

Culture Matters

Teachers must be able to *CONNECT* with their learners before they can share core content. Teachers teach learners, not subjects. To truly engage learners, we must reach out to them in ways that are culturally & linguistically responsive and appropriate, and we must examine the cultural assumptions and stereotypes we bring into the classroom that may hinder interconnectedness.



Parents' Guide to Support Learner Success

EMPOWERING PARENTS TO SUPPORT THE COMMON CORE CHALLENGE AT HOME

3RD GRADE

As practitioners in education and facilitators of cultural competency training, we know that in order for learners to be successful in today's schools, parents need to be knowledgeable of the most effective ways to support learning at home. Educators can work collaboratively to assist their learners to be more successful, by tapping into support from home. This guide, which provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of each grade level in English language arts/literacy and mathematics, prepares your child to be ready to succeed in the next grade level. This guide is based on the new Common Core State Standards, which have been adopted by 44 states (*at time of publication*). The Common Core State Standards are much more rigorous than the previously held standards amongst the states. In order to compete globally, our nation needs to increase critical thinking skills in our children.

This guide is designed to offer parents with creative ways to become involved in supporting their child's education as well as ways to communicate the expectations of the Common Core State Standards. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in these standards, he or she will be prepared for the 4th grade.

WHY ARE ACADEMIC STANDARDS IMPORTANT?

The academic standards are important because they help ensure that all learners, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in college and in their chosen careers. Rigorous standards provide an important first step – a clear roadmap and process for learning – to be utilized by a collaborative team of facilitators of learning, parents, and learners. Having clearly defined goals helps families and facilitators of learning work together to ensure that learners succeed. They also will help your child develop critical thinking skills that will prepare him or her for college and career.



A Snapshot of What Your Child Will Be Concentrating on in 3rd Grade

English Language Arts & Literacy

In 3rd grade, learners will continue to build important reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. They will think, talk, and write about what they read in a variety of texts, such as stories, books, articles, and other sources of information including the Internet. Through the writing process, learners will pay close attention to organizing information, developing ideas, and supporting these ideas with facts, details, and reasons. Activities in these areas will embrace:

- Reading a wide variety of stories and describing how a story teaches a lesson
- Reading closely to find main ideas and supporting details in a story
- Describing the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in stories (i.e., first, second, third; cause and effect)
- Describing characters in a story and how their actions contributed to events and outcomes
- Reading texts about history, social studies, or science and answering questions about what they learned
- Comparing the most important points and key details presented in two books on the same topic
- Referring to information from illustrations such as maps or pictures as well as the words in a text to support their answers
- Learning the rules of spoken and written English
- Learning and using new words, including words related to specific subjects (such as science words)
- Participating in class discussions by listening, asking questions, sharing ideas, and building on the ideas of others
- Reading stories and poems aloud fluently, without pausing to figure out what each word means
- Distinguishing the literal and nonliteral meanings of words, such as *something's fishy* and *cold shoulder*
- Spelling correctly and consulting dictionaries to clarify meanings of words
- Giving a class presentation on a topic or telling a story using relevant facts and details and speaking clearly
- Writing opinions or explanations that group related information and develop topics with facts and details
- Writing stories with dialogue and descriptions that establish a situation and include details and clear sequences of events that describe the characters' actions, thoughts, and feelings
- Independently gather information from books, articles, and online sources to build understanding of a topic
- Writing research or opinion papers over extended periods of time



Partner with your child's teacher to have a focused conversation about learning

When you talk with your child's teacher keep in mind that you and your child's teacher are partners; a part of a team which includes your child. You are an important part of your child's education. Time may be limited and you can't cover everything. Therefore, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In 3rd grade for literacy, these include:

- Reading grade-level books, stories, poems, and articles fluently
- Writing and speaking well, following rules of punctuation and grammar
- Building a foundation of knowledge through reading and listening to books in history/social studies, science, and other subjects
- Be prepared to ask the teacher questions like:
 - Is my child at the level where he/she should be at this point of the school year?
 - How is my child doing in writing?
 - In what areas is my child excelling?
 - What do you suppose is giving my child the most trouble? How can I help my child improve in this area?
 - What can I do to help my child with upcoming work?
 - If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside of the classroom?

Mathematics

In 3rd grade, learners will continue to build their concept of numbers, developing an understanding of fractions as numbers. They will learn concepts behind multiplication and division and apply problem-solving skills and strategies for multiplying and dividing numbers up through 100 to solve word problems. Learners will also make connections between the concept of the area of a rectangle and multiplication and addition of whole numbers. Activities in these areas will embrace:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and explaining what it means to multiply or divide numbers • Multiplying all-one digit numbers from memory (knowing their times tables) • Multiplying one-digit numbers by multiples of 10 (such as 20, 30, 40) quickly and accurately • Solving two-step word problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division • Understanding the concept of area • Beginning to multiply numbers with more than one digit (i.e., multiplying 7 X 60) • Relating the measurement of area to multiplication and division • Understanding fractions as numbers • Understanding and identifying a fraction as a number on a number line |
|--|

Continued...

