. Physical science topics included detailed study of the chemistry of organic fuels. While learning atomic structure, states of matter, and basics of the periodic table, students synthesized biofuel and compared its heat of combustion to ethanol. The final science unit focused on the physics of simple machines, exploring force, work, and energy.

### **Anatomy and Physiology**

Anatomy and Physiology is a survey class in which students investigate the human body's main organ systems both in a healthy and diseased state. Students discuss both the gross anatomy of these systems and the underlying bio-molecule based physiology. The first unit introduces the major biochemical molecules of life (proteins, carbohydrates, lipids and nucleic acids), and discusses the role each of those biochemical molecules plays in sustaining life. Students learn the importance of homeostasis, and the different ways cells and the body's systems work in order to maintain a stable environment. The first unit culminates with an investigation of the nervous system and how molecules, such as enzymes, control messaging in the body. In the second unit students go into detail on the skeletal/muscular and circulatory/respiratory systems. For each system we have an opportunity to dissect a major animal organ as a comparison to the human body. A lab practical assesses student understanding of the structure and function of the organs discussed in each system. In the third unit students look at the disease state, with a culminating research project to end the semester. Students research a system that has not yet been discussed, such as the endocrine, digestive, reproductive, or immune systems, and look at how dysfunction in these systems leads to a disease state.

### **Animal Biology**

We are all animals--from sponges, largemouth bass, and earthworms, to spiders, ostriches and humans. There are somewhere between 3 and 10 million members within this, the most diverse biological kingdom, known as "Animalia." Zoology is basically the wonderfully interesting "story" of animals. Why do animals look the way they do? How and when did all of these diverse body types evolve, and how do the forms of these bodies match their functions? By gaining an understanding of how the form of an animal relates to its function, you will gain a clearer picture of how animals have evolved over long periods of geologic time, as well as how these diverse organisms are related to each other and to their ecosystems. In this semester-long course, this grand story of animal biology will be told through the lens of Darwinian evolution. We will reinforce our understandings of the classic work of Charles Darwin and how natural selection has shaped the animals we see today. Towards the end of the semester, we will spend significant time on our own human "story" as we look closely at hominid evolution. Our own human odyssey has so many great questions. Where and what did humans evolve from? What prompted our ancestors to start walking upright? Why aren't we nocturnal? Why do we still crave salts, fats, and sugary foods even today? The best thing about these questions is that many of them are not fully answered yet. This class will have a significant lab component focused mainly on animal dissections, observations of fossils, and the careful evaluation of evidence as we recreate one of the most fascinating stories ever told!

### **Bioethics**

The application of scientific discovery towards human benefit has a long history. In the last hundred years these applications have skyrocketed with major breakthroughs in our understanding of cellular principles. However, these have also raised difficult ethical questions about when and how these miraculous applications should be used. For example, is it ethical to allow athletes to use performance enhancements? Is it ethical to compel communities to vaccinate against dangerous diseases? Always? Under what conditions? How do we choose who lives and who dies when life-saving resources are scarce? Is it ethical to use a person's body parts without consent for scientific or medical discoveries that can save someone else's life? In this class we will ask those questions and start to understand how ethicists would approach answering those questions. Scientific thinking and ethical thinking share similarities but are also different. In general, scientists aim to understand whether an application of scientific principles to human benefit is possible, while ethicists aim to determine whether those applications *should* be carried out. Our class will be divided into four units. In each unit we will mine current biological topics for ethical dilemmas, learn the underlying biological concepts, and make conclusions about who or what can be affected by our solutions to the dilemmas. In the first unit we will answer the question, "what is bioethics?" In this introductory unit we will learn how to approach and answer ethical questions. We will use the current COVID pandemic as the backdrop for the second unit in which we will look at the ethics of considering individual versus community needs in preventing the spread of disease. In the third unit we will learn about the ethical implications of using human tissues in scientific and medical investigations. In the fourth unit we will discuss the ethical dilemmas in organ transplantation. In our final unit we will ask the question, "is it ethical to modify non-human organisms for our benefit?" Portfolio eligible assessments that are offered: Systems Thinking, Scientific Investigation, Technical Communication.

### **Biotechnology**

Did you know that everyday biologists and geneticists are developing technologies and products that help save lives, feed millions and reduce greenhouse gas emissions? If you are interested in being part of these exciting, cutting edge applications

of biology then this semester-long course is for you! Humans have been using the basic ideas behind biotechnology since the dawn of civilization as we learned to selectively breed animals to produce desired traits in offspring, and used yeast and mold to make cheese and beer. Now, our advanced understanding of the genetic make-up of many organisms has enabled us to make everything from lifesaving medicines to the jeans you are wearing. Weekly lab experiences will introduce you to research being done in actual biotech laboratories. Our lab work will include isolating and recombining DNA to make insulin, extracting and making copies of specific genetic sequences, using software to assemble and analyze DNA “barcodes” and analyzing food samples to see if they have been genetically modified. Since biotechnology is a field that is advancing and changing almost by the hour, we will be dedicating a portion of each week diving into and journaling about the most up to date articles and “current events.” You will get a chance to visit the Whitehead Institute, a cutting-edge biotech company in Cambridge where you will experience a day in the life of a biotechnician. As the fastest growing industry in the state of Massachusetts, biotechnology offers many opportunities as a potential area of post high school study and employment! Come join us on as we journey into the world of biotechnology!

