

THIRD GRADE TRIBUNE

First Quarter: Success!



Welcome back, third-grade students! This year promises to be a great one, and the third-graders have started the school year with commendable effort and dedication. In math class, the students began by thoroughly reviewing concepts and facts learned last year. After keeping their skills sharp over the summer, the students were tested on their summer workbooks and did an outstanding job!

It's often surprising to the students that using a calculator isn't always quicker than solving problems without one, nor

does it always get you the correct answer! The students found this out during their introductory lesson on using calculators. They still love to use them, though, and they will be happy to know that there are more lessons involving using a calculator in the weeks to come. Review of place value, number sequences, function tables, and multi-digit addition and subtraction has ensured the students' thorough understanding of these important fundamentals. They have also solved word problems and discussed fractions, fractions and money, decimals and money, and adding and subtracting money.

Through a variety of activities, the students have really been exploring multiplication facts, division (as the inverse to multiplication), and division with remainders. To that end, any extra time (5-10 minutes) per day that can be spent practicing with the multiplication and division flashcards at home would be greatly appreciated. New concepts during this first quarter include calculating elapsed time, customary and metric units of measure, and practice with linear measurement. Keep up the fine work in math, third-graders!

Third grade has gotten off to a great start in French, and the children are adjusting to the implementation of homework, quizzes, and tests in language class. They have covered a number of topics, including basic greetings and classroom expressions, the French alphabet, and numbers 1 through 30. They also know how to respond appropriately to various classroom directions. The writing component of French class has encouraged students to focus hard on learning new vocabulary—not just how to say it, but how it is spelled. They have been briefly introduced to three French accent marks, and they are all aware that part of learning how to spell words in French involves learning the accents and where they are placed. They have had a glimpse into their French textbook, *Grenadine*, where they get the chance to listen to dialogs and improve their comprehension skills. They are taught that, even if they do not understand every single word that is spoken, they can use contextual clues to determine the gist of what is happening. *Bonne continuation*, third grade!

In English class, the third-grade students had become so entrenched in the plight of *Shiloh*, that it was hard to say goodbye! Students were so eager to share their opinions on the ethical dilemma of lying to save a beloved pet. The children really connect with strong emotions to the protagonist, Marty Preston, as he struggles to make the right decision. Third-graders have selected their first-quarter independent reading books, and they truly enjoyed choosing exactly the right book. In grammar, they have been learning to write dialogue using quotation marks, and are developing understanding of different points-of-view

in a text. The students will also continue to write exciting journal entries concentrating on descriptive paragraphs. They are off to a great start and working with enthusiasm!

The third-graders had an exciting start to the year as they traveled back to the very dawn of history. They learned about the challenges and hardships faced by prehistoric man, and they marveled at mankind's innovative solutions to those challenges. These solutions, and the inventions that accompanied them, eventually built the foundations of modern civilizations. Using the Star Board, students explored some of the earliest prehistoric artifacts and walked through the dark halls of Lascaux Cave while admiring its impressive paintings. They learned about domesticated animals and discovered that their pet dogs do some of the same jobs that the first domesticated dogs did. Each student also had an opportunity to explore the timeless craft of spinning and weaving, as they watched video clips of spindles in action and carefully examined thread and a loom in our classroom.

As the students wrap up their study of prehistory, they will learn about the important advances that led to the first organized civilizations. This discussion will lead them into their much-anticipated study of the ancient Egyptians, one of the great civilizations of the ancient world. Students will begin their study of Egypt by exploring the Egyptian desert and learning about the importance of one of the world's most well-known rivers, the Nile. In the second quarter, they are all looking forward to the festivities of Westminster's annual Egyptian Day celebration!

Complementing the material they are learning in history, the third-graders are virtually traveling to faraway lands, such as Nigeria, Kenya, and Egypt. Geography class kicked off this year with a review of map-reading skills and the physical features of the United States. Students also studied the five regions of the U.S. and reviewed state names, state capitals, and state locations. Bravo, third-grade! The second quarter brings back the study of earth science, and the students will become scientists in class once again.

Third grade brings many changes to Westminster students, but everyone has settled in nicely, knows the routines, and is feeling right at home. They are wide open to all of the exciting new experiences and opportunities that also come with third grade!



Third-grade students are eager to share what they are learning.

“Education is not the piling on of learning, information, data, facts, skills, or abilities—that’s training or instruction—but is rather making visible what is hidden as a seed.” ~ Thomas Moore