

GRADED MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE HANDBOOK

2017-18

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Curricular Overview

Core Classes 6th and 7th Grade

Humanities

Science

Math

Portuguese

Brazilian Social Studies (For students in the Brazilian Studies Program*)

Physical Education and Health

Core Classes 8th Grade

English

Social Studies

Science

Math (Standard or Extended)

Portuguese

Brazilian Social Studies (For students in the Brazilian Studies Program*)

Physical Education and Health

**Required for all Brazilian students and those wishing to pursue a Brazilian Diploma. Highly encouraged for all other students. Brazilian Studies students receive priority in the scheduling of electives due to the need to incorporate Brazilian Social Studies in their schedule.*

Electives Overview

6th Grade

Students in the Brazilian Studies Program: 1.5 blocks available for electives + BRSS 6

Students not in the Brazilian Studies Program: 2 blocks available for electives

Elective requirements:

All students in 6th Grade must take a Performing Arts elective (Music or Theater).

2017-18 Elective Offerings for Grade 6 Students:

Course	Year, Semester, or Quarter Long
Beginning Band	Year
Beginning Orchestra	Year
Beginning Choir (Vocal Music)	Semester or Year
Intro to Drama	Quarter
Art and Drawing	Quarter
Introduction to Multimedia	Quarter
Design and Modeling	Quarter
Community Building	Quarter
Intro to Journalism	Quarter

7th Grade

Students in the Brazilian Studies Program: 1.5 blocks available for electives + BRSS 7

Students not in the Brazilian Studies Program: 1.5 blocks available for electives + Geography

Elective Requirement:

We require at least one Arts elective from all students in 7th and 8th Grade.

8th Grade

Students in the Brazilian Studies Program: 1.5 blocks available for electives + BRSS 8

Students not in the Brazilian Studies Program: 2 blocks available for electives

Please note:

We require at least one Arts elective from all students in 7th and 8th Grade.

2017-18 Elective Offerings for Grade 7 and 8 Students:

Course	Year or Semester
Junior Band	Year
Junior Orchestra	Year

Junior Choir (Vocal Music)	Semester, Year
MS Guitar	Semester
MS Theater: Welcome to the Stage!	Semester
Dance	Semester
Art and Color	Semester
Art and Clay	Semester
Digital Art	Semester
Digital Video	Semester
Build Your Own App: Intro to Computer Science	Semester
Robotics	Semester
International Relations and Model United Nations	Semester
Journalism	Semester
Service Learning	Semester
History of Film and Movies	Semester
Geography 7*	Semester
French**	Year
Spanish**	Year

**Required for 7th Graders who do not take Brazilian Social Studies*

***Only open to 8th Graders*

PROGRAM AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Academic Support

Optimal Learning Center:

The Optimal Learning Center (OLC) supports students with identified learning differences, empowering them to become confident, autonomous learners who meet or exceed grade level standards. Learning specialists in the OLC collaborate with students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders in the community to provide individual, small group, and classroom level interventions. These include strategies within daily routines, classroom structures, and curricular activities.

Academic Support 6-8

Year

By special enrollment

The Academic Support program provides support and accommodations for students who have identified learning needs. Students who are part of the academic support program are capable of meeting Graded's academic standards, but require support in areas such as reteaching concepts, additional practice on classroom material, and direct instruction in the skills necessary to be an independent and successful learner.

Depending on their learning profile, students may spend their full day in their mainstream classes or may receive 80 minutes of support every other day in a small group class designed to meet their specific needs and offer support and instruction. Some students may also receive in-class support as well.

English for Academic Purposes 6-8

Year

By special enrollment

The Middle School English Language Learner program at Graded is designed to foster the acquisition of language and to assist students in acquiring the cognitive and academic proficiency necessary for success in the mainstream curricular program of the school. In the Middle School we believe that second language learners will make a more rapid academic, social, and emotional adjustment into the school environment through mainstream immersion.

Students are placed in mainstream classes (Humanities, Science, Math) and may receive up to 80 minutes every other day of additional content language instruction and support in the English for Academic Purposes class. In addition, depending on language competency, students may receive additional push-in language support in their mainstream classes.

Arts

It is the philosophy of the Graded Arts faculty that among mankind's greatest and most noble achievements are the arts. Transcending all other forms of communication, the artistic expression of deep human feeling and emotion is among the most basic of human needs, and a measure of all great civilizations past and present.

The experience of working together with one's peers, with the sole objective of creating a work of great power and beauty is an important and profound experience, and one that has tremendous relevance in today's rapidly changing world. As members of the Graded staff and community, we believe the arts to be an absolutely essential part of every young person's education, and it is our mission to provide the finest experiences possible.

MUSIC

Beginning Band

Quarter (6th Grade Only)

Students in the Beginning Band class receive basic skills training on a specific wind instrument such as the flute, clarinet, trumpet, or trombone. Instruction is provided in a mixed instrument class setting, and the class eventually becomes a performing music ensemble as skills develop. Playing fundamentals are stressed, including proper posture, breathing, embouchure development, and playing technique appropriate to this level. Music literacy is also a priority, and students are expected to demonstrate the ability to read simple music notation fluently upon completion of the course. **Attendance at concert performances is mandatory.** Successful students will be prepared to enter the Junior Band upon completion of this course.

Beginning Choir (Vocal Music)

Semester or Year (6th Grade Only)

Students will have the opportunity to develop their musical skills through the performance of a wide range of choral music. Music reading, vocal production, ensemble performance techniques, musical analysis, historical context and emotional/psychological aspects of music will be addressed. Advanced students will have the opportunity to audition for the Disney International Music Festival, in the years in which the trip is offered. **Attendance at concert performances is mandatory.**

Beginning Orchestra

Year (6th Grade Only)

This course is an introductory course for string instrument players. Students will learn how to play violin, viola, cello, or bass in a group setting performing a wide range of music styles. Students that already know how to play a string instrument are also welcome to join this class and develop their skills working on advanced projects. **Performances are mandatory.** Successful students will be prepared to enter the Junior Orchestra upon completion of this course.

Guitar

Semester

This course is for guitar players of all levels. Students will learn how to play and develop chords, solos and fingering on acoustic guitar in a group setting. They will also learn music theory, music appreciation, how to listen to and read music. No previous experience is required.

Junior Band

Year

Prerequisite: Beginning Band or teacher approval.

