

Mosaic Class Descriptions 2021 - 2022

Meeting Mondays, September 13 - May 16
Two 15-week Semesters (Fall & Spring)

A note on class placement: Academic age groups (Upper Elementary, Middle School, High School) are recommendations with flexible boundaries. Placement is based on both age/ability and at the discretion of the Instructor and Program Director. For inquiries, please contact jayne@mosaicfreeschool.com

[HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES \(AGES 14+\)](#)

World Literature: Global Voices (Full year course, 30 weeks)

Instructor: Jennifer Filannino (jenniferrose0612@gmail.com)

Travel the globe in your imagination and learn about the world, its geography, cultures, and history through a literary lens. This class will take you on a continental tour to places such as Europe, The Americas, Africa, Middle East, and Asia, and teach you to appreciate the historical and cultural significance of each location. The readings will span from ancient times to present. Emphasis will be on exploring cultural diversity, dissecting selected themes (such as self/identity, relationships, humanity), and reading various literary genres and voices (short stories, novels, mythology and folklore). Through critical analysis and writing about the text, the class seeks to develop aesthetic and ethical values, as well as critical reading, thinking, and writing. Please contact the instructor for a proposed book/reading list.

Algebra I (Fall semester course, 15 weeks)

Instructor: Hope Pressler (hopepressler@gmail.com)

This class will teach the fundamental concepts of Algebra including exponents and radicals, linear equations and inequalities, ratio and proportion, systems of linear equations, factoring quadratics, complex numbers, completing the square, and the quadratic formula. We will use the [Art of Problem Solving Introduction to Algebra](#) curriculum as the basis for our course of study. Instruction will be provided each week in a small group tutoring setting and students will also have time to work on other math in which they need support.

Students can either complete ~4 hours of written and/or digital work during each week at home in addition to the work in class to provide a full Algebra I course or use this class as a support for other math classes/curriculum they are currently working on at home. Please contact the instructor for a detailed list of topics and the schedule of instruction.

Biology (Full year course w/ labs, 30 weeks)

Instructor: Cristen Pantano (biologypantano@gmail.com)

In this year long class we will delve into the biochemical pathways and forces that power life. We'll start with atoms, build up to biomolecules, and continue through cells up to evolution and the study of whole organisms. We will be using the "flipped" classroom model where the reading is done before the material is presented in class. This allows students to become familiar with the concepts before each class, bring questions and insights, and allows us to go deeper with biochemistry and application of the information during class time. In addition to class discussions, we will have near weekly hands-on labs to further students' understanding and application of the class material. We will be covering one chapter of a standard tenth grade biology textbook per week, using [Miller and Levine Biology, 2014](#).

All material will be presented at the standard level, as well as the Honors/AP Level for those wishing to delve deeper. Mastery at this deeper level is not required and each student may choose the level of learning appropriate for their needs and ability.

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Chemistry (Full year course w/ labs, 30 weeks)

Instructor: Sandra Lynch (sandraml56@gmail.com)

This full year class will cover the fundamentals of inorganic chemistry and prepare high school students for higher level science courses in high school and beyond. The class will begin with a review of atomic structure and periodic law and progress to chemical reactions, stoichiometry, molar ratios, kinetic theory and gas laws, acids and bases, reaction rates and energy changes in chemical reactions. Students need to be proficient in Algebra 1, and will be required to read a standard high school textbook and complete practice problems each week. This class will include engaging and hands-on labs to reinforce concepts learned in class.

World History: People, Governments, and Ideas in Revolution (full year course, 30 weeks)

Instructor: Silvia Muller (silvia@scarletmail.rutgers.edu)

Understanding history means understanding changes in societies and through this class you will review some of the biggest revolutions in world history. We'll be looking at governmental, scientific, economic, and ideological revolutions by reading primary and secondary sources and researching our own sources for individuals' voices as they experienced these events or as they reflected back on what they witnessed. Included in this course will be a review of how historians find and assess evidence for credibility issues. We'll see first hand some of the information sources that the historians that wrote the books used!

