



PROGRAM OF STUDIES  
2018-2019





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SAINT DAVID'S SCHOOL  
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# PROGRAM-DRIVEN SPACE

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*A reimagined and redesigned Saint David's School now stretches from the original townhouses mid-block on 89th Street through Madison Avenue, with voluminous spaces that maximize our boys' learning potential. For the first time in Saint David's history, program is driving the allocation and use of space, with rooms tailored for each curricular area.*

## ACCESS

All specials: library, art, athletics, and music are located in the central core of the school, allowing each grade easy access, and facilitating movement of boys during the school day.

## STE(A)M

An entire floor is dedicated to science, technology, engineering, art, and math learning. Art rooms and science labs include retractable doors that provide flexibility for projects and exhibits. In a new innovation lab equipped with 3D printers and other equipment, boys engage in fabrication, coding, and mechanical engineering. Commons space between the art and science areas provides opportunities for collaboration in those disciplines.

## MUSIC/PERFORMING ARTS

The new multi-purpose Performing Arts Center features concert hall acoustics and professional lighting, and accommodates 300 audience members, allowing for full divisions to attend the boys' performances and presentations. Boys have increased opportunities to engage in the production side of theater arts. Sound-proofed practice rooms are designed specifically for music learning.

## ATHLETICS

With three new on-site gymnasiums, boys have more time to learn and to play. Faculty, classmates and families will more easily gather together for games in the middle school regulation size Upper Gym, which features bleachers. New cardio and strength training rooms and an interactive fitness center round out a multi-faceted program.

## LIBRARIES

The Upper and Lower School Library Suite affirms the school's commitment to its classical tradition, and to the written word. Common space integrates the library experience for boys and facilitates collaboration.

## LEARNING CENTER

Special services are provided for boys who struggle as well as those who want to extend their learning.

## HOMEROOMS

Larger, more square shaped homerooms provide teachers the ability to tailor the layout to a learning experience. Contiguous homerooms allow for easy movement between classrooms and cross-grade level activities. Upper School Commons areas enable boys to easily collaborate when working in research groups or problem solving in teams.

## LUNCHROOM

A third lunchroom frees up the schedule, builds community, and allows for a reduced number of lunch periods.



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SAINT DAVID'S is an elementary school for boys of all faiths whose parents seek a school program rooted in the moral and theological traditions of the Catholic Church. Pupils are admitted to pre-kindergarten through Grade Eight. Since its founding in 1951, Saint David's has graduated more than 2,000 students. They have gone on to the most competitive New York City secondary schools, as well as regional boarding schools, and from there to ranking universities and colleges throughout the nation. The school is accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools and is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools, subscribing to its Principles of Good Practice for admission of students. Saint David's also belongs to the Independent Schools Admissions Association of Greater New York. The school's headmaster is Dr. P. David O'Halloran.

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## LOWER SCHOOL

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THE LOWER SCHOOL provides a structured, challenging, and dynamic academic environment in which each boy develops a strong sense of confidence in himself as a learner. In the pre-primary grades, the curriculum introduces a vast array of topics and disciplines that aim to foster a love of discovery while cultivating the skills necessary for continued academic achievement. By following the Golden Rule, boys learn to work and play together while taking their first steps toward independence.

Language arts and mathematics form the core of the academic curriculum. Taught in small instructional groups that progress at an appropriate pace, reading classes balance direct instruction with group and individualized work. Each boy is challenged to master carefully sequenced concepts and skills at every level. The reading program is enhanced by stimulating projects such as Book-O-Ween, where third grade students dress up as characters from their favorite books. Written composition is integral to the program and developing writers learn to express themselves in clear, well-organized sentences and paragraphs.

Incorporating formal listening and speaking instruction, language arts in the Lower School is a comprehensive approach to early literacy development. Homeroom teachers read aloud daily, sharing with the boys the beauty and excitement of classic children's literature. Poetry recitation is a long-standing tradition at Saint David's School. Each week, first through third graders recite classic and beloved poems in front of their classmates and teachers.

A small-group format in mathematics allows each boy to proceed at a pace appropriate for his level. Teachers emphasize the four basic operations, as well as com-

putation skills and the automatic recall of math facts. Along with math lab manipulatives, online games, and iPad apps, fundamental math skills and concepts are introduced, reinforced, and mastered. Hands-on investigations allow boys to practice and apply skills in novel problem-solving situations as they dig into questions such as *Can you determine the number of people on a bus without counting?* or *How much space do we need to display our class's artwork?*

Interdisciplinary STEAM (science, technology, engineering, artistic design, and mathematics) classes take Lower School students on project-based learning adventures. These range from programming Bee Bots to follow a designated route, to designing three-dimensional cardboard structures outfitted with lighting and other conveniences, to engineering a mini-vehicle to race down a fifty-foot track in *The Nerdy Derby* competition. Through these units, boys have the opportunity to work together to solve problems they deem meaningful and relevant. They see that such work is iterative in nature, requiring multiple attempts and revisions before success.

Several times each week, Lower School boys are fully immersed in the Spanish language, and experience cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Students acquire Spanish speaking and listening skills through interactive language activities that parallel what the boys are learning in other subjects, deepening their understanding of multiple disciplines.

Beginning in pre-kindergarten, boys take field trips to explore the surrounding community and learn from the wealth of resources in our city. Lower School boys enjoy a dedicated library designed specifically for the needs of boys, with an exceptional collection of classic works and newly published volumes, designated story time space, and a variety of seating options. Boys participate in a daily sports period where they exercise and have fun while developing physical skills, teamwork, and good sportsmanship. Throughout the year, special events connect the Lower School boys with their older schoolmates as well as with their peers from neighboring schools.

Participating in community outreach begins early at Saint David's. In addition to bringing the school's Judeo Christian values to life, reaching out helps the boys to appreciate the differences and unique needs of others. During the fall and winter, second graders visit Manhattan Childrens Center, a school on the Upper

West Side that provides education and treatment for children with autism spectrum disorder and related disorders. Through working and playing with children who experience the world differently than they do, boys develop a deeper sense of empathy and an understanding that while people may differ in some ways, at the core, we are all the same.

Partnership with families is a prized component of our community approach to learning. Lower School parents feel connected to school life through Parent Nights, class coffees, Parents Association meetings, topical discussion groups, and parent-teacher conferences. Teachers aim to be proactive and respond promptly to parent questions or concerns.

The strength of the Lower School program lies in its teachers. Lower School teachers are dedicated to developing the competence, critical thinking, self-esteem, creativity, and moral compass of each boy. The ethical and moral dimension is addressed through chapel, which begins in the first grade. As a result of their teachers' devotion, Saint David's boys treasure the school experience and are well on their way to becoming enthusiastic lifelong learners.

By the end of the third grade, the last year of Lower School, Saint David's boys have mastered fundamental skills. They can read for comprehension and identify the main idea, make inferences, and track character development. They can write a strong descriptive paragraph and a beginning research paper. They can add, subtract, multiply, and divide, and understand concepts of time, money, and measurement. They have strong study skills and are comfortable using our academic planner. They collaborate to solve problems. They have interacted with neighborhood schools, and have developed a sense of themselves as members of a wider community who share responsibility for its strength. Over the course of their Lower School years, they have discovered the foundations of what it means to be good men.

## PRE-PRIMARY

*Pre-Primary boys have fertile imaginations. They are curious about the world around them and ask thoughtful questions. They enjoy exploring new materials and equipment as well as play-*

*ing games and engaging in dramatic play. Pre-Primary boys begin to develop their moral compasses, and they crave structure and boundaries. They are eager to receive adult reinforcement.*

*During a boy's first years at Saint David's School, he is encouraged to become familiar with his surroundings while engaging in new activities. Cooperative work and play opportunities allow him to learn about himself, his classmates, and the school community. Teachers help promote each boy's self-esteem by recognizing his accomplishments and helping him build on his strengths. At the same time, he is introduced to various cultures and traditions through stories and sharing, and his study of social studies, religion, art, music, and foreign language.*

## PRE-KINDERGARTEN

### Art

The pre-kindergarten art program focuses on developing basic art skills. Projects are often inspired by classroom studies and are designed to introduce boys to a variety of media and techniques including collage, watercolor, tempera, clay, and wood construction. Boys are encouraged to learn through trial and error and experimentation with materials, and to begin to express ideas visually through their art.

### Athletics

The pre-primary athletic program introduces cooperative group games. Boys develop gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities. Pedal bikes, soccer balls, basketballs, and a climbing structure featuring ropes and poles are some of the equipment the boys use.

### Language Arts

The pre-kindergarten language arts program provides opportunities for boys to use language in a variety of ways. Boys begin to develop phonemic awareness through rhyming and word games; their background knowledge and vocabularies are broadened through literature, poetry, and unit studies. Students learn to recognize their written names and those of their classmates and are able to identify upper case letters in and out of sequence. Boys develop fine motor control and learn to write using correct pencil grip and posture. They begin to write stories using pictures, labels, and dictation. Boys develop their listening skills by following multi-step directions and listening to stories and poetry.

## Library and Technology Integration

The pre-kindergarten technology program enriches the curricula of the core academic disciplines with activities that are imaginative and open-ended. As boys explore and create using painting software, they learn to identify the components of a computer, and gain dexterity interacting with a computer using the keyboard, mouse, and interactive white board. Boys use touch screen tablets to explore and reinforce mathematical concepts such as pattern recognition, properties of two dimensional shapes, and addition. Boys develop skills and learn routines that prepare them for a future of learning success. The pre-kindergarten library program promotes a love for books and reading. During library time, boys are exposed to a variety of children's literature and are introduced to the basic library system. The boys develop their listening skills through stories read aloud by the librarian, and they are encouraged to select and borrow books during their weekly visits.

## Mathematics

The pre-kindergarten mathematics program examines common two-dimensional figures. Boys practice classifying by different characteristics and learn to recognize, replicate, and predict patterns using manipulatives. They also work on sequencing activities to reinforce order. Students identify the numerals from one to twenty in and out of sequence, and learn to count to thirty. All boys learn to communicate their understanding of mathematics through problem solving activities and discussing books with mathematical themes. Throughout the year, math games are used to reinforce skills and concepts.

## Music

The pre-kindergarten music program explores a wide range of music. Boys learn to sing together in a group, experience the joy of playing rhythm instruments, and explore the vast world of folk songs, patriotic songs, humorous songs, work songs, camp songs, and songs that every child loves to sing. Boys listen to stories about Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart, and listen more critically and carefully to the sounds of different instruments. Basic musical vocabulary is introduced and rhythmic movement is a part of each class. The pre-kindergarten boys perform for the annual Grandparents and Special Friends celebration, as well as present songs at a spring garden party for parents.

## Science

Pre-kindergarten science is an interdisciplinary subject. Topics include a leaf study, colors, sinking and floating, Arctic and Antarctic animals, nutrition, plants, and the ocean. Through hands-on activities and demonstrations, boys develop the ability to ask questions by utilizing the scientific method, become keen observers, and work cooperatively while maintaining a safe environment. Some of the highlights during the year are the creation of terrariums and the simulations of animals to discover how they can keep warm in colder environments.

## Social Studies

The pre-kindergarten social studies program emphasizes the classroom and school community. Students learn to share with, listen to, and respect others through cooperative work and play. By exploring family relationships, holidays, farm life, and setting up a grocery store, kitchen, and pizzeria, the boys learn more about themselves and the immediate world around them, as well as what makes a successful community.

## Spanish

The pre-kindergarten Spanish program is intended to develop boys' aural skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed four times a week in playful visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities that aid retention of content. Students experience traditional music, art, games, and stories. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in Spanish are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As part of a series of interdisciplinary units, boys learn to talk about Arctic and Antarctic animals, outer space, and food.

## KINDERGARTEN

### Art

The kindergarten art program focuses on developing basic art skills such as drawing, painting, cutting, gluing, and creating collages. In pottery, students are introduced to basic ceramics skills. They make pinch and coil pots, build with slabs, and model clay. Boys utilize a variety of media such as printmaking, watercolor, and wood sculpture. Students learn a "vocabulary" of line and shape, which is the basis for all two-dimensional art endeavors. Boys become familiar with works by Van Gogh,



Cézanne, Nevelson, Matisse, and Mondrian among others.

### **Athletics**

The pre-primary athletic program introduces cooperative group games. Boys develop gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities. Pedal bikes, soccer balls, basketballs, and a climbing structure featuring ropes and poles are some of the equipment the boys use. Kindergarten and Omega boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

### **Language Arts**

The kindergarten language arts program focuses on reading readiness and emergent writing. Boys meet in small groups to develop phonemic awareness and literary skills. They are able to identify letter-sound association, recognize common words by sight, decode simple words, and develop a solid familiarity with the structure, mechanics, and uses of print. Through access to a wide variety of reading materials, including fiction and non-fiction, students build background knowledge, interest, and vocabulary as well as a familiarity with a number of books and authors. Boys learn to print lower case and upper case letters, using correct letter formation and proper pencil grip. Boys have ample opportunities to write using both pictures and words. While using invented spelling for many words, students develop a growing repertoire of conventionally spelled words. Through "Star of the Week" and unit projects, the boys practice public speaking and listening skills.

### **Library and Technology Integration**

The kindergarten technology program supports boys' emerging literacy and math skills and encourages creative artistic expression. As boys create original compositions of shape, line, color, pattern, and text using painting software, they practice using "vocabulary" of shapes and symbols, and improve their dexterity with the touch screen tablet, keyboard, and interactive white board. Structured learning activities engage boys in pattern recognition and completion, grouping of like items, identification of colors and shapes, and matching letters with objects. The kindergarten library program promotes a love for books and reading. During library time, boys are exposed to a variety of children's literature and are introduced to the basic library system. The boys further develop their listening skills through stories read aloud by the librarian, and they are encouraged to select and borrow books during their weekly visits.

