

While not representing ALL the concepts and skills we teach, these are the performance indicators we are committing to teach for MASTERY at each level. These skills build on those previously mastered and lay the foundation for learning in later schooling and throughout life. We expect that every student will demonstrate mastery of these skills. We will gather sufficient evidence to provide proof of their learning, and communicate their performance with students and families.



Parents'/Guardians' Guide to Third Grade

This guide provides an overview of what your student will learn by the end of third grade. It focuses on the key skills your child will learn in each of the different subject areas, which will build a strong foundation for success as your child progresses through school. The student outcomes outlined in this document reflect the Illinois Learning Standards as they are published at this time, which includes incorporating the Common Core Standards for English/Language Arts and Mathematics. As the Illinois Learning Standards undergo revision to reflect the development of new standards in additional subjects, our curriculum will also be revised to support additions or changes to the Illinois Learning Standards. If your child is meeting these end-of-the-year expectations, he or she should be well prepared for the next level of schooling.

Why Are Academic Standards Important?

Academic standards are important because they help set clear and consistent expectations for students, parents/guardians, and teachers; build a child's knowledge and skills; and help set high goals for all students. Having clearly defined goals helps families and teachers work together to ensure that students succeed.

How Can I Help My Child?

Use this guide to help build a relationship with your child's teacher. Talk regularly with his or her teacher about how your child is doing.

At home, you can play an important role in setting high expectations and supporting your child in meeting them. Work with your child's teacher to identify opportunities for additional learning or ways you can support your child in their schooling.

This Guide Includes:

- An overview of some of the key concepts and skills your child will learn in third grade
- Ideas for activities to help your child learn at home
- Topics of discussion for talking to your child's teacher about his or her progress

Preface and support material adapted from "Parents' Guide to Student Success" published by the National Parent-Teacher Association

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English/Language Arts: Third grade is a pivotal year for your child. Learning to read with fluency, understanding, and confidence will serve as a foundation for increasing demands in later grades. By strengthening reading strategies, your child will reliably be able to make sense of multi-syllable words in books, understand that there are literal and nonliteral meanings for words, and monitor his or her level of understanding while reading. Recognizing and understanding words and the way they work will help your child read increasingly challenging stories and books and build knowledge of the world around him or her. By the end of the year, your child also will be writing clear paragraphs on a range of topics, drawing on an expanding vocabulary.

A sample of the skills your child will be working on

Reading

- Using word attack skills (affixes, root words, decoding) together with context clues to determine meaning of unknown words
- Reading closely to find main ideas and supporting ideas in a story or informational text
- Reading grade level texts fluently (expression, pacing, accuracy), and high frequency words accurately
- Describing the relationships and logical connections between events and details in stories and texts
- Comparing the most important points and key details presented in two books on the same topic.
- Using text features and search tools such as key words, side bars and hyperlinks to locate information relevant to a text efficiently and to distinguish relevant and irrelevant information from a variety of reference materials
- Retelling stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determining the central message or lesson and explain how it is conveyed through the key details
- Distinguishing between literal and non-literal meanings of words

Writing

- 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
- Applying grade level editing and revising checklist
- Evaluating and revising their own work using grade level criteria
- Independently conducting short research projects that build knowledge about a topic, including paraphrasing information and presenting their findings in oral, written and/or multimedia formats

Speaking and Listening

- 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
- Demonstrating courtesy and respect for others rights and points of view

Language Usage

- Adapting language, and listening/speaking behaviors to a given situation
- Using grade-level grammar, mechanics and conventions appropriately (like parts of speech, subject-verb agreement, capitals, commas, apostrophes)
- Generalizing spelling patterns, word parts, ending rules, and checking reference materials as needed
- Determining or clarifying the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases
- Acquiring and accurately using general academic and content-specific vocabulary

Mathematics: In third grade your child will build on previously learned skills and gain important new knowledge and skills. One of the most important topics this year is multiplication and division. Another is building an understanding of fractions. Your child will also build expertise with solving addition and subtraction word problems. Multiplication, division, and fractions are the building blocks for many life skills that students will learn in later grades, such as percentages. Students also need to master these topics to be ready for algebra and advanced math, so it is essential to get a good start with these topics in 3rd grade.

A sample of the skills your child will be working on

Critical Focus Areas: developing understanding of multiplication and division and strategies for multiplication and division within 100; developing understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions (fractions with numerator 1); developing understanding of the structure of rectangular arrays and of area; and describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes

- Understanding properties of multiplication and relationship between multiplication and division
- Quickly and accurately multiplying and dividing within 100, including knowing the times tables from memory
- Solving word problems using all four operations
- Beginning to multiply numbers with more than one digit
- Understanding fractions and relating them to 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 (English and Metric Systems)
- Reasoning about shapes
- Finding perimeters and areas of shapes; relating area to multiplication and addition

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Science: Science instruction in third grade continues to build on your child's natural curiosity. The focus is on close observation, asking good questions, forming hypotheses, and data collection. Students are encouraged to think and act like scientists.

A sample of the skills your child will be working on

- Safely using equipment and materials to engage in the inquiry process to predict, conduct experiments, collect and record data, summarize findings
- Identifying key concepts in the areas of geology, the solar system and renewable and non-renewable resources
- Classifying living things according to their biomes, habitats, adaptations and life cycles
- Identifying states of matter, and types of energy: light, heat and sound

Social Sciences: Social Sciences: Your child will expand their understanding about the world and their place in it. Students will learn geography skills as they investigate themes and tools of geography and explore the geography of the United States and the world. They practice critical thinking skills as they research, read and evaluate primary sources of information as they learn about history and how history is investigated.

A sample of the skills your child will be working on

- Explaining how geographical features influence political boundaries and shape levels of government
- Explaining how geography affects the economy: relationship among factors such as location, climate, resources and trade
- Describing how geography and history are interrelated
- Reading, interpreting and using a variety of maps
- Demonstrating respect for others' perspectives and points of view

Physical Development/Health: The goal of physical development and health programming is physical fitness for all students. Third grade students explore the topics of fitness, wellness, teamwork, and cooperation in building a foundation of skills that will enable them to lead healthy and physically active lifestyles.

A sample of the skills your child will be working on

- Identifying simple body cues involved in weight transfer and balance movements (e.g., lower center of gravity, compensation movement; shift, lean, change direction)
- