

***What a  
Martin J. Gottlieb  
Day School  
Eighth Grader  
Should Know  
and  
Be Able To Do!***

*General Studies  
Judaic Studies  
Resource Program*

**ושננתם לבניך**

“And you shall teach  
your children...”



VALUES • KNOWLEDGE • LEADERSHIP

**Martin J. Gottlieb Day School**  
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## **A Message to the Reader**

This brochure lists skills and abilities in General Studies, Judaic Studies, and the Resource program that students should acquire by the end of Eighth Grade to earn promotion to the Ninth Grade. It answers questions that everyone in the school community needs to ask, such as:

- **What are students expected to know and be able to do?**
- **How are their achievements measured?**

This document is the product of extensive work by our faculty and administration, taking into account guidelines published by the Florida Education Department and the unique needs of our school community. Besides detailing the curricular goals and objectives of this particular grade, this document is designed to be part of the overall K-8 curriculum of the Martin J. Gottlieb Day School. Similar brochures can be obtained for other grades.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please be sure to contact Mr. Mitzmacher at 904-268-4200, ext. 148. We value your feedback and input.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Martin J. Gottlieb Day School, a Solomon Schechter school, is to provide a comprehensive, academically challenging curriculum in General and Judaic Studies. The school provides a caring, supportive community in which each student can grow academically, emotionally, socially and physically. Through the bilingual curriculum and school environment, the students are presented with a philosophy of life based upon the values and concerns embodied in Conservative Judaism, stressing social action and social responsibility.

Through a curriculum based on intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, students are challenged to meet the highest standards of academic excellence. The instructional approach fosters a lifelong passion for learning. We nurture the souls of each of our students, grounding them in Jewish values. By instilling personal and social responsibility and love for Israel, we create a foundation for a life of continuity and dedication to the community, which extends to the home, the synagogue and the community at large. Our studies foster a love of learning and openness to students' ideas.

# Language Arts

The Language Arts Curriculum for the Middle School is literature-based. A textbook provides the template for basic literacy (reading, writing, and speech), while independent reading promotes reading fluency and comprehension. Students are encouraged to ask essential questions and to find the answers through communication and collaboration, information and research, digital citizenship, media literacy, and technology. Differentiated learning provides a conducive environment for creativity, critical thinking, and innovation.

Eighth Grade Language Arts continues to build upon the foundations established in Grades Six and Seven. Activities are designed to encourage goal setting and reflection, and to promote higher-level thinking and critical skills, in accordance with Florida Benchmarks for Language Arts Grade 8. Students are expected to read, write, speak, and listen skillfully, and evaluate the validity of sources. Vocabulary, developed in context from varied genres, should increase expeditiously. Round table discussions, written analyses, digital projects, and unit tests assess reading comprehension and student ability to relate literature to self and the real world. Students will exhibit mastery of grammar and language concepts as applied to all forms of writing and speech. By the end of the eighth grade, students will have individual digital portfolios that showcase best products, processes, and reflections.

## **Reading—Process**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Demonstrate an understanding of the Reading Process
- Participate in a structured, independent reading program
- Read for a variety of purposes

## **Reading—Fluency**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Demonstrate the ability to read grade level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression
  - Increase reading rate based on purpose, text difficulty, form, and style
  - Listen to, read, and discuss familiar and conceptually challenging text
  - Distinguish denotative and connotative meanings of words
- Demonstrate the ability to increase vocabulary in all subject areas

- Apply multipurpose reading techniques and advanced study skills
- Identify word/phrase relationships and their meanings
- Relate new vocabulary, as introduced, to familiar words
- Use new vocabulary in conversation, exposition, and written work

### **Reading—Vocabulary Development/Spelling**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Use context clues to figure out word meanings
- Identify base words, word roots, prefixes, and suffixes
- Explore word origins (eponyms) and word families
- Use a dictionary, thesaurus, and digital tools to determine word meanings, pronunciation, parts of speech, etymologies, synonyms and antonyms
- Understand and use multiple meaning words, homophones, and homographs
- Recognize and apply spelling patterns
- Identify and avoid common spelling errors
- Recognize and avoid commonly misspelled words

### **Reading—Comprehension**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Use active reading strategies that promote understanding
  - Ask Questions ♦ Visualize ♦ Make Predictions ♦ Make Connections ♦ Make Inferences ♦ Reread ♦ Outline ♦ Summarize
- Use reading skills that further comprehension
  - Identify Author's Purpose ♦ Skim and Scan ♦ Find the Main Idea ♦ Determine Importance of Details ♦ Understand Literary Elements ♦ Take Notes ♦ Identify Sequence of Events ♦ Compare and Contrast ♦ Evaluate Cause and Effect ♦ Classify and Reorganize Information ♦ Distinguish Fact from Opinion ♦ Identify Multiple Levels of Meaning ♦ Interpret Visual Aids ♦ Draw Conclusions
- Read independently
  - Read different genres
  - Develop personal guidelines for book selection

### **Literary Analysis—Fiction**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Identify and apply knowledge of the elements of fiction to develop a response to literature
  - Identify the distinct characteristics of various genres
  - Recognize literary elements; locate examples within text
    - ♦ Plot ♦ Theme ♦ Author's Point of View ♦ Author's Purpose ♦ Characterization ♦ Setting

- Define, locate within the text, and evaluate the use of literary devices:
  - ◆ Sound Devices ◆ Figurative, Descriptive, Sensory, and Idiomatic Language ◆ Personification
- Compare and contrast selections of different genres for use of literary elements and personal response.

