**Science and Social Studies:**

In Science and Social Studies this year your child will learn using hands on methods such topics as: plants, animals, the solar system, chemistry, communities, geography, economics and other cultures. Students will complete at least one home project a grading period showing off what they know about specific topics. The highlight of our year in Social Studies is the Culture Fair which takes place in the spring. I have no doubt that your child will be excited about this event.

**Spelling**

As your child develops their basic understanding of word patterns and rules we will be working on spelling words they specifically struggle with through the year.

**During the first few weeks of school**, I will be assessing students’ spelling needs and collecting words they misspell. By week 3, students will make their own spelling lists.

**After this point,** each student has a spelling dictionary where they keep words they want to learn to spell or words they missed on a test or during “work on writing”. When making their spelling list for the week, each student chooses their words from their spelling dictionaries and word lists. Students will typically choose between 10-12 spelling words. I don’t want students to have more words than they can manage.

On **Monday**, students will make one spelling list. They bring their list to me for approval. I make sure the student has a balance of words -not too easy-not too hard, and that the words are spelled correctly. Once the list is approved, students write two more lists. In so doing they will have a list for home, a list for me, and a list to leave at school for practice.

**Tuesday through Thursday** students will spend time practicing their words through in class learning activities.

On **Friday**, students take an individualized spelling test. The test is returned to the student on Monday. (Your child’s spelling test will always go home with them on Monday.) The words they spelled correctly get crossed off in their spelling dictionary. The words spelled incorrectly automatically go back on their spelling list again. The words stay on their list until they are spelled correctly. If a student spells the word incorrectly through their writing or daily use, the word is added back to their spelling dictionary.

Students will practice their words at home using their Spelling Calendar. This calendar provides students with creative opportunities to practice their words at home. Their calendars will be checked on Tuesdays and Fridays for parent signatures to ensure practice has been complete.

I am excited about beginning this spelling program this year and hope it will meet the individual spelling needs of each child in our classroom

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*A Guide to*

*Curriculum and Procedures*

**Communication:**

We are forming a strong partnership in order to support your child this year, therefore; communication between home and school is essential. My contact information can be found in the Parent Information folder. Also, I am free at school after 3 pm if you need to contact me 325-8580. If you call during the school day, please just leave a message and I will call you back during my planning period. I will not leave class to take a phone call, because my time with your child is too important. Please make certain we have a phone number where you can be reached in case I need to reach you during the day.

If you write me a note and send it with your child to school, I will do my best to respond with a written response that day. If however, I am not able to write back, due to the busyness of the day, I will respond by the next school day or with a phone call.

Our class website is a great source of communication regarding our class. It contains our weekly newsletter and our spelling list. You can access it by going to the school website, <http://jww.sumnerschools.org>. Click on Classpages, and then click on Third Grade. Finally click on our page listed under my name, Mrs. Parker.

Your child will use the 3-ring binder provided by PTO as their STAR (Students Taking Academic Responsibility) BINDER. This notebook will have a note and money pouch as the first page in the notebook. All notes/money coming to school or going home to you should go in that pouch. A couple of sheet protectors have been included which will have your child’s weekly newsletter, lunch menu, spelling list, and multiplication tables. Also, in the binder will be your child’s planner and homework folder. This STAR BINDER is the key to our communication and your child’s organization. It should go home every day and return to school every day.

**Homework:**

Homework is assigned because it is useful in reinforcing what has been learned in the classroom, teaches responsibility, and helps students develop positive study habits. Students will receive homework most weeknights, but not on the weekends. Limited homework may be given on Wednesday nights.

It will be the student’s responsibility to write their homework each day in their student planner. **After the homework is complete**, it is the parents’ responsibility to check and make sure it is ALL complete and sign the student’s planner indicating that to the best of their knowledge the homework is complete. All homework is to be turned in the following morning. If homework is not completed, students will pull a card, complete a choice sheet and finish the assignment during recess. If this occurs more than 5 times, you will be contacted. Your child’s homework should travel to and from school in their homework folder which is found in their STAR BINDER.

**Testing:**

Testing is a reflection of the student’s independent knowledge. Tests will be given in many formats. Some will be traditional multiple choice, short answer, matching, etc. Others will be a more authentic reflection of the student’s understanding on a topic and will be work samples, writings, projects, or oral discussions with me. Tests will be graded on a 100 point scale. Tests will be doubled in the grade book. I will review with students before the test and work with them on study skills. Please remember to check the weekly newsletter (found in their STAR BINDER and on our class website) for test dates and look

for study guides to come home at least two days prior to the test. The only exception is Math. The tested skills in math are reviewed consistently in class and through homework. There are no study guides for Math.

**Math**

In our classroom we will be using the Saxon Math program for Math this year. We will be using the Math books offered by Saxon. This program provides students will plenty of opportunity to practice skills taught prior to any assessment. It also offers much repetition in order to make math facts and concepts automatic. You can expect homework in Math nearly every night.

In addition to the Saxon Mathprogram we will focus a great amount of time this year to learning and practicing our multiplication facts. This is a fundamental building block of math and sets the ground work for all future Math classes.

**Reading, Language, and Writing**

This year our class will focus on “The Daily 5” of reading. This is a reading program developed by the sisters, Gail Boushey and Joan Moser. Within this reading program we will focus on developing a love for reading by developing five basic skills of reading: Read to Self, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading, Work on Writing, and Word Work. Sixty minutes of our day each day will be devoted to learning and developing strategies through these reading skills, I know through this program your child will develop an even greater love for reading and writing than what they currently may have.

Language and Writing will be focused on during the Daily 5. Whole class presentation of new concepts will be conducted daily and students will receive time for practice and individual instruction, as well, on a daily basis.

Our writing will be the highlight of Author’s Night which will be held in the spring semester of this year. Watch the newsletter for times and dates so you don’t miss out on all your child has accomplished.

The second strategy of our reading program which will be new to the third grade this year, will be a 30 minute block of time of intensive accelerated focus on reading. During this block of time your child will be taught in a small group setting by one of the third grade teachers or one of our Title para-professionals. By using small groups for instruction during this time frame we can focus on more specific areas of strength and weaknesses to enhance your child’s reading capabilities.