

# Program of Studies

Berkshire Country Day School

*Where you belong.*

**Upper School**  
2009–10

# Grade 7

## Computer Maureen Tumenas

Grade 7-9 students will begin working online using a ning, an educational learning network. They will explore how to use online tools to complete their work for both computer class as well as other courses. Collaboration skills will be stressed as work will be shared with peers.

Topics and software covered in Grade 7 may include: keyboarding programs: Typer Shark, Typing Pal Jr., Microsoft Word, Inspiration, Excel and Adobe Photoshop. We will also be exploring many Web 2.0 tools, such as social bookmarking tools, notetaking tools, wikis, and blogs. Seventh graders have a moderated email program to use at school.

Students in Grade 7 have class twice a week and receive letter grades as well as effort grades. Letter grades are based upon keyboarding skills, class work and participation, work on the ning, work as tech mentors for others and major projects.

The keyboarding goal for Grade 7 is 30 words per minute with 90% accuracy.

## English Jim Fawcett, Kate Meyer

Grade 7 literature embraces self-discovery. The fantasy of Grade 5 has become the puzzle of Grade 7: Who am I? And what do I meet as my world grows? Home, self, change, values, power and weakness, survival, and support are all issues of increasing urgency for Grade 7 students. The literature we read, which may include *Animal Farm*, *Call of the Wild*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Dandelion Wine* and *The Iliad*, brings these issues into focus and allows for them to be explored in a supportive environment. The readings provide the basis for most class discussions and writing projects. Compositions will be assigned on a regular basis. *English Workshop* or *Words, Phrases, and Clauses* or teacher-produced worksheets are used for grammar study.

### Texts

- Grammar —*English Workshop* or *Words, Phrases, and Clauses*
- Anthologies —Poetry
- Play —*Romeo and Juliet*
- Classics —*Ye Gods*, *The Iliad*

### Novels may include:

- *Animal Farm*; *Tom Sawyer*; *Dandelion Wine*, *Call of the Wild*, *White Fang*

### Materials:

- Videos, music tapes/discs, slides, artifacts, art work

## French John Dreger

The foremost goal for Grade 7 is to help children to become increasingly comfortable hearing and speaking French. We will learn various expressions and vocabulary in a context that the students can understand and use. Students will learn that French is a living, working language that can be a pleasure to speak. They will be introduced to grammar and vocabulary useful for a variety of situations. Students will learn about France and the Francophone world, their culture and traditions.

The class will be conducted primarily in French. Students will be encouraged to participate actively in all classroom activities, which include communicative exercises, games, skits, creative writing, and reading. Grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary will be reinforced through a wide variety of activities including games, open-ended dialogues, and skits. The video clips of French teenagers that accompany the text will support comprehension and increase familiarity with spoken French. Written work will follow work done orally in class. In the spring, the class will also study the French Impressionist Movement in coordination with the Art Department.

### Materials:

- *Discovering French, Partie IA and B; Valette and Valette*; textbook, workbook, and audio and video cassettes
- Games, songs, poems and skits to aid retention and increase fluency
- Props and pictures to encourage and support interaction and dialogue

## History Kate Meyer, Sarah Pitcher-Hoffman

The seventh-grade history curriculum covers American History from the pre-Colonial period through the post-Civil War Reconstruction era. In this course, students develop the factual foundation and critical thinking skills that will enable them to discuss and write about these historical events in an increasingly conceptual and analytical fashion.

Students read a variety of primary source materials provided for them in the form of handouts. Students learn how to evaluate the material and think as historians do. Additional information is presented in a more traditional lecture format and through simulation games. The American Nation textbook is kept as a resource in the history classrooms when students need additional background and context.

Classes emphasize active and insightful participation in class discussion. Students are encouraged to work

on their ability to articulate opinions and support them with relevant facts. Students learn to listen and respond to one another in a polite and respectful manner. In this way, the class strives to teach students what the phrase civil discourse means. Student writing is based, in part, on these discussions. Students are encouraged to write succinct paragraphs articulating a view with supporting evidence.

Students are also required to complete one project for each trimester. These projects are designed to augment factual knowledge and improve research skills. In the fall and spring, the projects are done as a group. The projects are as follows:

Fall—a Colonial museum; Winter—read *Lyddie*, a novel about a mill girl; Spring—a Civil War research project that will entail a research paper and a presentation.

Students are assessed in a variety of ways. There are quizzes and tests. Projects and participation are also used to evaluate students. Students are taught a variety of study skills throughout the year that range from note taking to reading comprehension. An effort is made to connect historical knowledge with the present. Current events are tied into the curriculum wherever possible.

## Latin

**Eugénie Fawcett**

The primary goal of the Latin Department is to enable students to read Latin prose and to translate it into coherent English. Other goals of the Latin Department are: (1) to promote verbal precision, logical thought, and simple grammatical and etymological analysis, and (2) to foster an understanding of and appreciation for the Greco-Roman influence in Western literature, philosophy, and art.

By the end of the Grade 7 year, students in both Latin sections will have developed Latin reading skills and a knowledge of traditional first year Latin grammar, as presented in Book One of *Ecce Romani*. They will also have studied the political, economic, and artistic characteristics of ancient Rome.

Each student will be expected to maintain his/her own Latin grammar notes in a three-ring binder, as all the students are regularly tested on their mastery of syntax and quizzed on their memorization of vocabulary and forms. Weekly extra help sessions provide opportunities to improve grade averages by retaking quizzes and to get individualized attention. A final examination will be administered, as well as The National Latin Exam.

## Pre-Algebra

**Ned Douglas**

Our goal in teaching Grade 7 Pre-Algebra is to help to create feelings of confidence, enthusiasm, and competence in our students by encouraging them to see patterns, understand processes, and to use skills. Students at this age are usually ready to move away from the world of arithmetic toward the world of Pre-Algebra. We try to demystify math at this level by helping students make the connections between what we study in class and the real world, and to expand their critical thinking.

Our text is *Mathematics: Explorations and Applications*, published by Prentice Hall. Other resources include calculators, puzzles, games and work sheets. Students will work on note taking and writing. Topics studied include the vocabulary of Algebra, the decimal system, positive and negative numbers, fractions, equations and inequalities, geometry, ratio, proportion and percent, the coordinate plane, volume and surface area, and probability. Enrichment material is made available to all students to keep their level of interest and enthusiasm high.

