

2011 - 2012

Middle School Elective Course Catalog

Grades Six - Eight



- Khara Ledonne



Saint Ann's School

Altiora Peto

Dear Middle School Students,

Although it is only early March, it is already time to begin thinking about registering for your classes for the coming year. To that end, we offer you this course catalog.

Perusing, discussing, and in some cases agonizing over language, elective, and music choices are excellent examples of the increasing voice you as Saint Ann's students have in your own education as you move through middle school. Take advantage of this opportunity! Read through the following pages (*starting with page 4*), discuss your options with your family and friends, and spend time thinking about what you really want to learn and experience.

Once you have made your decisions about which classes you want to take, make your selections on the included Course Selection sheets and bring them to school. All students will meet with the appropriate division head to discuss and finalize their choices. Current fifth graders will meet with Katie Haddock, the Assistant Head of the Upper Middle School, while current sixth and seventh graders will meet with me.

See you soon!

John R. Smith
Head of the Middle School



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*In the beginning the pencils were sharp.
 In the beginning the erasers were pink.
 In the beginning the table was free of junk.
 At the end the dust was thick.
 The pink was black,
 The desk-top did stick.
 How I like the end.*

--Mai Li G.



In March of each year families receive the Middle School Course Catalog. Full of interesting and exciting courses for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students, the catalog's arrival marks a time of reflection for you and your parents. I invite you to read through the course descriptions and spend some time discussing options.

This catalog is divided into sections for rising sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. There is also a special section for students new to Saint Ann's (Welcome!). After reading the general advice on this page for upper middle school students, flip ahead to your section and start reading/thinking/planning for next year!

As you read through the descriptions of the offerings and discuss your options with your parents and friends, keep in mind that the number of periods available in any given day or week is limited. Ideally, your schedule should challenge but not overwhelm you; striking a balance between what you *must* take, what you would *like* to take, and what you realistically *have time* to take requires some thought and judgment. ***Remember that it may not be possible to create a schedule that contains all of your first choices***, so be sure to take some time thinking about and making realistic second and third choices.

While I encourage you to sample broadly from the following course offerings, try to resist the temptation to request too much. Consider your choices carefully, and ***be prepared to stick with your selections throughout the coming school year***, no matter whether you ultimately receive your first, second, or in rare cases, your third choice. Except for extreme cases, students may *not* withdraw from courses after October.

Please note that you can also find this course catalog online. From the Saint Ann's home page, click on *Departments*, and then *2011 - 2012 Middle School Course Catalog*.

That's all for now. Please look over your choices, indulge your interests, and plan wisely!



You can learn a lot about Saint Ann's School on our website, and I encourage you to check us out at www.saintannsny.org. In particular, you can find an online copy of this course catalog. From our home page, click on *Departments*.

For students entering seventh or eighth grade, there is a special section of the Saint Ann's website devoted just to you! From the Saint Ann's home page, click on *Departments*, and then on *Upper Middle School Web Page*. You will need the following (case sensitive) username and password to access this portion of our website:

username: **peto**

password: **altiora**



These pages contain a wealth of information about seventh and eighth grade life at Saint Ann's. You will also find links to download registration forms for language, elective, and music courses. Use these forms together with this course catalog to register for your classes for the coming year.

*I want to jump
Out of my seat
And into the words,
Swim with the commas,
Ride a period.
But the feeling would come to an
End,
And my daydream would be
Finished.*

--Anna M.



If you are new to Saint Ann's: welcome! We, Katie Haddock and John Smith, are very glad that you have joined us in the middle school, and we hope you are excited, too.

Registering for classes is a bit different at Saint Ann's, and this course catalog is proof of that. Take some time to read through the course descriptions for the grade you will be entering, and begin to make your choices. If you have any questions, you or your parents are welcome to call or email and we'll do our best to help.

All students are automatically scheduled into one art class. Sixth grade students will also automatically receive a theater class, while rising seventh and eighth graders will need to choose at least one. All students must also select a music course. Everything else is optional, but I encourage you to sample broadly. Please note that if you are entering seventh or eighth grade, you will also need to choose a foreign language.

Now, it's time to get started! Find the section of this catalog that applies to you and start reading. Good luck, and have fun making your selections.



Questions?



New 6th Graders

Contact Katie Haddock
Assistant Head of the Upper Middle School

718.522.1660 x 272
Khaddock@saintannsny.org

New 7th & 8th Graders

Contact John Smith
Head of the Middle School

718.522.1660 x 234
Jsmith@saintannsny.org



THEATER

Theater is an important part of Saint Ann's students' experience, and as such we ask all of our middle schoolers to involve themselves in the theater in one way or another. Whether they are acting, building, costuming, dancing, filming, puppeteering, or writing, Saint Ann's students are exploring the craft of the theater.

All fifth and sixth grade students are automatically scheduled into one theater course, but they have the option to add other theater courses if they wish. Seventh and eighth grade students are able to choose which theater course (or courses) interest them most, but are required to choose at least one.



VISUAL ARTS

All middle school students are automatically scheduled into a mixed media fine arts course meeting twice a week. These classes explore visual expression through a wide range of materials and media and dimensional formats. A variety of technical and conceptual approaches are introduced and practiced throughout the middle school years. The artist within is nurtured, challenged, and strengthened.



Registration for sixth grade is similar to previous years, but with a few more choices. All current fifth grade students will meet with Katie Haddock, Assistant Head of the Upper Middle School, to review their course selections. Feel free to visit her in the Sixth Grade Office with questions before or after your individual meeting. As always, your parents should feel free to call or email Katie Haddock with their questions and concerns.

Requirements for sixth grade students:

Art: one course will be automatically placed on your schedule

Computer: one computer class in either fifth or sixth grade

Music: at least one course, or a commitment to musical instruction outside of school as approved by the Assistant Head of the Upper Middle School

Rec. Arts: at least two periods per week

Theater: at least one course

Except for extreme cases as determined by the Assistant Head of the Upper Middle School, students may not withdraw from classes after October.

*Why do poets always write about gems?
I'm a poet; I don't write about gems.
I don't like gems:
History in the making.*

-- Sofiy I.



VISUALARTS

All students are automatically scheduled into a mixed media fine arts course meeting twice a week. This course explores visual expression through a wide range of materials, media, and dimensional formats. A variety of technical and conceptual approaches are introduced and practiced throughout the middle school years. The artist within is nurtured, challenged, and strengthened.

THEATER

All sixth grade students are automatically scheduled into a once-a-week "Theater Games" course that involves character study, improvisation and basic technique. Class plays are performed. Students are encouraged to choose additional courses according to their interests.

*Puppetry (1x per week) - This course is for students who want to learn how to make many styles of puppets: rod puppets, marionettes, hand puppets, and life-sized body puppets for the annual *Puppet Parade*. Students who want to put a puppet show together and write their own script are welcome to do so.*

Costume Production (1x per week) - Students study costume by learning to sew by machine and by hand. In addition to learning different sewing techniques, students learn about costume history, pattern making, and draping. They are encouraged to draw costumes and personal design ideas. Students construct costumes for each middle school theater production, as well as work on several personal projects.

Sixth Sense Theater (1x per week) - This course includes basic acting techniques, character work, and improvisation. Scripts of various kinds are explored. "Workshop" play performances will develop from this course.

*Technical Theater (1 double period per week) - An introduction to stage carpentry and other theatrical craftsmanship, *Technical Theater* is both a practical and a theoretical course. Carpentry, electrics, audio, and effects lectures act as groundwork for hands-on experience with power tools, lighting equipment, and sound gear. Students work side-by-side with their teachers, developing basic stage construction skills, building flats and platforms, creating props, and painting, all the while adhering to stage etiquette in this productive environment. Students who wish to extend themselves further may apply for a position on a production running crew. Please note that being a member of a running crew requires time outside of class. *Also, please be aware that due to size limitations and safety considerations, enrollment priority will be given to seventh and eighth graders.**



African Dance (1 double period per week) - This course offers an exciting introduction to the joys and complexities of traditional West African music, rhythms, culture and dances. Come one, come all!

Dance Fusion (1x per week) - Designed for fifth and sixth grade boys and girls at both beginning and intermediate levels of dance, this course requires no previous experience - but you have to like to move! Combining action-packed movement games, dance techniques, and experiments in how to make dances, this course may feature sections on: swing dancing, hip-hop and/or jazz! Everyone from athletes to actors to artists will enjoy this course!

