

Welcome to 3rd Grade
with Liz!



Curriculum Night
2018-2019

The Renaissance Charter School
Room 306

Class Policies and Procedures in Third Grade

Attendance

Our school day begins at 8:20 am each day. Students that arrive after that time must get a late pass from the office and will be marked late.

If your child is absent, please send a note in the following day for the office to keep in their files.

Snack

We will have snack daily in the classroom. Please send in a snack each day that can be easily opened and eaten by a third grader. Should the snack require utensils, please send those in with your child as well. **Due to possible allergies, students will not be allowed to share snack with others.**

Homework

Students will be assigned nightly homework M-Th. Students will be expected to copy their homework assignment each day into their homework notebooks. At the beginning of the year I will monitor notebooks to be sure that students are copying the assignment correctly, but students will be weaned off of this support. Homework will also be posted on the website. The majority of the weekly homework will follow the schedule below:

Day of the Week	Assignment
Monday	Math (selected problems)
Tuesday	Vocabulary and/or Spelling
Wednesday	Math (selected problems)

Thursday	Vocabulary and/or Spelling
To be completed over the course of the week and due on Friday	Reading Response

A few things to keep in mind:

- Students need to be reading in order to complete their reading response by the end of the week. Third graders should be reading at least 30 minutes a night.
- Please go over your child's homework with him/her. There is no need for you to have your child fix every mistake, but if you notice a glaring misconception, please do your best to help your child understand the concept and then have him/her try again.
- I will not correct every math problem students complete. Instead, I will correct a selection of problems, and we will go over one problem that the class found challenging. Homework will receive two grades- one for completion and one for accuracy of the selected problems only. Both will be taken into account for the homework grade on the report card.
- Students will choose from a list of activities for the vocabulary, spelling, and reading response assignments.
- On many nights, students will be bringing home materials that they need and use in class, such as their homework notebooks, their reading notebooks, their writing notebooks, and their math journals. **Please be sure that these materials are returned to school on the following day.** If students do not have the proper materials, it is much more likely that assignments will not be completed as intended, that they will be lost, or that they will lose credit due to being late.
- Late homework will always be accepted, but will lose credit. The only exception is when a child is ill. In this case, I ask that students pass in the work as soon as they are able to complete it, and that parents attach a note

explaining that the child was too ill to do the assignment on the original date.

- **I reserve the right to modify homework at any time. It is extremely important that students copy and refer to the homework assignment in their notebooks.**

I will not assign specific homework on weekends or vacations. However, here is a list of activities that would be worthwhile:

- Choose a chapter book to read with your child, and read a little bit together each day.
- Visit a museum. Have a conversation about what you saw.
- Have your child write in a journal about a special event or trip.
- Make a craft together, such as sock puppets, magic wands, slime...the possibilities are endless.
- Go to the zoo.
- Does your child have a favorite toy, blankie, or stuffed animal? Have him/her bring it to the places you normally go. Take pictures of the item in each place. Have your child write journal entries about his/her adventures with it.
- Cook a meal together. Let your child measure the ingredients.
- Bake something delicious together.
- Read some favorite poems or nursery rhymes or fairy tales together.
- Do you have a favorite movie from when you were a kid? Watch it with your child. Talk about why it's your favorite. Is it theirs too?
- Play a board game together.
- Go on a scavenger hunt around your neighborhood.
- Engage in some imaginary play.

Some of the most worthwhile homework is not really homework at all!

Birthdays

Birthdays are special for every child. In school, we will celebrate your child's birthday by singing "Happy Birthday" to them.

Please let me know in advance (at least 1 day before) if you would also like to send in a treat for the class on your child's birthday. Treats should be in individual portions (cupcakes, bags of popcorn, juice boxes, etc.) and should not require heating or refrigeration. **Although I understand that families want to celebrate with their children, due to a very tight schedule this year, I ask that families send in treats only.**

Treats will usually be given out during snack time, which varies each day. You may choose to send in the treat with your child or bring it into the office in the morning.

