



Extraordinary Education. Timeless Traditions. Inspired Lives.

## What to Expect: Third Grade at Denver JDS

Third grade means a transition from primary elementary to intermediate elementary. This year prepares students for new responsibilities and encourages them to work towards learning independence. Third grade students study civics and democracy, exploring their place in the third grade community, the Denver JDS community, and the world as a whole.

### Literacy

Third graders at Denver JDS learn what it takes to be a good reader and writer. They have a better handle on what to do when they do not understand a word or passage, like looking at pictures in a book for clues. They often discuss books in small groups and ask questions about what they are reading. They summarize and use graphs to organize their thoughts about the books they read. Their teacher will introduce many literary genres (including fiction, fantasy, nonfiction, poetry) and a variety of print forms such as newspapers, magazines and websites. Third graders also learn organizational methods that help them prepare for more complex writing assignments. They create maps, webs and Venn diagrams (diagrams used to compare and contrast two things) to plan their work. They write reports, creative fiction, and personal narratives. They are also asked to take more responsibility for the writing process including revising, editing, and proofreading. A highlight of the third grade literacy curriculum is the Author Skype series and units include the project-based Fairy Tale unit and the Melvin Bubble perspective writing project.

Our Learning Resource Center and Gifted Learner Program support Denver JDS teachers in challenging students across the academic spectrum and provide direct student support. Inside the classroom, flexible grouping and differentiation allows students to all be supported and encouraged to reach their potential. Additionally, through our Focus on Growth Initiative, teachers work with students to set individualized academic and social-emotional goals for the year, focusing on personal growth.

### Math

Denver JDS develops and fosters future-ready skills within our students to prepare them not only for today's world, but for the world of tomorrow. With an emphasis on creativity, communications, collaboration, critical thinking, and communities, we equip our students with the skills they need for success in any content area.

Our Math in Focus curriculum emphasizes mastery of basic mathematical concepts, number sense, mental math and problem solving. Third grade math emphasizes a mastery of basic mathematical concepts, number sense, mental math and problem solving. Students deepen their understanding of place value to the 10,000s and begin to study the concepts of multiplication, division, measurement and fractions. Throughout the year, students will develop multiplication and division strategies and relate multiplication to division. By the end of the year, students should recall all products of two one-digit numbers, have the ability to compare, order and make equivalent fractions, and describe and analyze shapes by their sides, angles and definitions. Key units concepts include fractions, metric measurements, and bar graphs and line plots.

## Social Studies

Third grade social studies focuses on civics, history, geography, and community building, incorporating a study of democracy in general and the United States Constitution, Bill of Rights, and the three branches of the government specifically. Third graders explore their place in the world through their study of civics, our *middot* (Jewish values) and geography. Through geography, students focus on developing spatial thinking and investigating types of geographic tools, learning about various features of a map and conduct research on regions and states within our country. Key units include “What is Democracy?,” “Our Role in Society,” and “Economics.”

## Science

Science investigations become much more detailed in third grade. Students explore more complex natural systems and delve more deeply into their inquiry. They’ll learn about landmasses and bodies of water and how to identify them on a globe or map. They investigate different states of matter such as solids, liquids, and gases. They are asked to make smart guesses about their observations. Students begin the year with a unit on the “Water Cycle and Water Conservation,” meeting with a representative of the Denver Water Department to discuss our complex water systems and using the Wabash Farmette at Denver JDS as an outdoor classroom to study water in a hands-on manner. Students also study the Earth’s materials, including rocks and minerals, culminating the unit with a visit to Roxborough State Park. The students also get a chance to sleep at the zoo or aquarium and witness all the animals in their habitats.

At Denver JDS, instructional and educational technology are a key means of extending and enriching teaching and learning. **Technology** is infused throughout every one of our classrooms as a vehicle for enhancing student learning.

## Judaic Studies

The third grade Judaic studies program focuses on character development with an emphasis on *middot* (Jewish values) through both classroom learning and hands-on activities. Torah study continues with careful examination of portions of the Book of Genesis in the *Chumash (Bible)* and a focus on understanding the text in Hebrew. A major focus of *Chumash* studies is Abraham’s life and the character traits we can learn from him. Through weekly discussions of *parashat hashavuah* (the Torah portion traditionally read each week), students engage in discussions about how to apply the teachings of text to their everyday lives. The Jewish holidays are also a focus of the year, allowing the students to add onto their previous study and make personal meaning of these days.

## Hebrew

Third grade students continue their Hebrew studies in the Tal Am, learning vocabulary to converse about everyday life. A major theme this year is the *B’hatzlacha* unit, in which students explore *klalim* (principles for successful learning) and the ways to ensure fruitful and productive study. They explore their own and fellow students’ traits and explore all that is involved in creating a successful learning community. Later in the year, students engage in a project-based learning unit on Israel. This unit, which integrates Hebrew and social studies, focuses on different locations/cities in Israel and gives students the opportunities to ask and investigate their own questions regarding the State.

Our *Divrei Chaim (Words to Live By)* and *middot* (Jewish values) are lived everyday at Denver JDS, both inside and outside of the classroom. They are used as a basis of community building and character development across the curriculum.