### **Literary Analysis—Non-Fiction**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Identify and apply knowledge of the elements of non-fiction to demonstrate understanding of the information presented
  - Identify the characteristics of a variety of types of non-fiction
  - Be able to outline, summarize, and take concise notes for specific purposes

### **Literary Analysis**

- Use literary terminology when analyzing fiction/non-fiction
- Write reviews, critiques, and recommendations for fiction/non-fiction selections read
- Create a digital bookshelf and post book reviews

### **Writing—Process**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Demonstrate an understanding of the Writing Process
  - PREWRITING: Generate ideas from multiple sources
  - DRAFTING: Develop main idea
  - REVISING: Evaluate writing piece for clarity of subject and expression
  - EDITING: Proofread for errors in mechanics
  - PUBLISHING: Present work to intended audience
- Engage in the Writing Process
  - Use strategies to generate ideas and form a plan: decide on a topic, audience, purpose, and form; gather ideas; arrange them logically
  - Write a draft by developing main ideas from the prewriting stage; organize information into a logical sequence; draft an introduction, body, and conclusion; develop voice
  - Evaluate the draft for organization (adding, cutting, or moving as needed), development of content, sentence fluency, and effective word choice; refine and revise for style and language
  - Proofread final draft for errors in spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation; make corrections
  - Produce final work in a format appropriate to intended audience and purpose; share

### **Writing—Applications**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Demonstrate an understanding of the modes and purposes of writing
  - EXPOSITORY: To inform, to present, to explain an idea or process, or to analyze and interpret
  - NARRATIVE: To entertain, to make a point, or to introduce a topic
  - DESCRIPTIVE: To entertain, to enrich, or to create a mood or emotional response
  - PERSUASIVE: To persuade readers to respond in a specific way
- Develop writing by producing examples in each of the four writing modes

### **Writing—Grammar and Style**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Demonstrate ability to use correct mechanics, word choice, formatting, usage, and sentence structure, in final draft
- Develop and demonstrate understanding of:
  - Consistency in verb tense
  - Subject-verb agreement
  - Pronoun-antecedent agreement
  - Figurative and sensory language

### **Communication—Listening**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Demonstrate literal, interpretive, responsive, and critical comprehension when listening to a variety of non-print presentations
- Listen to gain information for a variety of purposes (e.g., clarifying, elaborating, summarizing main ideas and supporting details)

### **Communication—Speaking Fluency**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Express ideas with clarity, coherence, conciseness, and conventional English in oral communication
- Demonstrate fluency by using effective organizational structure and word choice when giving oral presentations
  - Speak using colorful and imaginative vocabulary (e.g., figurative language, colloquialisms, dialect) and supporting details (e.g., examples, anecdotes, descriptions, facts)
  - Use simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences of different kinds (declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory)

### **Communication—Speaking Strategies**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Apply appropriate strategies when presenting orally
  - Delivery Strategies

- Use volume, emphasis, pacing, enunciation, eye contact, and gestures appropriate to the audience and content of the presentation
- Adjust to the audience's verbal and nonverbal cues
- Visual Strategies
  - Use illustrations and other visual aids to enhance the delivery of oral presentations

### **Communication—Speaking Purposes and Forms**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Demonstrate understanding of a variety of purposes
  - Narrative Presentations: relate events, real or invented
  - Persuasive Presentations: persuade an audience
  - Expository Presentations: give information, explain why or how, clarify a process, or define a concept
  - Informational/Multimedia Presentations: communicate an understandable explanation of information, citing sources and using technology, as appropriate
  - Response to Literature: demonstrate an understanding of a literary work; support interpretation with text references
- Demonstrate proficiency using a variety of oral forms
  - Deliver individual oral presentations (e.g., speeches, dramatic monologues, storytelling, poetry recitations, oral reports)
  - Be able to assertively defend a position
  - Ask and answer meaningful questions politely
  - Conduct interviews to gather information
- Participate in juried debate on a controversial topic

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills—Information and Media Literacy**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Recognize availability of a wide array of informational text
  - Locate, analyze, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media
  - Demonstrate ability to distinguish fact from opinion and to question the validity of data
- Use a systematic process for the collection, processing, and presentation of information
  - Use digital tools to gather, evaluate, and share information
- Develop an understanding of media as integral to informed decision-making
  - Demonstrate ability to select sources appropriate to specific tasks
  - Use variety of processes and perspectives to make informed decisions and/or explore alternative solutions

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills—Collaboration and Communication**

*By the end of the school year, students should:*

- Use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively
  - Interact, collaborate, and publish with others - digitally
  - Communicate information and ideas to multiple audiences using a variety of digital formats
  - Develop cultural understanding and global awareness by interacting with people of other cultures
- Contribute to class blog
- Show evidence of understanding “netiquette” and academic commenting

## Mathematics

By Eighth Grade, students in our school (depending on ability-level grouping beginning in Grade Four) may be in either “Algebra I” or “Geometry”.

