



Curriculum Information
Mr. Huyck's Third Grade 2021-2022



Dear Parents/guardians,

Welcome to Third Grade! I trust you will find the following curriculum information to be quite helpful as we enter this exciting and productive time in your third grader's educational journey.

The following is an overview of our third grade curriculum. At Curriculum Night, feel free to ask additional questions that may not be covered here or that you remain curious about.

Mathematics (Everyday Mathematics): Our mathematics curriculum is Everyday Mathematics (EM). We have been using EM since 1998. For several years now we've been using the updated Common Core State Standards (CCSS) edition.

EM provides excellent structure and covers a wide variety of concepts, providing teachers and students a variety of stimulating & productive activities. Much reasoning and deeper levels of thinking take place. EM also provides flexibility and support to help challenge and redirect lessons if your child needs a little extra challenge, or maybe feels a little too challenged. We also play engaging games that help us learn in interesting ways.

Here are some of the math items and concepts that EM encompasses: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division (facts and large numbers), patterns, relationships, functions, geometry, measurement (temperature, liquid volume, linear), data analysis, statistics, number sense, numeration, and operations and their properties.

Our mathematics curriculum is outcome-driven. Meaning that the teacher seeks to observe each student reach a level 3 (secure) on all outcomes. Some outcomes can be quite challenging, so it is also common for many children to be working at developing levels (1 or 2) on various outcomes. Hopefully, by the end of the year, students will be at the "3" level in all outcomes.

Throughout the year we will also focus on basic math facts (addition, subtraction, multiplication, & division). Emphasis is placed upon using and naming effective strategies to help solve basic facts, working towards quick recall and memorization. New facts are continually added as old facts are learned. The overall goal is to solve facts quickly (within one to three seconds). Students use strategies as needed, working towards automaticity/memorization.

In our class math is learned through:

- Activities
- Games
- Facts lessons, discussion, and practice (with partners, small groups, and via homework expectations)
- Whole group and small group instruction
- Hands-on learning using a variety of tools
- Integration of mathematics through other subject areas, and support from other, supplemental activity sheets.
- Use of computer apps and activities (DreamBox)

Language Arts: Language Arts encompass reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Our Language Arts curriculum is also an outcome-driven curriculum in that the teacher seeks to observe each student reach a level 3 on all outcomes. Keep in mind though that children learn at different rates, thus they will reach these goals or outcomes at different times.

The teaching and learning of Language Arts is accomplished through a variety of forms and evaluated and recorded through a variety of assessments. Since children's learning needs vary, the strategies used will vary as well, thus requiring a balanced approach.

Some of the Strategies used (and some thoughts):

Reading (genre study): Reading Workshop involves developing reading strategies/activities and, among other activities, it is a time when flexible & strategic groupings take place. Children are guided in their reading and the groupings are flexible. The groupings can be formed in a variety of ways and for various purposes. They can be connected to performance, abilities, or various needs derived from observations and assessments. Teachers can work with students in ways that keeps their levels and needs in mind. The groups are flexible so that children can move to different groups as they grow and develop, or as particular skills dictate. For example, the teacher might form a group around teaching the skill of attending to punctuation while reading.

Other parts of our reading instruction involve Independent Reading (I.R.), reading responses, large group and small group lessons (such as Interactive read alouds), sharing through small groups, and Book Talks. A big focus is placed upon learning about and reading from a variety of genres, primarily nonfiction.

Oral reading and modeling of books (read alouds) by the teacher and shared reading will be utilized as well. This will take place both for fun and as a learning tool.

Much reading also takes place through all of our subject areas. For example, we often learn about our various math concepts and skills by reading about them in our *Student Reference Books* (The SRB is a wonderful resource).

Writing (genre study): Writing primarily takes place during our Writing Workshop period. Our main writing focus is learning about various genres, primarily nonfiction genres. We plan to study the basic mechanics of writing, personal narratives, informational writing (feature articles), opinion writing (persuasive essays), and friendly letters.

Our writing involves guided and independent writing and process writing (learning about prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, sharing, and publishing). Almost daily we are involved in a "Writer's Choice" or I.W. (Independent Writing).

Word Study/Spelling (Words Their Way): We will study words in a variety of ways this year. In addition to learning how to spell words, we will study vocabulary words, key words, high-frequency words, common spelling patterns and rules, words from the students' own writings, challenge words, and learn the definitions of a variety of words. We use a curriculum called *Words Their Way*.

The concept of spelling is communicated as one of several tools that allows us to more effectively communicate through our writings and to help the messages of our writings be clearer to others. We want our readers to understand our messages.

Science (Science Companion, PLTW, Phenomenal Science): We use the *Phenomenal Science* curriculum for our units of study. We have two units connected to biology (*No Place Like Home* and *Stick to It*). We learn about many concepts, such as: organisms, habitats, how organisms survive, life cycles, traits & characteristics, how animals live & survive in groups, and more. We also study weather, climate, and temperature in our unit called: *Wild, Wacky Weather*.

In addition, Mr. Moger will attend our class for about six weeks to lead us through *Project Lead the Way* (PLTW). I will be present for additional support/teaching. We will learn about stability & motion (simple & compound machines), magnetic interactions, and programming patterns (we've explored with *Scratch* in the past). Our *Let's Move It* (force & motion) unit will be primarily covered during PLTW. More information and timing will be available as our year unfolds.

Strategies used:

- Whole and small group instruction and activities
- Hands-on learning
- Integration of science throughout the curriculum

Social Studies/Health/Behavioral & Social Skills: We learn about geography and the geography of Michigan. We also learn a little bit of Michigan's history, as we study early Michigan, the early people of Michigan, the logging industry, and more. Our World Language component is Mandarin Chinese (one hour per week).

In addition, we seek to work on social and behavioral skills/character building. We discuss and learn about *The 18 Life Skills* such as: *flexibility, perseverance, curiosity, responsibility, and 14 more*. These are skills necessary for successful, effective, and healthy lives. We also discuss bullying versus common conflict.

In health we learn about taking care of ourselves and solving conflicts. We squeeze the teaching of these items in and around our science units and during our class meetings.

Thank you in advance for your support this school year. I look forward to working with you and your child this year.

Sincerely,

Mr. Huyck