Students in Junior Band receive intermediate level wind and percussion instruction and work collectively as a performing music ensemble on their chosen musical instruments. Playing fundamentals such as posture, breathing, embouchure development, and playing technique are continually reinforced, and students study a wide range of concert literature suitable to their ability level. Music literacy is also emphasized, and students are expected to demonstrate fluency with music notation at the intermediate level upon completion of the class. **Attendance at concert performances is mandatory.** Successful 8th grade students will be prepared to enter the Senior Band upon completion of this course.

Junior Choir (Vocal Music)

Semester or Year

Students will have the opportunity to develop their musical skills through the performance of a wide range of choral music. Music reading, vocal production, ensemble performance techniques, musical analysis, historical context and emotional/psychological aspects of music will be addressed. Advanced students will have the opportunity to audition for the AMIS International Middle School Honor Choir Festival and the Disney Music Festival in the years in which these trips are offered. **Attendance at concert performances is mandatory.**

Junior Orchestra

Year

Prerequisite: Beginning Orchestra 6 or teacher approval.

This course brings together students of varied levels and grades to play orchestral repertoire. Students will improve their playing skills, and the necessary theory and technical development will be taught according to specific needs.

Attendance at concert performances is mandatory. Advanced students are encouraged to play in select ensembles, and may apply and prepare auditions for the AMIS International Orchestra Festival.

THEATER ARTS

Intro to Drama

Quarter (6th Grade Only)

The focus of the drama course is to introduce students to the skills of storytelling and develop the core theatre skills (clarity, collaboration, concentration, confidence, control, creativity & positive risk-taking). Through dramatic play, & rehearsal, students will create and develop an original, collaborative piece which will be showcased at the end of the course.

MS Theater: Welcome to the Stage!

Semester (7th and 8th Grade)

This course gives students a broad understanding of the basics of theatre and how we use performance to tell stories. Throughout the semester, students will study three distinct areas: creating, designing and performing stories on stage.

- Creating Stories: focus on how to develop stories for original performance. Units of study include: Improvisation, Devising & Playwriting.
- Designing Stories: focus on how designers use aesthetics to build a deeper understanding of a story, character or place. Units of study include: Set, Costume, Prop Publicity & Sound Design.
- Performing Stories: focus on how actors create character and story through movement, gesture, facial expressions and voice. Actors will develop their skills through scripted and unscripted scenes. This unit concludes in a performance. Units of study include: Monologues & Duets, Commercials & Radio Shows, Mask and Puppetry.

Each semester will have a different focus for the three areas, so students are able to repeat the course whilst learning new content. (This course may be repeated for credit.)

VISUAL ARTS

Art and Drawing

Quarter (6th Grade Only)

In Art and Drawing 6, students will be working with drawing using the method of Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain or drawing from observation. A variety of assignments will be given in order to improve their focus, observation and concentration, which are skills that help improving their drawing and increase creativity.

Introduction to Multimedia

Quarter (6th Grade Only)

Students are introduced to media literacy, design, video making and animation. Using different types of media, all done through computer design softwares, students are invited to explore their imagination utilizing the available resources. Focus is given to creating projects that are personal to the student, and projects that contribute to the community.

Art and Clay

Semester

In Art and Clay, students are introduced to three dimensional projects using clay. Students work on different clay projects exploring the techniques of coiling and slabs to create five different projects: a mask, a slab project, a coil project, a combination of both. Projects are considered finished only after fired and glazed. The students are also expected to understand and use vocabulary related to Ceramics.

Art and Color

Semester

In Art and Color class we review drawing skills and improve the student's sense of composition. Elements and principles of design are the focus of our first unit in order to improve their understanding of creating a balanced composition. Color is an important aspect of this class and is our focus during the second unit when the students are introduced to Color Theory and color mixing.

Digital Art

Semester

Students learn to communicate in the visual language of our digital lifestyle. The class combines Photography study and Graphic Design. Students learn how to best utilize a digital camera, are introduced to important artists and their style, and are encouraged to use the medium to express themselves. Using Adobe Photoshop, they will learn realistic photo editing, and the software possibilities to creation and manipulation. Students will also be introduced to design basics, exploring Adobe Illustrator to create original design pieces and advertisements.

Digital Video

Semester

Students will engage in individual and group projects for personal and educational purposes, with emphasis on learning by doing. By getting involved with all aspects of moviemaking, students will have the opportunity to experience scriptwriting, acting, directing, and post-producing; to learn not only how to capture video with digital cameras, and to edit; but also to increase their capacity to create in and for this medium.

Brazilian Social Studies

Os cursos, semestrais e ministrados em Língua Portuguesa, têm como objetivo garantir a problematização do Brasil a partir do conhecimento histórico e geográfico, abordando seus diferentes momentos e experiências históricas. Para tanto, analisam-se dimensões do passado, buscando compreender as condições e as razões dos acontecimentos, identificar os movimentos de resistência, confrontar perspectivas históricas conflituosas e examinar as permanências existentes no cotidiano da atualidade brasileira. Nessa perspectiva, trabalham-se conceitos básicos do ensino da História, como: tempo/espaço, continuidade/ruptura, semelhança/diferença e quanto à Geografia, integram-se os diversos temas, especialmente aqueles ligados à Geografia Física e à Geografia Humana, através dos conceitos de região, regionalização, escala, território, paisagem e lugar, observando como a natureza vai sendo modificada e reestruturada pela técnica e pela ação do homem.

Nosso objetivo principal é contribuir, a partir do ensino da História e da Geografia do Brasil, e dialogando com as perspectivas da Sociologia e da Filosofia, para que o aluno possa adquirir instrumentos intelectuais e de caráter social que possibilitem a formação de uma consciência crítica e atuante.

Brazilian Social Studies 6

Semester

O curso de Geografia para o sexto ano desenvolverá a linguagem cartográfica (analógica e digital) e apresentará alguns conceitos essenciais da disciplina, como por exemplo, paisagem, lugar e espaço geográfico, estudo dos estados brasileiros e suas capitais e o Distrito Federal e Brasília. Após essa introdução, o estudo do Brasil será construído através desses conceitos estruturantes do conhecimento geográfico. Esse estudo será feito com enfoque na construção do espaço rural e do espaço urbano nacionais, bem como a sua formação populacional de modo a problematizar os fenômenos sociais desnaturalizando modos de vida, valores e condutas sociais e identificando as principais formas de estratificação social.

