

Mosaic 2025 - 2026

Draft Schedule of Classes

Monday

		HIGH SCHOOL		MIDDLE SCHOOL		UPPER ELEMENTARY
1st Period	9:00 - 10:30	World Literature	Art Workshop	Inquiry Physical Science	Renaissance History	
2nd Period	10:30 - 12:15	Biology	Advanced Digital Photography	Public Speaking & Performance	Science Explorations	
12:15 - 1:00	LUNCH & RECESS					
3rd Period	1:00 - 2:30	US & World Government	TBD Elective	Literary Genre	The Art Lab: Art Meets Makerspace	
4th Period	2:30 - 4:00	Scene Study & Performance Workshop		Art History	Around the World with Literature	

Wednesday

		HIGH SCHOOL	MIDDLE SCHOOL	UPPER ELEMENTARY	Lower Elementary
1st Period	9:00 - 10:30	Environmental Science	Quantitative Investigations	Critical & Creative Thinking Circle	Language Arts
2nd Period	10:30 - 12:15	Journalism & Mosaic Newsletter		Young Entrepreneurs	STEM
12:15 - 1:00	LUNCH & RECESS				
	Afternoon programming TBD				

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- ❖ Classes are full-year courses. Registration for these classes requires a commitment to the fall and spring semesters (30 weeks).
 - * Classes are semester courses (15 weeks). Students may take these classes fall, spring, OR both semesters (content will continue, not duplicate).
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HIGH SCHOOL (ages 14+)

❖ World Literature

This course is designed to introduce students to masterpieces of World Literature ranging from Homer's *The Odyssey* through *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe. Through class discussion and in-depth literary analysis, students will hone their ability to think and talk critically about works of literary art that both shape and reflect our world and the ages. Students will read, discuss, and analyze texts from a variety of genres including poetry, plays, novels, and short stories. Through small group discussions and literary analysis, we will look specifically at the historical context of these works of literature and how they reflect and shape the world in which we live. Students will develop their thoughts through written analysis in four papers throughout the year. By the end of this course, students will be able to clearly articulate major themes, literary techniques, and devices used by a specific author and place the specified piece of literature within a larger world context.

Sample Reading List: *The Odyssey* by Homer, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare, *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston, *In the Time of the Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez, *Night* by Elie Wiesel, and *Things Fall Apart* Chinua Achebe

Instructor: Sachi Tripp

Tuition: \$740

❖ Biology

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.

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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.

Instructor: Cristen Pantano

Tuition: \$825

❖ Environmental Science

Environmental science is an interdisciplinary course that studies the earth, how humans interact with the earth, and how we can positively and sustainably deal with environmental issues. Environmental science includes topics from biology, chemistry, and even economics. This course is one of connections in nature, specifically: How nature works and has survived and thrived, how humans interact with the environment, and how we can live more sustainably. The course will be divided into five units. We will start by learning how the earth works without human intervention, followed by human population science and how this population affects ecological principles. We will then closely study the earth's resources and land use by humans. This section will focus on how we can sustain resources and how human population growth and food production affects the environment. The fourth unit will focus on energy; nonrenewable energy as well as energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. We will finish with a unit on pollution, global change, and how we can sustainably use earth's resources without causing environmental harm. Each week will include a discussion of the weekly topic and hands-on labs or group data analysis. The opportunity for working at the AP level and taking the AP exam will be available for motivated students.

Instructor: Cristen Pantano

Tuition: \$825

❖ US and World Government

This year-long look at governmental systems will begin with a deep-dive into the creation and structure of our own federal presidential republic in the United States. We will spend time reviewing many primary source documents from our nation's birth as well as unpacking the Constitution. Students will research the growth and history of our current system and discuss its different strengths and weaknesses. The first semester will culminate with a group mock congress project. The second semester will take us "across the pond" to investigate the systems of different European countries and compare them to our own. We will also research the creation and power of the European Union. Our final group project will include a debate about an issue the EU is currently facing.

Instructor: Natasha Benkendorf

Tuition: \$740

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* Scene Study & Performance Workshop (High School & Middle School)

This class takes a detailed and focused approach to the craft of acting and scene breakdown. Whether students are already seasoned performers or just beginning their journey in drama, this workshop will equip them with essential tools for understanding scenes and character motivation. True acting comes from a deep interpretation of the text—identifying beats, moments, and emotional depth within a scene. This class provides a structured approach, guiding students in how to analyze and break down scenes to deliver authentic performances. Students will work with scenes from a variety of genres, including contemporary drama, classic literature adaptations like Shakespeare, comedy, coming-of-age stories, historical drama, and mystery/thriller. They will learn techniques for script analysis, identifying subtext, and developing a clear approach to character interpretation. Through hands-on practice, students will step onto the stage, perform scenes with classmates, and experiment with different acting choices. They will receive coaching on taking direction, adjusting performance styles, and maintaining consistency while keeping their acting fresh and engaging.

