

# **The Basics of 3rd and 4th Grade with Miss Kuschel**

## **Introduction**

### **3rd Grade**

Many students are either very excited about the idea of starting third grade, or very nervous and apprehensive. I am very excited to take this major step with you and your child. Third grade is a big transition year in many ways and it is my privilege to be able to help your child through this new phase. My intent for this year is to help your child not only learn, but also learn how to study, develop good work habits, and become more independent learners and responsible individuals, all while using their God-given talents and desire to praise God in all they do. This will take time and effort on the part of all involved, but it is my prayer that the end product will be worth it.

### **4th Grade**

Fourth grade is intended to increase your child's level of independence and foster and continue strong work and study habits. My intent for this year is to help your child not only learn the course materials, but also learn how to study, develop good work habits, and become more independent learners and responsible individuals. Hopefully we can build on the foundations and skills laid in 3rd grade. Time, effort, and a desire to praise God in all we do will be expected and needed for success by all involved.

## **Take Home Folder/Homework Folder**

Students will be required to have two separate folders that are to come home on a daily basis. The take home folder will come home everyday with graded papers. Please empty this folder everyday and take the time to look over your child's work. If you are not receiving graded papers on a regular basis please talk to your child about this. Looking at the work they bring home is a much better indication of how they are doing at school than just looking at Power school for grades. The Homework folder will also come home everynight as it will include a sheet with the list of the week's Memory Treasures and the Spelling words for the week. On some days it may also contain work from the day that needs to be completed as homework. Please make sure that this work is completed and gets returned to the folder so it can be turned in the following day.

## **Assignment books**

For most students this will be the first year that they will use an assignment book. Assignments will be posted every morning on the assignment board displayed in the front of the room. Students will need to copy all posted assignments everyday as part of their morning routine. We will go through this process together for the first few weeks of school until students understand it and become comfortable with doing this themselves. At the end of the day I will be checking the student's assignment book as well as their homework folder to ensure that they have all of their work that they need to complete at home. I do initial the assignment book and although there is a place for parents to initial I do not require them to. However, I would

encourage you to go through the list daily with your child to ensure that they have completed not only all of their assignments, but the correct assignments.

## **Homework policy**

Homework in third and fourth grade can be defined in two main parts. First whatever is assigned throughout the day that is not completed will come home and become homework. Students will always be given time during the day to work on their various assignments, but sometimes this is not enough time and the student will need to take it home to be completed. This work is then required to be completed and turned in upon entering the room the next school day otherwise it is considered late work. The second part of homework is studying for Spelling tests on a weekly basis, practicing Math facts regularly, studying memory work, and independent reading.

Getting homework done on time and done well is a student's main job and responsibility. Time will always be given in class to complete most if not all assigned activities. Students can usually anticipate no more than 30 - 45 minutes of homework from the day's activities if they are using their time wisely, participating in class, and asking questions when they have them.

Parents can assist in the homework process by:

1. Expecting obedience of their children to the teacher
2. Checking their child's assignment book on a regular basis
3. Making homework a scheduled event/routine at home
4. Creating an organized and quiet place for homework
5. Helping their child meet all obligations and expectations
6. Contacting the teacher with any questions or concerns especially if homework is becoming too difficult or overwhelming

Children need to:

1. Keep a complete record of all work in their school supplied assignment book
2. Complete all homework assignments according to the schedule of the class
3. Finish all homework in a neat and orderly way
4. Complete all homework to the best of their God-given ability
5. Contact the teacher the night before or before school with questions

## **Missing Work**

If a student fails to complete an assignment on time they will be required to finish it in recess recovery. If they are unable to finish the work during recess recovery they will have until the end of the day to finish the assignment. At the end of the day the assignment will be given to the teacher to assess. If at least half the assignment is completed it will be considered complete and accepted at the end of the day. If less than 50% is complete it will be sent home to be completed and returned by the following day. If work is not turned in the following day, it will be considered late.

