

Lower School Course Outline 3rd Grade

Subject: Language Arts



Introduction

Literacy in third grade encompasses reading, writing, and oral communication. Students are expected to respect one another's voices, become more articulate speakers and writers, and read for comprehension. They are encouraged to develop a love of words and the power they have to express ideas.

Content:

Oral Communication:

Students gain practice in becoming more confident and apt speakers through ongoing shared oral presentations and discussions. They practice using appropriate tone and volume when speaking, acquire and use new vocabulary, and contribute relevant information to class discussions.

Reading:

Students read and interpret various types of literature representing both unique and universal human experiences. They make text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections to deepen understanding. Students are guided to draw their own conclusions, make inferences and predictions, and set a purpose for their reading. Students also identify elements of a story. Students also study a selection of content-based vocabulary words that they then begin to use in their own writing.

Writing:

Through a writing workshop structure, students learn that writing is a multi-step process. They learn to generate ideas through brainstorming and free-writing, write rough drafts, revise, edit, and publish their fiction and non-fiction pieces. Students learn to construct a simple paragraph (topic sentence, supporting sentences, and conclusion) for expository writing. They apply, with increasing accuracy, conventional spelling, punctuation, and rules of grammar. Students will increase use and understanding of tenses, irregular verbs, sentence structure, prefixes, suffixes, roots, contractions, superlatives, and comparatives. Students receive instruction and practice for cursive letter formation. After students' spelling stages are determined, spelling instruction is at their individual level. Students extend their word knowledge through the study of sophisticated sound and pattern relationships in polysyllabic words.

Materials:

Trade books, periodicals, literary anthologies, newspaper articles, graphic organizers, journals, dictionaries, thesauri, Rebecca Sitton's spelling list of high frequency words, *Word Journey* spelling lists are some of the material in use.

Evaluation Process:

Formal and informal assessment tools will be used, including teacher observation, self-assessment, writings, student read-alouds, and performance assessments.

Lower School Course Outline

3rd Grade

Subject: Math

Introduction:

In third grade, students investigate increasingly sophisticated mathematical ideas. Students are encouraged to make sense of mathematical content and processes, with particular focus on the central themes of computational fluency, equivalence, and multiplicative reasoning.

Content:

Numeration:

Students deepen their understanding of place value and numbers through one-hundred thousand. Students compare and order positive and negative numbers, fractions, and decimals.

Operations and Computation:

Students understand the meanings of operations and develop efficient, flexible, and accurate computational strategies. Students develop computational-estimation strategies as a tool for judging the reasonableness of solutions.

Patterns, Functions, and Algebra:

Students describe, extend, and make generalizations about geometric and number patterns. Students analyze the structure of a pattern, organize this information, and develop generalizations about the mathematical relationships. Students use invented notation, standard symbols, and variables to express a pattern.

Geometry:

Students identify, compare, and analyze attributes of two- and three-dimensional shapes and develop vocabulary to describe the attributes. Students explore symmetry and congruence. Students make and use coordinate systems to specify locations and to describe paths.

Measurement:

Students understand such attributes as length, area, weight, volume, and the size of angles, and select the appropriate type of unit for measuring each attribute. Students develop strategies for estimating the perimeters, areas, and volumes of irregular shapes. Students become familiar with standard units in the customary and metric systems.

Data and Chance:

Students design investigations, collect data, and represent data using tables and graphs. Students propose and justify conclusions and predictions that are based on data.

Materials:

Everyday Math student journals, Student Reference Book, Study Links, tool kits, and other math manipulatives as needed comprise the list of materials.

Evaluation Process:

Formal and informal assessment tools include teacher observation, daily journal work, student self-assessment, and periodic progress checks in the *Everyday Math* program.

Lower School Course Outline

3rd Grade

Subject: Social Studies

Introduction

The overall theme of Social Studies exploration in third grade revolves around exploring community and culture. Studies are guided by essential questions:

- How do our *personal* actions affect the communities in which we live?
- In what ways are differences among people of value to a community/society?
- How does geography affect the development of culture?
- What are the links among communities?

Content/Skills

Delaware River Estuary & Map Skills:

In preparation for a sailing excursion on the tall ship A.J. Meerwald, students learn about the geography and ecosystem of the Delaware River Estuary. Students explore the purpose of maps and are able to describe physical characteristics of land forms and bodies of water.

Defining a Community:

Students identify the elements that make up a community and recognize their role in it. Students compare/contrast different communities and their members, and they explore the ways in which geography and climate influence the culture of a community.

Breaking Boundaries & Building Bridges:

Students recognize the United States as a multi-cultural society. Through literature, students examine diverse individuals who overcame obstacles and made great contributions to their community. Students discover the meaning and give examples of “stereotype” and discuss ways in which diversity makes communities stronger.

Pioneers & Westward Expansion:

Students study the pioneers who swept westward and founded new communities in the Midwest. They learn about the Lewis and Clark expedition and how important it was for the future of our country.

Our Nation’s Government:

Students explore the reasons why governments are necessary and see the Constitution as a flexible set of rules. They define democracy and identify various services provided by government. Students identify Washington D.C. as the seat of our nation’s government.

Materials:

Trade books, maps (road, state, world, topographical, climate), globes, atlas

Evaluation Process:

Formal and informal assessment tools will be used, including teacher observation, self-assessment, writings, student read-alouds, and performance assessments.

Lower School Course Outline

3rd Grade

Subject: Science

Introduction

Students are exposed to a variety of science concepts that give them the opportunity to think critically, collect and analyze data, and involve themselves in the scientific world. The main goal is that students become scientific thinkers, investigating the world around them.

Content:

Life Science:

The following life science units focus on animal adaptations, habitat threats, and habitat conservation:

Monarch Migration and Habitat
Oyster Habitat in the Delaware Estuary
Animal Habitats in different biomes

Physical Science:

The powders and crystals unit introduces students to the techniques scientists use to study unknown substances, a process called “chemical analysis”.

Earth Science:

Students investigate the plants and terrain of various animal habitats.

Health Science:

Students are taught lab safety. Students participate in one trimester of yoga classes.

Materials:

Trade books, laboratory equipment, household chemical substances, Delta’s *Powder & Crystal* kit, and materials to support living animals (such as aquaria, terrariums, and bug boxes) are in use.

Evaluation Process:

Formal and informal assessment tools include teacher observation, self-assessment, drawings, writing, and performance assessments.