Brazilian Social Studies 7

Semester

O curso de Geografia para o sétimo ano desenvolverá os conceitos de região e regionalização e escala em articulação com os conceitos estudados no sexto ano. Iniciaremos com a localização do Brasil em relação ao continente sul americano, e as Américas Central e do Norte, em relação ao planeta (retomando as questões referentes ao estudo das zonas térmicas do globo). Em sequência será trabalhado com os alunos a formação do território brasileiro, quanto à sua divisão política-administrativa e regional.

Ainda tendo como eixo central a discussão natureza X sociedade, propomos o estudo da poluição tanto no ambiente urbano quanto rural. Desta forma, primeiro apresentaremos uma base conceitual para esta análise (definir o que é poluição e quais seus tipos, como as sociedades produzem lixo-o conceito de consumo e consumo consciente; tempo geológico e tempo histórico; crescimento econômico e desenvolvimento sustentável). A partir desses referenciais trabalharemos alguns estudos de caso.

Brazilian Social Studies 8

Semester

O curso de BrSS. do oitavo ano tem por objetivo propiciar uma visão abrangente e significativa do colonialismo português e da formação da sociedade lusoamericana a partir do encontro (conflituoso) entre as matrizes europeia, indígena e africana no movimento global do sistema-mundo moderno entre os séculos XV e XVIII, tendo como ponto de chegada a crise do sistema colonial.

Após uma introdução aos elementos constitutivos do conhecimento histórico (o acesso às fontes, a multiplicidade interpretativa e a historicidade das narrativas), os alunos são estimulados a situar as Grandes Navegações nos quadros da Modernidade, considerando as mudanças que marcaram a transição feudo-capitalista (Renascimento, Reforma e Contra-Reforma, Formação das Monarquias europeias e expansão das trocas comerciais).

Em seguida, são abordados diacronicamente os tópicos fundamentais do período: Montagem do Sistema Colonial, Administração, Formas de Exploração do Trabalho (compulsório indígena e africano), Características da Sociedade Colonial, Formas de Resistência, Mobilidade Social, Economia Açucareira, Invasões Holandesas, Bandeirantismo, Economia Mineradora, Crise do Sistema Colonial (contexto mais amplo do Iluminismo - como movimento filosófico - e das Revoluções Atlânticas).

Do ponto de vista das competências fundamentais, o propósito é que alunos se tornem capazes de lidar com diferentes fontes históricas (textos, imagens) e efetuar análises factuais, conjunturais e estruturais.

Humanities

The Middle School has an Humanities course that integrates the philosophies of the Social Studies and Language Arts Program.

Language Arts

At its core, Graded School's Language Arts and Literature Program teaches students to write effectively, read critically, speak coherently, and engage their world imaginatively. The program is designed to cultivate intellectual curiosity and a lifelong love of language - helping students to deepen their sense of humanity and enhance their capacity for wonder.

Social Studies

It is the mission of the Graded School Social Studies program to provide students with a strong foundation in history, and at the same time to provide options for students to explore their interests in geography, economics, cultural studies, psychology and government. At its core, we hope to nurture critical thinking and effective communication, while helping students value diverse views and ideas in an effort to apply an understanding of these perspectives to contemporary issues. Through our teaching, we hope that students learn to look beyond themselves and to feel empowered to engage thoughtfully and empathetically with their world as citizens and individuals.

Geography 7

Semester

World Geography

The World Geography course invites students to participate in a journey of exploration and discovery, which starts with its specific questions, instruments and tools. As we explore landforms, ecosystems, climates and water bodies in different regions of the planet, we also analyze the human landscapes and explore the relationship between people and their environments. The study of Geography helps students to build a global perspective by understanding the connections between international and local events, in the past and today.

Humanities 6

Year

This rigorous, integrated course is guided by the question, "How can an individual take action to address inequality in the world?" In this course, students will find their voice through written work, projects, presentations and discussions. Our class novels expose students to various themes, addressing social issues in historical and cultural contexts. With an emphasis on human rights and inequality, the course will culminate in students being charged with solving a global issue.

Middle School reading and writing at Graded thoughtfully integrates close and directed reading of a variety of texts, including primary documents and literary novels, with a variety of analytical, argumentative, and narrative writing tasks.

Students build on these skills each year in order to increase proficiency and develop complexity, so that they are prepared for 8th grade and high school English and IB courses.

Humanities 7

Year

This rigorous, integrated course is guided by the question, "To what extent does humanity's aspiration for power produce progress?" We will dive deeply into themes presented through literary novels and social studies and think critically together. The course combines collaborative work and opportunities for student choice. We will study world regions throughout time in order to inform, analyze, and reflect upon our modern world.

Middle School reading and writing at Graded thoughtfully integrates close and directed reading of a variety of texts, including primary documents and literary novels, with a variety of analytical, argumentative, and narrative writing tasks. Students build on these skills each year in order to increase proficiency and develop complexity, so that they are prepared for 8th grade and high school English and IB courses.

English 8 & Social Studies 8

Year

In 8th grade, English and Social Studies classes challenge students to hone their skills in the respective disciplines while pursuing a unified theme of the individual's participation in society and society's impact on the individual.

English 8 grapples with the question, "How do we use our voice to participate meaningfully in society?" It examines this role through a variety of literary forms, from drama to autobiography, from allegory to direct address. The class encourages students to think critically, not just about their role in their community but about the ways in which they give voice to their own stories. Capstone projects include the composition and delivery of an original speech, the staging of a dramatic scene, a formal literary essay, and a creative personal narrative.

Social Studies 8 is an exploration of the history of revolution and change in society that asks students to examine the question: "Why do people (as individuals and groups) choose to change their government?" The course builds an understanding of government and revolution and then examines three major historical political transformations: the Russian, Iranian, and Chinese Revolutions. Students engage in "thinking like a historian"; learning and applying the analytical skills necessary to construct meaning and understanding of historical events. Capstone projects include writing historical essays, writing and performing a role-play; analysis of historic political cartoons and other primary source documents.

Middle School reading and writing at Graded thoughtfully integrates close and directed reading of a variety of texts, including primary documents and literary novels, with a variety of analytical, argumentative, and narrative writing tasks. Students build on these skills each year in order to increase proficiency and develop complexity, so that they are prepared for high school English, IB, and other courses.

Electives

Note: Not all courses run each year; courses rotate.

Build Your Own App: Introduction to Computer Science

Semester

This semester long course introduces students to computer science and coding by building mobile applications. As the curriculum describes, "In this course, students discover the principles of this fast-growing field by focusing on creativity and an iterative design process as they create their own basic apps using MIT App Inventor." (Project Lead the Way)

Community Building

Quarter (6th Grade Only)

This quarter-long course is designed to give students a better understanding of community, its meaning and importance. Students will have the opportunity to "shadow" members of our Graded community (cafeteria, maintenance, security

library, nurse's office, etc.) bringing together many of the skills acquired in other courses to establish a relationship outside the classroom walls.

