



Thomas Jefferson Middle School

April Curriculum - Grade 8

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



Student Services Updates

During Academic Planning for next year, students are inquiring about opportunities for 9th grade and beyond. This Spring, Ms. Black will hold classroom meetings to help students build their 9-12 High School Plan using Naviance. Please contact Ms. Black if you have any questions about this important process.



Click the link below for contact information and office hours for our school counselors, psychologist and social worker along with important announcements:

[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, 8th grade band students are taking turns leading warm-ups, learning the Concert D-flat Major scale, and learning how to play "Blinding Lights" and "The Mandalorian." They are also working on a special project that incorporates expression through writing and composing music.

In Orchestra, students are playing solo and ensemble pieces, a variety of scales, advanced bow technique, sound production and reading skills. We are working on orchestra repertoire with Canvas and SmartMusic. Students are encouraged to use musical vocabulary to reflect on and improve their playing in their IB MYP Process Journals. Students are working on two orchestra pieces for a virtual spring concert. These pieces have advanced solo parts to ensure differentiation in the content.

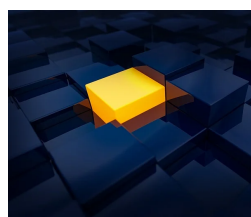
In Chorus, students have submitted their recordings for the South Arlington Choral Pyramid Project. We are starting new music for the spring and focusing on music literacy.

In Drama, students have been rehearsing 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 this week for your listening pleasure.

In Arts, students have been concentrating on continuous line contour drawing. Every day we have been doing warm up drawings, which is a great exercise in mindfulness. Students are finishing up an artwork with contour drawing, texture, watercolor and text. The results should be interesting.

Arts and Design

In Robotics, students are transitioning from building electric circuits to using microcontrollers that control the function of those circuits. We will be adding sensors to our circuits and writing programs that allow our circuits to operate based on environmental inputs and coded instructions.



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 Technology Education, students are demonstrating proper logic and syntax in the Python programming language. Students are writing programs that use loops and conditional statements to control inputs and outputs.

In Computer Applications and the internet 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 Life Management, students are examining the roles of families in society, community services available to help families solve problems, and considering ways that they can contribute to the well-being of their own family.

Individuals and Societies (Social Studies)

In World Geography, students are learning that individuals orient and identify themselves with their neighborhood, community, city, state, country, or world by using varied perspectives.

Students' understanding will be demonstrated by participating in the completion of many different region based activities. Our current unit of study covers the Central & Southwest Asia Region (C-SWANA) and the South/Southeast/East Asia Region (SSEEA). Students will locate and analyze physical, economic, and cultural characteristics of the both regions and will learn the past and present trends in human migration and cultural interactions as they are influenced by social, economic, political, and environmental factors. In class, we are engaged in learning activities like the Regional HyperDoc, Regional Mapping Lab, Mapping Activities and so much more! Additionally, students will be spending time on completing the SSEEA Mapping Lab Assessment, which will be completed in Canvas. Students will engage in this assessment using skills and content knowledge that they have gained during the school year in World Geography and apply gained knowledge to this assessment. The World Geography part of the assessment will then be used as the second part of our World Geography SOL Replacement Assessment.

Language Acquisition (World Languages)

In French 2 class, students are learning to communicate in the past tense. We have been exploring famous individuals in Benin. We have also finished reading an entire novel in the past tense about Kobe Bryant and his childhood in Europe. We practicing writing simple sentences in the past tense about what we did on the weekend.

Latin II students are learning about the Roman province of Britain, and the lives of enslaved people there. They have started research projects on a topic of their choice. We are also learning to use infinitives in Latin.

I Spanish 2 classes, students are learning about food from Latin America and Spain. They are also able to read short stories in the past tense and write simple sentences in the past tense.



Language and Literature

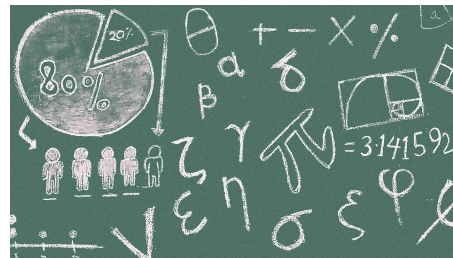


In English, students are learning that poetry communicates meaning through form, word choice, sound, and figurative language.

Students will write their own original poems and have various opportunities to share their poetry as a community of writers.

Math

Pre-Algebra 8: Students are working on Ratios and Proportional Reasoning with Consumer Application as they prepare for the Virginia Standards of Learning test.



Algebra & Intensified Algebra: Students are working on Quadratics as they prepare for the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) test.

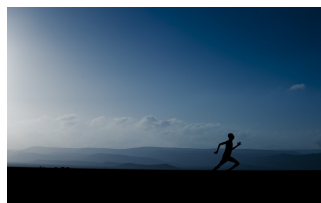
In Geometry:

Students are working on Surface Area and Volume for 3D figures as they prepare for the SOL.

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. Nutrition will be the next health unit on the Health Physical Education rotation. Mr. Curran's, and Ms. Patterson's class started a yoga unit and afterwards will complete functional fitness testing.

Ms. Pierce's and Mr. Heath's are currently in health finishing up a Family Life Unit.



Sciences

In May, students will use simulations to investigate forces and motion through exploring the key concept: *Relationships*.

We will solve equations, interpret graphs, and analyze diagrams. By the end of the unit, students will be able to apply

Newton's Laws of Motion to a sport/activity of their choice.

In June, 8th graders will take the Science SOL. To prepare for the SOL, students have review activities to complete during asynchronous Mondays. (*We will keep learning new physical science concepts Tuesday-Friday.) The Monday activities will help students review 6th/7th grade science and develop self-management ATL skills. We will keep using the Canvas calendar to help students balance current assignments with SOL review!



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!
- We've been going into TAs to help 8th graders with research and citations for their Community Project.

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!

Community Project Update and Learner Profile



Remember, the Community Project is now entering the Taking Action and Reflecting phases. No one should worry if they are behind, it is not due until June 10. We want all students to be engaged in investigating a community they care about. We want students planning to take action to help a community through research, advocacy, or direct participation. Then students will take action to help the community and reflect upon the actions they took. The final step will be making a presentation on Flipgrid about their project of no more than 5 minutes. [All of the lessons can be found here.](#) Any student wanting help can contact Mr. Malinosky or Ms. J. Miller through Canvas or email kip.malinosky@apsva.us.

We have wrapped up the Learner Profile Excellence and service contest where students create a poem, essay, story or graphic about it. The winners will be announced in Mid-May.