For students taking “Algebra I”, the topics that will be covered by the end of the year are:

### **Algebra I Concepts**

*By the end of the school students should be able to:*

- Evaluate algebraic expressions by translating words into algebra.
- Add, subtract, multiply and divide positive and negative numbers.
- Understand variables and expressions that include real numbers, square roots, and exponents.
- Solve equations using the order of operations.
- Solve one-step equations with one variable to multi-step equations with variables on both sides.
- Manipulate and solve an equation in two or more variables for one of the variables.
- Write and use ratios, rates, unit rates. Write and solve proportions.
- Solve problems involving percents and applications of percents, including interest, commission, taxes, etc.
- Graph and solve single-step, multi-step, absolute value and compound inequalities.
- Understand, write and graph functions that are lines, parabolas and absolute value graphs.
- Create and interpret scatter plots. Use trend lines to make predictions.
- Identify and graph linear functions, use the slope formula, put linear equations into slope-intercept and point-slope form, find slopes of parallel and perpendicular lines.
- Solve systems of linear inequalities by substitution, elimination and graphing.

- Solve linear inequalities and systems of linear inequalities
- Use multiplication and division properties of exponents to evaluate and simplify exponential expressions.
- Change numbers in standard form into scientific notation and vice-versa.
- Add, subtract, multiply and divide polynomials.
- Choose the best method for factoring polynomials. Factor binomials, trinomials, and the special types of polynomials.
- Identify, graph, and solve quadratic equations.

For students taking “Geometry”, the topics that will be covered by the end of the year are:

### **Geometry Concepts**

*By the end of the school students should be able to:*

- Identify and solve problems involving points, lines, planes, segments, and angles.
- Calculate midpoints and distance in the coordinate plane.
- Classify, measure, and calculate angles.
- Transform polygons using rotation, reflection and translation.
- Identify the relationships of angles that form from transversals cutting parallel lines.
- Calculate slopes and write equations of parallel and perpendicular lines on the coordinate plane.
- Classify triangles, angle relationships in triangles, and identify congruent triangles.
- Prove triangles congruent using SSS, SAS, ASA, AAS, and HL postulates
- Apply theorems about the properties and attributes of triangles, including perpendicular and angle bisectors, medians, altitudes, Mid-segment and Pythagorean Theorem.
- Apply properties of special right triangles and find missing lengths of sides using the 45-45-90 and 30-60-90 Triangle Theorems.
- Identify and apply properties of polygons, including parallelogram, quadrilateral, trapezoid, rhombus, rectangle, square, and n-gon.
- Identify similar relationships in triangles (AA, SSS, SAS) and apply properties of similar triangles and use proportional relationships.
- Apply trigonometric ratios (sine, cosine and tangent) and inverse trigonometric functions to find lengths of sides of right triangles.
- Apply formulas for area and perimeter of triangles, quadrilaterals, circles and regular polygons.
- Calculate perimeter and area of figures in a coordinate plane.
- Identify parts of circles (radius, diameter, arcs, chords) and calculate sector area.
- Use angle relationships and segment relationships in circles to

- find the measure of missing segments and angles.
- Find surface area and volume of three-dimensional figures, including pyramids, cones, prisms, cylinders, and spheres.

## Science

In Middle School, Students demonstrate mastery of science content and exceeding of benchmark standards in numerous and diverse ways. Tests involve varied forms of evaluation, including, but not limited to:

- Essay responses
- Modified true/false
- Identification of model components
- Extrapolation of information for the purpose of problem solving

Students are also expected to produce diverse, individual projects that demonstrate deeper and heightened learning, using chapter information as a “springboard”.

By the end of the school year, students in Grade Eight should show basic proficiency in understanding/carrying out the following:

### Physical Sciences

- Periodic table groupings and characteristics.
- Atomic structure and bonding, molecular relationships and chemical formulas.
- Characteristics of the 4 types of matter, changes between states, behavior of fluids and the principles that apply to it.
- Thermal energy and transfer, usable energy, conversions, entropy and disorder.

### Life Sciences

- Human reproduction, life stages and endocrinology.
- Heredity, genetic probability and genotypes, disorders and genetic engineering.
- Adaptations and acquiring of genetic characteristics, fossils and primate evolution.

### Earth and Space Sciences

- Energy resources and alternatives, water and land use.
- Earth’s structure and tectonic movement, plate boundaries and relationships, changes in Earth’s surfaces.
- Weathering, soil formation, and agents of erosion.
- Stars and their properties and life cycles, apparent/absolute magnitude, Sun’s features, galaxies, history of the universe and Doppler shift.

