

Lake Fern Montessori Academy
Parent Orientation 2010-2011
6th-8th Grades

Teacher: Greg Price

Overview:

The purpose of the upper level sixth through eighth grade classroom is to prepare our students for high school. The classroom setting will consist of both traditional and multimedia approaches to learning. Students will be expected to strive for excellence in both academic and social development. Students are encouraged to play a large role in their own education and will have the opportunity to select research projects and activities designed to develop a love of learning. The three governing tenants for personal development are as follows: accountability, sacrificial respect, and self control. These principals are designed to develop positive interpersonal skills and the discipline necessary to pursue higher education.

Computers:

Computers will be used extensively at various times during the course of the school year. Ethics and sound judgment are expected in the use of these machines. There is a heavy emphasis placed on computer use and proficiency. I would highly recommend that students practice typing at home. Please emphasize the use of home keys.

Cyber Bullying- There is zero tolerance for any instance where computers are used to humiliate, intimidate, harass, or acquire the personal information of others. Any instances will result in a mandatory meeting between the students involved, their parents, and school officials.

All students will be required to sign a Computer/Internet User Agreement.

Responders:

Responders are hand held input devices that allow the electronic delivery of tests and assignments. This is being used as a hands-on, technologically advanced method for delivering instruction and assessment. During lessons, the teacher will be able to ask questions directly related to the material and students will be able to answer immediately. This allows the teacher instantaneous feedback on how the students are doing with the lesson, thus allowing him to make any necessary adjustments to the lesson or to provide one-on-one instruction to those students that are not understanding the curriculum. The responders also allow students to input data for assessment purposes, allowing more immediate results. The responders will help tremendously since it self-grades and it is environmentally friendly as it will allow us to reduce our paper usage. Care for these is essential as they are very expensive. Replacement costs for any responder that is damaged is \$70 plus shipping and tax. Please emphasize the importance of taking care of these to your children, as parents will be responsible for replacement costs if a student damages it.

Other Electronics:

Other electrical devices (cell phones, MP3 players, video games, etc.) are prohibited. Any device found on a student's person or in their possessions will be confiscated by the teacher and not returned until it is claimed by the student's parent.

Curriculum:

Our class covers a broad range of curriculum areas. These include math, reading, grammar, vocabulary, written expression, science, social studies, and spelling. During written expression, students will learn how to prepare papers in rough draft form, self-evaluate, evaluate others, and use evaluations to prepare a finalized paper. Grading for writing will be based on two primary factors: the proper evaluation of other students and timed writing tests. Students will be permitted to do the majority of their writing assignments on computers, if they wish. The exceptions being timed writing assignments which must be hand written.

In science and social studies/history we will not be using textbooks. Instead we will be using comprehensive videos, note outlines, and other multi-media sources to present and process the material. Both science and history will be presented Monday through Thursday with tests on Fridays. School attendance will be crucial in the success of students in these classes because of the outlines and participatory nature of the lessons.

For the Math portion of our curriculum, we will be using the Saxon math curriculum. E-text books are available upon request.

AR Points:

All students will be required to read at least 25 points in AR reading per semester. Points are accumulated by reading books and taking quizzes on each book. Books chosen are based on each student's individual Lexile score determined at the beginning of the year and retested at various intervals. **IT IS EACH STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ACQUIRE THEIR AR BOOKS FROM THE LIBRARY. They may read their books during the times that they finish their work early or during other designated reading times. Not completing the required amount of points per semester will affect their reading grade for the semester.**

Scholastic:

We use Scholastic books as the primary source of obtaining our literature. Any purchases, especially in September, help us to accumulate points to purchase materials. Need any early Christmas or birthday presents? There are gift certificates available for \$10 that are worth \$20 in scholastic products.

Special Classes and Achievement Badges:

Special classes will be taught one or two times per week and will include computer literacy, performing arts (music, drama, and dance), Spanish, P.E, Art

and other subject areas. These classes are not “graded” per se, but participation is mandatory and will be reflected in the behavioral section of the report card. Achievement Badges are independent learning projects students can work on during the afternoons when we don’t have a special. Several of these projects, in many cases, will need to be worked on at home as well as in school. Each project will consist of objectives that will require the student to do both research/academic and experiential activities. These badges are not for a grade, but for their own learning edification. They are designed to supplement the academic foundation of the class. All required work MUST be done first. A more detailed outline of these achievement badges and information will be provided at the beginning of the school year.

