



I would like to take this opportunity to let you know how I am excited about having your child in my class this year. As a third grader, your child is well into his or her primary education. I would like to welcome each of you to a wonderful Third Grade Year at Mattawan Later Elementary. Hopefully this information packet will be helpful in introducing you to our curriculum and procedures. If you have any questions at all please feel free to contact me at 668-3361 ext. 1510 or mhare@mattawanschools.org.

This year, I'm making a special effort to help all my students become more responsible... more willing to help, more aware of the needs of others, and more able to work on their own.

WHERE THIRD GRADERS ARE

The average eight-year old is explosive, excitable, dramatic, and inquisitive. They:

- possesses a "know-it-all" attitude
- able to assume some responsibility for their actions.
- actively seeks praise
- may undertake more than they can handle successfully
- are self-critical
- recognize the needs of others
- begin to define their selves based on certain attributes or achievements
- friendships are very important, but may lack some social skills
- emergence of a sense of humor

WHERE THEY'RE GOING

School isn't just academics. Your child's teacher is helping him/her to grow socially. At eight-years-old, your child is learning how to set goals and understand the consequences of their behavior. You can help by encouraging them as they:

- explore the relationship of feelings, goals, and behavior
- learn about choices and consequences
- begin setting goals
- become more responsible
- learn how to work with other

Language Arts

The Daily 5 framework outlines a systematic, multilevel approach to teaching literacy, this model acknowledges that all children learn differently, and provides a framework for teaching with five different blocks: Guided Reading, Independent Reading, Listening to Reading, Writing, and Working with Words. Daily instruction in all five areas provides numerous and varied opportunities for all children to learn to read and write. Doing Daily 5 each day provides instruction to support whatever learning personality a child has. Using a variety of formats to make each block multi-level as possible, helps those children who need additional support, and gives additional challenges for children who catch on quickly.

Guided Reading

The purpose of this block is to expose children to a wide range of literature, teach comprehension and teach children how to read with books that become increasingly harder. This year we will use the Houghton Mifflin reading program. Children will also read from either multiple copies of trade books, magazines, poetry, plays, informational text, etc. The block usually begins with a discussion led by the teacher to build or review background knowledge necessary to read the selection. Comprehension strategies are taught and practiced during this block. This block also includes writing in response to reading.

Independent Reading

This time includes and usually begins with a teacher read aloud. The teacher reads to the children from a wide range of literature. Next, children read “on their own level” from a variety of books provided by the teacher/library. While the children read, the teacher conferences with and takes anecdotal records on several children each day.

Writing Workshop

The Writing Block is carried out based on Lucy Calkins “writer’s workshop” fashion. It begins with a mini lesson. The teacher writes and thinks aloud, modeling the way she thinks while writing. She writes about a variety of topics and in a variety of formats. Next, the children go to their own writing. They are all at different stages of writing process; finishing a story, starting a new story, editing, illustration, etc. While the children write, the teacher conferences with individuals who are getting ready to publish. Third graders will work on Narrative, Informational, Persuasive and Poetry. They will also learn how to revise their writing and make editing decisions as well.

Working With Words

In the Word Work block, children learn to read and spell high frequency words and learn the patterns which allow them to decode and spell lots of words. Students practice new and old words daily by looking at them, saying them, writing the words on paper, and self-correcting the words with the teacher. The remaining time is given to an activity which helps children learn patterns to decode and spell hundreds of words. A variety of activities are included in this block each day.

Accelerated Reader

This program is to help us focus on reading. There are selected books worth certain points. After your child has chosen a book and read it carefully, they may sign up to take an A.R. test in the classroom. Depending on the number of correct answers, he/she will receive various points. **The comprehension score is more important than the points. No scores should be lower than 80%. If so, the book is either too hard or was not read very carefully and thoroughly. It is their responsibility to take an AR test on their book. You can receive email notifications when your child takes a test telling you how they did.**

Nightly Reading and Homework

Your child has a daily homework notebook that you should expect to see every night in their three ringed binder. Homework is assigned to reinforce what is being taught during the day, to develop study habits, organization, and responsibility. The homework assigned Monday through Thursday should not take more than **30 minutes**, but is an important part of the learning day. HOMEWORK = 15 minutes AR/RR + nightly assignments + Monthly Projects. Each marking period the students will also have an AR/RR Reading Goal to keep track of the reading they do each night.

Monday – Reading

Tuesday – Homework Folder + Reading

Wednesday -- BLOG ENTRY + Reading

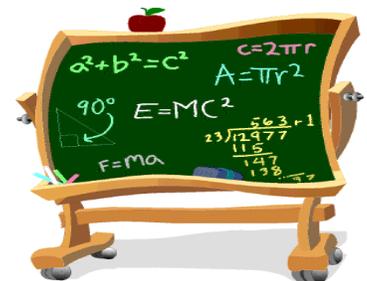
Thursday -- Homework Folder + Reading

Friday -- Reading + class projects

Math

Basic Text: Pearson Success

Our emphasis will have more emphasis on connecting concrete and abstract math concepts, daily review, problem solving and ongoing assessments. Student will learn how explain how to solve math problems and also write out explanations, too. We will begin work on times tables in October. Helping your student to learn to count in multiples from 2-12 will help with learning these times tables.



