

A Comprehensive Literacy Block for K-5

Component	Description	K-2	3-5	Grouping Options
• Read-aloud	Teacher models the reading process by reading a variety of genres, as children listen, discuss and respond	Picture Books/Big Books Beginning Chapter Books Information Books Poetry	Picture Books Chapter Books Information Books Poetry	Whole
• Shared Reading and Writing	Teacher reads first for understanding; teacher and children reread together to develop fluency and focus on skills; teacher invites children to participate in writing a group message	Text is at/above independent reading level; Big Books, Picture Books, Anthology, poems, overheads	Chapter Books; magazine articles, poems, overheads	Whole (K-2) Paired reading (After Whole Group) Small Groups (3-5) Struggling Readers (3-5)
• Guided Reading and Writing	Teacher scaffolds and monitors children's application of problem-solving strategies for word recognition, word analysis, and comprehension; children read at their instructional reading level. Teacher scaffolds and monitors fluent phrasing and expression. Teacher scaffolds and confers with individuals in all phases of the writing process	Focus is on developing accuracy, automaticity, and expression (fluency) AND on comprehension and self-monitoring of these skills and strategies	Increased focus on comprehension and self-monitoring with Reciprocal Teaching, DRTA, and Think-alouds	Small Group Similar ability levels 1 on 1
Word Study	Children engage in a variety of hands-on activities to read and spell high frequency words and apply strategies for decoding and spelling	ABC Center, Making Words, letter tiles, Word Wall	Word Wall Making Big Words Focus on structural analysis	Whole Group Small Group Individual
• Independent Reading and Writing	Children self-select materials from a variety of genres, at their independent reading level; children work on all phases of the writing process; teacher confers with individual readers and writers, and conducts on-going assessments	Classroom library selections, browse boxes, books on tape, reading corner, S.S.R., D.E.A.R., writing center	Classroom library, Research Projects, computer center, S.S.R., and D.E.A.R.	Individual Pairs 1 on 1



Reading

Our reading program is genre-based and integrates the new Common Core State Standards. Students learn nine reading competencies that good readers use to understand what they are reading. Throughout the year, different genres, elements of fiction, and topics are studied through the lens of these competencies.

Units will include: Realistic Fiction, Nonfiction, Mayflower, Poetry, Fairy Tales, American Revolution, and a unit centered around studying common themes across texts.

The more students hear the vocabulary of the competencies, the better. You can use this vocabulary in your discussions with your child about what they are reading.

The eight competencies for fiction are grouped into three categories and are as follows:

What is the Author Saying?

Finding Evidence

- What are the most important details? What do you know about the characters, setting, problem? What does the author want us to know?

Big Ideas

- Explain what is happening in your own words. What is the big idea or lesson learned? How does the author show this through key details?

Analyze

- How does the character change throughout the story? How does the setting make a difference to the story?

How is the Author Saying It?

Word Choice

- What words paint a picture in your mind or show emotion or feeling?
What does the word mean based on other words in the sentence?

Text Structure

- How is the text organized? How does this part or section fit into the whole text? What is the genre and how do you know it?

Point of View/Purpose

- Who is the narrator, or who is speaking in this passage? What does the narrator/character care about? Do different characters have different points of view about _____?

Why is the Author Saying It?

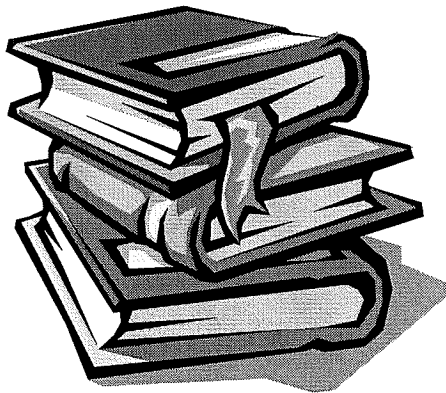
Compare/Contrast

- How is (character 1) the same as or different from (character 2)? Does the story remind you of anything else you have read? How is the message/theme of (story 1) the same as or different from (story 2)?