In order to protect the feelings of all students, invitations to birthday parties will **only** be distributed in class if every child in the class is invited.

Monday Folders

Each Monday, students will bring home their "Monday Folders." These will include important work, quizzes, or tests that your child completed recently. Folders will also include a Monday Folder log. Please look through the work, sign the log, **return the folder with the work inside it** to school on Tuesday and include any questions, comments, or concerns you have about the work you saw.

Home-School Communication

This year, I will be communicating primarily with families through my new website, which you can find at lizestabrooke.weebly.com. Visit the site to read class announcements, find educational websites, get homework assignments, etc. The website will take over some of the communication I used to do through ClassDojo. I do still plan to

use ClassDojo, however, for their new portfolio component. Students will be able to choose work that they would like to share with you, and then post videos, drawings, writing, etc. **If you are not currently linked to our Class Dojo account and you would like to be, please let me know and I will get you set up.**

I will also be sending a monthly newsletter in order to keep families informed of what's going on in school and in the classroom. This letter will be sent home and will also be uploaded to the website.

The best way to reach me is by email. My email address is lizestabrooke@rencharter.org. I will respond to emails within 24 hours (though this is not guaranteed on weekends or during vacations), but oftentimes much sooner.

You may also reach me at my personal phone number—(781) 710-2048. Texts are best, but please feel free to call if need be. If you receive my voicemail, please leave me a message.

In the case of an urgent message during the school day, please call the school, as I am not always able to check messages. This is especially important for dismissal changes.

Field Trips

Third graders will be going on some field trips this year to enhance the learning they do in school and offer them more opportunities for fun, hands-on experiences. Permission slips will include a space for family members to volunteer to chaperone. Many venues limit the number of adult chaperones that can attend with a class, so if we have more volunteers than spaces, I will pull names from a hat with the children. Priority will be given to those that send back permission slips in a timely manner and have not attended a trip with us before. I will confirm with all selected chaperones.

I would love for all students to attend our field trips, so if the cost of a trip is a hardship for you and your family, please let me know so that we can work out the issue together.

Assessment

Third graders will be assessed in a number of ways to allow me to see what they've learned, their strengths, as well as areas in which they may need support. Most of this assessment takes place during our regular classes, and could be anything from me listening to a conversation they are having with classmates to students filling out graphic organizers about texts they read to students presenting projects they have created.

Students will have a vocabulary test every Friday that will include the words they studied over the course of the week. Students will have a spelling assessment **every other** Thursday. Students will be tested on the 15 words they've studied over the course of the two weeks (10 of these words will follow a spelling pattern and five will be high frequency words they misspelled on the beginning of the year assessments). An additional 5 words will be added that the students did not study, but that follow the same spelling pattern. This is in order to see if students can apply what they have learned. These tests will be phased in over the next few weeks.

Students will also have occasional cumulative assessments at the end of units and at specific points in the year in ELA, Math, and Social Studies. Results of these assessments will be made available to parents through PupilPath and/or in the Monday Folders. In addition, students will participate in 4 administrations of the A-Net test in both ELA and Math. These tests are given in order to help prepare students for the state tests in the spring. Last year, it was decided that the scores would be used by teachers to improve instruction and help students in their areas of need. The scores were not released to parents. At this time, I am unaware of whether that decision will stand for this year as well.

Behavior and Classroom Expectations

Because this is my second year with most of your children, at the beginning of the year we will be revisiting our hopes and dreams from last year, and making new ones. This will lead us into a discussion about the rules we need to have in our classroom in order to make sure that we are all able to meet our goals, because every child has a right to feel safe at school and to learn. We may decide to keep our rules from last year, or modify them a bit. We will then discuss both rewards for when we are going above and beyond the expectations, as well as consequences for when expectations are not being met and learning is lost.