Homework:

Students are responsible for any work they do not complete in class and will need to take these assignments home for completion. Occasionally, additional assignments such as research projects will be given as homework as well. Sufficient notice will be given so that students will have plenty of time to accomplish these assignments. It is also a good idea to practice spelling words, reading, and math on a weekly basis. The rule of thumb for homework is about fifteen minutes per grade level per night, and much more than that can be counterproductive. It is a good idea to establish a homework routine with your child. If you notice that your child is having difficulty with an assignment or subject, please let me know so that I am aware of any problems the child may be experiencing. To make homework time a pleasant and productive experience, please see the following suggestions:

- Try to do homework at a regular time each day. A well-rested child is much better at working than a tired one. The earlier he or she can complete homework, the better.
- Complete homework in a well lighted and quiet place free from distractions.
- Keep supplies on hand. (Paper, pencils, erasers, crayons or colored pencils, scissors, and glue.)

Assessment and Grading:

Tests will be given weekly in class. Vocabulary and Spelling tests will be given on Thursdays. Science, Social Studies, language/writing, and Literature will be administered on Fridays. Math and written expression assessments will be given after the completion of specific lessons are complete and days will vary according to a variety of factors including length of chapter size and difficulty of the lessons. Students will be notified in advance as to upcoming tests.

The grading scale will be as followed:

90-100:	A
80-89:	B
70-79:	C
60-69:	D

59 and below: F

Uniforms:

The elementary uniforms consist of white, navy blue, or forest green solid-colored shirts and kaki, black, or navy blue pants, shorts, and skirts. Jeans and jean shorts may be worn as long as there is no other color, pattern, or design on them. Any shorts worn must be at least finger-tip length. Students may dress down on Fridays only, and wear any color, pattern, design, etc. as long as there are not characters (including real people like Hulk Hogan and Hannah Montana), skulls or other offensive material, or slogans on the clothing. Shirts with the LFMA logo can be purchased from the staff here at school. In addition, no hanging jewelry is permitted. This includes bracelets, necklaces, and hanging/large earrings. Small earrings and studs for pierced ears are permitted. Any violations will result in a call to the parents to bring a change of clothes.

Field Trips:

The upper level classes will be taking field trips to a variety of places this year. There will be three field trips that coincide with the three grading periods of Mrs. Price and Mrs. Manley's classes. Signup sheets will be placed in the foyer before each field trip and parents are asked to sign up to drive. If you are interested in driving for any of the fieldtrips this year, please bring a copy of your driver's license and proof of insurance to keep on file. Also, a permission form has been placed in the foyer and needs to be signed.

Attendance:

Please make sure to be at school every day possible. We certainly understand illness and don't want a truly sick child at school, but feel it is imperative that students arrive on time and attend classes regularly to get the most out of their education. Because of the way science and social studies are being taught this year and also because there will be participation grades for each subject, it is critical that students do not miss any more school than is absolutely necessary. Also, class starts promptly at 8:30 and assignments will be given immediately. Please have children at school on time, since it is disruptive for students to come in late. If possible, it is preferred for students to come in about ten minutes early so they can get a few minutes of exercise prior to the start of class.

Medication:

Students are prohibited to carry any form of medication on their person. This includes both prescription and non-prescription drugs, including seemingly innocuous items such as cough drops and vitamins. All medications should be given to a staff member, preferably the student's teacher. Please provide written instructions for administering the medication(s). Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary actions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Sign In/ Sign Out Policy:

Students ARE PERMITTED to sign themselves in, but NOT ALLOWED to sign out. Only parents or those authorized to pick your students may sign a child out. This is done for safety and accountability purposes.

Volunteers

We have an open door policy at school and volunteers are encouraged. There are many opportunities to volunteer including in class, field trips, and even take home work. In addition, we are trying to set yearly “goals” of things we’d like to see done. This year we would like to work on building outside activities for all grade levels. This includes developing the playground for the younger students and constructing a basketball area for the older students. If you have any expertise in areas such as construction, working with concrete, etc., your help would be invaluable. In addition, if you have any materials that you would like to contribute, it would be greatly appreciated. We would like to see at least 10 hours of volunteer time per family. If you are interested in volunteering, please let me know.

Class Schedule:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-9:00	Gathering and Journal	Gathering and Journal	Gathering and Journal	Gathering and Journal	Study Time
9:00-9:45	Literature	Literature	Literature	Literature	Testing
9:50-10:05	Language	Language	Language	Language	Testing
10:10-11:10	Science/ Social Studies	Science/ Social Studies	Science/ Social Studies	Science/ Social Studies	Testing
11:10-11:50	independent work time	Writing Groups	Writing Groups	Writing Groups	Writing Groups
12:00-12:20	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:20-12:40	Activity	Activity	Activity	Activity	Activity
12:40-2:15	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
2:15-3:00	Specials/ Independent work	Specials/ Independent work	Specials/ Independent work	Specials/ Independent work	Specials/ Independent work
3:00-3:30	Clean up/ Study	Clean up/ Study	Clean up/ Study	Clean up/ Study	Clean up/ Study