



## GRADE 3 CURRICULUM

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### BIBLE

The primary goal of the curriculum is to equip students with Biblical understanding in order to intentionally nurture real-life application of Biblical truth. Students will study the Creation story, the lives of Abraham and Joseph, and Daniel's exile to Babylon. Lessons trace God's loving message of salvation through portraits of Christ as He is foreshadowed in the Old Testament. Prayer, songs, discussion, morning devotions, weekly Chapel, and memorization of scripture passages, including the first chapter of Philippians, empower the students to share and demonstrate their growing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

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### LANGUAGE

### ARTS

Language Arts embraces Reading, Writing and English (spelling, grammar, penmanship and vocabulary). A love for reading is nurtured through author exploration, partner reading, group reading, read-alouds, and discussion. Our core language arts program is a literature-rich curriculum that encompasses the five essential reading components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The literature selections represent a diversity of genres, organized around unit themes; each story connects and expands literacy concepts to foster deeper meaning and understanding. Students apply reading strategies as they make the transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." Chapter books such as Charlotte's Web, Stone Fox, and Who Was King Tut, are enrichment components of the reading curriculum. Students study characterization, predict outcomes, and discuss the nature of the conflicts the characters face along with possible solutions. Students continue to apply decoding skills and phonetic rules to new words and are encouraged to read with expression, to read for meaning, and to increase fluency. Students continue to be assessed in the development of their reading skills through DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills).

Shurley English 3 is a grammar and writing program designed specifically for third grade. Shurley is a proven, research based method for instructing students in the principles of correct grammar and oral and written language skills. Grammar is fundamental to speaking, reading, and writing. The essential components of this program include grammar question and answer flows, jingles, practicing and revising sentences and paragraphs, and writing effectively for all purposes. Regular instruction provides constant review, immediate feedback and utilizes all learning styles. It is our goal to prepare our students to carefully interpret the mechanics of written English when reading and effectively and skillfully communicate their knowledge, ideas, and most importantly their faith to others.

Third graders also study biographies of famous people and complete a written biography report after reading a biography together.

Cursive writing is taught and reviewed weekly. Weekly spelling lessons are comprised of phonics-based word lists integrated from the ABeka curriculum, supplemented by challenge words.

Our writing curriculum is designed so students experience writing as a process, utilizing the steps of writing: pre-writing, writing a draft, revising and editing, and publishing to polish writing skills such as clarity, empowering personal voice, choosing effective topics, etc. Students write in diverse genres: poetry, narratives, fables, persuasive and expository pieces, including summaries and reports. Regular review of basic writing mechanics improves sentence and paragraph structure, and applies the correct use of capital letters, punctuation, etc.

Students will also participate in the Fable level of the Progymnasmata using *Writing and Rhetoric*, a classical approach to writing instruction in which students study, analyze and imitate high quality narrative selections.

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## **MATHEMATICS**

Math In Focus is a complete program based on the highly successful elementary math program used in Singapore. Designed to equip students with a strong foundation in mathematics, topics are covered in depth and taught to mastery. By focusing on mathematical understanding, the program aims to help students develop logical thinking and critical lifelong problem-solving skills.

The Math In Focus program calls for direct instruction and focuses on mathematical thinking with immediate application of new skills to problem solving. By encouraging students to solve problems in a variety of ways, this program stretches the mind and promotes an understanding of the way mathematical processes work.

### **Pedagogical Approach and Methodology**

The Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract approach enables students to encounter math in a meaningful way through concrete activities before progressing to pictorial and abstract representations. This allows students to understand mathematical concepts before learning the “rules” or formulaic expressions:

- Students first encounter the mathematical concepts through the use of manipulatives.
- Students then move on to the pictorial stage in which pictures are used to model problems.
- When students are familiar with the ideas taught, they progress to a more advanced or abstract stage in which only numbers, notation and symbols are used.

### **Model**

Model-drawing is an ingenious problem-solving strategy built into the curriculum. Students are taught to visualize and construct concrete pictures to help them make sense of word problems. The model-drawing method requires students to understand the mathematical concepts underlying word problems and equips them with a strong conceptual foundation in mathematics to solve even the most challenging problems. The model-drawing technique not only provides a powerful method for solving problems, but also serves as a link to algebra. Symbolic representation of problems, the mainstay of algebra, emerges as a logical extension of the model-drawing technique.

### **Drawing**

### **Teaching**

### **to**

### **Mastery**

Each topic is covered in detail and taught to mastery. Immediately after new concepts are taught, students are engaged with a variety of mathematically rich problems. This ensures that the focus is on the student’s deep understanding of each topic. Math In Focus is geared towards producing mathematical thinkers, and

it does this by walking children through all the component parts of a problem before presenting them with the whole problem to solve.

### **Spiral**

### **Progression**

Topics covered previously are reviewed at higher grades and with increasing difficulty. The introduction of new concepts is built upon the mathematical concepts students have learned previously. Spiral progression also allows for a review of important math concepts while expanding on that foundation.

### **Metacognition**

Metacognition refers to the ability to monitor one's own thought processes. In teaching students to be conscious of the strategies they use to accomplish a task, this strategy encourages students to think of alternative means of solving problems and promotes logical thinking. Students are encouraged to be aware of how they arrive at their solutions. Alternative ways of solving the problem are provided as a form of guidance for students to check their thought processes. This is opposed to rote learning and application of formulaic strategies.