The class will be setting goals throughout the year based on their areas of need. Students will have the opportunity to earn rewards for good deeds they've done individually, with their table groups, as well as with the entire class. Many of these will be awarded to celebrate evidence that we are working towards our goals and making good choices. Students will have a say in what these rewards are and when they will be administered.

When students are beginning to have a hard time meeting the classroom expectations, they will have the opportunity to recognize this themselves and ask me if they can visit "The Peace Corner." During this short break, they have the opportunity to calm down and get back on track and get back to their learning. Because they are recognizing this need themselves, they are learning to self-regulate.

Should students be unable to recognize this need on their own and break a rule, they will be given a warning. If they break a rule again, they will be sent to the Peace Corner, where they can calm down, think about the problem and what they could have done differently, as well as decide if there is anything they need to do to fix the problem. **If a rule is broken a third time, parents will be contacted by email.** In extreme cases, a

consequence may be given without a reminder. Also, all minor and major infractions will be reported to Student Support, who may decide to impose additional consequences.

Students are responsible for any missed work due to time in the Peace Corner.

Reading Workshop

Like last year, our reading work this year will be based on the Units of Study, created by Lucy Calkins and the Teachers College at Columbia University. In our first unit, students will “build a reading life,” make sure they are understanding stories, and learn how to tackle more challenging texts.

In subsequent units third graders will learn how to read to learn, analyze characters, and do research. Students will also practice reading texts closely and answering questions about them, while supporting their answers with evidence from the texts.

Our workshop will start with a minilesson in which the students will see a skill or strategy modeled, they will then try it out with a partner or with the class, and finally, they will try it in their own reading. While students are reading, I will be meeting with Guided Reading groups that are based on students’ reading levels and/or needs. Third graders are expected to be reading at a level N at the start of the year and a level P by the end of the year. Report card grades in Reading will largely be based on these benchmarks.

Writing Workshop

Also based on the Units of Study, third graders will be participating in Writing Workshop daily. They will have the opportunity to draft, revise, edit, and publish a variety of genres, including personal narratives, persuasive writing, and

fairy tales. All of this work will be guided by a close study of mentor texts that can inspire and teach us. Proper grammar, sentence structure, and paragraph format will be emphasized during these units. Students will also learn to respond in writing to questions about texts they've read.

Students will continue to work on giving and accepting kind, specific, and helpful feedback from both their peers and myself in order to improve their writing. This work will be supported by the use of checklists and rubrics.

Math

Our math program for third grade is Eureka Math (formerly called EngageNY). This curriculum was designed to meet the Common Core standards in math, and focuses on a balance between conceptual understanding and mental math skills. The curriculum builds on itself and spirals, so students are not expected to master a concept the first time it comes around, but after they've had multiple opportunities to try it out. Some of the important concepts students will be learning more about this year are multiplication and division, fractions, and area.

The Eureka Math curriculum will be supplemented with 3-Act-Tasks, which are engaging videos that introduce a contextualized problem that students then need to solve. In order to do so, students have to think deeply about the information they need to figure out in order to solve the problem. They then solve by modeling with mathematics. We will also be using some of the Contexts for Learning units, which are designed to foster a deep understanding of mathematical concepts using the math workshop format.

Social Studies

Our social studies curriculum this year will begin with a study of the 50 states and then move into learning how to describe the location of countries, both in relation to other countries and

oceans and in relation to important geographical markers such as the Prime Meridian and the Equator. We will then move into a study of specific countries, including Mexico, Canada, South Africa, and others.

The 2019 New York State Tests

The New York State ELA testing window will be April 2nd-4th. The Math testing window will be May 1st-3rd. Last year, the state changed the tests so that they are now only 2 days, and those days will be consecutive within the window. The tests are untimed. Students are expected to read passages, write both short-answer and extended responses, and show and explain their mathematical thinking. The work we will be doing in class will support students in being successful on these assessments.

Please let me know if you have any questions about any of the above information, and feel free to contact me for any reason. I am looking forward to a wonderful year with your children!

Sincerely,