Creative Writing

Quarter (6th Grade Only)

This quarter-long course will explore writing techniques of storytelling, poetry, and other creative writing forms. We will delve into the personal and cultural impact of writing narrative and expressive pieces. Students will have the opportunity to compose daily and find their writing voice, culminating in a writing submission for a yearly literary publication.

Dance

Semester

Dance elective (appropriate for beginner to expert dancers) allows students to schedule time into their regular day to learn the introductory skills of dance while improving technique, poise, self-confidence and creative ability. Students will express themselves by translating ideas, thoughts and feelings into original pieces through movement. Dancers will understand the importance of both self reflection in their movement and interpersonal relationships in group work. The course will challenge dancers to grow in each of the eight core values, while exploring the connection of their movement with these values at the end of each unit of study through various assessments.

Design and Modeling

Quarter for 6th Grade, Semester for 7th or 8th Grade

Building on student's creative skills, Design and Modeling introduces students to the tools and skills needed in various fields to plan, design, and model. As the curriculum describes, "Students apply the design process to solve problems and understand the influence of creativity and innovation in their lives. They work in teams to design a playground and furniture, capturing research and ideas in their engineering notebooks. Using Autodesk® design software, students create a virtual image of their designs and produce a portfolio to showcase their innovative solutions." (Project Lead the Way)

History of Films and Movies

Semester

This class will consist of a broad introduction to the study of Film and Movies, while offering a very selective, overview of cinema history, and explore the basic tools for analysing the art of film. We will examine how Films and Movies are conditioned by the uses of camera, lighting, sound, script and acting. Hands-on projects, written analyses and participation in class discussions will be requirements for successful completion of the course. The focus of the course culminating project would be directing a film for the Film Festival held at the school.

International Relations and Model United Nations

Semester

The course is designed to acquaint students with the operations of the international foreign policy and United Nations through the study of political positions of member nations, Human Rights case studies, climate change policies, and foreign aide studies. After completion of the course, students will be eligible to participate in, and travel with our MUN team. Model United Nations, also known as Model UN or MUN, is an activity in which students role play as delegates to the United Nations and simulate UN committees. This course will provide an orientation to the activities of the United Nations, as well as providing an understanding current events, pressing international issues, and the basics of procedures of diplomacy.

Journalism

Semester

This semester-long course introduces students to all journalism skills: reporting, interviewing, writing, editing, photographing, and both digital and print publishing. Students will practice these skills as they create authentic articles for publication and presentation within the Middle School and beyond. Students will choose their topics for investigation.

Reader's Workshop

Semester

This semester-long course involves students in authentic reading experiences. Student will explore books (that they choose) to address their individual strengths and needs. Students will walk away with specific strategies that make comprehending text easier. Kids who love to read—and even those who don't—will find the class powerful.

Robotics

Semester

In this hands-on course, students learn about automation and robotics, while acquiring design, coding, and problem-solving skills. As the curriculum describes, “students learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program real-world objects such as traffic lights, toll booths, and robotic arms.” (Project Lead the Way)

Service Learning

Semester

Service Learning is a semester long course that empowers students to address community needs that are relevant and meaningful. Students will implement authentic projects that aim to make a significant impact. This is done through a series of steps; 1. Investigation 2. Planning and preparation 3. Implementation and Action 4. Reflection 5. Demonstration and Celebration. Service Learning encourages reflective practices that enrich learning, build civic engagement and strengthen communities.

Solve it! 6th Grade

Quarter (6th Grade only)

The top skills employers look for in college graduates are teamwork, communication, and **problem-solving**. In today's world, these are top skills for life. This unique class will tackle big and crazy problems - you might at first say they are impossible! We will practice working together to understand complexity, organizing our own strengths and skills around creative solutions. Math, science, social studies, language, the arts and physical skills and knowledge will be needed - you don't have to be an expert at anything, but perseverance and a willingness to try and to be creative are necessary.

Solve it!

Semester

The top skills employers look for in college graduates are teamwork, communication, and **problem-solving**. In today's world, these are top skills for life. This unique class will tackle big and crazy problems - you might at first say they are impossible! We will practice working together to understand complexity, organizing our own strengths and skills around creative solutions. Math, science, social studies, language, the arts and physical skills and knowledge will be needed - you don't have to be an expert at anything, but perseverance and a willingness to try and to be creative are necessary.

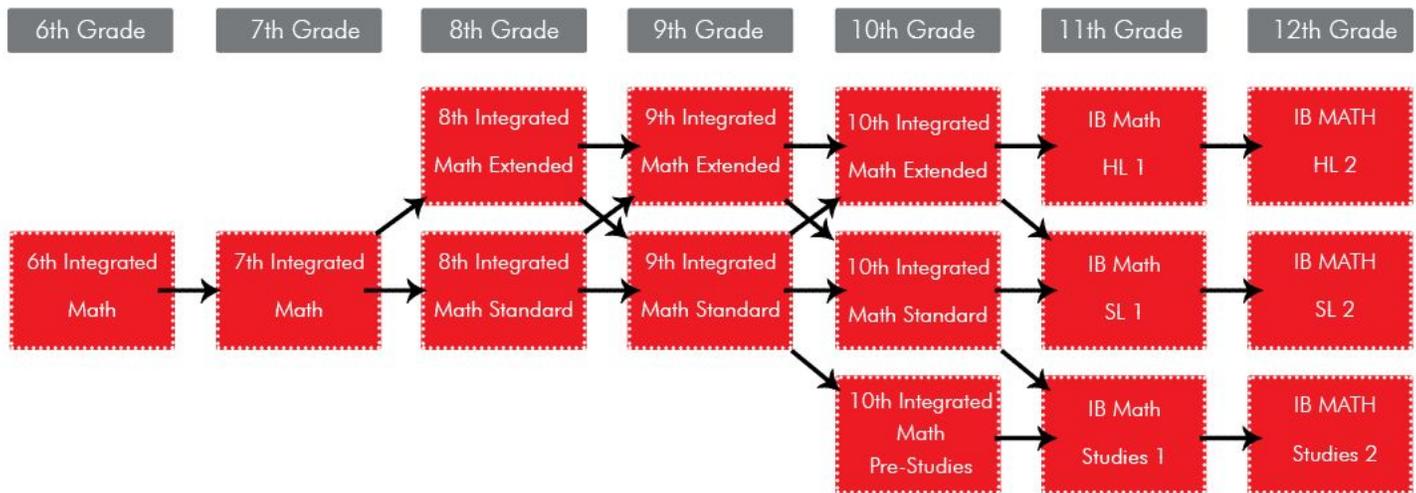
Step Up to the Stage

Quarter (6th Grade Only)

This quarter-long (.25) course is designed for students who want (or need!) to improve their public speaking skills. During this course, we will explore the many formal and informal ways that people communicate before an audience. Students will actively participate in storytelling, dramatic performance and readings, informational talks and persuasive presentations. This course uses theater techniques to help student relax before an audience, develop self-confidence, and improve communication.

