

## 3rd Grade - ELA

3rd ELA (Phonics, Spelling, Penmanship, Literature, Grammar, Composition, Poetry, Sayings)

In Grades 3-5 ELA, students are expected to have the most fundamental units of language already and to build on these as they gradually develop independence as readers and writers. Throughout these years, students develop a more robust vocabulary, and through the study of common Greek and Latin root words in Grades 4 and 5, they acquire the elements that allow them to derive the meanings of new words and to speak and write their own ideas with specificity. Phonics, spelling, and penmanship instruction continue with the expectation that students write fluently in cursive. As writers, students begin with writing good sentences, progress to paragraphs, and eventually multiple paragraphs, all while imitating excellent examples. Literature and poetry remain a primary source of delight and wonder and serve as examples of correct or beautiful English, attuning the hand and ear to order and beauty. As readers, students become increasingly fluent, eventually independently reading entire chapters of core literature. As students acquire a more detailed understanding of the fundamental elements of a story, literature-based discussions gradually engage students in deeper comprehension and analysis and provide opportunities to practice discussion etiquette.

Grade 3 grammar and composition instruction is characterized by a focus on building fundamental grammatical knowledge and skills at the sentence level. While students may already be familiar with the parts of speech from earlier studies, they will solidify a firm foundation in the eight parts of speech and English conventions and take a more active role in analyzing sentences in preparation for the introduction to sentence diagramming in Grade 4. The concepts taught in grammar are incorporated and reinforced in student composition work throughout the year. Writing instruction leads students through structured copy work, dictation, narration, and summary exercises with the goal of producing well-written sentences. It explicitly teaches the construction of full paragraphs and 3-paragraph compositions for the purpose of state exams as needed. Grade 3 writing activities develop writing stamina and habits of good writing at the sentence level, which will ease the transition to producing gradually longer compositions in later grades.

Grade 3 literature incorporates longer novels, more complex characters and plots, and exposure to influential books and series in Western Literature. The three goals are to read and listen to beautiful stories, learn and practice comprehension skills, and participate in discussions focused on the text. Literature lessons expose students to literary elements and support comprehension skills such as finding textual evidence, making inferences, deciphering new vocabulary, reasoning events, and supporting self-monitoring during independent reading. Core literature texts are read with adult supervision within the classroom, although partner or small group reading in the classroom can occur as the year progresses. A typical literature lesson or reading group involves reading, listening, and active engagement in asking and answering comprehension questions.

Discussing, memorizing, and reciting poetry engages the students' natural sense of wonder. The students' ears will be trained to the musicality of poetry and their minds to the meaning. Throughout the year, students will delight in language as they discover its many facets and how it can be used to beautifully convey truths of the human condition and the world. Students listen to, discuss, memorize, and recite poems throughout the year, at the pace of about one poem a month. They continue to gain exposure to poetic form and study various rhythmic patterns while practicing accurate recitation skills such as accuracy, tone, fluency, speed, posture, projection, expression, and poise, although the primary focus is memorization and recitation. In addition, students will gain further appreciation for the English language by memorizing, discussing, and illustrating expressions that represent linguistic and cultural nuances unique to our tradition.

- Unit 12: Introductory Prepositional Phrases (5 lessons)
- Unit 13: Compound Subjects (5 lessons)
- Unit 14: Compound Verbs (5 lessons)
- Unit 15: Compound Direct Objects (5 lessons)
- Unit 16: Grammar Review and Enrichment (4 lessons)

Composition instruction is the venue for the application of language skills for the purpose of communication; writing exercises will be text-based. The 3rd-grade composition curriculum is largely based on curricular materials designed by Susan Wise Bauer, specifically, *Writing with Ease Level 3*. While the core practices outlined in Bauer materials are upheld, the reading passages used in lessons have been largely replaced with writing selections from other subject areas such as Literature, History, Science, and the like. This practice of integrating curriculum is designed to give students repeated exposure to the material they are learning in other subject areas and facilitate a deeper understanding of it. Each composition unit contains direct practice for the skills mastered in the most recent grammar unit in addition to its structural focus. In the first semester, students practice retelling and summarizing passages that are 1-3 paragraphs in length. They will write correspondences such as friendly letters and thank you notes. They will also have regular dictation practice. In the second semester, dictation ends while summary practice continues, although with lengthier narratives. Students will have explicit instruction in creating and using the one-line outline to build multi-paragraph compositions. Third graders will explore expository style and write opinion pieces to meet standards-based expectations.

- Unit 1: Writing Foundations (12 lessons)
- Unit 2: Paragraph Structure (8 lessons)
- Unit 3: Outlining (12 lessons)
- Unit 4: Letter Writing (8 lessons)
- Unit 5: Independent Narratives (8 lessons)
- Unit 6: Expository (12 lessons)
- Unit 7: Persuasive \*Test Prep\* (12 lessons)
- Unit 8: Biographical Sketch (8 lessons)

### **Poetry and Sayings**

Grade 3 poetry exposes students to a variety of authors, experiences, and emotions, and is first experienced as a source of delight and beautiful language. Each unit of poetry carries a different focus on recitation skills. Poems are introduced through an in-class reading of the poem, leading into discussion of its meaning, and exposure to poetic elements as appropriate. Students are coached through memorization and pacing as a class over the course of several weeks; memorization practice may be assigned as homework or completed during class transitions. Recitations are done independently in front of their peers and students are given individual feedback on presentation skills.

### **Great Hearts Core Poetry List**

- Unit 1: "Fog" by Carl Sandburg
- Unit 2: "Catch a Little Rhyme" by Eve Merriam
- Unit 3: "By Myself" by Eloise Greenfield
- Unit 4: "Eletelephony" by Laura E. Richards
- Unit 5: "Father William" by Lewis Carroll
- Unit 6: "Dream Variations" by Langston Hughes
- Unit 7: "The Children's Hour" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- Unit 8: "Pocahontas" by Rosemary Carr Benet