

2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR

BELOVED HUMANITIES CURRICULUM

MIDDLE SCHOOL



MISSION STATEMENT

At its core, the mission of the BelovED Middle School Humanities Department is to provide a comprehensive curriculum that is based upon research and best practices, ensuring that students become critical thinkers, proficient readers, expressive writers and effective communicators in order to promote the literacy skills and concepts required for success in an ever-evolving global and technological world.

DEPARTMENT GOALS

BelovED's Middle School curriculum is designed to ensure that students read and understand a variety of complex texts across multiple genres such as poetry, myths, realistic fiction, historical fiction, speeches, dramas, literary criticism, letters, articles, short stories, and more. These varied texts, which directly link their ELA and history studies, allow students to encounter new perspectives, rethink ideas, and deepen their knowledge.

Our goal is to provide students with quality, rigorous instruction that encourages them to become critical and creative thinkers through culturally relevant texts and learning experiences that help them gain the competencies needed to become change agents within their larger communities.

GRADE LEVEL UNITS

| | 6th Grade | 7th Grade | 8th Grade |
|--------|--|--|----------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Introduction to Humanities | | Youth in Human Rights |
| Unit 2 | Ancient Egypt & Kush | World Religions | The Harlem Renaissance |
| Unit 3 | Early African Kingdoms | The Age of Exploration & The Colombian Exchange | The Great Migration |
| Unit 4 | Ancient Greece | Slavery in the Americas | Civil Rights |
| Unit 5 | Ancient Rome | The Revolution & The Declaration of Independence | Women's Rights |
| Unit 6 | World Religions | The Constitution | Gender Equality |
| Unit 7 | Kingdoms of West Africa | Westward Expansion & The Trail of Tears | The Immigration Experience |
| Unit 8 | Ancient & Medieval China & Japan | Defining America | Global Imperialism |
| Unit 9 | The Middle Ages, the European Reformation, & The Renaissance | | |

Every grade level is guided by historical eras, enabling students to study how the texts they are reading relate directly to the historical, political, and social context of its time. This study of the past, and how it directly relates to and has impacted the present, allows us to help students find their own voice and value system that leads them to becoming contributing members of society in their own ways.

SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS

Keeping in mind the varied learning abilities and differentiation students need, we try our best to cater to every student by employing different learning models and techniques.

STUDENT SUPPORTS

- In-Class Conferencing
- Gradual Release Model
- Embedded Social and Emotional Learning
- Small Group Intervention
- Honors and AP Level Courses

As a result of being part of the BelovED Community Charter High School Academy-- through reading, writing, speaking, and listening-- students will effectively and independently:

- Comprehend a range of texts and media by comparing and contrasting
- Communicate ideas while responding to varying demands
- Generate questions and seek answers through critical analyses of text and media
- Seek understanding of themselves and others
- Embrace lifelong learning and reading for enjoyment
- Develop a critical eye and appreciation for the written word

READING INSTRUCTION

We intend to encourage all our Scholars to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain expertise across content areas to become well-rounded, well-read citizens.

To that affect, our curriculum:

- Requires the reader to go deeper into the text in order to understand its structure, form, interconnectivity of ideas, message, goals, and intertextuality in order to explore the text at a deeper level
- Aims to develop an understanding of the overall literal meaning of the text along with developing a strong sense of how texts and various media forms are connected
- Necessitates that students grapple with the text to unravel the themes, motifs, and goals, and to extrapolate these ideas to connect the text not only to others like it but to the world around them

"It is what you read
when you don't have to
that determines what
you will be when you
can't help it."

--Oscar Wilde

WRITING INSTRUCTION

Writing every day helps students express and support their ideas. The Writing curriculum-- created using *The Writing Revolution*-- provides a student-centered framework that helps children write daily and purposefully. Minilessons focus on teaching explicit skills that align to writing standards, ensuring that students begin at the sentence-level to perfect their written expression.

By growing the whole writer, students not only learn to effectively communicate their ideas, but also understand and interpret the ideas of scholars and authors they read. Students learn that writing is not just a task they do for a grade, but a necessary lifelong skill.

Teachers use the following models to shape all writing activities:

- **Writing in Response** to reading consists of exercises, embedded in the context of the reading, that seek to develop students as analytical writers within the context of the day's text(s)
- **Formative writing** consists of exercises that let students use writing as a tool to develop and expand their thinking
- **Summative writing** asks students to develop writing that explains and provides evidence for a sophisticated argument about a text

CURRICULUM SCOPE & SEQUENCE

Scholar development in reading and writing is supported throughout the year via novel studies. The following novels will be analyzed and discussed in the 21-22 school year:

| | 6th Grade | 7th Grade | 8th Grade |
|--------|---|---|--|
| Unit 1 | <i>But Not Buddy</i> <i>The Watsons Go to Birmingham*</i> | <i>The Outsiders</i> | Varied Media |
| Unit 2 | <i>A Long Walk to Water</i> | <i>Boy at the Back of the Class</i> | |
| Unit 3 | | <i>Morning Girl</i> | <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> |
| Unit 4 | <i>The Lightning Thief</i> | <i>Copper Sun</i> | <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Graphic Novel / <i>Just Mercy</i> |
| Unit 5 | | <i>Chains / Wood Runner</i> | <i>Speak</i> |
| Unit 6 | <i>Number the Stars</i> <i>I am Malala*</i> | <i>Fever</i> | <i>The 57 Bus</i> |
| Unit 7 | <i>Where the Mountain Meets the Mood</i> <i>American Born Chinese*</i> | <i>Mary and the Trail of Tears / Indian No More</i> | |
| Unit 8 | <i>The Giver</i> | Short Stories | <i>Animal Farm / Night</i> |

*Advanced Track