

GT: 3rd 9 Weeks

A review of the 3rd 9 weeks in the 2021-2022 school year.

GT Curriculum

Kindergarten: Creative Thinking

I can think creatively.

The students are showing different perspectives by zooming in and out of their pictures. This one is kind of tricky to explain, so here's a [picture](#).

1st: Storybook STEM

I can connect literature to the world around me.

We read The Giving Tree and learned about personification. The students are writing their own story that includes personification.

2nd: Coding/Cultures

I can break a complex task into simple parts.

Students are continuing to work at their own pace to make progress in coding. The goal is to finish Course C by the end of the year. We have students working in levels B and C currently.

I understand that people have similarities and differences based on their culture.

We have been learning about different cultures through variations of Cinderella. The students are about to start writing their own version of Cinderella using a "culture" of their choice. I know that I have one who is going to write a Minecraft themed Cinderella.

3rd: Genius Hour

I can present my learning to my peers.

The students are in the product and presentation portion of their Genius Hour projects and will present to the class in 2 weeks. These are completely student-driven, so each project is unique!

4th: Perspectives/The Great Chocolate Caper/Robotics

I can identify different perspectives in a story.

I can create generalizations and conclusions.

I can follow step-by-step directions.

We just wrapped up perspectives and are about to finish solving The Great Chocolate Caper. We also just built our robots and will begin programming next week.

5th: Stock Market

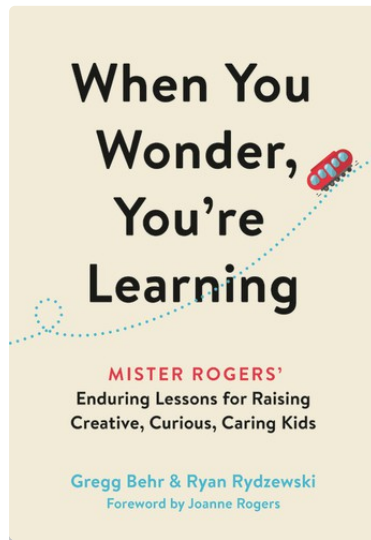
I can understand the impact of compounding interest.

The students are learning about diversifying their stock portfolio through The Stock Market Game. The most recent lesson was on compounding interest, but their heads are still spinning a bit on that, so they might not be able to explain it just yet.

6th: Debate

I can effectively communicate and support a claim with evidence.

The students are creating colonies on Mars. Each colony is required to designate a name, flag, government/laws, terraforming specifics, crops, clothes, counting system, writing system, and more. This is an introduction to their debate unit- their colonies interact with each other despite having different structures and systems in place.



When You Wonder, You're Learning

Throughout this school year, I'm going to share my favorite pieces from this book. Most of these are direct quotes. If you're impatient and want to get through it quicker yourself, you're welcome to buy it on [Amazon](#). 😊

Talk to your children about what they're feeling. Try not to lead the conversation too much, which can be hard!

"Ask lots of open-ended questions when something's not going right or not going well. "Sometimes the best thing to say is, 'Can you tell me about it?'" says Hedda Sharapan. We adults want to solve problems and avoid tears, but we might not know whether we're solving the right problem."

Working with others can be challenging, but an important skill!

"Today, nearly nine out of ten workers spend at least a third of their time in teams, and in survey after large-scale survey, employers consider the ability to work with others a top qualification. Some companies have even hired chief collaboration officers, while others are finding new ways to reward their top team players. The glass-and-ceramics manufacturer Corning, for example, names select employees "fellows, guaranteeing them jobs for life. To become a fellow, employees have to not only author a multimillion-dollar patent--they have to help their colleagues do the same. As Rogers himself once said, "What really matters is helping others win, too, even if it means slowing down and changing our course now and then." Predictably, people who work well with others tend to punch above their weight. You can be the most curious molecular biologist or the most creative jazz drummer on the planet, but if you can't collaborate, you're not likely to get very far."

"When difficult conflicts arise, let children know that there are ups and downs in every friendship. "Fred used to say, 'It's the people we

love the most who can make us feel the gladdest and the maddest," says Hedda Sharapan. "He wanted children to know that it takes work to repair a relationship, but it's the repairing that really strengthens it." Speak honestly with children about times when you struggled with friends. What did you do to repair that relationship? How was that relationship stronger in the end?"

I cannot stress this enough in class- things are going to be **hard** and that is okay!