A key focus of the class is developing the ability to break down a scene effectively, understand a character's objectives, and make strong performance choices. By exploring different genres and styles, students will refine their ability to bring depth and authenticity to their acting. This workshop-style course provides an exciting opportunity for young actors to strengthen their craft and gain confidence in their performance skills.

Instructor: Jayne Besjak

Tuition: \$370/semester

❖ Journalism & Mosaic Newsletter

Students in this class will learn the fundamentals of journalism while creating a monthly newsletter together. Students will practice key researching and writing skills as they create news articles, features, pop culture and sporting event reports, interviews, and editorials. Students will also spend time investigating the role of journalism in our history and its contribution to our democracy. We will discuss journalistic ethics and put a critical eye to discerning excellent reporting.

Instructor: Natasha Benkendorf

Tuition: \$740

* Art Workshop (High School and Middle School)

Fall Drawing:

This drawing class offers a balanced approach, combining fundamental technical skills with process-based projects that encourage creativity and exploration. Students will develop a strong foundation in observational drawing, perspective, shading, and composition while also engaging in experimental and conceptual exercises that emphasize creative problem-solving

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and artistic growth. Throughout the course, we will experiment with different media, including graphite, charcoal, ink, oil pastels, soft pastels and colored pencils. Students will learn how to capture light and shadow, create depth, and express movement through mark-making. We will also study historical and contemporary artists to inspire personal artistic growth. Through a mix of structured lessons and open-ended projects, students will learn to refine their techniques while also embracing intuition and personal expression. Most importantly, the goal is for the students to enjoy and appreciate the process of art making and gain confidence in their creative expression, while working on developing good artistic habits.

Fall Painting:

Using a similar teaching philosophy as the drawing class, the painting class will approach each project as a way for students to practice proper risk taking, and making choices, allowing them to have ownership of their art. Students will develop a strong foundation in color theory, composition, brush techniques, and paint application while enjoying the process of painting. Throughout the course, we will explore various painting media, including acrylic, watercolor, and oil, allowing students to experiment with different textures, layering techniques, and expressive mark-making. Through guided and open-ended assignments, working from life and from reference, students will learn how to mix and apply color effectively, create depth and atmosphere.

Other art class possibilities:

Sculpture: Clay, Paper Mache, Found Object, Plaster of Paris, Mosaic, etc.

Art Journaling and Illustrating.

Digital Art: Procreate.

Printing: Collage, Ebru Marbling, Reduction Prints, Cyanotypes, etc.

Fiber Arts: Weaving, Felting, etc

Instructor: Mariya Kovalyov

Tuition: \$370/semester

*** Advanced Digital Photography: Creative Exploration, Practice and Portfolio Development (Middle School and High School)**

This photography class is appropriate for students who either took digital photography before, or are exploring photography at Mosaic for the first time. This class challenges students to refine their artistic vision while mastering technical aspects of the craft. In this course, students will explore advanced composition techniques, experiment with lighting setups, and push creative boundaries through a variety of conceptual photography projects. Our assignments in this class will consist of a series of photographs, as opposed to singular photos.

Throughout the semester, we will study contemporary photography trends and analyze the work of influential photographers who have shaped the field. Students will also develop a

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personal portfolio, incorporating elements of fine art photography, commercial work, and experimental techniques.

In addition to artistic exploration, students will gain experience in professional workflows, including advanced post-processing techniques, photo curation, and exhibition preparation. By the end of this course, students will have a deeper understanding of photography as both an art form and a profession, preparing them for potential careers in photography, visual storytelling, and multimedia arts.

Supply List:

A digital camera (preferably not a phone or tablet, though those can be used in case of emergency).

