

Grade 3:

Overview

Third graders love to work. Their self-esteem grows with accomplishment and the mastery of challenges. In this year the curriculum begins with the Old Testament story of creation and the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. They must learn to make their way on the Earth. Third graders explore the practical aspects of life on our planet, including: the cultivation of food and the building of shelters. Class activities are enhanced by gardening and building projects outside of the classroom. Mathematics studies serve practical needs with the study of measurements (time and distance) and money, while continuing to practice the four operations on ever-larger numbers.

The gradual separation of children from the unity of the universe around them is noticeable in third grade. At some point during the year, third graders will enter a developmental phase referred to by Waldorf teachers as the “nine year change.” With an experience of separateness comes self-awareness and a sense of being unique. Students can feel lonely and misunderstood. The order and harmony of the world previously experienced is now uncertain. Practical work and an interest in life on Earth provide the nine-year-old with new focus and another way to feel connected to an orderly world.

As sturdy individuals emerge from group consciousness, teachers call upon the individual child with increasing frequency. Building on foundations put down in the previous two years, it is expected that most students will read at grade level and practice multiplication tables with the goal of demonstrating mastery. Third graders usually have the voice and the confidence to take on individual roles in the class play. Diatonic recorder playing is introduced.

With newborn awareness of the Self and others, third graders can find it challenging to work together as a class. It is important to be able to work out the conflicts that often arise on the playground. Respect for others and opposing points of view is expected. Likewise, participation and a positive attitude are needed to support the class as a whole.

Work Habits and Attitude:

In grade three, students should:

- Demonstrate increasing awareness of group needs and contribute to the class well-being: take turns, speak/listen, support others, do classroom chores
- Participate in both individual and collaborative work
- Resolve conflicts with respect and self-control

Language Arts:

By the end of grade three, students should be able to:

- Listen to oral presentations, comprehend, and recall the next day
- Participate in class discussions
- Speak clearly, with proper word choice, in class discussions, group recitations, and dramatic presentations
- Improve printing and master cursive writing with care for neatness
- Strengthen sentence composition and begin writing paragraphs (there will be varied abilities in the class)
- Create guided journals
- Begin to write their own compositions based on story material
- Begin to recognize parts of speech: nouns, verbs, and adjectives
- Work with basic punctuation (capitals, periods, and question marks) as needed in writing assignments
- Practice spelling with words generated from lesson content or lists
- Practice basic spelling rules
- Take dictation, several sentences at time
- Continue reading, arrive at grade level by the end of the school year
- Report accurately on content of reading material
- Read aloud fluently with inflection and attention to punctuation cues

Mathematics:

By the end of grade three, students should be able to:

- Apply four operations to larger numbers (thousands)
- Work with place value in larger numbers (understand carrying and “borrowing”)
- Master telling time and solve problems involving time
- Solve problems relating to money and making change
- Check solutions to calculations using the inverse operation
- Observe number patterns (especially in multiplication tables) (Other examples: Adding 2 to an odd number gives a sum that is an odd number and likewise for even numbers.)
- Discover square numbers
- Are fluent with multiplication tables 1–12
- Begin long division with divisor up to 12 and with remainders

- Practice reading and solving word problems
- Practice “mental math”
- Begin measurements: linear, liquid, dry, and weight

Natural Science and Social Studies:

By the end of grade three, students should be able to:

- Examine primitive house building techniques and the relationship of materials used to the surrounding environment and the cultures of various peoples
- Observe modern-day construction, trades involved (through field trips and class construction project)
- Understand the origin of a piece of clothing by experiencing the fiber arts
- Observe a working farm: animal husbandry and crop cultivation (farm visit)
- Learn about the cultivation of grains for human sustenance
- Participate in gardening chores

* Please note; these are the current standards for Waldorf School of Palm Beach. Faculty will strive to maintain these standards and will review them on an annual basis. As our program continues to develop, and as our resources may vary, these standards are subject to change.