### **Mathematics**

The kindergarten mathematics program focuses on developing boys' basic number sense. Students collect, represent, and analyze data on a daily basis. The math curriculum begins with an exploration of math materials, sorting, and patterning. Additionally, boys are introduced to basic 2D and 3D shapes and their attributes. As the year progresses, students learn strategies to count groups of objects with accuracy, sequence numbers, compare number quantities, and denote numbers through visual representations. They also write numbers using proper handwriting formation, and count by ones, fives, and tens. After the students develop a strong number sense, they learn addition and subtraction with values from one to fifteen. Throughout the year, students communicate and reinforce their understanding of mathematics through games, iPad apps, interactive math stories, and problem solving activities.

### **Music**

The kindergarten music program includes games, rhythmic movements, songs, and exercises based on the Kodaly method. Rhythm syllables are taught as a means to understanding notation. Beginning singing skills using "movable-do solfege" are also utilized. The boys enjoy singing together in a group; both classes present an annual neighborhood show that highlights many of the songs they have learned during the year. In addition, Upper School students regularly perform for them on the hand bells, recorders, or string instruments.

### **Science**

The kindergarten science program introduces boys to life, earth, and physical science. Through hands-on activities, boys investigate the world around them. Each activity encourages boys to display scientific curiosity in making detailed observations. Students study predator/prey relationships and create puppets to demonstrate camouflage. During an in-depth study of bees, boys learn about bee anatomy, behavior, and beehives. To understand weather, students make model thermometers and flags that show wind-speed. Boys also observe how different colored clothing can affect temperature. During their physical science study, boys are introduced to weighing and balancing, and they are encouraged to investigate various objects using their five senses.

### **Social Studies**

The kindergarten social studies program focuses on guiding students to study themselves, their families, Saint David's School, and its surrounding community.

The year begins with establishing classroom manners and routines, as well as allowing boys and teachers to learn about each other. These routines also create opportunities for boys to develop independence within the classroom community. In the "Star of the Week" program, a highlight of the year, students share favorite books and interesting facts about themselves while developing skills such as active listening and public speaking. Students further explore their identities through the "All About Me" unit of study within the first few months of school. The "All About My Family" unit allows students to share information about their families and what makes them special. Boys then expand the scope of their study by exploring the Saint David's community. They gain a more comprehensive understanding of our school by touring the building, meeting people who work in our school, and conducting interviews. The social studies curriculum culminates with a study of the neighborhood, where boys take several trips to nearby museums, stores, and parks. Students present their new knowledge in the "Kindergarten Neighborhood Show," reciting facts and singing songs in a performance for their families.

### **Spanish**

The kindergarten Spanish program is intended to develop boys' aural skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed three times a week in playful visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities that aid retention of content. Students experience traditional music, art, and stories. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in Spanish are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As the boys study their neighborhood in social studies, they discuss *el barrio* in Spanish class.

## **OMEGA**

### **Art**

A key theme of the Omega art program is "Animals in their Environments: A to Z." Boys practice a variety of skills such as drawing, painting, and creating collages around this theme as they learn about various creatures and their habitats. Other highlights of the program integrate classroom studies, such as "Career Boy" puppets that students make as part of their Career Day presentations and large dinosaur murals that provide scenery for

the Omega dinosaur presentation each May.

### **Athletics**

The pre-primary athletic program introduces cooperative group games. Boys develop gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities. Pedal bikes, soccer balls, basketballs, and a climbing structure featuring ropes and poles are some of the equipment the boys use. Kindergarten and Omega boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

### **Language Arts**

The Omega language arts program focuses on reading readiness and emergent writing. Boys meet in small groups to learn strategies for decoding and comprehending text, and expressing their ideas in writing. Students gain a better understanding of the alphabetic principle. They study rhyming words and learn to manipulate sounds within words to form new words. By reading a wide variety of materials, boys build accuracy, fluency, vocabulary, and background knowledge as well as develop a familiarity with a number of books and authors. Boys identify and discuss the story elements of the books they listen to and read on their own. Mentor authors are used to guide and inspire the boys' own writing. Students develop receptive language skills by listening to stories and following multi-step directions. Boys practice printing lower case and upper case letters, using correct letter formation and proper pencil grip, and they have ample opportunities to write, using both pictures and words. Boys develop the ability to clearly share their thoughts and feelings through speech by participating in classroom discussions, book talks, and casual conversations. Boys practice public speaking and listening skills through "Omega MVP" activities and unit projects.

### **Library and Technology Integration**

The Omega technology program engages boys in creative exploration of major learning themes of core academic disciplines. Boys use touch screen tablets to deepen their understanding of number sense, addition, and subtraction. The study of dinosaurs is integrated through structured sorting, classifying, counting, and pattern recognition activities. Boys practice public speaking while using the interactive white board to present their work to their classmates. The Omega library program continues to promote a love for books and reading. During library time, boys are exposed to a variety of children's literature and practice using the basic library system. The boys

further develop their listening skills through stories read aloud by the librarian, and they are encouraged to select and borrow books during their weekly visits.

### **Mathematics**

The Omega mathematics program focuses on reinforcing students' number sense. Boys learn to count to one hundred by twos, fives, and tens. They develop an understanding of place value to the hundreds. They also examine various strategies for adding and subtracting numbers up to twenty. Many math skills are introduced and reviewed during morning meeting. These include the number of days in school, place value, patterning, graphing, and predicting. On a daily basis, boys think critically while solving oral math problems. They practice representing and analyzing data involving weather, attendance, and the number of school days passed using graphs and charts. All students learn to communicate their understanding of mathematics through problem solving activities and discussing books with mathematical themes. Throughout the year, math games are used to reinforce skills and concepts.

### **Music**

The Omega music program is based on the Kodaly method and includes games, rhythmic movements, songs, and exercises. Rhythm syllables are taught as a means to understanding notation. Boys begin to read basic notation and participate in two-part singing. Beginning singing skills using "movable-do solfege" are also utilized. The boys enjoy singing together in a group, and they present a dinosaur play with music for their parents. In addition, boys are visited regularly by the Upper School students who perform for them on the hand bells, recorders, or string instruments.

### **Science**

The Omega science program seeks to further develop boys' understanding of scientific content, as well as sharpen their observation, measurement, and inference skills. Topics of study include fungi, magnets, earthworms, germs, fossils, volcanoes, dinosaurs, and light. Boys continue to incorporate the scientific method into their hands-on activities, and they are taught to use scientific equipment properly. Boys especially enjoy using the microscopes and donning goggles when completing activities such as erupting volcanoes and excavating fossils.

### **Social Studies**

The Omega social studies program begins with a series of community building activities that foster boys' under-

standing of daily routines. Through the year-long "Star of the Week" program, boys develop important skills such as active listening, respecting others, and speaking in front of a group. The "Exploring Jobs and Careers" unit includes parent visits, presentations, and field trips, and culminates in a career fair where the boys dress up, share what they have learned, and report on a career of their choice. The spring study of dinosaurs is integrated across several disciplines and offers boys opportunities to work in groups, use maps, conduct research, and explore the concepts of time periods and archaeology. As a culmination to the dinosaur unit, boys present facts, recite poems, and sing songs in a performance for parents.

### **Spanish**

The Omega Spanish program is intended to develop boys' aural skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed three times a week in playful visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities that aid retention of content. Students experience traditional music, art, and stories. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in Spanish are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As boys study jobs and careers in social studies, they learn to talk about various professions in Spanish. In the spring, boys learn to describe the dinosaurs' appearance and behaviors in Spanish, as part of an interdisciplinary unit on dinosaurs.

## **FIRST GRADE**

*First graders enjoy exploring newly discovered interests and passions, and it is not uncommon to find related collections in their blazer pockets. They become more skilled at problem solving and begin to use social skills developed in kindergarten in more mature ways. First graders' sincerity, intensity, and eagerness to learn make this grade one of the most transformative years in elementary school.*

*In Grade One, each boy becomes more involved in the traditions of Saint David's School and at the same time extends his horizons beyond 89th Street as he explores works of master artists and composers such as Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Henri Matisse, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Wolfgang*

*Amadeus Mozart as well as tree habitats and New York City. For the first time, he is recognized for his citizenship as well as his academic and athletic achievements at Lower School Armband Assemblies, and an emphasis on community is further developed through weekly Chapel talks.*

## Art

The first grade art program focuses on developing art and pottery skills. In art, boys continue to explore line, shape, form, color, texture, and pattern in a variety of art media, and create art works inspired by the modern masters, Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky. They draw from imagination and observation, learn basic color theory, paint with watercolor, and mix colors with oil pastels. In pottery, boys are introduced to basic properties, tools, and techniques of clay. They view and discuss ceramic work from a variety of cultures. Techniques include pinch pots, coil making, slab construction and glazing. Subjects include natural themes and roller coasters.

## Athletics

The first grade athletic program introduces four major sports: soccer, basketball, baseball, and indoor lacrosse. Boys learn basic ball skills, the rules of the game, and the importance of sportsmanship. Boys further develop their gross motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and body awareness through daily sports activities. Students are also introduced to nutrition education through a variety of games and class discussions. The unit focuses on the food groups, healthy versus unhealthy choices, and eating balanced "colorful" meals. As a culminating activity, boys participate in a nutrition seminar led by a registered dietician and the coaches. First grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

## Language Arts

The first grade language arts program encompasses reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Boys develop their expressive and receptive language skills in small groups. Students have intensive opportunities to develop phonemic awareness and practice decoding and comprehension strategies while reading meaningful texts each day. Boys are directly taught a sequence of language skills using a multisensory approach. Comprehension strategies, such as identifying story elements, sequencing key events, and making predictions, are also explicitly taught. Boys read both non-fiction and literature to further their background knowledge, develop their vocabularies, and begin to make inferences.

Through modeling and guided practice, boys become increasingly independent writers. They practice printing upper and lower case letters, using correct letter formation and proper pencil grip. Students express their thoughts using complete sentences and learn to write a variety of genres, including personal narratives and expert books. As a culminating activity, each boy writes and publishes his own story inspired by the *Rotten Ralph* series, and presents it at a special performance for boys, faculty, and parents.

## Library and Technology Integration

Information technology and library skills are fully integrated into the first grade program. Working with both notebook computers and touch screen tablets, boys develop a broad understanding of user interface icons and routines for saving and retrieving files and switching between apps. In science, boys build a foundation of programming concepts while participating in active, collaborative play and problem solving activities with Bee Bots and Lego WeDo robotics sets. Boys then apply these skills during their social studies classes as they program Bee Bots to travel routes on large floor maps. Students visit the library with their reading classes. Boys learn to navigate independently through the library and are encouraged to develop their own areas of interest. They investigate the differences between authors and illustrators, fiction and non-fiction, and become familiar with locating various genres available in the library. Boys also participate in book discussions and select "just right" books according to interest and reading level.

## Mathematics

The first grade mathematics program focuses on developing student understanding of ordinal and cardinal numbers. Boys continue to develop number sense through practice skip counting and using place value. Students practice addition and subtraction strategies to begin to develop automatic retrieval of math facts up to twenty. Boys also review two-dimensional figures and are introduced to three-dimensional objects. They learn to recognize and count money with coins and bills, and tell time using analog and digital clocks. Boys explore measurement through hands-on activities. Students communicate their understanding of mathematics through the use of math journals, weekly problem solving activities, and discussion of books with mathematical themes. Throughout the year, math games and iPad apps are used to reinforce skills and concepts. First graders are

introduced to open-ended investigations<sup>2</sup>, a hallmark of the Saint David's math program. All students complete three open-ended investigations using problem solving strategies to deepen understanding of concepts they have studied.

### **Music**

The first grade music program introduces boys to the formal study of music notation. Boys learn to clap, count, and write basic rhythms. They learn how notes are placed on the musical staff and begin to write on manuscript paper. Students learn about the instruments of the orchestra, and they listen to orchestral compositions by Beethoven, Mozart, Prokofiev, and Saint-Saens. Boys sing together in a group as well as sing solo. The first grade boys prepare and perform a Christmas Pageant, one of Saint David's oldest traditions. They also present several songs and poems for their parents in June. Boys who have begun their studies of violin or cello may also participate in the First Orchestra<sup>3</sup>.

### **Religion**

First grade religion is a scripture-based course that is taught in the school chapel once each week. In this setting, boys are introduced to the Bible through a series of weekly chapel presentations and activities. Well known stories and themes from the Old Testament are covered, and boys explore ideas such as monotheism, an invisible God, God's laws, the Golden Rule, and the consequences of one's behavior. The use of appropriate chapel-manners and the development of good listening skills are emphasized.

### **Science**

The first grade science program expands boys' understanding of important science concepts. Topics of study include: tree habitats, the properties of liquids and solids, interactions using simple machines, and robotics. Boys construct scientific knowledge, develop new vocabulary, and share their discoveries with others as they explore the world around them. Hands-on activities, such as building a gear system and constructing pulleys or engineering robots, provide opportunities to develop problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. The year begins with an emphasis on the proper use of basic science tools and materials. Students practice the scientific method and learn a variety of scientific skills necessary to answer questions they discover during their investigations. While studying tree habitats, boys build a large model of a tree and enact a day in the lives of raccoons, owls, and bears. They learn what

dissolving means when they mix a mystery solid into a liquid, and watch as the liquid becomes gelatin. Examining oil and water drops, they learn to name the properties of liquids. Inventing recipes for toothpaste, salad dressing, and Coca-Cola, they learn to make correct measurements and record their procedures. Boys build a foundation of programming concepts using Bee Bots, then progress to building and programming unique Lego WeDo robots that use sensors and motors to interact with the environment. They explore and articulate the relationship between physical design and programming. In social studies, boys apply their programming skills as they program Bee Bots to travel routes on a large floor map. After each activity, students communicate their discoveries in writing and illustrations.

