

WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CURRICULUM GUIDE

FOR

THIRD GRADE



MAMARONECK AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents,

We want your child to enjoy coming to school each and every day. Making your child's classroom environment a pleasant one, filled with rich experiences, interesting projects, a challenging curriculum and lasting friendships is our goal. In order to accomplish this task, we feel it is particularly important to develop and maintain a strong bond with you. We will make every effort to let you be the first to know whether your child is enjoying school, when your child needs special attention in a specific subject, or if we have a concern about your child's peer relationships. Our commitment to your child is genuine and we believe the interaction between home and school is essential to your child's academic success.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and involvement. We look forward to getting to know you and working together in the best interest of your child.

Sincerely,

The Third Grade Teachers



THIRD GRADE SUPPLY LIST

It would be helpful if your child brings the following items to school (please label with child's name):

- 1 box of sharpened #2 pencils
- crayons or markers
- ruler – metric and standard
- scissors
- 2 composition books – black and white, not spiral
- 2 glue sticks
- an old shirt for art
- 1 box of tissues
- pocket folder

Some teachers might request a few additional items.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Elements of the language arts strand of the curriculum are woven into everything we do in third grade. We focus on developing skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

READING

The third grade uses a variety of genres: short and long narrative fiction, non-fiction, folktales, expository text and poetry. This includes many formats, such as short stories, chapter books, articles, content area reading (social studies and science), poems, etc. We strive to familiarize our students with the characteristics of each type of writing, so that they will be able to approach their reading with the appropriate comprehension strategies. Each teacher will give an overview of the books used in that class at the parent meetings in the fall. Your child's reading and writing experiences will emphasize developing these skills:

- Acquisition of comprehension strategies
- Ability to recognize genre, main idea, details, characters, setting, plot and sequence
- Communication of ideas orally and in writing
- Utilization of *Making Words* technique

WRITING

Writing is integrated in every area of the curriculum. The Teachers College Writers Workshop model is used throughout the district. The following units are covered in third grade: Personal Narrative, Expository Writing, Test/Genre Study, Persuasive Writing, Poetry, Content Area Writing

Skills include:

- Writing complete sentence
- Writing paragraphs with main idea, three supporting details, closing sentence
- Writing to describe, explain and persuade
- Appropriate use of language
- Revising and editing skills
- Knowledge of grammar and writing mechanics

HANDWRITING

Cursive writing is taught systematically through motor patterns and practiced throughout the year.

SPELLING

The third grade spelling program will familiarize children with sound/symbol and structural characteristics of English.

ASSESSMENTS

- New York State English Language Arts Test in January
- Informal reading inventories
- Classroom observation and discussion
- DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) is used selectively

MATHEMATICS

The third graders are using the TERC Curriculum (The Investigations Curriculum from **T**echnical **E**ducation **R**esearch **C**enters). The focus is on:

- Math concepts and related vocabulary
- Developing problem solving strategies
- Explaining mathematical thinking through writing
- Estimation/approximation
- Computation skills

Third graders review and learn addition, subtraction with renaming, multiplication, division, telling time, place value, money, measuring in customary and metric systems, fractions, decimals as they relate to money, geometry and graphs.

ASSESSMENTS

- Classroom tests
- Informal assessments
- Teacher observation
- New York State Math Test

SOCIAL STUDIES

In the third grade social studies program, students explore communities around the world. Communities are studied using five perspectives:

- Social/cultural
- Political
- Economic
- Geographic
- Historic

The communities selected for study represent the diversity of the world's cultures. Skill development is an integral part of the social studies program.

The skills the children will be developing are grouped into the following categories:

- Gathering and using information
- Participation in interpersonal and group relations
- Current events
- Interpreting maps, globes, charts
- Experiential activities – learning about cultures through holiday celebrations

ASSESSMENTS

- Vocabulary tests
- Short-response questions
- Research reports

SCIENCE

The students will continue to explore science in a hands-on atmosphere. They will work in cooperative groups. The key concepts are:

- Systems (solar systems, human body, soil)
- Properties
- Adaptations
- Food chains
- Metric Measurement
- Classification
- Habitats (Rainforests)
- Life cycles

ASSESSMENTS

- Informal observations
- Experiment reports
- Research reports

SPECIAL AREA AND SUPPORT SERVICES

THIRD GRADE ART CURRICULUM

Third grade students receive art twice each cycle. Additional elements and principles of art are introduced, such as form, space and variety. Skills learned in prior grades are reinforced. Students create a wide variety of projects that encourage creative interpretation and expressions. Understanding of the visual arts in relations to history, cultures, and communities is developed. Children

choose and evaluate a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas. Greater responsibility of art materials is expected. Adaptations are made for students with special needs.

THIRD GRADE LIBRARY MEDIA CURRICULUM

Each class is scheduled for instructional time in the library every cycle. Library skills are presented within the context of the current classroom curriculum, with an emphasis on resources available in the Media Center, including both print and non-print sources. Students continue to select reading materials on an appropriate level.