### **Scientific Processes**

- Practice metric measurement techniques.
- Exercise the Scientific Method as a primary inquiry tool.
- Work as a group to carry out specific laboratory tasks.
- Create scientific documents that organize and communicate data.
- Use the chapter as a springboard for independent inquiry and in the creation of a customized product that demonstrates deeper understanding.

Our school holds a Science Fair (conducted every other year), during which students are afforded extra opportunities to practice all of the skills associated with the scientific method, among others, in addition to the regular yearly curriculum. Organization, critical thinking, interview processes, showcase techniques, and long-term planning strategies are reinforced during the course of the project.

## **Social Studies**

The Middle School Social Studies Curriculum for the Martin J. Gottlieb Day School is based on a three-year sequential history strand. It begins with prehistory and continues through the study of key ancient world civilizations in Sixth and Seventh Grades, introduces American history as its foundations begin during the Middle Ages and Renaissance at the end of Seventh Grade, and concludes with an overview of American history in Grade Eight. In addition, all key Florida middle school benchmarks in geography, economics, civics, and government are fully covered at appropriate points along the history strand and are completed by the end of Eighth Grade.

### **By the end of the year an Eighth Grader should:**

#### **American History:**

- *Use research and inquiry skills to analyze American history using primary and secondary sources by:*
  - Providing supporting details for an answer from text, interviewing for oral history, checking validity of information from research/text, and identifying strong vs. weak arguments.
  - Analyzing charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and time lines; analyze political cartoons, determine cause and effect.
  - Analyzing current events relevant to American history topics through a variety of electronic and print media resources.

- Differentiating fact from opinion, utilizing appropriate historical research and fiction/nonfiction support materials.
- Identifying within both primary and secondary sources, the author, audience, format, and purpose of significant historical documents.
- Comparing interpretations of key events and issues throughout American history.
- Viewing historic events through the eyes of those who were there as shown in their art, writings, music, and artifacts.
- *Examine the causes, course, and consequences of settlement in America by:*
  - Identifying the explorers, nation for which each was sailing, and areas explored and claimed.
  - Comparing and contrasting the claims of Portugal and Spain, and the historical effect of the Treaty of Tordesillas.
  - Describing the outcomes of the “Columbian exchange”.
  - Comparing the styles and relationships among the British, Spanish, French, and Dutch in their struggles for colonization in North America; describing how each related to the Native Americans.
  - Comparing and contrasting the characteristics of the New England, Middle, and Southern colonies, differentiating among the economic systems that developed in each, including indentured servants and slaves as labor sources.
  - Describing the elements of the “triangle trade”.
  - Identifying the impact of key colonial figures on the economic, political, and social development of the colonies.
  - Discussing the impact of colonial settlement on Native American populations,
  - Examining the causes, course, and consequences of the French and Indian War and its connection to events in Europe.
  - Describing the contributions of key groups (Africans, Native Americans, women, and children to the society and culture of colonial America.
  - Describing how Jews arrived in each of the 13 colonies and the problems encountered in each.
- *Demonstrate an understanding of the causes, course, and consequences of the American Revolution and the founding principles of our nation by:*

- Explaining the consequences of the French and Indian War in British policies for the American colonies from 1763 to 1774.
- Explaining American colonial reaction to British policy from 1763 to 1774.
- Recognizing contributions of the founding fathers such as John Adams, Sam Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, George Washington, George Mason and others during the American Revolution.
- Examining the causes, course, key events, and consequences of the American Revolution.
- Describing the structure, content, and consequences of the Declaration of Independence.
- Evaluating the structure, strengths, and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation and its aspects that led to the Constitutional Convention.
- Examining the course and consequences of the Constitutional Convention.
- Analyzing support and opposition to the ratification of the Constitution.
- Examining the influences of and precedents set by George Washington's presidency in the formation of the office and new nation.
- Explaining the major domestic and international economic, political, and socio-cultural events of John Adams' presidency.
- Explaining the major domestic and international economic, political, and socio-cultural events of Thomas Jefferson's presidency.
- Examining the time period (1763-1815) from the perspective of historically under-represented groups such as Native Americans, women, indentured servants, slaves, children, and the working class.
- Examining key events in Florida history as they are impacted or impact each period of American history.
- Examining key events in the lives of American Jews as they are impacted or impact each period of American history.
- *Demonstrate an understanding of the domestic and international causes, course, and consequences of westward expansion and development of the new nation by:*
  - Examining the US' growing diplomatic assertiveness