### **Calculus**

This course will be an introduction to the fundamental concepts of Differential and Integral Calculus. The course will be investigative and applications oriented, with students strengthening their understanding by exploring and applying the concepts being covered and carefully explaining the ideas in their own words. The opportunity will exist for interested students to explore more theoretical and abstract concepts of Calculus as appropriate. Students MUST have completed Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry in order to enroll in Calculus.

### **Chemistry**

In this introductory chemistry course, students will explore the fundamental principles of chemistry which characterize the properties of matter and how it reacts. Students learn the properties of matter, how to measure these properties, and to develop the techniques of problem solving. Students learn atomic structure, formula writing, balancing equations, recognizing types of chemical reactions, periodicity, chemical bonding, and stoichiometry. These concepts will be taught in context to give students an understanding of the real world questions that can be answered using chemical principles. Lab investigation is used as an integral part of this course to develop key chemical concepts, teach basic laboratory techniques, and train students in data collection and analysis. Classroom dialogue and problem solving encourage students to think creatively, to analyze and question scientific information, and to foster independent and collaborative work habits. This is a lab based class that relies heavily on the use of algebra for problem-solving and depends on the foundation of chemistry set in Division 2 science.

### **Chemistry in Context**

In this semester long introductory chemistry course, students will explore fundamental principles of chemistry which characterize the properties of matter and how it reacts. Students learn the properties of matter, how to measure these properties, and to use these properties when problem solving. Students will develop a functional understanding of atomic structure, the properties of matter, chemical formula writing, balancing equations, chemical bonding, and reaction stoichiometry. These concepts will be taught in context to give students an understanding of the real-world questions that can be answered using chemical principles. The key lab investigations will be focused on the properties of gases, the synthesis of biodiesel and a measurement of its energy content, and an extraction of copper from an ore with a focus on reaction conditions to maximize product amounts. Classroom dialogue and problem solving encourage students to think creatively, to analyze and question scientific information, and to foster independent and collaborative work habits. This is a lab-based class that relies heavily on the use of algebra for problem solving.

### **Financial Math**

In Financial Math, students develop their technology, problem-solving and technical communication skills by grappling with real-life problems of launching into financial adulthood. With extended technological challenges exploring areas like the purpose and function of banks or the critical elements of establishing a good credit history, seniors in this class are challenged to make meaning in the numbers and logical structure of spreadsheets. This is reinforced with real-world applications to their future life. Should you rent or buy a house? Are fancy car leases too good to be true? Is a potential spouse’s terrible credit score an unromantic deal breaker? The course has multiple Technology POWs which build to culminate in the final project asking students to answer the question: “How must I live today, so that I may live as I wish in the future?” in which each student uses all the spreadsheets developed in class to create a budget and plan to live life with an understanding of what the future may hold.

## **Marine Biology**

This course is designed to give you an introduction to the marine environment. We will begin by looking at the diversity of marine life, which we will learn about by examining specimens via dissection, observation and extensive lab journal documentation. We will then take an ecological approach to investigating the marine life in the ocean by exploring the different “zones” of the ocean and studying how life within each of those zones is adapted to the specific conditions of the environment. Finally, we will look at human impact on the marine environment and how pollution affects the organisms that reside in or near the ocean. In this class, dissections will be an essential component in our first unit of study, some incredible trips to coastal communities will be critical to our learning in the second unit, and we will read extensively from the text *Marine Pollution: What Everyone Needs to Know* by Judith Weis. Adventure and discovery await as we learn what lies down by the bay!

## **Physics**

This course will be an investigation of the fundamental rules that govern the physical world around us. It will, as much as possible, be a laboratory-based class, with students exploring and gaining an understanding of the laws of physics by seeing them in action. Significant emphasis is placed on using the content learned about Physics to support applying and developing the skills of Scientific Investigation, Mathematical Problem Solving and Technical Communication in the first semester and Scientific Investigation, Technology and Systems Thinking in the second semester. The primary Physics content focused on will be Mechanics. We will start with figuring out what is needed to define the motion of an object, then develop the formulas relating the different numerical quantities related to that motion. We will explore the ways to influence the motion of objects and more advanced methods of looking at the properties of objects in motion.

## **Pre-Calc: Functions**

Pre-Calculus focuses on functions and their applications. The emphasis will be on refining your algebraic skills and developing efficient problem-solving processes. We will develop a more formal mathematical vocabulary for discussing functions and their behaviors and investigate the properties of several function families in depth. This class, when taken with Trigonometry, provides the necessary prerequisite for Calculus.

