

Welcome to THIRD GRADE!

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts sets expectations, or standards, for what every student will know and be able to do in school. This guide is designed to help you understand those standards and partner with teachers to support your child's learning during third grade. If you have questions about this information or your child needs extra help, please talk to your child's teacher.

To talk to your child about school, you can ask:

- ▶ Can you tell me about something you **read** today?
- ▶ How could you use the **math** you learned today?
- ▶ What **scientific ideas** did you talk about today?
- ▶ How did someone help you learn today?

If your child is also learning English, you can ask:

- ▶ How does your teacher help you understand and participate in class?
- ▶ How do you work on your English while you learn academic material?



TO LEARN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY at every grade, your child will:

- ▶ Read various texts, like books, poems, letters, news articles, and Internet pages.
- ▶ Speak and listen in formal and informal ways, like presentations and conversations.
- ▶ Communicate opinions, information, and experiences in writing for various readers.
- ▶ Use knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary in both speech and writing.



TO LEARN MATHEMATICS at every grade, your child will:

- ▶ Use math to represent and solve real-world problems.
- ▶ Use math to make arguments about why something is true or false.
- ▶ Use tools, like rulers and calculators, to show mathematical relationships.
- ▶ Use patterns and the structures of numbers to think about math.



TO LEARN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING at every grade, your child will:

- ▶ Ask scientific questions about the natural world and things humans design.
- ▶ Learn through various experiences, like observations and experiments.
- ▶ Solve problems using the skills and tools of engineers and scientists.
- ▶ Share solutions and communicate explanations of how the world works.

The next three pages focus more specifically on the Massachusetts learning standards for **THIRD GRADE**.



NEW EXPECTATIONS FOR THIRD GRADE:

- ▶ Refer to specific parts of a text when speaking or writing about what it means. For example, when reading a story, explain how a character's words or actions show that she is brave.
- ▶ Notice differences between literal and figurative language. For example, the "step" is literal in *with the next step he reached the finish line* but figurative in *the next step is finding a partner*.
- ▶ Organize writing in ways that help readers understand. For example, use linking words and phrases like "another reason" and "after that" to connect ideas and information.
- ▶ Improve writing by making changes. Changes can be larger (like explaining ideas more fully) or smaller (like fixing spelling mistakes).



BY THE END OF THIRD GRADE, STUDENTS CAN:



- ▶ Stay on topic and ask and answer questions during class discussions.
- ▶ Notice differences between written and spoken English.
- ▶ Sound out words with two or more syllables. Use story clues to guess what words mean.
- ▶ Use a simple dictionary to find out how a word is spelled or what it means.
- ▶ Read aloud smoothly, not just one word at a time. Notice and try to fix mistakes while reading.
- ▶ Use pictures, headings, and other visual clues to help understand a story or article.
- ▶ Use books as well as other sources (like videos and websites) when doing research.
- ▶ Read two or more books on the same topic. Notice what is the same and different.
- ▶ Read traditional stories, like myths. Understand a story's lesson or message for readers.
- ▶ Describe characters in a story. Explain how their actions affect what happens.

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOUR CHILD:

- ▶ Who is the story about? What kind of person (or people) are they?
- ▶ What do you think the author is trying to tell you? How do you know?
- ▶ What do you think that word might mean? How can you figure it out?



TOPICS YOU CAN DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER:

- ▶ Books and authors to look for at the library
- ▶ Types of writing your child is working on



FOCUS AREAS FOR THIRD GRADE:

- ▶ Understand multiplication and division and how they are related. For example, use multiplication to find the cost of 10 apples and division to find the cost of 1 apple.
- ▶ Understand fractions and how they represent real-world situations. For example, use fractions to compare how much pizza two people eat.
- ▶ Understand connections between multiplication and the areas of shapes. For example, find the area of a room using floor tiles.
- ▶ Describe, analyze, and compare shapes like rectangles and squares. For example, explain that any shape with four sides can be called a quadrilateral.



BY THE END OF THIRD GRADE, STUDENTS CAN:



- ▶ Solve two-step word problems using multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction.
- ▶ Explain what the answer to a division problem means in the problem's context.
- ▶ Know multiplication and division facts up to $9 \times 9 = 81$ and $81 \div 9 = 9$.
- ▶ Fluently (quickly and correctly) multiply and divide numbers up to 100.
- ▶ Fluently (quickly and correctly) add and subtract numbers under 1,000 using various methods.
- ▶ Understand that fractions are numbers that represent parts of a whole.
- ▶ Explain how to know whether two simple fractions (like $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{2}{4}$) are equal.
- ▶ Use symbols to compare simple fractions: for example, $\frac{1}{2} > \frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{2}{5} < \frac{3}{5}$.
- ▶ Place fractions on a number line along with whole numbers (like 2 and 5).
- ▶ Solve problems using units of time (like minutes), mass (like grams), and volume (like liters).
- ▶ Understand and use area and perimeter. Find the area and perimeter of shapes like rectangles.
- ▶ Sort shapes into categories: for example, shapes with right (90°) angles.

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOUR CHILD:

- ▶ Can you measure half a cup of milk for the muffins we're making?
- ▶ How can we lay out our game cards so we have the same number in each row?
- ▶ How are fractions like other numbers? Can you put them together to make other numbers?

TOPICS YOU CAN DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER:

- ▶ Which multiplication and division strategies that work well for your child
- ▶ Games that can help your child practice math at home





FOCUS AREAS FOR THIRD GRADE:

- ▶ Understand connections among humans, earth systems, and the environment. For example, think about how people can reduce damage caused by weather.
- ▶ Understand the different life cycles of plants and animals. For example, compare the life cycles of a sunflower, a bird, and a frog.
- ▶ Understand life and environments that existed on Earth long ago. For example, use fossils to understand that some types of plants and animals no longer exist.
- ▶ Understand the concept of force and how forces sometimes balance each other out. For example, explore how magnets push or pull each other.



BY THE END OF THIRD GRADE, STUDENTS CAN:

- ▶ Use graphs and charts to talk about weather patterns around the world.
- ▶ Understand that plants and animals can grow and reproduce in different ways.
- ▶ Explain how specific characteristics help living things survive (like how thorns protect roses from being eaten by animals).
- ▶ Explore the difference between inherited traits (like eye color) and traits caused by something in the environment (like when a plant is small because it gets too little sunlight).
- ▶ Understand that when an environment changes, some plants and animals survive and reproduce, some move to other places, and some die.
- ▶ Explore how objects move and affect each other. Explain how they move differently over rough and smooth surfaces.
- ▶ Draw or build models to show possible solutions to a problem (like how to design safe playground equipment).



QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOUR CHILD:

- ▶ What will the weather be like this week? How do you know?
- ▶ How do engineers figure out how to solve problems?
- ▶ What happens to plants and animals when their environment changes?



TOPICS YOU CAN DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER:

- ▶ How science relates to everyday situations in your child's life
- ▶ Places in the community that can help your child learn science