Assessment of progress includes self-tests, quizzes, section tests, and records of homework completion so that students always receive feedback to let them know where they stand.

## Pre-Algebra/Algebra I

**Geoff Perkins**

This course is for the advanced student who already has experience in Pre-Algebra. The first half of the year is spent reinforcing many topics that have been studied in the past while introducing a more challenging textbook series that emphasizes real world situations while integrating the use of technology as it applies. This is also a time when the concepts and material become more abstract. During the second half of the year we begin the study of formal Algebra. This is a course that will be completed in Grade 8.

Our text is *Pre-Algebra: An Integrated Transition to Algebra & Geometry*, published by Glencoe. During the second half of the year we will use *Algebra 1: Integration, Application, Connections*, published by Glencoe. Topics studied include solving equations, integers, rational numbers, functions, graphing, statistics, and geometry. Tests and quizzes will be given on a regular basis and homework will be assigned, on average, four nights a week. Enrichment activities will also be presented when appropriate.

## Physics

**Geoff Ashworth**

Physics is the study of matter, and it is the most fundamental of sciences. All things are made of some kind of material or another but “matter” is not the only kind of thing that moves through space and time. Some things—such as bits of “information” - move too. It turns out that the manner in which information moves is also called “physics.”

This course is divided into three basic segments: During the first segment, we will introduce the fundamental principles and patterns of motion. Newtonian movement will be taught conceptually and experimentally, i.e. by doing and feeling the physics. During the second segment, we will take Galileo’s axiom and apply it to the motion of things on Earth. The notions of speed, acceleration, free-fall, force, and mass will be developed in the context of common (“terrestrial”) objects. We’ll experiment with balls rolling down slides, pendulums swinging along arcs, and springs squishing in and out. We will thereby establish Newton’s Laws of Motion.

During the third segment we will investigate circular motion, gravity, and tides. One way or another, we will find that even something as abstract as a chain reaction obeys both Newton’s Laws and Galileo’s Principle of Motion. Tides, sound, and electricity thus become phenomena of central concern in the culminating portion of this course.

If time permits we can look at heat, electricity and sound, and further extend Newtonian concepts to more abstract fundamentals.

Homework will be assigned twice or three times a week, and the laboratory notebook will be graded.

### Text

- *Motion, Forces, and Energy*, published by Prentice Hall.

## Human Development Program

### Freedom from Chemical Dependency

Freedom from Chemical Dependency (FCD) is a non-profit organization (based in Needham, Massachusetts) that provides alcohol, tobacco, and other drug education for schools and colleges in the United States and abroad. Since 1977, FCD teachers have taught over a million students of all ages. Their mission is to:

- Provide students with up-to-date information on the physiological and psychological effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- Empower young people to make healthy, responsible choices regarding alcohol and other drug use.
- Encourage and support the non-use of alcohol and other drugs during adolescence.
- Teach students how to recognize the early warning signs of chemical dependency and how to intervene appropriately.

## Human Sexuality

**Dara Johnson, M.Ed.**

Ms. Johnson elicits from the students the key elements of healthy friendships and demonstrates how these are similar to and prepare people for healthy dating relationships. The course also focuses on respecting physical/emotional boundaries, recognizing different types of touch, and practicing effective communication. Role-plays and small group activities are used throughout the two workshops.

# Grade 8

## Computer Maureen Tumenas

Grade 7–9 students will begin working online using a ning, an educational learning network. They will explore how to use online tools to complete their work for both computer class as well as other courses. Collaboration skills will be stressed as work will be shared with peers.

Topics and software covered in Grade 8 may include: keyboarding programs: Typer Shark, Typing Pal Jr., Inspiration, Excel, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign and a web design program. We will also be exploring many Web 2.0 tools, such as social bookmarking tools, notetaking tools, wikis, and blogs. Eighth graders have a moderated email program to use at school.

Highlights of the 8th grade year in computer class are two major projects: the field guide to the Everglades, produced in collaboration with science class, and a Grade 8 memory book cd, a compilation of web pages designed by the class.

Students in Grade 8 have class twice a week and receive letter grades as well as effort grades. Letter grades are based upon keyboarding skills, class work and participation, work on the ning, work as tech mentors for others and major projects.

The keyboarding goal for Grade 8 is 35 words per minute with 90% accuracy

## English Kate Meyer, Jim Fawcett, Rachel Siegel

By Grade 8, the surprise for the student is that adventure need not be over the mountain and far away but is most definitely much nearer to everyday experience. As the student's identity becomes more secure, the literature read speaks to the more immediate themes of the individual and the group, standards and their structure, and microcosms other than the student's own. Books like *Lord of the Flies*, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *Macbeth*, *Warriors Don't Cry* and *The Odyssey* bring forth the questions that the students are asking and need to hear discussed. Compositions will be assigned on a regular basis, and the analytical essay can be attempted seriously at this grade level. Words, Phrases, and Clauses or other grammar texts are used for grammar study.

*Novels may include:*  
*Lord of the Flies, To Kill A Mockingbird, Macbeth, Warriors Don't Cry, The Odyssey, The Pearl, The Chosen, A Separate Peace*

## French John Dreger

The foremost goal is to help children to become increasingly comfortable hearing and speaking French. We will learn various expressions, vocabulary, and grammar in a context that the students can understand and use. Students will learn that French is a living, working language that can be a pleasure to speak. They will be introduced to grammar and vocabulary useful for a variety of situations. Students will learn about France and the Francophone world, their culture and traditions.

The class will be conducted primarily in French. Students will be encouraged to participate actively in all classroom activities, which include communicative exercises, games, skits, creative writing, and reading. Grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary will be reinforced through a wide variety of activities including games, open-ended dialogues, and skits. The video clips of French teenagers that accompany the text will support comprehension and increase familiarity with spoken French. Written work will follow work done orally in class. Towards the end of the year, the class studies a Francophone culture (Québec, Sénégal), including its history, culture, language and traditions.