Math

Graded Middle School Math Placement



We make placement recommendations based on where we believe students will have the highest possibility of academic success. We differentiate in each class to ensure all students are appropriately challenged and supported.

We consider three points of data when making placement recommendations for extended courses (8th Grade). Generally, these are weighted equally:

- Math course grades at the 6-7 level.
- NWEA math scores in the HIGH category.
- Math Learner Habits of 3 or 4.

Teachers will consider all of the above criterion after the second round of NWEA MAP tests in April to make placement recommendations. Placement decisions are communicated when schedules are shared at the end of the academic year. Please note that in exceptional cases course changes can be made at the mid-year point based on student performance.

What does assessment look like in Math?

We aim to make assessment types varied, whether traditional tests or projects.

In the middle school, we welcome the opportunity for communication about student learning that our levels 1-7 offer. In designing our curriculum and our assessments, we provide different levels of challenge within as many activities and lessons as possible. Using the levels as communication to the students, as a “signpost” of their current performance, the level is the feedback of their current level of understanding. Therefore, any student will find challenge in moving from their current level to the next level. The levels help the student understand what type of problems they are currently able to show their understanding of and what types of problems they will be approaching.

As students gain the skills and problem-solving strategies needed for each level, they gain confidence and competence in problems of that type. As a guide in developing our daily curriculum and our assessments, teachers strive for the following:

Level 1-2

Activities/problems to identify which skills from earlier years a student still needs to practice and strengthen.

Level 3-4

Activities/problems to practice and master current grade level material that is step-by-step in nature, algorithmic, or out-of-context skills.

Level 5

Activities/problems to put those taught skills of levels 1-4 into a context (often seen as “word problems”) or use those skills in more complicated ways.

Level 6-7

Activities/problems are challenging and they are developed with the idea that students build on content and concepts from earlier units and that students use the learned skills in new combinations with creative problem-solving strategies. These problems are **unfamiliar but accessible** with the skills that have been learned. It requires a deep understanding of the skills and concepts and the ability to recognize, choose and execute the proper skills needed to solve an unfamiliar problem.

How do we differentiate within Math classes in the MS?

Instruction/Classroom Activities

Throughout the middle school math program we use a variety of strategies to provide a differentiated environment to ensure that all students are appropriately challenged. Students engage in Math through a variety of learning experiences that target problem solving, reasoning, communication and mathematical connections as outlined in our curriculum. Student reflection and teacher feedback is a critical piece that helps students grow as math learners.

Assessments

Our assessments are designed to ensure students can practice and showcase various levels of achievement. Mathematical work that students engage in at the 3-5 level on our Descriptors of Achievement allow students to showcase their knowledge and understanding of our curriculum. At level 6-7, students are accessing work that targets a depth of knowledge that requires both strategic and extended thinking. At this level, students build on skills and apply them in unique and novel ways. Assessment is differentiated, and may include tests and projects. All students can reassess summative assessments, which allow them re-apply their learning or extend their thinking.

[Differentiated instructional strategies](#) in Math may include:

- Student choice in practice levels and topics
- Flexible groupings
- Project based learning
- “Low floor, high ceiling” problems
- Learning stations
- Self directed computer based practice
- Focus on process standards and communication
- Guided discussions.
- Peer tutoring and coaching.
- Challenge by Choice
- Solicit feedback with OLC team on classroom practice.

Outside of Class

In addition, outside of class, students may participate in MathCounts, Fermi math, STEM electives, such as Robotics, Computer Science and Design, Math Problem of the Week, or math-based Friday Activities.

Math 6

Year

This year of math focuses on encouraging our students to grow in their problem-solving skills and conceptual understanding of math in the following areas: numbers and operations; measurement; patterns, functions and algebra; geometry; and data analysis. Through a combination of projects and traditional skill-based practice, students are guided to see the connection between math with practical applications in real-world situations and math as an academic exercise.

Math 7

Year

Seventh grade math students study a variety of topics based on the AERO standards and MYP philosophies in six main units. In the first semester, students explore numbers and operations and their use in real life decision making, use probability and data analysis to make informed decisions and use angle relationships to solve problems. During the second semester students will explore unknown quantities in equations, inequalities and expressions, solve problems in

three dimensional geometry and investigate number patterns in linear algebra.

The 7th grade math course builds upon the 6th grade course in a fully differentiated environment. Students are given a wide variety of choice in their level of practice and in class discussions and group work happen at a variety of levels within the classroom. Enrichment and rigor is provided through a variety of open ended activities, projects and practice tasks. Support is given to students through a range of grouping strategies, individual practice and online resources.

Math 8 Standard

Year

The 8th grade standard math course continues to study a variety of math topics based on the AERO standards. Students formalise their algebraic skills through the study of problems including linear equations, functions, inequalities, and linear and coordinate geometry. Students will be introduced to the TI-84+ family of calculators which will allow them to incorporate technology into their problem solving strategies. The AERO standards challenges the students to have the “knowledge and understanding of the mathematics necessary to function in a world very dependent upon the application of mathematics”. In the classroom this translates to learning experiences where students are asked to demonstrate procedural fluency, conceptual understanding and problem solving.

Math 8 Extended

Year

Students in the 8th Grade Extended course will cover the same topics as the standard course with the addition of radicals, systems of equations, and quadratic equations and functions. The AERO curriculum framework uses the following four Depth of Knowledge levels:

- DOK 1 - Recall
- DOK 2 - Skill/Concept
- DOK 3 - Strategic Thinking
- DOK 4 - Extended Thinking

Students in the extended course will spend more time working on DOK 3 and DOK 4 level problems throughout the year.

