Science

The science curriculum in third grade focuses on practicing scientific & engineering skills within science content. Students will investigate three topics: life science (Survivor), physical science (Energy and Electricity) and earth science (Changes in Earth's Surface). In the life science unit, (Survivor) students observe live pillbugs and fossil artefacts in order to learn about adaptations, habitats and changes to habitats over time. In the physical science unit, (Energy and Electricity), students learn about energy and electricity by conducting simple investigations using batteries, light bulbs, and motors. They also explore natural resources and use what they know about electricity to design a solar powered device. In the new earth science unit, students experiment with wind and water, observe and experiment how to prevent erosion.

Social Studies

Third graders learn about the historical events that shaped Needham as a community and connected it to Boston. They learn about the regions of the United States and develop an understanding of how the physical characteristics of the regions affect the way people live. They learn about states, their capitals, the continents, and the oceans. They are able to use appropriate map skills to locate and identify states, capitals, continents, and oceans.

Visual Art

In third grade, students are introduced to simple perspective, direct-observational drawing, and use of space with emphasis on incorporating greater detail in their work. Students create works that express specific scenes or feelings, using the Elements of Art, and the Principles of Design. They have an increased ability to use a sequential creating process and can communicate this process to others. Work includes drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, construction, and clay modeling. Visual Art domains of **Communications and Expression, Design and Composition,** and **Methods, Tools and Techniques** and addresses the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework Categories of **Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting** in an age appropriate way.

Music

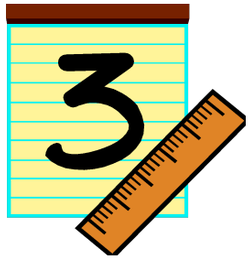
Singing continues to be the central activity of most third grade music classes, covering a variety of American folk songs and songs from diverse cultures. Students are able to perform one and two part ensemble music using classroom instruments. Third Grade Music also begins to further emphasize music literacy with an increased focus on reading traditional western music notation. Students may elect to join the Instrumental Program and may begin instruction on the violin, viola, or cello. Instruction addresses the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework Categories of **Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting**.

Physical Education

The third grade elementary physical education program is designed to teach children motor skills and skill themes that are developmentally appropriate for their age. Motor skills are taught within the context of skill themes. "Skill themes are fundamental movements that are later modified into the more specialized patterns on which activities of increasing complexity are built. Once the basic skills are learned to a certain degree of proficiency, they are combined with other skills and used in a more complex setting, such as those found in dance, games, and gymnastics." (Graham, Parker, Holt/Hale, 1999)

Media & Digital Learning

The media and digital learning curriculum integrates information and technology literacy skills with classroom curriculum learning. Students learn to use a variety of tools and resources to become information gatherers and creators of products to demonstrate knowledge. They practice library and digital technology skills within the context of reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies learning. For instance, students studying Massachusetts or other states gather facts, read maps, write articles, collect artifacts, and acquire new information by actively searching, recording and presenting their work. This area of the curriculum is assessed within the context of the activity in which it is embedded.



NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grade 3 Progress Report
Parent Brochure

The Progress Report

This progress report is intended to *complement* existing parent conferences and to provide you with additional information about your child's progress toward mastering grade-level learning expectations. It reflects the district's belief that students should be engaged in challenging academics as well as ongoing social emotional learning experiences that are grounded in clearly defined and developmentally appropriate standards.

This report is designed to communicate students' progress in a way that descriptively reflects what they know and are able to do in relation to the state curriculum standards. The parent brochure outlines the categories that are included in the report for each curriculum area and provides a description of the characteristics associated with proficiency in that category. Please note that:

- A student's achievement is reported separately from effort.
- In each reporting period, the skills that are taught are assessed against a benchmark.
- Numerical levels are used to report performance with respect to the grade level learning goals.
- The system is designed to describe how well a student is progressing with respect to mid and end-of-year grade level expectations, rather than in relation to other students in the class.
- Teachers use this information to inform instructional practices that address student learning needs.

Please keep in mind that this report represents just a snapshot of your child's progress at a particular point in time. The information presented here, in conjunction with your conference with the child's teacher, provides a more comprehensive picture of your child's overall progress.

All of the staff in the Needham Public Schools remain committed to working in partnership with you to provide a meaningful learning and growth experience for your child.

Proficiency Scale – SEL	
E	Established
D	Developing
B	Beginning
NY	Not yet observed
*	See separate progress monitoring report

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

At the elementary level, the Responsive Classroom Approach is used to promote well-designed practices intended to create safe, joyful, and engaging classroom and school communities. The emphasis is on helping students develop their academic, social, and emotional skills in a learning environment that is developmentally responsive to their strengths and needs. The process of Social Emotional Learning is dynamic and lifelong. Social and emotional competencies change and grow influenced by an individual's developmental period, experiences, and external factors with no real "stopping point" to skill development. With this in mind, the proficiency scale for SEL measurement is meant to provide feedback about your child's current strengths and areas to focus on for continued growth.

