

## Third Grade **כיתה ג**

As the first Upper Elementary year, third grade both continues to build upon the skills and competencies that students bring with them from second grade and, in significant ways, represents a new beginning. Students use the skills they learned in the lower grades – reading in English and Hebrew, writing, and basic math operations – as tools for acquiring new knowledge. They reinforce and extend their schoolwork with daily homework assignments; they undertake longer-term projects and work, individually and in small groups, with greater independence; and they assume greater responsibility for their own materials and belongings. They also undertake their first yearlong sustained community service project as a class, organizing and coordinating the annual, school-wide *tzedekah* drive.

### **ART**

In third grade, students learn to observe and offer comment on other's work. They learn the language of art, what to look for, and how to offer feedback and critique in a constructive and respectful manner. With this in mind, a central unit of the year is a study of Georgia O'Keefe's work. They look at her large flower paintings, and explore patterns in nature in drawing and painting. Other themes covered during the year include symmetry, patterns in nature, and three dimensional work with clay and/or fabric.

Work relating to the general third grade curriculum is sprinkled throughout the curriculum. Third graders take an annual November trip to the Canstruction exhibit in the Financial District, and explore the sculptural designs created entirely from cans of food.

### עברית HEBREW

Third grade students are divided into groups according to Hebrew language proficiency. This arrangement makes it possible for students to study at the level best suited to their needs.

The language series on which the program in these grades is based, and which provides the continuity from class to class and year to year, is *Aleph Bet Yeladim Lomdim Ivrit*. A sequential program, *Aleph Bet Yeladim Lomdim Ivrit* follows a structured linguistic progression and integrates the four language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – in each unit. Based on the most current understanding of language acquisition in children, it exposes students to multiple genres, including stories, conversations, poems, songs, albums, journals, bulletin board notices, and the like. Students are challenged to speak and write, using the language patterns they are learning in both familiar and new contexts. Additional reading materials and language exercises developed by the school complement the published units and ensure that students have

ample opportunity to practice their emerging language forms and structures within a naturally occurring, functional context.

In the advanced classes, students read short stories, write extensively, creating travel pamphlets and short stories, and speak in full sentences using verbs in several conjugations, in all tenses, and in active and passive voices. In addition, they prepare and perform their own plays and make oral presentations.

In the intermediate groups, students review and reinforce their basic reading skills and learn to conjugate verbs in present tense and the infinitive form; in addition, they study agreement among nouns, verbs, and adjectives in gender and number. For all students, spoken Hebrew is reinforced through classroom routines and classroom phrases.

## **JEWISH STUDIES**

In third grade, Torah study focuses on *B'reshit* (Genesis) 18-25, continuing the lives of Abraham and Sarah and moving on to Isaac, Rebecca, and Jacob. Working in *chevruta* pairs and guided by their teachers, students read, comprehend, discuss, analyze, and interpret the text, and pose “juicy” (probing) questions and share answers about it.

Among the grammatical skills students learn are identifying the subject and verb of a sentence; recognizing direct speech; transforming the tenses of verbs using *vav*

*hahipuch* (the conversive vav); and analyzing complex verbs into *shorashim* (verb roots) and suffixes.

A new subject in third grade is *Pitgam* (rabbinic sayings), which serves as an introduction to *Mishnah*. During the year, students study a rabbinic saying each week, mostly relating to a Jewish value or a moral dilemma. The value or dilemma is often contextualized by means of a written scenario, a story, or a skit. Students then read and comprehend the *pitgam* using familiar vocabulary and *shorashim* (verb roots). Following a discussion about the meaning and possible interpretations of the text, the value or dilemma itself, and its application to students' lives, the students prepare a page illustrating the *pitgam*.

In *t'filah*, the third grade students complete their study of the *Amidah*, learning the full text of each *b'rachah*, identifying its main themes based on key words, class discussions, and activities, uncovering its personal significance to them, and illustrating it in their individual *siddurim*. In addition to the *Amidah*, third grade is also introduced to new sections of the Torah service, *Hallel*, and *Kabbalat Shabbat* and additional prayers for the high holidays, *Sukkot*, *Chanukah*, and Purim.

The third graders' insights into and knowledge of *chagim* (Jewish holidays) continues to deepen as they both revisit previous years' experiences and introduce new aspects: studying basic texts from Rabbinic literature and the Torah. Students are exposed to different interpretations of these texts and form how they relate to our own observance of the holidays.

In Israel studies, the students study the various cultural groups within Israel and learn about their culture.

## **LANGUAGE ARTS**

Writing and reading workshops are coordinated throughout the year. In writing workshop, students use their own experiences to learn the craft of writing both from the writing of professional authors and by living the writer's life themselves. In reading workshop, they learn to live rich, literate lives by working from their chosen books to become expert readers and to understand the world complexly. At the same time, their teachers model the thinking, language, behaviors, and strategies of successful writers and readers and build communities in their classrooms in which the students can engage in reading and writing text in active, individual, and personal ways.

In reading workshop, students continue to build upon the comprehension and decoding strategies that they learned in the lower grades. Units studied during the year include character, non-fiction, comprehension strategies, and book clubs. The students keep reader's notebooks to help keep track of their thoughts and to record their predictions, inferences, and interpretations. In independent book club discussions, students develop ideas and insights that arise from their reading and learn to extend their conversations.

