

Educating the Whole Child

The ultimate purpose of education is not only to enable individuals to assimilate successfully into their culture, but to empower individuals to transcend their culture in order to make a positive impact and help it to advance.

—ANDREW KUTT, FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
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THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE ACADEMY

Educating the Whole Child

Oneness-Family School



THE PEACE ACADEMY

ages 9-12

grades 4-6

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The Day's Schedule

8:30-9 am Social Bonding

Students arrive between 8:30 and 9 AM. This time helps students get oriented to the classroom environment and practice essential social skills which are so critical to this age group.

9-9:30 am Morning Circle Time (M-Th)

9-9:30 am Community Meeting (F)

Our morning circle is a time of self-reflection as well as community building and special lessons. The class gathers each morning for sharing of news, feelings or thoughts; discussions of particular virtues and values; as well as lessons in self-esteem, cooperation, conflict-resolution, grace and courtesy, and learning skills. We also discuss global issues as they arise.

9:30 am Morning Work Time

Mornings are an uninterrupted block of academic studies. Individual work plans are set up with the students that indicate their daily assignments, according to their own individual needs. The students are then responsible for following their plans. Drawing on the Montessori philosophy as a base, they work either independently, in small groups, or in lessons with a teacher. Subjects include math, language, science and research.

11:45 am Lunch

12:30 pm Recess

Each day, weather permitting, the students have an outdoor recess. This is a time where students play a variety of group games, such as 4-square, jump rope, hockey, kickball or capture the flag.

1:00 pm Silent Reading (M,W,F)

After recess, the students have approximately 20-30 minutes of sustained silent reading. In a relaxed, quiet environment, students are able to become deeply involved in reading material.

1:00 pm Specialists (T, Th)

On specialist days after lunch, students participate in 3 small group enrichment classes for 40 minutes each. French or Spanish are offered twice a week. Other specialist classes include Art, P.E., Self-discovery, and Music. These classes are offered once a week.

1:30 pm Afternoon Work Time (M, W, F)

This is a time devoted to intense, in-depth study of core curricular themes including Culture, History and Science. Concentrated study units last 5-6 weeks. Students work individually, in small groups, and as a whole class to create projects, presentations, and large scale manifestations of their knowledge and understanding of these units.

3:00 pm Classroom Jobs

Students are responsible for their environment in the Montessori classroom. They increase their sense of ownership by taking turns doing the jobs that help keep the classroom clean and ready for learning.

3:15 pm Afternoon Meeting

This important closure to the day includes time for announcements, homework clarification, processing of the day's events and acknowledgements.

Philosophy

In the Peace Garden, students were dealing completely with a concrete world, the world of their senses: things they could hear, smell, taste and touch. As they grew, they were able to use concrete materials to understand more and more complex concepts; in the Peace Arbor, they used math manipulatives to understand concepts of multiplication, division and even pre-algebra. Now, in the Peace Academy, they are developing abstract thinking. Now they are ready to use the concrete materials as a jumping off point for their own journeys into the abstract. Their imaginations are primed and ready to muse over universal problems and historic dilemmas. Their focus is widening, able to comprehend and grapple with issues of social justice and personal belief. They are beginning to understand their own role in society, the global society, as well as their own classroom's.

Students at this level may seem more disorganized outwardly, but this is because they are concentrating on developing inner order. They need time to try out roles, and get feedback. They need to research many different ways and options of how to live life. They need structure and guidance, but they need to feel that they have power over their life and their learning. Studies need to be relevant to them. They need to exercise choice over the topics they research; they need to shoulder increasing responsibility for their work and for their community. They need to discuss their beliefs and the beliefs of others in terms of current events and philosophies, so to better refine their own inner values. They need to be held accountable for their actions, and yet held in patient and high esteem as they stumble through the many mistakes that will help them learn poise, tact, and grace in social situations.

Peace Academy students are growing physically as well as emotionally and academically. Sometimes their growth spurts make them

seem awkward, and they often do not know their own strength. They need to practice using their new, developing bodies.

