

Red Pine Third Grade Expectations 2005-2006

Welcome to third grade! We are very excited to begin the year, and hope to make the transition a smooth one for you and your child. This handbook contains important information about the third grade curriculum, general procedures, discipline practices, and homework expectations. Please be sure to read your Red Pine calendar/handbook for school wide information.

Curriculum

Reading

It is as natural as breathing for children to love good stories... to learn from good stories... to be inspired by good stories. Authentic literature is used as a focus for all learning and teaching. The goal of our reading program is to help students become self-directed, strategic readers. These are readers who analyze, plan, make decisions, apply skills, monitor their understanding, and respond to and use ideas from their reading. The ideas generated through reading are catalysts for speaking, listening, and writing. Group discussions provide individuals with the opportunity to express and support their own ideas and to listen and respond to others' ideas. This is a balanced approach to teaching language arts. This approach takes into account the individual needs of each learner and is presented through fiction, poetry, and non-fiction literature selections.

We will be having Independent Reading time in school each day, and we ask that students always have a book or two with them so that they can make full use of this special time. Students will visit the library once a week, but are allowed to check books out at other times during the week. The children may also choose from a wide variety of genre in our classroom libraries. Rereading favorites is a great activity, but please make regular trips to the public library to keep the excitement in reading alive!

Children learn to read by reading, and it is important that we work together to support their growth in this area. Reading homework for third graders consists of 100 minutes (minimum) per week. This can be done as your schedule permits, and divided appropriately among reading to your child, reading along with your child, and independent reading by your child. Reading aloud can involve the whole family, and is a great way for children to enter the world of chapter books. Your family could also sit down for a "family reading time," where everyone reads what they would like. It is important for children to see that adults make time for reading, too! Watch for quarterly reading programs, which highlight different themes (weekly reading minutes), such as "Fall into Reading."

Writing

Our writing curriculum involves students in the creation of new ideas and as a communication tool. In order for students to become more effective writers, exploration and guidelines will be provided in each area of the writing process - prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading, publishing, and sharing. Students will learn to use capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure through assigned writing activities. Writing is a part of our balanced language arts program.

Handwriting

Manuscript writing will be used for daily assignments while cursive letters are being taught. We will use the Zaner-Bloser method to teach cursive writing. Our goal is to teach proper letter formation, placement, and spacing. As the students become more proficient, they will be required to do assignments using cursive writing.

Spelling

This year students will focus on mastering high frequency spelling words and selecting their own spelling words, which coincide with a weekly spelling principle/mini-lesson. Emphasis on this curriculum is placed upon helping your child to read and write with fluency, build a better vocabulary and write with spelling accuracy. Students will be tested weekly. Some spelling activities will be done in school, but the majority of the studying needs to happen at home. The weekly spelling schedule will vary according to your child's classroom teacher.

Math

Concepts:

Third grade uses the Scott Foresman and Investigations program for instruction. It is a comprehensive program focusing on the National Mathematical Standards with an emphasis in problem solving. It incorporates the use and development of language in the exploration and communication of mathematical concepts and reasoning. The learning of mathematics is an active process where skills are developed by building links between physical models and symbolic work.

Math facts:

Timed tests may be given occasionally during the year. Mastery of addition and subtraction facts is expected by the end of November, as we will concentrate on multiplication and division facts the remainder of the year. Students will need to develop immediate and accurate recall of multiplication facts. Students need to practice their facts at least 30 minutes per week at home. Additional time may be required for some students to reach this goal.

Science

The FOSS science curriculum is organized into kits filled with “hands-on” material relating to topics that engage the students in a problem solving approach of exploration, concept development, and application. These topics include Structures of Life, Magnetism and Electricity, Measurement and Earth Materials.

Social Studies

In third grade we explore the rich diversity of communities, present and past, in our national and global regions. The year’s topics may include the Ojibwe, colonial life, countries of origin, immigration, and Washington D.C.

Health

The third grade health program is composed of a variety of resources. The Harcourt Health text explores several health concepts from personal, family and social to community and environmental health. The specific topics covered are human body, emotional, intellectual, and social health, drug use prevention, injury prevention, and chemical and environmental health.

