

Ahoy Mateys!

Welcome to 3rd Grade where we learn and strive to be like PIRATES!

Wait, I know that does not sound like a positive thing, right? Well, learning like a pirate has nothing to do with being a stereotypical, Johnny Depp swaggering pirate (even though we all love that). Instead, learning like a pirate has everything to do with spirit. To quote David Burgess, who wrote the book Teach Like a Pirate, he stated, "Pirates are daring, adventurous, and willing to set forth on uncharted territories...They reject the status quo and refuse to conform to any society that stifles creativity and independence. They are entrepreneurs who take risks and are willing to travel to the ends of the earth for what they value. Although fiercely independent, they travel with and embrace a diverse crew. If you're willing to live by the code, commit to the voyage, and pull your share of the load, then you're free to set sail."

That is how I want my students to be; free to set sail, leaders willing to take risks, and sail their ship with skill, even through rough waters. That is why we strive to live up to a certain code in third grade. Being a pirate is an acronym that means that we strive to be:

Polite
Informed
Responsible
And
Totally
Engaged
Students



Religion

Truly religion is at the core of everything we do every day, and it weaves itself into all of our curriculum and in the ways we interact with one another. We begin each day with student lead prayer, pray a decade of the rosary daily, and attend mass together as a class at least twice a month. We focus on the study of the mass, studying the meaning behind the prayers that the students know by rote memory, and we learn about the hierarchy and structure of the church, and the basic foundations of our Catholic faith.

Math

Pirates need to do more than to be able to count their doubloons! In third grade math we meet the Common Core Standards using a combination of two texts, Saxon Math and Go Math. The combination of both allow the students to reach the new levels of critical thinking required by the Common Core. There is a strong emphasis on multiplication, division, fractions, algebra, and critical problem solving throughout the year.

The following websites are excellent resources to assist students and parents with practice at home:

Speed Math

The goal of Speed Math Deluxe is to create an equation, as quickly as possible, from the four digits the computer gives you, using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

<http://education.jlab.org/smdeluxe/index.html>

Mathmagician

Drill that times students, give correct answers, and provides percentage correct at end of drill.

<http://www.oswego.org/ocsd-web/games/Mathmagician/cathymath.html>

Visual Fractions

3rd-6th grade; tutorial that models fractions with number lines or circles.

<http://www.visualfractions.com/>

Math Baseball from Fun Brain

Select type of problem and level.

<http://www.funbrain.com/math/>

National Library of Virtual Manipulatives

Manipulative math activities for preschool – 12th grade from Utah State University.

<http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html>

AAA Math

K-8th grade; interactive math lessons.

<http://www.aaamath.com/>

Enchanted Mind Brainbenders

Math puzzles with solutions.

http://www.enchantedmind.com/html/puzzles/brainbenders/brainbender_puzzles.html

Enchanted Mind Interactives

Creative puzzles for exercising both sides of the brain.

http://www.enchantedmind.com/html/puzzles/interactive_puzzles/creative_java_puzzles.html

Language Arts

The third grade language arts program follows the Common Core Standards and consists of reading comprehension skills for all varieties of texts, reading fluently with appropriate expression and inflection, writing and speaking. The school year ends with the class reading of a novel so that the skills the students practice all year of questioning the author's purpose, prediction, comparing and contrasting, and the study of plot and character development can be used on a larger scale.

Writing

Students in third grade write better than the average pirate. They continue to develop their writing with the Six Traits of Writing Program, and also instruction that includes skill based instruction in grammar and mechanics, exercises in editing and revision, weekly or monthly writing assessments and cumulative projects. With consistent review and application, third grade writing evolves from individual paragraphs to a three paragraph essay format. Students write for a variety of purposes, revising and editing their work to improve coherence and clarity of purpose. Third graders also apply more sophisticated grammar and mechanics to their writing, including complex sentence structure and more specific, creative vocabulary. Through consistent review and application of the writing process, students in third grade produce polished essays with three related paragraphs, grade appropriate vocabulary, and spelling.

Social Studies

Third grade social studies focuses on communities. We begin with the world community, as any good pirate would do, we study the globe, make maps, and learn how to write detailed directions not only for a global geography assignment where each student has to write a description and directions to a mystery place on the globe, but we culminate the unit with a special "Pirate Day." On Pirate Day our pirate dress in their best pirate garb and create their own treasure hunt for their crew mates that takes them seeking treasure all over the school campus.

After our focus on the world community, we focus on how the world community influenced our local Native American tribes in California. We look at this interaction through both perspectives; the explorer, and the Native American. To help the students live the difference, we take several field trips. First, through the Grays Harbor Historical Society's educational program, we are able to take the students out for a three hour sail on historical replica ships from the late seventeen to early eighteen hundreds to learn about life at sea as a sailor and what trading ships did to survive .

<http://historicalseaport.org/our-programs/education-programs/>

Next, our class visits Indian Grinding Rock State Park to get a sense of what life was like in a Native American community before the arrival of European explorers.

The lives of local Native Americans and how they interacted with some Europeans is brought to life by our third field trip, an overnight trip to live and experience history at Fort Ross. It is at Fort Ross that students have the opportunity to experience the joys of history as fully active participants. After preparing for a month in class, researching their historical character, and learning about how the Native Americans, Russian settlers, and Spanish Settlers interacted, the students spend a day and a night in costume and role play the lives of either a native Kashaya/Pomo or Coast Miwok, or as a Russian, Kodiak, or Aleutian settler who are part of the Russian American Company. Students step back in time as soon as they begin a hike in to the fort. Once there, the students complete historically accurate jobs, eat historically accurate food, dance, and create memories that will last a lifetime.

Lastly in Social Studies, we focus on our own local community of Sacramento. We study what brought people to Sacramento, but more importantly to our community history is why people stayed, and what they did in order to be able to stay. To experience this, we culminate our studies with a trip to the Underground Tours in Old Sacramento so that the students can appreciate what was done to preserve our local boom town so that it became the state capitol that is today.

Science

Our first adventure in science begins in the first trimester with the study of ecosystems from large to small. We culminate our ecosystems unit with an exploration and study of worms, how they live, and how they help our planet. Our second focus in science is knowing and understanding the three states of matter, how to measure, then describe them, and compare them. Our understanding of matter then allows us to explore electrical, light, and heat energy and how they exist and work in the world around us. We complete science labs with magnets, slime, Finally, we conclude our studies with a focus on the planets, comets, and the solar system.



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