Breaking the Code (1x per week) - This two-semester workshop is a general purpose media and technology analysis class. We will deal primarily with studying and discussing new forms of media and technological advancements from film, advertisements, narrative structure, television, computers, robotics, communication, and the ever-evolving world wide web.

The purpose of *Breaking the Code* is to spark discussion about how media and new technology alter what it means to be alive, affect our emotions, change the way we live, interact subliminally with our psychological state, and shape the future of humanity. At the end of the year, each student will craft a final project of his or her choosing, exploring one aspect of new media or technology that we have covered in our class.



COMPUTER

*All courses use the Apple computers in the Saint Ann's Computer Center, mostly using software that also runs on Windows and Unix/Linux machines. Classes meet twice a week for an entire year in classrooms with at least one computer per student. **Students must take at least one computer course by the end of their sixth grade year.***

Computer 1 (2x per week) - This course offers an introduction to computers through creative projects including drawing, animation, webpage creation, programming, word processing, music, databases, spreadsheets, and touch-typing. Students often build haunted houses, adventure games, and personal web sites. *Prerequisite: None*

*The mother has baggy eyes.
The son stares at his food.
The daughter is still in her pajamas.
But the baby is energized and ready to go.*

-- Stella J.



Computer II (2x per week) - Building on the concepts introduced in *Computer I*, the focus in this course is on using the computer to creatively express ideas and helping students solve problems relevant to their work at Saint Ann's. While developing their keyboarding skills and using the computer to create web pages, images, animations, graphics, spreadsheets, and databases, students are encouraged to refine their ability to organize their ideas and learn independently. *Prerequisite: Computer I or instructor's permission.*

Middle School Programming I (2x per week) - This course is an introduction to logic and computer languages. Be prepared to concentrate and experiment: we don't spend any time drawing pictures, but we do write programs (just using words) to find prime factors, for example, and to make objects fly about the screen, perhaps with parachutes and keyboard control. *Prerequisite: Computing I or instructor's permission.*

Physical Computing I (2x per week) - Learn how to physically interact with a computer without using the mouse, keyboard, or monitor interface. Move beyond the idea that a computer is a box or a system of information retrieval and processing. Using a microcontroller and a single-chip computer that can fit in your hand, learn to write and execute interactive computer programs that convert movement into digital information. Work with components such as resistors, capacitors, diodes, and transistors, as well as integrated components. Control motors, interpret sensors, and explore advanced concepts in interface, motion, and display. Through sequential exercises and longer creative assignments, learn how to program, prototype, use components effectively, and develop your understanding of what the hardware can do and how it interfaces with others. *Prerequisite: some programming or permission from instructor.*



RECREATIONAL ARTS

Sixth grade students are scheduled into two to four gym classes per week depending upon the rest of their schedule. In addition, they may opt to take:

Karate I (1x per week) - This course offers a serious, non-intimidating approach to traditional martial arts. Students begin with basic punches, kicks, and blocks, and then progress to forms and other basics on their way to freestyle sparring. The primary emphasis is on karate as a sport and martial art, although confrontation training and self-defense applications are also covered. A gi (karate uniform) is both required and provided.

Middle School Exercise (1x per week) - This course provides an introduction to various forms of exercise and conditioning which may include cardiovascular and weight training, fitness walks, climbing, group games, and sport skills.



SEMINARS



Poetry (1x per week) - A workshop - a place where things are made with tools. We experiment; we play with words, ideas and the devices people use to make poems. We make poems.

Problem Solving (2x per week) - Problem Solving is designed to be an interactive and fun class for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders who love math – love it enough to spend two days a week during lunch creating, solving, and discussing a wide range of interesting math problems, puzzles, and games. Some problems arise from discussions in regular math classes; some are classical mathematical questions; some are problems created by students in the class. Homework consists of a few challenging problems, and students are encouraged to collaborate with friends and family.

Problem Solving is not intended to help students "get ahead" in the math curriculum, but rather to supplement an established or burgeoning love of mathematics. *Please note that we often meet during at least one lunch period.*

Math for Contests (2x per week) - This weekly workshop aims to prepare students for the kinds of problems that typically comprise middle school mathematics competitions, notably *MathCounts* and the *AMC8*. It offers students the chance to work on previous contest problems both cooperatively and competitively with their peers. Although direct instruction plays a role in the course, these occasions will spring from the doing of problems by students.

*It's a five star folder
Five stars for high quality, but look!
Already there are rips and nicks
Running up along the sides.
It's lasted, though,
Through half of the year,
So I think I'll give it three.*

--Catherine S.



*“Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom or philosophy.”
~ Beethoven*

Overview:

Most sixth grade students continue studying the instrument they began playing in fifth grade. Two years of study enables a fuller learning experience that prepares each young musician for future participation in chamber music groups, classical ensembles, or jazz ensembles. Sixth grade students may also begin percussion or sign up for Music Lab. String instrumentalists are welcome to participate in *Camcrata*.

Particulars:

Students are placed in small classes.

While Saint Ann’s provides instruments for all fifth graders, sixth grade students may rent instruments from the school for a yearly fee of \$150. No child is prevented from renting an instrument due to financial need, and parents may call Matthew Bloom, our Director of Finance, to discuss financial arrangements.

Each student should carefully choose a first, second, and third choice of instrument. The department will make every effort to see that each student receives his or her first choice given the number of sections available in each instrument category.

During the third year of instrumental study students are *strongly encouraged* to supplement class time with private lessons (the department can provide a list of private teachers to students and parents). These lessons are essential for participation in our instrumental ensemble and chamber music programs. Students’ ongoing progress is evaluated through checklist and anecdotal reports, and each spring we assess all instrumental students in an attempt to ensure appropriate placement for the following year.

Love

*It fills a proud parents' heart,
It ruins a young man's life,
It stares a young lonesome woman in the face,
It is creating, yet destroying our world*

-- Casey H.



All music classes meet twice a week, except for Percussion I, which meets once a week. Each student should carefully choose a first, second, and third choice of instrument. The Music Department faculty will make every effort to see that each student receive his/her top choice, given the number of sections available in each instrument category.

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Music Lab I (2x week) - An exploration of basic composition, production, and keyboard musicianship through the use of electronic musical instruments, computers, and a variety of compositional, production, and instructional software. Students develop increased fluency in note-reading, ear-training, listening, keyboarding, and music vocabulary.

INSTRUMENTAL STUDY

All students in the instrumental study program must either provide their own instruments or rent them from the school.

Beginning I: Percussion – Students may choose percussion for beginning group lessons. All students are expected to practice at least fifteen minutes a day.

Continuing II: Clarinet, Flute, French Horn, Percussion, Trumpet – These courses are a continuation of the first year instrument classes. In the second year of study, all students are expected to practice at least twenty minutes a day. If braces are in the future for any student who wishes to continue studying on a wind instrument, please tell your teacher so that appropriate decisions may be made.

January

So cold, so bitter

Harsh, nipping at every arm and leg

Take cover as soon as possible

February

Snow slowly melting

Days passing by

So many foreign holidays

Is that a bud of a flower I think I see?

-- John W.



PERFORMING ENSEMBLES

The Music Department offers the following large ensembles to sixth graders based on student needs and interests. If you would like to join an ensemble, we recommend you select two from the following choices. Speak with your current instrumental teacher if you want to know more about any group. Once enrolled in any instrumental ensemble, the Music Department strongly encourages students to engage in private lessons; the expectation is for all students to be proficient in reading and sight singing as determined by the department.

Please note that all performing ensembles are subject to change from year to year, depending on the number and musical level of all participating students.

Choral

Middle School Singers (2x week) – Any upper middle schooler may join this choral group. This performing ensemble focuses on strengthening the singing voice, and developing the ability to part-sing independently. We perform music in different languages, styles, and levels of difficulty. Please note that one of the class meetings may take place during half of one lunch period.

Instrumental

Camerata (2x week) – This class is open to any student who currently studies a string instrument privately, or who has participated in the Saint Ann's strings instruction program. This group plays a broad range of musical styles to develop ensemble and listening skills. Students must provide their own instruments or rent them from the school.

Please note that because this class is of mixed instrumentation, and the focus is on developing musicianship and ensemble skills, rather than technique particular to each instrument, students are *strongly encouraged* to supplement class instruction with private lessons.

*I will become lined if I stare at any more paper.
I will need to be sharpened if I hold any more pencils.
A writer's life.*

--Katrina N.



Registration for your final two years of Middle School is similar to previous years - there are just many more choices! All current sixth and seventh grade students meet with the Head of the Middle School to review their selections. You are welcome to drop by the Middle School office with questions before or after your individual meeting. As always, your parents should feel free to call or email our office with their questions and concerns.

