

What to Expect in Mrs. Boenker's 3rd Grade English, Math, Language Arts and Spelling

Dear 3rd Grade Families,

I wanted to give you some information about what your child will be learning with me this year and a little bit about how our classroom operates. I hope this answers some questions you may have. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any other questions or concerns.

Thank You,
Mrs. Jennifer Boenker

English

In English this year, your child will have an English textbook in which we focus on grammar (sentences, nouns, pronouns, verbs, etc.) and writing. Your child will be learning how to compose different types of writing and will learn the steps of the writing process. Most of this work will be completed at school, but your child may bring his/her English textbook home to complete work from being absent, to study the night before a test, or if you request it.

Math

For math, we will usually focus on one lesson from our textbook per day. The math series builds upon students' prior knowledge and has frequent reviews of previous skills. Each lesson consists of three parts: a "Power Up," learning a new concept and practicing it in class with the teacher, and written practice that students complete individually. A "Power Up" is a quick worksheet we use to start each lesson. It has math fact practice and reviews skills the students have already learned. The written practice that students complete on their own will often be sent home for homework. Students will bring home their textbooks to complete the homework. Please make sure your child returns his/her homework and textbook to school the next day. After every five lessons, your child will take a test over the skills he/she has learned. (Exception: The first math test isn't given until after lesson 10.)

Language Arts and Spelling

Language Arts can also be referred to as Reading and will encompass spelling. For reading, we are using Storyworks, which is a monthly magazine that is published by Scholastic. We will use this magazine instead of a textbook. The reading magazine covers a wide variety of reading skills, contains stories of all different genres, and has some great online resources. We will have reading tests most Fridays over the story and skills we practice during the week. A parent informational letter will be sent home soon that explains Storyworks and gives you access to some of the online resources. If

your child brings home his/her magazine to complete homework or to read at home, please be sure it is returned to school since we use it in place of a textbook. Your child will be allowed to keep the magazine after we are finished with it each month.

For spelling, we will be using the Saxon phonics and spelling program. Your child will have a spelling test every Friday. The spelling words will contain the phonics concept that is taught during the week. A spelling word list will be sent home each week with 20-30 spelling words as well as additional words your student should know. Our weekly spelling tests will consist of 15 words from that list. Your child will not know exactly which 15 words will be on the spelling test.

Folder and Planner

Your child will have a folder for my class that should be checked daily if possible. (We call it our “monkey folder.”) This folder will contain graded work from the classes I teach your child, notes for parents, spelling word lists, Think Sheets (see “Classroom Behavior Plan” below), etc. I try to send home most papers on Wednesdays so that you can check your child’s folder when you check his/her Wednesday envelope.

All students will be given a planner. In our class, I have your child fill out his/her planner every morning. In the planner, students write down activities/assignments we are doing each day. Any work not completed in class becomes homework. You can check your child’s planner to see what work should be completed.

Schedule

The 3rd graders are with me for half of the school day. They start out with Ms. Stapel in the morning (their home room). I get them after our morning announcements and bring them to my room (the music room), except for Wednesdays and Fridays when I will take them to Mass after announcements. Then, the students stay with me all morning until we go to lunch. After lunch and recess, Ms. Stapel will get the students and have them for the rest of the afternoon, unless they have specials.

Classroom Behavior Plan

In our classroom, the students are expected to “Give me 5.” This means that they are aware of and check their hands, eyes, feet, mouths, and ears. If students choose not to follow our classroom rules, they will be given two warnings. On the third offense, students will go to our class “Safe Seat” and fill out a “Think Sheet.” The Safe Seat is just a desk in the room where a student sits that is off on its own. The student sits there in order to be away from other students and the situation where the behavior was occurring. This is intended to keep the student “safe” from making the same choices. The Think Sheet that the student fills out is a form stating what he/she did, who it affected, and what he/she will do differently next time. I talk with the student about his/her behavior, and the student takes the Think Sheet home to be signed by a parent

and returned to school the next day. In order to hold students accountable for their actions, their only consequence for their behavior is to discuss the Think Sheet with their parents, get it signed, and return it the following day. If a student fails to return the Think Sheet, he/she will owe five minutes of recess. I will then email parents about what occurred, and the Think Sheet will again be sent home for parents to sign. If a student engages in a serious, threatening, or violent behavior, then instead of following our classroom behavior plan, we will follow the guidelines set forth in the SVS handbook. Also, if our classroom behavior plan isn't successful for controlling a student's behavior, or if the student is continuously having behavior issues that interfere with learning, other arrangements may need to be made.

To reward positive behavior, students will have hole punch cards they keep at their desks. When students are doing an exceptional job following our classroom rules, they will get a hole punch on their cards. Students will earn small rewards when they receive ten hole punches on their cards. They will also get to pick from our class treasure box when they fill up an entire card (twenty hole punches).

Bulletin Board/Calendar/Fast Direct

On Fast Direct you can access my bulletin board and our class calendar. My bulletin board is where you will find my weekly newsletters and other information, including this document. I usually send an email through Fast Direct when I upload a new newsletter, but if I forget to send an email reminder, just note that newsletters are posted every Friday. Our class calendar is also updated weekly on Fridays and shows test dates and other important dates, like dress down days. Your child's grades can be seen on Fast Direct as well. I try to update grades at least weekly.