



August 2020

Dear Third Grade Parents,

I hope this letter finds you well, and that you have been enjoying a lovely summer with your family. The administration and I have information to share, but before we do so, I wanted you to know that your child's health and safety is my number one concern. I am going to be very strict with our protocols and sanitization procedures. I will be doing my best to make it a great third grade year for your child. We would be wise to take on the adaptability and resilience of our children. I would like to give you some information regarding the upcoming school year, beginning with a glimpse of our third grade curriculum.

The third grade year is a year of great transformation. The children will typically begin to experience a sense of separation from their familiar connection to childhood as they enter into a more conscious state of who they are as individuals. They will no longer feel as if they are an extension of their parents, but the emerging 9-year old stands firmly on the earth and is ready to work and learn in new ways. Their bodies and minds are ready for this new soul awakening as they begin to face the world anew, as individuals emerging.

The third grade curriculum gives the 9-year old the gift of experiencing the world through a sequence of stories from the Hebrew Culture. These stories express the journey of humanity from paradise to the earth, a journey that the children are experiencing in their inner life as well. Practical experiences such as farming, gardening, house building, using tools, learning time and measurement, and cooking give the children practical ways to embrace their emerging selves.

The school-year for third grade begins on **Tuesday, September 8th, 2020.**

**Our first day** will begin at 8:00 am and the students will be dismissed at 12:00 pm. The children should come to school in assembly dress (fancy clothing that one would wear for a special event or holiday) for the first day of school (please refer to the online *Parent Handbook*). They should also **bring-in a snack, mask and face shield** on this first day.

**On the second day of school, the children should bring-in the following materials:**

- A clean face mask daily. The best type of mask is the one that the student can comfortably wear and keep on.

- A clear face shield (shield hat or headband) for outside \*\*
- A change of clothes (including socks, underwear, pants and a shirt - all items **labeled** with your child's full name)
- A shoebox to store the above items
- A pair of in-door shoes (these will stay at school and not be worn outside)
- A pair of sneakers or shoes for movement (can be the same as their in-door shoes if those are sneakers)
- A painting smock or apron (an old T-shirt without any media images or logo is a great option)
- A set of rain pants, hooded rain jacket and rain boots - **all labeled**.
- Lunch in a labeled lunchbox (again, without any media images or logos)
- Placemat made of cloth, like a large (approx. 15" x 12") linen napkin that can be easily folded and brought to and from school inside their lunchbox.
- A water bottle. We are no longer using mugs. I will return the ones from last year.
- Any 2nd grade classroom **books that were sent home this spring**. **Please place these inside a sealed bag for 5 days prior to the first day.**
- Your child's individual items not yet returned from the spring such as: small chalkboard, pentatonic recorder, beanbags, jump rope, and crayons.

I will supply the children with all other supplies such as main lesson books, pencils, and pencil cases.

**Reading Assignment Reminder:** I hope you had the opportunity to read my July letter. If not here is a link to it:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dM4Xg0R8JErFT7p65FodpcpYOP9MKAMmjm6FFqR8gv8/edit?usp=sharing>

In the letter, I asked you to have your child start reading the books, Little House in the Big Woods by Laura Ingalls-Wilder and Kaya, The Journey Begins by Janet Shaw. Prior to the first day of school, I would like your child to choose and draw a favorite scene from one of these stories and describe it. We will be discussing these books as a way to reconnect with one another. The activity can be done inside their journal (from last year) or on any other paper that you have available.

**Third Grade Classroom and Rules** - This year, due to the pandemic, we have had to move around some classrooms. Fortunately, our third grade class is staying in the second grade classroom. I will go over all classroom safety rules, such as how to hand wash, keeping hands to yourself, keeping masks on, etc., with the class on the first day of school. Teachers and students will wear masks inside. We will have regular mask breaks after 45-minute increments or sooner. That is what I will be wearing in order to convey my warmth and emotions through facial expressions as well as enabling others to understand me better. Clear Shields will be worn outside.\*

**First Parent Evening Date, Weds. September 17th, 7PM:** We will have our first Parent Evening on Wednesday, September 16th at 7 PM. It will be a zoom meeting. I will email a link and post it in the Google Classroom.

**Changes in Our Class Family:** It is with great sadness that I announce that some of our beloved students have decided to opt for another schooling option this fall: Ava Restivo, Noah Klepack, Connor Klepack, and Charles Helm. I will miss these children dearly and wish them all the best this fall and beyond. They are always welcome to rejoin us at any point in the future. I am happy to announce that we have five new students joining us: Peter Cornwall, Mohan Kalia, and Cleo Hux. Please join me in welcoming these children and their families into our Third Grade Community! I would like to have 3 volunteers to befriend the parents of Peter and Mohan as their “Parent Buddy”. This person can be there to answer questions and give reminders and explanations about how we do things at Waldorf. Please let me know if you’d be willing to do this. Thank you!

**Parent Zoom Meeting, Thursday, August 27th, 8 PM.** I am inviting you to meet with me via zoom before school opens. Here is the link: <https://waldorfgarden-org.zoom.us/j/819459927?pwd=UTJha29icDAyc0cwN3YzUFF3bEhVQT09>  
Meeting ID: 819 459 9927    Passcode: 654857

Please plan for a Socially Distanced **Picnic** (tentatively on the morning of **Saturday August 30th**) before school opens. We can talk about our expectations and agree upon distanced behaviors. I suggest that we meet at a local park, such as Eisenhower. We can decide this at our meeting, I can answer any remaining questions that you may have after reading our Reopening Plan Post: <https://www.waldorfgarden.org/movingforward2020/>

I hope you have had a wonderful summer so far. I am looking forward to seeing you in September. I miss the children and am eagerly anticipating our third grade school year together!

Should school need to close, we can move over to **Teacher Directed Distance Learning**. Here is a link to a classroom: <https://classroom.google.com/u/1/c/MTQ3MzUzNzg2Mzg3>

I have been meeting with students (on zoom or in person) to reconnect and guide them through a craft. It has been so wonderful to spend time with the children. Sign up by clicking on the Google spreadsheet link in my July letter. We are making a **macramé water bottle holder** so that your child can hang their water bottle from their desk. It is great and helpful if 2 children can meet me at once. New families, I am happy to come to your home and work (play) individually with your child. Thank you!

Warmly,

MaryBeth Thomas  
Third Grade Teacher