

Third Grade Handbook

**Legend Springs
Elementary**

Dear Families,

We want to welcome you and your child to the third grade! We are looking forward to working with you and your child to make this an exciting year for all of us! Enclosed you will find a variety of information regarding policies and expectations. Please read over each section and save this information for future reference. We have done our best to be clear on all points; however, we realize there is always room for questions. Please feel free to approach any one of us at anytime.

Our goal, as classroom teachers, is to facilitate each student's learning and enhance his or her overall growth and desire to learn. Student growth and development is related to a cooperative and supportive classroom environment. It is our hope that this year will be a most exciting and rewarding time for your child in his or her journey to success in learning.

Every child's success in school is dependent upon many factors. The most important factor is the student, parents and teacher working together to provide the most supportive program of education. Ongoing communication is an essential part of your child's success in school. Your feedback is welcome and your participation is encouraged!

Thank you for your support and cooperation. We are going to have a great year!

Sincerely,

Third Grade Teachers

Curriculum Overview

Curriculum in all of the third grade classrooms follows the Common Core Standards.

English Language Arts (ELA)

Reading is the most important and perhaps the most challenging skill young children acquire. The primary focus in third grade reading instruction is to continue to build reading skills and increase fluency and comprehension using the common core standards.

- 1) **Literature**: Key ideas and details, craft and structure, integration of knowledge and ideas, and range of reading and level of text complexity.
- 2) **Informational Text**: Key ideas and details, craft and structure, integration of knowledge and ideas, and range of reading and level of text complexity.
- 3) **Foundational Skills**: Phonics and word recognition, and fluency.
- 4) **Writing**: Text types and purposes and production, distribution of writing, research to build and present knowledge, and range of writing.
- 5) **Speaking and Listening**: Comprehension and collaboration, presentation of knowledge and ideas.
- 6) **Language**: Conventions of standard English, knowledge of language, and vocabulary acquisition and use

The Daily 5

The Daily Five is a research based method of structuring the reading block so every student is independently engaged in meaningful literacy tasks. These tasks focus on those skills that will have the biggest impact on student reading and writing achievement, as well as fostering children who love to read and write. Students receive daily whole group instruction as well as independent practice time to read and write independently. The Daily Five is comprised of the following:

Read to Self

The best way to become a better reader is by practicing each day, with books the students choose and are a "Good Fit". These books may include books from the class library, or poetry. Students will read books independently from their Book Bags. These book bags are composed of books they choose from leveled book boxes. Students will "shop" for new books weekly or when needed.

Read to Someone

Partner reading allows for more time to practice strategies, helping to build fluency, check for understanding, and hear their own voice and time to share in this learning community. They may read the Reading Street selections or books from each others' Book Bags. Each student will have the chance to be a "Coach".

Listen to Reading

Hearing good examples of literature and fluent reading expands your vocabulary, builds stamina and helps you become a better reader. Students will be able to listen to books via the CD player with headphones; teacher read books or the computer.

Word Work

Expanded vocabulary and correct spelling allow for more fluent reading and writing thus speeding up the ability to comprehend what is read and get thinking down on paper.

Work on Writing

Just like reading, the best way to become a better writer is by practicing writing each day. Students work on an existing writing piece or write about a topic of choice.

I PICK "Good Fit Books"

The students are taught from day one about choosing and selecting books that are just right for their reading level. They are called "Good Fit Books".

1. **I** pick a book
2. **P**urpose (What's my purpose for choosing this book?)
3. **I**nterest (Does this book interest me?)
4. **C**omprehend (Can I comprehend what I'm reading?)
5. **K**now (Do I know most of the words?)

Check for Understanding

This is a comprehension strategy that teaches children to stop frequently and check, or monitor, if they understand what they are reading.

Often as readers, children are so aware of reading accurately that they forget to take time and think about what they are reading, checking to see if they understand the text. Advanced readers can develop the habit of reading through the text without monitoring if they were aware of Checking for Understanding (comprehending).

This vital strategy is not only one of the first we introduce, but is also one we model frequently throughout the year.

When students are Reading to Someone, their job is listening and retelling what their partner just read. When they switch, the other student reads as their buddy listens and retells.

Building Stamina

Many parents are amazed to hear their child speak about building "stamina". It's not a typical word you hear third graders say! When I begin teaching The Daily 5 parts, the first time I model, instruct, and demonstrate how to do this skill, the students start on their own for 3 minutes. Every day we add one minute or more, eventually building their stamina to 30 minutes. The students "build stamina" for each of the Daily 5 parts.

Homework

Reading homework consists of reading 20 minutes or more each night. Students will have a challenge of 10 books to read per quarter of various genres. After completion of each book, students will fill out a summary sheet that will be turned in to the reading teacher.