Art Workshop III (Course may be taken for full year or by semester)

Instructor: Lisa Young (lisa@artfullyyoung.com)

Suitable for high school students that have completed Art Workshop II or a similar middle school art course. Working towards the creation of an art portfolio, students will undertake personal art projects under the close direction of the instructor. Students will have the opportunity to work on realistic, figurative and abstract work. Mediums: Graphite pencil, watercolor, colored pencil, charcoal, acrylics, oils, pastel (soft and oil), pastel pencils, ink and polymer clay.

Screenwriting & Filmmaking (Course may be taken for full year or by semester)

Instructor: [Montclair Film](#)

This course will provide students with the fundamentals of filmmaking and will cultivate their creative voices through the creation of a cinematic story. From a technical perspective, they will be able to demonstrate basic competence in essential skills including cinematography, sound recording, and video editing with professional software, Premiere Pro. From a scholastic perspective, they will form a deeper understanding of the essential elements of story and voice as they learn how to plan, organize, and execute a story; and will be able to articulate not only the how, but the why behind their creative and aesthetic choices. This course will provide 21st Century skills that will support students' creative and academic development, and will also provide a foundation for a wide range of professional career options.

By the end of this course, students will have acquired the basic knowledge and skills to write a short script and to create a short film on their own from pre-production through post. Students will understand that filmmaking is a procedural process, and they will have experience working through the steps of the process from planning to screening. Students will learn and practice the skills required for a variety of real world jobs including screenwriter, cinematographer, grip & electric, director, actor, script supervisor, assistant director, and editor.

Students will culminate their filmmaking knowledge through the creation of a final film that they make together as a group or in multiple groups. To celebrate their accomplishments, Montclair Film would be happy to host a special screening for friends and family in their state of the art Cinema505. Students will also be invited to enter their film into Montclair Film's 2022 Emerging Filmmaker Competition, if completed before the submission deadline.

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To deepen their film appreciation, students will be invited to attend a special screening and conversation at the Montclair Film Festival in October!

MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSES (AGES 12 - 13)

Western Literature and Composition (Full year course, 30 weeks)

Instructor: Jennifer Filannino (jenniferrose0612@gmail.com)

This class will travel to different times and places to explore cultural diversity through works of literature. Emphasis will be placed on themes of growth, transformation, and acceptance as students connect the significance of these concepts to their own lives. Students will read and analyze a broad range of works (novels, short stories, plays, and biographies) and learn to express their own views through engaging written assignments including personal narratives, informative essays, and literary analyses. They'll learn to critically read, think, discuss, and write about literature and have fun while doing it (games, trivia, food)!

Please reach out to the instructor for a list of proposed book selections.

Mock Trials - The Judicial System at Work (Fall semester course, may extend to full year)

Instructor: Natasha Benkendorf (tashaleigh@gmail.com)

The classroom will transform into a courtroom as students adventure through a variety of criminal and civil trials to uncover the inner workings of the judicial system first-hand. This class will explore how our court system uses sound argument and evidence to strive to create justice in a variety of situations. The students will work together to investigate, prepare, and enact fictional courtroom scenarios while learning proper procedure and basic law concepts. (e.g. burden of proof, liability, credibility, and precedent.) As they move into middle school, many students discover a desire to express opinions and argue about aspects of the world they see around them. This class will provide a safe space for all participants to practice creating orderly, persuasive, and logical statements while also learning to recognize fallacies and pitfalls in poor arguments. Students will have the opportunity to develop public speaking and critical thinking skills in an exciting and engaging environment. An opportunity to submit an original case for the Law Adventure competition through the NJ State Bar Foundation is also a possibility.

Art Workshop II (Course may be taken for full year or by semester)

Instructor: Lisa Young (lisa@artfullyyoung.com)

This class is aimed at middle school students that have completed Art Workshop I. The course will focus on taking a student's art skills to a superior level. Students will be taught advanced drawing, painting, palette knife and sculpting techniques and will be introduced to a number of new mediums. Mediums: Graphite pencil, watercolor, colored pencil, charcoal, acrylics, oil pastel, ink and polymer clay.

Please contact instructor with questions about student placement.

