Math 6
Math 6 is designed to integrate a prior foundation of number sense and basic operations with more complex problem solving. The main concepts of Grade 6 math include an introduction to statistics and probability; understanding of operations with integers; order of operations including exponents and integers; integration and application of fractions, decimals, and percents; understanding ratios and proportions including simple conversions using dimensional analysis; and basic equations and functions. Students develop note-taking skills through completion of guided notes. Under the umbrella of the Grade 6 theme of self-awareness, students learn to reflect on, self-assess, and revise homework. Students also take ownership of their learning and develop study skills through the completion of homework packets that expect them to make connections between their daily performance and assessment review work.

Pre-Algebra
Pre-Algebra is a rigorous course incorporating all strands of mathematics. The course serves as a critical link in the transition from arithmetic to algebra. Advanced arithmetic concepts are reviewed and used extensively, and the primary foundations to all algebraic concepts are introduced and practiced. Topics covered include variables, equations, patterns, problem solving strategies, functions and graphing, geometry, and polynomials. There is a strong emphasis on the application of concepts through daily practice, in-class discussions and problem solving, and in-class projects. Students are expected to use the language of mathematics in reading, writing, and discussion to further develop their understanding. In addition, students are encouraged to reach beyond memorized rules or strategies in order to fully comprehend the reasoning.

Algebra 1A
Algebra 1A is designed to meet the needs of a student who is ready for Algebra, but at a pace that provides greater time for the development and reinforcement of new topics. Students in Algebra 1A will complete the Algebra 1 curriculum in a two year program by enrolling in Algebra 1B as a ninth grader. Topics covered include rational numbers, percents, equations, inequalities, linear equations, systems of equations and polynomials. Problem solving techniques and strategies designed to improve critical thinking and organizational skills are developed and reinforced throughout the year. Algebra 1A is further enriched by cross-curricular units and projects. Placement into Algebra 1A is determined by diagnostic testing, previous coursework, and teacher recommendation.

Algebra 1
Algebra 1 is designed to give all students a solid algebraic foundation before moving on to higher-level mathematics courses. Topics covered include linear functions and their graphs, inequalities and their graphs, systems of equations and their graphs, polynomials, factoring, quadratic functions and their graphs, radicals functions (expressions and equations), and rational functions (expressions and equations). Problem solving opportunities throughout the year give students a deeper understanding of algebra concepts and sharpen their critical thinking skills. Cross-curricular units and projects further enrich the Algebra 1 course. Placement into Algebra 1 is determined by diagnostic testing, previous coursework, and teacher recommendation.

Honors Algebra 1
Algebra 1 Honors is designed to be a rigorous and challenging course that requires students to draw upon all prior mathematical understandings. The scope and sequence challenges students to think critically, using full comprehension and retention, and apply arithmetic and algebraic concepts to many various scenarios. The pace of the course is quick and students will be required to use all math vocabulary to ensure that the discussions in class demonstrate a depth of knowledge deserving of an Honors level course. Algebra 1 Honors covers topics such as equations, inequalities, polynomials, factoring, rational expressions, functions, graphs, systems, radical expressions, and quadratic equations. Problem-solving techniques and critical thinking skills are expanded and explored throughout the year. A unit on the stock market further enriches the Algebra 1 Honors course as students learn about the stock market and establish, maintain, and analyze their own stock portfolios by using formulas within spreadsheets. Placement into Algebra 1 Honors is determined by diagnostic testing, previous course work performance, and teacher recommendation.
Honors Geometry

Geometry emphasizes the study of the properties and applications of common geometric figures in two and three dimensions. It is a critical component of a mathematics education because students are required to relate concepts from Algebra to geometric phenomena. Deductive reasoning skills are developed by using theorems to solve problems and create formal proofs. Topics covered in plane geometry include angles, lines, triangles, polygons, circles, congruence, similar figures, area, volume, trigonometric ratios, logic and constructions. The course is supplemented with projects designed to re-emphasize a particular approach to problem solving or to introduce another approach to examining geometric or mathematical thinking. Two-column proofs are emphasized and students are expected to attempt the most challenging work available, independently and critically.

LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS

Algebra 1B (9-10)
Geometry (9-11)
Geometry Honors (9-10)
Algebra 2 (10-12)
Algebra 2 Honors (9-11)
Advanced Mathematics: Function Analysis and Trigonometry (11-12)
Pre-Calculus (11-12)
Pre-Calculus Honors (10-12)
Statistics (12)
Calculus (11-12)
AP Calculus AB (11-12)
AP Calculus BC (11-12)
AP Statistics (12)
Multivariate Calculus & Linear Algebra (12)
AP Computer Science A (9-12)
**English 6**
The overarching goal of this course is to help students develop as careful readers and critical thinkers. Moving beyond plot and summary, students build toward recognizing and analyzing subtle inferences and broader themes in the assigned reading. At its core, the daily curriculum is designed to help students form and keep habits that will empower them as learners in and out of the classroom: active reading, regular annotation, basic study skills, time management, responsible behavior, and respectful communication in the classroom. The content of the curriculum is an age-appropriate mix of genres, forms, and subject matter, all geared toward the broader sixth-grade theme of Self Awareness. The increasing complexity of the literature stretches students as readers, thinkers, and writers, leaving them primed and ready for the challenges that await them in English 7.

