

Sixth Grade Humanities

What is Humanities?

The Humanities program at Portland Jewish Academy integrates the themes and content of Social Studies within a strong Language Arts curriculum. The block period allows for the meaningful exploration of topics which in the sixth grade include world geography, human origins, and the development of culture and civilization. Special attention is given to the study of Mesopotamia, Ancient Egypt, and Ancient China. In addition, students are introduced to a wide variety of genres of literature, especially autobiography and memoir, the components of literary analysis, formal and informal modes of writing, and oral expression. Sixth grade Humanities is where students find their own voices and then look outside themselves to see the connections between past and present, between personal view and world view, between self and literature, between identity and writing, between individual and community.

Units of Study

- What Do We Know About Our World: Global Literacy & Themes of Geography
- What Makes Us Human: Early Humans, Evolution & the Quest to Know More
- How Do Humans Connect & Develop: Culture Studies & the Origins of Civilization (Mesopotamia)
- How Do Human Interactions Change & Progress: Ancient Egypt & Ancient China

Literature

- Autobiography and Memoirs (excerpts)
- *Inherit the Wind* by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
- Poetry Collection
- *Ties That Bind, Ties That Break* by Lensey Namioka

Writing

- Writers Workshop
- Peer editing and review
- Four modes of writing

Special Projects

- Imaginative Autobiography: Past, Present, Future YOU!
- Independent Reading Projects
 - "In Character" Book Talk
 - NY Times Inspired Book Review
- Cultural Encounters Book Club
- River Research Cereal Box Project
- Cave Painting Short Story
- Trip Up the Nile Simulation
- Compare/Contrast Essay (Dystopian novels)
- Create Your Own Civilization

Year Long Activities

- Weekend Update (promoting writing fluency through journaling)
- Troubleshooting on Tuesday (developing strong editing and grammar skills)
- O-WOW! Outstanding Writing on Wednesdays (identifying the qualities of good writing)
- Staying Current on Thursdays (discussing current events)
- Alphabiography
- Independent Reading
- Study, Organization, and Time Management Skills

Parents can access our class website at: pjahumanities6.wikispaces.com