Requirements for all seventh and eighth grade students:

Art: one course will be automatically placed on your schedule

Computer: not required

Language: at least one course

Music: at least one course, or a commitment to musical instruction outside of school as approved by the Head of the Middle School

Rec. Arts: at least two periods per week

Theater: at least one course

Except for extreme cases as determined by the Head of the Middle School, students may not withdraw from classes after October.

*her little mouth moving
chewing with her mouth open
those were the days when no one cared
how you ate
what you did
but now you can't get away with anything*



A Brief History

The study of language is first introduced at Saint Ann's in the Lower School as Language Arts. In fourth grade the language structures program takes formal charge of language studies in a three-year sequence, beginning with the structures and history of English and culminating in the sixth grade in a comparison of English and Latin grammars.

The formal study of a foreign language begins in the seventh grade, where students may choose from a variety of classical and modern languages, all of which continue through High School.

What to Expect

When you begin seventh grade, you will select either one or two foreign language courses from the following choices: *Latin, Spanish, French, Chinese, or Classical Greek*. To take *Classical Greek*, you will need the permission of both the Classics Department chair and the Head of the Middle School. Please note that except in rare cases, seventh graders may not take more than two languages. If you are planning for eighth grade, you will most likely continue with your current language choice(s).

Some seventh grade students may decide to choose a second language, which is a decision that involves a commitment to a sixth, full-time academic class. It is important that you be prepared for the extra work this will entail. Eighth grade students wanting to add a second language should discuss this choice with the Head of the Middle School. Students may not select both *French* and *Spanish* unless they have had *at least two year's* experience with either language, and they obtain permission from Romance Languages Department chair. Eighth grade students may elect to study *Japanese*, but not if it will be their third language.

The Middle School foreign language program is best utilized by those students who pursue their chosen language(s) for **two full years**. As a result, I encourage you to think carefully about your choices, and to be prepared to **stick with your selection(s) through eighth grade**.

Extra Help

French and Spanish students may make use of our *Language Room* when their teachers feel this extra support will help. This instruction is offered free of charge by department faculty, is scheduled during the school day, and lasts only as long as a teacher feels is necessary.



All language classes meet four times per week.

Spanish Beginner I

The Beginner I course aims to guide students in their first steps toward proficiency. An assortment of useful vocabulary and idiomatic expressions, combined with the fundamentals of grammar and syntax, provide students with the opportunity to become comfortable with the basic elements of the Spanish language and to develop confidence. Accurate pronunciation is encouraged, and classes are taught mostly in Spanish. Audiovisual material is used to increase auditory training. By year's end, students are able to carry on an elementary conversation in Spanish, as well as read simple sentences.

French Beginner I

The Beginner I course aims to guide students in their first steps toward proficiency. An assortment of useful vocabulary and idiomatic expressions, combined with the fundamentals of grammar and syntax, provide students with the opportunity to become comfortable with the basic elements of the French language and to develop confidence. Accurate pronunciation is encouraged, and classes are taught mostly in French. Audiovisual material is used to increase auditory training. By year's end, students are able to carry on an elementary conversation in French, as well as read simple sentences.

Latin Beginner I

Although this is an introductory course, it is designed for students who have already encountered Latin in the sixth grade course *Introduction to Languages*. As a result, much of the beginning material is treated as review, and students who are new to Saint Ann's are advised to meet with their teacher to further discuss the requirements. The course in itself both reviews and introduces students to a wide vocabulary and all basic Latin forms and syntax. Written memorization is required. The course also focuses on various aspects of life in ancient times such as politics, technology, art, architecture, and daily life.

Chinese I

The aim of this course is to introduce students to Mandarin Chinese, while increasing awareness and understanding of Chinese-speaking cultures through songs, poems, and calligraphy. We emphasize Pin Yin, a spelling system that helps students learn how to pronounce words. We also focus on the four tones, while regularly introducing essential sentence structures, useful expressions, and vocabulary. The practice of the four tones, based on students' mastery of

continues...



Pin Yin, ensures their pronunciation of words and sentences with an accurate accent. Students will learn 350 Chinese characters during the year, and both traditional and simplified characters are included in the textbook to meet the different needs of learners. Topics include Chinese names, friends, schools, families, jobs, animals, colors, numbers, birthdays, and Chinese food.
Textbook: Chinese For Youth - Book 1

Classical Greek I

The aim of this course is to introduce students to the basic forms and syntax of classical Greek. Memorization of forms and vocabulary are stressed in order to facilitate the reading of classical Greek texts as quickly as possible, such as selections of readings from the New Testament, from Xenophon's Anabasis, and from Plato. *Please note that Classical Greek requires the permission of both the Head of the Middle School and the Classics Department chair.*



-- Chi Chi W.

VISUAL ARTS

All students are automatically scheduled into a mixed media fine arts course meeting twice a week. This course explores visual expression through a wide range of materials, media, and dimensional formats. A variety of technical and conceptual approaches are introduced and practiced throughout the middle school years. The artist within is nurtured, challenged, and strengthened.

THEATER

All seventh grade students must choose at least one theater class.

*Puppetry (1x per week) - This course is for students who want to learn how to make many styles of puppets: rod puppets, marionettes, hand puppets, and life-sized body puppets for the annual *Puppet Parade*. Students who want to put a puppet show together and write their own script are welcome to do so.*

*Puppetry Production (1 double period per week) - A class for inventors and experimenters, and for more advanced students who want to continue their puppetry work at a higher level. *Prerequisite: two previous years of puppetry or permission of the instructor.**

Costume Production (1x per week) - Students study costume by learning to sew by machine and by hand. In addition to learning different sewing techniques, students learn about costume history, pattern making, and draping. They are encouraged to draw costumes and personal design ideas. Students construct costumes for each middle school theater production, as well as work on several personal projects.

Theater Workshop (1x per week) - This course includes basic acting techniques, improvisation, scene work, and character work. We explore all of kinds of scripts, and workshop play performances develop from this course. Come and play the roles you dream about!

Double Theater (1 double period per week) - A more advanced theater course offered to students who show intense interest in acting; it is for those students who just can't get enough performance time from a single class period! The course includes improvisation, character work, monologue work, and scene study with texts. An array of scripts and texts are explored. Ensemble work is encouraged. We work on further developing technical skills and exploring new creative approaches. Workshop performances of scenes or a short play develop from this course. A trip or two will be scheduled if an appropriate show is in production.



Technical Theater (1 double period per week) - An introduction to stage carpentry and other theatrical craftsmanship, *Technical Theater* is both a practical and a theoretical course. Carpentry, electrics, audio, and effects lectures act as groundwork for hands-on experience with power tools, lighting equipment, and sound gear. Students work side-by-side with their teachers, developing basic stage construction skills, building flats and platforms, creating props, and painting, all the while adhering to stage etiquette in this productive environment. Students who wish to extend themselves further may apply for a position on a production running crew. *Please note that being a member of a running crew requires time outside of class.*

The Art of Comedy (1 double period per week) - Comedy improvisation and slapstick have as their roots the popular street theater of sixteenth century Italy known as *Commedia dell'Arte*. In this exciting introduction to comic acting and theater history, students create characters through mask work, develop funny walks, learn to juggle, and try their hand at comedy writing and directing. While students explore this spirited and physical style of theater, they continue to work with the improvisation exercises and theater games of contemporary theater. This course is open to those interested in ensemble work, silliness, and risk-taking. Workshop performances develop from this course.

African Dance (1x per week) - This course offers an exciting introduction to the joys and complexities of traditional West African music, rhythms, culture and dances. Come one, come all!

High Velocity Dance (1x per week) - This is an exciting course, jam-packed with skills, fitness, and combinations. The various dance styles covered may include: swing, jitterbug, modern, jazz, salsa, ballet, tap, hip-hop, and musical theater dance. There are opportunities for students to create their own choreography, perform, and collaborate on a dance video unlike any they have ever seen! No previous dance experience is required. Athletes, gymnasts, actors and artists will all enjoy this class!

Middle School Playwriting (1 double period per week) - *Fall semester only.* This is a workshop course in which students read their work to each other, and then discuss and improvise on the material presented. By the end of the course, each student has written a one-act play that is presented as a staged or semi-staged reading at the *Middle School Playwriting Festival*.





COMPUTER

All courses use the Apple computers in the Saint Ann's Computer Center, mostly using software that also runs on Windows and Unix/Linux machines. Classes meet twice a week for an entire year in classrooms with at least one computer per student.