A laptop that has software that we can use to edit the photos. While Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom continue to be industry standards, and that is what I recommend, there are other options available at low or zero cost. The programs that we can use in class are as follows:

- Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom
- PIXLR: <https://pixlr.com/> (has a free version and is an online only editor)
- GIMP 2: Open source software that works great for editing most photos: <https://www.gimp.org/downloads/> (free)
- Photopea: <https://www.photopea.com/>
- For phones: Snapseed (google developed app for photo editing, free): https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.niksoftware.snapseed&hl=en_US&gl=US&pli=1

Instructor: Mariya Kovalyov

Tuition: \$370/semester

MIDDLE SCHOOL (ages 12 - 13)

❖ Public Speaking & Presentation

On our journey to develop confidence and skill, each class will include interactive games and warm-ups as we work together to practice basic public speaking. Following that, students will be able to choose their own adventure! Do they want to write their own persuasive speech? Maybe they are interested in creating an informative visual presentation with physical or digital props. Some students may choose to memorize a famous speech or give a well-rehearsed reading from a publication. Other options include storytelling, dramatic interpretations, or learning to read breaking news in front of a "camera". Whichever platform or piece they select, each student will practice similar skills needed for excellent public speaking. We will be carefully developing diction, inflection, eye contact, and excellent use of movement as we learn from and with each other.

Instructor: Natasha Benkendorf

Tuition: \$740

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❖ Inquiry Physical Science

This middle school class engages students in the practice of science, not just the memorization of facts. Using an Argument-Driven Inquiry (ADI) methodology, we will cover four core areas in physical science: matter, motion and forces, energy, and waves. Through labs and activities, students will actively engage in scientific practices as they design their own investigations to answer a variety of thought-provoking research questions—ranging from how thermal energy works to roller coaster design.

The ADI process is multi-layered and collaborative, strongly focusing on developing scientific writing and presentation skills. Working in small groups, students will respond to guiding questions, design their own methods, develop models, collect and analyze data, and construct arguments for presentation. Each investigation will conclude with peer critique, class discussion, and written lab reports, helping students strengthen their ability to communicate scientific ideas effectively.

Students will also use SageModeler, a dynamic modeling tool, to create and refine models of key physical science concepts. By constructing visual representations of systems explored in class, such as energy transfer or forces and motion, students will analyze relationships, test predictions, and enhance their scientific reasoning.

Pre-requisites: Students must possess appropriate maturity for effective small group lab work and solid communication and writing skills.

Instructor: Jayne Besjak

Tuition: \$825

❖ Literary Genre

In this class, students will explore the major literary genres, discovering together what those genres have in common and how they differ. The year will be broken into units based on those genres, including fiction (both short story and novel), nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Students will become familiar with each genre and be able to identify distinguishing characteristics of each. Within each of these units, we will study various literary devices, including the author's use of figurative language, theme, tone, and style of writing. Through small group projects and in-class discussions, students will get comfortable talking about literature with their peers. Additionally, they will practice writing extensively and write two formal papers throughout the year.

Sample Reading List: *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare, Emily Dickinson's poetry, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba

Instructor: Sachi Tripp

Tuition: \$740

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❖ Art History

This class promotes a deep understanding of art throughout the history of humanity through the study of art movements, concepts, and their connection to historical events. Students will develop visual and critical analysis through the course. By examining diverse cultures through the lens of art, students will broaden their knowledge not just in art, but also delve deeper into history, geography, literature, traditions, religions, ethnicity, political and economic progress. The material covered in class will deepen their comprehension of artistic advances from a global perspective, as well as sharpen their visual, critical, and comparative analysis. For each time period, the students will go over major and memorable works of art, examine how the events of the time influenced the artistic development, connect the art to the current events of the time in question, analyze the intended use of the artwork, the audience, and the role of artistry in the society.

Art History I (Fall Semester): We will cover everything from Cave Art to Early Renaissance: Cave Art, Mesopotamia, Mesoamerica, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, Byzantium, Medieval Europe, Early Renaissance, Ancient China, Japan and India. We will examine why humanity makes art, what influences art making, how leaders used art to their advantage, etc. The most fascinating question is how the art and ideas that existed thousands of years ago still influence us today. We look at the art development from a wide perspective, with studying individual artists wherever possible.

Art History II (Spring Semester): Will cover everything from Early Renaissance to Contemporary Art. While in Art History I we mostly discussed art from a broader perspective, in this semester the focus shifts to smaller time increments, individual events and individual artists. We will learn about how conflict, industrial development and trends of the time have influenced art over the years, and how we ended up where we are today. While it helps to take Art History I prior to this class in terms of providing context, it is not essential, and the classes can be completed separately.

Textbook - TBA.

Instructor: Mariya Kovalyov

Tuition: \$740

❖ Quantitative Investigations

This is a hands-on, problem-solving class designed to develop quantitative rationality—the ability to apply logical, mathematical reasoning to real-world problems. Aimed at students ages 11 to 14, this course builds a strong foundation for high school mathematics through engaging investigations, creative problem-solving, and collaborative exploration.

