



From the Desk of Mrs. Powell

2009-2010 School Year Syllabus

# Powell's Paw Prints

## What's Happening This Year?

Dear Families,

Welcome to third grade!! I hope that your summer was all that you hoped it would be, filled with relaxation, recreation and family time together.

Each child in this room is unique and brings special talents that make this classroom a family. I have profound respect and compassion for each student. I honestly believe that each child's growth and achievement in the classroom is earth-shattering, awesome, and deserving of a pat on the back.

Enclosed you will find important information about how our classroom operates. Things may seem overwhelming and quite different from what you have experienced in the past. I have the goal that your child becomes a proficient, life-long learner. His/her experiences in this classroom will mirror that desired goal. Please ask if you have any questions or concerns.

We expect to have a wonderful year!!!!

With respect,

Tamika Powell

### Needed Donations

- \*Colored paper
- \*Decorative Computer Paper
- \*Air fresheners
- \*Tape
- \*Items for the classroom store.
- \*Index cards
- \*Books-A-Million gift card to support each child's reading appetite (This might be fun for your child's birthday! Your student would pick the books for the classroom library.)
- \*Sharpie markers (all colors)
- \*Poster Board (white or color)
- \*Any other supplies you think we need.

### Other News....

### Mrs. Powell's 2009-2010

### 3rd Grade Class

- ★ Madison Bates
- ★ Cameron Baumgartner
- ★ Jayce Brooks-Barbee
- ★ William Crumbley
- ★ Emma Kate Dean
- ★ Daniel Dong

- ★ Millie LaGanke
- ★ Tyler Neal
- ★ Destiny Osmon
- ★ Atticus Phillips
- ★ Garret Schooley
- ★ Cailyn Sorrow

- ★ Jozi Jackson
- ★ Cameron Starnes
- ★ Bailie Vaughn
- ★ Abigail West
- ★ Curtis Wilson

## Writing Workshop

I will be using a variety of resources to teach writing. Each child will have a Writer's Notebook. Writer's Notebooks will be the primary tool used in Writing Workshop.

## Writer's Notebook

A Writer's Notebook is a tool our students use to record the things they notice, observe, and think about. We call each recording an entry. The entries can be any variety of ideas. Writer's notebooks SHOULD include the following ideas:

- memories
- observations of the things happenings

## Reading Workshop

During reading workshop, I will give a minilesson, then students will have independent reading time, and then everyone gathers as a group to share thoughts and opinions. I use several resources to help the children learn the strategies they will need to be a fluent reader, such as, *The Comprehension Toolkit*, *Strategies that Work*, and *Guiding Readers and Writers*, to name a few.

- **Minilesson:** short lesson focused on a specific procedure, strategy, or skill.
- **Independent reading:** students' read individually and silently usually selecting their own texts.
- **Share session:** students will gather together and show application of the procedure, strategy, or skill taught in the minilesson.

As students are independent reading, guided reading and literature circles (book study groups) will be happening.

around them

- descriptions of people and places important in their lives
- opinions
- wonderings
- Wishes
- family stories, hobbies, and other passions

**Writer's Notebooks ARE NOT diaries or personal journals.** We encourage students to be in touch with what is going on in the world, by paying attention to the meaningful, everyday things that may otherwise go unnoticed or unrecorded.

### Accelerated Reader Disclaimer

The purpose of AR is to motivate children to read. Given our reading workshop setup, the children are daily held accountable and engaged in numerous reading activities. Therefore, students are not required to achieve a certain number of points. There will be NO grade given for independent AR reading

- **Guided reading:** small group instruction for students who read the same text. The students read at about the same level, demonstrate similar reading behaviors, and share similar instructional needs. These small groups are temporary; they change as I assess their growth and needs. Groups are also formed based on similar interests.
- **Literature circles:** small groups that are formed based on similar interests, authors, genres, or specific books. Students agree on meeting times, reading tasks, and they talk in-depth about what they have read.

### Reader's Response Journal (Reader's Notebook)

A Reader's Response Journal is a notebook of bound pages in which students write about their reading. All messages are written in the notebook as a continual record of one reader's reading responses through the year.

## The Poetry Anthology

We will read, listen to, and write wonderful poetry this year! I believe the quality of our notebook entries will go up from reading poems and listening to them. All the poems we write will be combined into a personal anthology that will be treasured for a lifetime!