Computer I (2x per week) - This course offers an introduction to computers through creative projects including drawing, animation, webpage creation, programming, word processing, music, databases, spreadsheets, and touch-typing. Students often build haunted houses, adventure games, and personal web sites. *Prerequisite: None*

Computer II (2x per week) - Building on the concepts introduced in *Computer I*, the focus in this course is on using the computer to creatively express ideas and helping students solve problems relevant to their work at Saint Ann's. While developing their keyboarding skills and using the computer to create webpages, images, animations, graphics, spreadsheets, and databases, students are encouraged to refine their ability to organize their ideas and learn independently. *Prerequisite: Computer I or instructor's permission.*

Computer III (2x per week) - A continuation of *Computer II* with more advanced material. Students in the past have built colorful video games, language translators (English to Spanish, for example), interactive maps, and digital movies. *Prerequisite: Computer II, any programming class, or instructor's permission.*

Computer Animation (2x per week) - By telling a compelling story, defying the laws of physics, or creating abstract motion, animating can infuse a sequence of images with the illusion of life. But without a firm understanding of the principles of animation, characters fall flat. Students learn the basics — planning, key framing, timing, 3D modeling, and stop motion — using the computer, storyboards, drawings, cutouts, and puppets. Students also view and discuss the work of other animators. *Prerequisite: Computer I or instructor's permission.*

3D Animation (2x per week) - Students learn the basics of computer animation - modeling, basic lighting, and animation techniques - by working with Blender's IPO curves, armature basics, vertex animation, modifiers, particles, child-parent relationships, and a physics engine. *Prerequisite: Computer II.*

Middle School Programming I (2x per week) - This course is an introduction to logic and computer languages. Be prepared to concentrate and experiment: we don't spend any time drawing pictures, but we do write programs (just using words) to find prime factors, for example, and to make objects fly about the screen, perhaps with parachutes and keyboard control. *Prerequisite: Computing I or instructor's permission.*



Middle School Programming II (2x per week) - This course is a continuation of *Programming I* with more advanced material, including the Java language. *Prerequisite: Programming I or instructor's permission.*

Physical Computing I (2x per week) - Have you ever wanted to build an electronic instrument or an interactive art installation? In this course students learn how to physically interact with a computer without using the mouse, keyboard, or monitor interface. We move beyond the idea that a computer is a box or a system of information retrieval and processing. Using a microcontroller and a single-chip computer that can fit in your hand, we learn to write and execute interactive computer programs that convert movement into digital information. Work with components such as resistors, capacitors, diodes, and transistors, as well as integrated components. Control motors, interpret sensors, and explore advanced concepts in interface, motion, and display. Through sequential exercises and longer creative assignments, we learn how to program, prototype, use components effectively, and develop our understanding of what the hardware can do and how it interfaces with others. *Prerequisite: some programming or permission from instructor.*

Physical Computing II (2x per week) - This class is an experimental environment in which students combine theory and practice to interface microcontrollers and transducers. We learn how to make devices respond to a wide range of human physical actions. Building on previous knowledge acquired in *Physical Computing I*, we build projects from schematics, make programs based on class examples, and make interfaces talk to each other. Topics may include: networking protocols and network topologies; mobile objects and wireless networks of various sorts; digital logic building blocks and digital numbering systems. Students are involved in short production assignments and final projects, and keep an online journal documenting their work and reading. *Prerequisite: Physical Computing I or permission from instructor.*

iPhone Programming (2x per week) - Learn how to program with Objective-C, Interface Builder, and XCode on the iPhone and iTouch's unix-based operating system. Understand the way the iPhone applications work and how to build them. Actively and creatively explore this new field of little computers using the iPhone as the main research platform. **No iPhone required.** *Prerequisite: at least one year of programming (ideally two) or permission from department.*

Wearable, Soft, and Experimental Circuits (2x per week) - Standard electronic components can be hard, brittle, or difficult to work with. Embedding them in soft environments, like clothing or toys, can be awkward. Building circuits using paper, fabrics, thread, and paint opens up new possibilities for soft, curly, organic, visible, and attractive electronics. This class will explore materials, components, and construction techniques for successfully integrating soft materials with standard electrical supplies. **(continues...)**



The results will be light, thin, flexible, durable, aesthetic, and even expressive circuits. We will also cover techniques for integrating the Arduino LilyPad microcontroller and XBee radio communication to create interactive and social objects. Students will develop wearable devices and accessories as a means of self-expression and communication. Explore the relationship between the body, fashion, technology, and social interaction. Experiment with materials and objects, and develop concepts to refine, construct, and test. Make t-shirts that interact with each other, objects that light up in the dark, toys that talk to each other, or artwork that responds to a user's movements. The resulting possibilities are almost endless!

Programming For Little Computers (2x per week) - This class covers object oriented programming, Objective-C, scripting languages, OS X internals, Interface Builder, and XCode. We also explore the rapid developing OpenFrameworks port for the iPhone, as well as web apps. The class is highly technical in nature and is geared toward students who are looking for a challenging programming experience. The goal of the course is to actively and creatively explore this new field of little computers using the iPhone, iPad, and Chumby as the main platforms. *Prerequisite: experience with Object-oriented programming.*



RECREATIONAL ARTS

Seventh grade students are scheduled into two to four gym classes per week depending upon the rest of their schedule. If they wish, students may select one or more of the following specialized courses as part of their recreational arts requirements.

Fencing I (1x per week) - An introduction to the sport of fencing, basic technique, and conditioning. Included are execution of simple attacks and defensive actions, with special emphasis on developing proper form.

Karate I (1x per week) - This course offers a serious, non-intimidating approach to traditional martial arts. Students begin with basic punches, kicks, and blocks, and then progress to forms and other basics on their way to freestyle sparring. The primary emphasis is on karate as a sport and martial art, although confrontation training and self-defense applications are also covered. A *gi* (karate uniform) is both required and provided.

Karate II (1x per week) - This course is for students who have completed one year of karate at Saint Ann's. It focuses on material for the yellow-belt rank and above. A *gi* (karate uniform) is both required and provided.

Middle School Exercise (1x per week) - This course provides an introduction to various forms of exercise and conditioning which may include Yoga, strength and cardiovascular training, fitness walks, climbing, group games, and sport skills.



SEMINARS



Oration and Rhetoric (1x per week at lunch) - Students learn to deliver two minute speeches on a range of themes using rhetorical tactics and memorization methods to compose in their heads and then orate unscripted speeches. The instructor provides the themes and debate subjects as well as the age old rhetorical methods (taken from the ancient Roman and Greek schools of rhetoric and still used to this day by our more celebrated and literate politicians). Students then invent, set, and artfully articulate their ideas. In the early spring students test their speaking skills at the *Packer Model Congress*. This course is open to anyone with mental stamina and a desire to speak in a formal setting.

Poetry (1x per week) - A workshop - a place where things are made with tools. We experiment; we play with words, ideas and the devices people use to make poems. We make poems.

Problem Solving (2x per week) - *Problem Solving* is designed to be an interactive and fun class for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders who love math – love it enough to spend two days a week during lunch creating, solving, and discussing a wide range of interesting math problems, puzzles, and games. Some problems arise from discussions in regular math classes; some are classical mathematical questions; some are problems created by students in the class. Homework consists of a few challenging problems, and students are encouraged to collaborate with friends and family.

Problem Solving is not intended to help students "get ahead" in the math curriculum, but rather to supplement an established or burgeoning love of mathematics. *Please note that we often meet during at least one lunch period.*

Math for Contests (2x per week) - This weekly workshop aims to prepare students for the kinds of problems that typically comprise middle school mathematics competitions, notably *MathCounts* and the *AMC8*. It offers students the chance to work on previous contest problems both cooperatively and competitively with their peers. Although direct instruction plays a role in the course, these occasions spring from the doing of problems by students.

