

YEAR 8 CURRICULUM NEWSLETTER

Spring Term 2

This newsletter provides an overview of the curriculum your child will follow in different subjects this term. If your child has any concerns or questions, please encourage them to resolve them as quickly as possible by speaking to their Form Tutor or Subject Teachers. Parents are also invited to make an appointment to see Mr. MacRae if they wish to discuss any academic issues.

ART

Students explore super-heroes as a starting point for making imagery and collecting information which will build up and understanding of illustration for animation. Students will learn techniques in drawing the human form, 3D construction and creating simple sequences, designing for simple animated “finals”. They will have the opportunity to explore physical characteristics, personalities and stories that go to make up a super-hero. .

CLASSICS

Year 8 continue with their study of Latin and some aspects of Roman society. We begin with the third declension, then move on to the genitive case. Next are adverbs and then neuter nouns and adjectives. Finally we will consider the dative case. A Latin version of the siege of Troy will be studied, including the death of Hector. The fall of Troy will be taken from the Aeneid with Vergil’s hero Aeneas escaping and his subsequent adventures , particularly with Polyphemus and Dido.

DRAMA

In this second term Year 8 will further develop their improvisation work. They will develop further these techniques which include offering and accepting, developing a scenario, character and subsequent relationship and generally being confident enough to take risks on stage. Students will also be given the opportunity to watch themselves and others on film and to self and peer assess. The work will be varied and challenging, employing many theatre sports activities as well as more traditional approaches to developing ideas collaboratively. Later students will devise their own one act plays which will include fully developed characters.

As part of the Drama department’s commitment to cultural diversity these skills will be taught using varied stimuli. Students will be expected to take part in small and large group work, solo work, independent research and creative writing either in the classroom or at home.

Apart from the skills of drama, students will also begin to understand how important it is to collaborate and compromise in the creative process as well as gain the confidence and skills required for public speaking, an essential skill in the modern world.

ENGLISH

Teaching in this subject is generally delivered in mixed ability groups, in order to make the most of the different and varying skills and abilities all students bring to English. However, within a shared broad outline and standard of work, choices of text, topic and timing within the year are at the discretion of the class teacher. This means that different classes will often be learning about quite different aspects of English within any given term. The exception to the mixed ability groupings in YEAR 8 is one group covering the same broad outline, again with choices of text, topic and timing at the class teacher’s discretion, but with more specialist focus on EAL learners.

Students will begin by studying a range of language topics, varied according to class and teacher. Some will concentrate on animal poetry, including Ogden Nash and puzzle poetry, and focusing on sustained semantic field and metaphor. They will develop their ability to recognise and appreciate the way figurative language is employed for effect in a range of fiction and non-fiction short texts and extracts. Others will study a range of communication and information topics, and be encouraged to develop their questioning and research skills by looking at the language of newspapers and magazines and writing to inform, describe and comment. Others will examine the use of persuasive language in formal speeches,



using a variety of techniques to present their arguments in a clear and cohesive manner.

This term a number of students will study one of two Shakespeare comedies, either *Much Ado About Nothing* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The students will investigate Shakespeare's language, verse and characterisation and Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre. The unit will also seek to develop students' language skills and improve writing in a variety of genres for various audiences and purposes.

EAL

Year 8 EAL students will be developing their reading skills by exploring the 19th Century tales *Owl Creek Bridge and Other Stories* by Ambrose Bierce. Key teaching ideas in these lessons will include: the significance and familiar features of these stories and how language has changed over time. Students will be responding to these tales both visually, and in writing. Students will later focus on non-fiction, using *The English and Media Non-fiction Book* as a springboard for activities. They will also learn about drama through their study of *Paper Tigers* by Steve Barlow & Steve Skidmore finishing with a performance which will be videoed.

EAP

Year 8 pre-FCE learners will attend a further two periods per week of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) which focus on developing cross-curricular language skills. Lessons will focus on improving students' grammar including lessons on: active and passive sentences, simple and compound sentences, using conjunctions, and adverbs and adverbial phrases. Students will also be revising and learning new rules for spelling, capitalisation and punctuation. Six classes will be dedicated to timed-journal writing. In these lessons students will complete a number of creative writing assignments requiring them to write against the clock for 15 minutes, followed by 10 minutes self- and peer-editing.

FRENCH

Intermediate

The students will complete the remainder of the module "On va au restaurant".

They will then study the module "On va chez Galeries Lafayette". In this module, the students

will build up a large stock of new vocabulary associated with shopping, particularly in the context of clothes and fashion. They will revise colours and prices and learn about patterns, materials, sizes and national costumes in French speaking countries. They will learn how to purchase items and interact in a clothes shop. They will learn how to give a wide range of opinions and will have the opportunity to design a school uniform and sports kit. They will complete a web quest with an imaginary budget on the "Galeries Lafayette" website. Grammatically, they will focus on adjective agreement, the use of the superlative and some conditional forms.

Higher

Students will study the module "On va chez Galeries Lafayette". In this module, the students will build up a large stock of new vocabulary associated with shopping, particularly in the context of clothes and fashion. They will revise colours and prices and learn about patterns, materials and sizes. They will learn how to purchase items and interact in a clothes shop. They will learn how to give a wide range of opinions and will have the opportunity to design a school uniform and sports kit. They will complete a web quest with an imaginary budget on the "Galeries Lafayette" website. Grammatically, they will focus on adjective agreement, the use of the superlative and some conditional forms.

They will then study the module "On va au cinema". In this module, the students will build up a large stock of new vocabulary associated with genres of film and making plans to go to the cinema. They will learn to write a simple trailer for a film and will design publicity material. They will learn/revise their high numbers and practice how to buy tickets online and at the ticket office. They will complete a web quest on the cinema in France. Grammatically they will focus on the future tense.

