

# grading in Mrs. Paine's class



By now, most of you are probably familiar with Wake County's Standards Based Grading System. I have found that parents often have lingering questions about grading. *What does a star mean? How are report card grades determined? My child got everything right- why didn't he get a 4?* These are all questions that parents have asked in the past. I hope the following information will help clear up any confusion:

**Reading-** Several diagnostic reading assessments are given throughout the year to determine students' reading levels. Students show whether or not they are meeting reading objectives with quizzes, in-class assignments, and reading conferences. While reading quizzes and in-class assignments do not have "bonus questions", students are able to earn a 4 when their written answers and projects give evidence of thinking that extends beyond grade level expectations. A rubric is used to grade reading quizzes when more than one objective is covered.

**Writing-** In class, writing is taught through a process-based, workshop model. Each quarter, students learn writing concepts while focusing on one or two major writing projects (personal narrative, research report, etc.). A rubric is designed for each writing piece and students are graded based on the rubric.

**Math** - After concepts are taught, students usually get "Quick Quizzes" or independent classroom assignments. This is a way for me to check whether or not they have met the objectives. Quick Quizzes sometimes have extension opportunities. In order to get a 4 on a quiz, the child usually must get every question right as well as the extension question. Also, the child must be able to complete the assignment *independently* (require no teacher assistance). Not every quiz or assignment is designed with an extension opportunity; therefore it is not possible to get a 4 on every quiz or assignment. *A student may get every single problem right on a quiz and still get a 3.*

Comprehensive tests are sometimes given at the end of units. If a child did not do well on a unit test, I will e-mail parents and give the child extra instruction, practice, and small group lessons.

**Science-** Science grades are based on in-class assignments, performance during science investigations, class discussion/participation, and a unit test. Just like Social Studies, students are able to get 4s on some assignments if their work shows that they are exceeding grade level expectations. The unit tests are not open book because we do not use a science textbook.

**Social Studies-** Social Studies grades are based on how well students do on in-class assignments, class discussion/participation, and a test given at the end of the unit. Just like math, some social studies assignments have questions where students can show how they extend their knowledge and exceed grade level expectations. It is possible to get a 4 on some Social Studies in-class assignments. Sometimes students are able to show this extension through participation in class discussions (this grade is based on teacher observation). Finally, a unit test also factors in to the Social Studies

grade. I use the test, which is usually multiple choice and short answer, to determine how well students have met the objectives. Students are notified of the test ahead of time and the test is occasionally open “notes”.

#### Assignments:

**Assessments** – After reviewing an assessment with your child, please sign the assessment and return it the next school day. I keep all assessments for reference throughout the year.

**Graded Classwork** – Some classwork will be graded and used to make sure all standards are being met. Graded Classwork will have a traditional grade of 1, 2, 3, or 4. Graded classwork does not need to be returned.

**Non-graded classwork**- We will often do non-graded classwork for practice or review purposes. Oftentimes this work is done with partners or the assistance of the teacher. The purpose of this work is NOT to determine if a child is meeting an objective, therefore it is not graded. You will NOT see a standards-based grade (1, 2, 3, or 4) on this work. I will indicate that I have looked over the work with a smiley face, check mark, star, sticker etc.

**Homework**- All Homework should be *practice*. Homework is *not* used to determine whether or not students are meeting objectives. The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills and concepts that are taught in the classroom. Completion of homework counts towards a child's “Work Habits” grade on the report card. You will never see a standards-based grade (1, 2, 3, or 4) on your child's homework. However, I will check homework for correctness. If a child misses a significant number of problems or does not perform very well, I will review the concept with him/her. I will indicate that I have looked over the work with a smiley face, check mark, star, sticker etc.

Homework time should not last more than 50 minutes. Please let me know if your child takes more than 50 minutes to complete each night's assignment on a regular basis. Homework can benefit students by providing additional exposure to concepts needed for mastery.

If you have any questions about grading, please feel free to contact me at [apaine@wcpss.net](mailto:apaine@wcpss.net)

Thank you!

Mandy Paine