

da Vinci Class Descriptions 2014-15

9 week Exploratory Classes

MUSIC

African Drumming

This class focuses on the traditional songs and rhythms of West Africa. We will be using authentic instruments including djembe, sangban and kenkene.

The students will also gain communication and leadership skills by learning to listen for signals and cues within each rhythm or song.

Music Exploration

Students learn the basics of music including rhythm, note reading, composition, music history, articulation and dynamics. These concepts will be practiced through bucket drumming, melodic instruments, body percussion and more.

THEATER

Exploring Theater

This class exposes students to the foundations of theatre, improv, and ensemble work. Students will create and perform scripted and improvised scenes to be performed in class and will develop vocabulary for assessing their own performance as well as that of their peers.

DANCE

Term Dance

This class introduces students to the fundamentals of movement, coordination, rhythm and music. In class, students learn the basic tenets and concepts of Tap, Jazz, Ballet and Modern Dance. It is designed to enhance body conditioning strength, control and flexibility and to develop an awareness of basic alignment and principles of safe and effective movement.

VISUAL ART

Drawing

What is art? What are the building blocks of a piece of art? These questions will be explored through the principles and elements of design. Students will explore 2-D basic drawing techniques of line, composition, drawing from observation, light and shadow, volume, point perspective space and human proportions. Students will learn to critique their work and look critically at the work of others.

Exploring Media

Students will explore clay, fiber and print media. In this course we will focus on hand-built sculptural objects with significant cultural connections. Come prepared to try something different.

8th Grade Master of Arts

Just as students create speech, writing and math problem solving samples for benchmark scoring, arts benchmarks have been created as well. As an arts-focused school da Vinci values these skills and issues a certificate acknowledging the student's accomplishments in this area.

On their forecast form for next year, current 7th grade students will choose an arts area of mastery from Music, Theater, Dance or Visual Arts. They should choose the area where their passion and skills lie, not something brand new. Then they need to be sure and pick a year-long focus elective that allows them to work with their mentor teacher each day to fully develop their project.

Work Samples need to demonstrate proficiency in the following arts standards:

- ◆ Create, present, perform - Create a series of visual art pieces or perform a dance, piece of music or dramatic work
- ◆ Historical and cultural context - What are some of the cultural and historical references that your work draws on. How does it relate to artists of the recent or even distant past.
- ◆ Critique - Show that you understand the vocabulary of your medium and can use it to describe and analyze your work as well as the work of others.

As you can see students will need to develop skills in their chosen art area and be able to write about it with authority. Each student will work with the da Vinci teacher that best suits their chosen arts discipline. During fall conferences 8th grade students will meet with this teacher so the student can better understand specific guidelines and expectations within their arts focus area. Later in the year, this same teacher will evaluate their work.

APEX Program

Alternative Physical Education Experience

PPS requires middle school students to have a PE program each year. At da Vinci all of our 6th grade students and most of our 7th & 8th grade students take a dance class.

For 7th & 8th grade students that wish to take 2 year-long focus electives, neither of which is dance we have the APEX program. (This program is not an option for 6th graders.)

The program requires both a documented exercise log detailing at least 40 hours of physical work and two written assignments about nutrition and/or health issues. Plus a year-end reflection of their work.

Students can pick up a contract in the office that outlines the requirements more fully.

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Class offerings may vary due to student interest and funding.

- Yearlong Arts Focus Classes -

HOW THINGS WORK

Students have two arts electives each day. Some electives are year-long, while others are 9-weeks long.

6th grade students have one year-long arts focus class and an Exploratory Wheel where classes change each quarter.

7th and 8th grade students may choose two year-long arts focus classes. If one of them is not dance they need to complete an APEX project for their PE equivalent.

We do our best to place students in their top choice, but this is not always possible, so be sure to have a second and third choice as well.

THEATER

Apprentice in Theater

In this class, students will delve deeper into their development as a theatre performer. Students will work to have the skills of voice and speech, auditioning and storytelling.

Journeyman in Theater

Students will continue to work on the tools of voice and speech, character and movement. Deeper exploration of scene work, play writing, and performance are coupled with their standards in performance.

Mastery in Theater

8th grade only. This year the focus is understanding that self-expression involves a sequential, creative process called problem solving. Whether the teacher or the student generates the initial problem, the process of reaching a solution is the same. By the end of the year, the Master theater student will work with a small group of fellow Masters to create a theatrical piece using the Elements of Theater, their mind, spirit and body.

MUSIC

Choir

This class is open to all students. The focus of the class is to develop singing, sight-reading, and rehearsal skills. Students will sing music from a variety of cultures and historical periods including some popular, contemporary songs that will be presented throughout the year. Attendance at ALL performances, both in and out of school is mandatory.

Beginning Concert Band

For students with little or no experience. Instruction on flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba, and percussion. Open to all students regardless of experience and/or skills. Attendance at ALL performances is mandatory.

Intermediate and Advanced Concert Band

This is an auditioned ensemble designed for students who have completed beginning band and have mastered certain basic skills required for Intermediate/Advanced Concert Band. Instruction on flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba, and percussion. Attendance at ALL performances both in and out of school is mandatory.

DANCE

Apprentice, Journeyman & Master in Dance (Levels I-IV)

Yearlong classes build on successively higher technical skill levels and emphasize proper technique. Styles include Tap, Jazz, Ballet and Modern. Participation in yearly dance recitals is required. This entails several after school rehearsals and 4 weekend performances per recital. For these performances the class works together like a dance company and the presence of every member is essential.

VISUAL ART

Painting

Fall classes will master drawing skills, explore various types of painting media and techniques such as watercolor, ink, gouache, and acrylic paints. A reproduction of a masters work will be the focus. Winter students will survey art through history, continue painting and try their hand at mixed media. Spring term will focus on contemporary techniques and independent projects.

Print Media

Students in this class will master a wide variety of printmaking techniques including Monoprint, calograph, linoleum block, drypoint etching, silkscreen, and digital photography.

Ceramics & 3-D Media

Students will work with slabs, coils, pinch potting, and wheel throwing to create pottery and sculptures. Students will learn to make and glaze work that is food safe and usable. Additionally students will make sculptural work.

B&W Darkroom Photography

Students will learn the basics of composition, pinhole photography, parts of the camera, film development and print processing using enlargers and filters. They will produce 10 or more projects. We will look at the history of photography and research a photographer. Students will need to have their own working camera as well as purchase film. Organization of material and independence are recommended skills.

Textiles & Fibers

Students in this class learn how to create products using fiber. We will learn how to warp a loom and weave patterns into fabric. They will use their fabric to make items that they can use such as ponchos, bags, scarves, and hats. Advanced students will self design projects and present a group show of their work.