GEOGRAPHY

This term Year 8 Geographers will begin the term studying Crime and understanding the different types of crime and its effects, they will go on to understand how geography can both affect and be used to prevent crime through the use of Geographical information systems, aerial maps and photographs to "design out" crime. They will then go on to follow units on global warming and energy where students will learn about environmental interaction, the concept that human and physical processes are interrelated. This will be done



through Geographical enquiry, use of maps and geographical data and geographical communication where students will be encouraged to share their knowledge and learning through a number of activities.

HISTORY

This term, Year 8 will begin a study of the growth of the British Empire. Students will study the factors that contributed to the Empire's growth and how this affected people and societies in Africa and Asia with whom the British came into contact. The issue of slavery will be studied; so too the situation of ordinary Britons at home and how they adapted and reacted to the changing socio-economic conditions within "the First Industrial Nation."

Year 8 will reference a number of texts, DVDs, powerpoints and websites to facilitate their learning in all the topics studied this academic year 2009 / 2010.

ICT

Year 8 will spend time during this term developing skills in control, spreadsheets and will continue to use the VLE and develop e-portfolios. The focus in the spreadsheet study will be on using web queries and integrating charts into public information systems. In control they will use the OLPC software "Scratch" to create games and learn action orientated programming. For more information see <http://vle.harrowbeijing.cn/course/view.php?id=57>.

MANDARIN

In Term 2 of 2009/10, Year 8 Mandarin will cover three key areas of topics: my school life; my hobby; and the most discussed topic – weather!! Students will be fully skilled with introducing their school subjects, day to day school life; expressing the various weathers in four language skills: listening; speaking; reading and writing. To ensure these targets are met, not only will language based regular dictations and unit tests be conducted, but also opportunities to link classroom knowledge with real life scenarios, e.g. celebrating the 2010 Chinese New Year in school.

For advanced Mandarin students, to ensure their language skills are fully consolidated to the required level, Chinese literature learning has become an interesting new aspect. Focusing on school life and hobbies, literature works, e.g. "敬业与乐业 (jing ye yu le ye)" by "Liang Qi Chao" and

"云南歌会 (yun nan ge hui)" by "Shen Cong Wen" will be offered.

Learning resources will be carefully selected from well-known text books, e.g. Happy Chinese; Chinese Made Easy; Yu Wen (Chinese State School text books) and multi-media resources, etc. All teaching materials will be uploaded onto VLE <http://vle.harrowbeijing.cn> for revision and future reference. Students are most fortunate to be living in an environment where Chinese culture and language are easily accessible. By making the most of life from the inside and outside of the classroom, students can share with the family of the Chinese traditions that they come across in school.

MATHEMATICS

Many of the following topics have related links and support materials on the HISB VLE. The website is simple (students have been trained) to use and it links directly with Chapters from the textbook.

The core text used will be the 8A STP text.

Fractions and Percentages	One quantity as a fraction or percentage of another Interchanging fractions, decimals and percentages Percentage increase and decrease	Chapter 4 Pg 63 - 87
Ratio	Comparing sizes of quantities Simplifying ratios Ratios as fractions Using ratios to find unknown quantities Division in a given ration Map ratios Direct proportion	Chapter 5 Pg 88 - 104
Formulae	Constructing formulae Using brackets Using directed numbers Substitution into formulae Finding the nth term Using a spreadsheet to generate sequences	Chapter 10 Pg184 - 201
Half Term		
Linear Equations	Forming and solving linear equations involving brackets Multiplication and division of algebraic fractions Solving equations involving brackets Forming and solving linear inequalities	Chapter 12 Pg 232 - 255
Straight Line Graphs	Equation of a line through the origin Plotting a line from its equation Gradient of a straight line Equations of lines not passing through the origin $Y = mx + C$ Intersecting lines	Chapter 13 Pg 256 - 277



	Using online software Lines parallel to the axes Drawing conversion graphs	
Curved Graphs	Drawing a line through given points Constructing a table from a formula Equation of a curve Shapes of curves with equations of the form: $y = ax^2 + bx + c$	Chapter 14 Pg 278 - 289

MUSIC

Year 8 are going to look at a project based on improvisation and the importance of improvisation as a tool for composing. Year 8 will learn that improvisation is a feature within a range of musical traditions, styles and genres. We will specifically look at the music of Africa and drumming, Chinese music, Indian classical music and Blues music.

The project will end with a fusion of these styles and students performing in a class concert demonstrating their improvisatory skills.

Please encourage your child to listen to as many different styles of music as possible.

PE

Students follow a prescribed syllabus. The course develops a student's physical competence and confidence, and his/her ability to use these to perform in a range of activities. It provides opportunities for students to be creative, competitive and to overcome different challenges, both as individuals and as part of a team. It promotes positive attitudes towards leading and understanding the pursuit of an active and healthy lifestyle.

Year 8	Term 2
	Badminton Dance Swimming Basketball

SCIENCE

Students will start 2010 with an exam reviewing all the work covered in Term 1. All classes will then move on to study Chemistry in the topic 'Materials and Recycling', which includes an introduction to the periodic table and the ideas of elements and compounds. They will move on the Physics of forces and transport next, and then the Biology of microbes in the unit 'Doctors and Diseases'. The term ends with more Chemistry, considering the reactions of metals. Homework will be set every Monday and should take approximately half an hour to complete. Students are urged to begin the tasks on the night they are set so that they have time to ask for help if they find anything difficult. Talking about their Science lessons at home will help them to develop stronger communication skills and we encourage them to do this as much as possible. There is a wealth of support materials available on the VLE.