Writing

Next to reading, writing should be the most exciting skill to improve on this year. Students will build their basic writing and spelling skills through mini lessons and activities to become more effective writers. There are many aspects of writing that we will focus on this year.

The first is the writing process itself. The students will have an ongoing writing folder which holds the assignments they will be working on each day to improve familiarity with the writing process. The focus for the writing process includes:

Prewriting
Writing
Revising

Editing
Publishing

Another focus in writing is grammar. Students will understand how to recognize and form a complete sentence with subject and predicate, follow basic capitalization rules, proofreading strategies, and other grammar terms like:

Subject/verb agreement
Punctuation

Prepositional phrase
8 parts of speech

An additional focus in writing is spelling which will include phonemic patterns and spelling rules, such as:

using 'i' before 'e'
changing final 'y' to 'i'

dropping the final 'e'
doubling final consonant

One more focus in writing is working to include the six recognized traits to a well written piece. These are:

Ideas
Organization
Voice

Word Choice
Sentence Fluency
Conventions

Lastly, there are many different types of writing. In third grade, we will be working on some or all of these genres:

Argumentative/persuasive
Informative/explanatory texts
Cause/effect

Narrative
Comparison/Contrast
Description

Math

The third grade teachers at Legend Springs use the enVision Math Program. This is a comprehensive program classified into topics. The topics include: data/graphs/probability, numeration, adding whole numbers, subtraction number sense, subtracting whole numbers to solve problems, multiplication meanings and facts, multiplication fact strategies, congruence and symmetry, division meanings, division facts, patterns and relationships, solids and shapes, understanding fractions, customary measurement, metric measurement, perimeter/area/volume, time/temperature, and discrete math.

Each lesson focuses on hands-on learning, guided and independent practice, problem solving and connections to literature. Homework will be assigned Monday - Thursday. The goal is 90% mastery of all lessons. A topic test will be given for a grade at the end of each topic.

We will also be incorporating math centers to enrich problem solving and critical thinking skills and a Daily Spiral Review worksheet to keep learned lessons fresh in their mind.

Homework

Math homework consists of:
Math worksheet
Daily practice of math facts

Social Studies

In third grade we will use the *Harcourt* Social Studies Series to explore many aspects of the Arizona State Standards.

Character Counts	Biographies	Civics and Government
Exploration	Civil War/Reconstruction	
Ancient Greece/Rome	Immigration	Economics
		Maps/Geography

We will also be using the Weekly Reader/Scholastic Weekly Magazines that incorporate the Social Studies Arizona State Standards for third Grade.

**In third grade there will be a large emphasis on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship as well as identifying the traits of good character.

Science

The *Foss* program provides a science curriculum which includes the study of: structures of life, earth materials, and physics of sound.

We will continue to focus on the inquiry process of science and how to predict and record outcomes. We will practice organizing data and communicating results of an investigation.

We will also be using the Weekly Reader/Scholastic Weekly Magazines that incorporate the Science Arizona State Standards for Third Grade.

Technology

Technology is integrated into all curriculum areas. We will attend the computer lab weekly with supervised internet instruction during research units. Our classroom is equipped with student computers to extend their technology experience during center/workstation time.

Classroom Procedures and Other Stuff

Communication

The best way to communicate with your teacher is by emails.

denise.bager@dvusd.org - math

nicole.devargas@dvusd.org - writing and spelling

joy.nelson@dvusd.org - reading

abby.sromek@dvusd.org - science and social studies

3rd Grade Website: <http://ls3grade.weebly.com>

- Important Dates
- Newsletters
- Curriculum

Legend Springs Website: <https://www.dvusd.org/domain/23>

School Supplies

Donated school supplies are appreciated, but not required. Students need to manage their supplies in their backpacks. Teachers will provide standard classroom supplies for student use in the classroom. Check the website for suggested supplies. We ordered Scholastic News bi-weekly magazines for each student. To help cover the cost, a \$5 donation would be greatly appreciated.

Classwork

It is important that good work habits are encouraged. Each student will have ample work time to complete assignments and ask questions. If the work is still not completed, it may be sent home and will be due the next day.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special times for all students. It is acceptable for your child to bring small, store-bought birthday treats to share with the entire class on his/her special day. Summer birthdays will be recognized near the end of the school year. If your child is planning a birthday celebration outside of school, he/she will not be permitted to distribute invitations while inside the classroom, unless the entire class has been invited.

****Please be aware of any food allergies within the classroom****

Classroom Directory

Since we departmentalize in third grade, we will make a 3rd grade directory.

Star Student

Because every child is special and unique, each week one student will be selected as the “Star Student” at one time during the school year.