Chronic incomplete work will be defined as three late assignments in one week. If a child has a problem with chronic late work:

1. The teacher will counsel the student in God's Law and Gosepel
2. Classroom routines (seating, recess, etc.) will be adjusted to assist the student to get work done
3. Parents will be contacted to discuss the issue
4. After the 3rd late assignment, an after school detention will be assigned at the teacher's discretion and at the teacher's earliest convenience
5. If the issue persists the teacher, parent, and student will meet to discuss ways to help the student
6. If further action is needed the parent, student, and teacher will meet with the principal after school to discuss the ongoing issue

If the assignment is left at home I will allow them a one day extension to bring the assignment to school as long as it does not happen often. (No more than 6 times a quarter)

Papers will not be counted as late if parents/guardians contact the teacher about the assignment before it is due. I understand that sometimes things come up at home that prohibits a student from completing an assignment. Parents may send a written note or e-mail explaining the reason and the student will receive extra time with no consequences. Parents may also call me at home or school to notify me of a problem or ask a question about an assignment. If a student has a question about an assignment and has completed everything except the part in question they may bring the work to school the next morning and ask me about it before 8:00. If they are then able to complete it before first recess they will not be penalized.

## **Missing School**

If a child misses a day of school I usually allow one extra day for each missed day to complete their work. Parents may ask for work to be prepared to be sent home or picked up if they wish for their sick child. Usually I am able to put things together for pick-up before school or by 1<sup>st</sup> recess if you let the secretary know to tell me when you call your child in sick. Work can also be picked up after school by stopping in the classroom. If a parent knows that their child will be missing a day of school they are encouraged to let the teacher know ahead of time. I am more than happy to provide a student with the required work ahead of time if given advanced notice in writing or am notified in any way by the parent. (Note: I **DO** need verification from an adult, not the student, that they will be missing and would like their work ahead of time. This can be done through e-mail or phone call.)

## **Grading**

While grades are given in most subjects and on most assignments I would first and foremost remind parents that they should not become overly concerned with daily grades or even quarter grades but instead look at how their child is progressing throughout the year as well as the kinds of mistakes they are making. I am more concerned with a child's understanding of a concept or growth in knowledge over the school year than the grades they receive. With that in mind I also ask parents not to become overly concerned with a single bad paper. Grades are

based on a percentage points system rather than a subjective A, B, C grade. Each assignment is given a certain number of points and grades are determined from the number of points earned out of points possible. Please keep in mind that this may mean that assignments count differently and some weigh more than others. Because this is the case, keep in mind that if a student were to receive 5 out of 8 points on a paper it would result in a failing grade on the paper, but if they were to receive 18 out of 20 points on another assignment from the same class this would easily offset the failing grade because it was worth more points. Student's grades are listed in a fraction indicating points received out of points possible, as a percent, and the letter grade on all papers. If the paper receives less than a 69 percent it is an F and I usually only post the percentage and not the letter grade. Grades will also be posted on Power School in a timely manner and parents are encouraged to check these on a weekly basis.

On occasion I will write notes or comments on work when I am grading. The note is often intended to provide some clarification as to why things were marked wrong or to let parents know that perhaps their child did not pay attention to something we did in class or neglected to follow some direction. Sometimes the amount of writing might seem overwhelming, however it gives me a chance to provide some immediate feedback for you and your child that hopefully you can discuss further to avoid further issues. I hope you do not view this as a negative on your child's paper, but instead the chance for more communication in helping you and your child as they use their graded work to learn from and continue to grow.

At times mistakes do occur in grading. If at times you feel something has been marked wrong that should not be or you have a question about an answer please bring it to my attention. You can bring it in or send it with your child back to school with a note attached. If in fact a mistake was made that caused the student to receive a lower grade I certainly want to fix it in the grade book. If however the error was mine and it benefits the child (I missed an error), it is my error and the child will receive the grade given,