### Materials

- *Discovering French Partie I and II; Valette and Valette*; textbook, workbook, and audio and video cassettes
- Games, songs, poems and skits to aid retention and increase fluency
- Props and pictures to encourage and support interaction and dialogue
- *Intrigue à Québec*, a dramatic detective story
- Supplemental readings

## History Geoff Ashworth

Our year studying history concentrates primarily on one topic—The Shaping of Western Society—and in particular the development of European Culture from 300 AD to 1700, from Constantine I and the Fall of the Roman Empire to The Glorious Revolution. It is not a coincidence that the two events are almost mirror images, for with the Fall of Rome we find the collapse of classical civilization replaced by a barbarous society of warriors and adventurers, to the rise of a New Order and a hope for peace, a peace that lasted in Europe for almost 100 years.

Within the course we will learn that written history is an often biased account of events that require careful analysis and consideration. We learn that it is not a series of dull events about Great Men (who are dead) fighting Great Battles, on dates that are immediately

forgotten after examinations or tests. Hopefully, we begin to understand that the freedoms we possess today are a continuation of a long and desperate struggle by enlightened individuals, and that European history is a river that is sometimes turbulent, sometimes calm, but never still, whose tributaries include cultures from all over the world.

We also learn to understand that to synthesize complex data we ask questions, develop hypotheses, and gather evidence, and finally test that hypothesis, perhaps with several modifications. The skill is one that can be used throughout the student's academic years, and on into a professional career.

To set the theme of the course, students are asked to write at the front of the notebooks the quote from the Spanish poet Santayana: "They that forget the past are condemned to repeat it." I then talk about my visit to Auschwitz and the horrors that mankind perpetrated on itself. I use E.M. Rosenthal's article in the New York Times, and compare this to a racist and anti-semitic publication from North Carolina. The theme "never again must this be allowed to happen" is repeated several times. Students are then introduced to the philosophy that history is a continuous learning process, where the rights of human beings as free individuals are evolving from slavery and serfdom to the democratic enlightenment we strive for today.

#### *Materials:*

- a role-play game where students try to become "king" or "archbishop" by negotiation, subterfuge, and even bribery.
- A PBS video "The Story of English—The Mother Tongue"—the development of Anglo-Saxon society in Britain.
- A slide show of the Bayeux tapestry illustrating the Norman Invasion of England in 1066.
- A PBS video "Cathedral"—animated.
- A PBS video "Castle"—again, animated.
- A role-play where students take on the life of characters in a medieval village community. Developed by Mark Williams at Loomis-Chaffee School, there is a potential that some players may "starve to death" while others get very rich.
- The movie "Henry V" with Kenneth Branagh.
- A series of videos from the PBS show "Art in the Western World" illustrating the Renaissance. There is some nudity, eg. "David" by Michelangelo, and "Venus" by Tintoretto, are shown in detail.
- An excerpt from the film "Richard III" by William Shakespeare, showing Richard plotting to take the crown.
- A short clip from "The Private Life of Henry VIII," 1932 version with Charles Laughton as Henry.
- The students' role play an episode in the Thirty Years War, from a script in "Children's Classic Illustrated—Great Disasters."
- A PBS video episode of "The Age of Discovery—The Story of Maps."
- "Cromwell" illustrating the English Civil War.

If there is any addition to this list, I will endeavor to let you know. Students will be expected to submit a paper at the end of the school year about a topic of their own choice.

Homework will be assigned twice a week, and each assignment should take about one hour to complete.

#### *Text:*

- *Early Times, The Story of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, Suzanne Strauss Art, Wayside Publishing

## Latin

### **Eugénie Fawcett**

The primary goal of the Latin Department is to enable students to read Latin prose and to translate it into coherent English. Other goals of the Latin Department are: (1) to promote verbal precision, logical thought, and simple grammatical and etymological analysis, and (2) to foster an understanding of and appreciation for the Greco-Roman influence in Western literature, philosophy, and art.

Grade 8 Latin builds upon the foundation laid during the previous year. Book I of *Ecce Romani* will be completed and Book II begun. In addition to the text, students use *Latina Blocks\** and *Latina Nouns\*\** and *Latina Verbs\*\** for sentence patterning and for drill and translation. Oral recitation and written work are emphasized equally, and the students make additions to their Latin notebooks in class. Regular vocabulary quizzes, occasional grammar and translation tests, and a final examination will be administered. During the weekly Latin Help session, students may retake vocabulary quizzes, in order to improve their grades and show that they had mastered the material. Greek mythology and Roman history are reviewed, and all the students take The National Latin Exam. In the spring the class will visit the Greco-Roman section of The Metropolitan Museum in New York City.

## Pre-Algebra/Algebra I

### **Ned Douglas**

The focus of this course is on Algebra as a set of tools, so we spend time both learning how to use the tools and, just as important, when to use them. Modeling life situations for analysis and looking at word problems will be a continual component of our work this year. At every step, stress will be placed on the process of solving problems. Careful attention to methods and error analysis will allow each student to gain confidence and precision in computation.

Class will be a mix of lecture and discussion, with an emphasis on student participation in the form of questions and class examples. Homework will be assigned four nights per week in an effort to practice the concepts that we cover in class.

Topics to be covered include: Sets; Number lines; Order of operations; Variables; Word problems; Manipulating equations; Absolute value; Inequalities; Graphing functions; Systems of variables; Coordinate plane.

Text

- Algebra, by Addison-Wesley

## Algebra I

**Paul Frantz**

This course is a continuation of the work begun in Grade 7. This course provides students with a strong grounding in operations with variable expressions. While Algebra is abstract in nature, it is conceptually grounded in the course work of previous years. This connection allows students to reinforce their understanding of previous topics, including integers and rational numbers. They will also encounter new topics including operations with polynomials, quadratic equations, irrational numbers and graphing linear equations. Throughout the course, students will also gain familiarity with the graphing calculator when appropriate.

Text

- *Algebra 1: Integration, Applications, Connections* (New York, NY: Glencoe/McGraw Hill, 2001).

## Physical Education

**Gail Heady**

Physical Education is provided for students not participating in after-school sports due to Theater commitments and meets twice a week. Activities will be based on life sports and will include Hiking, Cross-country Skiing, Rock Climbing, and Canoeing.