Information will be sent home prior to your child’s week. A poster will be provided for your child to fill out and decorate. In addition, your child may bring in pictures and special items to share.

Sack Lunches on Early Release Days

There is no time to eat sack lunches. We normally do not eat lunch until 12:20, so it doesn't seem to be a necessity when we release students at 12:05. If you would like your child to purchase a sack lunch and save it for after school, let their teacher and they will schedule time for your child to purchase a lunch during transition time. Otherwise, we are not allowing time for students to leave instruction time to eat their sack lunches. Thank you for understanding.

Toys

Absolutely NO toys will be allowed in the classroom. Please help your child remember to leave toys at home by checking his/her backpack from time to time. If your child tries to bring something to school which is interfering with his/her learning, it will be taken away.

Volunteers

Homeroom parents are needed to help organize 4 parties.

Fall Party, Thursday, Oct. 31

Winter Party, Friday, Dec. 13

Valentine’s Day Party, Friday, Feb. 14

End of Year Party, Wednesday, May 21

Water Bottles

Water bottles are a MUST for much of the year! Please make sure they are small, labeled with the child’s name, and contain water only. Water bottles must be spill proof and free of leaks. Water bottles must remain closed and off of the child’s desk. A water bottle sleeve or carrier that has a strap is a great way to keep the books, papers and LIBRARY BOOKS from getting wet in their backpacks.

Homework

Agendas

In 3rd grade, students are given an agenda to write down their homework and to help develop organizational skills. Your child's homework should be written down in their agenda. This should help you know what work needs to be completed. **We would like you to sign your child's agenda every Thursday night.**

Why assign homework?

Homework is important because it is a valuable tool to help students make the most of their experience in school and move information from short term memory to long term memory. Homework helps reinforce what has been learned in class and prepares students for upcoming lessons. Most importantly, it teaches responsibility and proper study habits.

When will homework be assigned?

Homework will be assigned Monday through Thursday nights. Your child should be spending no more than 20 minutes on math homework and word work. The other 20 minutes should be spent reading any reading material of choice. Each student should have a goal of reading at least 1-2 hours a week. **Remember: Short breaks are good! Consistency is what counts!**

What are your child's homework responsibilities?

Students are expected to do their best job on each homework assignment. Homework should be done neatly and in pencil. Homework needs to be completely finished by class time the following morning. Your child should be asking you to sign his agenda every Thursday night.

What are the teacher's responsibilities?

We will check all homework assignments to see if they have been completed and show good effort. We will support good homework habits by giving praise and other incentives.

What are the parent's responsibilities?

Parents are the key to making homework a positive experience. Therefore, it is important that you make homework a top priority. Provide your student with the supplies and a quiet homework environment. Set aside a time everyday when homework should be done. Go over the homework with your child.

What else parents can do to help your child succeed:

- Monitor your child's reading - 20 minutes or more a night is the expectation
- Ask your child what genre they are reading in class or other questions
- Monitor daily math homework and return to class the next day
- Read the weekly Newsletter that are posted on the 3rd grade website
- Weekly check your child's grades on Power Schools
- Weekly check your child's behavior card
- **We would like you to sign your child's agenda every Thursday night**
- Encourage your child to keep their homework folder, agenda, and backpack organized
- Explore the online reading/math book and practice activities
- Email/contact teachers with concerns/happy thoughts
- Help support us so we can help your child

Discipline Policy

In order to have an environment in which all children have the opportunity to learn and grow, it is necessary to implement a strong discipline plan. The following three rules will enable all of the students to have such an environment:

Respect yourself
Respect others
Respect school/classroom property

In class, we will discuss what each rule means and how to follow the rule. Please discuss the importance of these rules at home with your child. There will be consequences to making bad choices. Consequences can be negatives, loss of recess, or seeing the principal.

Behavior Cards

- We will track all students' behaviors with a card that they must keep with them at all times in their homework folder. Teachers will give + (positives) for preferred behaviors and - (negatives) for not following the rules. Students must have twice as many positives than negatives to attend monthly reward parties. **We would like you to sign your child's agenda every Thursday night.**

Support our PTA

Please support our PTA. One of the easiest ways you can support them is to join their annual membership. It is one of their main fundraisers. Joining the PTA doesn't mean you have to attend meetings. It is more like being a silent partner that helps get extra supplies and technology into your child's classroom.

Another way you can support the PTA and your child's classroom is to collect Box Tops for Education. Each box top gives our PTA 10 cents. The PTA has a year round box top drive and classroom contest. If your class collects 600 box tops by November 30 then they earn an ice cream party in December. If your class collects an additional 600 box tops by April 30 then they can earn a pizza party in May. When you turn in box tops to your teacher, please write your child's name and teacher on the back so they can get credit and possibility win a cookie coupon for the cafeteria.