## **Statistics**

What truths are revealed when we look at situations statistically? How can statistics “lie?” This course focuses on how data can be collected, analyzed, and presented to support an argument or draw conclusions. We will begin by reviewing descriptive statistics and learning some basic data-gathering techniques. We will then explore how we can predict the probability of particular events, and, ultimately, how truthfully we can make inferences about the world around us using statistical methods. Students will then have the opportunity to design statistical studies of their own, and implement them outside of class. This course will build on a student’s algebraic skills and will challenge students to develop a healthy skepticism toward all forms statistical analysis in the future.

## **Trigonometry**

This course includes topics from trigonometry and geometry. We will begin with a quick review of right triangle trigonometry, and use this as a foundation for studying triangulation, the unit circle, and trigonometric functions. We will then use the laws of sines and cosines to solve problems in three-dimensional solid geometry, culminating in the design and construction of a geodesic dome! When taken with PreCalc: Functions, this course can provide the necessary prerequisite for Calculus.

# **SPANISH**

## **DIVISION I SPANISH (Generally enrolled in 9<sup>th</sup> grade year)**

In Division 1, students are expected to acquire basic grammar and a limited range of vocabulary for a variety of academic and social purposes. Students work to develop speaking and writing skills sufficient to communicate simple ideas about their lives as well as the cultures of Spanish-speaking peoples throughout the world. To become familiar with authentic Spanish as it is spoken and written by native speakers; students begin to read authentic pieces of children’s literature and simplified versions of more complex texts. Students listen and respond to examples of simplified and authentic speech. Throughout the year students apply their growing mastery over Spanish to perform a variety of plays, debates, dialogues,

and simulations of real-life situations. Students communicate their ideas in writing through stories, essays, poems, and letters.

### **DIVISION II SPANISH (Generally a two year program)**

Division 2 Spanish students develop their speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills through cultural units that include new vocabulary and a review of past grammar, and new grammatical units (the imperative, future, conditional and present perfect tenses). Students develop speaking and writing skills to communicate in depth about cultural and political issues, and they begin to read and listen to authentic literature, film and works in other media.

### **DIVISION III SPANISH (Semester long courses, recent samples shown)**

#### **Contenido: ¡Conversaciones y Composiciones!**

**Enfoque literario en cuentos cortos analizando el feminismo y la indiferencia hacia la mujer, sus ideologías, y su rol en diferentes ámbitos sociales y políticos. Los jóvenes y la inseguridad, pero también la esperanza y sus posibilidades hacia el futuro. La política y como esta tiene influencia en la vida de los ciudadanos latinoamericanos.**

In this course you will continue to develop your proficiency in Spanish. Together in Spanish, we explore the culture of Latin America through short stories from the book, *Cuentos de Eva Luna*, by Isabel Allende. Additional texts will include short stories, videos, history, music, and poetry. Students will engage in weekly writing, speaking, listening, and reading tasks to continue the language acquisition process. One objective will be to continue with the goals used in Division 1 and 2: using only Spanish; overcoming fear, taking risks, and celebrating mistakes; inferring meaning and using known language to communicate rather than relying on translation; and, contributing to a community in which all can learn. The other main objective is to understand, analyze and engage in discussions about more challenging texts. Together we will learn and apply new cultural knowledge to understand the Spanish-speaking world more fully. Students will also have the opportunity to complete an independent research project about a theme of their choice involving the Spanish-speaking world. There will be at least two opportunities to create a Spanish portfolio piece for the Graduation Portfolio. The expected level to engage successfully and be able to complete a portfolio eligible piece in this course is Intermediate High or above. Seniors are not required to meet on a piece in Spanish Division III but must demonstrate progress to pass the class.

#### **Nacer la Conciencia/Birth of Awareness**

This course will push students to continue to develop their proficiency in Spanish. Through the autobiography of Rigoberta Menchú, Guatemalan Nobel Peace Laureate, film and historical documents and current events, students will better understand the collective stories of Guatemalans and Indigenous peoples of Latin America. Students will engage in daily conversations, analytical reading and writing, working to delay judgment to better understand the lives of others. There will be three opportunities to create a Spanish portfolio piece for the Graduation Portfolio.

#### **Las regiones de España/ The Regions of Spain**

In this course we will explore the cultural diversity of Spain through its regions and its history. Some of the themes we'll explore are: architecture; Andalusia and its Moorish influence, as well as its dance; the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the period of dictatorship in Spain through the book *La Hija del Sastre* and the Spanish miniseries *El Tiempo Entre Costuras*; and lastly, the political situation today in Catalonia. Among grammatical themes that we'll explore are the two main forms of the past tense, as well as more precision with prepositions, transitions, and the present tense. As we explore this content together, we will work to continue our goals from Divisions 1 and 2 Spanish: using only Spanish, supporting the flow of language, taking risks and celebrating mistakes, and building a supportive community in which all can learn. There will be at least two opportunities to create a Spanish portfolio piece for the Graduation Portfolio. Seniors are not required to meet on a piece in Division 3 Spanish but must demonstrate progress and substantially engage with all work to pass the class. To engage in this class successfully, students must be able to interpret (read and listen) at the Advanced Low level and must be able to write and speak at the Intermediate Mid-level or above. To successfully complete a portfolio-eligible piece, students must be able to communicate in writing and/or speaking at the Intermediate High level or above.