Students will tackle multi-step, open-ended problems, brainteasers, logic puzzles, and mathematical investigations that encourage critical, creative, and divergent thinking—skills rarely emphasized in traditional math classes but highly valued in business, academia, and

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modern high-tech industries. This course is not about rote memorization or textbook drills—it's about thinking mathematically, appreciating different approaches, and embracing mistakes as part of the learning process. Whether working individually or in small teams, students will refine their ability to analyze, strategize, and problem-solve—essential skills for success in high school math and beyond.

Instructor: TBD

Tuition: \$370/semester

UPPER ELEMENTARY (ages 10 - 11; 9 year olds with instructor approval)

❖ Renaissance History

"Remember the Alamo!" Also, who was the Sun King? How did samurai become sumo wrestlers? What was the Black Hole of Calcutta? And why was a California town named Ground Hog Glory? Don't just read about history – experience it! This course will bring early modern history to life through hands-on projects, class discussions, games, and more! Students will fully immerse themselves in early modern history as we cover the major historical events from Elizabeth I to the Forty-Niners, using *Story of the World Volume 3* as our guide. This book weaves world history into storybook format, covering important events from every continent using maps, illustrations, and tales from each culture. Students will explore this period in history (1600-1850) with group projects, presentations, and experiential learning activities. Textbook chapter reading will be required homework each week.

Instructor: Renee Alejandro

Tuition: \$740

❖ Science Explorations

Hands-on activities and experiments are the perfect way for elementary students to have fun exploring science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). In this class, students will enjoy short (2-4 week) units focused on "doing science" to encourage active learning and exposure to core STEM concepts and scientific thinking. We will explore a variety of physical, earth/space, and life science topics.

Instructor: TBD

Tuition: \$740

* The Art Lab: Art Meets Makerspace!

Welcome to The Art Lab, where creativity and innovation come together! If you enjoyed Maker Space, you will enjoy this class. This course blends traditional art-making with hands-on, experimental techniques found in makerspaces. Students will explore a wide range of materials and tools. Art lab is a space where we get to experiment with unusual, strange and

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downright bizarre art techniques. It is a process-based, project-oriented class, suited for anyone that likes to explore and experiment. We are going to bring science into the art classroom, and employ a number of techniques that often elude a standard art curriculum. Through a series of interdisciplinary projects, students will push the boundaries of artistic expression, engineering, and design. Whether constructing interactive installations, experimenting with wearable art, or integrating technology into creative works, The Art Lab encourages curiosity, problem solving, risk-taking, and collaboration. This class is perfect for those who love to create, invent, and explore new ways of making art!

Instructor: Mariya Kovalyov

Tuition: \$370/semester

❖ Around the World with Literature

Join us on a thrilling literary voyage that doesn't require any travel plans! In this class, students will journey through the pages of contemporary and classic novels to discover diverse places and cultures from around the globe. Through guided discussions and short response writing prompts, students will explore literary styles and devices, develop their own opinions and writing voices, and identify important elements of fiction analysis such as plot and theme.

Throughout this journey, students will gain insights into different cultures, geographies, and histories. We will engage in various class activities and creative projects that utilize maps, food, games, and crafts. This immersive experience will make learning fun and engaging while enhancing literary understanding and critical thinking skills.

Instructor: Katie Sander

Tuition: \$740

* Critical & Creative Thinking Circle

This is a hands-on problem-solving class where the focus will be on creative, critical, and divergent thinking. These are areas rarely covered in a typical school setting but highly sought after in the real-world settings of business, academia, and modern high-tech industry. Each week, students will be encouraged to solve challenging and complex problems individually and collaboratively in small teams, where they will learn to appreciate each other's input and value alternative approaches. We will discuss multi-step and open-ended problems, brainteasers, math puzzles, and logic problems as students learn to distinguish what is relevant for obtaining a solution. We will even make mistakes and enjoy them! For more information on the history of this approach (inspired by an ideology that employs more problem-solving vs. computational or textbook math), please visit the website [Mathcircles](http://Mathcircles.org).

Instructor: TBD

Tuition: \$370/semester

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* **Young Entrepreneurs (Upper Elementary & Middle School)**

In this exciting, hands-on entrepreneurship class, students will learn how to turn ideas into real businesses. They'll explore creativity, problem-solving, and design thinking as they brainstorm business ideas, conduct market research, and develop a business plan. Through engaging activities, students will create products or services, learn budgeting and marketing strategies, and practice pitching their ideas. The course emphasizes teamwork, adaptability, and financial literacy. It culminates in an Entrepreneurship Fair, where students showcase and sell their products to the community—gaining real-world experience as young business owners!

Instructor: TBD

Tuition: \$370/semester