Independent Research in Mathematics (1 or 2x per week, depending upon enrollment) - This course offers interested students the opportunity to engage in both individual and collaborative mathematical research. There is no set topic or agenda; students are expected to pose and develop their own problems, pursue their own ideas, go where their curiosity takes them, and experience firsthand both the joys and the frustrations of creative mathematical work. Students meet once or twice a week with a faculty member to discuss their projects, share results, and explore possible new directions for investigation. *Permission of the Mathematics Department is required.*



Independent Research in Science (2x per week) - This course is dedicated to fans of science desiring to design and conduct their own independent research projects. Students have ample opportunity to formulate strategies to answer personally perplexing, "What would happen if?", "Why is it that?", "Let's see what happens if..." types of questions. During the first semester lab skills are fine-tuned by conducting mini-projects in diverse fields. We explore popular claims, trying to support or debunk them. Is Gorilla Tape indeed the strongest? Is cinnamon a natural anti-fungal agent able to protect bread from spoiling? Does organic milk last longer? Long-term ecological experiments are set up to address the impact of toxins in our environment using *Daphnia*, a water flea, and phytoremediation, the use of plants to mitigate pollution. Other experiments include collecting and isolating Brooklyn plant extracts, hoping to discover novel antibiotic and anti-fungal agents; mixing up fiery chemical reactions; conducting spicy surveys; and testing consumer products. Throughout the year the class will particularly focus on developing the skills of scientific research: gathering background literature, writing procedures, performing experiments, collecting data, summarizing conclusions, and presenting findings.

In the second half of the year students in *Independent Research* conduct individually selected research projects. The year culminates in a presentation of this work in a poster symposium.

Robotics (2x per week) - This course offers students a totally hands-on introduction to concepts of engineering and mechanics. Students work in teams to design and program their own contraptions for various challenges. The robots students build need to navigate mazes, adapt to their environment, lift and move objects, sing, dance and even play hockey.

*Walk
On the walls
That separate
Our dreams from our reality
Learn to slip through
The pinhole
In the silky mirrors.*

--Sophia R.



“Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom or philosophy.”
~ Beethoven

Overview:

Seventh grade students may continue with the instrument they chose in fifth grade, and/or they may begin guitar, saxophone, or trombone. Students may also choose a non-instrumental course.

Particulars:

Students are placed in small classes.

Students may rent instruments from the school for a yearly fee of \$150. No child is prevented from renting an instrument due to financial need, and parents may call Matthew Bloom, our Director of Finance, to discuss financial arrangements.

Each student should carefully choose a first, second, and third choice of instrument. The department will make every effort to see that each student receives his or her first choice, given the number of sections available in each instrument category.

During the third year of instrumental study students are *strongly encouraged* to supplement class time with private lessons (the department can provide a list of private teachers to students and parents). These lessons are essential for participation in our instrumental ensemble and chamber music programs. Students' ongoing progress is evaluated through checklist and anecdotal reports, and each spring we assess all instrumental students in an attempt to ensure appropriate placement for the following year.

The Music Department faculty appropriately place those students wishing to begin ensemble study. While the specific number and composition of ensembles will inevitably change from year to year, for the upcoming year students may choose *Brass Techniques, Camerata, Clarinet Ensemble, Flute Choir, or Jazz Techniques*. Auditions are required for any students *beginning* in any ensemble.



All music classes meet twice a week for a **full year**. Each student should carefully choose a first, second, and third choice of instrument. The Music Department makes every effort to see that each student receive his or her first choice given the number of sections available in each instrument category.

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Music Lab I (2x week) - An exploration of basic composition, production, and keyboard musicianship through the use of electronic musical instruments, computers, and a variety of compositional, production, and instructional software. Students develop increased fluency in note-reading, ear-training, listening, keyboarding, and music vocabulary.

Music Lab II (2x week) - This course is for seventh and eighth graders who have already taken *Music Lab I*. *Music Lab II* continues the development of the skills and techniques learned in *Music Lab I*. Additionally, students are introduced to the musical uses of digital audio and multimedia.

MUSIC HISTORY & LITERATURE

Words and Music (2x week) - We explore the relationship between words and music (song) throughout history and across cultures. We consider the almost infinite ways that music and words influence one another, and how the interplay between word and tone has created some of the most amazing, compelling music from every corner of the world. We emphasize listening skills and gain historical knowledge. This is a class for the musically curious, performer and non-performer alike.

INSTRUMENTAL STUDY (Beginning - I, Continuing – II)

All students in the instrumental study program must either provide their own instruments or rent them from the school.

Beginning I: Guitar, Saxophone, Trombone

Students may choose one of these three instruments for beginning group lessons. If braces are in your future, please inform the instructor so that appropriate decisions may be made.

Trumpet students please note: in general it is easy to make the transition to trombone!

Continuing II: Advanced Guitar, Percussion II

These courses are a continuation of the first year classes on these instruments. In their second year of study, **all students are expected to practice their instrument at least twenty minutes a day.**



PERFORMING ENSEMBLES

*The Music Department offers the following ensembles based on both student need and interest. If you are interested in joining an ensemble, we recommend you select **two** from the following choices. Speak with your current instrumental teacher if you want to know more about any group. Please note that because ensemble classes are of mixed instrumentation, and because the focus is on developing musicianship and ensemble skills rather than technique particular to each instrument, students enrolled in instrumental ensemble classes are **strongly encouraged** to supplement class instruction with private lessons. The expectation is for all students to be proficient in reading and sight singing.*

All performing ensembles are subject to change from year to year depending on the number and musical level of all participating students.

Choral

Middle School Singers (2x week) - Any upper middle schooler may join this choral group, which focuses on strengthening the singing voice and developing the ability to part-sing independently. We perform music in different languages, styles and levels of difficulty. Please note that one of the class meetings will take place during half of one lunch period.

Instrumental

Brass Techniques (2x week) - Horn and trumpet students beginning their third or fourth year of brass study are combined into one ensemble. Playing in two, three, and four-part harmony, students explore ensemble playing while at the same time building solid fundamentals of technique and musicianship. Private lessons are strongly encouraged for students in this class.

Clarinet Ensemble (2x week) - Designed for students beginning their third year of clarinet, students in this class explore the repertoire of a variety of periods and styles, playing in three or more parts. The class may also incorporate the bass clarinet. Students learn to play their parts with a beautiful sound, while maintaining their individual parts and listening to the other ensemble members. Additionally, students reinforce and expand their technical skills. Private lessons are strongly encouraged for students in this class.

Flute Choir (2x week) - In Flute Choir, third year students are introduced to three, four, five, and even six-part harmony. Flutists experience a variety of musical styles and are expected to prepare their assignments independently. Flutists use this year to work on their articulation, tone, and intonation, while becoming comfortable with the full range of the instrument. Our primary focus is to prepare students for playing in large ensembles in the upper grades. Enrollment in this class is by permission of the instructor. Private flute lessons are strongly encouraged for all students in this class.



Jazz Techniques – This class is for all instrumentalists, and focuses on jazz improvisation and ensemble playing. Instruction in basic scales and chords provides a vocabulary for improvisation. Students are introduced to the jazz repertoire. All instrumentalists and vocalists should be able demonstrate a grasp of major and minor scales and chords as well as good reading skills. Except for piano, electric bass, and drums, students must provide their own instruments or rent them from the school. *Audition required, and once enrolled private lessons are strongly encouraged for students in this class.*

Please Remember:

*Because ensemble classes are of mixed instrumentation and the focus is on developing musicianship and ensemble skills, rather than technique particular to each instrument, students enrolled in instrumental ensemble classes are **strongly encouraged** to supplement class instruction with private lessons. The expectation is for all students to be proficient in reading and sight singing.*

The Confessional

*I guess it would be
pretty easy
to pick up the brush
caked in layers of white,
and out
the crooked letters
that venture too far,
or misshapen words
that veer off the dotted line.*

*But why try to taint
the human condition?
Not all of us can
write neatly in cursive
and
dot our i's and cross our t's
and bleach the words
to perfection.*



What to Expect

In most cases, as an eighth grade student you will continue with your current language choice(s). However, it is possible to add or drop a language in your final year of middle school.

Eighth grade students who wish to add a second or third language must discuss this choice with the Head of the Middle School. Remember, you may not select both *French* and *Spanish* unless you have had *at least two year's* experience with either language and you obtain permission from Romance Languages Department chair.

Adding *Japanese* to your schedule requires permission from both the Chair of the Classics Department and the Head of the Middle School. And except in rare cases, you may only add *Japanese* if it will be your *second* language. In other words, students may not study three languages if *Japanese* is one of them.

Parents Please Note

If you agree to let your child withdraw from his or her language course in eighth grade, please send written permission along with his or her Language Selection sheet. You may also email me at Jsmith@saintannsny.org.

Middle School

It was hard

I could leave my loyal friends

Who had stood faithfully by my side

Forever,

And become one of the few that were worshipped

Inside the hallowed halls of Harry S Truman middle school

The populars

Or,

I could stay unpopular,

But have friends who really cared for me

And would help me through it all.

It was a hard choice,

But I chose right.

- Edie A-M.



All language classes meet four times per week.

