

# Sonoran Sky Elementary School

## Curriculum Highlights

**Third Grade**

### **Theme: *Exploring our World and Beyond***

Many academic, social, and emotional milestones occur during third grade. Students learn how to handle more responsibility with the management of their 3-ring binders and assignment sheets. They have ample opportunities to grow and interact with other third graders as well as students in other grade levels. They also have many buddy activities with fellow students. Throughout all subject areas, Howard Gardner's eight "**Multiple Intelligences**" is emphasized so that each child experiences success.

Programs in **art, library, music, physical education** and **technology** are also provided to students at Sonoran Sky. Trained specialists not only teach essential skills relative to their special areas, but also work with classroom teachers to plan learning experiences, which enrich classroom curriculum and assist children in discovering their own strengths and talents. Cooperative learning is emphasized in all phases of the 3rd grade curriculum.

### **Reading**

Harcourt Storytown, The California Early Literacy Learning (CELL) framework and Wilson's *Foundations* are used in third grade reading instruction. This philosophy requires students to read literature at their level. In addition, third graders also experience the Accelerated Reader (AR) program. Students are required to complete a minimum of one and a half hours of reading outside of school per week. Our goal is to expose 3rd graders to different genre to further their journey into the fascinating world of print.

### **Spelling**

Sonoran Sky integrates the Scholastic Spelling Program with high- frequency spelling words to include the study of word patterns. The goal of this integrated program is to increase students' spelling performance in their everyday writing. Students also have already mastered the 3rd grade spelling words are provided opportunities to learn a more advanced set of words. Spelling is also a focus during the use of the writing process. A highlight for many third graders is the acquisition of cursive handwriting skills.

### **Language**

Students use their basic writing skills to apply to new writing activities. Students learn to write complete paragraphs, personal narratives, pen pal letters, essays and research reports. The complete writing process is used from pre-writing through publishing. Thinking maps, Write from the Beginning, and Step up to Writing are all programs incorporated into the 3rd grade language curriculum.

### **Math**

With the adoption of the Harcourt Math textbook, instruction is process-oriented with an emphasis on problem solving. Students are encouraged to be creative thinkers. They'll be introduced to the concepts of multiplication and division. Basic mathematical facts and procedures are also stressed.

**Social Studies**

The third grade Social Studies curriculum incorporates many hands-on activities. Early in the year, students learn about the seven continents and participate in making their own paper mache model of the earth. Literature is consistently integrated into the social studies curriculum. The 3rd grade Arizona Academic Social Studies standards cover many areas including World History and American History. Geography is a part of each week's lessons.

**Science**

Third grade uses our district adopted Scott Foresman Science program along with Foss Science kits. Areas of study include rocks and minerals, light and sound, and plants and ecosystems.

**Homework**

Third grade students are required to complete an average of 30 minutes of homework per night, plus 15 minutes of reading. Weekly assignments include spelling, weekly geography, math review, and later in the year, test preparation packets. Daily assignments include math practice of introduced topics and reading independently. There is one out-of-class project to be completed each quarter.

**Special Activities**

- ~Globe making
- ~Thanksgiving Turkey Trot
- ~First Grade Buddies
- ~Dance Thom Lewis (Artist-in-Residence)

**Field Trips**

- ~Phoenix Zoo Overnight
- ~Arizona Mining and Mineral Museum