**English 7**
This course pushes students to take the next steps toward academic writing and scholarship. If students begin to think critically and independently in English 6, they are asked to build appropriate foundations underneath that thinking in English 7. The daily curriculum focuses on close reading, passage analysis, vocabulary development, and supporting arguments. The diverse reading selections — a wide variety of age-appropriate works from different cultures and different eras — lead students, directly or indirectly, toward the Grade 7 theme of Community Awareness. The English 7 curriculum also emphasizes substantive collaboration, effective presentation skills, and independent reading.

**Writing emphasis:**
The focus turns to the nuts and bolts of the composition process: integrating quotations, supporting claims, shaping arguments, writing clear and powerful topics sentences, using transitions to maintain authority over an argument, and applying and extending grammar lessons learned in English 6. At the same time, students are pushed to engage the chosen texts independently through a variety of creative assignments, from short responses to substantial projects.

**English 8**
Playing off the Grade 8 theme of Global Awareness, the curriculum of this course emphasizes critical thinking and leads students to a richer understanding of human nature. Working in a cross-curricular mode with their history courses, students are guided through some of the most challenging and troubling topics of the modern era. The texts are denser, and the themes more challenging. Ultimately, students come to wrestle with both the negative and positive aspects of the human condition. At the same time, the literature of the course pushes students toward reflecting on their own unique identities, especially in the context of their own family stories and ancestry. Working jointly in their history and English classes, all students complete a multi-media “Family History Project” project, which they present to their classmates and teachers in the second trimester. This course pushes students to take the next steps toward academic writing and scholarship.

**LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS**

**English 9, 10, 11, & 12**
**Honors English 12**
**AP Language and Composition**

**Sample English Elective Classes:**
- Philosophy & Literature
- Poverty and Power
- Utopias & Dystopias: Literature of Power & Possibility
- Literature and the American West
- Reading the Victorian Mind
- Creative Writing
- Journalism
Science 6 - Earth Science

Students in Grade 6 Earth Science pursue a course that emphasizes discovery of their home planet and how Earth's systems interact. Earth is explored as a set of interconnected systems: atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere, and biosphere. Students investigate the different sources of energy and matter that cycle within and among the systems, over various time scales. Students use models to deepen their understanding of the interconnectedness of these stems and how processes within these systems cause Earth to change over time. Additionally, students investigate Earth as part of a broader system - the solar system - which itself is a small part of one of the many galaxies in the universe. Active, hands-on class activities and investigations heighten the awareness of scientific habits of mind, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving strategies. Students are expected to use the language of science in reading, writing, and discussion to further develop their understanding of the sciences. The overall goal is to produce lifelong learners of science.

Science 7 - Life Science

This course develops students' scientific knowledge, understanding, skills, and engineering practices in order to inspire a love of life science. The purpose is to give all students an overview of common strands in life science including, but not limited to, diversity of living organisms, structure and function of cells, heredity and genetics, body systems, ecosystems, and biological evolution. Students explore an amazing variety of organisms, the complex workings of the cell, the relationship between living things and their environments, and discoveries in the world of modern genetics. Practical, hands-on lesson activities help students discover how scientists investigate the living world. The final purpose of the course is to help students hone their scientific observational skills in preparation for Grade 8 science.

Science 8 - Physical Science

In Grade 8 physical science, students pursue a course that emphasizes discovery of matter and its interactions, motion, energy, waves and their applications in technologies for information transfer. By the end of this course, students will be able to answer the following questions: “How do atomic and molecular interactions explain the properties of matter that we see and feel?”, “How can one describe physical interactions between objects and within systems of objects?”, “How can energy be transferred from one object or system to another?”, and “What are the characteristic properties of waves and how can they be used?”. Students will look for patterns to understand how the physical world works. Class activities heighten the awareness of scientific habits of mind, critical thinking skills and problem-solving strategies. Students are expected to use the language of science in reading, writing and discussion to further develop their understanding of the sciences. In addition, students are encouraged to reach beyond the classroom and participate in science activities offered off-campus. The overall goal is to produce lifelong learners of science.

LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS

Biology (10-12)
Biology Advanced (10-12)
AP Biology (11-12)
AP Environmental Science (11-12)
Physiology Honors (11-12)
Marine Science (11-12)
Chemistry (10)
Chemistry Advanced (10)
AP Chemistry (10-12)
Honors Organic Chemistry (11-12)
Physics (9)
Physics Advanced (9-10)
AP Physics 1 (9-10)
AP Physics 2 (9-10)
AP Physics C: Mechanics (11-12)
AP Physics C: Mechanics, Electricity & Magnetism (11-12)
Engineering Honors 1, 2, and 3 (10-12)
Social Studies

COURSE GUIDE

Geography, History, and Culture 6
The Geography, History and Culture 6 course provides a thematic overview of the development of complex civilizations throughout the world. Students will examine the dynamic relationship between geography and culture in Central America, Southwest Asia, South Asia and early Europe by examining the ways in which people groups have adapted to lands with diverse climates and topography. Students will master concrete information (landforms, location, vocabulary) in addition to acquiring the analytical skills necessary to become critical thinkers and global citizens throughout their lives.

Geography, History, and Culture 7
The Grade 7 social studies course coordinates with the Grade 6 curriculum to cover World Geography, History, and Cultures. Grade 7 considers the relationship between geography, history and cultures of specific regions around the world, including Africa, East Asia, Renaissance to Modern Europe, and South America. Students will develop and refine skills in critical reading, analytical writing, and evaluating sources. Together, the sixth and Grade 7 courses lay a foundation for the study of Global History in ninth and tenth grades.

United States History 8
The Grade 8 social studies course covers early US History, from the founding period through the Civil War and Reconstruction. Reconstruction is used as a springboard to the Civil Right Movement and modern Human Rights issues. These themes are correlated with the Grade 8 theme, which is “Global Awareness.” Essential skills will focus on writing, note-taking, craftsmanship, organization and planning, as well as research skills and public speaking.

LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS

Global History 1 (9)  
Global History 2 / Global History 2 Honors (10)  
American History / American History Honors (11-12)  
AP United States History (11-12)  
AP Art History (10-12)  
AP Economics (11-12)  
AP European History (12)  
AP Government & Politics  
AP Human Geography (12)  
AP Psychology (12)  
Social Justice (11-12)  
Global Studies and Statecraft (10-12)  
Trimester Course Sequence:  
Race and Gender: This is US (9-12)
World Language

COURSE GUIDE

Spanish Intro
This is a novice level Spanish course which corresponds to ACTFL (American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages) standards. The main goal of the course is to build a preliminary foundation of the language through basic reading, writing, listening, and oral activities, as well as acquiring the essential vocabulary and grammatical tools upon which the students will build in subsequent Spanish courses. Lastly, students will start acquiring an understanding of the Hispanic culture, the customs and traditions of Spanish-speaking countries.

Spanish 1
This is a novice level Spanish course which corresponds to ACTFL (American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages). Students will use memorization and highly practiced conversations that will mimic real life situations. It is a highly intensive vocabulary learning course with some basic grammar structures.

Spanish 2
This is an intermediate mid level Spanish course which corresponds to ACTFL (American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages) standards. Students are able to function in a classroom where Spanish is the main language, with the goal for there to be a continual decrease in the use English as the year goes on. There is considerable emphasis on new grammatical forms and structures which allow students to communicate effectively beyond the present tense. In this course students will begin to read more complex texts. Lastly, students will continue to gain an understanding of cultures, customs and traditions of Spanish-speaking countries through a variety of authentic sources.

Spanish 3
This is an intermediate high level Spanish course which corresponds to ACTFL (American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages) standards. This course focuses on advanced grammar structures and vocabulary to further increase students’ ability to communicate in the target language in authentic situations. Students will continue to develop both oral and written communication skills, as well as read more complex texts. A strong emphasis is placed on the use of the Spanish language during class meetings. Lastly, students will continue to gain an understanding of the Hispanic culture, customs, and traditions of Spanish-speaking countries through a variety of authentic sources.

Spanish Language and Culture
This course is an introduction to the cultural and ethnic diversity of our global community. Students will examine global cultures and their worldviews in an immersive language setting. They will explore their perceptions, practices and products of the culture studied acquiring an understanding of and sensitivity towards other cultural perspectives. Students will also compare and contrast the cultures studied with their own in order to challenge or deepen their understanding of their own worldviews and prepare them for a globalized world.

Mandarin Intro
This course is a beginning Mandarin Chinese language course designed for students with no Chinese language background. Following the guidelines of the National Foreign Language Standards, this course has as its goal to specify at the beginning the knowledge and the skills the students should have gained at the completion of the course. Throughout the course, students are provided with numerous opportunities to engage in learning tasks for interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational communication. They will also explore aspects of Chinese culture that are related to the language under study, compare languages and cultures, and make connections with other subjects and communities. Because this is a beginning course, basic language skills are emphasized so that students can lay down a solid foundation for learning Chinese pronunciation and characters.
Mandarin 1
Mandarin Chinese I course continues to develop the fundamentals of listening, speaking, reading and writing the Chinese language, emphasizing the Pinyin Romanization system, and tones. Students will learn basic grammar, including sentence structures, measure words, radicals, past and future tense. This class will also introduce Chinese culture, such as Chinese food, ethnicities, traditional holidays, customs, history and geography through language and class activities.