Physical and Health Education

Graded's Physical & Health Education (PHE) Program engages learners in a curriculum that fosters the physical, social, and emotional growth of each student. The program promotes physical and health literacy through a variety of developmentally appropriate activities that emphasize collaboration, responsible decision-making, and the benefits of an active lifestyle. The overall goal is to enable students to make well-informed, healthy choices and develop behaviors that contribute to the well-being of self and others. Students complete a variety of formative and summative tasks in PHE classes and are assessed via teacher observations, reading and analyzing articles on current issues, participating in guided discussions, completing reflections upon their student blogfolios and completing various projects and tests.

Physical & Health Education 6

Year

This year-long program encourages students to focus on personal and social behavior, motor skill development and appreciate the value of developing healthy lifelong skills in PE class. These skills and concepts are promoted through participation in Net and Wall, Invasion, Target, Strike and Field, Fitness and Recreation activities.

In Health class, students focus upon three domains: Benefits of Healthy Lifestyles, Personal Wellness Choices and Relationship Choices. In Grade 6, students explore the following topics: Making Choices, Personal transitioning with Family and Peers, Challenges and Responsibilities of Growing Up, Balancing Personal Responsibilities, Bullying and Conflict Resolution Skills and the importance of balancing stress, sleep and good nutrition habits.

Physical & Health Education 7

Year

This year-long program promotes the continued growth in personal and social behavior, motor skill development and to value the development of healthy lifelong skills in PE class. These skills and concepts are promoted through participation in Net and Wall, Invasion, Target, Strike and Field, Fitness and Recreation activities.

In Health class, students focus upon three domains: Benefits of Healthy Lifestyles, Personal Wellness Choices and Relationship Choices. In Grade 7, students explore topics that focus upon the Use and Abuse of Tobacco and Alcohol, Changes during Adolescence (Puberty and Parenting) and Basic Nutrition Issues.

Physical & Health Education 8

Year

This year-long program promotes the continued growth in personal and social behavior, motor skill development and to value the development of healthy lifelong skills in PE class. These skills and concepts are promoted through participation in Net and Wall, Invasion, Target, Strike and Field, Fitness and Recreation activities.

In Health class, students focus upon three domains: Benefits of Healthy Lifestyles, Personal Wellness Choices and Relationship Choices. In Grade 8, students explore topics that focus upon Physical Fitness and Exercise, Body Systems, Advanced Nutrition Issues, Body Image and Eating Disorders and Changing Peer Relationships.

Science

Science 6

Year

“The most exciting phrase to hear in Science, the one that heralds new discoveries, is not Eureka! (I found it!) but rather, ‘hmm...that’s funny...’” Isaac Asimov

In sixth grade Science, students enhance their observation and investigative skills, learn new skills and begin to work independently in a lab setting. Science concepts and skills are explored through lab activities, online simulations, class discussions, and research projects. Students delve into topics that help them understand the interconnectedness among different life forms, the environment and how human actions affect our surroundings. Our units of exploration include Scientific Inquiry, Introduction to Chemistry, Biology and Physical Science.

Science 7

Year

In Science 7, students improve their communication and investigation skills during the following units of study: Ecology, Energy, Water Systems, Scientific Inquiry and Geology. Students begin by analyzing different ecosystems, including ecosystems visited on our grade level trip - the Atlantic Rainforest and the cave ecosystems. In addition, students practice and refine their digital search skills. During investigations, students accurately measure the masses and volumes of matter. Then, students learn about energy forms and energy changes. They write a research paper and practice skills such as citing sources in-text. Students choose a specific energy investigation, collect and process data and draw conclusions from data. After, students analyze global and local water systems, choose a specific water issue, research it and present their findings. Furthermore, they conduct multiple investigations into the properties of water. Following the water unit, students conduct a full scientific investigation on a topic of their choice and present their results at the Middle School Science Fair. Finally, students evaluate the same geological evidence found by scientists over centuries, an inquiry which culminates in the Theory of Plate Tectonics. Students well-developed communication and investigation skills prepare them for continued success in the Sciences.

Science 8

Year

Big questions and ideas are some of the most exciting parts of learning about science:

- What do atoms and molecules have to do with delicious food and beautiful art?
- Do we want to genetically engineer human traits or know if we might have inherited a disease?
- How are life forms on this planet so diverse, and yet often similar to each other?

- What do forces and motion teach us about designing structures whether fun, useful, or beautiful?

Building on student's experiences from 6th and 7th grade sciences, 8th grade science focuses on developing lab and thinking skills for high school science through investigating big ideas and challenging questions. Students will apply knowledge and creativity to design projects and explore ethical questions facing science and society. Major topics for the year include lab techniques and experimental design, applied chemistry, genetics and society, diversity of life, and forces and motion.

World Languages

Graded's World Languages Program not only empowers students to achieve fluency in speaking, listening, reading and writing in various languages, but also is crucial in developing intercultural competence and active global citizenry. By engaging in purposeful and collaborative communicative and academic activities that provide insight into their own heritage, students increase their awareness into the identities of others and learn to respect and embrace differences within an international community of learners.

French as an Additional Language A

Year (8th Grade only)

Prerequisite: None

The students' first encounter with French is designed to engage them in learning a new language and explore a variety of cultures. This course introduces students to the basic skills in French language. The focus of this course is the development of oral skills through a variety of communicative activities. Vocabulary is acquired constantly and structures vary according to the theme, topic or unit studied. Students will be able to communicate short messages on highly predictable, everyday topics that affect them directly.

French as an Additional Language provides students with the opportunity to improve not only language skills, but also to develop the ability to think critically and discover new ideas that represent divergent cultural and intellectual perspectives.

Spanish as an Additional Language A

Year (8th Grade only)

Prerequisite: None

The students' first encounter with Spanish is designed to engage them in learning a new language and explore a variety of cultures. This course introduces students to the basic skills in Spanish. The focus of this course is the development of oral skills through a variety of communicative activities. Vocabulary is acquired constantly and structures vary according to the theme, topic or unit studied. Students will be able to communicate short messages on highly predictable, everyday topics that affect them directly. The course covers the following topics: the individual and society, leisure and work, urban environment and rural environment. Students will be in contact with movies and different forms of art from different Spanish speaking countries.

Spanish as an Additional Language provides students with the opportunity to improve not only language skills, but also to develop the ability to think critically and construct their identity and knowledge while respecting differences and perspectives.

