



3rd Grade Curriculum

Religion

The Concordia series, “One in Christ,” lays the foundation for faith development for third grade at St. Paul. Instruction in this series takes place through key Lutheran teachings that coincide with our Church year. These themes include: The Bible as God’s Word, the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), prayer, being followers of Christ in our daily lives, the ways God brings His grace to us (Means of Grace), responding to others in love, and sharing Christ with them through our words and actions.

The ultimate faith instruction goal, however, is not merely to give students facts and information; but rather, it is to help the young people in our care understand that their relationship with Jesus should overflow into every area of their daily lives as Christians. Their faith in Christ should be personal, living, breathing, and evident in all they do.

Language Arts

The St. Paul curriculum for reading, comprehension, written expression, and proper use of the English language is extensive and has several components. There are also a good amount of overlap and practice opportunities among the different series in the Language Arts program. Those various pieces are described as follows:

Reading

In the third grade, children transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn”. The McGraw-Hill “Wonders” series exposes students to the various reading genres, such as folktales, historical fiction, realistic fiction, and expository text, to name a few. Along with the themes and essential questions for each week, these different types of literature are the foundation for reading instruction through the “Wonders” curriculum. As background is built for each theme, students’ prior knowledge is tapped to aid with interest and comprehension. Along with comprehension, other skills taught each week are vocabulary, phonics, and fluency.

Several trade books are also used to foster interest in reading and enrich vocabulary, fluency, and text analysis through book report projects. The Accelerated Reader program is also used to assist in comprehension and reading interest.

Language

The Christian-based Abeka Company is the main source for instruction in the following areas: parts of speech, word usage, punctuation, sentence structure, research skills, and composition. This series provides students with a broad scope of language arts skills practice, and formats in its lessons within the context of the Christian faith, which is central to all we do at St. Paul.

Spelling

Pearson’s “Spelling Workout” is the chosen method for targeting and practicing several of the more difficult spelling patterns at the third grade level. Some of those patterns include short and long vowel sounds, consonant blends, digraphs, plurals (regular and irregular), as well as homophones. Proofreading and writing practice are built into each lesson.



Phonics

Modern Curriculum Press, part of the Pearson Learning Group, is the publisher of the third grade phonics series that gives students added phonemic support, an important building block for reading instruction. This teaching tool emphasizes phonemic awareness, sound to symbol connections, blending, work with syllable, and other word study skills. There are also many interesting themes and writing opportunities attached to each unit.

Handwriting

“A Reason for Handwriting” is the chosen curriculum for penmanship at St. Paul. This series practices the formation of each letter and then transitions students into actual word writing. While many schools have eliminated cursive writing instruction, we, at St. Paul, have chosen to continue the practice because there is evidence that students gain development of fine motor skills, along with better retention of written material as they use cursive. This series is also Christian-based, so students practice their cursive with Bible verses to further instill God’s Word into their lives.

Writing Workshop

There are many opportunities for expressive writing and editing built into the reading, language, and phonics series. Writing assignments are usually connected to the themes in the reading series, along with topics that are hopefully interesting and relatable to students.

Math

The most recent revision of Saxon Math guides our third grade math learning at St. Paul. The series begins with reviewing and strengthening number sense skills through the use of calendars, telling time, number lines, reading a thermometer, and ruler measurement. Understanding place value and reviewing basic addition and subtraction quickly move into adding/subtracting with multiple digits. Continuous repetition and expansion of counting patterns lead students into multiplication and division which is a main turning point in third grade math. Various geometry skills are highlighted in the later part of the year. All these various skills are taught through a variety of methods. Games, manipulatives, group work, and technology are often used to meet the different learning needs of each student.

The Houghton-Mifflin/Saxon math series does an excellent job of constantly reviewing prior skills and concepts throughout the entire year. The goal of training students to be logical math “thinkers” and apply math skills in their daily lives is evident in the way Saxon has structured their curriculum.

Michigan History

In third grade, the study of our unique and interesting State of Michigan is guided by the Our Michigan Adventure textbook, published by Hillsdale Educational Publishers, a Christian company, as well. Through various activities, students receive an overview of Michigan with the following topics: Michigan’s history, people, resources, transportation, economy, manufacturing, and government.

Various mapwork topics are also studied separately from the Michigan History series, although map skills are also covered in the text.

Science

The Christian-based Science and Health series by Abeka is the curriculum we follow at St. Paul. Recently revised, Abeka provides a fairly broad scope of science instruction with many hands-on demonstrations and experiments. The series begins with a comprehensive look at what science is along with the scientific method. Other areas of study include: God’s creation at work (physical science), the earth’s atmosphere and weather, the earth’s surface, the solar system, plants, animals and their habits, and the human body. All these topics are

tucked into the context of God as our spectacular, awe-inspiring Creator and how we fit into His creation.

Technology *(Departmentalized)*

Third graders will continue to learn keyboarding, striking, mouse manipulation, and letters and numbers by various exercises and games that are age-appropriate.

Art *(Departmentalized)*

Students will develop an appreciation of visual arts through a variety of age-appropriate art explorations. Individualism is encouraged as students employ various forms of media including pencil, pastel, charcoal, paint, paper, and sculpting materials. The elements of art including line, shape, color, value, space, and texture will be emphasized and utilized. Projects will also incorporate and consider the principles of design including balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity. A variety of craft projects incorporated will also inspire student creativity.

Music *(Departmentalized)*

The third graders build on concepts learned in previous grades as they advance in music, learning notes and rests in the treble clef and also being able to recreate the rhythms of a musical score. Third graders will also have the opportunity to participate in the Cantata Choir, a choir for grades 3-5, who performs in various church services and at the Christmas Concert.

Physical Education *(Departmentalized)*

Students will show signs of advanced beginner-competency in the following:

- *Locomotor* ability to run, leap vertical jump, horizontal jump, hop, skip, gallop, slide and land properly.
- *Object Control* to underhand roll/throw, dribble with hands/feet, kick, punt, catch, and under/over hand strike.
- *Fitness* in demonstrating power, strength, endurance, flexibility, aerobic capacity in the 1/3 mile run.

Students will show advanced beginner skill in the following games: Badminton, Pickleball, Bowling, Football, Frisbee, Golf, Handball, Floor Hockey, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, and Softball.