### **Social Studies**

The first grade social studies program focuses on the geography and landmarks of New York City while continuing to place an emphasis on community building. As part of a partnership with the New-York Historical Society, boys deepen their understanding of mapping and features of maps as they study historical maps of New York City and explore how to create a map using techniques cartographers use. Technology plays an integral role in the boys' study of the landmarks and geography of New York City. Boys apply programming skills developed in their science course as they program Bee Bots to travel routes on a large floor map of the school's surrounding neighborhood. These programming and mapping projects engage the boys in strategizing in teams, plotting a route on paper, programming the Bee Bots, and then testing and revising their work based on their observations of the Bee Bots in action. In the spring, boys work in small groups to research New York City landmarks and present their findings to their classmates. As a culminating experience, first graders apply their understanding of landmarks, geography, and mapping during a trip to the Top of the Rock observation deck.

### **Spanish**

The first grade Spanish program builds on existing language skills and fosters boys' understanding and appreciation of cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Boys are expected to develop their ability to produce simple sentences with content mastered in the previous year. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed three times a week in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid retention of content. Students deepen their understanding of the Spanish



language through projects, songs, and games. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that the concepts introduced in the foreign language are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As boys learn about geography in social studies, they study the flags and locations of Spanish speaking countries and landmarks of New York City.

## SECOND GRADE

*Second grade is a year of creativity and enhanced self-awareness. Seven- and eight-year-olds become increasingly proficient in basic skills and are able to use them with ease. They enjoy working cooperatively, but they sometimes need adult help to negotiate group dynamics.*

*At Saint David's School, a second grade boy's creative interests are cultivated through a variety of academic experiences such as designing three-dimensional sculptures, writing poetry, composing music, and using MIT's visual programming language, Scratch, to create geometric shapes. His need to be part of a group is nurtured through team building exercises in social studies, art, and athletics. Second grade provides an opportunity for each boy to explore his creativity while strengthening friendships with his classmates.*

### Art

The second grade art curriculum revolves around students' firsthand interaction with works of art at three major art museums. In the fall term, second graders spend their weekly eighty-minute art sessions at the Guggenheim Museum, where they study the iconic architecture of the building as well as modern masterpieces from the permanent collection and work on hands-on art activities under the guidance of a museum educator. The term culminates with an exhibit of student work at the museum. Mask making is the focus in the winter term. The class visits the Metropolitan Museum of Art to view and sketch masks from a variety of world cultures. Back at school, boys create their own "tribal masks" in mixed media. Picasso is the focus of art studies in the spring term, in conjunction with the Spanish curriculum. A visit to the Museum of Modern Art exposes boys to major works by the artist such as *Girl in a Mirror* and *The Three Musicians*. Boys make collagraph prints informed by their understanding of cubism.

### Athletics

The second grade athletic program begins to utilize and refine the boys' skills into more sport specific activities. Boys develop greater control in the use of their bodies and are able to apply running, catching, and kicking skills in more sophisticated ways. Practicing good sportsmanship continues to be a focus of the program. During the fall term, boys play soccer and football. They also participate in the annual Turkey Run, which is approximately 450 meters. In preparation for this Saint David's tradition, boys partake in weekly conditioning exercises. During the remainder of the year, boys play basketball, indoor lacrosse, and baseball. Second grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

### History

The second grade history program deepens students' understanding of New York City as it explores the various ways the city has changed over time while remaining connected to its historical roots. Boys' knowledge is deepened through hands-on learning experiences developed by a partnership with the New-York Historical Society. Second grade students begin by studying the Lenape tribe of early Manhattan and creating seasonal models of Lenape longhouses and wigwams. Boys visit Inwood Park to further explore Lenape culture. Students also study the impact of Henry Hudson's explorations throughout the region as well as the development of New Amsterdam. They then sketch still life drawings of period household items to reflect the life of the Dutch settlers. Boys later learn about the New York colony and the city's critical role during the American Revolution. They study the impact of the Battle of Brooklyn and the role the printing press had in the spread of information during the war. Boys print a Revolutionary era stamp that reflects the point of view of either a loyalist or a patriot living in New York City in 1776. As a culminating trip at the end of the year, second grade students visit the New-York Historical Society.

### Language Arts

The second grade language arts program focuses on developing reading and writing skills using a direct, multisensory approach that is tailored to meet boys' needs. Boys learn strategies to decode and encode words, and they learn to identify the meaning of words using context clues. Boys learn comprehension strategies for reading fiction and non-fiction, with a special focus on articulating key elements of stories and identifying the main idea. They further improve their comprehension by building knowledge of more complex words and

language structures. Through modeling and guided practice, boys become increasingly independent writers. Students are introduced to cursive handwriting, and they practice communicating their ideas in well-organized basic paragraphs. They are taught to proof-read for content and mechanics using editing symbols. Throughout the year, boys write for a variety of purposes, including how-to paragraphs, poetry, and realistic fiction, and have ample opportunities to share their writing with classmates, and younger and older boys.

### **Library and Technology Integration**

Information technology and library skills are fully integrated into the second grade program. In science, boys are introduced to computer programming with Scratch. Clicking and dragging blocks to direct an onscreen character, boys learn that computer programs are made of clear, sequential instructions. Programming activities encourage boys to think logically and break down challenges into a series of component tasks. Once the basics are mastered, boys can program their characters to draw geometric shapes, create abstract compositions, and even compose and play music. In math, boys use software to graph data and explore the geometric properties of angles and two-dimensional shapes. During their reading classes, boys visit the library and learn to select appropriate books for independent reading. Boys become adept at navigating through the library and are introduced to the Dewey Decimal System. Students participate in book discussions and library activities developed to enhance their library routine and build a love of reading.

### **Mathematics**

The second grade mathematics program extends the concepts of place value to introduce regrouping with double-digit addition and subtraction by implementing standard algorithms and manipulating physical models. Boys expand their understanding of fractions as part-to-whole relationship. Money, time, and measurement are examined, and boys learn to recognize standard units of measure. During their study of geometry, boys deepen their understanding of the properties of polygons. They finish the year with an introduction to multiplication and division. Students learn to communicate their understanding of mathematics through the use of math journals, weekly problem solving activities, and the discussion of books with mathematical themes. Math games are used to reinforce skills and concepts. Throughout the year, students complete three open-ended investigations<sup>2</sup> using problem solving to deepen understanding of concepts they have studied.

### **Music**

The second grade music program continues the boys' study of musical notation. Boys begin to learn basic musical vocabulary including dynamics, tempo indications, and rhythm names. Students are introduced to music notation software and learn to write notes using iPads. Boys also learn traditional American folk songs, with a particular emphasis on historical and patriotic themes. They begin to explore the American musical theatre repertoire, including songs written by Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hammerstein, and George M. Cohan. The second graders perform an annual show for parents based on the founding of America. Boys who have begun their studies of violin or cello may also participate in the First Orchestra<sup>3</sup>.

### **Religion**

Second grade religion is a scripture-based course that is taught in the school chapel three times per week. Topics and themes covered include a look at the world in which Jesus lived, prayers, parables, the Golden Rule and the ideas of kindness, forgiveness, and respect for others. In a series of bi-weekly chapel presentations, boys are introduced to significant Gospel stories of the New Testament. Beginning with narratives of His birth, students explore the life of Christ focusing on Jesus as a teacher, healer, miracle worker, and Savior. During the year, boys prepare for their First Holy Communion. Students not receiving the sacrament are invited to contribute to discussions based on their own faith and family traditions.

### **Science**

The second grade science program provides opportunities for boys to explore science and technology concepts through hands-on investigation, scientific experimentation, and engineering projects. Topics of investigation include plant growth, magnets, robotics, chemistry and the nature of matter, and electricity and circuits. Students learn about the practices of science by planning and conducting their own experiments on plant growth and magnetism. This work strengthens each student's ability to pose scientific questions, make careful observations, gather and analyze data, and draw conclusions based on evidence. Hands-on engineering projects include building and wiring cardboard structures. Boys practice working collaboratively to solve problems and apply their knowledge of circuitry and understanding of interactive systems of input and output. A trio of coding and robotics units allows boys to deepen their understanding of computer programming. Students

use Scratch, a developmentally appropriate programming environment, Lego kits with programmable sensors and motors, and Dash and Dot, speedy and interactive robots that boys program to respond to each other and the world around them.

## Spanish

The second grade Spanish program builds on existing language skills and fosters an understanding and appreciation of the cultures of Spanish-speaking people. Boys are expected to develop their ability to produce simple sentences with content mastered in the previous years. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed three times a week in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid retention of content. Students deepen their understanding of Spanish cultures through their study of art and music. This program is aligned with topics in the curriculum so that the concepts introduced in the target language are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. As part of an interdisciplinary unit on Picasso and Cubism, boys study select masterpieces and make observations in Spanish.

## THIRD GRADE

*Eight- and nine-year-old children enjoy taking on responsibility and have a contagious can-do spirit. They have a strong drive toward independence and at the same time are interested in learning more about family history and traditions. As third graders become more self-directed in activities, they are able to plan and carry out projects with adult support.*

*As one of the "oldest" boys in the Lower School, a third grader enjoys planning and organizing homeroom initiatives such as helping the less fortunate by working with City Harvest to feed New York's hungry. He serves as a role model for younger boys and avows his commitment to lead responsibly at the annual knighting ceremony, a long-standing Saint David's tradition. A third grader begins to develop long-term time-management and organizational skills by preparing monthly book projects.*



## INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:

### *STEAM: The Nerdy Derby*

*How can comparing a small sample of data with a large sample of data help win a race?*

Third graders' math, science, and artistic design skills are put to the test in *The Nerdy Derby*. This no-rules miniature car building and racing competition rewards creativity, cleverness, and ingenuity. The goal is to engage boys in educational, interactive, and fun design experiences through problem-solving and collaborative challenges. Boys participate in a series of hands-on activities to examine the ways that factors like friction, mass, and aerodynamics affect the motion of their cars. They test different variables and record their results on data sheets. Teams also plot their data points on large graphs representing results from test runs completed by the entire grade. They analyze their own individual data and the aggregate data to make decisions about how to design an effective race day vehicle. In teams, boys work through the engineering design cycle to design, build, test, and revise their vehicles. Boys enter their cars in a series of contests on Nerdy Derby Race Day.



## Art

Third grade boys divide the year between art and woodworking. In art, boys create mandala designs in mixed media with a focus on basic color themes, pattern, and radial symmetry. In woodworking, they are introduced to wood as a construction material and practice basic skills such as measuring, sawing, filing, and joining small pieces of soft wood with hand tools. Projects are informed by boys' study of the medieval times and include basic design technology employing wheels, axles, and levers.

## Athletics

The third and fourth grade athletic program marks the introduction to the school's intramural program. Boys are divided into six teams, which rotate through a schedule of games, practices, and fitness exercises. Boys play soccer, basketball, indoor lacrosse, and baseball. The fitness program focuses on strength training and conditioning, both are considered important means of reducing injury and promoting readiness for more sustained, competitive play. Boys practice doing push-ups and sit-ups, and have an opportunity to use stationary bikes, rowing machines, and elliptical



machines. Sportsmanship is a hallmark of the Saint David's athletic program. Each week, third and fourth grade boys are recognized for their sportsmanship and sports achievement during the Player of the Week presentation. Third grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

## History

The third grade history program focuses on nineteenth and early twentieth century American history, emphasizing the ways in which Americans have demonstrated perseverance and ingenuity in improving their lives. Boys' understanding is deepened through hands-on learning experiences developed by a partnership with the New-York Historical Society. Students begin the year by studying the reasons for westward expansion. Boys develop an appreciation of the pioneer experience as they examine a variety of primary and secondary sources and participate in an Oregon Trail simulation. They learn by figuratively stepping into the shoes of the pioneers who worked together to overcome hardships in the pursuit of a better life. During the winter term, students study immigration at the turn of the twentieth century, investigating the reasons why some people decided to come to America and then considering the many challenges that they faced. Boys acquire an understanding of the immigrant experience as they examine a variety of primary sources, visit Ellis Island and The Tenement Museum, explore the diverse cuisines of the Lower East Side, and participate in Mock Ellis Island. In the spring, students learn about the Industrial Revolution, especially its new technological developments and processes that changed American life. In teams boys engage in an independent study of an important and influential idea or invention of the time period. They analyze primary sources, search for information online, and compose notes to complete a group research project. At the end of the school year, students present what they learned at an exposition.

## Language Arts

The third grade language arts program focuses on solidifying reading and writing skills. Boys learn strategies to decode and encode multisyllabic words, and they learn to identify the meaning of words using context clues. While reading fiction and non-fiction books at their instructional level, boys develop comprehension and fluency skills, which help them understand both explicit and implicit information. They are read myths from Classical mythology and read selective stories about the Middle Ages. Boys master cursive and write for a variety

of purposes using the full writing process when appropriate. Students compose informational texts and narrative stories as well as their own original fairy tales set in medieval times. Students revise and edit their writing with attention to content, spelling, and mechanics using editing symbols and a rubric, and they share their published work with their classmates.

## Library and Technology Integration

Information technology and library skills are fully integrated into the third grade program. In science, boys build on the programming skills they learned in second grade and use Scratch to demonstrate and deepen their understanding of scientific concepts. Boys visit the library regularly during their reading and history classes. They use the Dewey Decimal System and their knowledge of the library's organization to search for books. Students continue to be exposed to various genres of literature, with a special emphasis placed on the use of nonfiction materials as an aid to report writing. As part of their history research projects, boys learn to locate and evaluate information using books, websites, and online encyclopedias while developing their skills in interpreting primary and secondary sources. Students are introduced to note-taking strategies as they learn to record relevant facts and basic information about their sources. The program continues to promote a love for reading and books, and the boys are encouraged to become both lifelong readers and independent researchers.

## Mathematics

The third grade mathematics program extends students' understanding of adding and subtracting to multiplying and dividing. Boys spend time exploring the meaning of each operation and are provided with learning opportunities that allow for a deeper understanding of mathematical operations and their applications. They are taught various strategies for solving problems and are expected to utilize the most efficient ones independently. Boys explore geometry and measurement, and learn how fractions are parts of whole numbers. Students study how data is collected and represented graphically. As part of an interdisciplinary project called *The Nerdy Derby*, boys interpret their team's data and the aggregate data from the class to inform decisions about the design of their vehicles. Boys learn to communicate their understanding of mathematics through the use of math journals, class discussions, and problem-solving activities. Math games are used to reinforce skills and concepts. Throughout the year,

students complete three open-ended investigations<sup>2</sup> to deepen understanding of concepts they have studied.