## Physical Science

**Susan Benner**

Students in Grade 8 examine Physical Science through a set of experimental protocols in the laboratory where students discover important principles governing the physical world. They discover math as a language of science through data analysis, graphing, and Algebra. They investigate properties of matter: melting and boiling points; density and solubility. They identify characteristics of elements and compounds. They also learn procedures such as fractional distillation and crystallization, chromatography, and filtration; they separate mixtures into pure components; study molecular motion; and use mathematics to determine the size of molecules and atoms.

The spring trimester begins with a trip to the Everglades National Park in Florida. The trip is followed with an introduction to ecology and ecological research as they relate to the class's experience in

the fragile ecosystem of the Everglades and our local environment. Grading is based on class participation, laboratory reports, homework, tests, and an Everglades project.

## Human Development Program Freedom from Chemical Dependency

Freedom from Chemical Dependency (FCD) is a non-profit organization (based in Needham, Massachusetts) that provides alcohol, tobacco, and other drug education for schools and colleges in the United States and abroad. Since 1977, FCD teachers have taught over a million students of all ages. Their mission is to:

- Provide students with up-to-date information on the physiological and psychological effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- Empower young people to make healthy, responsible choices regarding alcohol and other drug use.
- Encourage and support the non-use of alcohol and other drugs during adolescence.
- Teach students how to recognize the early warning signs of chemical dependency and how to intervene appropriately.

## Sexual Education

**Dr. Robert Benner, OB/GYN**

*Fall Term*

Grade 8 and 9 students have a series of single-sex lectures conducted by a licensed obstetrician/ gynecologist and BCD biology teacher. Topics to be discussed will include methods of contraception and sexually transmitted diseases as well as other relevant topics.

# Grade 9

## Computer Applications

**Maureen Tumenas**

Grade 7–9 students will begin working online using a ning, an educational learning network. They will explore how to use online tools to complete their work for both computer class as well as other courses. Collaboration skills will be stressed as work will be shared with peers. Ninth graders will be expected to show their leadership skills and help direct the ning project. Topics and software covered in ninth grade may include: keyboarding programs: Typer Shark, Typing Pal Jr., Inspiration, Excel and Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, Alice ( a 3D programming environment) and work with database software.. We will also be exploring many Web 2.0 tools, such as social bookmarking tools, notetaking tools, podcasting, wikis, and blogs. Eighth graders have a moderated email program to use at school. Students in Grade 9 have class twice a week and receive letter grades as well as effort grades. Letter grades are based upon keyboarding skills, class work and participation, work on the ning, work as tech mentors for others and major projects. The keyboarding goal for ninth grade is 40 words per minute with 90% accuracy.

By the end of Upper School, students should have a firm grasp on how technology relates to information management and communication. They should be comfortable with keyboarding, word processing, file management, spreadsheets, desktop publishing, web design, introductory programming, databases, multimedia, and graphic design. They should understand the issues and importance of responsible, effective, and ethical Internet use and demonstrate good digital citizenship. The students should see the computer as a tool that they can use both to research and learn about the world around them and to create new media and to collaborate with others.

## English

*War and Peace: Principles and Survival*

**Jim Fawcett**

By Grade 9, students are close to being young adults as they cap off their BCD experience. The skills acquired in the earlier grades, the works read, the writing done, all are meant to reach their culmination in this year's work. Dreams, dilemmas, paths of possibilities and the need to make choices: the literature read this final year will follow these themes as they are set into motion. *Of Mice and Men* (the required title of the four summer reading books) will be followed by other novels: *Ethan Frome*, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Plays will include *Our Town*, *Everyman*, and *Julius Caesar*. Selections from *The Aeneid* will be covered as well along with various poets and their works. Vocabulary study and grammar reinforcement

are part of the program as well. Written assignments will focus especially on the analytical essay but will embrace creative compositions and poems as well.

*Text*

- Grammar
- Anthologies: short stories, poetry
- Plays: *Our Town*, *Everyman*, *Julius Caesar*
- Classics: *The Aeneid*

## French III

**John Dreger**

The Modern Foreign Languages Department strives to build and strengthen the student's ability to handle a language proficiently and comfortably. Oral fluency is the top priority, but there is also a strong emphasis on reading and writing. Students learn grammatical structures and vocabulary, which help to prepare them to communicate more effectively. Ninth grade students have the opportunity to travel to Provence in March.

All basic grammar is covered in this course as well as a variety of simple readings. The program is highly interactive and affords students opportunities to develop their speaking and listening comprehension skills. Reading, writing, and oral communication are all emphasized. Students finish French II as fluid and confident speakers. Students will also read the classic work *Le Petit Prince* by Saint-Exupéry.

*Text*

- *Discovering French 2, Blanc; Valette and Valette;* textbook, workbook, and audio and video cassettes. Games, songs, poems and skits to aid retention and increase fluency
- Props, pictures, and interactive websites are used to encourage and support interaction and dialogue.
- *Discovering French 2, Blanc; Valette and Valette;* textbook, workbook, and audio and video cassettes. Games, songs, poems and skits to aid retention and increase fluency
- Props and pictures are used to encourage and support interaction and dialogue.

## History

*Western Civilization: Post-Enlightenment*

**Ned Douglas**

Western Civilization: Post-Enlightenment emphasizes the increasingly complex relations between an expanding Western Europe and other world civilizations. The growth of the nation-state, industrialization, imperialism and nationalism are discussed as well as the impact of these forces on the rest of the world. Study, writing, and research skills will be emphasized. This course will delve deeply into primary sources via document based questions, a major independent research project, and frequent homework assignments requiring the use of

library materials rather than a text, all aimed at giving students personal experience of the historian's methods. Students are expected to read a newspaper or to watch international news on television every day because the course links themes of the past to the present.

## Latin II

**Eugénie Fawcett**

The students in Latin II spend the first part of the year completing the study of Latin grammar in the 1987 edition of Jenney's *Second Year Latin*. Regular vocabulary quizzes and occasional grammar tests will be administered, and the students are encouraged to retake vocabulary quizzes whenever necessary.

The balance of the year is spent reading selections from Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* and other Latin prose. The students prepare translations for homework and also translate at sight in class. Since the *Commentarii* are read and discussed as the historical documents that they are, the students will be expected to become familiar with the history of Republican Rome.

