

# 2011–2012

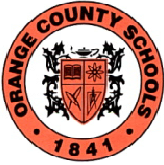


## PARENT GUIDE *to Elementary Curriculum*

# 3

## Third Grade

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS  
MATHEMATICS  
SCIENCE  
SOCIAL STUDIES  
INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS  
ARTS EDUCATION  
HEALTHFUL LIVING  
WORLD LANGUAGE



# Orange County Board of Education

200 East King Street  
Hillsborough, NC 27278

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August, 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This Orange County Schools Curriculum Guide reflects the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* for students in grades K-5. It is designed to give you an overview of the content students study in grades K-5 as well as the variety skills students need in order to be successful. More in-depth information can be found about specific subjects and skills by visiting the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction at its web site [www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum).

It is important to understand that reading and writing skills are process skills that students learn and master in grades K-12; consequently, there are no grade specific skills or month-by-month sequential topics in reading and writing. Instead, it is the level of complexity with which students are able to analyze, interpret, generalize, and hypothesize that changes from grade to grade. As students advance from grade to grade the text levels that students will read and work with across content areas becomes more difficult. Finally, vocabulary and grammatical techniques become more advanced as students progress.

Through this Guide, we hope to provide you with enough information to enable you to discuss curriculum with your child and his/her teacher(s). The Orange County Schools teachers are happy to discuss curriculum in depth so that you have knowledge of how our district works to ensure that each student reaches her/his potential.

The Standards-Based Report Card for Grades K-5, which we began using in 2006-2007, reports more accurately how students are performing in relation to state described proficiency standards. Should you desire more information about how the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and the Orange County Report Card align, please ask your child's teacher to discuss this with you.

Finally, we believe that all students deserve the best teachers and the best educational opportunities possible. To this end, we in Orange County Schools commit ourselves to plan and deliver a purposeful program of study that challenges all students to be learners and generators of knowledge and maximizes their many and varied abilities.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information or assistance to you, your family, and your Orange County Schools student(s).

Sincerely,

Denise Morton, Ed.D, Chief Academic Officer

***Lisa Ann Napp***

Lisa Ann Napp, Ed.D, Director of Elementary Instruction

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Third grade students apply the foundational skills they learned in the primary grades automatically and flexibly to decode and comprehend fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. They use critical thinking skills which they apply strategically across the disciplines to comprehend and clarify information and ideas. Third graders become increasingly independent in their use of English Language Arts skills and strategies to:

- **Read with fluency, expression, and comprehension**
- **Apply strategies to recognize words, learn new words, and construct meaning from text(s)**
- **Extend and refine understanding as they participate in group discussion**
- **Expand vocabulary through wide reading, word study, and discussion.**

Third graders become increasingly independent and flexible in their use of oral communication skills and strategies. They listen actively by:

- **Facing the speaker**
- **Making eye contact**
- **Asking questions to clarify the message or gain additional information**
- **Considering the impact of word choice on spoken language.**

Third grade students compose fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama for a variety of purposes and audiences. They use written language to:

- **Present information in a sequenced, logical manner**
- **Share information and ideas**
- **Recount or narrate**
- **Answer open-ended questions**
- **Make a personal response**
- **Report information on topic.**

As students write, they:

- **Identify topics of personal interest for writing**
- **Explore the craft/techniques of authors studied in class**
- **Compose a draft that conveys major ideas and maintains focus on the topic**
- **Revise target elements (ideas, descriptive words and phrases, sequence of events, word choice)**
- **Produce work that follows the conventions of particular genres**
- **Use correct grammar including capitalization, subject/verb agreement, and spelling**
- **Write for a variety of audiences and purposes**
- **Understand the five features of effective writing: focus, organization, support and elaboration, style, and conventions**

Students spend from two to three hours each day engaged in a study of English Language Arts.