### Music

The third grade music program builds on the boys' understanding of musical notation. Boys learn to identify and name the notes on the grand staff, and begin to write their own compositions. More advanced rhythm study is taught, including dotted notes and time signatures. Boys learn to sing more complicated songs in two parts. They also begin to learn hymns and music from the Mass, and critically listen to a wide variety of musical selections from classical to jazz. In the spring, boys present a vocal concert for their parents featuring many complicated songs that they learned throughout the year. Boys who have begun their studies of violin or cello may also participate in the First Orchestra<sup>3</sup> or Philharmonic Ensemble<sup>4</sup>.

### Religion

The third grade religion program introduces students to a number of major Christian and Roman Catholic themes. Topics covered include the Mass, the Sacraments of the Church, the Bible, prayer, the saints, and the liturgical year. In addition, boys gain exposure to non-Christian faiths through the creation of their own "Holiday and Holyday" calendars. Classroom sharing, projects and activities, and developing respect for all religious traditions are important parts of this program. Boys attend chapel four times each week.

### Science

The third grade science program is designed to encourage students to generate questions that lead to experimentation and discovery. Boys practice asking questions, making careful observations, gathering information, and drawing conclusions based on evidence. Topics of study include: bubbleology, motion and design, animal behavior, the solar system, life cycles, and programming. Boys utilize the electronic modules "littleBits" to develop creations of their own

design. Students also build upon their knowledge of Scratch to create simulations of prey and predator relationships, demonstrating their understanding of animal behavior. As part of an interdisciplinary project called *The Nerdy Derby*, students apply their understanding of motion and design as they examine the ways that factors like friction, mass, and aerodynamics affect the motion of their cars. Boys test different variables and record their results on data sheets. In teams, boys work through the engineering design cycle to design, build, test, and revise their vehicles.

### Sophrosyne

*Sophrosyne*<sup>8</sup>, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation and awareness of one's true self. This course helps third graders learn what it means to be a good friend and a kind and respectful classmate. Through role playing scenarios, boys practice navigating social situations. They learn how to communicate their feelings in an effective manner and develop tools to advocate for their interests while respecting the perspectives of others.

### Spanish

The third grade Spanish program is intended to develop the boys' aural and literacy skills, willingness to communicate in a foreign language, and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Songs and games are the primary vehicles for learning. Boys are encouraged to use Spanish regularly as they are immersed three times a week in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid retention of content. Students experience traditional stories and music. This course is also aligned with topics in the curriculum so that concepts introduced in the target language are familiar to the boys and extend their understanding of multiple disciplines. During the winter, boys perform the "Visit of the Three Kings" in Spanish, incorporating theater, religion, and music into their language learning. Additionally, boys learn to describe animals, talk about parts of the body, and how to cure common ailments.

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## UPPER SCHOOL

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SAINT DAVID'S UPPER SCHOOL refines the reading, writing, speaking, and critical-thinking skills developed in the Lower School and prepares boys for the greater independence and responsibility of adolescence. In all subject areas, teachers help students master the skills needed to conduct research, absorb new material, speak clearly, write cogently, behave ethically, and organize their time.

The Upper School academic program is based on the classical paradigm of balance. In English, students explore the best in modern literature as well as selected works from the Western canon. The boys write often, and they learn to write well, with a coordinated expository and creative writing program that builds targeted skills from year to year. In mathematics, conceptual understanding and computational accuracy receive equal emphasis, and students are taught to apply their knowledge to solve problems. In Upper School science, whether they are extracting and analyzing DNA or investigating Newton's laws, our boys hypothesize, experiment, observe, and interpret. In history, through multi-faceted examinations of Ancient Egypt, the Renaissance or the Vietnam War, boys obtain essential insights into the human past and translate those into lessons for our time. Fourth and fifth graders are fully immersed in the Spanish language and experience cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. Boys begin studying Latin in the fifth grade and choose to continue with Spanish or begin French in the sixth grade. The use of technology for instruction, research, and presentation is integrated throughout the Upper School curriculum.

Teachers in the Upper School use direct instruction to impart essential knowledge skills. Through collaborative, project-based learning, they also cultivate teamwork, leadership, and public speaking skills. For example, teachers of English, science, and technology assist sixth grade boys with their Digital Universe projects, which involve research, scientific narratives, and

live presentations as the boys "fly through space" in the dome of the Hayden Planetarium. Working in small groups, students learn to appreciate one another's gifts and to delegate and accept responsibility. Each grade has comparable integrative projects that are among the highlights of a Saint David's experience.

Interdisciplinary STEAM (science, technology, engineering, artistic design, mathematics) units in Upper School grades present challenges that promote cross-disciplinary thinking and problem solving. These units draw upon boys' prior knowledge of science and math concepts and processes, and their sense of the aesthetic. When boys determine the optimal way to design and build an efficient wind turbine or conduct an original DNA research project, they develop deeper, more durable understanding of key concepts in math and science while strengthening collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills.

Throughout the program, educational partnerships with cultural and research institutions such as the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, DNA Learning Center of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and American Museum of Natural History augment boys' learning and deepen understanding, providing them with special access to the facilities and the work of experts in a variety of fields.

Public speaking is specifically addressed in each grade of the Upper School. In fourth and fifth grade, students practice fundamental skills such as delivering well-organized content and making good eye contact. Rhetoric is an integral part of the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade interdisciplinary study program. Students refine their style, delivery, and use of visuals as they present to their classmates, teachers, parents, and guests of the school.

Each day Upper School students are called upon to speak in front of others. Saint David's boys greet guests confidently and readily explain the current focus of class. During lunch, students make announcements to their schoolmates and faculty about upcoming community service events and athletics games. Throughout the year, students are invited to speak at parent and alumni events.

The teamwork of the boys reflects that of their teachers, who meet on a weekly basis to discuss curriculum, plan assessments and special events, coordinate home-

work and monitor student progress. Partnership with families is also a prized component of our community approach to learning. Upper School parents feel connected to school life through Parent Nights, class coffees, Parents Association meetings, topical discussion groups and parent-teacher conferences. Teachers aim to be proactive and respond promptly to parent questions or concerns.

The unique charge of Upper School teachers is to launch young adolescents successfully into the broader world. Programs and activities at Saint David's contribute to this important goal. Boys who are elected to our student government exercise leadership skills through planning, advocating, and mediating. Members of our athletic teams, clubs, and musical groups understand what can be accomplished by placing the group before oneself. Through religion classes and chapel, boys develop a moral compass that we hope will inform the personal and social decisions they are called upon to make. Grade specific classes are devoted to the challenges facing emerging adolescents.

On the sixth grade overnight trips to Frost Valley and Washington, D.C., boys focus on leadership and team building activities. In the sixth grade, students study the twentieth century from the standpoint of history, English, and music, guided by the teachers in all three disciplines. During the annual weeklong seventh grade trip to Cape Cod, students not only examine marine ecology, but also expand and deepen the friendships that are so important to the emotional development of boys. All boys at the conclusion of seventh grade can take part in an optional trip to Salamanca, Spain, for cultural study and Spanish language instruction regardless of their level. The two-week Eighth Grade Italian Study Tour strengthens these bonds while providing students with the experience of a lifetime: seeing, discussing, critiquing, drawing, and writing about the Classical, Renaissance, and Baroque masterpieces they have been analyzing in their humanities classes. By the time our boys start considering secondary schools, they have developed a strong confident sense of self and a healthy curiosity with which to meet the challenges and adventures ahead.

Our comprehensive secondary school placement process provides guidance to each family so that the experience is illuminating and successful. A boy who graduates from Saint David's takes with him rich experiences and life lessons from the Lower and Upper Schools. He

is the sum of early skill development and more mature analytical thinking, of gentle reminders to live by the Golden Rule and of the Headmaster's call to "be good men." He has learned from devoted teachers, coaches and friends and is poised to explore the important questions of how he will live, what he will love, and who he will become.

## FOURTH GRADE

*Developmentally, nine- and ten-year-old children are much more in touch with the adult world than younger children. They are more than ready to discuss such grown-up topics as personal responsibility, justice, and the nature of civilizations. Self-reliance is important, and boys this age can set their mind to a school task and bring the task home. Fourth graders like written work and are attracted to problem solving. There is a definite advance in critical and abstract thinking.*

*Fourth grade is an important developmental stage in a boy's career at Saint David's. He has left the familiar environment of the Lower School and has entered a new world of stronger academic demands, larger responsibilities, and broader extra-curricular offerings such as singing at the school Masses, being in charge of lunch duties, and playing integral roles in community service projects. A fourth grader earns grades for the first time, and he must learn how to allot time between leisure and schoolwork. Good study habits are not learned overnight, but a very real beginning is made in internalizing those skills and habits that will serve him well in the years to come.*

### Art

Fourth grade art, woodworking, and pottery studies are closely linked with classroom exploration of ancient cultures. Boys spend one term each in art, woodworking, and pottery. In art, boys learn to draw the human figure after discovering how the ancient Egyptians and Greeks realized the human form. They create landscape pictures after examining examples of Chinese and Western masterworks. In woodworking, boys choose projects inspired by Egyptian, Chinese, and Greek art or architecture. In pottery, creations include Egyptian gods, Chinese warriors, and Greek hero reliefs. Independent problem solving, craftsmanship, and mastery of skills are emphasized throughout the visual arts curriculum.

## Athletics

The third and fourth grade athletic program marks the introduction to the school's intramural program, and fourth graders are called upon to assume a leadership role. Boys are divided into six teams, which rotate through a schedule of games, practices, and fitness exercises. The boys play soccer, basketball, indoor lacrosse, and baseball. The fitness program focuses on strength training and conditioning; both are considered important means of reducing injury and promoting readiness for more sustained, competitive play. Boys practice doing push-ups and sit-ups, and they have an opportunity to use stationary bikes, rowing machines, and elliptical machines. Sportsmanship is a hallmark of the Saint David's athletic program. Each week third and fourth grade boys are recognized for their sportsmanship and sports achievement during the Player of the Week presentation. Fourth grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

## History

The fourth grade history course focuses on the essential question: "What is civilization?" After discussing what distinguishes a civilization from a group of nomadic people, the boys identify core aspects that are representative of all civilizations: architecture, art, belief systems, cities, entertainment, government, and writing systems. These become the linchpins for their study of the accomplishments and legacies of the ancient Egyptian, Chinese, and Greek civilizations. As boys discover how these civilizations developed, they learn to annotate and highlight text, utilize physical and political maps, prepare for assessments, and compose written responses in paragraph form. Each unit culminates in a group project that engages boys in the research process. In small teams, students make note cards, construct story boards, and write a multi-paragraph report. Each team presents their report to the class. As a result of applying a consistent framework of study to each civilization, students should be able to make comparisons across cultures and develop generalizations with regard to their accomplishments.

In addition to team research, each term, fourth graders learn to think like historians as they individually prepare and deliver presentations about aspects of the ancient civilizations they are studying. Boys are encouraged to use their creativity as they determine the most effective way to present what they have learned to their classmates and teachers. Students often enrich their pre-

sentations by dressing up as the historical figure they studied, building a model representative of a geographical term, or sharing visuals or digital slideshows on the interactive white board. In addition to the presentation of content, boys are assessed on how clearly and effectively they deliver their ideas.

## Language Arts

The fourth grade language arts program seeks to develop independent readers and writers. Boys read novels about children solving problems by authors such as Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, Henry Winterfeld, and Kate DiCamillo. Students learn to be active participants in book talks where they assume roles that make them think deeply about the novels. They continue to learn strategies to decode and encode multi-syllabic words by identifying prefixes and suffixes. As boys read, they begin to annotate, taking initial steps toward learning the art of summarizing and generating thought-provoking discussion questions. Boys write for a variety of purposes, using the full writing process when appropriate, and compose expanded expository paragraphs as well as multi-paragraph narratives. Fourth graders use rubrics to edit and polish their writing, and they share their published work with their classmates.

## Library and Technology Integration

The fourth grade library and information technology program teaches boys how to find what they need from print and digital resources. Library and technology work is integrated into projects from the core curriculum so that the research, organizational, and presentation skills that the boys develop have immediate relevance. In the first term, boys are introduced to Google Apps. Students learn to create, share, and collaborate on word processing documents in real time via the Internet. Students find books for both independent reading and research by using the online catalogue and familiarizing themselves with the organization of the library's stacks. They also learn how to conduct research by using digital encyclopedias and websites. Boys practice organizing information by creating note cards, defining relevant sub-topics, and citing their sources in their notes. In addition, boys visit the library regularly to learn about and select independent reading titles, solidifying the habits of lifelong readers.

## Mathematics

The fourth grade mathematics program emphasizes operations with whole numbers and includes an in-depth study of fractions. Boys learn algorithms for multi-digit



multiplication and long division. In addition, they deepen their understanding of fractions and utilize equivalent fractions in problem solving. Boys explore customary and metric measurement conversions to make predictions about the mass of a large number of objects. During the study of plane geometry, students use vocabulary to classify geometric figures. Throughout the year, boys practice strategies for problem solving. Fourth graders complete three open-ended investigations<sup>2</sup> to deepen their understanding of topics being studied.

### Music

The fourth grade music program introduces the boys to instrumental music. The class is divided into four groups, and the boys alternate between the strings class, the recorder class, the bell choir, and singing. At the end of each eight-week session a “switch concert” is presented to the parents. Boys learn the basic techniques of playing an instrument and performing together as a group. Musical pieces performed focus on Medieval, Renaissance, classical and the contemporary. In addition, performance skills and practicing strategies are discussed. Each boy has an opportunity to experience playing and performing on three different instruments, and the students all experience the joy of making music with their classmates. Boys may also participate in the Philharmonic Ensemble,<sup>4</sup> Chamber Singers,<sup>5</sup> or the Percussion Ensemble<sup>6</sup>.

