



# Thomas Jefferson Middle School

## April Curriculum - Grade 6

*Learning together to understand and improve ourselves, our futures, and our world.*



### Student Services Updates



This month your child engaged in *Academic Course Planning*. In middle and high school, your child's school counselor will work with them to develop an individualized personal academic plan. This Academic Course Plan links the student's career interests to course selection and leads to meeting rigorous graduation requirements as they begin to explore their post-graduation goals. Each year, we will review their plan and make adjustments to courses that will be taken as they explore new and developing interests. You have access to your child's plan through Naviance, a tool that will be used throughout middle and high school. If you have questions, please feel free to reach out for additional information.

[TJMS Student Services Newsbites](#)

### Gifted Information Update

#### What it Means to Teach Gifted Learners Well: An Excerpt from Carol Ann Tomlinson

Teaching gifted learners begins with the premise that each child should come to school to stretch and grow daily. It includes the expectation that the measure of progress and growth is competition with oneself rather than competition against others. It resides in the notion that educators understand key concepts, principles and skills of subject domains, and present those in ways that cause highly able students to wonder and grasp, and extend their reach. And it envisions schooling as an escalator on which students continually progress, rather than a series of stairs, with landings on which advanced learners consistently wait.

It's fiendishly difficult to achieve in schools where standardization is the norm, and where teachers are supported in being recipe followers, rather than flexible and reflective artisans. In schools where responsive instruction is a carefully supported indicator of professional growth, the capacity to extend even the most capable mind is a benchmark of success.

### Arts

In band, students are working on differentiated and progressive "Band Karate" checkoffs using the SmartMusic Notation Software. We are also working on a special project that incorporates expression through writing and composing music. Advanced students are beginning to select solos to perform.

In Orchestra, students are making excellent progress with a variety of solo pieces. We continue to develop our reading skills and technique in order to play with a smooth, full tone. Music vocabulary is emphasized at all times. Students are writing IBMY Process Journals to develop their independent practice skills and music vocabulary.

In Chorus, students have submitted their recordings for the South Arlington Choral Pyramid Project. We are starting new music for the spring and focusing on music literacy.

In Drama, students are rehearsing for our radio drama production. We are performing Jack and the Beanstalk with a commercial for Aunt Lottie's Leftover Cafe. The final performance will be recorded next week for your listening pleasure.

In Arts, students have been focused on drawing with value shading. They have studied form by practicing geometric forms and the organic shapes of the face. They are creating an identity drawing that does not have to be a self portrait, but still represents them nonetheless.

### Design

In Technology Education, students are working on board drafting. This traditional technique allows us to invent and innovate using the design process later in the semester. We will explore drafting each letter neatly and cleanly on a blueprint and work on orthographic, 3 view and isometric drawings.

In Design technology, students are working on "Internet Scavenger Hunts": where the students will use clues given to them to find various answers around the internet. They will work on search skills, putting technical terms into their own words, and manipulating multimedia layouts.



In Design FACS, students have been learning effective communication skills to make friends, solve problems, and get along with others.

## Individuals and Societies (Social Studies)

In **History**, students are continuing our final unit: Turning Points and the Emergence of Modern America. We have explored Industrialization, Progressive Reform Movements, the Spanish American War and US Imperialism and World War I since we began this unit. We have looked at events from different perspectives to think about how change does not always improve the lives of all people. We will continue our exploration by studying the Harlem Renaissance, Great Depression, World War II, the Civil Rights Movement, Globalization and current issues. We will continue to develop map skills, inquiry skills and connecting events through time and place. Our inquiry questions will include: Why did we fight and what did we gain? What was life like?

## Language and Literature

In **Reading**, we have just finished our social issues unit. Students have made noticeable strides in their ability to participate in a meaningful discussion with peers. We are now beginning an interdisciplinary unit with science, "Life and Water." Students will learn about water systems and water-related issues in science and explore the human connection to those issues more deeply in reading.

In **English**, students are in the midst of the 100 day writing challenge. From March 1- June 8, every student must participate at one of the levels: Required, Reward, or Centurion. Families, ask your students about this exciting activity. Students, challenge yourself to write every day! To support this work, students will be choosing from a variety of writing activities.

## Physical and Health Education

In Physical Education, students are working on fitness plans and workout routines focusing on the different health related components of fitness: cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance and flexibility. Mr. Rodriguez retired May 1st. Ms. Menza will be taking over his classes for the remainder of the year. Ms. Menza's classes will continue with badminton and a variety of sports with her in-person students for the next 2 weeks. Mr. Stith's classes are still in Physical Education completing a variety of workouts. Mr. Heath's classes are in Health completing a Family life unit for the next 2 weeks.

## From the Library:

- Read our weekly Library Buzz Newsletter in Canvas! Here's the link to our [April 26, 2021, issue](#).
- If you have any questions please send Ms. J Miller, Ms. Wall, or Ms. Rosegrant a Canvas message or email us!
- Our final TAB Club meeting of the year is May 3rd. We will vote for Jefferson's Top 10 TAB Picks books!

### Free Audiobooks all summer long!

- Starting April 28 (and for the next 14 weeks), you can "borrow" two great audiobooks each week. [Here is the list of all the books](#) (and their weeks) for this year. Once you have borrowed an audiobook, **it will be yours forever**--it stays on your shelf in the Sora app you use. Audiobooks are only available during their week: you have to remember to go to the app and borrow books each week or you'll miss them.
- Here are [step-by-step directions](#) for how to register, get the Sora app, and "borrow" the free audiobooks!

## Language Acquisition (World Languages)

Introduction to French students continue being comfortable hearing and using basic French statements. We are laughing, singing, and reading short stories.

Intro to Latin students are learning about the early history of Rome, and making comparisons to modern America. We are also practicing our Latin vocabulary through online games.

Intro to Spanish students are becoming more comfortable reading for comprehension short stories in Spanish. They love stories related to animals. They love to listen to music in Spanish and even dance!

## Math



In Math 6, students are working to understand Equations and inequalities as they prepare to take the Virginia Math 6 Standards of Learning test.

## Sciences

In Science, we are ending the weather unit with a unit test. During the Month of May, students will work on an Interdisciplinary unit with Reading 6 on water sustainability. Students will research this issue around the world by reading "A Long Walk to Water." Students will then research another country with water sustainability issues and make a presentation that includes a reflection upon the connection to "A Long Walk to Water."

## Learner Profile and Service Learning Update



We have wrapped up the Learner Profile Excellence and service contest where students have a choice of creating a poem, essay, story or graphic about it. The contest is hosted by the IB Mid-Atlantic with a \$500 prize for the winner. The work has been submitted and now we are awaiting the

announcement of the winners. See an example of the Learner Profile drawing by one of our students picture to the right. We will also be looking to update our service learning reflections. Students have had the opportunity to play the Free Rice game to support shipping rice to people in need, play an Eco-Arlington nature game, among other activities in TA. Students will have a chance to reflect on what they have learned through service in May.