## MATHEMATICS

Within the K-8 grade span, the North Carolina Standard Course of Study is organized around five strands; they are: Number and Operations, Measurement, Geometry, Data Analysis and Probability, and Algebra. The content becomes increasingly complex and the expectations for students become more demanding as students progress from grade to grade.

Third grade students are expected to:

- **Model, identify, and compute with whole numbers through 9,999**
- **Recognize and use standard units of metric and customary measurement**

## MATHEMATICS – continued

- **Recognize and use basic geometric properties of two- and three-dimensional figures**
- **Understand and use data and simple probability concepts**
- **Recognize, determine, and represent patterns and simple mathematical relationships**

Students spend approximately one hour each day engaged in a study of mathematics.



## SCIENCE

In third grade science, students continue to study the unifying concepts begun in grades K-2 of evidence, explanation, measurement, order, and organization around the universal theme of change. A second universal theme, systems, is introduced in third grade. Students learn that a system is an interrelated group of objects that form a functioning unit; that the natural and human designed world is complex; therefore, investigation must be done around the components of a system such as the planets of the solar system, the human body systems, or the plant system.

Third grade students conduct investigations, gather evidence and grow in their understanding of:

- **Plant growth and adaptation**
- **Properties of soil**
- **Earth, moon and sun relationships**
- **Form and function of the skeletal and muscle systems of the human body.**



## SOCIAL STUDIES

Third grade students are introduced to the concept of leadership within a community. They study diversity of groups within a community, how cultures, tradition, and religion contribute to a community. As students compare familiar communities with unfamiliar ones they consider problems that leaders and communities confront and how conflicts are resolved.

Because third grade students are more proficient readers, literature is integrated into social studies so that students make connections between character traits literary heroes possesses such as courage, perseverance, integrity, responsibility, judgment, and contributions leaders make to their communities. Third grade students:

- **Characterize qualities of good citizenship**
- **Identify people who made a difference in their community**
- **Analyze multiple roles that individuals perform**
- **Analyze the roles of real and fictional heroes in shaping the culture of a community**
- **Explain how economic and geographic relationships shape leadership within a community.**



## INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Students in the third grade are introduced to categorizing sources of information, applying appropriate strategies when reading for pleasure or information, using technology tools, doing collaborative research, and understanding safety and responsible use of information and technology resources.

The third grade curriculum provides structured, supervised learning experiences that require students to:

- **Classify various types of resources as appropriate or inappropriate for purposes.**

- **Classify resources as reliable or not reliable.**
- **Use visual and literacy cues to locate relevant information in a given text (e.g., bold print, italics, bullets, etc).**
- **Compare the characteristics of genres to develop diverse reading habits.**
- **Use a variety of technology tools to gather data and information (e.g., Web-based resources, e-books, online communication tools, etc.).**
- **Use a variety of technology tools to organize data and information (e.g., word processor, graphic organizer, audio and visual recording, online collaboration tools, etc.).**
- **Use technology tools to present data and information (multimedia, audio and visual recording, online collaboration tools, etc.).**
- **Implement a research process by collaborating effectively with other students.**
- **Understand the guidelines for responsible use of technology hardware.**
- **Understand ethical behavior (copyright, not plagiarizing, netiquette) when using resources.**
- **Understand internet safety precautions (personal information, passwords, etc.).**



## MUSIC

The purpose of the music program is to provide experiences and opportunities which develop the child's creativity, growth in musical knowledge and skills, and an appreciation for a variety of cultures and musical styles. The focus in grades K-2 is to create, respond to, and perform music. In grades 3-5, these skills are refined through more in-depth study. The music program reinforces the total curriculum by providing integrated learning opportunities.

Children engage in creating, performing, and responding to music. Singing, playing instruments, creating, moving, and listening to music enable them to acquire musical skills. Along with these capabilities, students in grades 3-5 begin to develop the more complex skills of evaluation, analysis, and appreciation of music. Opportunities for development of essential knowledge and attitudes are provided through a variety of activities and experiences.