They need to get out and do things. They also need to get out of the classroom and interact with the world because of their widening worldview and need for relevant, purposeful work. And they need desperately to interact with each other, to learn to get along with their peers, to problem solve in a group setting, to shift their support system away from their parents and onto the age group that are, and will continue to be, their workmates, colleagues and partners.

Curriculum

Our unique curriculum is divided into 3 parts:

◆ **Academy**

The traditional academic subjects representing the child's exploration of the world around him/her.

◆ **Self Discovery**

The arts and other subjects representing exploration of the child's inner world.

◆ **Manifestation**

The crystallization of Academy and Self Discovery representing how the child views him/her self in the world and how he/she chooses to participate in it.

Please see curriculum chart on the next 2 pages to view the curriculum parts in more detail.

3 Parts of the Curriculum

Academy, Self-Discovery & Manifestation

Academy

A journey of exploration of the world around us.

LANGUAGE

Stories, poems, readings, creative poetry, writing, telling stories, vocabulary, handwriting, communication skills

MATH

Processing, practical skills, problem solving, computation

SENSORIAL

Developing the senses, learning to discriminate sizes, shapes, colors, textures and order in preparation for later academics

CULTURAL / SCIENCE

History, Geography, Biology, the Sciences:

The integration of them all, originating from the great lessons about the history of our world

PRACTICAL LIFE

Developing practical skills, improving fine and gross motor control, promoting self-awareness, self esteem, order, independence, concentration and coordination

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French, Spanish– foreign languages as a gateway to communicating and understanding people of other cultures

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Appreciating the core essence of nature, identification of plants and animals in the natural world

HEALTH

Body awareness and knowledge

FIELD TRIPS

Leaving the classroom environment, exploring places connected to the curriculum

Self-Discovery

A journey of exploration of the world inside of us.

SELF-REFLECTION

Guided meditations at circle time, time for individual reflection, peace corner, sacred items, morning circle, silent moment, activities for inner peace

TEACHING VALUES AND VIRTUES

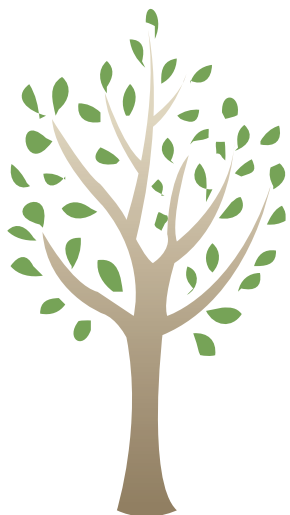
Peace studies, discussions – using stories, plays, role plays, songs

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Conflict resolution, peer mediation, cooperation, communication and relationship skills

DRAMA

Acting, singing, choreographed dancing, skits in the classroom, performances at community meeting, story extensions, role play



Manifestation

A culmination of Academy and Self-Discovery work brought forth to the world.

COMMUNITY MEETING

Songs, dances, skits, community games, seasonal/holiday celebrations

FESTIVALS & SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

United Nations Day, Festival of Lights, Earth Day/Week, Peace Run, Science Fair, Spring Tea, Field Day, Art show Auction,, seasonal celebrations

PERFORMANCES

Within each classroom, at community meetings, at festivals, organized around a central theme, talent shows

EXHIBITS & DEMONSTRATIONS

Art shows at school, libraries, and local businesses; special class presentations, peaceful conflict resolution demonstrations

BUDDIES – KIDS HELPING KIDS

Manifestation of the multi-age classroom, interaction between the age levels

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Identifying the needs of others in the world, helping those in need, manifesting values learned, practical applications.

AFTER SCHOOL CLASSES

Music lessons, soccer, art classes, drama, chess, dance, mad science

MUSIC

Rhythms, songs, singing, instruments, reading music, creation of own songs/music

WORLD RELIGIONS

In conjunction with our cultural studies, we expose students to differences and similarities in belief systems around the world to promote tolerance and understanding

COOKING

Cultural food preparation

ARTS / CRAFTS

Visual arts, painting, sculpture, form drawing,

HANDICRAFTS

Sewing, finger knitting, weaving,

MOVEMENT

Brain gym, eurhythmy, creative movement

PHYSICAL EDUCATION / SPORTS

Team games, individual skill-building

Academy

In the Peace Academy classrooms, students combine hands-on, experiential work with introductory textbook work, have individual, small group and whole class lessons, and engage in independent and small group follow-up activities and presentations. They have special assignments based on their individual skill levels, and a variety of assessments to test their mastery, including individual, group, and standardized testing. Students take as much responsibility as possible for their own learning and time management, creating and working on weekly assignment plans based on a six-week cycle of work. A mixed age environment helps students refine leadership and peer mentoring skills, as well as developing tolerance, understanding of different learning styles, and a sense of unity.