The final examination will be primarily a literature and history exam. The National Latin Exam, on the other hand, will include some questions that test the students' knowledge of grammar and forms.

## Algebra I

**Paul Frantz**

This course intends to present a complete Algebra 1 curriculum in one academic year. The class is designed for students who already possess a strong foundation in mathematics and well-developed critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Designed to be cumulative as well as comprehensive, this course will continuously review previously learned material. Students successfully completing this course will be well-prepared to move on to courses in Geometry and Algebra II. Our topics of study will be:

*First Term:*

- Expressions, Equations & Functions
- Exploring Rational Numbers
- Solving Linear Equations I
- Using Proportional Reasoning
- Graphing Relations & Functions

*Second Term:*

- Analyzing Linear Equations
- Solving Linear Inequalities
- Solving Systems of Linear Equations
- Equations and Inequalities
- Exploring Polynomials

*Third Term:*

- Factoring
- Quadratic Exponential Functions
- Rational Expressions/Equations
- Radical Expressions/Equations

We will begin most classes by addressing issues and concerns from the previous night's homework, before moving on to the next lesson. The teacher will introduce the topic of the day, and, if time permits, students may have an opportunity to begin their homework in class, while seeking help from the teacher or a classmate.

*Text:*

- *Algebra 1: Integration, Applications, Connections* (New York, NY: Glencoe/McGraw Hill, 2001).

## Geometry

**Geoff Perkins**

This course provides students with an in-depth study of plane geometry and an introduction to three-dimensional geometry. The approach is inductive in nature, expecting students to utilize the capability of a computer software program, Geometer's Sketchpad, to investigate geometric questions and, through their observations to produce and defend conclusions. Students spend the majority of the year developing a familiarity with geometric concepts, vocabulary, and relationships, finishing the year with an examination of the role of proof in geometry.

*Text:*

- *Discovering Geometry: An Investigative Approach* (Key Curriculum Press)

## Physical Education

**Gail Heady**

Physical Education is provided for students not participating in after-school sports due to theater commitments and meets twice a week. Activities will be based on life sports and will include Hiking, Cross-country Skiing, Rock Climbing, and Canoeing.

## Biology

**Susan Benner**

Students in Grade 9 examine biological science through class lecture, discussion, and laboratory experiments. The course will examine cell structure and function, genetics, evolution, human anatomy and physiology and a comparative survey of kingdoms. The course starts at the molecular level and moves upward through organ systems, finishing with the survey of kingdoms. The students will become better world citizens through knowledge of the natural world. Students will complete extensive laboratory

work and create laboratory write-ups. The course will require students to do a significant amount of reading and homework.

Grading is based on class participation, laboratory reports, homework, and tests. A mid-year and final exam will be given.

Text

- *Biology* by Miller and Levine

## Spanish I

### Carmen Dockery Perkins

The Modern Foreign Language Department strives to build and strengthen the student's ability to handle a language proficiently and comfortably. Oral fluency is the top priority, but there is also a strong emphasis on reading and writing. Students learn grammatical structures and vocabulary, which help to prepare them to communicate more effectively.

In the first year of study, students are introduced to the speech and rhythms of Spanish. Emphasis is placed on oral communication and on developing the ability to speak with and understand native Spanish-speakers. Students will read a short story as well as a variety of Latin-American poetry. Oral drills, role playing, and improvised conversational activities allow students to feel proficient in basic Spanish by the end of the year.

Text

- *Paso a Paso I, Second Edition*; by Prentice Hall; textbook, workbook, and audio and video cassettes. Games, songs, poems and skits to aid retention and increase fluency
- Props and pictures are used to encourage and support interaction and dialogue.

## Human Development Program

### Freedom from Chemical Dependency

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## Sexual Education

### Dr. Robert Benner, OB/GYN

Fall Term

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# Program of Studies

Berkshire Country Day School

*Where you belong.*

**Arts Block**  
2009–10

# Music

## Middle School Band

**Heather Fishman, Jon Suters**

Beginning in fourth grade students may elect to study a band instrument. Students proficient on their instrument are invited to join the Middle School Band. The band rehearses once a week during a forty-minute period and will perform at various concerts throughout the school year. Success in instrumental lessons and/or band requires practice at home. Beginning students should practice ten to fifteen minutes a day at least five days a week.

## Upper School Band

**Heather Fishman, Jon Suters**

Students may elect to play in the Upper School Band provided they have at least two years experience playing an instrument or upon the discretion of the director. The band will meet twice a week and perform at various concerts throughout the school year. Goals will include producing a well-balanced sound, and exploring a variety of musical styles and genres. The instrumentation and ability level of the students will dictate the compositions to be studied.

## Middle and Upper School

### Chamber Music

**Heather Fishman**

Chamber music is for instrumentalists who would like to play music from the classical repertoire. Chamber music students will collaborate with the band musicians on some larger group pieces, as well as play in small ensembles. Groups are formed based on experience and there is an emphasis on enjoying the art of playing with others.

## Middle School Chorus

**Heather Fishman**

The main objectives are continued development of proper good vocal technique, confident stage presence and the experience and enjoyment of singing in a large group. Choral pieces studied will vary in musical form, style, time period, and cultural origin. Each grade rehearses once a week for forty minutes. Rehearsals begin with choral warm-ups including games, folk songs, rounds, rhythmic chants, breathing exercises and movement. The focus will be on learning to sing in two parts and preparing to perform at school concerts throughout the year.

## Upper School Vocal Ensemble

**Heather Fishman**

Vocal Ensemble performs several times during the school year both for Schooland community activities. Various song styles are used including folk, popular, and gospel. Songs with social messages—freedom, equality, and love—are an important part of the repertoire of this group. There is an emphasis on vocal health and well-being, which is explored through physical warm-ups, stretching and movement.

## Electronic Music

**Heather Fishman, Jon Suters**

*Grades 7,8, and 9, fall/winter or spring*

Electronic Music presents an introduction to creating, mixing, and editing digital music. Topics include Garage Band, working with clips, loop construction, audio tracks and audio effects. Students will be guided through the process of composing various pieces using pre-recorded audio loops, and MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface). Students will begin to understand musical form and structure as well as various musical terms. Based on enrollment, beginner and advanced classes will be offered.