- Summarizing the key events of the presidencies from 1812-1860.
- Describing the debate surrounding the spread of slavery into western territories and Florida.
- Examining the experiences and perspectives of significant individuals and groups during this era of American history.
- Discussing the impact of westward expansion on the lives and cultural practices of Native American and slave populations.
- Explaining the causes, course, and consequences 19th century transportation revolution on the growth of the nation's economy.
- Identifying technological improvements, (inventions/inventors) that contributed to industrial growth.
- Analyzing the causes, course, and consequences of the Second Great Awakening on social reform movements.
- Analyzing the impact of technological advancements on the agricultural economy and slave labor.
- Examining the aspects of slave culture including plantation life, life of slaves in different areas, resistance efforts/punishments, role of spiritual system in the lives of slaves.
- Examining the effects of the 1804 Haitian Revolution on the U. S. acquisition of the Louisiana territory.
- Explaining the consequences of landmark Supreme Court decisions significant in this era.
- Examining the causes, course, and consequences of the women's suffrage movement.
- Examining the causes, course, and consequences of literature movements (Transcendentalism) significant to this era of American history.  
Identifying the key ideas and influences of Jacksonian democracy.
- *Examine the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War and Reconstruction including its effects on American peoples by:*
  - Explaining/analyzing the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War (sectionalism, slavery, states' rights, balance of power in the Senate).
  - Explaining major domestic and international economic, military, political, and socio-cultural events of Abraham Lincoln's presidency.

- Identifying the divisions (Confederate and Union states, border states, western territories) at the outbreak of the Civil War.
- Comparing Union and Confederate strengths and weaknesses.
- Analyzing the set up and leadership of the Confederate government.
- Comparing significant Civil War battles and events on civilian populations and the overall war effort.
- Discussing the roles of key military and other leaders of the Civil War period.
- Analyzing the impact of the surrender at Appomatox, and the assassination of Lincoln on the re-unification of the United States.
- Explaining and evaluating the policies, practices, and consequences of Reconstruction (presidential and congressional reconstruction, Johnson's impeachment, the Civil Rights Act of 1866, the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, opposition of southern whites to Reconstruction, accomplishments and failures of Radical Reconstruction, presidential election of 1876, end of Reconstruction, rise of Jim Crow laws, rise of Ku Klux Klan, the legacies of the period that echo into today.)
- Identifying the key movements, events, wars, and leaders in American history from 1876 to the present.

### **Geography:**

- *Locate and identify on maps the fifty states and their capitals, national capital, protectorates and territories, and other major land and water forms of the United States of America.*
- *Interpret maps to identify major land and water forms of North, Central, and South America, and islands of the Caribbean.*
- *Identify major physical and cultural landmarks of the U. S.*
- *Explain how major physical characteristics, natural resources, climate, and location have influenced settlement, economies, and inter-governmental relations in North America.*
- *Describe current major cultural regions of North America.*
- *Explain how latitude and longitude/climate and prevailing weather patterns affect life in the United States.*
- *Use maps to describe the location, abundance, and variety of natural resources in North America.*

- *Use geographical terms and tools to explain cultural diffusion throughout North America, and to examine the importance of demographics within political divisions of the United States.*
- *Describe the impact of human modifications on the physical environment and ecosystems in the United States both negatively and positively, and analyze the possible consequences of such actions in the future.*
- *Use GIS (global information systems) to view and accumulate data about the United States.*
- *Identify the physical and human elements that have defined and differentiated regions relevant in American history.*
- *Use geographical terms and tools to analyze case studies of regional issues in different parts of the U. S. that have had critical economic, physical, or political ramifications and how selected regions of the U. S. have changed over time.*
- *Locate and describe in geographic terms the major ecosystems of the U. S.*
- *Use geographic terms and tools to explain differing perspectives on the use of renewable and non-renewable resources in the U. S. and Florida over time.*
- *Understand the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human population within, or into the U. S.; interpret population growth, migration, or other demographic data for any given place in the U. S. throughout history.*
- *Use geographic terms and tools to explain cultural diffusion throughout the U. S. as it expanded its territory.*
- *Interpret databases, case studies, and maps to describe the role that regions play in influencing trade, migration patterns, and cultural/political interaction in the U. S. throughout time.*
- *Use geographic terms and tools to analyze case studies of the development, growth, changing nature of cities and urban centers in the U. S. over time.*
- *Use political maps to describe changes in boundaries and governance throughout American history.*
- *Understand how human actions can impact the environment by:*
  - *Describing human dependence on the physical environment and natural resources to satisfy basic needs in local environments in the U. S.*
  - *Describing the impact of human modifications on the physical environment and ecosystems of the U. S. throughout history.*

- *Use appropriate maps and other graphic representations to analyze geographic problems and changes over time throughout American history.*
- *Illustrate places and events in U. S. history through the use of narratives and graphic representations.*

**Economics:**

- *Explain how the principles of a market and mixed economy helped to develop the U. S. into a democratic nation.*
- *Discuss the importance of borrowing and lending in the U. S., the government's role in controlling financial institutions, and list the advantages and disadvantages of using credit.*
- *Review the concepts of supply and demand, choice, scarcity, and opportunity cost as they relate to the development of the mixed market economy in the U. S.*
- *Discuss the function of financial institutions in the development of a market economy.*
- *Assess how profits, incentives, and competition motivates individuals, households, and businesses in a free market economy.*
- *Compare the national budget process to the personal budget process.*
- *Explain how federal, state, and local taxes support the economy as a function of the U. S. government.*
- *Describe the banking system of the U. S. and its impact on the money supply.*
- *Compare and contrast the standard of living in various countries today to that of the U. S. using gross domestic products per capita as an indicator.*
- *Examine motivating economic factors that influenced the development of the U. S. economy over time including scarcity, supply and demand, opportunity costs, incentives, profits, and entrepreneurial aspects.*
- *Analyze contributions of entrepreneurs, inventions, and other key individuals from various gender, social, and ethnic backgrounds in the development of the U. S. economy.*
- *Explain the economic impact of U. S. government policies past and present.*
- *Assess the role of Africans and other minority groups in the economic development of the United States.*
- *Evaluate domestic and international economic interdependence.*

