

**THIRD GRADE
CURRICULUM**

VILLA ACADEMY CURRICULUM INFORMATION

THIRD GRADE

READING / SPELLING

We provide a literature-based program, direct instruction, practice, and integration of reading, grammar, and spelling skills. Our spelling program, the Rebecca Sitton Sourcebook integrates the 355 most frequently used words into daily literacy activities. We use the literature circle model to analyze characters, settings, plot, vocabulary, and author's intent, in a discussion based format. To encourage the habit of independent reading, students are expected to read at least two free choice books of appropriate level each trimester. Students then have the opportunity to share these books with the class.

WRITING

Integrated with our reading program, we teach writing through a workshop model. Throughout the year we explore the writing traits of ideas, word choice, fluency, voice, organization, and conventions and work on presentation. Writing projects are designed to enhance their imaginations while securing their basic writing skills. In conjunction with teacher assessment, students will learn and practice self-assessment. We use laptops as a facilitator for publishing some of the children's finished works. Students also learn to form cursive letters correctly, and how to transfer handwriting skills to all written work.

RELIGION

Students discover the role of Church as a community. They study the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent, and learn about the many forms of prayer. Enrichment activities may include Saints and the Feast Days, Mother Cabrini's life, the history of Villa Academy, and activities to discover the general contents of the Bible. Students attend liturgies and prayer services during the year, and are responsible as a grade level for preparing and planning for one liturgy or prayer service per year. Textbook: *Blest Are We* by Silver Burdett Ginn Religion

MATH

The *Everyday Mathematics* program, guided by standards set by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), encourages students to become math "thinkers" not just "number movers." Along with the reinforcement of math facts, students are engaged in higher level conceptual reasoning skills. Through hands-on activities, challenges, and games, students become aware of the process of problem solving.

Core concept/skill areas include:

- Number Sense
- Computation
- Math Sentences
- Consumer Math
- Geometry
- Measurements
- Tangrams
- Magic Squares
- Rational Numbers
- Problem Solving
- Geoboard

SCIENCE

The science program helps reinforce the writing program by teaching students how to research, organize, and write non-fiction writing.

Major topics of focus in Third Grade science are:

- *Health*: students learn about the working systems of the human body.
- *Earth Science*: investigation of the solar system.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students explore the history of Seattle by examining the people and events that helped shape this diverse community.

Children choose individual events and people from Seattle's history to research and share their findings.

We use Storypath to understand the development of a new community.

Students explore current social and political topics using Time For Kids.

SPECIALISTS

Third Grade students participate in a varied schedule and see specialists in the following areas:

Art: 60 minutes — *once a week*

French: 30 minutes — *twice a week*

Library: 40 minutes — *once a week*

Music: 30 minutes — *twice a week*

PE: 30 minutes — *twice a week*

Technology: 45 minutes — *once a week*

LIBRARY

The goal of our program is to develop students who value learning and have the skills, strategies, and processes to be independent users of information. The library curriculum provides learning opportunities for students to develop skills in information literacy, literature appreciation, and responsible library behaviors.

Information Literacy and the Research Process

- Identify central question and formulate 3 sub questions
- Develop pre search strategies
- Use key words to locate relevant materials and text features to find relevant information
- Interpret, evaluate, and record information
- Take notes, paraphrase and summarize key ideas
- Sort and organize information to answer sub and central questions
- Create a product that demonstrates understanding of information

Literature Appreciation and Reading for Meaning

- Respond, select and evaluate nominees for various awards
- Compare and contrast story elements and motifs in various versions of folktales
- Summarize events, ideas and information
- Identify characteristics of various genres
- Respond to a variety of literature representing different perspectives, cultures and traditions

Library Responsibilities

- Review organization of resources
- Locate resources using search stations and call numbers
- Select, use, and return resources
- Understand the fair use of resources

TECHNOLOGY

Once a week, Lower School students come to Villa's iMac computer lab to build their computer literacy skills and experiment with a range of programs, applications and equipment. Assigned projects undertaken in this class integrate with the students' classroom curriculum throughout the school year.

The world of the computer lab starts to widen a bit as students enter Second and Third Grade! Using the more complex components of *KidPix*, students learn to create slide shows and import graphic images. For word processing, students work with *EasyBook Deluxe* that allows them to create and print in a book format. *Kidspiration*, a visual mapping program, is introduced for organizing information in many creative ways. Using Internet research, students are directed to specific sites that are carefully chosen to be kid friendly.

FRENCH

The French program presents language in meaningful situations and builds continuity with the development of specific themes. Students use the language to communicate and to express. By incorporating Total Physical Response (TPR) and storytelling methods, students respond with physical activity to increasingly complex teacher commands. This develops oral comprehension and facilitates language acquisition and retention.

A variety of methods are used, including a whole language method and limited immersion. The majority of class time is conducted in French.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Third grade students are introduced to more complex activities such as Frisbee games, volleyball, soccer, basketball and floor hockey. We continue to focus on lifelong fitness and promote sportsmanship, self-improvement, individual growth and teamwork. Students are evaluated primarily on effort and attitude.

MUSIC

The purpose of our music program is to expose students to a wide range of musical experiences so they may develop a foundation for lifelong appreciation of music. This is accomplished by providing students with learning experiences so they develop the skills described by the Association for the Supervision of Curriculum Development (ASCD) benchmarks while learning concepts related to the elements of music. The activities designed to provide such experiences are singing, playing recorders, Orff and other percussion instruments, moving to music, reading music, listening, and performing.

ART

The objective of the Kindergarten through Third Grade visual arts program is to encourage artistic and aesthetic growth through teaching observation, use of a variety of art media to express and communicate, application of the creative process to solve problems, understanding and use of art elements and concepts, and the appreciation and enjoyment of the artistic process. Art history and cultural arts are also an integral part of students' art curriculum.