English Language Arts (Reading)

Third grade readers use a system of strategic actions that include phonics and word analysis, meaning, and language structure in an integrated way to read texts with understanding. They read fluently with phrasing and expression. When reading new texts, they slow down to problem-solve unknown words and quickly pick up the pace again to focus on the meaning. The students learn to use comprehension strategies such as making connections to their own lives, their world, and other known texts; making and confirming predictions; and summarizing important ideas. They develop their ability to infer what's implied but not stated and integrate text information with their own knowledge to create new understandings (synthesize). Third graders analyze texts, examining the author's craft (e.g. words that create sensory images or feelings), and evaluate and think critically about the ideas.

Adjusting their reading for different purposes, third graders learn to read a variety of texts such as informational texts, poetry, fiction, drama, and traditional literature from diverse cultures. They read to learn new information as well as for enjoyment. Readers learn to distinguish the characteristics of different genres (e.g. fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry). They identify themes and main ideas, distinguish among multiple points of view, and find evidence (details) from texts to support their thinking. Third graders learn how non-fiction texts are organized (e.g. cause and effect) and how to use charts, graphs, diagrams and other features of informational texts. They learn the structures and elements of fiction (e.g. plot, setting, characters, problem, solution). The students learn about literary elements in poetry and other texts (e.g. sensory images, rhyme, repetition) as well as structural elements (stanza/verse).

Third graders use language to communicate their ideas in discussions. They listen to other students' ideas, pose questions, and add their own information. They communicate their understandings of texts in written form, using evidence to support their thinking.

Language and Word Study-- The students learn and use new vocabulary in the context of texts, as well as solidify their phonetic and word analysis knowledge (e.g. letters, syllables, word families, root words, prefixes, suffixes). They use grammar knowledge (e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives) to read and write texts. Third graders recognize many regular and irregular words that appear frequently in texts and learn about words that sound alike but are spelled differently (homophones), multiple meanings of words (homographs), and words that have the same or opposite meanings (synonyms, antonyms).

English/Language Arts (Writing)

In third grade, teachers look for evidence that a student can independently understand and use the steps of the writing process. Students write in a variety of genres, including personal narrative, fiction, informational, and persuasive pieces. Multiple samples of writing inform a student's grade. Because various genres are taught at different times during the year, a student's grade in June could differ from that in January.

Writing Process-- Proficient writers write for a sustained amount of time. They generate ideas, plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing, incorporating feedback from adults and peers.

Structure-- Proficient writers provide a meaningful introduction and conclusion. They organize and connect ideas in logical order according to genre.

Development--Proficient writers include well-developed and organized paragraphs that support the main ideas or story. They elaborate with details and evidence that support the reader's understanding, using voice appropriate to the genre.

Conventions--Proficient writers apply rules for punctuation, grammar and usage, paragraphing and capitalization.

Mathematics

Needham's elementary mathematics program balances mathematical skill fluency with the development of conceptual understanding and problem solving within the five domains of the MA Common Core standards:

Operations & Algebraic Thinking-- Proficient students understand the concepts of the four basic operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They solve multiplication and division facts within 100 with accuracy, efficiency, and flexibility by June. They are able to represent and solve word problems involving multiplication and division.

Number & Operations in Base Ten--Proficient students fluently add and subtract numbers within 1,000. They use place value knowledge to break apart large numbers in order to multiply.

Number & Operations—Fractions—Proficient students understand fractions as quantities formed when a whole (a shape, a set, a number line) is partitioned into equal parts. They can represent fractions on a number line. They can explain equivalence of fractions and can compare fractions by reasoning about their size.

Measurement & Data-- Proficient students are able to solve problems involving addition and subtraction of time intervals in minutes. Using standard units, they are able to solve problems involving measurement and estimation of liquid volume and weights. Students are able to measure area and relate it to addition and multiplication. Students are able to interpret and create a variety of graphs, including scaled graphs.

Geometry--Proficient students identify two-dimensional shapes. Students compare and categorize polygons based on attributes.

Standards for Mathematical Practice --The Standards for Mathematical Practice describe the types of thinking and behaviors students engage in as they are doing mathematics. Proficient students make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. They know how to select and use appropriate tools to solve problems. They communicate clearly about their mathematical ideas. They listen to, make connections to, and offer feedback about the ideas of others.

Proficiency Scale - Academic	
4	In addition to meeting the standard, the student is able to make in-depth inferences and applications that extend beyond what was taught. The student exceeds the January/June standard.
3	The student meets the January/June standard.
2	The student is progressing towards meeting the January/June standard.
1	The student needs more review & reinforcement, requires constant teacher support and assistance to learn and use information. The student is having difficulty meeting the January/June standard.
-	Not taught during this reporting period.
*	See separate progress monitoring report.