## Caribbean Music

**Jon Suters**

*Grades 7,8, and 9, fall/winter or spring*

Caribbean music is the heart and soul of this performance-based ensemble. Students will have the opportunity to work with various styles and pitches of steel drums, from the single lead to the six 32-gallon drums that constitute the bass section. Some skill in reading music is required. Offered as enrollment permits.

## Guitar Ensemble

**Jon Suters**

*Grades 7,8, and 9*

This class will focus on the basics of playing the nylon string (classical) guitar: right hand and left hand positioning, tone production, scale and arpeggio technique, basic music reading for the guitar, playing solo, and playing within a guitar ensemble. Some rudimentary knowledge of the guitar would be helpful but is not necessarily required. Students must have access to a classical guitar (or at the very least steel string acoustic).

# Studio Art

## Studio Art Philosophy

The Studio Arts department hopes to provide time, place, materials and instruction to allow every student to experience the power and joy of creation. Students gain hands-on familiarity with a variety of mediums, including but not limited to drawing, painting, print-making, sculpture, collage, and photography. They have the opportunity to discover their own path to fulfilling an assignment, to make choices, to develop self-expression, and to become comfortable with reading visual images. Students become familiar with a variety of styles and time periods in art, with the work of many artists, and with art from many cultures. They see connections between art and other subject areas, linking the interconnectedness of the real world for them.

A student who has attended BCD for most their school years is curious, is comfortable with reading a work of art, with analyzing the flood of images our society generates, and with museum experiences. Students learn principles and elements of art and become aware of their own best abilities to create art work. They have the opportunity to work independently and in a group, and to show their work. They become sensitive to the fact that choice shapes all human efforts. They develop tolerance for one another's efforts. They should also know that creating can be fun. The art teachers hope to challenge and nurture creative thinkers in society.

Art throughout history deals with durable human concerns. Exposure to art contributes to being a well-rounded member of society.

## Arts Foundation

**Marilyn Cromwell**

*Grade 7, fall and winter*

These students will practice a variety of styles and techniques, while working with both new and familiar materials. They will increase their knowledge of color theory, their drawing skills, and their awareness of the possibilities for working in three dimensions. Verbal as well as visual communication skills will be explored, as we talk and write about works of art. The final project will be chosen by the student. This course will be fun and challenging.

## Mosaics and More

**Marilyn Cromwell**

*Grade 7, spring*

Have you been waiting and hoping to make a mosaic piece, or a découpage plate? Do you enjoy manipulating materials? This is the course for the craftier endeavors, made with an eye to fine arts elements and principles. As many projects as possible will be packed into this brief time.

## Drawing, Painting, and Sculpture

**Marilyn Cromwell**

*Grades 8 and 9, fall and winter*

All students will work with a variety of mediums. Pastels, recycled materials, clay, stone, and paint are the tip of the iceberg for materials that we will be using. Eighth graders will have occasional homework assignments in sketchbooks. Ninth graders will have work due in their sketchbooks weekly. All students will work with a variety of materials. Personal style will be encouraged, and ninth graders, with their greater skill base, will have more latitude in defining the direction of their response to assignments. This is the place for hard work and best efforts.

## Basic Black & White Photography

**Marilyn Cromwell**

*Grade 8 and 9, spring*

This is an introduction to the mysteries of the dark-room. We have acquired two school cameras, so it is no longer required that students have their own 35mm cameras, although it is helpful. Other materials will be provided. This class will require work beyond class time, as you learn to shoot, process film, and print black and white images. The works of published photographers will be our departure point for discussions.

## Design After Sol Lewitt

**Marilyn Cromwell, Geoff Perkins**

*Grade 8 and 9, spring*

This class is for students who love art, writing, and/or math! The artwork of Sol Lewitt, on exhibit at MASS MoCA, will serve as the inspiration for the graphic work that will be created. Each student will write directions for another student to use to make a work of art, will work collaboratively on large scale work, and will explore the mathematics of creating geometric design.

# Graphic Design

## Graphic Design Philosophy

Graphic Design courses are offered to students in Grades 7–9 as additions to standard studio courses, in recognition of the growing field of art which is digitally based. Much of our world has become electronic and so, just as artists have always done, artists communicate in the medium “of the times.” Today there are artists whose entire body of work may be produced through use of computers and other digital methods. Graphic Design courses focus on learning the software necessary to produce graphic design. Additionally, each course will look at basic design principles which apply to all graphic communication.

## Intro to Graphic Design

**Jenny Wright**

*Fall & winter terms for Grades 7 & 8*

Through the study of graphic design, students will be more able to look beyond the words and images to the how and why of our intensely visual culture. In the same way that studying grammar better equips writers to communicate, understanding and learning principles of design, producing projects out of design criteria, and evaluating others’ designs will begin to develop in these students the ability to look at everything from packaging to highway signs with more understanding. They will become better and more creative communicators through visual presentations. By looking at the hand of the artist in images that have been created on computers as illustrations and how those illustrations convey meaning in their context, students will learn about this field of art.

The main focus of this class, however, will be a series of lessons in Adobe Illustrator®, the industry standard for creating artwork on a computer. Using Illustrator students will create their own images, graphics, and projects. Students will learn how to use a variety of tools and effects. Sometimes they may use imported images and learn how to manipulate them, and at other times they will create from “scratch.” A portion of the curriculum will include both Photoshop and InDesign and how these programs, with Illustrator, can be used to produce everything from posters to books. The class will be project oriented and each student will produce a portfolio of work.

Students receive grades for this course. Making the effort to be creative, stretch boundaries, and produce graphic communication that is both arresting and understandable are the most important tasks for the each student. Grading is done according to a rubric which is supplied at the first class. In-class assignments must be turned in on time. Missed assignments (due to excused absence) must be turned in at the next class or will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made.

## Graphic Design 8 & 9

**Jenny Wright**

*Fall & winter terms*

Graphic design is part of virtually everything in our lives. From packaging design to car design, maps to cd covers, clothing and how parking lots are organized, if you look behind our visual culture there is a vast population of graphic designers directing us, enticing us, and informing us. Underlying each decision is, hopefully, a concept of design that attracts the viewer in order to communicate a message. In this class we will look at how that communication is done and how it can be powerful. A series of basic design principles will be studied.