### **Civics and Government:**

- *Recognize how Enlightenment ideas including Montesquieu's view of separation of power and John Locke's theories related to natural law and how Locke's social contract influenced the Founding Fathers.*
- *Trace the impact that Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights, Mayflower Compact, and Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" had on colonists' views of government.*
- *Describe how English policies and responses to colonial concerns led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence.*
- *Identify how the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation led to the writing of the Constitution.*
- *Interpret the intentions of the Preamble of the Constitution.*
- *Describe how the Constitution limits the powers of government through separation of powers and checks and balances.*
- *Explain the viewpoints of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists regarding the ratification of the Constitution and inclusion of a bill of rights.*
- *Define the rule of law and recognize its influence on the development of the American legal, political, and governmental systems.*
- *Define the term "citizen," and identify legal means of becoming a U. S. citizen.*
- *Evaluate the obligations citizens have to obey laws, pay taxes, defend the nation, and serve on juries.*
- *Experience the responsibilities of citizens at the local, state, or federal levels.*
- *Evaluate rights contained in the Bill of Rights and other amendments to the Constitution.*
- *Distinguish how the Constitution safeguards and limits individual rights.*
- *Simulate the trial process and the role of juries in the administration of justice.*
- *Identify the evolution of America's political parties, and illustrate today's parties' ideas about government.*
- *Evaluate candidates for political office by analyzing their qualifications, experience, issue-based platforms, debates, and political ads.*
- *Compare different forms of government (direct democracy, representative democracy, socialism, communism, monarchy, oligarchy, autocracy).*
- *Compare parliamentary, federal, confederal, and unitary systems of government.*

- *Illustrate the structure and function (three branches of government established in Articles I, II, III with corresponding powers) of government in the United States as established in the Constitution.*
- *Identify the relationship and division of powers between the federal government and state governments.*
- *Explain the Constitutional amendment process.*
- *Evaluate Constitutional rights and their impact on individuals and property.*
- *Analyze the impact of the 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments on participation of minority groups in the American political process.*
- *Analyze the structure, functions, and processes of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.*
- *Illustrate the law-making process at the local, state, and federal levels.*
- *Identify sources and types (civil, criminal, constitutional, military) of law.*
- *Diagram the levels, functions, and powers of courts at the state and federal levels.*
- *Analyze the significance and outcomes of landmark Supreme Court cases including but not limited to, Marbury v. Madison, Plessy v. Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education, Gideon v. Wainwright, Miranda v. Arizona, in re Gault, Tinker v. Des Moines, Hazelwood v. Kuhlmer, United States v. Nixon, and Bush v. Gore.*
- *Compare the constitutions of the U. S. and Florida.*
- *Differentiate between local, state, and federal government obligations and services.*
- *Differentiate concepts related to U. S. domestic and foreign policy.*
- *Recognize government and citizen participation in international organizations.*
- *Describe examples of how the U. S. has dealt with international conflicts.*
- *Identify the constitutional provisions for establishing citizenship.*
- *Compare views of self-government and the rights and responsibilities of citizens held by Patriots, Loyalists, and other colonists.*
- *Recognize the role of civic virtue in the lives of citizens and leaders from the colonial period through Reconstruction and into present day.*

- *Identify the evolving forms of civic and political participation from the colonial period through Reconstruction and into present day.*
- *Apply the rights and principles contained in the Constitution and Bill of Rights to the lives of citizens today.*
- *Evaluate how amendments to the Constitution have expanded voting rights from our nation's history to present day.*
- *Explain the connections, interactions, and individual responsibilities of local, state, and federal governments in the United States.*
- *Identify the causes and effects of Chinese isolation and the decision to limit foreign trade in the 15th century.*
- *Evaluate and compare the essential ideals and principles of American constitutional government expressed in primary sources from the colonial period to Reconstruction and into the present day.*

#### **Current Events:**

- *Research, describe, analyze, and discuss major world events utilizing and applying social studies terminology. Relate them to historical, geographical, and economic concepts to make the lessons of history relevant to today.*
- *Research a single topic in multiple news sources, identifying bias where present.*

## Judaic Studies

### **Conservative Judaism**

We are a school proudly aligned with the Conservative Movement. We adopt the guiding principles of our Movement for our school's curriculum and program. As such we provide learning and experiences that encourage:

- Development of a personal relationship with God.
- The centrality of Mitzvah and Torah Study.
- Valuing and cherishing Jewish plurality and diversity, both within our school and the larger world around us.
- Identity with Jews in Israel and the world.