Third graders begin focusing on reading and writing music. This, in conjunction with a detailed study of instrument families, prepares them for the annual concert performed by the North Carolina Symphony.



## VISUAL ARTS

Students in third grade are introduced to the four basic areas of the visual arts: art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. Students display increased manual dexterity. They use a broader range of subject matter and media. Ideas which have an impact on their art are incorporated from a variety of sources to include individual readings out of books, magazines, and reference materials. They grow more sophisticated in depicting movement, relationships, and emotions in their work. Students develop a sense of history, including an ability to distinguish between art created by different cultures. Students begin to enjoy knowing and sharing interesting facts about various artists and the times in which they lived. Class discussion about artwork should show greater verbal fluency, the incorporation of selected art vocabulary, and a focus on expressing oneself in a positive manner.

Third grade students begin to use their knowledge of the elements of art in combination with the principles of design. They also begin a more in-depth study of artists and their artwork.

## HEALTHFUL LIVING

A comprehensive healthful living education program is designed to help each student develop pro-active health promotion behaviors. Students should develop positive attitudes toward regular physical activity and its effect on health. The following educational descriptors are reflective of the goals and objectives found in the K-3 healthful living education curriculum:

### **By the end of grade three:**

Students will be aware of the important health risks for their age group and will comprehend some of the major influences on their own health, especially including the role of their own behaviors in regard to eating breakfast and balanced meals; rest and exercise; using seat belts; responding to traffic, fire, and other warning signs, sounds, and symbols; avoiding burns and getting help in an emergency; and the impact of substances, including alcohol and tobacco, on their lives; identify social and psychological contributions of physical activity.

Students will be able to demonstrate ways in which they can manage stress; be responsible for their own behaviors; cope with fear, embarrassment and failure; recognize and respond appropriately to teasing, aggression and bullying; resolve conflict; cooperate, share, and respecting the rights of others; know safe practices, class rules and procedures and apply them with little or no effort.

Students will know and understand the value of being physically fit and the types of activities that contribute to total fitness; express feelings with challenges; be aware that choosing to be physically active is a conscious decision and personal choice for both enjoyment and health-related benefits. Students will be able to demonstrate fundamental motor skills; develop and refine creative movements; demonstrate manipulative skills; work cooperatively with others to complete a task; display appropriate behaviors during social situations; express an enjoyment for movement experiences; and want to participate in community activities.

## Healthful Living Focus Areas – Grade 3

- Coping with loss and grief
- Communicable and non-communicable diseases
- Injury Prevention
- Nutrition labels
- Differentiating between portions and servings
- Dangers of tobacco and other drugs
- Catching, throwing, striking, dancing, and basic tumbling
- Creating movement sequences
- Develop understanding of the components of fitness and healthy living



## WORLD LANGUAGE

In the Elementary School Foreign Language Program, the primary goal is the development of listening and speaking skills and cultural awareness through concrete experiences. Because language acquisition begins with listening, successful language learning activities emphasize comprehension rather than speaking at the beginning stages.

Successful language learning activities involve students in interpersonal communication as they learn songs, recite poems, and give oral commands. At this level, reading and writing are not introduced; instead, emphasis is placed on the oral language necessary for students to become good readers and writers later on.



## MODIFIED CURRICULUM

Because some students learn at a more rapid pace than others, because some students come to school who speak a language other than English, and because some students require additional assistance to be successful in learning the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, accommodations are made which modify and/or adapt the curriculum to meet students' needs. Students who qualify for accommodations may have extended time to complete assignments or take tests or they may have the opportunity to work on assignments that have been compressed. The pace of the lessons may be slowed down or increased depending on students' needs.

## STATE ASSESSMENTS GIVEN IN THIRD GRADE

- **Third Grade Pretest**  
**Components include:**  
    **Reading**  
    **Math**
  
- **End-of-Grade Test (EOG)**  
**Components include:**  
    **Reading**  
    **Math – Calculator Active**  
    **Calculator Inactive**