In writing workshop, students learn to build upon the writing process that they experienced in earlier grades. In a workshop setting, they keep writer's notebooks in

which they record entries from their personal experience; choose writing “seeds” that seem promising; expand, extend, and build upon them with detail and description; share their writing with each other and respond to each other’s writing; and edit, revise, and publish their work. They gain experience in writing sentences, paragraphs, and multi-paragraph pieces; work on developing strong beginnings; and proofread for conventional spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Students also participate in writing clubs, where they experiment with various genres.

Students use many styles of writing in third grade, such as biographies, articles, informational books, reading response, and across-curriculum writing, including writing based on research. They also learn to write and read cursive script using the Universal Publishing handwriting system.

The following routines support and reinforce a mastery of written language: ongoing class work and homework on spelling: a word wall of high-frequency words, spelling explorations based on sounds, direct instruction in spelling rules and patterns, word puzzles, and independent work on personal spelling mistakes.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Third grade continues to place a balanced emphasis on understanding mathematical concepts as well as speed and accuracy in computation. Students work both individually and cooperatively with partners.

Key goals for the year include understanding multiplication and division, studying multiplication tables up to 10, adding and subtracting two- and three-digit numbers, and explaining solution strategies orally, in writing, and with pictures. To help students understand new concepts, tangible objects, physical models (e.g., number lines, 100's and 300's charts), and arrays are used; to help build fluency in computation, students use flash cards, mental math, and 60-second challenges.

Third graders study the following topics:

- Review and extension of basic skills
- Addition and subtraction of two- and three-digit numbers
- Skip counting
- Multiplication and division
- An introduction to fractions
- Measurement with standard units
- Problem solving using alternative strategies
- Math puzzles
- Multi-step math projects
- Money
- Geometry
- Graphing and surveys

**MUSIC**

In third grade, students are introduced to the recorder. They learn to read, write, and sing (solfege) the notes using the European method of do re mi (A B C). Among the elements they learn are measures, sharp notes, and 1/8 notes. The recorder study also facilitates playing in ensemble and being able to listen to others while playing. They also cover elements of rhythm, composition and ear training. A highlight of the year is preparation for and participation in the Carnegie Hall-sponsored Link Up! program, which focuses on guiding students through learning recorder and playing with others. The unit culminates in a field trip to Carnegie Hall, where students play in an “audience ensemble” of thousands along with the orchestra.

Throughout the year, students are also exposed to different kinds of music, from Baroque to Classical, and Romantic to modern. They also study work from composers from different periods, and create dances and movement in relation to music.

Students of Kitah Gimel continue to build their repertoire of Israeli and Jewish songs, including holiday songs. Students participate actively in the annual school concert in the spring. They perform both a vocal selection and one utilizing the recorder.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students in third grade continue to strengthen their basic sports and movement skills. Soccer, kickball and softball are among the team sports that are played at this age. As they are bigger, stronger athletes and now more familiar with the rules of different games, students engage in more gameplay than before. At the core of everything we do, is the expectation of *menschlichkeit* - respectful interactions and sportsman-like play. When needed we stop play for a “teachable moment” and, through discussion explore what happened, why it happened, and what, if anything, could have be done differently. Third grade is serious but fun!



## **THEMATIC STUDIES, SCIENCE & SOCIAL SCIENCE**

The theme in third grade is culture. The students begin the year by inquiring, “What is culture?” Looking at both environmental and cultural influences, they explore a variety of constructs, including language, art, religion, values, and survival needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. They investigate the connections between people and the physical characteristics of the place in which they live.

Following a unit on the geography of the United States, in which students learn to read maps, the focus shifts to in-depth studies for the class’s exploration of culture. The students research specific topics of their choice relating to the environment and elements of countries and cultures of the world, such as clothing, language, values, history, and food. In their research, they learn to read and comprehend non-fiction, identify the main idea of a paragraph, take notes and produce a final product that is several complete paragraphs long. In the process, they learn to manage time and materials, organize an extended project, and work independently.

The children express their understanding of culture in writing, through a creative component, and in an oral presentation. These products are on display at Culture Day, the culminating presentation that is a highlight of their culture study and of the third grade year.

In science, the students develop an understanding of soil and landforms tying together the theme of culture and the way the environment impacts how and where we live. They will understand what basic landforms are, how they form, and how different forces shape them over time. Layers of Earth, rocks, volcanoes, and earthquake patterns are addressed, as well as how weathering, erosion, and people shape the land. The second unit brings together the different elements of STEAM as the students engage in a unit on insects. They will learn basic STEAM and design skills in order to engineer an exoskeleton. Finally, the year culminates in an in-depth study of plants, specifically exploring how they grow. In addition to making observations and collecting data, students explore how varying conditions impact a plant's growth. Through these activities and experiments, students learn about scientific methodology and develop skills in scientific thinking.

## **CODING**

Students have a weekly coding class where they explore structures of code such as sequencing, loops, conditionals, and events. Students explore these concepts through a series of "unplugged" games and activities, as well as through iPad-based exercises using block-based languages. Students apply their understanding of coding through game design, digital illustrations, and programming robots to navigate obstacles and follow simple commands.