Language

At the 4th -6th grade level, students are ready for deeper investigation and appreciation of language. For it is only in being able to use language to defend our views, pursue our interests, and speak our hearts that any of us truly become mature citizens of the world. Especially in our modern times, it is written language that is the vehicle of communication. It is essential then, that our students learn as much as possible about their legacy, language.

In keeping with the work begun in the Peace Arbor, students continue in the slow synthesis of grammar: parts of speech, and types of clauses, phrases and sentences. They categorize as linguists categorize and they learn Latin and Greek roots.

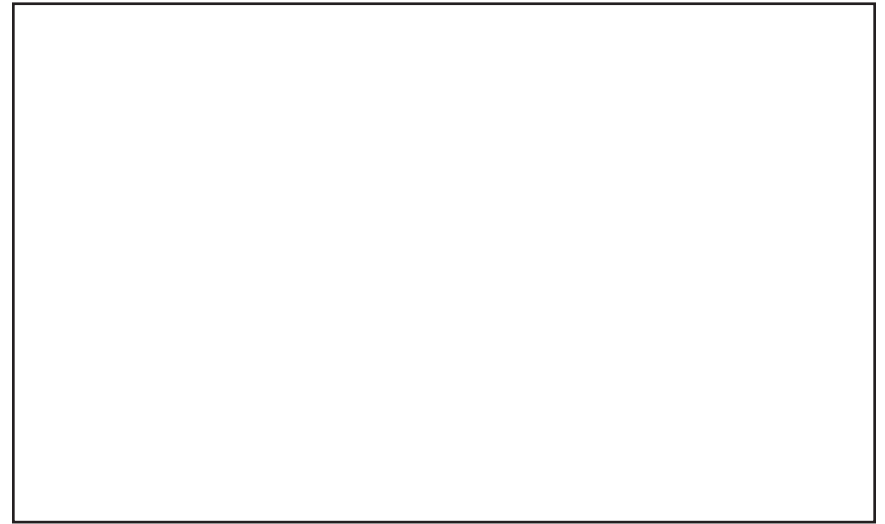
They analyze complex sentence structure and study rules of punctuation, developing their understanding of how language works piece by piece, as an architect would build, brick by brick, a beautiful temple of language. They also learn to appreciate other people's "temples" through critiques and discussions of literature.

Students in the Peace Academy spend time each day reading literature, from the classics, to modern authors, to novels that enrich the themes of our cultural studies. Encounters with many different authors help students learn what makes writing effective and useful, and gives them a palate of communication techniques and literary devices to try in their own writing. They also explore plot, character development and themes of literature, as well as get practice in reading comprehension through the SRA program.

Students gain experience communicating their views and imaginations in a variety of writing experiences. Writer's Workshop gives them a chance to choose and write on topics and in styles that interest them, and to experience the whole writing process, from conception, through editing and revising, to publication. Poetry reading and writing develop even more options for how to express oneself. Students in the Peace Academy also write pieces for the school bulletin about class and school wide events. Students in the Peace Academy also connect their writing skills to other parts of the curriculum through their expository writing. They develop their research writing skills through cultural and science projects, learning important skills such as note taking, organizing their notes, and writing original material based on notes.