Spanish Beginner II

Building on the fundamentals of Spanish syntax taught in *Spanish Beginner I*, students in this course broaden their understanding of grammatical structures and considerably extend their vocabulary base. They develop their speaking, listening and reading skills through conversational activities, written assignments, and readings of simple texts. Emphasis is placed on mastery of the present and past tenses of regular and irregular verbs, the rules of agreement, the interrogatives, and personal pronouns. Classes are taught chiefly in Spanish, and accurate pronunciation is stressed. Activities using DVD's and audio CD's reinforce learning and encourage students to approach the language orally.

High School Spanish I

This course is for students who are learning Spanish for the first time, as well as for those second year students who would benefit from a full year of instruction to solidify their knowledge and usage of the fundamentals. Emphasis is placed on sentence structure and oral expression. Students work to acquire elementary conversational skills and learn vocabulary through texts and review exercises. We also use internet-based interactive activities to practice and retain material. Accurate pronunciation is encouraged.

French Beginner II

Building on the fundamentals of French syntax taught in *French Beginner I*, students in this course broaden their understanding of grammatical structures and considerably extend their vocabulary base. They develop their speaking, listening and reading skills through conversational activities, written assignments, and readings of simple texts. Emphasis is placed on mastery of the present and past tenses of regular and irregular verbs, the rules of agreement, the partitive, interrogatives, and personal pronouns. Classes are taught chiefly in French, and accurate pronunciation is stressed. Activities using DVD's and audio CD's reinforce learning and encourage students to approach the language orally.

High School French I

This course is for students who are learning French for the first time, as well as for those second year students who would benefit from a full year of instruction to solidify their knowledge and usage of the fundamentals. Emphasis is placed on sentence structure and oral expression. Students work to acquire elementary conversational skills and learn vocabulary through texts and review exercises. We also use internet-based interactive activities to practice and retain material. Accurate pronunciation is encouraged.



Latin Beginner II

Upon completion of this course, students will have mastered all Latin forms and syntax, including the use of the subjunctive. In the spring semester, the students begin to read excerpts from Roman and medieval authors. The homework requirements are similar to those for *Beginner I*. Students continue to study life in antiquity, and are introduced to Roman History.

High School Latin I

This course is for students who did not take Latin in seventh grade and *who are committed to learning seventh and eighth grade Latin in a single year*. It focuses on the basics of Latin forms and syntax, stressing memorization in order to facilitate the reading of Latin literature as quickly as possible. Readings are selected from Cicero, Caesar, Martial and others. The course also covers background material on mythology, history, and Roman life.

Chinese II

Having gained basic skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in *Chinese I*, this course provides a more intensive study of grammar and vocabulary. Students enhance their communication abilities through discussion of everyday topics (clothes, shopping, cities, transportation, asking for directions, weather, holidays, and travel). Authentic photos are included in the textbook to help students visualize the beauty of Chinese culture. Another 350 characters, as well as more sentence structures, are introduced.

Textbook: Chinese For Youth – Book 2

High School Chinese I

The aim of this course is to introduce students to Mandarin Chinese, while increasing awareness and understanding of Chinese-speaking cultures through songs, poems, and calligraphy. We emphasize Pin Yin, a spelling system that helps students learn how to pronounce words. We also focus on the four tones, while regularly introducing essential sentence structures, useful expressions and vocabulary. The practice of the four tones, based on students' mastery of Pin Yin, ensures their pronunciation of words and sentences with an accurate accent. Students learn 350 Chinese characters throughout the year, and both traditional and simplified characters are included in the textbook to meet the needs of different learners. Topics include Chinese names, friends, schools, families, jobs, animals, colors, numbers, birthdays, and Chinese food.

Textbook: Chinese For Youth - Book 1



Classical Greek I

The aim of this course is to introduce students to the basic forms and syntax of classical Greek. Memorization of forms and vocabulary are stressed in order to facilitate the reading of classical Greek texts as quickly as possible, such as selections of readings from the New Testament, from Xenophon's Anabasis, and from Plato. *Please note that Classical Greek requires the permission of both the Head of the Middle School and the Classics Department Chair.*

Classical Greek Intermediate

This course continues the work begun in *Classical Greek I*. Rapid review of forms and syntax is followed by the study of more advanced syntax and vocabulary. Students make the transition to longer, connected texts. The year culminates in selected readings from Attic prose authors.

Japanese I

This course serves as an introduction to the Japanese language. Students are asked to master two sets of Japanese phonetic syllables: 46 hiraganas and 45 katakanas, modified and combination forms respectively. Emphasis is placed on the Japanese accent system, basic Chinese characters with Japanese pronunciation, basic sentence structures, and cultural background. *Please note that, with rare exceptions, students who enroll in Japanese are only permitted to take one additional language.*

*The scratch of pencils
and hum of mind,
inspiring words
beautiful lines,
teaches me
new and interesting things...*

-- Charlotte C.



VISUAL ARTS

All students are automatically scheduled into a mixed media fine arts course meeting twice a week. This course explores visual expression through a wide range of materials, media, and dimensional formats. A variety of technical and conceptual approaches are introduced and practiced throughout the middle school years. The artist within is nurtured, challenged, and strengthened.

THEATER

All eighth grade students must choose at least one theater course.

*Puppetry (1x per week) - This course is for students who want to learn how to make many styles of puppets: rod puppets, marionettes, hand puppets, and life-sized body puppets for the annual *Puppet Parade*. Students who want to put a puppet show together and write their own script are welcome to do so.*

*Puppetry Production (1 double period per week) - A class for inventors and experimenters, and for more advanced students who want to continue their puppetry work at a higher level. *Prerequisite: two previous years of puppetry or instructor's permission.**

Costume Production (1x per week) - Students study costume by learning to sew by machine and by hand. In addition to learning different sewing techniques, students learn about costume history, pattern making, and draping. They are encouraged to draw costumes and personal design ideas. Students construct costumes for each middle school theater production, as well as work on several personal projects.

*Project Design (1x per week) - This course is an alternative to *Costume Production*, and is offered only to *8th grade students* who have taken *Costume Production* previously. It focuses on more advanced sewing techniques and costume design for theater. We work not only on sewing skills, but also on drawing, character analysis, and further developing design skills. Students help design and coordinate pieces for the middle school plays, the *Middle School Playwriting Festival* and/or the *Middle School Dance Concert* with the guidance of the instructor.*

Theater Workshop (1x per week) - This course includes basic acting techniques, improvisation, scene work and character work. All kinds of scripts are explored, and workshop play performances develop from this class. Come and play the roles you dream about!



Double Theater (1 double period per week) - This more advanced theater class is offered to students who show intense interest in acting; it is for those students who just can't get enough performance time from a single class period! The course includes improvisation, character work, monologue work, and scene study with texts. An array of scripts and texts are explored, and ensemble work is encouraged as we work on further developing technical skills and exploring new creative approaches. Workshop performances of scenes or a short play develop from this course. A trip or two will be scheduled if an appropriate show is in production.

Technical Theater (1 double period per week) - An introduction to stage carpentry and other theatrical craftsmanship, *Technical Theater* is both a practical and a theoretical course. Carpentry, electrics, audio, and effects lectures act as groundwork for hands-on experience with power tools, lighting equipment, and sound gear. Students work side-by-side with their teachers, developing basic stage construction skills, building flats and platforms, creating props, and painting, all the while adhering to stage etiquette in this productive environment. Students who wish to extend themselves further may apply for a position on a production running crew. *Please note that being a member of a running crew requires time outside of class.*

The Art of Comedy (1 double period per week) - Comedy improvisation and slapstick have as their roots the popular street theater of sixteenth century Italy known as *Commedia dell'Arte*. In this exciting introduction to comic acting and theater history, students create characters through mask work, develop funny walks, learn to juggle, and try their hand at comedy writing and directing. While students explore this spirited and physical style of theater, they continue to work with the improvisation exercises and theater games of contemporary theater. This course is open to those interested in ensemble work, silliness, and risk-taking. Workshop performances develop from this course.

High Velocity Dance (1x per week) - This is an exciting course, jam-packed with skills, fitness and combinations. The various dance styles covered may include: swing, jitterbug, modern, jazz, salsa, ballet, tap, hip-hop, and musical theater. There are opportunities for students to create their own choreography, perform, and collaborate on a dance video unlike any they have ever seen! No previous dance experience is required. Athletes, gymnasts, actors, and artists will all enjoy this class!

African Dance (1 double period per week) - This course offers an exciting introduction to the joys and complexities of traditional West African music, rhythms, culture and dances. Come one, come all!