### **Mitzvah**

As a Conservative Day School, we teach, experience, and celebrate mitzvah. All of the mitzvot are both taught and observed throughout our school program. Much of the Mitzvah curriculum is implicit in all phases of our school program. This applies both to mitzvot we traditionally call "ritual" (*mitzvot bein Adam l'Makom*) and those we sometimes refer to as "ethical" (*mitzvot bein Adam l'chavero*). For example, all children give tzedakah each week. So

too, Kashrut is strictly observed throughout the school. At the same time, we teach respect for teachers through an emphasis on proper behavior. Children observe the mitzvah of *kavod ha Brit* through recognition of the differences among our students and teachers.

While we recognize the wide range of observances among our families, the school remains committed to the observance of mitzvot for our children and families.

In the Middle School we are committed to teaching our students the source of the mitzvot and then giving them the opportunity to put them into practice. Students are taught that they can and do make a difference in the world. Their actions can lead to tikkun olam.

In Eighth Grade the mitzvot that students concentrate on include

- *kibud z'keynim* - honor the elderly
- *kibud heani* - honor the poor
- *al teefrosh mean ha tzibur* - do not separate yourself from the community
- *tzar baaley chaim* - the ethical treatment of animals
- *mitzvot ha met* - mitzvot related to death and dying
- *g'milut chesed* - acts of kindness
- *mazon* - feed the hungry

As part of our weekly mitzvah trips, students experience kashrut outside of the school building. Stops to purchase snacks require students to learn approved kosher symbols.

Recognizing that this is the last year of Jewish Day School education for most of our students, special units are taught to prepare our students for situations that they will encounter in the near future (if they have not already). These units include the Jewish laws concerning:

- drugs and alcohol
- suicide
- tatoos and body piercing
- eating disorders

### **Tefillah**

Tefillah is seen as the central way we express our thoughts, needs, and wishes as Jewish people. Tefillah teaches us the central categories of Jewish values and helps us communicate with God. Because the school sees Hebrew as the language of the Jewish people, tefillah is always done in Hebrew. Boys and

girls participate equally in all aspects of the school's curriculum and Jewish experiences.

We teach tefillah both to help children learn the *matbayah tefillah* (the way the tefillot are recited in the synagogue services) and the ideas and aspirations the tefillah encompasses.

Tefillah is a sequential curriculum. Each year builds on the tefillot learned in the previous school years. By the end of their learning in the Elementary School, the children are capable of leading almost all of the daily and Shabbat tefillot. Students by Grade Eight will have mastered *ta'amei ha-mikrah*, trop, for Torah – the musical notation system for properly chanting Torah. They use these skills to read for the Middle School minyan. They are also encouraged to read Torah at their home synagogue.

Eighth grade students will learn the difference between praying with a minyan and without a minyan. Eighth grade students participate in "Learners Minyanim". These minyanim are intended to help the student understand the role of prayer in Jewish life and will help the student develop a personal relationship with prayer and in turn with God.

### **Shabbat and Holidays**

Through the weekly and monthly life of the school, the children see Shabbat and the Jewish holidays as special moments for Jewish celebration. Connections are made between the mitzvot of the Torah, our Jewish life in school, and our lives as Jews at home and in the wider world.

The Holiday curriculum is integrated with the Torah curriculum, which will continue to expose students to rabbinic commentary, on such holidays as Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur, Chanukah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim, Passover and Shavuot.

### **Torah Study**

An integral part of the Judaic Studies curriculum at MJGDS is the study of the *Tanakh* (Bible) because it is the source of the spiritual history, literature and values of our people. It is the foundation of our Jewish civilization and the source of the ethical and ritual mitzvot (commandments), which have been central to Jewish life throughout the ages. It is the record of what the Jewish people have understood as the basis and meaning of the covenant between God and the Jewish people.

We teach both the simple, literal understanding of the text as written (*pshat*) and the interpretive understandings of the text (*drash*) at appropriate grade levels, always maintaining the distinction between the two. While both are integral to the study of

Torah, we distinguish between them when teaching Torah to our students.

Students also learn to compare Torah language and Hebrew by looking closer at the grammar of phrases, verbs and words taken from text.

In Grade Eight, we focus on the book of Bamidbar (The fourth book of the Bible) and Sefer Melachim (Kings, from the Prophets section of the Bible).

### **Hebrew Language**

There are two Hebrew language tracks are offered in the Middle School:

#### *Track One:*

This track is designed to meet the needs of students entering MJGDS in Grade Six. This track assumes no prior knowledge of Hebrew and is taught in an immersive, *ulpan* style.

*By the end of Middle School, students should be able to:*

- Answer simple questions using complete sentences.
- Understand simple stories.
- Assimilate new vocabulary words including correct verb formation in present tense.
- Follow all class directions.

#### *Track Two:*

This track consists of students who have mastered the Hebrew skills presented in the Lower School as part of the Tal Am program and are ready to move forward in increasing their fluency in conversational Hebrew. The goal of this Hebrew track is to have students continue to develop their skills.