## Grades

- Publishing writing pieces
- Daily Oral Language quizzes
- Daily Paragraph Editing quizzes
- Daily Grades \*\*

\*\*All daily grades will have a star next to the grade and count 30%.

### Literacy Work Stations

During reading workshop the students will participate in literacy work stations. According to Debbie Diller, a literacy work station is an area within the classroom where students work alone or interact with one another, using instructional materials to explore and expand their literacy. It is a time for students to practice reading, writing, speaking, listening, and working with letters and words.

### Grades

- Literature circles (Three grades: literacy project, AR comprehension test, and participation/preparation)
- EBSCO article test
- Skill and strategy test
- Vocabulary tests
- Daily grades \*\*
- Graphic organizers \*\*

\*\*All daily grades will have a star next to the grade and count 30%.

# Math

Our third grade curriculum requires our students to study higher levels of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, geometry, measurement, and word problems than they have studied in the past.

Your child **MUST** learn his/her multiplication facts. This is the most important math skill in third grade that **MUST** be mastered. Soon after school begins, we will begin timed test for multiplication. At first, I will not take the test as a grade but will eventually count it as a quiz. I will keep you informed when I begin to take the timed test as grades.

## Grades

- Timed tests
- Weekly tests
- Chapter tests
- Homework \*\*
- Daily grades



Daily grades are worth 30% and tests are worth 70% of the final grade in each subject.

\*\*Homework is a daily grade and will be compiled as one grade at the end of the grading period.

# Spelling

The spelling program I use **DOES NOT** involve having the entire class learn the same set of words. With the "buddy study" the students learn spelling principles and effective techniques for studying and connecting words. Buddy study is based on a five-day cycle.

**Day one:** Choose, Write, Build. Students select words from their writing, words to learn chart, and/or teacher.

**Day two:** Look, Say, Cover, Write, and Buddy Check. Students use a folder

we will create during class and manipulate the words chosen for their spelling list. These activities will provide the students with practice using their words. Spelling buddies, who are matched by spelling development, give each other a test and check it. Students learn to self-correct and develop strategies for tricky words.

**Day Three: Making Connections.** Students write connections for each one of their spelling words. They connect words by the way they sound (phonetic connections; beginning, ending sounds, rhymes, homonyms), (visual patterns), and mean (synonyms).

**Day Four: Buddy Test.** Buddies give each other a test in the Spelling Notebook, which is checked by the teacher for a test grade.

**Day Five:** Students finalize their spelling word list for the following week. The teacher **MUST** sign their list, which approves the spelling word list.

## Grades

- Spelling test grades
- Daily Grades \*\*

\*\*Each day's activity will count as a daily grade.

# Social Studies

Students will begin to develop an understanding of how the environment affects its inhabitants and how people change the land. They expand their understanding of historical concepts, individual expressions, societal values, and cultural traditions as they develop an appreciation for the people, places, and events that shaped the history of Alabama. I will be incorporating Social Studies during our Reading Workshop. I will also be using *Time for Kids* and *National Geographic Explorer*. Daily

Geography will be used to teach map skills.

## Grades

- Tests
- Daily Geography
- Map Activities
- Time for Kids Activities
- Daily grades



# Science

East Elementary is fortunate to participate in AMSTI (Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative). We have been trained on various science and math modules. These modules will be incorporated into our classroom. We will spend the school year studying about different areas of science. Some of these include plant life, human body, rocks and minerals, matter, chemical changes, and simple machines.

## Grades

- Tests
- Daily grades
- Small group projects
- Science notebook checks

This document is meant to serve as a guide. Writing and Reading Workshops are currently considered BEST PRACTICE in language arts instruction. I continue to learn new techniques; therefore, things may change.

## A Few Last Words.....

### Take-home Folder

Your child received a 6-pocket folder that will go home daily. In it you will find all graded work, PTO and school letters, and communication letters from me. Please have your child show you the contents of this folder each night. (There should be NO loose documents in student backpacks. Organizational skills are extremely important and needs to be reinforced at home.)

### Missed Assignments

I understand that children get sick or

### Snack

We will have a short snack in the afternoon. The students may bring a snack and bottled water from home. Please do not send candy or any other beverage.