Mandarin 2
Mandarin Chinese 2 course continues to develop the fundamentals of listening, speaking, reading and writing the Chinese language, emphasizing the development of fluid and novel usage of the language. Students will review basic grammar, including sentence structures, measure words, radicals, past and future tense. Students will also begin to write in clear paragraphs with properly used connecting words and engage in interpersonal communications on a variety of topics. This class will also introduce Chinese culture, such as Chinese food, ethnicities, traditional holidays, customs, history and geography through language and class activities.

Mandarin Language and Culture
Mandarin Language and Culture exists to create depth of knowledge about the Mandarin speaking world. Based in geographic regions and using authentic texts, this course seeks to produce more globally minded language learners. The themes and motifs of this course are intended to increase real-world application of the language and allows students to feel comfortable when both speaking and writing.

French 1
This is a novice low through intermediate mid level French course which corresponds to ACTFL (American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages) standards. This course is designed to build a strong foundation in reading, writing, listening and speaking within the context of the emerging vocabulary and grammar knowledge. To this end, they will learn major verbs groups, basic greetings and theme-based vocabulary, so that students can handle most basic daily communicative necessities. Students will also be introduced to French and some Francophone geography, history, and culture. Through thematic units, grammar lessons, writing assignments, speaking and listening exercises, along with project-based learning, students will develop both cultural awareness and communicative skills.

French 2
This is an intermediate mid through advanced French course which corresponds to ACTFL (American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages) standards. French II reinforces the basics learned in French I and introduces proper uses of past tenses and the future as well as more complex grammatical structures. Oral and written expression is emphasized along with various cultural readings. Students will exercise all language skills through different activities that will include authentic sources such as films, fiction and non-fiction readings, and podcasts.

French Language and Culture
This course is an introduction to the cultural and ethnic diversity of our global community. Students will examine global cultures and their worldviews in an immersive language setting. They will explore their perceptions, practices and products of the culture studied acquiring an understanding of and sensitivity towards other cultural perspectives. Students will also compare and contrast the cultures studied with their own in order to challenge or deepen their understanding of their own worldviews and prepare them for a globalized world.

LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS

French 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
French 3 Honors
French Language Honors
French Literature and Culture Honors
AP French
Mandarin 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
Mandarin 3 and 4 Honors
Chinese Language and Culture Honors 1 and 2
Spanish 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

Spanish 3 and 4 Honors
AP Spanish Language and Culture
Spanish Literature and Culture 1 and 2
Spanish Literature and Culture 1 and 2 Honors
**Introduction to Programming (Grade 8 only)**
This introductory Computer Programming class is one trimester long and designed to give students a feel for writing computer programs. Unlike platforms such as Scratch and LabVIEW that use a visual programming language, this course uses Processing, a textual programming language similar to Javascript. Students will write code in Processing to develop static images, animations, and video games throughout the course while developing an appreciation for the technical art of computer programming.

**2D Art (Grade 7 and Grade 8 only)**
In 2D Visual Art students develop two-dimensional visual and conceptual skills through the exploration of various art media and techniques including drawing, painting, printmaking and mixed media applications. Creative and artistic skills are built through the creation of observational and interpretive artworks with reference to the elements of art and principles of design. Students will be introduced to the work of relevant historical and contemporary artists and art movements. They will be encouraged to investigate art from various cultural, social and historical backgrounds, and gain an interdisciplinary understanding of the arts around the world.

**3D Art**
This course emphasizes hands on construction using the creative process. We will focus on a balance between the exploration of materials, development of technical skills, and content building. Students will be exposed to past and contemporary sculptors, and will develop new avenues of idea generation and visual problem solving. Students will work with an array of materials such as wire, wax, plaster, recyclables, photographs, fabric and fibers, paper mache, small metals and more. Projects may include jewelry making, sewing, fabric design, assemblage, carving, modeling, and other types of sculpture practices. We will aim to use everyday materials to create purposeful and non-disposable sculptures. Students will work both independently and collaboratively on projects, and strive to create a productive and creative studio environment.

**Woodworking**
Woodworking offers students an interesting and challenging opportunity to design and construct projects of their own choosing that are appropriate to their skill level and the length of the course. Although skill building and learning the safe use of hand and power tools are at the very heart of the course, students are also challenged to commit themselves to a high standard of craftsmanship. Throughout the process of construction, students are faced with decisions that force them to exercise their critical thinking, problem solving, and math skills as they design, lay-out, measure, and cut to exact size, the materials needed for their projects. In addition to gaining useful knowledge and skills required in the realm of woodworking, students learn to appreciate the beauty and utility of wood and wooden projects.