Playwriting (1 double period per week) - *Fall semester only.* This is a workshop course in which students read their work to each other, and then discuss and improvise on the material presented. By the end of the course, each student has written a one-act play that is presented as a staged or semi-staged reading at the *Middle School Playwriting Festival*.

Filmmaking (1 double period per week) - During the first semester we deal primarily with cinematic technique and theory for the first-time director/screenwriter. These areas of study include camera direction, directing the actor, narrative structure, screenplay format, and a preliminary survey of domestic/international film from past to present.

In the second semester the class morphs into more of a production workshop in which students work in groups of three to implement the techniques and theory they learned by writing, producing, casting, directing, shooting, designing, editing, and screening their own short films. Each group of three produces one three-to-five minute black and white digital film with limited dialogue and an emphasis on telling a story visually. At the end of the year, we have our own film festival.



COMPUTER

All courses use the Apple computers in the Saint Ann's Computer Center, mostly using software that also runs on Windows and Unix/Linux machines. Classes meet twice a week for an entire year in classrooms with at least one computer per student.

Computer I (2x per week) - This course offers an introduction to computers through creative projects including drawing, animation, webpage creation, programming, word processing, music, databases, spreadsheets, and touch-typing. Students often build haunted houses, adventure games, and personal web sites.
Prerequisite: None

Computer II (2x per week) - Building on the concepts introduced in *Computer I*, the focus in this course is on using the computer to creatively express ideas and helping students solve problems relevant to their work at Saint Ann's. While developing their keyboarding skills and using the computer to create webpages, images, animations, graphics, spreadsheets, and databases, students are encouraged to refine their ability to organize their ideas and learn independently.
Prerequisite: Computer I or instructor's permission.

Computer III (2x per week) - A continuation of *Computer II* with more advanced material. Students in the past have built colorful video games, language translators (English to Spanish, for example), interactive maps, and digital movies.
Prerequisite: Computer II, any programming class, or instructor's permission.



Computer Animation (2x per week) - By telling a compelling story, defying the laws of physics, or creating abstract motion, animating can infuse a sequence of images with the illusion of life. But without a firm understanding of the principles of animation, characters fall flat. Students learn the basics — planning, key framing, timing, 3D modeling, and stop motion — using the computer, storyboards, drawings, cutouts, and puppets. Students also view and discuss the work of other animators. *Prerequisite: Computer I or instructor's permission.*

Computer Animation II (2x per week) - More and better animation. Go crazy!
Prerequisite: Computer Animation I.

3D Animation (2x per week) - Students learn the basics of computer animation - modeling, basic lighting, and animation techniques - by working with Blender's IPO curves, armature basics, vertex animation, modifiers, particles, child-parent relationships, and a physics engine. *Prerequisite: Computer II.*

Middle School Programming I (2x per week) - This course is an introduction to logic and computer languages. Be prepared to concentrate and experiment: we don't spend any time drawing pictures, but we do write programs (just using words) to find prime factors, for example, and to make objects fly about the screen, perhaps with parachutes and keyboard control. *Prerequisite: Computing I or instructor's permission.*

Middle School Programming II (2x per week) - This course is a continuation of *Programming I* with more advanced material, including the Java language.
Prerequisite: Programming I or instructor's permission.

Middle School Programming III (2x per week) - This is an advanced programming course that focuses on making games and web pages. *Prerequisite: Programming II or instructor's permission.*

Physical Computing I (2x per week) - Have you ever wanted to build an electronic instrument or an interactive art installation? In this course students learn how to physically interact with a computer without using the mouse, keyboard, or monitor interface. We move beyond the idea that a computer is a box or a system of information retrieval and processing. Using a microcontroller and a single-chip computer that can fit in your hand, we learn to write and execute interactive computer programs that convert movement into digital information. Work with components such as resistors, capacitors, diodes, and transistors, as well as integrated components. Control motors, interpret sensors, and explore advanced concepts in interface, motion, and display. Through sequential exercises and longer creative assignments, we learn how to program, prototype, use components effectively, and develop our understanding of what the hardware can do and how it interfaces with others. *Prerequisite: some programming or permission from instructor.*



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iPhone Programming (2x per week) - Learn how to program with Objective-C, Interface Builder, and XCode on the iPhone and iTouch's unix-based operating system. Understand the way the iPhone applications work and how to build them. Actively and creatively explore this new field of little computers using the iPhone as the main research platform. **No iPhone required.** *Prerequisite: at least one year of programming (ideally two) or permission from department.*

Wearable, Soft, and Experimental Circuits (2x per week) - Standard electronic components can be hard, brittle, or difficult to work with. Embedding them in soft environments, like clothing or toys, can be awkward. Building circuits using paper, fabrics, thread, and paint opens up new possibilities for soft, curly, organic, visible, and attractive electronics. This class will explore materials, components, and construction techniques for successfully integrating soft materials with standard electrical supplies. The results will be light, thin, flexible, durable, aesthetic, and even expressive circuits. We will also cover techniques for integrating the Arduino Lilypad microcontroller and XBee radio communication to create interactive and social objects. Students will develop wearable devices and accessories as a means of self-expression and communication. Explore the relationship between the body, fashion, technology, and social interaction. Experiment with materials and objects, and develop concepts to refine, construct, and test. Make t-shirts that interact with each other, objects that light up in the dark, toys that talk to each other, or artwork that responds to a user's movements. The resulting possibilities are almost endless!

Programming For Little Computers (2x per week) - This class covers object oriented programming, Objective-C, scripting languages, OS X internals, Interface Builder, and XCode. We also explore the rapid developing OpenFrameworks port for the iPhone, as well as web apps. The class is highly technical in nature and is geared toward students who are looking for a challenging programming experience. The goal of the course is to actively and creatively explore this new field of little computers using the iPhone, iPad, and Chumby as the main platforms. *Prerequisite: experience with Object-oriented programming.*



**RECREATIONAL ARTS**

Eighth grade students are scheduled into two to four gym classes per week depending upon the rest of their schedule. If they wish, students may select one or more of the following specialized courses as part of their recreational arts requirements.

Fencing I (1x per week) - An introduction to the sport of fencing, basic technique, and conditioning. Included are execution of simple attacks and defensive actions, with special emphasis on developing proper form.

Fencing II (1x per week) - This course offers advanced techniques of fencing including competitive strategies, a broader range of ripostes, etc. *Prerequisites: Fencing I, approval of Department Chair or fencing instructor.*

Inward Bound (1x per week) - *Fall semester only.* This course challenges the body, mind, and spirit through group games, conditioning, and individual and collective goals. Students set goals and attempt to reach them by working together and offering group support.

Karate I (1x per week) - This course offers a serious, non-intimidating approach to traditional martial arts. Students begin with basic punches, kicks, and blocks, and then progress to forms and other basics on their way to freestyle sparring. The primary emphasis is on karate as a sport and martial art, although confrontation training and self-defense applications are also covered. A *gi* (karate uniform) is both required and provided.

Karate II (1x per week) - This course is for students who have completed one year of karate at Saint Ann's. It focuses on material for the yellow-belt rank and above. A *gi* (karate uniform) is both required and provided.

Middle School Exercise (1x per week) - This course provides an introduction to various forms of exercise and conditioning which may include Yoga, strength and cardiovascular training, fitness walks, climbing, group games, and sport skills.

Yoga (1x per week) - An introduction to one of the oldest existing forms of physical exercise. The class seeks to increase body awareness, flexibility, strength, and concentration.



SEMINARS



Digital Photography (2x per week) - An exploration of the use of digital technology within a photographic context. The intentions of the course are twofold: to explore the use of photography for image making and narrative purposes; and to explore the use of digital technology with the digital camera. *This course is offered by the Art Department, and has a limited enrollment.*

Oratory and Rhetoric (1x per week at lunch) - Students learn to deliver two minute speeches on a range of themes using rhetorical tactics and memorization methods to compose in their heads and then orate unscripted speeches. The instructor provides the themes and debate subjects as well as the age old rhetorical methods (taken from the ancient Roman and Greek schools of rhetoric and still used to this day by our more celebrated and literate politicians). Students then invent, set, and artfully articulate their ideas. In the early spring students test their speaking skills at the *Packer Model Congress*. This course is open to anyone with mental stamina and a desire to speak in a formal setting.

Poetry (1x per week) - A workshop -- a place where things are made with tools. We experiment; we play with words, ideas and the devices people use to make poems. We make poems.