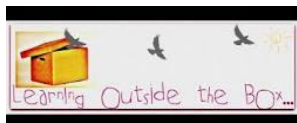
- Expressing whole numbers as fractions and identifying fractions that are equal to whole numbers (for example, recognizing that $\frac{2}{1}$ and 2 are the same number)
- Measuring and estimating weights and liquid volumes and solving word problems involving these quantities
- Reasoning about shapes (i.e., all squares are rectangles but not all rectangles are squares)
- Finding areas of shapes, and relating area to multiplication (i.e., why is the number of square feet for a 9-foot by 6-foot room given by the product 9×6)
- Representing and interpreting data



Partner with your child's teacher to have a focused conversation about learning

When you talk with your child's teacher keep in mind that you and your child's teacher are partners; a part of a team which includes your child. You are an important part of your child's education. Time may be limited and you can't cover everything. Therefore, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In 3rd grade for mathematics, these include:

- Multiplication
- Fractions
- Be prepared to ask the teacher questions like:
 - Is my child at the level where he/she should be at this point of the school year?
 - In what areas is my child excelling?
 - What do you suppose is giving my child the most trouble? How can I help my child improve in this area?
 - What can I do to help my child with upcoming work?
 - If my child needs extra support or wants to learn more about a subject, are there resources to help his or her learning outside of the classroom?



All learning does not take place in the classroom, nor should it. Learning must continue at home, encouraging learners to “think outside the box.” Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and set aside time *every day* when your child can concentrate. You should also set aside 15 to 30 minutes each week to sit down with your child, while he or she completes homework. This will help you to stay in tuned with what your child is working on, and it will help you to be the first to know if your child needs assistance with specific topics. Furthermore, here are some activities you can do with your child to support successful learning at home:

English Language Arts & Literacy

- Provide time and space for your child to read independently. This reading time should be free from distractions such as television and gaming activities.
- Ask your child what topics, events, or activities he or she likes. With that information in mind, search for books, magazines, or other materials about those topics that would motivate your child to read.
- Model reading at home. It is helpful when your child sees other people reading at home. You can share what you have read.
- Make reading a fun part of your child’s day, every day. Encourage your child to find a picture from a newspaper or magazine, cut it out, paste it on paper, and write a story about it.
- Start a family vocabulary box or jar. Have everyone write down new words they discover, add them to the box, and use the words in conversation.
- Have your child write a thank you note or letter to a neighbor, family members, or friends.
- Establish a family book club. Let different members of the family select the book. This is a good way to enjoy quality family time while experiencing the pleasure of reading together!
- Make sure your child has a library card. Take him or her to the library on a weekly basis. Children should select books in which they are interested to develop a love for reading. Many community libraries have book clubs and family activities that make reading fun for the entire family.
- Use technology to help strengthen your child’s interest in reading. Ask your child’s teacher for suggestions of websites where learners can read books or articles on line. The computer will help with words the learner cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers learners can use to access those sites.

Mathematics

- Math can be so much fun if you make it a game. For example, “*I’m thinking of two numbers whose product is between 20 and 40. How many parts can you think of that would satisfy this problem?*” Have your child explain the solutions. How does he or she know that all the number pairs have been identified?
- Look for “word problems” in real life. Some 3rd grade examples might include:
 - Notice those everyday occasions when you find yourself using your times tables – such as to determine how many days there are in six weeks. Ask your child for the answer.
 - Bring your child into a conversation when you notice yourself using division to “work backward” in the times tables – such as determining how many cookies each child will get if 36 cookies are shared equally among nine children at a party.
- Get your children excited about writing involving math. Encourage him or her to write or describe numbers in different ways. For example, what are some different ways to make 1450? 1450 = 1 thousand, 4 hundreds, 5 tens, and 0 ones, or 1000 + 450, 14 hundreds and + 50 ones, 13 hundreds, + 15 tens, etc.
- Use everyday objects to allow your child to explore the concept of fractions. For example, use measuring cups to have learners demonstrate how many $\frac{1}{3}$'s are in a whole, how many $\frac{1}{4}$ cups you need to make $\frac{1}{2}$ cups, and how many times you have to refill a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup measure to make 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups.
- Encourage your child to persevere, “sticking to it” whenever a problem seems difficult. This will help your child see that **everyone** can learn math.
- Praise for your child’s efforts in solving problems or understanding something for the first time.



For more information go to www.corestandards.org
the official online home of the Common Core State Standards