THIRD GRADE MUSIC SERVICES AND GOALS

All third grade children receive two periods of music each cycle taught by the music specialist in the music room. Each period is forty minutes long.

Goals:

- To continue to develop a singing voice
- Sing alone and with others a variety of songs from many cultures
- Play more complex rhythm and melodic patterns
- Listen to and describe music in terms of dynamics (loud, soft, getting louder, getting softer), tempo (fast, slow, getting faster, slower), style, mood (why a piece creates a feeling), tone color, melody, harmony
- Compose and improvise simple melodies and simple instrumental accompaniments
- Move expressively to a piece of music
- Recognize and read note patterns using so-mi, so-la, mi-re-do, so-la, so-fa-mi-re-do, the octave do-do
- Recognize and read rhythmic patterns with half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth and whole notes
- Understand music's place in history
- Evaluate music and musical performances

THIRD GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND GOALS

All third grade students at MAS receive two 40-minute period of physical education per cycle. The physical education staff teaches these classes in the gymnasium.

Goals:

Students will have the necessary knowledge and skills to establish and maintain physical fitness, participate in physical activity and maintain personal health

- Participate in physical activities (games, sports, exercises) that provide conditioning for each fitness area
- Develop fitness skills through regular practice, effort and perseverance
- Demonstrate mastery of fundamental motor, non-locomotor and manipulative skills, and understand fundamental principles of movement

- Understand the effects of activity on the body, the risks associated with inactivity and the basic components of health-related fitness (cardiovascular, muscle endurance, flexibility and body composition)
- Demonstrate and assess their fitness by performing exercises or activities related to each health-related fitness component and establish personal goals to improve their fitness
- Understand the relationship between physical activity and individual well being

Students will acquire the knowledge and ability necessary to create and maintain a safe and healthy environment.

- Contribute to a safe and healthy environment by observing safe conditions for games, recreation and outdoor activities
- Come to know and practice appropriate participant and spectator behaviors to produce a safe and positive environment
- Work constructively with others to accomplish a variety of goals and tasks
- Know how injuries from physical activity can be prevented or treated
- Demonstrate care consideration and respect of self and others during physical activity

Students will understand and be able to manage their personal and community resources.

- Know that resources available at home and in the community offer opportunities to participate in and enjoy a variety of physical activities in their leisure time
- Become discriminating consumers of fitness information, fitness and sports equipment and health-related fitness activities in their communities
- Demonstrate the ability to apply the decision making process to physical activity

LEARNING STRATEGIES PROGRAM

In third grade the learning facilitator team-teaches with the multisensory classroom teacher during the literacy block. The students are organized into reading groups and the teacher and learning facilitator alternate groups each week. At this time the learning facilitator supports the grade level reading program.

If any of the children require extra support, the learning facilitator provides tutorials approximately three times in a six-day cycle. Those students who need additional help in reading are taken for tutorials. The focus of the tutorial session is to increase accuracy (labeling the letters or words with the appropriate pronunciation), fluency (reading rate), reading with expression and the learning of comprehension strategies. Parents will be notified if their children are receiving extra help.

E.S.O.L. (ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES)

All E.S.O.L. students, kindergarten through fifth grade, are aiming to acquire the English language as quickly and proficiently as possible. E.S.O.L. teachers co-teach with classroom teachers to provide extra support. In addition, E.S.O.L. students receive small group instruction to enhance their English language skills. All instruction and work is carefully aligned with the standards to better assist and prepare the students for the challenging New York State testing. Incorporating listening, speaking, reading and writing in English, E.S.O.L. students master English through content based instruction and thematic units.

READING SUPPORT SERVICES

Students attend reading each day with small instructional groups. During this time students engage in the multiple methods of reading and literacy learning to improve and develop their skills which include:

- *Guided reading* with focused mini-lessons which teach specific strategies and self-monitoring skills needed for successful reading.
- *Writing* for a variety of purposes and audiences including reflective writing, understanding of text and writing in correlation with the state standards and state testing preparation.
- *Word work* develops a critical understanding of words and word parts using prefixes and suffixes found in multi-syllabic words.
- *Read Alouds* are used for analysis and understanding of text in order to develop critical thinking skills.
- *Literature circles* give students the opportunity to engage in meaningful literary discussions.

EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEACHERS

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES (A.I.S)

The purpose of the A.I.S. program is to provide small group instruction for third grade students who have been identified as “at risk of not meeting grade level standards in math and/or reading.” Students who are at risk are identified at the beginning of the year through classroom and district assessments. After the students are identified they work with an Early Childhood Instructional Support specialist in the afternoon. They are given small group instruction depending on their needs. The goal of this program is to offer more individualized instruction and additional practice with grade level concepts. Parents will be notified if their children will be receiving extra help.