**Ceramics**
Students design and create ceramic art: sculpture and pottery. They explore hand-building techniques and are introduced to throwing-wheel skills. Students create projects that are both challenging and reflect personal interests while developing an understanding of the artistic process. A variety of kiln and glaze options allow projects to be fully functional tableware or evocative sculpture: an unlimited expression of each student’s discovery of what is special. The elements of art and principles of design, project management, critical thinking, problem solving and studio etiquette are emphasized.

**Think, Tinker, Make (Grade 7 only)**
If you have ever wished for a class that was designed by you, this is your class! Created to provide a space for broad exploration and guidance to imagine a project of your choosing, “Think, Tinker, Make!” is a place make something great, learn to use a variety of maker tools, research a topic of interest, and create your own science experiment. Through the course, students will learn that scientific, writing, performance, and design processes are not mutually exclusive, but, rather, share common types of thinking and doing. Students will gain a habit of mind useful in all course work: design with the end in mind, then iterate. What will your project be?
Think, Tinker, Make Noise (Grade 8 only)

What's the secret to sound? Students will experiment with acoustics, electronics, and sound synthesis to design artifacts that make noise in this class. Meeting in Parker’s Design Lab, students will work with different materials and software to create instruments, electronic synthesizers, and software sound effects. Students will also be introduced to concepts of recording and mixing, as well as sound design for video. A final student project will be required, including documentation and reflection of work through the trimester.

Digital Animation (Grade 7 only)

“Lights! Camera! Action!” Go behind the scenes at Pixar and produce your own computer animated movie in this 3D animation course. Students will create 3D models, design surface textures, apply lighting, and program automated camera movements to produce their own original short video by the end of the term. We will also explore history of animation including silent films, traditional hand-drawn cartoons, stop motion photography, and the advent of computer generated animation.

Digital Foundations (all Grade 6 and new Grade 7 students only)

Grade 6 - This is a required course for all Grade 6rs, and students will automatically be assigned to this course for one trimester. The class will include multiple mini-courses covering the following topics: Apps & Media, Digital Literacy, and Programming with EV3.

Students will begin this course with a Nuts and Bolts week-long session. The session introduces students to their instructors, prepares them to use OnCampus and Google Drive, and provides them with keyboarding account instruction and practice. The Apps and Media course introduces students to useful apps they can use in all their classes. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the features of each app by creating projects that they will present in class. The Digital Literacy portion of the course will empower students to understand their rights and responsibilities as a digital citizen. Students will learn how to critically analyze online resources while understanding how to navigate digital spaces in a productive, inclusive manner. Students will also learn practical skills that will facilitate their use of digital tools and applications. The programming EV3 course will provide an opportunity for students to learn the basic concepts of programming using the LEGO Robotics EV3 system to perform a deliberate task.

Grade 7 - This is a required course for all new seventh-graders, and students will automatically be assigned to this course during Trimester 1. The class will include mini-courses covering Apps & Media as well as Digital Literacy.

Students will begin the course with a Nuts and Bolts week-long session. This session introduces students to their instructors, prepares them to use OnCampus and Google Drive, and provides them with keyboarding account instructions and practice. The Apps and Media section will introduce students to apps they can utilize in all of their classes. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the features of each app by creating projects that they will present in class. The Digital Literacy portion of the course will empower students to understand their rights and responsibilities as a digital citizen. Students will learn how to critically analyze online resources while understanding how to navigate digital spaces in a productive, inclusive manner. Students will also learn practical skills that will facilitate their use of digital tools and applications.

Design, Photography, and Editorial Layout I - Grade 6 (One Trimester Course)

The main objective of this course is learning to convey a message - or entire story - on the printed page, using text, photography, and graphics. “Editorial Layout” has a very strong association with magazine construction and design, and students in this course will gain valuable foundational skills necessary for a future course in publications, including yearbook. Students will be challenged to build skills with the goal of publishing a unique product at the end of the trimester. Students will generate the photography and copy that make each page of their trimester publication, and in doing so learn the importance of collaborative process, meeting deadlines, and faithfully representing the student experience of Francis Parker Middle School.

Design, Photography, and Editorial Layout II - Grade 7 (One Trimester Course)

Building on skills learned in the Level I course, students will continue to develop and refine the skills required to convey a message - or entire story - on the printed page, using text, photography, and graphics. The concept of process is emphasized, as is the acquisition of skills. Like the Level I course, students will be challenged to build skills with the goal of publishing a unique product at the end of the trimester. This course is an excellent stepping stone to Grade 8 Yearbook. Students will generate the photography and copy that make each page of their trimester publication, and in doing so learn the importance of collaborative process, meeting deadlines, and faithfully representing the student experience of Francis Parker Middle School.
Design, Photography, and Editorial Layout III - Yearbook Production  
(Grade 8 only - Full Year Course)
Having built foundational and intermediate skills in the Level I and II courses, students will be challenged in this course to continue refining those skills while entrusting them with the responsibility to construct and publish the Middle School Yearbook from start to finish. This course is closely articulated to its counterpart in the Upper School, and students will be well positioned to continue their journey as chroniclers of the student experience at Parker.