Portuguese as an Additional Language (PAL) A

Year

Prerequisite: None

This course is designed for students who have never been exposed to the Portuguese language or had very few opportunities to interact in it. For these beginners in Portuguese, this course is an important introduction to the language, its sounds and simple structures, in addition to the Brazilian culture. The main goal is to help students perform and interact using important basic vocabulary that will help them communicate using simple structures and functions. By the end of the year, students are able to talk about everyday topics that affect them directly as well as to engage in "real-life"

situations, such as going to restaurants, parties etc. Also, students produce a book called “Minha vida no Brasil”, as a result of their year-long work, which is an important reflection about their lives in Brazil and their own cultural identity.

Portuguese as an Additional Language (PAL) B

Year

Prerequisite: PAL A or Departmental Recommendation

This course is designed for students who have been exposed to the Portuguese language for at least 1 year or who may have a strong Latin-rooted linguistic background, showing a minimum proficiency in interacting in the target language without referring to his/her native language(s). PAL B is more focused in consolidating the fluency in Portuguese, increasing essential vocabulary - such as family, cities, transportation - as well as starting to learn to process writing skills in Portuguese. Conversation, comprehension and written abilities will continue to increase through multiple tasks that allow for getting acquainted with the language and its cultural aspects. Also, students start to consolidate past tense structures at this level. The focus of the learning is through projects that also implicate getting to know the rich Brazilian culture; for instance, Family; Cities; Houses and the Environment. Every project provides students with opportunities to practice and explore all language skills: listening, speaking, writing and reading.

Portuguese as an Additional Language (PAL) C

Year

Prerequisite: PAL B or Departmental Recommendation

This course is designed for students who have been exposed to the Portuguese language for 1 ½ -2 years and who have knowledge of present, future and past tense structures in the target language. In this PAL C year-long course, students get more and more fluent every class. There is consistent work towards progressing from sentence to paragraph level productions. Students talk about memories from their past such as their early childhood in poem-format, read a variety of legends and then write their own. Students begin to create with the language when talking about familiar topics. By the end of the school year, students are able to tell a personal anecdote with proper rhythm, intonation and style. Students interact with authentic sources as their language becomes more refined and proficient.

Portuguese as an Additional Language (PAL) D

Year

Prerequisite: PAL C or Departmental Recommendation

This course is designed for students who have been exposed to the Portuguese language for at least 2-3 years and have knowledge of present, past and future tenses, indicative, imperative and subjunctive modes. Students are motivated and interested in speaking Portuguese and learning about the rich Brazilian culture, as well as sharing cultural aspects of their own native languages, their heritage and of the places in which they have lived. The emphasis is to refine and improve fluency and accuracy while interacting in Portuguese. Their proficiency in speaking will continue to improve through the diverse opportunities given in class as contemporary subjects and issues are discussed. For appropriate usage of language, a strong structural foundation is given through multiple reading, speaking, writing and listening practices. These objectives are achieved through a social-historical-cultural approach that encompasses both linguistic and cultural studies.

Portuguese as an Additional Language Advanced 6 (PAL Adv 6)

Year

Prerequisite: PAL Adv 5 or Departmental Recommendation

Este curso anual destina-se a alunos de Português como língua de herança (que moraram fora e não desenvolveram o Português acadêmico) e para alunos com nível avançado de proficiência em Português, prioritariamente alunos estrangeiros que já tenham algum tipo de contato acadêmico com a língua. O objetivo geral é aprimorar habilidades de expressão oral e escrita, bem como ampliar o repertório cultural por meio de leituras de diferentes tipos de textos e linguagens, abrangendo gêneros como o seminário, crônica, conto, lenda, relato pessoal, romance e outros.

O curso tem uma bibliografia comum centrada em textos de autores brasileiros e africanos de língua portuguesa. Trabalhamos com quatro romances de autores brasileiros contemporâneos e um romance traduzido, além de contos e poemas selecionados pela professora. A lista de leituras obrigatórias inclui as seguintes obras: *A droga da obediência*, de Pedro Bandeira; *O menino que caiu no buraco*, de Ivan Jaf; *Nuno descobre o Brasil*, de José Roberto Torero e Marcus Aurelius Pimenta; *O livro Selvagem*, do mexicano Juan Villoro, e alguns contos do livro *Os da minha rua*, do autor angolano Ondjaki. A bibliografia é atualizada periodicamente.

A experiência cinematográfica complementa o estudo da linguagem e das narrativas. A produção audiovisual na sala de aula é mais uma fonte geradora de debates e problematizações temáticas e estéticas, tendo como um dos princípios norteadores a inserção do aluno na produção cultural do Brasil.

As atividades de produção escrita têm como ênfase a exploração dos elementos e momentos da narrativa - ficcional ou não - e uma introdução aos textos expositivos, com exercícios que estimulam, também, a criatividade e o próprio desenvolvimento do hábito da escrita. Em termos de análise linguística, o foco é a introdução dos conteúdos de morfologia, juntamente com a revisão de questões ortográficas, acentuação, pontuação e outras convenções da escrita.

Portuguese as an Additional Language Advanced 7 (PAL Adv 7)

Year

Prerequisite: PAL Adv 6 or Departmental Recommendation

Este curso anual destina-se a alunos de Português como língua de herança (que moraram fora e não desenvolveram o Português acadêmico) e para alunos com nível avançado de proficiência em Português, prioritariamente alunos estrangeiros que já tenham algum tipo de contato acadêmico com a língua. O objetivo geral é aprimorar habilidades de expressão oral e escrita, bem como ampliar o repertório cultural por meio de leituras de diferentes textos e linguagens, abrangendo gêneros como o debate, a apresentação oral, poesia, conto, resenha crítica, romance e outros.

O curso tem uma bibliografia comum obrigatória, bem como leituras adicionais de escolha do aluno, com a orientação do professor. Alguns dos autores lidos: Moacyr Scliar, Adriana Falcão, Yves de la Taille, Paulo Leminski, Manuel Bandeira, Carlos Drummond de Andrade e Augusto dos Anjos, dentre outros. A bibliografia é atualizada periodicamente.

As atividades de produção escrita têm como ênfase a exploração dos elementos da narrativa - ficcional ou não - e os fundamentos da argumentação, com exercícios que estimulam, também, a criatividade e o próprio desenvolvimento do hábito da escrita.

A experiência cinematográfica complementa o estudo da linguagem e das narrativas. A produção audiovisual na sala de aula é mais uma fonte geradora de debates e problematizações temáticas e estéticas, tendo como um dos princípios norteadores a inserção do aluno na produção cultural do Brasil.

Em termos de análise linguística, o foco é morfologia, especialmente o estudo dos verbos, e a introdução à sintaxe, juntamente com a revisão de questões ortográficas, de acentuação e outras convenções da escrita.