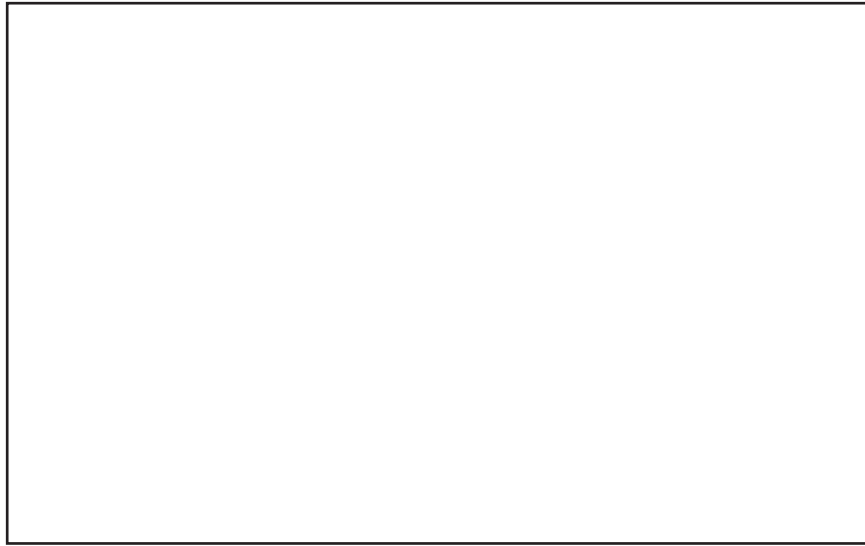
Mathematics

Maria Montessori found brilliant, eloquent, graceful ways to make clear the inner workings of math -- how division of fractions is really similar to multiplying, how pi can be discovered and expressed as an extension of the area of a rectangle. Students here at The Oneness-Family School get the whole world of Math. In the lower grades, students were introduced to concrete materials that taught them about the decimal system, place value, and multiplication and division. In the Peace Academy, these same materials come to their teaching fruition as ways to begin to understand mathematical



algorithms, algebraic equations, square and cube roots, fractions and decimals. They use concrete materials to get the concept, and then quickly jump to more abstract workings of the Pythagorean Theorem, areas and volumes of two and three-dimensional constructions, Euclid's laws, and pi. With the firm foundation given them in the Peace Garden and Arbor, they are able to transition from concrete operations to abstract concepts, all the while seeing the grace and perfection of math for its own sake.

The Peace Academy's mathematics curriculum also addresses the needs of the students to turn their focus towards the outer world. Opportunities abound where newly learned concepts are taken out and put to use. Data from recess games or special events are manipulated into graphs and pie charts, means and averages. Compass constructions help in the building of art or science projects. Fractions and decimals come into play during cooking lessons or doing the class business accounting. Weekly word problems keep students using their critical thinking and problem skills. Students also connect math to their cultural studies, learning the history of numbers and how other cultures and times have used, advanced, and appreciated the beauty of math.



Science (Natural World)

There is no substitute for the real thing in science; to truly understand a concept, a student must experience it for him or herself. In the Peace Academy, the science curriculum is designed to offer broad, experiential learning that helps the students connect to their world. At this age, it is important to give an overall view of many different branches of science, to plant seeds of future interest. Where the Peace Arbor child's main question might have been "What is it?", the main questions for Peace Academy students tend to shift towards "Why is it?" or "How does it...?" Students practice the scientific method, and are allowed to re-discover most scientific concepts, thus gaining essential processes for discovery and exploration that will continue to serve them as they take on an ever-changing world.

Topics in the science curriculum cover Biology, Physics, Chemistry and Earth Science and are often connected to cultural studies. During our studies of the theories of the creation of the Universe and our Earth, we might study Astronomy, Photosynthesis, Cells

and Microscopic Life, and the Layers of the Earth. When we study ancient civilizations, we look into the Domestication of Animals and Genetics, study Earthquakes and Volcanoes and how they affect civilizations, and investigate Simple Machines. During our studies of the Renaissance and the Age of Exploration, we might study Constellations and Navigation, Human Body Systems, the Physics of Sailing, or Electricity and Magnetism. This type of integrated curriculum helps the student connect new ideas to concepts already learned, and makes each subject relevant. Through seeing connections across the curriculum, students also come to better appreciate the interconnectedness and interdependence of life.