At the focus of this two-term class will be the creation of BCD’s yearbook, *The Penguin*, we will move along quickly to begin its design. Using Photoshop and InDesign as computer design tools, students will design the yearbook, compose pages, and be responsible for acquiring editorial content. Members of the class will form a design team and collaborate on the look and feel of the yearbook. Working cooperatively, students will decide layout, position, connecting design themes, dedications, and all other layout choices for the yearbook. Through a carefully crafted timeline and areas of responsibility, members of the class will submit their own writing and photography for the yearbook or obtain this content from peers or faculty.

The entire design of the yearbook will be the responsibility of this class, even though some pages will be completed after the class closes at the end of the winter term. Plans for the spring sports pages will be supplied by this class to be executed by others. Students receive grades for this course. Making the effort to be creative, stretch boundaries, and produce graphic communication that is both arresting and understandable are the most important tasks for the each student. Additionally students are assessed on their efforts as team members and as individuals, and their ability to complete assignments within parameters and time limits given. Grading is done according to a rubric which is supplied at the first class. In-class assignments as well as homework will be required, must be turned in on time, and will be graded. Missed assignments (due to an excused absence) must be turned in at the next class or will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made. Homework will be assigned weekly during the fall term for extra credit. One Saturday workday will be required during the winter term.

# Shops

## Shop Philosophy

Shop is another aspect of BCD's mission to teach the whole child. It provides an opportunity for children to learn to create projects using tools. The primal satisfaction of holding an object in your hands that you have crafted is a pleasure from which we are increasingly alienated in a mass produced society. The ability to use tools is empowering and encourages people to take control of the world around them. Student buddies help other students be safe while using power tools and teaching them to be good citizens. In the shop program age appropriateness is directly related to the machinery the students are allowed to operate. As the students mature, they are given more responsibility, whether it is a new tool they may operate or that they are allowed to operate a piece of machinery without assistance or supervision. Shop is a required subject for Grades 4 through 6 and meets once a week. Grades 7 through 9 have the option of selecting shop in the arts block of the Upper School schedule.

## Middle School Shop

**Laura Piasecki**

Shop is a required class for all students in Grades 4 through 6 and meets once a week. During the course of the year, students will work in wood, leaded glass, and clay. Classes begin with a lecture and demonstration of each skill or tool until all of the necessary material is covered. For students in Grade 4, the emphasis in wood is on hand tools. Sanders, drills, and saber saws are some of the portable power-tools used in the Grades 5 and 6. Also beginning in Grade 5, stationary power tools such as the band saw, drill press, and scroll saw are used with the "buddy system" for safety. In the sixth grade, the wood lathes are introduced. Projects in Middle School (which are student-generated) might include CD or tape racks, boxes, lathe projects, and furniture. The glass sun-catchers are made in the copper-foil technique with the glass being cut by the instructor. Each student must complete at least one wood and one glass project. Clay is the only medium in the spring term for all of Middle School. Students alternate between throwing on the wheel, hand modeling, and glazing. Twice a year, reports are sent home evaluating each student's performance, one for glass and wood, and one for clay.

## Upper School Shop

**Laura Piasecki**

Shop is an arts block option for students in Grades 7–9. There are two different programs: wood and glass for the fall and winter terms where students are required to make a project in each medium, clay in the spring.

Students in Grades 7, 8 and 9, are taught to use the portable power tools such as the sanders, drills, and saber saw. Those in Grades 8 and 9 may also use the router. All students are instructed in the use of the stationary tools including the band saw, drill press, lathe, and scroll saw. Projects (which are student generated) might include wooden games, furniture and wooden spindle pieces.

Beginning in Grade 7, students learn to cut glass. Sun catchers and boxes are the most common projects. In the spring term, clay is the shop option for the arts block. Students alternate weekly between throwing on the wheel and hand or glazing work. Reports evaluating the student's progress in wood and glass are sent home at the end of the winter term. The clay term reports are completed in June.

# Theater & Film

## Digital Film Philosophy

In the Upper School, digital film is taught as part of the arts curriculum. In the film courses, students work on small-scale collaborative projects and build skills. Through hands-on experience, the students move through introductory exposure to digital film techniques, equipment, and software into full engagement in short film projects of their own design. Completed works at all levels will be eligible for inclusion in BCD's Drew Bridges Upper School Film Festival and submitted for consideration in the student category at the Berkshire International Film Festival, both in May.

## Introduction to Digital Filmmaking

**Jesse Howard**

*Grades 7 & 8*

This course introduces facets of digital filmmaking including, shot lists, camera angles, shooting techniques, and editing with Final Cut Pro. In addition, elements of style are explored including use of satire, voice-over, and visual economy. Students work in groups to make simple short digital film projects aimed at demonstrating knowledge of the techniques taught in class.

## Intermediate Digital Filmmaking

**Jesse Howard**

*Grades 8 and 9 (Prerequisite: Introduction to Digital Filmmaking)*

In the intermediate course, students take their skill to the next level, developing and producing more advanced projects. They learn new techniques and expand on familiar ones, deepening their understanding of each phase of pre-production, production, and post. Participants in the class learn more about camera angles, the short film form, project management, and editing techniques in addition to basing their scripts on a study of Joseph Campbell's mythic story structure. They take their projects from concept and pitch all the way to editing and exporting their finished movie.

## Advanced Digital Filmmaking

**Jesse Howard**

*Grade 9 (Prerequisite: Intermediate Digital Filmmaking)*

Ninth graders having completed Intermediate Digital Filmmaking may work together to produce a short independent film project alongside the intermediate class. While they work on their own project, they also serve as mentors and class assistants with the intermediate group. By the end of the course, these select students will have written and produced a short film that builds on everything they learned in the previous courses.

## Theater Philosophy

The Upper School theater courses are designed as a place to focus on skills outside of the pressure of production. Starting with a safe, fun, and challenging experience in improvisation, students work up to an introduction to current acting techniques designed to give them a new set of tools for use exploring characters, relationships, and scenes.