Science

Themes or units in this area will include:

- 1) Scientific Method
- 2) Organisms Have Character
- 3) Light and Sound
- 4) Changes in Motion
- 5) Earth and Me

Social Studies

We have an exciting Social Studies Curriculum this year. Our main focus will be on communities. Themes or units will include:

- 1) Map Skills/Geography
- 2) Michigan History
- 3) Economics
- 4) Core Democratic Values



Absences

Your child's attendance in third grade is essential to his/her learning. When a child misses a day of school, he/she misses a day of learning. Each day's learning builds upon the previous day. Therefore, it is important that your child attends school regularly and arrives on time. Children who are absent from school are not excused from missed work. A list of this work will be given to the student and they will have from 3-5 days to complete it upon returning to class. If your child will out for an illness please be sure to call me at 668-3361 ext. 1510 and leave me a message.

Parent Volunteers

We love to have parents volunteer in the classroom. If you can help on a regular basis, let me know what days/times would work best for you. Thanks so much!

Volunteer times are from 9-11am or 12-2pm.

Daily Schedule

We will develop a very predictable and comfortable routine within the classroom. With a comfortable routine, the children always know what to expect and what is expected of them. We can then change and adjust as needed to meet everyone's learning needs.

I encourage the children to bring a **healthy** snack to eat in the afternoon. Send quick items to eat. Teaching will not stop during this time. Please help your child to remember to place this snack in his/her backpack, rather than lunch box.

Good snack choices are: fruit, veggies, yogurt, dry cereal, granola bars, graham crackers, popped popcorn, cheese, half a bagel, raisins, applesauce, pita chips and hummus, crackers (Wheat Thins, Triscuits, etc.)

SNACKS TO AVOID: Pop-Tarts, chips, cookies, candy, fruit roll-ups, donuts, brownies, sugary cereal, anything covered in hot-orange "cheese" dust, pudding, or jello.

Sports Top Water bottles are allowed.

Class Donations

We would welcome donations of the following:

- 1) Your time and experience
- 2) Kleenex – a must for winter
- 3) Extra Pencils, pencils, pencils
- 4) Paper Towels – we use many rolls
- 5) Lysol/Clorox wipes -- to clean desks
- 6) Glue Sticks – you would not believe how quickly we go through these
- 7) Did I mention Kleenex?
- 8) Post it Notes
- 9) Dry Erase Markers
- 10) Washi Tape - colorful crafting tape to use while revising our writing

Discipline Policy

All class rules are established at the beginning of the school year with the children. We develop these rules together and then sign a contract agreeing to follow them. Learning in the classroom can only take place with the cooperation of the teacher, parents, and students. Together we can ensure that your child comes to a sound and well discipline learning environment. If a student is disruptive during classroom instruction, not only does it take away from his/her learning; it also takes away vital learning time from each child in the classroom. As parents and guardians, you can help your child by supporting me in the creation of a safe classroom that is conducive to learning. I ask you to please respect the school's educational policies and speak to me whenever you have any concerns. Together we can provide a better learning environment for all the children.

Classroom Conduct

Our classroom houses a small community. Each student is a citizen who acts in accordance with expected standards of behavior. With this in mind, rewards are not given for expected behavior-just as society does not give rewards for behaving properly. Also, irresponsible behavior is seen as an opportunity for growth, rather than punishment.

Our approach encourages students to exercise self-discipline through reflection and self evaluation. Students learn to control their own behavior, rather than always relying on the teacher for control.

We want our classroom to be encouraging and conducive to learning at all times. In this way, young people develop positive attitudes and behavioral skills which are so necessary for successful lives.

<p>D. Democracy Develops Self-Discipline Shows Kindness Does good because it is the right thing to do</p>	<p>C. Cooperation Listens to others Does what is told Cooperates with others</p>
<p>B. Bothering Bosses others Botherers others Breaks classroom standards</p>	<p>A. Anarchy Noisy, Absence of order Unsafe Out of Control</p>

3-RINGED ZIPPED BINDERS

These books are used in an effort to help your child establish good organizational skills as well as teach them responsibility. I do ask that students purchase a 3-ring binder notebook that has a zipper on the side. It holds everything the students and parents need to keep updated on classroom and school events. All of the papers, notes, assignments, etc. that are needed during class each day are kept in this notebook. BINDERS are to be taken home each night and returned for use during class the next day. The weekly agenda page in the planner will keep you informed of daily activities. It also serves as a means of constant communication between us. Please go through this with your son/daughter every evening and then sign it. Your child will receive stickers as rewards for completing homework and getting your signature. Please help your child keep track of this book. If it is lost or destroyed, it will be the responsibility of the statement to pay to replace it.

You will receive my weekly newsletter, Mrs. West’s weekly newsletter and notes from the office every Tuesday which will come home via email, if you do not have access to email a hard copy of both of these newsletters can be sent home in the Communication/Tuesday Folder. This folder will go back and forth only on Tuesday and returned on Wednesday.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our class information. I am looking forward to working with your child during this upcoming school year and cannot wait for school to start. Once again, if you have any questions or concerns you can call me at 668-3361 ext.1510 or email me at mhare@mattawanschools.org.