Robotics (Grade 7 and Grade 8 only)
Grade 7 - In this course students will learn about the engineering design process and apply it to solve a selected problem. Students will be expected to design, construct, program, and test an EV3 LEGO robot. The selected problem will engage students in inquiry, reasoning and critical thinking. Furthermore, students will learn technical skills and processes associated with the production of their robot, including fundamental build and programming strategies. Students will collaborate in small groups while maintaining an individual engineering notebook. This trimester long course will culminate in robot productions, a set of notes pertaining to their productions, a complete presentation, and collaborative creation of a novel robot game.

Grade 8 - Students will engage in the production of quality robots, produced from the VEX system, while developing important team-related skills. Students will be expected to give careful consideration to design choices and the overall execution of their robotics product. Connections will be made throughout the course to key scientific principles that are demonstrated by robot production. Robot production will be inspired by actual practical robotic systems. Students will be expected to keep an individual engineering notebook, and communicate their understanding and the progress of their project frequently.
Music

Middle School Strings
This performance-based course is intended for string students who enjoy making music in an orchestra setting. Students will play a variety of styles of music ranging from classical to pop. Middle School Strings members will have the opportunity to showcase their hard work by performing in four on-campus concerts throughout the school year and a fifth performance, in the third trimester, when we travel to the LA area to play at Forum Music Festival. Students will be graded on their attendance at performances, practice habits, and improvement. Beginners are welcome, with the understanding that weekly, private lessons may be required.

Band
Band is a full year course for woodwind, brass and percussion students. The band performs five concerts each year including the Holiday Concert and a music festival in Orange County. Students will develop technique through long tone exercises, scales and chords. The band rehearses and performs concert pieces, music from films, jazz and rock. The Grade 6 band plays music at grades 1-1.5, Grade 7 band plays grades 2-2.5, and Grade 8 band plays grades 2-3. Developing each student’s musical abilities and building high quality performing ensembles are the primary goals of the course.

Chorus
Students will develop the basic elements of vocal technique demonstrated through the use of warm-up exercises. They will sing in multi-part harmony, which will improve their sense of pitch and their ability to project the voice with confidence. Students will also learn the fundamentals of music theory and ear training, heightening their ability to sight-sing and read a vocal score. There will also be small group projects where 2-4 students pick a song they are passionate about and record it, make a video with their iPads, and do research on the song and artist. Solo projects are also acceptable. Regular concerts throughout the year will help students to mature in performance technique and stage presentation. Performing a varied repertoire (contemporary and classic pop, rock, with occasional excursions into Broadway, jazz and classical) will help develop an appreciation of a wide range of music.

Percussion
This class provides an introduction to percussion techniques, note reading, rhythmic awareness, and ensemble playing techniques. We will use O Passo, a Brazilian movement-based method, to create a foundation for understanding rhythm and playing together as a group. We will also study the traditional American drum rudiments to facilitate the acquisition of correct stick technique. During the first trimester, we will focus on counting and understanding syncopation through the study and performance of Brazilian rhythms. In the second trimester, we will focus on reading and performing percussion ensemble music written in traditional Western musical notation. In the third trimester. We will begin drum set studies and join forces with the guitar classes for rock projects in the spring. All students will perform on a drum set as part of a rock band in the final concert.
**Guitar**  
Grade 6 guitar is an introductory one-year course with a focus on fundamentals in music. Students learn to read standard notation, tablature, and chords in first position while playing in various ensembles with students of similar experience. The course will emphasize both classical and contemporary techniques of playing the guitar. The course also emphasizes team exploration as students choose their own selections for presentation in small classical and “rock project” ensembles during the course of the year.

Continuing Grade 7 guitar class is a one-year course emphasizing both intermediate Classical and Contemporary styles of music. Students play in ensembles with students of similar experience, heightening personal technique, awareness of music theory and skill in reading music. The course also emphasizes team exploration as students choose their own selections for presentation in small “rock project” ensembles at the end of the year. Students entering in Grade 7 must audition and gain approval of the instructor to show mastery of Grade 6 concepts.

Continuing Grade 8 guitar class is a one-year course emphasizing advanced Classical and Contemporary styles of music. Students play in ensembles with students of similar experience, heightening personal technique, awareness of music theory and skill in reading music. The course also emphasizes team exploration as students choose their own selections for presentation in small “rock project” ensembles at the end of the year. Students entering in Grade 8 must audition and gain approval of the instructor to show mastery of sixth and Grade 7 concepts.

**LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS**

Classical Guitar Ensemble (9-12)  
Advanced Classical Guitar Ensemble (9-12)  
Contemporary Guitar Ensemble (9-12)  
Pep Band (9-12)  
Instrumental Ensemble (9-12)  
String Ensemble (9-12)  
Lancer Orchestra (9-12)
Performing Arts

COURSE GUIDE

Drama
The drama program is designed to promote the development of each student’s imagination, knowledge, problem-solving ability, understanding of human relationships, and communication skills.

Grade 6 - Grade 6 drama will emphasize basic performance skills such as improvisation, acting technique, movement, and storytelling. Special emphasis will be placed on the development of theater vocabulary, blocking on stage, character work, and creative writing. This class offers students the tools to master the fears associated not only with performance, but with public speaking, interviews, and examinations as well as many other experiences they face as they grow to young adulthood. The drama class is a safe space where students can take risks, experience theater games and creative activities that build self confidence and opportunities for success.

Grade 7 - During the first month of class, Grade 7 students will review basic improvisation and acting skills. Students will continue to hone their creative writing skills as well as expand their knowledge of acting theory and character development. Students will apply concepts and skills that are inherent to theatrical performances. They will recognize problems related to all aspects of theatrical presentation. They will design and implement solutions that are consistent with form and expressive intent. Through study and practical experiences, students will develop the physical, conceptual, and the intellectual skills associated with the crafts essential to theater.

Grade 8 - Grade 8 students will continue to build on skills from last year’s work regarding theater vocabulary, improvisation and character work. Special emphasis will be placed on developing the skills and knowledge that go into mountain a production. Students will use various creative drama techniques to build ensemble, stimulate imagination, movement, and role play with an emphasis on movement and state presence. They will understand and follow stage directions, and use proper techniques for body and voice control. Students will learn and discuss the basic elements of drama to better understand and analyze characters and scripted material. They will learn and use drama and theater vocabulary in class discussions.

Dance
Grade 6 - This class is designed as an overview of several styles of dance, an introduction to creating original choreography and the basics of creating a dance film. Students will spend time exploring ballet, modern, jazz, improvisation, hip hop, and various cultural dances. They will learn and perform a group dance, created by the instructor, and a cultural dance, taught by a guest instructor. They will create a short choreographic study and use that material to learn how to create a basic continuity dance film.

Grade 7 - This class is designed to have a more in-depth exploration of various dance styles, along with the opportunity to contribute original choreography to a class dance. Each trimester will focus on two different dance styles: Trimester One - Ballet and Modern; Trimester Two - Jazz and Improvisation; Trimester Three - Hip Hop and Cultural. Students will learn about the basic history of each of these styles. They will learn and perform a group dance, created by the instructor, and work with their fellow classmates and the instructor to co-choreograph an original class dance.

Grade 8 - This class is designed to focus on how to create choreography. Students will spend class time practicing several choreographic and composition techniques. They will have the freedom to design, choreograph, and perform their own dances. Students are encouraged to continue developing within a style of dance that they feel confident in and/or take on the challenge of exploring outside their comfort zone. They will work with their fellow classmates on developing their choreographic ideas.

LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS

Theatre (9-12)
Dance 1, 2, 3, and 4 (9-12)
Physical Education

All Middle School students participate in four blocks of physical education or team sports practice during the week (just like all other courses).

Grade 6 Physical Education is a one year course. Through the combination of individual and team activities, students are introduced to a variety of sports as well as Parker’s core values. Specific areas of instruction include skill and strategy development for specific sports, character development (i.e. sportsmanship, teamwork, integrity, general sports etiquette) through competitive, cooperative, and group play. The one year course is divided into four nine week sessions. Each session is divided into three specific physical education units that cover twelve different activities.

Grade 7 and 8 students can elect to take a Physical Education class or join a seasonal interscholastic sports team. Our Middle School Athletic program is a great opportunity for students to begin their pursuit of athletics at the high school level. Students will be placed in groups within each team appropriate to their skill levels.

Interscholastic sports are an integral part of the school community. Athletics contribute to building school spirit and the well being of the entire student body. At Parker, we believe that athletics is an integral and valuable component of our students’ overall educational experience. We believe that student-athletes benefit not only physically and emotionally by participating and competing in sports, we believe that one of our fundamental responsibilities is to help student-athletes develop critical skills (e.g., teamwork, resilience, leadership, tenacity, etc.) that promote success in the classroom, in college and in life.

The health and welfare of our student athletes is of primary concern. Parker’s Certified Athletic Trainer is available to athletes for injury evaluation during the majority of practices and home contests.