## Introduction to Improvisation

**Jesse Howard**

*Grade 7, spring term*

Have you ever watched *Whose Line is it Anyway* or another comedy improv show and thought, "How do they do that?" This course will show you how. Learn to be a reliable, creative, spontaneous member of a comedy improvisation troupe. No experience necessary! With a few basics, you'll be cracking your classmates up in no time. Come for fun, laughter, and a challenge! This course culminates in a small, informal performance for fellow students and teachers.

## Advanced Improvisation

**Jesse Howard**

*Prerequisite: Intro to Improv*

Students who wish to continue their exploration of improvisation can join the advanced class. In this course, more challenging games, rules, concepts, and characters will be explored. Students will develop more spontaneity, confidence, and quickness on stage as they attempt performance games that take their skills to a whole new level. This course culminates in a small, informal performance for fellow students and teachers.

# Program of Studies

Berkshire Country Day School

*Where you belong.*

**After-School Programs**  
2009–10

# After-School Programs

## Sports Philosophy

The foundation of the after-school sports program is the belief that every student should have an opportunity to participate in organized team sports at BCD. Among the many things which can be learned from team sports are physical conditioning, sportsmanship, cooperation, social interaction, dependence on others, and the shared-experience factor. This last point is particularly important at a small school and is a major reason for having only one sport each season through the ninth grade. Perhaps the most compelling reason for having team sports is that the peak time for physical skill and coordination development in a person's life is from ten to thirteen years old. Being on a team provides a means for this development through the skill and time requirements. It also provides a reason to want to excel so that the individual may be an asset to the team. Another reason to have team sports at the elementary/middle school level is that this may be the only opportunity for a student to be on a team due to the far more competitive demands of high school and college sports. Finally, a basic tenet of the BCD sports experience is that students are encouraged not to give up and quit. After a number of years of practice and play, even students who never felt that they had any particular ability find themselves playing well and truly enjoying being on the team and in the sport.

At Berkshire Country Day School, after-school sports are required for all students in Grades 5 through 9 in the spring and fall and are available on an optional basis for 4th graders. In the winter, there are numerous optional sports offerings for Grades 4-9 as well as the Friday Ski Program which is open to students from Pre-K to Grade 9. Students who have particular interest beyond the scope of what BCD offers (such as tennis, riding, swimming, karate, etc.) may choose an alternate program in the fall and/or spring as long as it meets certain criteria such as meeting three times per week, provides active as opposed to passive activity, and is supervised by a qualified instructor. The administration at BCD finds it particularly important for students in Grades 7 through 9 to be involved in after-school sports as no physical education classes are scheduled for these grades within the school day.

The most difficult problem with a required competitive sports program is striking a balance between participation and competition. Achieving a perfect blend of the two is virtually impossible even though this is what the program tries to accomplish. The reason is our belief that all children should have an opportunity to play team sports. While an intramural program would be sufficient for some, it does not provide the competitive edge or the format for teaching good sportsmanship for those who have the skills to play on a competitive team. So BCD tries to create enough teams at varying levels in an effort to meet the needs of all of its students.

The emphasis of the program for Grades 4 and 5 (the Farm Team) is on learning skills, and, consequently, there are no required interscholastic games at this level. In the Junior Varsity and Varsity programs, students participate on competitive teams that play teams from area schools. In both of these programs, the coaches try to balance participation and playing time. The question of balance between competition and participation is always a delicate one, but the fact is, everyone is on a team and everyone is involved.

## Theater Philosophy

There are many opportunities for students to participate in productions throughout the year. The after-school theater and film program at BCD allows students to become members of a collaborative team with a singular goal. The fun, excitement, and hard work involved necessitates that each student play an integral role in the process, daring to contribute their own thoughts and ideas in safe environment. Members of the cast and crew engage together in artistically challenging productions that model both sound theatrical practices and positive group dynamics. Students learn to make themselves and their work public while celebrating the work, ideas, and processes of ensemble mates. The guiding principle of the BCD theater and film program is to provide an arena in which students come into their own by consciously searching for and finding each other as both human beings and artists. Through this process, they learn to regard themselves and others as enough from the get-go. Executing theater and film work in this respectful manner, each student can feel free to answer his or her own questions in an honest manner and receive vigorous direction within a space of acceptance. The teacher presents a clear vision and is both proactive and highly energetic so that specific advances may arise out of each student's own tenacious exploration.

## Middle School Theater

Students in Grades 5 and 6 work on original material under gentle, knowledgeable instruction. Through brainstorming, improvisation, games and writing exercises, the casts create short pieces of theater that draw on their own interests, ideas, and strengths. The focus is on the process: finding one's voice, respecting all ideas, and practicing theater fundamentals. The end result is the proud presentation of that work to the school community. The Grade 6 production takes place in late fall with the Grade 5 show happening in late winter.

## Upper School Theater & Film

In the Upper School, students have the opportunity to take their interests to the next level. Autumn is the time for a small production in Grades 8 and 9. Through the expansion of their knowledge and skill at improvisation and collaboration, students will engage in a completely improvised performance. This might be an original story with improvised scenes, a sketch comedy improvisation show (akin to *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*), or even a "Choose Your Own Adventure" play where the audience's choices guide the story. In the winter, students in Grades 7 through 9 audition for a full-scale production giving them experience with a larger ensemble, involvement in the technical aspects of scenery, lighting, props, and costumes, and the thrill of telling a story on a larger scale. This production might be a full-length drama, a musical, or Shakespeare, differing from year to year. Finally, there is a small digital film production in the spring.

Students write a screenplay through a collaborative process that includes ideas from all participants. They then set about producing the project learning about acting for film, camera work, continuity, editing, and more. All Upper School performances and screenings will take place at the Winthrop Theatre.

### **Limits of Participation:**

To keep from decimating the sports teams, a cap will be placed on participation in the theater productions as follows:

- Fall: 9 students (seniority by grade, then first-come, first-served)
- Winter: No set cap (audition to determine correct number for given show)
- Spring: 9 students (seniority by grade, then first-come, first-served)

Grade 7 may do only 1 season of theater (winter)

Grade 8 may do 2 seasons of theater

Grade 9 may do 2 seasons of theater and petition for 3

Petition Committee will consist of at least the Theater Director and the Associate Head of Upper School