## **Memory Work**

Please be aware that Memory Treasures are assigned three times a week and these are considered homework. This means that students are expected to be able to recite their assigned passage in the morning at the beginning of the day. If a student fails to say memory work they may forfeit some recess time until they are able to recite or in some cases they may receive a failing grade for the passage. Students should say Memory in the morning upon arriving in the classroom. Students are encouraged to say the reference along with the passage. Students will receive a sheet each week with the Memory work for the week printed on it. The assignment board will also list the passage that is homework for the next day. Most Memory Treasures are no longer on the Christlight material. Students will receive a printed memory book of all passages in order of the Bible references to keep at home or in their homework folder. (Students may ask for multiple copies to make use of as needed. Students will also keep a copy of this list here at school with their Christlight material. Students are expected to recite Memory work as part of their make-up work when they miss school. This can be done upon returning to school or on Friday or Monday when there is no new passage assigned.

## **Math**

Students will make use of a binder to keep track of practice problems and reference materials in Math. With each new concept taught, students will be provided with a set of practice problems that we will work through together in class. Students are expected to fully participate in class and fill out all problems done in class on their practice set. This will also serve as a reference for doing homework problems. Students will also be allowed to make use of this material to complete tests and quizzes, so it is important and beneficial that they take part in this part of class. If students are absent I try to send home a photocopy of a completed practice page.

Students are encouraged to add this to their binder of material for future reference, and not just to complete the missing work. Students who miss class may ask for an additional copy of a practice set but they must do so within 1 week of the lesson. No copies will be provided to students who were present for class or on the day of the test.

Students will continue to work on mastering their skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. This fact work will be done primarily through timed quizzes and fact sheets that will be done in class. Students will also have the opportunity to work on skills using Xtra math, an online math program.

While most assignments will come from the Engage NY problem sets, there may be times students will be assigned lessons on iXL Math. Work assigned from this program will be due just like any other assignment. Students are encouraged to work on these assigned tasks until they are able to receive a score of no lower than 75 points.

## **Spelling**

Most full weeks students will be given a Spelling list of words to work on for the week. A pretest will be given on Monday with activities in spelling and vocabulary usage given throughout the week. All students will take the post test at the end of the week regardless of how they did on the pretest. Students will be responsible for learning the Spelling words in each unit, however Spelling, review, and challenge words will be tested. Students will receive extra points for spelling the Challenge words correctly and review words spelled correctly will cancel out misspelled Spelling from the week or be used as extra credit. Students will receive 2 copies of their list of spelling words for the week. One will be kept in their homework folder to be used at home to study and one copy to be kept at a binder at school to be used for reference to use for completing daily assignments. Spelling will not begin until the 2nd week of school.

## **Bathroom and Drinks**

Students are encouraged to bring a personal water bottle with them each day. Students will be allowed to use them in the room as long as it does not become a distraction or issue. I will only allow water bottles to be refilled before school and during breaks.

Students should make use of the bathroom before school and during assigned breaks. Let's take care of the bathroom and use them for taking care of our physical needs. Students should not use the bathroom as places to have private conversations or hangout. Students having repeated issues in the bathroom will be talked to and be dealt with on an individual basis. Students are expected to get in, take care of business, and get out. In general students will go to the bathroom before 7:55 and during assigned breaks. Students are given five opportunities for using the bathroom during the day so it is expected that they will not need to use them at other times during the day. Students will be permitted to go to the bathroom at other times in emergencies or with a doctor's note, but every effort will be made to train them to go during assigned times. This practice assures that students are not unsupervised and provides them one less distraction in getting work done throughout the day.

## **Before School**

Students would not arrive at school prior to 7:30 AM. Upon arrival, students are to empty their backpacks and remove their coats out in the hall. Students are to eat breakfast and use the bathroom before school starts so that they are in their seats by 7:55 AM and ready for class to begin at 8:00 AM. A message with ways to prepare for the day, including reciting memory work, will be posted each morning for students to read and follow.

## **Clothing and Dress**

The uniform policy has been shared. Please look it over and be sure that students follow the policy as it is posted. Students will not be allowed to enter the classroom with hats or coats on for any reason. It is my hope that students make every effort to follow the policy and that we will not have to deal with issues in regard to this policy in the classroom, but can instead focus on learning.