Skills and concepts covered or introduced in grade three include:

- Numbers to 10,000: comparing, place value, rounding
- Addition and subtraction
- Multiplication and division
- Money
- Fractions
- Time
- Tables and graphs
- Area, perimeter and volume

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## **FOUNDATIONS**

## **IN**

## **LATIN**

**3**

Latin is first introduced in grade 3 to teach a language that forms the basis for more than 60% of English words. Latin is a foundational language not only for English but also for many other languages as well. By studying Latin, students will strengthen their ability to understand grammar and increase their vocabulary. They will also begin to comprehend the connections Latin has with English and other languages. The goals for the Grammar School Latin program are: 1. To build a solid Latin vocabulary through short stories, theme-based lessons, and some Latin conversation. 2. To begin building students' skills through memorizing short Latin phrases, verses, and grammar concepts. Our Latin instructors strive to create a fun and interactive environment where students can develop a true enthusiasm for learning a new language, complete with its rich culture and history.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES / HISTORY**

Third grade history focuses on the story of the ancient world and the major civilizations that inhabited it. Students enjoy a curriculum full of interesting stories and factual information about these civilizations, with studies focusing on the main people, events, cultural beliefs, challenges, and accomplishments of each civilization.

Students first learn about how civilizations began by examining the Stone Ages and the accomplishments (like farming) that allowed people to begin settling in permanent homes. From this foundation, students will

then examine some of the first civilizations, beginning with the region of Mesopotamia. From Mesopotamia, students will move to studies of Egypt and China. In each of these units, students will study the achievements that made these civilizations renowned. Students will learn about the different types of leaders and cultures that these civilizations have, and students will learn from comparing and contrasting the civilizations to one another. Finally, students will engage in fun projects in each of these units like creating an Egyptian mask or making Chinese paper.

By the end of the year, students will be prepared to delve into the studies of Greece, Rome, and the Middle Ages.

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## **SCIENCE**

The grade three Science curriculum highlights the steps of the scientific process: forming a hypothesis, conducting an experiment, observations, recording data, drawing conclusions, and presenting results. These principles are applied by means of hands-on curriculum kits designed by the National Sciences Resources Center.

Students engage in an in-depth study of chemical properties by utilizing common household substances to explore physical properties, solubility, crystallization, and evaporation. Students discover the unifying concept that materials may be ordered into groups or systems that display common chemicals and physical behaviors. Students also identify properties of materials by the use of physical and chemical tests.

A mini-unit based on the study of weather is a major theme of grade three's science curriculum. Students study the basics of weather and its impact upon their environment through demonstrations, projects, and experiments. As students study the elements that control our weather, they develop weather instruments to observe, measure, and analyze conditions of the earth's atmosphere.

An introduction to the fascinating world of animals takes the form of studying the major classifications in the animal kingdom and studying animal life cycles, and creating an animal scrapbook as a culminating project.

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## **ENRICHMENT**

## **CLASSES**

### **PHYSICAL**

### **EDUCATION**

The creative goals for the third grade physical education curriculum stress creative play and strength/flexibility building. Manipulative skill development, manipulative skill integration (hitting, throwing, and catching), motor ability development, and creative movement performance (creative and folk dance) are components of creative play. Our primary decisional goals are to share, to care, and to play fair. Good sportsmanship is developed through activities such as volleyball, basketball, touch football, soccer, movement based games, and creative dance.

## **MUSIC**

Music is a multi-faceted curriculum that is based upon the premise that music is a gift from God enabling students to bring glory to God. Students continue to develop their musical knowledge through singing, playing rhythm instruments, improvising, and listening, while focusing on the fundamentals of music theory. In addition to singing rounds, folk songs, and American music, students sing in two-parts. Students learn to play the recorder, thereby developing the fine motor skills necessary for playing all wind instruments, and learn to read musical notation in the treble clef.

Students make important connections between melody, rhythm, and phrase, and develop these elements by improvising their own musical melodies. Performing and listening skills are facilitated through ongoing participation in classroom and concert activities.

## **ART**

Children of younger ages develop art skills largely by experimentation based on their love of art activities and a natural sense of color and design. The goal of art activities is to teach skills in a logical way, to allow experimentation with various media, and to enable individual development. Students will be taught basic drawing skills based on seeing shapes in the forms around them. Art history will be introduced by observing examples of artwork, exploring the biographical information of artists, and discovering their inspiration for ideas. Students will be taught shading and basic color theory as they work on paintings, crayon drawings, colored pencil drawings, and pastel drawings.

## **LIBRARY**

Students will enjoy literature enrichment weekly with our Librarian and discover new worlds and characters within the pages of a book. Over the course of the year, students are introduced to a variety of genres and authors, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and biography. Students are engaged in read-alouds, class discussions, games, building challenges, writing, and artistic responses. The primary goal of library time is to pique and expand students' interest in reading for pleasure and for information, and to help them interact meaningfully with the books they encounter.

For more information regarding our Grammar School Program  
please contact our Grammar School Principal, Andrea Bergstrom [andrea.bergstrom@ccamail.org](mailto:andrea.bergstrom@ccamail.org)