A wide selection of subjects are covered in a three year cycle, and include, but are not limited to: Matter and Molecules, Electricity and Magnetism, Vital Functions of Plants and Animals, Human Body Systems, Catastrophic Events in Nature, Characteristics of Sound and Light, Astronomy, Simple Machines, Introductory Genetics, and Human Body Chemistry. Instruction varies from whole class lessons and demonstrations, to individual experiments and projects. Students also take their learning out into the field for investigations in nature, and to connect with practicing scientists. Each year, students participate in a schoolwide Science Fair, giving them a chance to articulate their understanding of scientific methods and concepts.

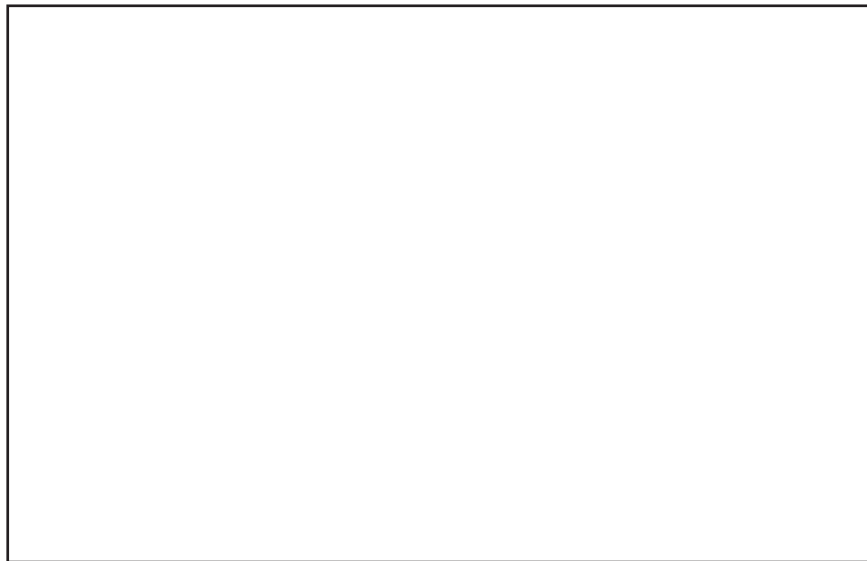
History & Geography (Social World)

Dr. Montessori once wrote that an essential principle in education is not to simply teach details, which bring confusion, but to establish the relationship between things, which brings knowledge. In the Peace Academy's History curriculum, our aim is to help students establish these relationships, between peoples, eras, cultures, religions, technologies and geographical areas. We also seek to help students to find relationships between themselves and the whole of human kind. All other subjects, indeed all the knowledge we have

today, can be traced through a shared heritage, our own history on this earth.

Students in the Peace Academy study human roots in a three-year cycle. They begin by reviewing the origins of the universe and our earth, and the coming of life to our planet. They explore theories of early human development and evolution. They study Ancient Civilizations with an emphasis on Early Civilizations around the World. And they also delve into understanding the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Age of Exploration. In the classroom, we seek to balance the curriculum by giving ample time to a global perspective, and include units on Australian, Asian and African Cultures as well as the European and American.

In-depth units include large-scale group projects, individual research, artistic and dramatic elements, and are integrated with all other areas of the curriculum as appropriate. Each cycle of learning culminates with a manifestation of the students' learning, which could be a trip, a presentation, a festival, or some other creative expression. In this way, students truly encounter and



experience history in an exciting and memorable way. They develop a firm foundation and understanding of how we humans got to where we are now, the mistakes we have made, the triumphs and transcendences we have accomplished. Throughout our program, we make a concerted effort to present as full an array of material as possible, and the means for finding the rest. In this way, students are prepared to take their rightful place as world citizens, as inquisitive history makers, as seekers of the truth.

Practical Life

Practical Life in the Peace Academy mirrors the emotional and intellectual development of the students. Whereas the work of the younger students was concentrated on gaining control of the outer environment, such as in pouring drinks or learning to tie one's shoes, the practical life work at this level focuses on inner control, taking responsibility, planning, coordinating, and connecting with society in positive ways. Students take more and more responsibility for the running of the classroom, learning to lead morning meetings, hold jobs such as librarian, and do school service such as trash pick-up, grounds beautification, or dismissal crew. They learn how to manage their own time and assignments and how to organize their work.

