



Main Line Classical Academy

LOWER SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CURRICULUM

Reading

- Readings are drawn from the grade-by-grade literature lists (see English Literature Curriculum below). All students in a grade read, discuss, and write about the same novel/play at any given time in a school year. The teacher devotes some time regularly to reading parts of the assigned text out loud with students. He also devotes time to teaching students about the historical and cultural context of text, and to discussion and analysis of text.

Writing

- Writing assignments are closely related to the literature readings and to the in-class discussion and analysis of text. Students practice articulating a claim (aka paper topic) and outlining their arguments in support of the claim. Throughout the year, they practice writing different forms of expository essays (e.g., character studies; discussions of historical context; comparison and contrast essays; and public speeches). Time in class is spent on outlining and on peer-reviewing rough drafts.

Poetry

- Students read, analyze, and commit to memory approximately 15 poems/year. Time is spent discussing the biography of the poets; the historical background of the poems; the genre of the given poem; its rhyme and metrical scheme; and any special aesthetic effects. Students memorize poems through brief daily in-class recitations and prepare individual poems for declamation for the two Poetry Nights/year.

Oratory

- Older students (grades 6-7) practice speaking in front of the class. This includes composing speeches modeled on different literary prototypes and declaiming them by heart.

Grammar

- From 4th grade onward, grammar is an integral part of the English curriculum.

Spelling & Vocabulary

- All students in grades 2 and up are given weekly spelling & vocabulary lists (including Latin roots of English words) and have a brief (5 min) quiz every week.

Penmanship

- Students in grades 1, 2, and 3 practice penmanship on a regular basis. Students in grades 4 and up are expected to continue to apply their handwriting skills, producing written answers in neat, legible script.