### Religion

The fourth grade religion course introduces students to the basic idea of religious belief and several of the world's major religions. Students also examine the origins, structure, and organization of the Old and New Testaments, and learn to look up Biblical passages. Using the rosary as a framework, boys review important prayers and events in Christ's life. During preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, fourth graders focus on the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule, as well as on the themes of self-reflection, contrition, and forgiveness.

During the *Sophrosyne*<sup>8</sup> strand of the religion course, boys participate in class talks which address group issues openly and purposefully. Boys deliberate what makes a person a good leader and how to be a productive and respectful member of a team. Through their work with Seeing Eye, boys learn to understand and appreciate differences. Boys meet with individuals who are visually impaired to learn about their experience, and they learn

about the role of guide dogs during their visit at Seeing Eye in Morristown, New Jersey. Students develop their leadership and teamwork skills as they plan, advertise, and execute a school-wide bake sale as part of their “Pennies for Puppies” campaign, which helps fund guide dogs for the blind.

### Science

Fourth grade science is designed to introduce students to basic forces and structures in nature through a hands-on approach. The inherent curiosity of nine- and ten-year-old boys is well suited to an examination of how the world around us is organized. The year commences with a study of magnetism and its relationship to electricity. The movement of electrons leads to the introduction of the atom, the states of matter, and how sound travels through matter. The arrangement of atoms into more elaborate molecules provides a stepping stone from inanimate matter to cellular life. The study of the living world begins with the structure of a cell and builds in complexity to include organisms and their adaptations. Along the way, boys' skills in problem solving, observation, measurement, data collection, and microscopy are utilized. The ability to integrate ideas and organize thoughts is fostered through report writing.

### Spanish IV

The fourth grade Spanish program continues to develop students' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing with more explicit focus on the language's structures. After five years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas. Boys are introduced to a middle school text to help them consolidate and refine their understanding of how to describe; express possession, locations and obligations; and make comparisons. Grammar is taught in context and includes subject agreement, plurals, and the conjugation of regular verbs and several irregular ones. Throughout the school year, boys are immersed in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid in the retention of the content they study. Students' willingness to communicate in Spanish is developed through games and activities that support their understanding and build their growing language skills in authentic ways. Responsibility for continuing conversation and elaboration in written forms of communication is gradually shifted to the students.

## FIFTH GRADE

*Ten- and eleven-year-old boys enjoy healthy competition and games that allow for self-improvement. They become more adept at asking questions that lead to greater understanding, and they are able to entertain multiple points of view. At the same time, fifth graders begin to develop their own views about social and global issues and become more active contributors to the school community.*

*Student-led discussions and teamwork are at the core of a fifth grade boy's experience. It is not uncommon to overhear a fifth grader debating with his classmates about the actions of a character or the motivations of an explorer. A boy's understanding of historical events is further deepened through role-playing experiences and field trips. An emphasis on study skills continues, and, for the first time, a boy's academic achievements are formally recognized at the academic awards assembly. A fifth grader also has the honor of being elected to the Student Council, where he works with fellow representatives to contribute meaningfully to the school and broader community.*



### **INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:** ***STEAM: Exploring Robotics through Mechanics and Coding***

*What makes a machine a machine and what makes a robot a robot?* Boys dig into this question as they build, test, and revise simple and compound machines and robots using Lego technic parts and the Lego Mindstorms EV3 robotics system in this hands-on, interdisciplinary unit. Working in small, collaborative groups, students use the engineering design process to build solutions to a series of challenges. As they design and build they gain hands-on understanding of the ways simple machines leverage distance to provide mechanical advantage. They practice quantifying this principle by applying the equation:  $\text{work} = \text{force} \times \text{distance}$ . Challenges require boys to combine simple machines into compound machines and explore the ways machines transform energy as they design and build clocks, cranes, windmills, hydro turbines and solar powered lawn mowers. Finally, boys add sensors, motors, and a processor to their machines and learn to build code sequences that allow their robots to move, collect data, and respond to their environment. The

unit is designed to inspire boys to think critically, take risks, and enjoy the process of creative problem solving through the iterative design process in which attention is paid to mechanics and coding, and the effective interaction of both. Throughout the unit, boys ask questions and devise their own solutions using their engineering, math, science, and design skills.



### **Art**

During the fifth grade year, boys study two-dimensional art and woodworking on a semester basis. In art, students create detailed cityscapes and “plantscapes” inspired by the work of French post-Impressionist Henri Rousseau. Woodworkers create individualized artifacts informed by colonial American culture. Throughout the curriculum, the emphasis is on independent problem solving, craftsmanship, and mastery of skills.

### **Athletics**

The fifth grade athletic program continues to include intramural sports. Boys participate in soccer, cross country running, basketball, indoor floor hockey, flag football, and fitness. During the spring term, boys may choose to participate in baseball, lacrosse, or cross country. Throughout the year, all boys have an opportunity to represent the school in interscholastic competition. Sportsmanship is a hallmark of the Saint David's athletic program. Each week, fifth and sixth grade boys are recognized for their sportsmanship and sports achievement during the Player of the Week presentation. Fifth grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

### **Classical Language: Latin V**

Latin V is the first year of a two-year introduction to Latin and the Roman world. Students in Latin V and VI use the *Cambridge Latin Course, Book 1*. The book follows various aspects of a real Pompeian family, the Caecilii, during the fateful year 79 AD. The course emphasizes reading skills, and through the readings the students learn about Roman imperial public and domestic culture. Major grammar items in Latin V include introduction to the nominative (subject) and accusative (object) cases of the first three declensions and the present tense of verbs; students' vocabulary reaches about 100 words. The course also makes use of the Cambridge Elevate website and multimedia presentations. A consistent focus in the class is the relation of Latin to English and Spanish etymology.

## History

The fifth grade history program is the first part of a two-year study of American history. During the fall term, boys examine encounters among Native Americans and European explorers. They then assess how these encounters shaped the development of the thirteen colonies. In the winter term, boys investigate key events and historical figures during the Revolutionary Era. Students end their year with a study of the events and ideas behind the Constitution. Boys continue to develop their ability to synthesize essential information from a textbook, and they develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of the content as they utilize primary sources. As part of a partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, boys have access to a unique archive of primary source materials. Boys learn how to transcribe and analyze primary source documents from the Revolutionary and Founding Eras. Throughout the year, boys compose individual research reports and work together in teams to produce collaborative presentations. To complement formal study, there are numerous field trips, historical role-play activities, debates, and games.

Fifth graders continue to develop effective writing and speaking skills as they prepare oral presentations about the perspectives of Native Americans, European explorers, and colonial settlers in different regions. Each team of boys prepares a ten-minute report, which is augmented with a multi-media slideshow. Students are assessed on the content, organization, visuals, and delivery of their presentations. All team members play an integral role in presenting the reports to their members of the school community. Throughout the year, boys also prepare written responses that address interpretive questions in paragraph form, thereby building persuasive writing skills.

## Language Arts

The fifth grade language arts program supports boys in their transition from childhood to emerging adolescence. Boys read classic novels and short stories that represent different genres and cultures. They learn to monitor their comprehension and utilize strategies that will enable them to gain meaning from texts. Students learn to develop and support interpretations and engage in literature discussions with classmates. Whether it involves writing responses to literature, or multi-paragraph persuasive compositions, the fifth grade writing program emphasizes the development and organization of ideas, articulated in a robust and cogent manner.

Boys practice and gain appropriate mastery in elaborating upon ideas, using rich vocabulary, and becoming more substantive editors of their own and each other's work. Skill development in grammar and vocabulary continues and is pursued in conjunction with reading and writing assignments as well as through direct instruction and practice.

## Library and Technology Integration

In fifth grade, boys use online resources for academic research. They learn to find information efficiently, think about it critically, and use and share information ethically and safely. Using Google Drive, boys work collaboratively on term-long projects related to core academic disciplines. As an extension of their history course work, boys synthesize research on Native American tribes, European explorers and colonial settlers into engaging multimedia presentations. The fifth grade library program continues to build on and reinforce library research skills and information literacy in support of classroom curriculum needs. Specifically, boys independently locate, process, and synthesize information as part of their research projects for history class. They master the ability to identify key topics, create note cards from salient facts, and cite sources consulted in both their notes and in their presentations. In addition, boys visit the library regularly to learn about and select independent reading titles, which they share with their classmates via oral presentations.

## Mathematics

The fifth grade mathematics program focuses on developing procedural fluency in fractions and decimals. Boys review operations with whole numbers and explore patterns of divisibility and prime factorization. They draw on their understanding of factors to work with rational numbers, focusing on mastery of the four operations with mixed numbers. Next, boys look at the role of fractions within the field of probability. Students use mean, median, mode, and range to analyze and interpret data and graphs. Boys explore probability by collecting and analyzing data from the world around them. Students use place value and decimal operations to calculate percentage-discounts and increases. During each unit, time is spent working on related problems and puzzles with an emphasis on comprehensive explanations of strategies used. Throughout the year, all students complete three open-ended investigations<sup>2</sup> to deepen understanding of topics being studied.



## Music

The fifth grade music course is a continuation of the instrumental music program, where students can specialize in strings, recorder, bells, or percussion. Classes emphasize more advanced instrumental techniques, particularly note reading and rhythmic understanding. In order to showcase their developing musicianship, boys perform two Musicales for their parents, one in January and the other in May. Fifth graders also meet as members of the Glee Club. They sing in the school's Advent Service of Lessons and Carols, and each spring they present a fully costumed and staged production of a renowned musical, such as a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta – always a highlight for the boys and their families. Boys may also participate in the Philharmonic Ensemble,<sup>4</sup> Chamber Singers,<sup>5</sup> or the Percussion Ensemble<sup>6</sup>.

## Religion

Fifth grade religion classes reinforce and expand on the students' understanding of the central components of the Catholic faith: the mass, the sacraments of the Church, the Bible, prayer, and the saints. The course looks closely at the gift of faith as it evolves from Abraham to Christianity and at the foundation of our moral principles expressed in the Ten Commandments. The school motto, "... that they be good men," is incorporated in practical applications especially appropriate for young boys, and various opportunities are presented to boys to help them put the Golden Rule into practice.

During the *Sophrosyne*<sup>8</sup> strand of the religion course, boys engage in class talks which address group issues openly and purposefully. Boys learn to share their opinions while respectfully listening to the perspectives of their classmates. Boys discuss biases and stereotypes, increasing their awareness of the power of language. Students also discuss privacy and safety issues related to digital citizenship, and they learn how to use technology safely, responsibly, and ethically.

## Science

The fifth grade science program engages students in active STEAM learning about robotics engineering, DNA, evolution, and organisms' relationships within ecosystems. Boys ask questions, plan and implement investigations, make observations, collect and analyze data, make inferences, and articulate conclusions based on evidence. Rich learning experiences deepen boys' understanding of core science concepts as they weave together hands-on experimentation and mathematical

reasoning and computation. Engineering activities allow boys to apply their knowledge of science and technology concepts to solve a problem. While building and revising a robotic lawn mower, boys apply their understanding of how simple machines combine to form compound machines and practice adjusting mechanical parts while also tweaking code to maximize efficiency. In the winter, students' in-depth study of DNA takes place at school and at the Cold Spring Harbor DNA Learning Center facilities. Boys work in labs and speak with scientists about their research. Hands-on lab investigations allow boys to develop their understanding of the structure and function of DNA and the ways random mutation and natural selection lead to species' evolution. In the spring, students investigate balance and imbalance in ecosystems. Working in pairs, they build two connected habitats, a terrarium and an aquarium, and observe the relationships between the living and non-living elements of the two environments. Boys draw connections between key ideas in a variety of scientific articles and their close observations of their own model ecosystems. Class activities frame students' thinking around these questions: *What do organisms need to survive? How does energy move through a food web? In what ways can human activity affect ecosystems? How do ecosystems evolve?* As a culminating project, boys work in groups to design a board game around one of these essential questions.

## Spanish V

The fifth grade Spanish program continues to develop students' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing with more explicit focus on the language's structures. After six years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas. Boys continue to use a middle school text to help them consolidate and refine their understanding of how to express possession, location, obligations, and preferences, and how to make comparisons and purchases. Grammar is taught in context and includes subject agreement, plurals, and the conjugation of irregular verbs. Projects offer students an opportunity to showcase their language skills and appreciation for cultures of the Spanish-speaking world. In celebration of Día de los Muertos, boys visit El Museo del Barrio in Spanish Harlem. Throughout the school year, boys are immersed in visual, musical, and kinesthetic activities to aid in the retention of the content they study. Students' willingness to communicate in Spanish is developed through games and activities that support their under-

standing and build their growing language skills in authentic ways. Boys become increasingly responsible for initiating and continuing discussions, and clearly communicating their ideas orally and in writing.

## SIXTH GRADE

*During these early adolescent years, eleven- and twelve-year-olds learn to balance their desire to be independent with their need for adult support. As they assert their individuality, they also become intensely loyal to their peer group. Sixth graders move beyond concrete experiences and think in more abstract and multivariate ways.*

*During the first part of sixth grade, a boy has the opportunity to strengthen ties with his classmates as he participates in a two-day team-building excursion in upstate New York. Similar bonds are formed during a three-day trip to Washington, D.C. during which a sixth grade boy deepens his understanding of American history and government by seeing democracy in action. Utilizing his ability to think abstractly, a sixth grader learns to write persuasively and cite specific evidence to support his ideas. In the spring, he deepens his understanding of a twentieth century event by examining multiple forms of documentary evidence, including historical accounts, poetry, and music.*



### **INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:** ***STEAM: Digital Universe***

The Digital Universe, a first-of-its-kind partnership with the American Museum of Natural History, blends English, science and technology curricula into an interdisciplinary unit. Sixth graders take advantage of access to research-grade tools and deep discipline expertise of the museum's educators and astronomers, as they identify and research an astronomy topic of particular interest and use the writing process and cutting-edge technology to create a space show they perform live in the Hayden Planetarium.