Through lessons and real-life practice, they learn proper phone etiquette, how to write letters to community and government representatives, and how to manage the public transportation system. As they gain confidence and skill in these areas, they are able to use what they have learned to plan, organize and implement many class projects, such as a student business, social action projects, school events, or student-planned overnight trips. They take on challenges of budgeting, inventory, menu planning and other important, real-life skills in this process. Because these projects are highly relevant to their age and interests, they work enthusiastically and tirelessly at perfecting skills they will be able to use for the rest of their lives.

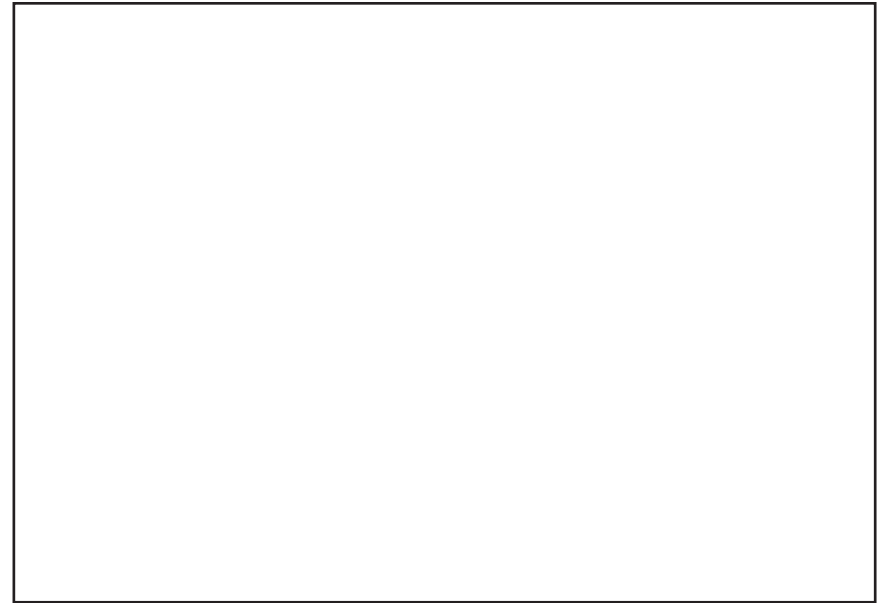
Foreign Languages

The study of another's language is a window into understanding that person's culture. French and Spanish studies in the Peace Academy are an effort to promote tolerance and understanding of cultural differences, as well as to foster a feeling of global unity. Our student body is diverse, with many students coming from overseas, and it is essential for us to honor and learn about each other's way of life. Language classes give the foundations of vocabulary and grammar of the language, as well as explore the music, food, cultural festivals and social mores of the culture through activities and dramatic presentations. In addition, students have participated in several service projects designed to further understand and connect with people in French- or Spanish-speaking countries such as Angola and El Salvador. In this way, they use their language skills to put into action their own ideals for a better world.

Field Trips

Peace Academy students often take their learning out into the world. Educational field trips may happen as often as once a week as part of the curriculum. These trips are carefully designed to enrich and supplement the classroom studies, to give students a chance to put their learning into action, and to help them interface with the larger community in a positive way.

Students practice skills in communicating with adults and professionals, investigate areas of particular interest, and do research while on trips. Sometimes they have the chance to work with scientists, ecologists, or other researchers as they work, giving the students a chance to experience the working world and professions that might possibly interest them. The students also help plan and implement some longer, overnight trips.



In the fall, the class does a ropes course trip as a venue for team building and personal transcendence. In the spring, the class plans a 4-5 day trip that is directly related to an area they have studied during the year. For example, when the students have been studying the Age of Exploration, they have gone on a sailing voyage that helped them understand experientially what it might have been like for early explorers. Or when the class has been studying early humans, they may take a trip during which they have to learn survival skills such as shelter building or tool making, or they might go on a fossil hunt. These trips are a culmination of the learning the students have done, and are some of the most memorable learning experiences Peace Academy students have.

