

Third Grade

Knowing the essential skills and strategies our kids will be learning in school helps us know how to support them all year. Find out, by subject, what your kids will be learning this year and read on for strategies to help them be successful students.

Reading at School:

- Reading closely to find main ideas and supporting details in a story
- Describing the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in stories (e.g., first, second, third; cause and effect)
- Comparing the most important points and key details presented in two books on the same topic.

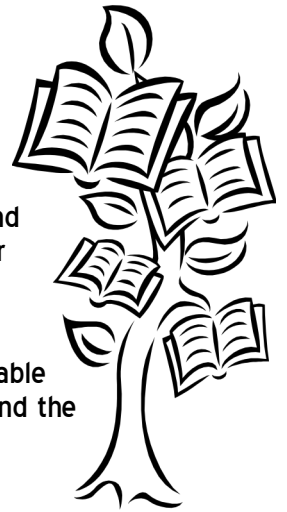
Support Reading at Home:

Read with your child every day.

You don't have to read aloud or listen to your child read every day, but there should be time built into each day where you and your child are reading. Providing a model of reading for pleasure and for information is more valuable than any other reading behavior for your child at this time.

Have varied reading materials available at home. Use the library - they have magazines, newspapers, non-fiction and fiction text available to be read there and to take home. If there are things to read around the house, your child will be more likely to practice skills and strategies from home.

Talk to your child about books. What is happening in the story? Who are the characters and what do you like about them? What do you dislike about them? What new learning are they doing? What will happen next? Take what's on the page and put it into conversation.



Speaking and Listening at School:

- Asking and answering questions about information he or she hears from a speaker or while participating in classroom discussions, offering appropriate elaboration and detail that build on what others have said.

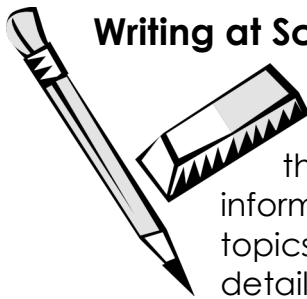


- Reading stories and poems aloud fluently, without pausing to figure out what each word means.

- Explaining personal ideas and understanding in light of a discussion.

Support Speaking and Listening at Home:

Building conversational skills at home will help build speaking skills at school. Speaking clearly and making eye contact are easy to practice every day. Make sure you talk to your kids and encourage them to talk to you. Share stories and experiences while working to make the language clear, organized and interesting. Talk about how you are relating experiences, and help your child do the same. As kids think about putting skills together, the skills come together much more efficiently.



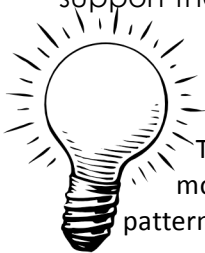
Writing at School:

- Writing opinions or explanations that group related information and develop topics with facts and details.
- Writing stories that establish a situation and include details and clear sequences of events that describe the actions, thoughts, and feelings of characters.
- Independently conducting short research projects that build knowledge about various topics.
- Spelling correctly and consulting dictionaries to clarify meanings of words.

Support Writing at Home:

Third graders are using writing for a wider variety of reasons than ever before. They use the complete writing process to generate completed pieces and are called upon to use critical reading skills as they conference about and revise their writing.

Some of the best support a third grader can get for their writing is having experience reading good stories and discussing the writing. When reading, point out the use of commas, interesting words, strong sequencing and clear ideas. Ask to read stories and reports written by your child and use the same language to support their choices as a writer.



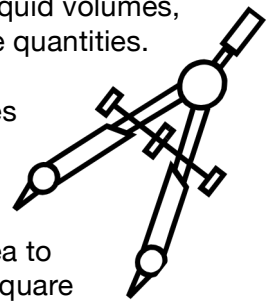
Science:

Third grade science students are exploring the states of matter and how forces affect an object's position, motion and speed. They investigate the life cycles of plants and animals, study Earth's seasonal weather patterns of precipitation and temperature and learn the basic concepts of scientific inquiry and engineering design.

Help your child develop characteristics of a scientist by encouraging observation and exploration of things around them. When playing with toys, ask questions about how they move and interact with each other. Notice the growth of plants in the yard or park, measure rainfall and temperature and keep track with a graph. Build models together – from blocks, wood, or even household recycling. Problem-solve better design and rebuild, knowing you are building a scientist.

Math at School:

- Multiplying and dividing up to 10x10 quickly and accurately, including knowing the times tables from memory.
- Solving word problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Beginning to multiply numbers with more than one digit (e.g., multiplying 9 x 80)
- Understanding fractions and relating them to the familiar system of whole numbers (e.g., recognizing that $\frac{3}{1}$ and 3 are the same number)
- Measuring and estimating weights and liquid volumes, and solving word problems involving these quantities.
- Reasoning about shapes (e.g., all squares are rectangles but not all rectangles are squares)
- Finding areas of shapes, and relating area to multiplication (e.g., why is the number of square feet for a 9-foot by 7-foot room given by the product 9×7 ?)



Support Math at Home:

The three major math concepts students are responsible for learning in third grade are fractions, multiplication and division, and understanding properties of two-dimensional shapes.

Reinforce these concepts by using fractions in conversation around the kitchen. Relate parts of the whole to how much people get – a fourth of the macaroni, for example. Practice with multiplication facts will help build automatic use of them, making multiplication and division easier to use. Identifying shapes in everyday life and justifying their names will strengthen understanding of two-dimensional shapes.