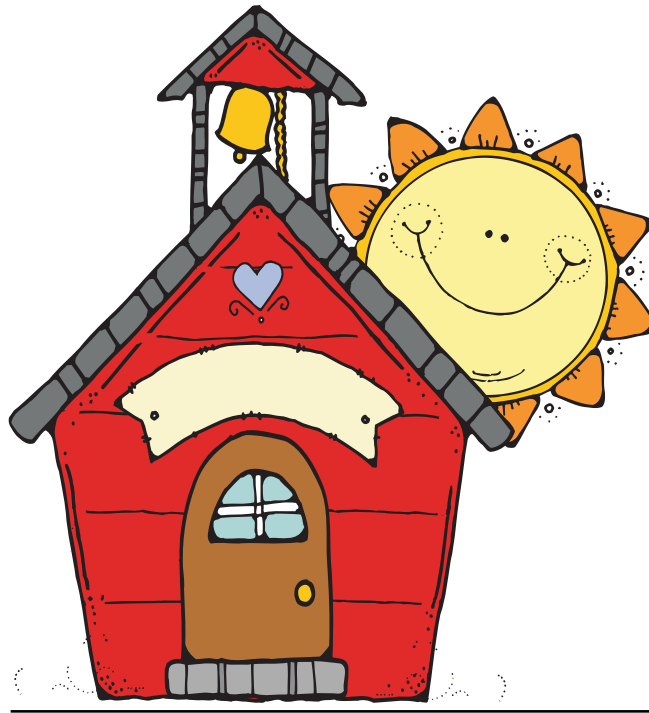


# Third Grade Handbook 2011-2012



Miss Van Arkel

# All About Miss Van Arkel

Dear Families,

This will be my fourth year teaching third grade at Georgetown. I am a graduate of Hope College and I love teaching third grade. I can't wait to get to know each student and I enjoy spending each day working together and learning together. I look forward to a wonderful school year!

In my free time, I enjoy reading, riding my bike, running, shopping, photography, baking, and being with friends and family.

Your third grader is very important to me and to our classroom. I am thankful for each new day to be with a wonderful group of students!

## School Policies

### Attendance

Please inform the school office when your child is going to be absent. You can call the school any time before 9:15 to report the absence. Our answering machine will record your message if you call before the office opens.

More and more of our learning is being accomplished through in-class reading, writing, and discussion. This makes it more difficult to send home the work your child misses.

If your child arrives late, please stop in at the office to sign him/her in. If you are picking your child up early, please stop in the office to sign them out. At that time Mrs. Ripley or Mrs. Neurenburg will call your child down to the office to meet you.

### Prearranged Absences

Please send a note in advance indicating when your child will be gone from school. Families planning vacations must fill out a vacation request form at least five days in advance of the scheduled vacation.

### Dismissal

**If your child is going home a different way than he or she normally does, please send a note indicating this change.** We cannot allow your child to ride home with anyone else, or stay after school for an activity without your written instructions. **If your child does not have a note, they will be sent home on the bus they normally ride.**

### Personal Items

Please label your child's hat, coat, mittens, boots, gym shoes, lunch box, backpacks, etc. so that they are easy to identify when they are lost. Toys of any kind, including electronic games, are not allowed at Georgetown Elementary.

## **Recess**

Students are expected to go outside for recess when it is not raining and the wind chill factor is appropriate as determined by the office. Students will go out before their lunch and at afternoon recess. **Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather.**

## **Lunch Money**

You will need to send separate slips for each of your children with their first and last name, indicating how much money you would like to put into that child's account. Please send all slips in one **envelope with the children's names, grades and teachers** on the outside. It is recommended that money be sent in early in the week, but it will be accepted on any day. It is suggested that you deposit enough money in your child's account to cover at least one week's worth of lunches or milk.

## **Snack**

We have a snack break in the morning. Please send a healthy snack that will allow your child to do his or her best learning. Please avoid candy.

## **Messages**

Georgetown Elementary has a voice mail system, if you need to contact me, call the school at 797-9797. My extension is 22203. You can also email me at [avanarke@hpseagles.net](mailto:avanarke@hpseagles.net) I will try to check my messages when I can, but if you have an urgent message, please leave it with the secretary. I will return your call as soon as possible.

## **Special Circumstances**

We would appreciate knowing about any special circumstances (sickness or death of a family member, death of a pet, etc.) that you feel may affect your child at school. Sometimes things that happen outside of school cause them to need extra patience and TLC, and we want to take care of your child the best we can.

## **Classroom Procedures**

### **Mission and Rules**

The mission statement at Georgetown Elementary is made up of three simple quotes. Be Nice, Work Hard, Learn Well. Our basic rule is that we are respectful of ourselves, each other, other teachers, the school building/grounds, and the materials we use.

### **School and Classroom Behavior**

As a class, we have created a classroom promise. This is a list of rules that we think are important for our classroom. We will be doing our best to follow this promise. It is important that students are held accountable if our promise is not followed. **Our classroom promise includes:** Be respectful and polite to others, Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself, Raise your hand and wait to be called on, Follow directions the first time they are given, Encourage each other! (fill a bucket), and Always try your best!