Problem Solving (2x per week) - *Problem Solving* is designed to be an interactive and fun class for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders who love math – love it enough to spend two days a week during lunch creating, solving, and discussing a wide range of interesting math problems, puzzles, and games. Some problems arise from discussions in regular math classes; some are classical mathematical questions; some are problems created by students in the class. Homework consists of a few challenging problems, and students are encouraged to collaborate with friends and family.

Problem Solving is not intended to help students "get ahead" in the math curriculum, but rather to supplement an established or burgeoning love of mathematics. *Please note that we often meet during at least one lunch period.*

Math for Contests (2x per week) - This weekly workshop aims to prepare students for the kinds of problems that typically comprise middle school mathematics competitions, notably *MathCounts* and the *AMC8*. It offers students the chance to work on previous contest problems both cooperatively and competitively with their peers. Although direct instruction plays a role in the course, these occasions spring from the doing of problems by students.



Independent Research in Mathematics (1x or 2x per week, depending upon enrollment) - This course offers interested students the opportunity to engage in both individual and collaborative mathematical research. There is no set topic or agenda; students are expected to pose and develop their own problems, pursue their own ideas, go where their curiosity takes them, and experience firsthand both the joys and the frustrations of creative mathematical work. Students meet once or twice a week with a faculty member to discuss their projects, share results, and explore possible new directions for investigation.

Independent Research in Science (2x per week) - This course is dedicated to fans of science desiring to design and conduct their own independent research projects. Students have ample opportunity to formulate strategies to answer personally perplexing, "What would happen if?", "Why is it that?", "Let's see what happens if..." types of questions. During the first semester lab skills are fine-tuned by conducting mini-projects in diverse fields. We explore popular claims, trying to support or debunk them. Is Gorilla Tape indeed the strongest? Is cinnamon a natural anti-fungal agent able to protect bread from spoiling? Does organic milk last longer? Long-term ecological experiments are set up to address the impact of toxins in our environment using *Daphnia*, a water flea, and phytoremediation, the use of plants to mitigate pollution. Other experiments include collecting and isolating Brooklyn plant extracts, hoping to discover novel antibiotic and anti-fungal agents; mixing up fiery chemical reactions; conducting spicy surveys; and testing consumer products. Throughout the year the class will particularly focus on developing the skills of scientific research: gathering background literature, writing procedures, performing experiments, collecting data, summarizing conclusions, and presenting findings.

In the second half of the year students in *Independent Research* conduct individually selected research projects. The year culminates in a presentation of this work in a poster symposium.

Robotics (2x per week) - This course offers students a totally hands-on introduction to concepts of engineering and mechanics. Students work in teams to design and program their own contraptions for various challenges. The robots students build need to navigate mazes, adapt to their environment, lift and move objects, sing, dance and even play hockey.



*“Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom or philosophy.”
~ Beethoven*

Overview:

Eighth grade students may continue with the instrument they chose in fifth grade. Alternatively, they may begin studying the guitar or choose a non-instrumental class.

Particulars:

Students are placed in small classes.

Students may rent instruments from the school for a yearly fee of \$150. No child is prevented from renting an instrument due to financial need, and parents may call Matthew Bloom, our Director of Finance, to discuss financial arrangements.

During the third year of instrumental study students are *strongly encouraged* to supplement class time with private lessons (the department can provide a list of private teachers to students and parents). These lessons are essential for participation in our instrumental ensemble and chamber music programs. Students’ ongoing progress is evaluated through checklist and anecdotal reports, and each spring we assess all instrumental students in an attempt to ensure appropriate placement for the following year.

The Music Department faculty appropriately place those students wishing to begin ensemble study. While the specific number and composition of ensembles will inevitably change from year to year, for the upcoming year students may choose *Brass Techniques*, *Chamber Orchestra*, *Jazz Techniques*, or *Woodwind Choir*. Auditions are required for any students *beginning* in any ensemble.

The Music Department faculty determines the number and composition of *Chamber Players* groups, depending upon the number and respective musical levels of participating students. Auditions are required for any student *beginning* the *Chamber Players* program.



*All music classes meet twice a week for a **full year**.*

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Music Lab I (2x week) - An exploration of basic composition, production, and keyboard musicianship through the use of electronic musical instruments, computers, and a variety of compositional, production, and instructional software. Students develop increased fluency in note-reading, ear-training, listening, keyboarding, and music vocabulary.

*Music Lab II (2x week) - This course is for seventh and eighth graders who have already taken *Music Lab I*. *Music Lab II* continues the development of the skills and techniques learned in *Music Lab I*. Additionally, students are introduced to the musical uses of digital audio and multimedia.*

*Advanced Music Lab (2x week) - A course for the advanced music lab student who has *already taken Music Lab I*. It focuses on composition and recording techniques using MIDI, digital, audio, video and other forms of multimedia. *Permission of the instructor is required for this course.**

MUSIC HISTORY & LITERATURE

Words and Music (2x week) - We explore the relationship between words and music (song) throughout history and across cultures. We consider the almost infinite ways that music and words influence one another, and how the interplay between word and tone has created some of the most amazing, compelling music from every corner of the world. We emphasize listening skills and gain historical knowledge. This is a class for the musically curious, performer and non-performer alike.

INSTRUMENTAL STUDY (Continuing – II)

Students in the instrumental study program must either provide their own instruments or rent them from the school.

*Advanced Guitar, Percussion II, Saxophone II, Trombone II - These courses are a continuation of the first year classes in these instruments. In their second year of study, **all students are expected to practice their instrument at least twenty minutes a day.***



PERFORMING ENSEMBLES

*The Music Department offers the following ensembles based on both student need and interest. If you are interested in joining an ensemble, we recommend you select **two** from the following choices. Speak with your current instrumental teacher if you want to know more about any group. Please note that because ensemble classes are of mixed instrumentation and the focus is on developing musicianship and ensemble skills, rather than technique particular to each instrument, students enrolled in instrumental ensemble classes are **strongly encouraged** to supplement class instruction with private lessons. The expectation is for all students to be proficient in reading and sight singing.*

All performing ensembles are subject to change from year to year depending on the number and musical level of all participating students.

Choral

Middle School Singers (2x per week) - Any upper middle schooler may join this choral group. This performing ensemble focuses on strengthening the singing voice, and developing the ability to part-sing independently. We perform music in different languages, styles, and levels of difficulty. Please note that one of the class meetings may take place during half of one lunch period.

Instrumental

Brass Techniques (2x week) - Horn and trumpet students beginning their third or fourth year of brass study are combined into one ensemble. Playing in two, three, and four-part harmony, students explore ensemble playing while at the same time building solid fundamentals of technique and musicianship. Private lessons are strongly encouraged for students in this class.

*Chamber Orchestra (2x week) - This course is for advanced string, wind, and brass players, and performs repertoire from the Baroque to the present. Students learn to play under a conductor. Instrumentalists who have participated in *Camerata* or *Clarinet Ensemble* are encouraged to join *Chamber Orchestra*. Permission of the instructor is required, and private lessons are strongly encouraged for students in this class.*

Chamber Players (1x week) - Students are placed in small groups to study chamber music repertoire. Groups are arranged based on enrollment and are coached by members of the Music Department. All orchestral instruments, as well as piano, are eligible. Audition and permission of instructor required, and more so than any other music course, this repertoire poses challenges best met with the aid of private lessons.



Jazz Techniques (2x week) – This class is for all instrumentalists, and focuses on jazz improvisation and ensemble playing. Instruction in basic scales and chords provides a vocabulary for improvisation. Students are introduced to the jazz repertoire. All instrumentalists and vocalists should be able demonstrate a grasp of major and minor scales and chords as well as good reading skills. Except for piano, electric bass, and drums, students must provide their own instruments or rent them from the school. *Audition required, and once enrolled private lessons are strongly encouraged for students in this class.*

Woodwind Choir (2x week) – This course combines the rich sonorities of flutes, clarinets, oboes, saxophones, and bassoons to create a diverse and vibrant ensemble. Students are introduced to playing with other instruments in multiple part harmony. The ensemble explores music in various styles and from different time periods. Students are expected to practice regularly and to prepare their notes and rhythms outside of class. *Audition and permission of instructor required, and private lessons are strongly encouraged for students in this class.*

Please Remember:

*Because ensemble classes are of mixed instrumentation and the focus is on developing musicianship and ensemble skills, rather than technique particular to each instrument, students enrolled in instrumental ensemble classes are **strongly encouraged** to supplement class instruction with private lessons. The expectation is for all students to be proficient in reading and sight singing.*

*The baby is born
With its fist sealed:
It has all to give
The world.*

*The dead man lays
With his fist open:
He is taking nothing
With him.*

- Zev M.

