

YBH

Curriculum Update from Mrs. Natalie Lichtman November 4, 2014

YBH provides students in both our girls and boys divisions with an engaging and rigorous general studies program. We provide a well rounded curriculum that ensures that students acquire the literacy, math and content area skills and knowledge needed to become critical thinkers and autonomous learners. Our teachers differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the children in our classrooms. They employ a repertoire of strategies in daily instruction to ensure that every child progresses in his learning. Learning targets are established through a variety of assessments and also informed by curriculum standards established at each grade level.

Students at YBH receive intensive daily instruction in all aspects of literacy, beginning with the acquisition of foundational skills in decoding; the development of oral and written language skills needed for effective communication, comprehension of a variety of texts, with an increasing focus on constructing meaning from informational text. Teachers model and inspire a love of reading for their students through shared read alouds and through deep analysis of engaging classroom novels. In addition, all elementary grades are stocked with leveled libraries so that every child has access to quality fiction and nonfiction reading material at his/ her "just right" reading level. In our Middle School, students explore a variety of literary genres in order to deepen their understanding of text, build critical thinking skills and vocabulary. They write for multiple purposes including to express and support opinions, respond to literature and create original narratives.

Math instruction at YBH focuses on building a solid understanding of number concepts and automaticity of basic number operations at the early grades. Students solve real life and increasingly more complex math problems using a variety of strategies and algorithms as they move through the grades. Students learn to represent problems using concrete manipulatives, pictures and abstract symbols. As students move into the middle school, they perform operations and solve problems with decimals, fractions and integers. They solve algebraic equations requiring multiple steps; explore geometric constructs and delve into concepts related to graphing data. Our Middle School math program facilitates a smooth transition for YBH students into high school math classes.

Our elementary school classes also devote significant classroom time for investigations into the content areas of Science and Social Studies. Under the leadership and guidance of our Science coordinator, all classes conduct in depth investigations into two topics each year. This allows for a more intensive study of each area with a focus on questioning, hands on experiential learning and expansion of content specific knowledge. Our Science program aligns with the principles of the Next Generation Science Standards. In Middle School, our students delve into Earth Science, Biology and an innovative STEM curriculum in partnership with the Center for Initiatives in Jewish Education.

Our Social Studies curriculum provides a rich opportunity for students to read and discuss informational text about communities, our government and the history of our nation, with particular emphasis on geography, economics and civics. As students move through the grades, they acquire a deep understanding of the events that led to the establishment of our country, culminating in a three year Middle School curriculum that leads students through a parallel course of study of Jewish and World History. Our “seniors” participate in a year long intensive study of the Holocaust and in founding of the State of Israel. Through classroom discussions, speakers and trips, our students deepen their understanding of these events.

The General Studies program is enhanced by several co-curricular programs, including art, instrumental and choral music and physical education.

Students graduating from YBH are well prepared for the intellectual challenges and academic requirements for high school. More importantly, they have acquired the skills as “learners” regardless where their future classrooms may be. They learn to face challenge with resilience and optimism and success with humility. We are proud of our graduates who are sought after by high schools throughout the metropolitan NY and NJ areas.