I will be using the ticket system in our classroom. Students will have many opportunities to earn tickets. Tickets may be earned by appropriate hallway behavior, quiet working, being ready for learning, turning in homework on time, having the agenda signed each day, helping a classmate, etc. Students will owe tickets when they show disrespect, are not following our class promise, show inappropriate hallway behavior, do not have materials ready for learning, etc. There will be opportunities throughout the year to spend tickets on special prizes!

We will also be using a behavior clip chart. The chart encourages positive behaviors within our classroom and school. We have a chart in our classroom that looks like the one to the right. Each student will have a small chart at their seat with a clip attached. Each day, every student begins on green-Ready to Learn. If a student makes a poor choice, a warning will be given and he/she will move their clip to yellow. If poor choices continue, the student will be asked to move his/her clip down to orange-Think About It. The student will owe a ticket and 5 minutes of recess. If poor choices still continue the student will move his/her clip to red-Problem Time. He/she will owe 2 tickets and will fill out a Time to Think form (to be sent home) at recess. As students make good choices, they will be asked to move their clip up. If good choices continue and even outstanding choices, then he or she will continue to move their clip up. Students will earn tickets for moving their clip up as well as a chance for a sweet treat or classroom coupon. It's important to remember that remaining on green-Ready to Learn is a great place to be! Throughout the year we will be focusing on making positive choices and building character traits. Please talk about responsible behavior with your child at home as well.

Outstanding
Great Job
Good Choices
Ready to Learn
Warning
Think About It
Problem Time

## **Homework**

Homework helps to develop responsibility and it reinforces skills learned in class. It also increases parent awareness of what is happening in the classroom. The majority of homework will consist of math. This will usually be sent home on Tuesdays and Thursdays unless it is needed on other days. Other homework such as spelling, science, social studies, etc. will be sent home as needed. It's your child's responsibility to return the work, but gentle reminders from you are always helpful. Also, feel free to help your child with homework, but please have them do the work with you as a guide.

## **Agenda and Homework Folder**

This year the students will have an agenda sheet in the homework folder that will come home with them each evening. They will write a few words each day to inform you of what we did in class and any homework assignments they might have. Please check the folder with your child daily and initial in the space provided. I will check the agendas each morning, so questions or notes you need to write can be written in the agenda and I will get back to you. Students with parents signatures will receive a ticket. Any papers or homework for your child will travel to and from school in their nightly folder. **Please check it each evening and make sure it is returned each day to school.**

## **Notes from the Office**

This year, notes from the office will travel with the youngest or only child in your family and will be sent home on the day they are issued. Please check your child's mail each evening.

## **Blog**

Our class blog is <http://vanarkel.edublogs.org> . We are working on becoming a 'green' school so I encourage you to check the blog often for news, upcoming events, homework and test information, and things we are studying. There is also some education links on the blog for your third grader to practice at home.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards will be issued three times a year. Parent/Teacher conferences will be held in November and February.

## **Math**

We will be using Math Expressions as our math curriculum. Your child will learn many new and helpful ways to think about math by using drawings and writing. I encourage you to support your son or daughter as they learn some wonderful math strategies. Your third grader would probably love the opportunity to teach you some great, new strategies as well! :) Look for some more information regarding math on our blog.

## **Reading**

I encourage you to read daily with your children at home. Ask them about what books they are reading at school and talk about what strategies they are learning. Reading every day will build confidence and improvement.

## **Reading Workshop**

We will be using The Daily Five in our classroom this year. The Daily Five consists of read to self, read with someone, writing, word work, or listening to reading. Our reading time will begin with a mini lesson on a certain reading strategy and then students will make a choice from the daily five. Each area will be modeled and practiced. Students will work at their level, and take responsibility for their literacy learning and behavior. This will help students develop the daily habits of reading and literacy.

## **Reading Counts**

In grade three we have a program that allows children to read at their own level and take comprehension quizzes to see how well they read the text. In the next few weeks each student will be given a quiz on the computer to determine his/her reading range (level) and a point goal. Each book is worth a certain amount of points. Depending on how well your child has read, they will receive points after passing the quiz. It is a great motivational tool for the children. They can read at their own pace and at their own level. In third grade, It is important that students take responsibility for reading the reading counts books and taking quizzes. Please encourage your third grader to get reading counts books at the library and sign up to take a quiz when they are ready.

## **Science**

In third grade we will study; life cycles, adaptations, and the parts of a plant and each parts job, properties of matter; pollution and conservation; rocks and earth changes; forces of motion; sound and light; the scientific method. We will do many activities with each unit and end each unit with a final assessment.

## **Social Studies**

This year we will be studying Michigan throughout the year. This includes Michigan geography, economics, history, growth of Michigan, the government of Michigan, and public issues facing Michigan.

## **Handwriting/Keyboarding**

In third grade your child will be introduced to cursive writing and key boarding when we have computers. Please check our blog links for some fun keyboarding games.

## **Specials Schedule**

Our special schedule will be each day from 1:55-2:45. Day 1 is P.E., Day 2 is Art, Day 3 is Music.

We will have computers on Wednesdays and Library on Fridays. Please help your child to remember to return library books when completed.

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are very special in our classroom. We will celebrate birthdays on their exact date if we have school on that day. Otherwise, we will celebrate it on the next school day. If your child's birthday is in the summer, we will celebrate their half birthday. The children usually like to bring a treat for their birthday. Usually treats such as pencils, stickers, erasers, bookmarks, or small snacks work best. Please send enough for 29.