Self-Discovery

Peace Academy students are able to understand and appreciate more complex, abstract ideas about themselves, their values, and the world. They are full of questions as they seek to understand the truth about life. They are great philosophers, and love to grapple with ethical and social dilemmas. They need answers, or at least the time to discuss and formulate their own. Pre-adolescence can be a time of great disillusionment, as the world becomes more and more complex and confusing, with competing messages in the media and in students' lives. But it can also be a time of great energy and hope, if students can feel empowered by their beliefs, their understanding of themselves, and the skills they develop to create the kind of world they want to live in as adults.

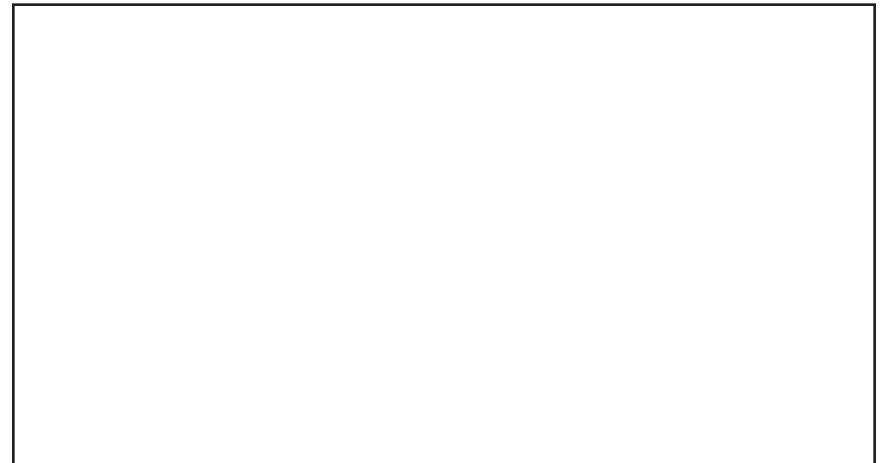
Self-Reflection

By the time the students reach the Peace Academy, they have become well versed in the art of honoring sacred space. Because of their developing ability to think abstractly, this special morning circle time takes on new and deeper meaning for them. They are able to use the time to explore and express their maturing belief systems and personal inner hearts. They may explore how they use the space at morning circle, designing centerpieces with candles or special items. They experiment with different ways to ring the chimes or bowls to get the most meaningful sounds to accompany their personal reflection time. As a class, we discuss the basics of meditation, how it is used around the world, and its known benefits as stress management and concentration tools. The students have opportunities to try a variety of non-religious meditation techniques.

During the school day, Peace Academy students also have time to write responses to guided questions in their "Personal World" journals. Personal World questions give the students time to reflect on

their own connections to current curriculum themes and to the units being studied. For example, during a unit on Human Body Systems, a Personal World question might ask students to write about the ways in which they take care of their body and the ways they could improve upon their self-care. Or in a unit on Explorers, students might be asked to imagine themselves transported back in time and reflect on what aspects of sailor's life during the 1600s would have been hardest for them to handle, and how they would have managed to transcend. They might also be asked how this knowledge could help them in their lives today.

Other experiences in and out of the classroom give students structured time to continue becoming more aware of their feelings, beliefs, and inner balance. Students often create art to inspire others or art objects to go on our sacred shelf or in the Peace Corner, a special place for quiet reflection. The class often chooses to listen to inspiring music to help them achieve their goals. Nature walks or journaling time outside also help students discover more about how they fit in the world, and the interconnectedness of all things. In the Peace Academy, these events are not separate from the academic curriculum, but serve to support and connect the learner to the learning, the student to his or her world.



Virtues & Values and Interpersonal Skills

Values and virtues, like other aspects of the self-discovery curriculum, are integrated into the school day and are not always separated from the rest of school life; indeed, many of the most powerful values lessons are to be found in the midst of class lessons, projects, lunches, or recesses throughout the day. However, there are also times devoted to the discussion, exploration, and implementation of virtues and values.

One of the most important times for this kind of work is during morning meeting. Students often bring up current events during this time that are fraught with ethical dilemmas that can be the jumping-off point for a deep philosophical discussion. Students have a chance to state their opinions, to check in with peers and adults about their beliefs, to hear another side of the argument to consider, and to problem-solve with their community.