In science classes that take place at school as well as over a series of extended field-study visits to the museum throughout the winter term, sixth graders investigate the cosmos using UniView, the front-end software that interfaces with the Digital Universe Atlas: a vast

aggregation of real-time astronomical data captured through advanced telescopes by dozens of organizations across the globe and represented in virtual 3D.

Students learn to use the professional digital tools of researchers and planetarium professionals as they virtually "fly through" the universe. Working in pairs, boys pose a research question to investigate. During field study visits, and in science and English classes back at Saint David's, boys build arguments from evidence found using the Digital Universe Atlas, museum exhibitions, and online databases and journals available through the Saint David's library.

In English, boys conduct several sessions of research to generate the data they need to describe their specific journey through the cosmos. Boys develop storyboards to plan their trajectory through space so they know exactly what they need to describe to the audience en route and to do so in a way that captivates their listeners. They access a variety of print and online sources to gather an understanding of celestial bodies, interstellar and interplanetary distances, and the time it would take to travel such distances.

Finally, boys translate their research findings into a gripping narrative that aligns with their storyboard, combining previously learned, narrative storytelling techniques with the data generated in their research. Then they reinvent their storyboards using the UniView software. Breathtaking, high-definition images captured by the world's most powerful telescopes replace their sketches of moons and planets.

The unit culminates in a celebration at the Hayden Planetarium during which boys perform their shows live, delivering their scripts and "flying" through space, using the same sophisticated tools used by planetarium professionals.

### **INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:** ***The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope***

Sixth graders further develop effective research, writing, and speaking skills as they examine twentieth century events from a "kaleidoscope" of perspectives during the spring term. Students work on collaborative teams and derive meaning from primary sources, including iconic songs, poems, and historical documents.

In history, boys learn to write an analytical and correctly cited research essay. Each component of the research

process is directly taught and modeled, and students receive ongoing feedback as they practice the steps. Additionally, they analyze primary sources in their original context in order to learn *what* happened as well as to ask *why* it happened. Each boy crafts his own research question that he then answers in a multi-paragraph analytical essay and, using Noodle Tools, creates online note cards as well as a detailed bibliography.

In English, students complete an in-depth study of poetry as documentary evidence and hone their analytical abilities together in a partnered critique of poetry connected to their twentieth century topics. Discussion and modeling help students learn how to analyze poetry and distill meaning. Teams identify and analyze poems deeply connected with the events they are researching. Throughout the unit, students apply poetic principles of composition to their own poems, which reflect upon twentieth century figures and events.

In music, the focus is on learning to view songs from the Great American Songbook as historical documents that evoke the struggles and ideals of the time periods in which they were written. Teams work with the teachers to identify iconic songs of the time periods they are researching. Boys study original recordings of the songs they select and analyze the lyrics and music.

As a culminating performance, teams orally present a synopsis of their findings against a backdrop of images and examples of primary source documents to their classmates, faculty members, and administrators.



## Art

The sixth grade visual arts program further advances creative skills related to two-dimensional art and ceramics. In art, the focus is on portraiture and the human figure. A visit to the Frick Collection to view and analyze master portraits firsthand deepens and informs boys' understanding of the genre throughout time. At school boys create "aspirational" portraits in mixed media. In the ceramics studio, boys study traditional Asian pottery forms, and create two vessels: one based on a box and one round. Throughout the curriculum, self-expression, craft, perseverance, and respect for materials are emphasized.

## Athletics

The sixth grade athletic program continues to include intramural sports, but also introduces the boys to

interscholastic play. Sixth graders are called upon to assume a leadership role in regards to their fifth grade counterparts. Boys participate in soccer, cross country running, basketball, indoor floor hockey, flag football, and fitness. During the spring term, boys may choose to participate in baseball, lacrosse or cross-country. Throughout the year, all boys have an opportunity to represent the school in interscholastic competition. Sportsmanship is a hallmark of the Saint David's athletic program. Each week, during the Player of the Week presentation, fifth and sixth grade boys are recognized for their sportsmanship and sports achievement. During the sixth grade nutrition seminar led by a registered dietician and the coaches, boys learn how eating habits affect athletic and academic performances. The seminar focuses on portion size, reading nutrition facts labels, establishing healthy eating routines, and proper hydration. Sixth grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

## Classical Language: Latin VI

Latin VI is the second year of a two-year introduction to Latin and the Roman world. Students in Latin V and VI use the *Cambridge Latin Course, Book 1*. The book follows various aspects of a real Pompeian family, the Caecilii, during the fateful year 79 AD. The course emphasizes reading skills, and through the readings the students learn about Roman imperial public and domestic culture. In addition to review of what was studied in Latin V, major grammar items in Latin VI include introduction to the dative (indirect object) case of the first three declensions, and the imperfect and perfect tenses of verbs; students' vocabulary reaches about 250 words. The course also makes use of the Cambridge Elevate website and multimedia presentations. A consistent focus in the class is the relation of Latin to English and Spanish etymology.

## English

The sixth grade English program focuses on identifying and tracing themes in literature. Boys read a wide selection of literature and explore novels from multiple points of view. While reading class novels by authors such as S.E. Hinton and Mildred Taylor, students annotate key passages to find evidence to support a theme and write responses to literature. Boys learn how to write persuasive essays, scientific narratives, and poetry, and they have many opportunities to practice the craft of writing using the full writing process whenever appropriate. In the winter, boys present their scientific narratives during live planetarium

shows as part of an interdisciplinary project with the American Museum of Natural History. During the spring, boys analyze and discuss twentieth century poetry as part of an interdisciplinary project called *The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*. Skill development in grammar and vocabulary continues and is pursued in conjunction with reading and writing assignments, as well as through direct instruction and practice.

## History

The sixth grade history course forms the second half of a two-year sequence in American history. The course surveys American political, social, and cultural history and focuses upon the nation's struggle to live up to the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Major topics include slavery and its abolition, political life in the early United States, the Civil War, America's emergence as a global power, the Great Depression and New Deal, World Wars I and II, and the Women's and Civil Rights movements. The course underscores the value of documentary evidence in its original context. As part of a partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, boys have access to a unique archive of primary source documents. Students spend substantial time analyzing primary sources and develop interpretive and argumentative skills through a series of written compositions that respond to complex historical questions. These exercises stress the relationship between evidence, argument, and analysis. In the spring, students research specific topics within twentieth century American history as part of an interdisciplinary project called *The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*. As a culmination to their study of American history, boys travel to Washington, D.C. to experience democracy in action.

## Language Enrichment

The sixth grade language enrichment course focuses on strengthening reading, writing, and study skills while previewing and reinforcing the content taught in English, history, and science. Boys learn techniques for making annotations and tracing themes in novels as well as strategies for comprehending primary source readings and passages from textbooks. Students learn how to take two-column notes and are given opportunities to practice this strategy using history and science course readings. They practice writing expanded sentences and paragraphs, and are taught to write various types of essays through modeling and guided practice. The boys also learn strategies to promote organization and practice strategies for taking standardized tests.

## Library and Technology Integration

Each sixth grade boy is given his own iPad and laptop for use at school. Technology is integrated throughout the sixth grade program in ways that make learning more efficient and more effective. In science, boys use iPad apps to explore dynamic models of global weather and climate. As they manipulate variables, they understand the interplay among environmental factors that contribute to and result from climate change. In art, as part of a unit on portraiture, boys use iPads for independent research and take photos of themselves for visual references when working on their self-portraits. In English classes, boys strengthen critical thinking skills by using images and creating videos to summarize main ideas and highlight important themes. Across the curriculum, boys use Google Drive to work collaboratively on research projects and multimedia presentations. Integrated technology plays an essential role in the signature sixth grade interdisciplinary study experiences: *The Digital Universe* and *The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*.

The sixth grade library program reinforces information literacy skills. As part of their history and science projects, students practice framing engaging independent research questions. They utilize academic databases and independently find facts and supporting information in both digital and print resources. Students are introduced to NoodleTools, an online tool for creating formal bibliographies, storing research questions, collecting digital notes linked to sources, and outlining research conclusions. In addition, boys visit the library regularly to learn about and select independent reading titles, which they share with their classmates via oral presentations.

## Mathematics

The sixth grade mathematics program emphasizes the use of operations with rational numbers within a problem-solving context. Boys draw on place value, exponents, and operations with decimals to explore scientific notation and its use in solving distance-rate-time problems with large numbers. During an in-depth study of geometry, boys apply skills with Geometer's Sketchpad technology and traditional compass constructions to design creative drawings in the style of a local church. Operations with fractions, accurate measurement, and a thorough study of ratios enable boys to build scale models of a standard mailbox. Students also explore area and volume formulas for a variety of figures and learn to convert volume into metric liquid capacity in order to

find the volume of figures using displacement of water. Building on the study of ratios, boys develop a business plan to understand percentage profit and loss. Finally, students begin the study of algebra by examining the concept of a variable. All students complete three open-ended investigations<sup>2</sup> during the year using problem solving strategies to deepen understanding of topics being studied.

### **Modern Language: French VI**

The French VI course is an introduction to the French speaking world and elementary vocabulary and grammar. The aim of the program is to enable boys to communicate about themselves, their school day, and their homes and families. The grammar topics introduce several regular verbs as well as some irregular ones; singular and plural forms of articles and adjectives; and possessive adjectives. Students also study French geography.

### **Modern Language: Spanish VI**

The sixth grade Spanish program continues to develop students' proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing with a more explicit focus on the language's structure. After seven years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas. Boys continue to use a middle school text as an anchor for their learning. Grammar topics include stem-changing verbs, direct object and demonstrative pronouns, how to make comparisons, and structures used to express likes and preferences. Cultural studies focus on Peru and Guatemala. The aim of the program is to enable students to discuss subjects relevant to their lives. Boys become increasingly responsible for communicating their ideas orally and in writing.

### **Music**

The sixth grade music program introduces students to music appreciation, history, and theory. While listening to works from various traditions and genres - including operas by Puccini, Verdi, and Mozart - as well as works of non-Western cultures, boys learn to think critically about musical elements and discern different forms of composition. The year's highlights include performing in the Advent Service of Lessons and Carols, a fully staged and costumed musical production for parents in March, and a study of the American Songbook during the spring term. As part of an interdisciplinary project called *The Twentieth Century Kaleidoscope*, students listen to and discuss music from each decade of the twentieth century. Boys may

also participate in the Philharmonic Ensemble<sup>4</sup>, Chamber Singers<sup>5</sup>, Percussion Ensemble<sup>6</sup> or the Recorder Consort<sup>7</sup>.

### **Religion**

The sixth grade religion course has two main elements, which may be called the religious and the ethical. The religious element is a preparation of boys for the Sacrament of Confirmation, which is conferred in May. Students not receiving the sacrament are invited to contribute to discussions from their own faith and family traditions. The milestones and rituals of major world religions are examined, helping students to develop a better understanding of their own faith. Much of the course is a lesson in the fundamentals of Christian religion, beginning with the Old Testament basics and a study of the text of the Apostle's Creed. The ethical element is designed to inculcate those values which will help the boys become "good men." The students discover forms of right behavior through exercises like class discussion and social service projects.

### **Science**

The sixth grade science program focuses on Earth and space science. During the fall, boys learn about weather and climate as they conduct experiments focused on Earth's oceans and record weather data. Throughout the unit, students make predictions, collect data to test hypotheses, and draw conclusions based on evidence. During the winter term, the boys study astronomy. As part of the Digital Universe signature unit, boys learn about the cosmos by engaging with the American Museum of Natural History's experts, collections, and technology. Students develop a fundamental understanding around four topics: the scale of the universe, astronomical vocabulary and the taxonomy by which scientists classify celestial bodies, how tools have been developed and used to collect astronomical data, and how scientists have come to know as much as they do about the cosmos. Inspired by these ideas and their own curiosity, boys then work in pairs to pose their own questions, conduct research, and use the UniView software to turn that knowledge into breathtaking space shows that they present to an audience of students, families, and faculty in the dome of the Hayden Planetarium. The spring term begins with robotics. Boys build, program, and operate their own model planetary rovers. Working in small, collaborative teams to solve a series of challenges, boys think critically as they test and revise mechanical systems and digital sensors, and build and debug code. Boys' understanding of robotics



engineering helps deepen their comprehension of big ideas around planetary exploration, and vice versa. Sixth graders end the year with a study of Earth processes. Students develop an understanding of the structure of the Earth and the concepts of plate tectonics through investigations about earthquakes and volcanoes. Each term, boys complete hands-on, inquiry-based investigations to deepen their understanding of core scientific concepts.

### Sophrosyne

*Sophrosyne*, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This course seeks to help boys navigate the complex issues around health, wellness, and sense of self in pre-adolescence and adolescence. The goals of *Sophrosyne* are to impart factual information, help students understand biases and stereotypes, and help emerging adolescents understand how to make safe and healthy choices in a friendly and supportive setting. Students learn about adolescent risk factors and stressors, and healthy ways to deal with those stresses. Controversial topics are dealt with in a truthful, forthright way, often by presenting a continuum of views. The sexuality education component aims to make boys feel comfortable and knowledgeable about the changes of puberty. In the drug education component, understanding attitudes and feelings is as important as learning factual information about specific drugs. Students also discuss privacy and safety issues related to digital citizenship, and they learn how to use technology safely and responsibly. Finally, students learn about personal safety through extensive role-playing scenarios, so they have practiced responses to the difficult situations they are most likely to face. The program includes nine visits with Prepare, Inc., a self-advocacy group that teaches young people how to make safe and healthy choices when confronted with peer pressure and other challenges.