Astronomy (Fall semester course, 15 weeks)

Instructor: Cristen Pantano (biologypantano@gmail.com)

In this semester long class we will learn about the fascinating and mysterious universe that we commonly call, "space". We will not just learn facts about the universe, but will delve into how scientists know what they do about the universe. Topics to be covered include, The Big Bang, the expanding universe (How is this happening and how do we know?), formation of stars, types of stars, formation of our solar system as well as planetary motion and the Laws of Ellipses.

This class will require some math, at-home research and will include hands-on in class activities to demonstrate how scientists gather information about the universe. A trip to a planetarium in NYC will also be planned!

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UPPER ELEMENTARY CLASSES (AGES 10 - 11)

Art Workshop I

Instructor: Lisa Young (lisa@artfullyyoung.com)

Art class focused on bringing each student to the next level in their art journey. The course will lead the student from basic drawing skills through to advanced painting techniques using a wide range of mediums. Students will have the opportunity to express themselves in both realistic and abstract visual arts, as they work towards developing good foundational art skills. Class will include still life, portraiture, landscape, life drawing, cubism, impressionism, surrealism and sculpture. Mediums: Graphite Pencil, colored pencil, charcoal, watercolor, pastel, clay and acrylic.

Please contact instructor with questions about student placement.

Creative Writing Workshop (Fall Semester course, 15 weeks)

Instructor: Jayne Besjak (jayne@mosaicfreeschool.com)

Let's dive into creative writing in this class aimed at unleashing imaginations and igniting self-expression! We'll use a variety of writing resources including those from the National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) Young Writers Program along with writing prompts, story dice, and engaging story starters. Early classes will focus on pre-writing exercises to get creativity flowing as students work individually and in small groups to brainstorm characters, plots, settings, villains, and heroes. Students will develop original short stories or novella's which they will write at home and workshop with peers in class. In later classes students will move on to editing, illustrating, and polishing their work for final publication. The class will include instruction on grammar conventions such as writing dialogue, use of adjectives and adverbs, punctuation and capitalization, etc. At the conclusion of the class, each student will have a published portfolio of original work as tangible evidence of their amazing accomplishments!

Ocean Science (Fall semester course, 15 weeks)

Instructor: Hope Pressler (hopepressler@gmail.com)

Students will embark on an ocean adventure as they uncover fascinating facts, carry out exciting investigations and uncover the mysteries of the deep. Topics to be studied include ocean tides and currents, density, mapping the ocean floor, longitude, latitude, GPS, ocean habitats, ocean organisms, adaptation, and food webs. Students will use hands-on investigations to answer many questions including: what causes ocean tides and currents, what is density and why it is important in scientific investigations, what does the ocean floor look like, how do currents flow around the world, how do we track ocean vessels, what are the different habitats in the ocean, how do adaptations help ocean animals survive in different ocean habitats, what are food webs and the importance of all organisms. We will end the semester dissecting squids to gain insight into the adaptations of squids to their open-ocean habitat. We will also make calamari with the squid we dissected.

Geography & Cultures (Fall semester course, 15 weeks)

Instructor: Susan Kuney (susankuney@yahoo.com)

Pack your bags (book bags, that is!) for a wild adventure studying the people and places that make up our diverse planet. In this Geography class, we will integrate the study of physical geography - maps, mapping tools and physical features - with hands-on projects centered on culture, history, natural resources, cuisine and economy. Students will learn how to conduct and write a research paper, and will work in teams to produce presentations, news stories and creative information graphics. Depending on the class size and interest level, students can show off their knowledge in our very own Mosaic Geography Trivia Show, "Mo Geo."

Literature Circle (Full year course, 30 weeks)

Instructor: Jayne Besjak (jayne@mosaicfreeschool.com)

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"Books are the plane, and the train, and the road. They are the destination, and the journey."

~Anna Quindlen

The purpose of this class is to foster a love of literature and an appreciation for the ability of a story to capture one's imagination. Students will be reading three to four novels over the course of each semester, and exploring what makes great literature through hands-on activities, class discussion, and age-appropriate writing assignments. Basic literary elements (plot, character, setting, theme, etc.) will be identified and analyzed, as students develop the ability to thoughtfully critique a novel and express their views in a group setting. Outside work required for this class will consist of reading assigned chapters and preparation for class discussions and projects. The book list will be finalized based on the preferences and ability levels of registered students. Please contact the Instructor for a list of books under consideration.