



# Odyssey

Living History Education For Young Explorers  
A Focus Option Program of Portland Public Schools

**Learn about the**

## **678 Cluster Curriculum Overview**

All Odyssey students are supported to successfully complete their History, Science, Language Arts, Literature and Art studies, which include many exciting writing, research, simulation and field study activities.

Odyssey students are provided with a rich historical context for their learning. At the beginning of the school year, students form teaming groups and work hard to prepare their **teams** for the great adventure of becoming the real people of their historical time period by **simulating** their real-life experiences. In team-based History study, teams read historical sources, working cooperatively to respond to the history reading and **writing focus** questions. A team writing focus may take more than one class session to finish, as teams work at different paces. Cluster teachers conference with each team, helping the students to arrive at meaningful and complete responses to the questions. Teams finish any **incomplete** responses and are re-evaluated by the teacher, thus ending the team cycle for that writing focus. At the end of each unit of study, a cluster teacher helps each team complete a review of the essential concepts studied. Then every team member individually completes a History **post test**.

At the end of each unit of study, the typical cluster schedule, in place from the beginning of the year, is flexed to include time necessary for the **culminating activities** of that unit of study. During these last weeks of the Unit, students complete the remaining enrichment

activities for this period, celebrating the culmination of their unit studies with a mid-year performance piece. Students present this program to the entire Odyssey Community.

Student teams study two or three **integrated units** each year, developed around an historical theme. Units culminate in **performance**-based activities in winter and an extended **field study** trip in late spring. Students explore the following themes:

- Change and Continuity in American Democracy: Ideas, Institutions, Practices, and Controversies
- Contact and Interaction of Peoples, Cultures, and Ideas
- Economic and Technological Changes and Their Impact on Man, Culture, Ideas, and the Environment
- The Changing Role of America in the World

### **678 Cycle of Units**

#### **Year One**

##### **History Units:**

- Early Civilizations of the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Americas
- Ancient Civilizations of Greece and Rome
- Medieval Feudal Societies / Renaissance, Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution
- The Age of Exploration / American Empires

**Field Study:** Archaeology, geology and

astronomy study in Central Oregon, including John Day Fossil Beds and Lava Lands

**Performance:** “Troy, the Musical”: a whimsical re-telling of Homer’s “The Iliad”

**Special Event:** Greco-Roman Festival, highlighting projects prepared by every 678 team, Greek dancing, and Greek food

## **Year Two**

### **History Units:**

- European Imperialism in the Americas
- The Age of Enlightenment and Revolution
- The New Nation Defends Itself / Jefferson and Westward Exploration

**Field Study:** Ecology study at the Oregon Caves, Crater Lake, Redwood Forest (CA), and Ashland

**Performance:** Shakespeare’s “Twelfth Night”

**Special Event:** Renaissance Guild Fair

## **Year Three**

### **History Units:**

- Manifest Destiny / Westward Expansion
- The Civil War and Reconstruction
- The Making of Modern America

**Field Study:** Marine biology at the Oregon Coast, including the Newport Aquarium, Mark Hatfield Marine Science Center, and whale watching

**Performance:** “Little Women” and “Showtime on the Showboat”, depicting life in both the North and South during the Civil War

**Special Event:** Inventor’s Fair

## **678 Homework Expectations**

Students at this level are expected to benefit from homework. Sixty to seventy minutes of effort daily, Monday through Friday, is considered appropriate. Students at this level may also need scaffolding and students may need occasional parent assistance, although this should not be a regular need.