Integrate Diverse Media

- How do the illustrations (charts, photographs, etc.) add to meaning? How is the (live version, video) the same as or different from the text version?

**Please note that there are nine competencies for nonfiction!



Word Study

Word study "describes the teaching and learning experiences designed to help learners build understandings about how letters, sounds and words work" (Pinnelle & Fountas, 1998). Students will analyze the way words are formed, the relationships between words, and find patterns to help them in their spelling. Ultimately, it is not just about spelling the word correctly in that week's quiz; the goal is for students to be able to apply what they have learned in their reading and writing.

Word Study integrates whole group lessons as well as individual and pair work. The heart of each week is a sort where children find patterns in that set of words. Students will bring home a list to study at home on Monday, which is comprised of that week's sort. In addition to the patterned words, students will study high frequency words and homophones. We have begun implementing Word Study routines; the typical week's word study will look something like this:

Day	Routine	For example...
Monday	Skills, patterns and words are introduced. Modeled sort & individual sort	The three sounds of ed: /t/, /d/, /id/
Tuesday-Thursday	Practice patterns, homophones, and high frequency words	Individual written sort
Friday	Word Study Quiz	Quiz assesses words, patterns, homophones, and high frequency words

Homework: Students are responsible for studying their words and word patterns each week, in a way that works for them. A Spelling Bingo sheet is sent home with suggested activities. Students may turn in any written work they complete when studying.

Start the Writing Process

In Writing Workshop - (K - 5)

The children ...

- generate their own topics.
- choose forms to pursue:
fiction, poems, nonfiction, letters, etc.
- write about what they know.
- rewrite pieces they feel can be improved or
begin a new "vision" of a piece.
- may not choose to finish or revisit some pieces.
All work is saved and dated.
- learn to edit their own work.
- conference with the teacher to discuss pieces in progress.
- select pieces to publish (3 or 4 per term) and for
assessment.
- keep all writing in a notebook.
- share their writing with peers.
- can assess own work based on a preestablished rubric.

Structure of Writing Workshop

Mini lesson - 15 minutes

Writing - 35 minutes

Author's chair (closing) - 10 minutes

{Sharing of piece - Comments reflect understanding of audience}

Mini Lessons may include:

Punctuation usage

Spelling strategies

Mood

Author's voice

Alliteration

Descriptive words

Topics selection

Character development

Similes/metaphors

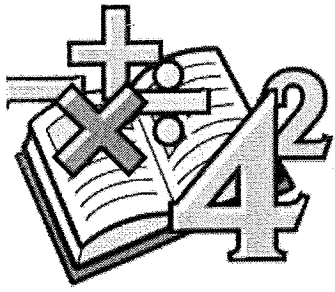
Genre

Lead sentences

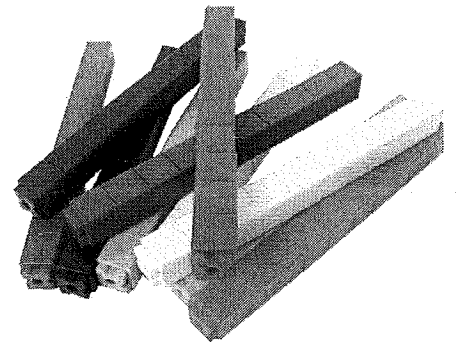
Editing

Point of view

Purpose



TERC Math



We are looking forward to another exciting year in third grade Math. We continue to use TERC's *Investigations in Number, Data, and Space* curriculum. *Investigations* supports all students as they learn to reason, problem-solve, and think mathematically. We continuously work on explaining mathematical thinking through talking, drawing, and writing. Lessons are designed to engage students in key mathematical content as they develop number sense, learn to visualize and describe geometric relationships, and collect and analyze real data. As they explore mathematical problems in depth, students work together, and use a variety of tools such as cubes, Base-10 blocks, play money, and graphic organizers.

This curriculum has long been used in Arlington, and its content, philosophy, and methods are in alignment with The Common Core. We also use supplemental materials to give students ongoing skills practice and practice in solving open ended problems.