Portuguese as an Additional Language Advanced 8 (PAL Adv 8)

Year

Prerequisite: PAL Adv 7 or Departmental Recommendation

Este curso anual destina-se a alunos de Português como língua de herança (que moraram fora e não desenvolveram o Português acadêmico) e para alunos com nível avançado de proficiência em Português, prioritariamente alunos estrangeiros que já tenham algum tipo de contato acadêmico com a língua. O objetivo geral é aprimorar habilidades de expressão oral e escrita, bem como ampliar o repertório cultural por meio de leituras de diferentes textos e linguagens abrangendo gêneros literários e não-literários, interpretações, debates e projetos. As produções textuais serão o fio condutor a partir do qual serão desenvolvidos os trabalhos com leitura e expressão oral. Os estudos gramaticais serão feitos com vistas à adequação às situações comunicativas, sobretudo ao uso da linguagem acadêmica, buscando estudo mais aprofundados da gramática de língua portuguesa. Cultura brasileira é fio condutor do curso, na visão indissociável de língua e cultura construindo-se mutuamente.

A experiência cinematográfica complementa o estudo da linguagem e das narrativas. A produção audiovisual na sala de aula é mais uma fonte geradora de debates e problematizações temáticas e estéticas, tendo como um dos princípios norteadores a inserção do aluno na produção cultural do Brasil.

Portuguese 6

Year

Este curso anual destina-se a alunos de Português como língua materna ou com nível avançado de proficiência. O objetivo geral é aprimorar habilidades de expressão oral e escrita, bem como ampliar o repertório de leituras, abrangendo gêneros como o seminário, crônica, conto, lenda, relato pessoal, romance e outros.

O curso tem uma bibliografia comum centrada em textos de autores brasileiros e africanos de língua portuguesa. Trabalhamos com quatro romances de autores brasileiros contemporâneos e um romance traduzido, além de contos e poemas selecionados pela professora. A lista de leituras obrigatórias inclui as seguintes obras: *A droga da obediência*, de Pedro Bandeira; *O menino que caiu no buraco*, de Ivan Jaf; *Nuno descobre o Brasil*, de José Roberto Torero e Marcus Aurelius Pimenta; *O livro Selvagem*, do mexicano Juan Villoro, e alguns contos do livro *Os da minha rua*, do autor angolano Ondjaki. A bibliografia é atualizada periodicamente.

A experiência cinematográfica complementa o estudo da linguagem e das narrativas. A produção audiovisual na sala de aula é mais uma fonte geradora de debates e problematizações temáticas e estéticas, tendo como um dos princípios norteadores a inserção do aluno na produção cultural do Brasil.

As atividades de produção escrita têm como ênfase a exploração dos elementos e momentos da narrativa - ficcional ou não - e uma introdução aos textos expositivos, com exercícios que estimulam, também, a criatividade e o próprio desenvolvimento do hábito da escrita. Em termos de análise linguística, o foco é a introdução e aprofundamento dos conteúdos de morfologia, juntamente com a revisão de questões ortográficas, acentuação, pontuação e outras convenções da escrita.

Portuguese 7

Year

Este curso anual destina-se a alunos de Português como língua materna ou estrangeiros com nível de proficiência muito próximo ou igual ao de um nativo. O objetivo geral é aprimorar habilidades de expressão oral e escrita, bem como ampliar o repertório de leituras, abrangendo gêneros como o debate, a apresentação oral, poesia, conto, resenha crítica, romance e outros.

O curso tem uma bibliografia comum obrigatória, bem como leituras adicionais de escolha do aluno, com a orientação do professor. Alguns dos autores lidos: Moacyr Scliar, Adriana Falcão, Clara Averbuck, Osman Lins, Yves de la Taille, Paulo Leminski, Manuel Bandeira, Carlos Drummond de Andrade e Augusto dos Anjos, dentre outros. A bibliografia é atualizada periodicamente.

As atividades de produção escrita têm como ênfase a exploração dos elementos da narrativa - ficcional ou não - e os fundamentos da argumentação, com exercícios que estimulam, também, a criatividade e o próprio desenvolvimento do hábito da escrita.

A experiência cinematográfica complementa o estudo da linguagem e das narrativas. A produção audiovisual na sala de aula é mais uma fonte geradora de debates e problematizações temáticas e estéticas, tendo como um dos princípios norteadores a inserção do aluno na produção cultural do Brasil.

Em termos de análise linguística, o foco é o aprofundamento dos conteúdos de morfologia, especialmente o estudo dos verbos, e a introdução à sintaxe, juntamente com a revisão de questões ortográficas, de acentuação e outras convenções da escrita.

Portuguese 8

Year

Este curso anual destina-se a alunos de Português como língua materna ou com nível avançado de proficiência. O objetivo geral é aprimorar habilidades de expressão oral e escrita, bem como ampliar o repertório de leituras, abrangendo os gêneros poesia, conto, romance, relato pessoal, biografia, autobiografia, memória, entrevista, documentário e artigo de opinião. A bibliografia se divide em livros de leitura obrigatória e coletâneas de contos, poemas e outros gêneros textuais, permitindo ao aluno escolher. O trabalho é feito com autores contemporâneos brasileiros, portugueses e de

países africanos com expressão em língua portuguesa, como Bernardo Kucinski, João Anzanello Carrascoza, Michel Laub, Pepetela, Mia Couto, Gonçalo Tavares, Francisco Alvim, além de autores canônicos como Pedro Nava, Carolina Maria de Jesus, Machado de Assis, Marques Rebelo, Guimarães Rosa, Carlos Drummond de Andrade entre outros. As atividades de produção escrita são o cerne do curso. Trabalha-se, primeiramente, a escrita pessoal, com foco no relato pessoal, passando ao gênero ficcional (romance, conto e poesia) para que possamos terminar com uma introdução ao estudo dos gêneros argumentativos. As atividades de leitura e de expressão oral se desenvolvem em torno das atividades de produção escrita. Em termos de análise linguística, o foco está na revisão de questões ortográficas, de acentuação e outras convenções da escrita, assim como a introdução ao estudo aprofundado da sintaxe, dando início ao estudo do período simples. A experiência cinematográfica complementa o estudo da linguagem e das narrativas. A produção audiovisual na sala de aula é mais uma fonte geradora de debates e problematizações temáticas e estéticas, tendo como um dos princípios norteadores a inserção do aluno na produção cultural do Brasil, focando-se, neste curso, nas produções documentais