General Procedures

Cycle Days

Third graders will see a Specialist for physical education, music, art, computers, and library. Specialist schedules may vary according to teacher. Students will be going outside for Phy. Ed. when the weather permits, and should dress

appropriately. Please watch the weekly communication “Peek at the Week” to see what is happening daily.

Communication

Third graders will also have a daily Home Folder. Lunch money, homework, notes to the teachers, and notes to parents will be placed in this folder. Students will bring the Home Folder to and from school every day. Please develop the routine of going through the folder with your child on a daily basis.

Red Pine will be using Friday Folders this year. Any flyers (sports, community education, etc.), all-school notes, newsletters, and grade level notes will be sent home in the Friday Folder. These folders are due back on Monday.

Look for the “Peek at the Week” to come home in the Friday Folder. This form gives an overview of the special events for the upcoming week.

Birthdays

Birthdays will be celebrated in each classroom. Treats are optional. If you choose to send treats, please make sure the treat is purchased and not homemade. Birthday treats cannot be shared with anyone outside the classroom due to allergies. Mr. Anger encourages all students to stop by and get a birthday pencil. Thank you!

Homework Expectations

Homework is a consistent part of third grade. Each child is expected to practice the weekly assigned spelling words at home. Other homework will be coming home at the discretion of your child’s teacher. Please check the “Peek at the Week” for these assignments. Our goal is to help each student become a responsible learner. To achieve this goal, our expectation is that each assignment be completed within the given time frame. Student responsibility is assessed in third grade, and late assignments will be reflected on the report card.

Homework Requested Prior to Vacation

We have many families who plan and take vacations during the school year. When this happens, we appreciate being notified in advance; however, it is impossible to collect and prepare all the homework the child will miss.

We are taking the following position in regard to schoolwork missed due to vacation.

1. The work that is assigned on a regular basis or is in a workbook can be taken on vacation to be completed.
2. Other work missed will be completed upon the child's return. The teacher will collect and hold the materials for the student as it is prepared and used.
3. A daily journal should be prepared and turned in when the student returns to school.

Person of Intriguing Character

Each week a student in each class will be honored as the "P.I.C. of the Week." In doing so, we hope to allow each child a special time of individual attention in terms of getting to know that person better and what makes her/him unique.

A special poster and inventory will be sent home for you to fill out with your child. It will be used to share his/her background and feelings with the rest of the class. Pictures of family, pets, vacations, sports, and activities may also be shared. Please try to limit pictures to ten.

The "P.I.C. of the Week" will be a method of creating awareness of each individual and highlighting the aspects that make our class unique as a group. To keep the suspense high, we will be drawing names for the "P.I.C." a week or two in advance. However, if there are special dates that would be more convenient for your family, let your child's teacher know in advance so arrangements can be made.

Third Grade Behavior Plan

In order to guarantee your child, and all the students in our classrooms, the excellent learning climate they deserve, we are utilizing the following Behavior Plan. Please be sure to read your Red Pine calendar/handbook, which discusses school and district rules and policies.

Our Philosophy

We believe that all students can behave appropriately in the classroom. We will not allow any student to prevent us from teaching or any student to prevent another from learning. It is in your child's best interest that we work together to create a warm and caring atmosphere in which the rights of all are respected and taken into consideration. We also believe that no one plan is appropriate for all children. We recognize the need for modification of the plan for some students.

Our Classroom Rules

1. Listen and follow directions
2. Complete work on time
3. Use time wisely
4. Respect school and personal property
5. Respect others - be kind with your words and actions

Classroom rules are discussed and defined in each classroom during the first few days of school.

If a student chooses to behave in an inappropriate manner, a blue reminder sheet will be sent home that day explaining the inappropriate behavior. If a student has any late work, a green reminder sheet will be sent home that day. If students receive multiple Reminder sheets in one week, parents will be contacted. They will lose their privilege to participate in Friday Fun. Students referred to the behavior room will also lose this privilege.

* 0-2 Reminder sheets - Students will participate in Friday Fun.

* 3 or more Green Reminder sheets - Students will lose the Friday Fun privilege

Communication between school and home is very important Please contact your student's teacher if you have any questions.