## SEVENTH GRADE

*Twelve- and thirteen-year-olds are more aware of who they are. They are in tune with their strengths and interests, and enjoy learning. Seventh graders begin to establish a personal moral code and display empathy for those around them.*

*A seventh grader at Saint David's School is well on his way to becoming "a good man" as he becomes*

*more involved in the school community and the surrounding neighborhood. He shares the lessons he has learned from his volunteer experience and research for the Trustees Prize Essay in Christian Doctrine in a Chapel talk to faculty and fellow students. During his week-long interdisciplinary study on Cape Cod, he forms deeper bonds with his classmates. He is also a "big brother" to a second grader as both prepare to be leaders in their respective schools.*



### INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY: *STEAM: Thinking Algebraically to Code Video Games*

Embedded in the seventh grade math course is an intensive, four-week coding unit. Working with Scratch, MIT's visual programming language, students learn and apply essential programming concepts such as sequence, looping, conditional statements, variables, parallel execution, synchronization, Boolean logic, and event handling. In addition, they practice thinking systematically, taking bold risks in their programming and debugging carefully as they test, observe, and revise their code. As challenges become more complex, boys must create variables to define their functionality. Thinking and working iteratively through these exercises, boys gain a deeper understanding of the power of variables and algebraic thinking.

As a culminating project, boys develop a game of their own design. Students' completed games must have coherent narratives and be fun to play while showcasing their ability to apply fundamental coding concepts in service of their own creative vision. Working on their own games is a highly motivating context for students to practice problem solving and thinking creatively, systematically, and algebraically.

### INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY: *Agents for the Good: The Trustees Prize Essay in Christian Doctrine and Chapel Talk*

During their seventh grade year, students refine their research, writing, and speaking skills as they engage in an interdisciplinary study designed to provide boys an opportunity to reflect on and articulate what it means to be a good person. In religion class, students read several passages from Matthew's Gospel, such as the Beatitudes, Salt and Light, and the Judgment of the Nations, and brainstorm characteristics of people who exemplify the

message of Jesus conveyed in these passages. Each boy then selects an individual he believes embodies these characteristics. In English class, students investigate what led the individuals they selected to be agents for the good. Boys utilize the research process to document and organize their findings and write a thesis-driven research paper. The culminating performance, which is led by the Headmaster, is the preparation and delivery of a Chapel talk that draws from their research and the school's mission statement.

Once students determine which grade levels they will be addressing during their Chapel talk, they begin to outline ideas and formulate a draft. Students revise their drafts based on criteria for effective talks and the Headmaster's feedback. Boys then use a rubric of traits of an excellent talk, such as maintaining eye contact, demonstrating enthusiasm, and communicating clearly and effectively, as they plan and practice the delivery. Each student formally presents his talk in Chapel to faculty and boys and receives final feedback from the Headmaster.



### Art

All seventh graders begin the year with two terms of observational drawing studies. The first term is spent learning and practicing basic skills such as careful observation and rendering of contours (edges), and the accurate perception of proportions and angles in space. The winter term is taught at the Guggenheim Museum, where students synthesize and apply skills to draw the works from the permanent collection and architecture of that iconic building. The seventh grade drawing course culminates with a student exhibit at the museum to be viewed by boys' families and members of the school community. In the spring term, seventh graders choose an elective art course. They may choose to study pottery, woodworking or two-dimensional art. Pottery students model "pop art" sculptures, woodworkers explore advanced techniques such as carving, turning, and joinery, and art students study perspective or acrylic painting.

### Athletics

The seventh and eighth grade athletic program allows boys to pursue a wide range of sports, while offering those who are interested a more competitive experience. For the first time, boys try out for positions on standing teams. Saint David's School is a member of the Manhattan Private Middle School League, which

also consists of Allen-Stevenson, Browning, Buckley, Collegiate, Dalton, St. Bernard's, and Trinity. Boys compete against these schools in soccer, cross country running, basketball, lacrosse, baseball, and track and field. Intramural sports include flag football, fitness, indoor track, and softball. Saint David's also offers squash. Sportsmanship remains a hallmark of the Saint David's athletic program. Each week, seventh and eighth grade boys are recognized for their sportsmanship and sports achievement during the Player of the Week presentation. Seventh grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

### Classical Language: Latin VII

In Latin VII students begin Book 2 of the *Cambridge Latin Course*. This book traces the path of the surviving members of the Caecilius family through Alexandria and Britain. The boys read longer and more complex passages, and through the reading selections they learn about the interactions of the Roman government with the cultures on the Roman Empire's peripheries. Major grammar items include introduction to the remaining cases, the remaining noun and pronoun declensions, relative pronouns and clauses, and the pluperfect (past perfect) tense. A consistent focus in the class is the relation of Latin to English, French, and Spanish etymology. The class also makes use of the Cambridge Elevate website. In the spring the boys participate in the *National Latin Examination*.

### English

In seventh grade English, boys extend the range of their reading beyond literature written specifically for younger people and learn to appreciate works dealing with more mature themes by authors such as John Steinbeck, Edgar Allan Poe, William Golding, and Harper Lee. Students analyze more sophisticated literary conventions, such as narrative point of view and symbolism, and they trace themes and stylistic techniques across various poems and short stories. By relating Latin and Greek roots to new words, they continue to expand their English vocabulary. In their study of grammar, students develop a more nuanced understanding of both the structure of English and the parts of speech. Boys practice the skills needed to write effective short stories, research papers, and persuasive essays. In the second semester, the boys work on the research component of an interdisciplinary project called *Agents for the Good: The Trustees Prize Essay in Christian Doctrine and Chapel Talk*. Finally, boys engage in regular practice for the standardized tests they will

take, and review strategies for maximizing their success.

### History

The seventh grade course focuses on the roots of Western Civilization. Boys complete an in-depth study of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, gaining an understanding of their significant contributions to the formation of Western democracy and culture. Students develop and practice important skills such as taking notes, interpreting primary source documents, writing effective thesis-driven essays, and reviewing material for tests. Boys present research on topics related to ancient Greece or Rome using digital slideshows, make oral presentations, and participate in a dramatic performance related to their study of ancient Greece.

### Language Enrichment

The seventh grade language enrichment course focuses on developing comprehension and writing techniques, as well as organizational, study, and test-taking skills. Note-taking and comprehension strategies are strengthened using assigned textbooks from seventh grade history and science classes. Students are taught how to write various types of essays through modeling and guided practice. Afterwards, when editing their compositions, boys revisit the rules of grammar and punctuation. In addition, multi-step projects and research reports offer ample opportunities for bolstering time management techniques and practicing research methods. Finally, the students rehearse test taking strategies before taking standardized tests and cumulative assessments.

### Library and Technology Integration

Each seventh grader is given his own laptop for use at school. Technology is integrated throughout the seventh grade program to make learning more efficient and effective. In science, boys build simulated roller coasters, which helps them develop a strong understanding of potential and kinetic energy. Across the curriculum, boys use Google Drive for writing assignments and multimedia presentations. Integrated technology plays an essential role in interdisciplinary study units. Technology tools and coding provide a rich context for boys to deepen their understanding of algebra and strengthen problem solving and critical thinking skills in the STEAM unit, *Thinking Algebraically to Code Video Games*, and boys use online tools to organize information and write and revise drafts while working on the *Agents for the Good* project.

### Mathematics

The seventh grade mathematics program is the first half of a two-year Algebra I sequence. Boys use the concepts of variables and algebraic expressions to write and solve linear equations. They practice modeling word problems with equations with one and two variables. Students complete a rigorous study of polynomials, which culminates in solving equations by factoring. All students participate in preparation for SSAT and ISEE tests and complete two open-ended investigations<sup>2</sup> during the year. As part of an intensive four-week STEAM experience, students apply their algebraic reasoning skills to design a video game using the Scratch programming language.

### Modern Language: French VII

The seventh grade French course builds on the boys' knowledge and understanding of French. Boys communicate about food, clothing, and travel by air and train, and they learn the present tense of all three regular verb groups and the present tense of several new irregular verbs, as well as irregular and demonstrative adjectives and the comparative form. Responsibility for continuing conversation and elaboration in written forms of communication is gradually shifted to students.

### Modern Language: Spanish VII

Spanish VII consolidates and builds on previous skills as students transition to the second half of a typical high school first year course. Boys learn to communicate food preferences and discuss professions, sports, hobbies, and pastimes. Students also learn expressions related to health, personal hygiene, and daily routines. Grammar topics include direct object and demonstrative pronouns, reflexive verbs, stem-changing verbs, the simple future tense, and the present progressive tense. Cultural studies focus on Spain and the Spanish-speaking community of the United States. After eight years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas. The aim of the course is for boys to reach intermediate level proficiency in listening, reading and speaking.

### Religion

The seventh grade religion course focuses on the idea of "living one's creed" by emphasizing the importance of engaging in activities of Christian service and studying individuals who model ethical and moral behavior. Boys read and discuss the book *Rescue: The Story of How Gentiles Saved Jews in the Holocaust* by Milton Meltzer, and participate in visits to senior



citizens living at the Carnegie East House. Students discuss scripture passages and current events while studying the early history of the Catholic Church. Throughout the year, boys work on an interdisciplinary project called *Agents for the Good: The Trustees Prize Essay in Christian Doctrine and Chapel Talk*.

### Science

The seventh grade science program introduces students to the fundamentals of physics and chemistry. In the fall, students investigate the physical and chemical properties of matter through the lens of oceanography, learning how water's physical properties drive the circulation of the world's oceans and how the oceans drive climate patterns worldwide. During the winter term, students study the structure of atoms and uncover the patterns in the Periodic table. They continue their exploration of chemistry by running a series of increasingly complex chemical reactions, simultaneously reveling in hands-on work and building their theoretical understanding of how atoms combine to form molecules. In the spring, boys study forces and motion, performing a series of labs and building model cars to develop an understanding of velocity, acceleration, force, and Newton's laws.

### Sophrosyne

*Sophrosyne*, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self.

This course seeks to help boys navigate the complex issues around health, wellness, and sense of self in adolescence. The goals of *Sophrosyne* are to help boys gain a better understanding of the evolving nature and characteristics of adolescence, and to provide factual information about sexuality, drugs, and wellness that will help them make positive and healthy decisions. Controversial topics are dealt with in a truthful, forthright way, often by presenting a continuum of views. Students also discuss privacy and safety issues related to digital citizenship, and they learn how to use technology safely and responsibly. Finally, students learn about personal safety through extensive role-playing scenarios, so they have practiced responses to the challenges they are most likely to face. The program includes seven visits with Hallways, an organization that provides comprehensive instruction tailored to the difficult situations faced by students in independent schools, and six visits with Prepare, Inc., a self-advocacy group that teaches young people how to make safe and healthy choices when confronted with peer pressure and other challenges.

## EIGHTH GRADE

*Thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds display a newfound maturity as they become actively involved in the decision-making process of selecting a secondary school. They demonstrate their scholarship by engaging in a high level of abstract thought and solving more complex problems.*

*An eighth grader approaches problems more analytically and is comfortable sharing his thinking with an audience. He becomes more aware of the world around him. In the fall, he helps lead a school-wide turkey and canned food drive to support the needy in our neighborhood, and, for two weeks in March, his Saint David's experience extends beyond Manhattan to Florence, Assisi, and Rome. Through the interview process for secondary schools and multiple leadership experiences as a senior member of the student body, he develops a strong sense of confidence and is ready to pursue new challenges.*



### INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY:

#### *Analysis and Rhetoric*

As part of the humanities course, students refine the art of clear, concise, cogent writing and speaking, hallmarks of the art of rhetoric. During the year, boys complete four summary projects.

In the fall, eighth graders participate in the Nightingale-Bamford Lectures competition. Each eighth grader researches a notable work by a renowned artist, and then prepares a lecture and PowerPoint presentation on the work that includes in-depth analysis of such components as impact of the artist, historical setting, gesture, color, iconography, and balance, among others. Boys are judged on the quality and depth of their research and analysis, as well as on their oral presentation skills and the visual design of their slides. Finalists compete in the final NBS Lectures before a panel of judges comprised of faculty members, administrators, trustees, and experts in art.

In preparation for the Italian Study Tour, students spend part of the winter working in teams on the Via Fiorentina project. Each group of four or five boys is assigned a particular Renaissance building in Florence and researches the building, its patron, its architect, and

its significance. Students within the same group enrich their understanding and appreciation of the work by sharing the results of their inquiries with one another and discussing the salient points of their findings. The next step for each boy is to write an outline and brief essay based upon his and his team's preliminary efforts. A final component of the project is the creation of a visual representation of the building by utilizing the skills learned and practiced in observational drawing classes. The choice of medium is up to each boy. The possibilities include pencil, pen and ink, colored pencil, and watercolor. Through research, discussion, writing, painting, and drawing, the boys appreciate the interplay between art, history, religion, politics, economics, and society in Renaissance Florence. Before visiting his building, each boy pastes into his Italian Study Tour journal the essay about and drawing of the assigned structure. The boys in each group also give an oral presentation to their classmates and faculty at the site itself.

During the spring, eighth graders are challenged to create a piece of work in the spirit of a famous artist. Boys write a brief biography of the artist and a reflection on the process of creating their own work. They present their artwork and rationale, without divulging the name of the artist who inspired them, to a panel of judges including teachers and art professionals who must determine which project most emulates but does not merely imitate the work of the selected artist. The culminating event of the *Αρχω* Project is an evening reception for parents and families, *Salon de Diplômés*, at which the eighth grade boys comment on their work.

Additionally, eighth grade students complete the Hoguet History Essay, established in honor of Mrs. Hoguet, one of the school's ten founders. During the winter, students are guided through the sequence of steps required for the writing of an analytical research paper. Boys apply the skills they have developed in framing research questions, developing theses, evaluating print and digital sources, navigating databases, and utilizing NoodleTools to store and organize their information. The Hoguet Prize is awarded annually to a boy whose final work exhibits excellence in analysis and writing.

These four summary experiences provide opportunities for eighth graders to develop and hone their skills in analytical and creative thinking, which prepares them for the demands of a secondary school curriculum.



## Art

The eighth grade program focuses on more advanced development of observational drawing skills. For the first two-thirds of the year, eighth graders continue to practice observational drawing so that they can gain the most from the on-site drawing done on the Italian Study Tour. In the fall and winter, boys review basic drawing skills such as contour, gesture, and value. They keep a sketch book, and they draw daily while in Italy, where their sources include painting, sculpture, architecture, and the environment. Saint David's boys graduate having acquired real drawing skills and comfort with the ability to "draw what they see." For the spring term, boys elect to study either woodworking, ceramics, or two-dimensional art during which they create individual projects based on their personal interests.