## **Additional Information**

If at anytime you have any questions or concerns about your child or the classroom please feel free to contact me at school, via e-mail, or at home. Feel free to stop in at school at any time. If necessary we can set up an appointment or have a quick chat after school. In addition to any concerns you may have, if your child ever has any problems encourage them to come and talk to me. Your child's education and safety is top priority and I look forward to working with you to help them succeed and have a successful and fun-filled year.

## **Classroom Management Plan**

Students are expected to follow the basic rules of the classroom at all times. As students continue to age and mature they are expected to become more responsible and independent. Students will be made aware of daily routines, rules, procedures, and expectations for behavior during the first few weeks of school. In general, students are asked to stay seated during class, raise their hand and wait to be called on to speak, and be respectful of their teacher and classmates. Students are reminded that in all things and all circumstances we want to give glory to God in all we do. We are motivated by Christ's love for us to show love for others and respect others and our environment as our thanks to God. The following will serve as basic expectations for students:

- 1. Show honor and respect to God, classmates, teachers, staff, and other students.**
- 2. Have homework done well and before getting to school.**
- 3. Use your time wisely.**

Discipline can take many different forms. Discipline often begins with training and expectations. Expectations and routines will be shared with students at the beginning of the year and practiced throughout the year. Students will be given ample reminders and guidance on expected behavior.

### Management goals

- Provide a safe and productive learning environment
- Provide opportunities for students to meet both physical and educational needs
- Discover, respect, and meet the specific needs of each student when possible
- Achieve and maintain student engagement in all learning opportunities

However, at times things happen that require action to ensure that all are being kept safe and that we can ensure the best learning environment possible. When needed the following steps or actions may be taken as deemed appropriate for each situation.

1. I as a teacher will use seating, instruction techniques and proximity to a student to deal with the majority of issues.
2. All teachers have been taught to intervene quietly with students when they are not able to control their behavior or self correct through use of non-verbal cues. I will strive to try this first.
3. Students will then be given a choice to solve the problem themselves by giving a solution for solving the problem, proposing an appropriate consequence, or being given a solution or consequence to them by the teacher.
4. At times students can choose to
  - a. Solve the problem immediately
  - b. Remove themselves to a recovery area in the classroom
  - c. Remove themselves to a recovery area outside of the classroom
  - d. Have the teacher remove them to a recovery area outside of the classroom

5. Students moving to a recovery area should make every effort to return to the classroom within 3- 10 minutes under the following steps:
  - a. Students raise 3 fingers to show they are ready to return to the classroom
  - b. You return to the room and return to your seat
  - c. During non-instruction time, the following 3 steps should be taken:
    - i. Apologize for your actions
    - ii. Receive forgiveness for your behavior
    - iii. Suggest a natural consequence for your behavior
      1. The teacher accepts the idea
      2. The teacher may offer other suggestions.

Every opportunity will be given to assure that student and teacher can work out issues together in a way that is appropriate. Students who fail to give respect or work with the teacher to solve a problem will receive a teacher determined consequence. In these situations parents/guardians will be contacted to discuss the issue.



# Communication Plan

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## Parent Communication

- Classtag - a school wide communication tool used at Word of Life - will serve as one of the main platforms for communication for whole group communications
- E-mail - I will often communicate through this method for personal communication about students, at time I will also use it for whole class communication
- Notes home
- Guardians are able to communicate with me through
  - E-mail
  - Phone call
  - Text messages
  - Quick morning or after school chats

Communication with parents is very important to your child and their progress. I encourage parents to contact me when they are concerned about any and all school - related topics. I encourage students to let me know their preferred method of communication and I will strive to accommodate them.

I will also contact parents in a timely manner about any concerns I might have about their student as well as to share important school or classroom information. My preferred method of communication is e-mail and class tag, but will make phone calls for important communication that needs immediate attention.

## Student Communication

If a student would like to communicate after school the preferred method is

- E-mail
- Classtag
- Phone call
- Having their guardian contact me

I would prefer that students **Do Not** contact me directly through text message unless they have no other means, including using their guardian's phone