The third grade curriculum covers the following units:

Trading Stickers, Combining Coins

(Addition, Subtraction, and the Number System 1)

Collections and Travel Stories

(Addition, Subtraction, and the Number System 2)

Equal Groups

(Multiplication and Division)

Perimeter, Angles, and Area

(2-D Geometry and Measurement)

Finding Fair Shares

(Fractions)

Surveys and Line Plots

(Data)

How Many Hundreds? How Many Miles?

(Addition, Subtraction, and the Number System 3)

Open Circle Curriculum

In some elementary classrooms, each student stands out as a unique, valued individual. At the same time, a sense of community permeates the classroom. By personal example, the teacher in these classrooms models respect, caring, and high expectations for all students. But in talking to these teachers, one finds that more than modeling is taking place. Time is set aside on a regular basis for the class to come together as a community.

In recent years we have learned that the social competency of children is strongly tied to both social and academic success and the development of higher-level thinking skills. In 1986, the National Institute of Mental Health recommended that school curricula include social competency building programs as a way of preventing social, behavioral, and health problems in children. Our current understanding of the importance of social competency makes it imperative that teachers are supported in teaching social competency skills and in creating environments that are conducive to the building of positive interpersonal relationships in the classroom. In his books *Emotional Intelligence* and *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman draws on scientific studies and neuroscience to make a compelling case for the importance of emotional intelligence skills to success in life. The business community also reinforces the importance of social competency development. Changes in the national and global economy have led business leaders to pursue practices that emphasize ongoing skills development, shared responsibility, and teamwork.

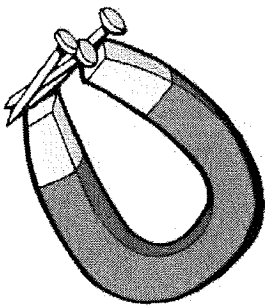
The Reach Out to Schools: Social Competency Program is based at The Stone Center at Wellesley College. This program combines a theoretical basis emphasizing the central role that relationships play in development, a commitment to year-long instruction within the classroom setting, and an experiential training model that encourages changes in teacher behavior by increasing facilitation skills.

The program was first piloted in 1987 in six classrooms of the Framingham, MA, Public Schools, using the Quality of School Life (QSL) curriculum written by Ruth F. Schelkun (1989). Since 1988, the Social Competency Program has evolved, building on the QSL curriculum and inspired by other well-researched methods of instruction in social competency skills (Spivak, Platt & Shure, 1976; Weissberg et al, 1980; Elias & Clabby, 1989). The Stone Center relational theory has given a clear focus to the curriculum's overall goals and objectives. Teachers working with the curriculum have helped shape the present format, developed many of the current classroom activities, and informed the training and consultation process.

The entire format of this program recognizes the critical role that relationships play in the social development and academic success of children. By learning the social competencies necessary to make and maintain new and diverse relationships with classmates, children and adults create new avenues for their own and other's growth.

Open Circle Skills

- √ Listening
- √ Non-verbal communication
- √ Complimenting
- √ Inclusion
- √ Cooperating
- √ Recognizing when to tell a Responsible Adult
- √ Handling Annoying Behavior
- √ Dealing with Teasing
- √ Recognizing Differences
- √ Speaking Up
- √ Understanding/Recognizing Feelings
- √ Being Calm
- √ Problem Solving
- √ Interviewing
- √ Leadership
- √ Expressing Anger Appropriately
- √ Understanding/Recognizing Body Language
- √ Self-Talk



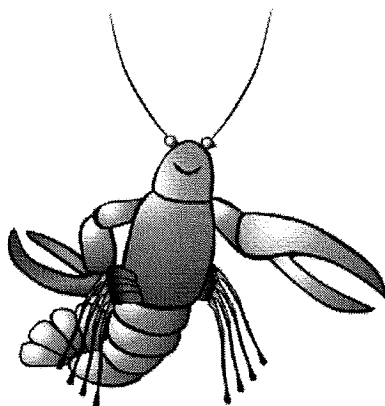
Grade 3 Science



In third grade, students will study Physical, Earth, and Life Sciences through FOSS units that are aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards, as well as learn the engineering process through the Museum of Science's Engineering is Elementary curriculum.