*By the end of Middle School, students should be able to:*

- Carry on meaningful conversations in Hebrew.
- Assimilate new vocabulary words including correct verb formation in present, past and future tenses.
- Read and discuss stories in a Hebrew newspaper.

All Middle School students will participate in an annual play in Hebrew. Participation in the play allows students the opportunity to use and master Hebrew in a different format.

## **Rabbinics**

The curriculum for Grade Eight no longer comes from a textbook or workbook, but from the original source texts themselves.

These students study rabbinic texts such as *Mishnah*, *Talmud Bavli*, *Shulkhan Arukh*, and *She'arot V'Teshuvot*. The focus of the texts will include Conversion, Marriage, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, Kashrut, Gender/Sexuality, etc.

*By the end of the year, children should begin to be able to:*

- Understand how to read and interact with Jewish text.
- Realize the sanctity and holiness of the text they are learning.
- Apply rabbinic texts to real-life situations.
- Develop Jewish outlook on life with core values and essential questions.
- Access and build skills around Jewish texts.

*Additional Notes:* Included in the process of studying Rabbinics, students should be able to express agreements and disagreements with the text and begin to ask, "Where do God and theological issues play a role?"

## **Medinat Yisrael**

All children in the school learn about the State of Israel. Focusing primarily on modern day Israel, the children daily express our love of Medinat Yisrael by singing Hatikvah at the start of the school day. The children learn about the Flag of Israel.

Through our annual celebration of Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel Independence Day), the children learn about different aspects of modern day life in Israel, ranging from Jerusalem to the Army, from the map of Israel to the joy of Israel's existence. So too, the children periodically learn about the political conflicts confronting present day Israel. Finally, the children regularly engage in projects fostering their connection to the State of Israel and our responsibility to Israeli Jews. These projects range from letter writing to tzedakah projects.

The Jewish History Fair held every other year includes many projects that help to foster an understanding of and a love for Medinat Yisrael.

## **Resource Program**

The Middle School enrichment program consists of a series of quarter-length courses called "Rotations". The purpose of the

program is to enrich and to complement our academic program with offerings that enhance a Middle School student's liberal arts education. Providing students with enrichment education is a valuable asset to their knowledge base. Enrichment lessons are additional to the standard curricula and allow students to explore areas of interest. Courses offered are in the areas of art, music, technology, media, and sports.

### **21st Century Technology & Learning**

At MJGDS, we incorporate 21st Century skills with academic curriculum. Computer technologies are utilized as a tool for students to use in creating, communicating, making connections, researching, and solving problems. Never are computer skills taught in isolation; students acquire fluency with technology concepts, applications, terminologies and troubleshooting through working on projects and assignments that enhance and extend classroom learning. Our program provides a framework for the development of 21st century literacies including information literacy, media literacy, digital citizenship, global literacy and network literacy. All lessons are designed to help students meet [ISTE's NETS](#) (National Educational Technology Standards) for students. The NETS provide a foundation for "what students should know and be able to do to learn effectively and live productively in an increasingly digital world."

These include:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Communication and Collaboration
- Research and Information Fluency
- Critical Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Digital Citizenship
- Technology Operations and Concepts

Middle School students are gaining further proficiency in the use of a variety of digital tools to create, connect, communicate, collaborate, research and solve problems. Middle school students explore more advanced topics of digital citizenship. They learn to properly cite sources, decide how to license their own work, understand and respect the licenses placed upon the work of others and, with supervision and guidance, work on the creation and maintenance of a positive digital footprint.

### **Art**

Middle School students can choose art as "Rotation". These are some of the skills they will acquire if they choose Art:

**Skills and Techniques:** The student will understand and apply techniques and processes. Students will create two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of art using a variety of mediums

such as, but not limited to acrylic paints, watercolor paints, pen and ink, and clay.

**Creation and Communication:** The student will create and communicate a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas using knowledge of structures and functions of visual arts.

**Cultural and Historical Connections:** The student will understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture. The cultures they will learn about may include Japan, Mexico, and more.

**Aesthetic and Critical Analysis:** The student will be able to assess, evaluate and respond to the characteristics of works of art.

**Applications to Life:** The student will make connections between the visual arts, other disciplines and the real world.

## **Physical Education**

### *Movement Competency*

Students will use offensive and defensive strategies while playing a variety of sports and activities. They will demonstrate principles of biomechanics necessary for safe and successful performance.

### *Cognitive Abilities*

The student will have an understanding of basic rules of team sports and will provide feedback of others playing the sport and will identify critical elements for successful performance of a variety of sport skills.

### *Lifetime Fitness*

Children will participate in a number of team or individual sports that promote cardiovascular endurance, muscle strength, flexibility and well-being. The student will also develop tools to manage stress through physical activity.

### *Responsible Behavior and Values*

The student will be able to identify and combat peer pressure that could result in unhealthy choices. Students will demonstrate proper etiquette and respect for others participating. They will display appropriate care for equipment and their surroundings.