School or class happenings are also a chance to discuss our classroom community values, guidelines and consequences. Students learn and practice conflict resolution skills and are often asked to help mediate conflicts among students in the younger grades. They do role-plays to practice appropriate behavior in challenging situations. They discuss the values and virtues displayed in movies, music and literature. They read real-life stories to one another (such as the “Chicken Soup” series, or hero biographies) and write their own. When a conflict arises in class, it is often the students themselves that, using guidelines they have created, problem-solve and deal with the conflict. It is the balance between abstract discussion and real-life implementation that gives students in the Peace Academy a strong foundation of their own values, and an understanding of virtues toward which they can aspire.

Performing Arts

(Drama, Music, Dance)

Peace Academy students incorporate the performing arts into all areas of the curriculum. Whether role playing a situation for conflict resolution practice, doing a skit that shows their understanding of life in the Middle Ages, or creating a song that will help them remember all the parts of the digestive system, students of this age use their creativity and imagination as an every day part of learning. In a sense, to really understand something, they need to do it and be it. So they dance like atoms, learning that when they are hot, they dance quickly and become a free-moving gas, and when they cool down, their dance almost stops, making them a solid. Or they spend a day as members of an Ancient Egyptian city to see if they have learned enough to survive there. Peace Academy students often perform for other classes at community meetings, or for each other when they present what they have learned about a subject. They also have the opportunity to join the OFS Drama Club or Peace Choir to hone their singing and acting skills.

Visual Arts

(Fine Arts, Crafts, Handicrafts)

In keeping with Gardiner’s theory of multiple intelligences, students in the Peace Academy are encouraged to explore their artistic intelligence as a part of their overall learning, as well as in a separate class. Students make presentations at the end of each cycle of work, alone or with a group, and these presentations often include artistic elements. For example, one group might make a poster depicting how fundamental needs are met for a person living in Thailand, or another group might make a full-sized sarcophagus complete with papier-mâché mummy inside to enhance their pres-

entation of how the ancient Egyptians dealt with death. Art supplies are readily available at any time during class for these projects. Students also learn and use arts and crafts for many practical purposes: as a stress management tool, learning finger knitting to help them calm down or concentrate during a discussion; as a means of service, making quilt squares that are sewn together to make a blanket for local homeless families; or even as a fund-raising effort, making dream-catchers and holiday cards to sell at school-wide events.

Peace Academy students also have a more formal art class once a week. During this time, they explore various media including charcoal drawing, watercolor painting, clay sculpture, mask and puppet making, and many handicrafts. They study artistic masters and their works, as well as folk arts from around the world.

Physical Education and Movement

Peace Academy students have Physical Education twice a week, and either Yoga or Chi Gong once a week. While the emphasis is still on self-transcendence and teamwork, students are gradually exposed to healthy competition and sportsmanship. The class is divided into skill building, fitness activities, and team sports components. Students also have time outside everyday to be physically active; the class decides on one or more games to play and everyone is encouraged and welcomed to participate.

Yoga and Chi Gong classes offer pre-adolescents important lessons on accepting and understanding their growing bodies, developing flexibility and balance, and nurturing concentration, self-awareness, and self-control. Students in the Peace Academy are also encouraged to take part in extra-curricular physical activities such as kayaking, soccer, basketball, dance, and outdoor education.

Manifestation

Manifestation is the crystallization of Academy and Self-Discovery where students bring together what they have learned about the world with the knowledge of their own talents, interests, and ideals. Performances, field projects, classroom displays, school fairs, and outreach programs are some of the many ways they use their skills, energy and insights. The students gain a sense of competence and achievement, and learn to see themselves as valuable contributors to the community.

Community Meeting

Friday mornings the entire school gathers together for songs, community games, class presentations, and seasonal celebrations. Parents are invited to join in the fun.

Field Trips

Hikes in Rock Creek Park, boat rides on the Potomac, trips to the Smithsonian, Baltimore Aquarium, and the Kennedy Center as well as excursions to other cultural sites of the Washington, D.C. region complement and manifest the yearly studies.

Festivals

School-wide festivals such as United Nations Day and our Winter Solstice Festival of Lights honor the different cultures and religions. In the spring, the children bring forth their appreciation of the earth at Earth Day and their studies of the physical world at the Science Fair.