This year, your child will be encouraged to explore the scientific world, using hands-on learning experiences. Scientific investigations can center on student questions, observations, and communication about what they observe. Students will plan and carry out investigations as a class, in small groups or independently.

Science is a way of looking at the world around us. Children have a natural curiosity to explore that world. Learning becomes reality when a child is allowed to discover the why's and how's, of that world. Classroom investigation and experimentation can build essential scientific skills such as observing, measuring, collecting and reporting data. When your child comes home with new knowledge or the need for more exploration, please provide encouragement by participating in the experiences with your child.



The Great Body Shop

The Great Body Shop is an exciting, comprehensive health education and substance abuse prevention program. Each grade level of The Great Body Shop from kindergarten through grade five is structured so that concepts are age appropriate and familiar. There are ten content strands, which are consistent with the Massachusetts Health Frameworks.

During The Great Body Shop lessons, students will learn to examine problems from multiple perspectives, practice methods of making good decisions, and learn how to compare, contrast, and generate multiple solutions to problems. By practicing these critical thinking skills, we can help students create responsible options for themselves and to evaluate and manage their own progress towards positive goals.

Following are the third grade Great Body Shop units:

When Bodies Have Problems

The Better to See You

Community Safety

Things You Might Catch

I like Your Attitude

Your Family, My Family

Responsibilities and Expectations

It is everyone's responsibility to:

- Teach and model self-discipline
- Respect the rights of others
- Cooperate with one another
- Provide a safe and positive educational environment at school and at home

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Be in charge of his/her own behavior
- Comply with the school and classroom rules at all times
- Have their homework done and be prepared to learn
- Tell the school staff about any discipline concerns or unsafe conditions they may have
- Honor the teacher's duty to teach and other students' right to learn

It is the parent's responsibility to:

- Support school rules and expectations
- Communicate to the teacher their child(ren)'s concerns or needs
- Encourage child(ren) to do his/her best
- Contact the school if child(ren) will be absent
- Be available for conferences
- Assure that child(ren) attend school daily and be on time

It is the teacher's responsibility to:

- Manage classroom behaviors
- Inform classroom rules and behavioral expectations
- Be available for communication with parents
- Provide students with a safe school environment
- Encourage child(ren) to reach his/her potential
- Teach in accordance with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core Standards

Ways To Help Your Child

How can I help my child at home? That is the question most asked of a teacher by interested parents. Here are some suggestions that may be of help to you:

- When booklets and papers are brought home, look at them; comment on them; go over them with your child. Show genuine interest in the work. This communicates the idea that education is important and encourages your children to do well in school.
- Talk with your children about school and everyday events.
- See that your child gets plenty of sleep. Encourage exercise and good nutrition.
- Monitor TV programs. TV can be instructional and also relaxing in proper doses at the proper time. Talk with them about the programs they watch. Turn off the TV during meals to facilitate conversation.
- Encourage your child to do homework as early in the afternoon or evening as possible.
- Provide a quiet, well lit study area for your child. Set up a desk, table or area designated for study, not far from the other family members. Remember to provide materials such as pens, pencils, pencil sharpener, paper, dictionary, ruler, crayons, glue stick and scissors.
- Take an active interest in your child's school work. Keep up with your child when he/she has a test and needs to study.
- Orally quiz your child to help him/her prepare for a test.
- If your child has trouble understanding something, try to help.
- Be aware of numerous study strategies, such as flash cards, that can be shared with your child.
- Provide learning experiences outside of school. Parks, museums, libraries, zoos, historical sites, and family games offer good learning experiences.
- Encourage your children to write.
- Read with your children. Encourage them to read for fun and discuss what they read.
- Insist that your child do homework in a place free of distractions, with the TV, stereo, and radio off.