"Mistakes, after all, are the things that power our learning. In fact, at the biological level, that's what learning is; a series of new neural pathways born of silent (and sometimes not-so-silent) struggle. Making mistakes- and then correcting them- is how we grow our brains and make new connections. Very young children seem to get this. They struggle to walk for weeks or months, getting up, falling down, and trying again unfazed. They're relentless to the point of recklessness, sometimes to their own delight and their parents dismay. They're simply doing what they're designed to do- explore the world's surprises with wonder and joy, mistakes and bruises and scrapes be damned. But as children get older, learning tends to lose some of its luster. Mistakes become hazards. Struggles become wellsprings of disappointment. As kids develop self-consciousness and start comparing themselves to others, they often become less willing to take on difficult challenges. It's not that they're afraid of difficulty- they've been doing difficult things from the moment they entered the world. Instead, writes Dweck, "they become afraid of not being smart."

"It's important to value the process and the outcomes to show kids that they're inextricably linked."

"Schedule what David Epstein calls "Saturday experiments" deliberate yet pressure-free opportunities to try something new. Remind kids they don't have to be good at this strange new thing. Talk about why it might feel strange. Talk about why it's important that they try. Sample lots of activities; kids can't develop an interest in something if they don't know anything about it. "Hey, let's skip this stone across the pond." Or, "Have you ever seen the garden over in the neighbor's yard?" Or, "I have this glue gun up on this shelf, and you have lots of empty cereal boxes."

"Notice what lights a child up. Every child has an interest, a fascination, or something that they want to figure out and improve. Pay attention, and figure out what you can do to nurture that interest, however unfamiliar it might be to you. Approach it with enthusiasm and without judgment. "I don't have a clue why my daughter is fascinated by Paris. We've never been there, and I can say only, "Bonjour." But maybe we can figure out how to make croissants. And

maybe we can start to learn French by doing online lessons together. And maybe we can go to the museum and see those impressionist paintings."

"Be by your child's side. Not just at the game, or the recital, or the moment. If you can, be there at the practice, too. Be there to talk about how hard practice was, or to hear about the problems she had while coding her robot. If you give your child feedback, be sure it's specific, clear, and focused on improving the task instead of changing the person. Remark how difficult it was for you to learn how to play the piano or how hard it was to start a new job.

Talk about your own frustrations or mistakes, and mention how you moved forward."

GT in the LOCAL News

This section is going to focus on something that I know you'll be happy to hear: Godley hired an additional GT teacher!!!

Jennifer Camp currently teaches in 4th grade in Godley, but she is literally the perfect person to be added to the GT department. She has been teaching for 23 years and has 10 years of experience working with GT kids. I can't say enough about how excited that I am to have her join me and continue to build out the program.

She will be the GT teacher at RB Godley and Pleasant View. I will be the GT teacher at Legacy and the 6th Grade Center.





El Tesoro

My family is in the process of planning for Fall Break, so I'm guessing you are, too! I've started planning for our El Tesoro visit. If you did not participate this year, here is a blurb from the newsletter after our trip:

"Godley's GT students in first through sixth grade were invited to participate in an outdoor camp at El Tesoro over fall break. 23 students attended the day camp and 57 students attended the overnight camp. They participated in a variety of activities to help build communication, cooperation, and perseverance skills. Some of the favorite activities of the campers were archery and the high ropes course. The high ropes course, only available to those 8+ who stayed the night, was definitely the most challenging physically and mentally. My favorite quote was from one of the counselors: "It's called the challenge course not the easy course." Many students tried, some failed, but all learned that there is room for improvement in our abilities. The students discovered that not all classrooms have four walls."

I'm looking at October 8 (Saturday) - 10 (Monday). This will allow 2 nights at the camp which means more activities. I also am planning the weekend to help with our need for chaperones. We will still offer a day camp version on the first day of camp.

This year's prices were \$175 for 1 night and \$75 for day camp. Next year it is looking like \$250 for 2 nights and \$70 for day camp. We will save money by doing a packed lunch on Saturday.

GT Awareness Week

Today wrapped up GT Awareness Week! G/T Awareness Week was created to increase awareness and encourage support of gifted education in Texas. TAGT (a professional organization I am a part of) is pushing to have this week officially recognized in Texas starting 2023.

[TAGT has a parent flyer to learn about who they are.](#)



I wanted to have an in-person showcase of our final products, but we are not yet at the final product stage and then we will be prepping for the transition to multiple elementaries. I will record students/take pictures and add that into our final newsletter of the year.



Reach Out!

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