Teamwork, good citizenship, and academic achievement are expectations of all our athletes.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS BY SEASON

FALL
- Co-ed Cross Country
- Co-ed Golf
- Football
- Girls Lacrosse
- Girls Volleyball
- Physical Education

WINTER
- Boys Basketball
- Boys Soccer
- Girls Soccer
- Girls Softball
- Physical Education
- Cheer

SPRING
- Boys Baseball
- Boys Lacrosse
- Boys Volleyball
- Co-ed Tennis
- Co-ed Track and Field
- Girls Basketball
- Physical Education

LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL SPORTS OFFERINGS

Cross Country (Co-ed)
Football
Girls Golf
Sailing
Boys Sand Volleyball
Water Polo
Surf
Girls Tennis
Girls Volleyball

Cheer
Dance
Sports Medicine
Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Boys Soccer
Girls Soccer
Baseball
Boys Golf

Girls Lacrosse
Boys Lacrosse
Girls Sand Volleyball
Softball
Boys Tennis
Track & Field (Co-ed)
Boys Volleyball
PURPOSE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

The world is interconnected. Our society and individual lives are directly affected by what occurs in other societies. Our students must develop a global perspective so that they have the capacity to understand how their interactions affect those around them. The awareness of other cultures is the first step to defusing future conflict and allowing students to assume goodwill. A global education opens our students’ eyes to the complex interplay between different societies and enables them to appreciate and understand different cultures.

At Parker we believe that a student who is globally competent should:

- understand community
- make connections between local and global community
- know geography (people and places)
- be open to other cultures
- be able to communicate in another language
- have knowledge of current events
- have the ability to problem solve

WHAT IS DISCOVERY WEEK?

Discovery Week is a week-long experiential learning opportunity that is a culminating event for the Grade 8 program and a capstone for our Middle School experience.

During Discovery Week, students travel to a variety of locations where they participate in programs that foster development of self-reliance and cultural awareness, enhance language skills and historical knowledge and provide opportunities for students to make real world connections to what they have studied.

All of the travel programs are organized and chaperoned by Middle School faculty. Preparation begins within advisory and language classes in the months prior to traveling, and students process their experiences each evening while traveling through a series of journaling activities.

Discovery Week is an integral part of the global curriculum in Grade 8, and as such is incorporated into the curriculum in multiple ways including in language classes, in two Global Awareness Days during the year, and in advisory.

LOOKING FORWARD: UPPER SCHOOL GLOBAL PROGRAM DESTINATIONS

- India
- Cambodia
- China
- Colombia
- South Africa
- Fiji
## Character Education

### Grade Level Themes

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Theme</th>
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<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
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<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Community Awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Global Awareness</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All programming builds on the ethical framework of **STRIVE**:

- **Seek** always to do your best.
- **Treat** people and property with respect.
- **Revere** the truth.
- **Invest** in your future.
- **Value** School rules, your heritage and personal responsibility.
- **Enrich** the world for all.

### Life Skills

As part of our commitment to character education and social-emotional learning, the Middle School holds three Life Skills Weeks each year as a complement to our advisory programming. Life Skills Week programming is presented by our counselors, nurse, and director of diversity and inclusion, as well as faculty and some outside providers. Curriculum involves a sharper focus on Social Emotional Learning including health and wellness, alcohol and drug awareness, healthy eating, human development and stress management.

### Major Topics of Life Skills

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication (Peer group advocacy)</td>
<td>Intro to World Language and Culture Week</td>
<td>World Language Week Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stress Reduction - Yoga</td>
<td>Stress Management - Focus on perfectionism</td>
<td>Gender/Race/Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stress Reduction - Practical Strategies</td>
<td>Community Relationships and Expectations</td>
<td>Healthy Eating - Hunger awareness</td>
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<td>Positive Self Image</td>
<td>Drugs/Alcohol - Education and Effective Refusal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stereotypes</td>
<td>Health Management</td>
<td>Pyramid of Hate</td>
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<td>Alcohol Awareness</td>
<td>Internet Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Let It Ripple (Kindness/Empathy)</td>
<td>Safety - Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>Break Out Room - Leadership Skills</td>
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<td>Biases</td>
<td>Safety - Suicide Prevention</td>
<td>Natural High</td>
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<td>Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Development</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Community &amp; Communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun Safety</td>
<td>Drug Awareness</td>
<td>Gender Roles in Media</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cyberbullying, Social Media, and Being Kind Online</td>
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Character Education

ADVISORY

The purpose of advisory is to provide a space and time for students to build a relationship with at least one teacher that will help guide them through the school year and advocate for them as needed. Advisory also increases students' sense of community, satisfies students' need to belong to a group during crucial developmental years, provides a forum to discuss Character Education topics, improves communication between the school and home, and helps to prepare students for academic success by discussing study skills, organization, and time management.

PORTFOLIOS

At the end of each year, students share information with family and peers about their overall progress. Students set goals for their own learning, examine their progress against their own goals, and develop their ability to discuss their own learning. Students take time in advisory to prepare for presenting, and get feedback from their advisor about their progress on their portfolio.