## Athletics

The seventh and eighth grade athletic program allows boys to pursue a wide range of sports, while offering those who are interested a more competitive experience. For the first time, boys try out for positions on standing teams. Saint David's School is a member of the Manhattan Private Middle School League, which also consists of Allen-Stevenson, Browning, Buckley, Collegiate, Dalton, St. Bernard's, and Trinity. Boys compete against these schools in soccer, cross country running, basketball, lacrosse, baseball, and track and field. Intramural sports include flag football, fitness, indoor track, and softball. Saint David's also offers squash. Sportsmanship remains a hallmark of the Saint David's athletic program. Each week, seventh and eighth grade boys are recognized for their sportsmanship and sports achievement during the Player of the Week presentation. Eighth grade boys may also participate in the Saint David's hockey program<sup>1</sup>.

## Classical Language: Latin VIII

In Latin VIII the students finish Unit 2 of the *Cambridge Latin Course*, and begin Unit 3. They complete the story of Julius Caecilius's time in Alexandria (a city like New York, whose study offers students an excellent opportunity to compare ancient and modern urban cultures) and return to Britain, specifically to the city of Bath, and gain a more detailed and realistic view of Roman rule. The boys learn to read lengthier and more complex passages. Major new grammar concepts include present and past participles, more uses of the noun cases, and the forms and some of the uses of the subjunctive mood. The relationship between Latin and English grammar and vocabulary, and Latin and French

and Spanish derivations, are emphasized throughout. The course also makes use of the Cambridge Elevate website. In February the students sit for the second level of the *National Latin Examination*.

### English

In eighth grade English, boys are introduced to some of the great writers in the Western tradition including William Shakespeare and Alexandre Dumas. They learn to interpret literature from historical, psychological, and ethical perspectives, making thematic and stylistic connections among a diverse group of works, including poetry and short stories. They continue to expand their English vocabulary, particularly by learning Latin and Greek roots of more sophisticated words. In their study of grammar, boys cultivate an increasingly nuanced understanding of both the structure of English and the parts of speech. A principal focus of the program is the cogent expression of ideas in writing for a variety of audiences and purposes, using the full writing process. To this end, students master the skills necessary to write effective essays, personal narratives, poetry, and responses to literature. Finally, students engage in regular practice for the standardized tests they will take, and they review strategies for maximizing their success.

### Humanities

Eighth grade humanities, a cornerstone of the Saint David's curriculum, is an interdisciplinary course that concentrates on history, art history, research skills, and rhetoric. It is team-taught by four faculty members. In history, topics include the Renaissance and the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Twice monthly, each student delivers an oral summary of an assigned reading. Art history classes include a summary view of the ancient world, a study of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, and an examination of modern and contemporary art. Boys go to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to view, study, and discuss works of art on display. Much of the year's work in humanities is integrated into the Italian Study Tour, a means of seeing the actual paintings, sculpture, and architecture the boys have studied and a way of deepening their understanding through writing and drawing. Combining all elements of the humanities course, the boys apply their knowledge of Renaissance art and history to the writing of the Hoguet Prize Research Essay.

### Language Enrichment

The eighth grade language enrichment course focuses on developing comprehension and writing techniques,

as well as organizational, study, and test-taking skills. Note-taking and comprehension strategies are strengthened using assigned textbooks from eighth grade humanities and science classes. Students are taught how to write various types of essays through modeling and guided practice. Afterwards, when editing their compositions, boys revisit the rules of grammar and punctuation. Additionally, support is given to multi-step projects and research reports assigned in other classes. This work offers ample opportunities for bolstering time management techniques and practicing research methods. Finally, the students rehearse test taking strategies before taking standardized tests and cumulative assessments.

### Mathematics

The eighth grade mathematics program is the second half of a two-year Algebra I sequence. Boys solve linear equations, fractional equations, and problems involving percents. Operations with algebraic fractions are practiced, providing students the opportunity to reinforce factoring and simplifying expressions introduced the previous year. Boys learn to solve, graph, and interpret solutions to one and two-variable inequalities. They explore rational and irrational numbers and apply this knowledge to the Pythagorean Theorem and square roots. Quadratic functions are explored; students graph parabolas on the coordinate plane and learn to solve quadratic equations using several methods including the quadratic formula. As part of a problem-based learning unit, boys encounter and solve novel algebra problems without explicit teacher direction. All boys independently complete two open-ended investigations<sup>2</sup> during the year and participate in preparation for the SSAT and ISEE tests.

### Modern Language: French VIII

French VIII furthers the boys' basic proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in French. Boys study vocabulary related to sports, arts and leisure activities, and health and medicine. The grammar topics introduce the reflexive verbs, *passé composé* formed with either *être* or *avoir*; frequently used irregular verbs, "connaître" and "savoir;" direct and indirect object pronouns; and the imperative forms of verbs. Cultural units explore the Tour de France and other typical sport activities in French speaking regions of the world. Boys become increasingly responsible for initiating and continuing discussions, and clearly communicating their ideas orally and in writing.

### Modern Language: Spanish VIII

Spanish VIII consolidates and builds on previous skills

as students transition to material typically covered in a second-year high school course. Boys continue to develop their proficiency in the intermediate range with increasingly challenging tasks requiring listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. Boys learn how to request and give information about places, destinations, and directions in cities. The irregular forms of the past tense are used in the context of telling what they did, where they went and what happened. Projects focus on telling a story about events in someone's life. Additional grammatical structures include giving commands, comparisons, participles, reflexive verbs, and negative forms. These are used in an exploration of sports and daily routines. Cultural studies focus on Argentina and Chile. After nine years of exposure to Spanish, students are expected to communicate regularly in Spanish and use more complex sentences to express their ideas.

### **Religion**

The eighth grade religion course promotes the formation of a reflective and committed student, especially as this pertains to the world of ethics and spiritual values. Boys study the nature of Christianity at its source, by reflecting upon the person, story, and teaching of Jesus Christ. They learn the core teachings from the Catholic Church's 2,000 year-old theological tradition, thereby deepening their understanding of the specific tradition in which life at Saint David's is grounded. The course emphasizes the relevance of faith and ethics to governing one's conduct and making good choices. When time allows, an additional component is a survey of the other major world religions, particularly the monotheistic ones. Finally, all boys are encouraged to live the message of the Gospel in their daily lives, with a special focus on organizing and participating in a number of charitable and community service activities during the year.

### **Science**

The eighth grade science program is a yearlong, microscopic to macroscopic exploration of the science of the human body. Students begin the year by learning how cells use DNA to build structures and carry out the functions of life. In the winter, the year's themes – genes, DNA, and the relationship between form and function – continue as boys perform labs and dissections and complete projects to understand the workings of the human pulmonary, cardiovascular, muscular-skeletal, and digestive systems. After studying DNA and the systems it controls, students, in partnership with Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory's DNA Learning

Center, carry out original research using an approach called DNA barcoding. They apply their understanding of DNA and lab techniques to investigate the biodiversity of an urban ecosystem and draw conclusions about its overall health. Groups choose a topic of investigation, collect and analyze samples, and present their results and conclusions to faculty, visiting scientists, and younger students at the DNA exposition.

### **Sophrosyne**

*Sophrosyne*, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. This course seeks to help boys navigate the complex issues around health, wellness, and sense of self in adolescence. The goals of Sophrosyne are to help boys gain a better understanding of the evolving nature and characteristics of adolescence, and to provide factual information about sexuality, drugs, and wellness that will help boys make positive and healthy decisions. Controversial topics are dealt with in a truthful, forthright way, often by presenting a continuum of views. Students also discuss privacy and safety issues related to digital citizenship, and they learn how to use technology safely and responsibly. Finally, students learn about personal safety and decision-making through extensive role-playing scenarios, so they have practiced responses to the difficult situations they are most likely to face. The program includes thirteen visits with Prepare, Inc., a self-advocacy group that teaches young people how to make safe and healthy choices when confronted with peer pressure and other challenges.

## NOTES

### <sup>1</sup>**Athletics: Hockey**

Hockey at Saint David's is an elective after-school program available to kindergartners through eighth grade students as well as to their siblings. All players are registered with USA Hockey. Games and practices take place at a number of rinks in the New York City area; all are conducted according to USA Hockey rules. The program begins in early November and concludes by the middle of March.

The kindergarten program focuses on skating skills and the boys do not play any games. The basic elements of ice hockey are introduced in first grade and the team plays three to four games towards the end of the season. Beginning with the second grade program, boys play a full season of twelve to fourteen games and participate in the Governor's Cup at Riverbank and/or the Lasker Cup.

### <sup>2</sup>**Math: Open-ended Investigations (Grades 1 – 8)**

Open-ended investigations completed by boys in Grades One through Eight present a unique opportunity for student-centered learning. Boys receive a problem or a question where the solution requires more than the application of a standard procedure. Five to ten class periods each term are dedicated to developing individual problem-solving approaches, collecting data, interpreting findings, and exploring extensions. Each project culminates with a report in which boys communicate the process they used and their conclusions.

### <sup>3</sup>**Music: The First Orchestra**

The First Orchestra provides an opportunity for younger boys to experience the pleasure of playing together in an orchestra setting. It encourages our younger violin and cello students to practice even more, and it provides them with an opportunity to learn the skills of playing in a larger group. The curriculum is designed to help the students make a smooth transition to our Philharmonic Ensemble when they reach the Upper School. The First Orchestra rehearses once a week, and boys in the orchestra perform for their classmates twice a year. The First Orchestra is open to any boy in Grades One through Three who has been studying violin or cello for at least six months.

### <sup>4</sup>**Music: The Philharmonic Ensemble**

The Saint David's Philharmonic Ensemble invites musicians from Grades Three through Eight to join together to learn and perform famous symphonic compositions from the classical repertoire. There are four performances each year for the student body, two in the winter and two in the spring;

the Ensemble has recently performed at Alice Tully Hall in Lincoln Center and at Carnegie Hall. Boys rehearse twice a week before school, and may also choose to participate in small group sectionals and chamber music rehearsals during lunch periods or study halls. The Ensemble is open to any musician who is able to read music, has the desire to participate, and is willing to commit to practice time.

### <sup>5</sup>**Music: The Chamber Singers**

The Chamber Singers is open to any boy in Grades Four through Eight. The students audition in September and rehearse twice weekly before school. The Chamber Singers perform regularly at all of the school Masses, and perform at the winter and spring concerts and the Advent Service of Lessons and Carols. There are many opportunities for solo singing for members of the Chamber Singers. The boys learn liturgical music, classical music written especially for young boys' voices, and more contemporary selections. The Chamber Singers is a very popular extra-curricular activity at Saint David's and draws many boys from the Upper School.

### <sup>6</sup>**Music: The Percussion Ensemble**

The Percussion Ensemble is open to boys who take private percussion lessons and wish to play a wide variety of mallet instruments in a small group. The class meets twice a week before school, and boys learn a wide variety of music from Bach to contemporary songs. Boys learn to follow complicated rhythmic patterns, learn techniques on many different instruments, and enjoy performing at school Masses and in the winter and spring concerts.

### <sup>7</sup>**Music: The Recorder Consort**

The Recorder Consort is offered on an extra-curricular basis for boys in sixth through eighth grades who elect to continue with recorder. The music is challenging, but also satisfying; the boys are aware that they are being stretched musically but feel a sense of accomplishment. The repertoire is drawn from the Medieval through Renaissance periods. They perform at the Service of Lessons and Carols and are joined by an increasingly large number of alums who enjoy staying connected to Saint David's through the recorder. There are, from time to time, extra performance opportunities for the boys, and this group performs at the end-of-year recital.

### <sup>8</sup>**Sophrosyne**

*Sophrosyne*, an ancient Greek virtue, is excellence of character and a healthy state of mind, characterized by self-control, moderation, and awareness of one's true self. The Sophrosyne curriculum, which begins in Grade Three and continues through Eighth Grade, is designed to help boys navigate social, health, and wellness issues while developing a strong sense of self as they move from pre-adolescence into adolescence.

# MISSION

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The mission of Saint David's School is to educate boys to fulfill their potential through rigorous academic pursuit, deliberate moral introspection, and critical analysis of ideas and issues. The classical tradition of balance has guided the school since its beginning. Saint David's boys are scholarly and creative, aesthetic and athletic. The school seeks to engender intellectual curiosity, appreciation for the arts, skill and sportsmanship in athletics, and an enduring love of learning.

Founded as an independent school in 1951 by nine Catholic families, Saint David's remains committed to the teachings of the Church. Our community includes boys and faculty of many religious backgrounds. Boys are taught to respect and learn from all religious traditions, to recognize their own capacity for spiritual experience, and to develop strong moral values.

Saint David's is a true community, known for its sense of family, compassion and kindness. The tradition of the school affirms that elementary education is important in its own right and should always be compelling, joyful, and designed to serve self, others, and God.

Mastery of academic skills and a strong sense of self-confidence enable our graduates to excel at the secondary school level and beyond. Saint David's boys distinguish themselves as young men of ideas and ideals, action and reflection, who fulfill the aspirations of the Founders "... that they be good men."

## COMMUNITY AND INCLUSION

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In addition to our rigorous academic program and in keeping with our Catholic traditions, Saint David's is known for its sense of family, compassion, and kindness. Our community includes boys and faculty that reflect the cultural, ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, and religious diversity of New York City. At Saint David's, we believe that being curious without prejudice and without bias is essential to a well-informed, educated young man. Our boys develop cultural competency as they are taught to respect and embrace difference in all its myriad manifestations. Boys broaden their perspectives as they learn from other traditions, creeds, and ways of life – fundamental in fulfilling the aspiration of the Founders "that they be good men."



**Saint David's School**  
Twelve East Eighty-ninth Street  
New York, New York 10128  
[www.saintdavids.org](http://www.saintdavids.org)