### Food

The cost for lunch is \$1.80 and \$0.40 for reduced. Please sign in at the lunchroom if you are having lunch with your child. The lunchroom also serves breakfast at 7:30 each morning. The cost is \$1.30 and \$0.30 for reduced.

need to be out for certain reasons. I will work with each child on an individual basis to make up needed material.

### Parent Contact

I will send a weekly parent letter home on Mondays. I will also have it posted on the East Elementary website. I will be glad to meet with you to discuss the progress that your child is making and any strength or weaknesses that he/she may have. Please send me an e-mail or call and I will set up a time to meet with you.

### Pick Up and Drop Off

Please follow school procedures for dropping children off at school in the morning. Students will not be allowed in the hallways before 7:45 a.m. They may arrive to school at 7:30, at which time they need to report to the gym for supervision. My class will dismiss in the afternoon by walking together through the door on the north side of the building. I will wait for your child to be picked up along the sidewalk. **Due to safety, parents must pick their child**

### Discipline

I set high expectations in my classroom for both academic achievement and behavior. I believe that children rise to the occasion and will perform well if they know we expect much from them. My goal is for each child to live autonomous lives. When problems arise we will talk it out and consider points of view from all parties that are involved. As a class, we will construct rules for our classroom.

**up along the curb of the sidewalk. The children will not be allowed to walk across the street unsupervised.** If your child needs to ride home with someone else, please let me know by writing a note or e-mailing me before 2:00 p.m. If your child is not picked up by 3:10, they will be taken to Extended Day, and you will be charged a fee.

**School starts at 7:45. Morning work is from 7:45-8:00. Please make all efforts to have your child at school at 7:45. Thanks!!!**

## Homework

Part of your child's homework is to read. Please make sure your child is reading at home for at least 20 minutes or more. There are several ways to accomplish this. Choose a variety so you and your child continue to enjoy reading. Some suggestions are:

1. Individual silent reading
2. Reading aloud
3. Shared reading- you read one page, they read the next, so on...

## Join the PTO!

### PTO

Don't forget to join! The PTO here is SUPER- I have never before worked with such caring and kind people who really care about kids and teachers the way this group does! Your children benefit greatly from the work PTO does.

## Learn the Lingo.....

### **ARMT :**

(Alabama Reading and Mathematics Test): This is a state-mandated test that will be given in the spring. It will be graded using a rubric (see definition below) designed by the State Department of Education.

### **Student Conference:**

This is a time when I sit alongside my students to see how I can help. It is the time when I am expected to meet

Any class work not finished is considered homework. Other homework will be given periodically.

### Book Clubs

I will occasionally send home book club forms. These books are offered at discounted prices. Each book you buy helps our classroom receive free books. If you would like to buy books to donate to the class, I would be glad to help you choose what we need. Please make

### Donations

A \$25.00 donation is greatly appreciated! The money will be used for books, notebooks, art supplies, folders, and food and drink items for classroom celebrations.

### Website

Please visit the East Elementary website!! The address is [www.ees.cullmancats.net](http://www.ees.cullmancats.net). I will update my portion of the website weekly. There you will find our weekly newsletter, pictures, homework and other important information under my name on East's website. You can also e-mail me directly from this website.

the needs of my students, each with individual abilities and learning styles.

### **Assessment:**

Ongoing means of monitoring students' work and progress. Results are used to inform teaching decisions.

### **Rubric:**

An assessment tool that clearly states the standards to which a piece must be held in order to receive a specific evaluation. Used by both students and teachers to develop common language and understandings in order to evaluate work.

### **Portfolio Assessment:**

This assessment will show growth over time in each academic subject area. Periodically, the students will file work

checks payable to Scholastic Book Clubs.

### Jackets/Sweaters

Students may want to keep a jacket or a sweater in the classroom. The temperature in our room is extreme-extremely warm or extremely cool.

samples in all subject areas. These include breakthrough pieces in all subject areas. It is very revealing to observe how children grow over time on all these tasks.

**Genre:** A particular type or category of writing. The variety of genres students produce may include memoir, poetry, nonfiction, realistic fiction, recipes, biography, fantasy, comic books, and movie or book reviews.

**Writing Cycle:** The writing cycle is a process through which a writer works to produce a finished draft. The cycle includes rehearsal, drafting, and revision, editing, and publishing.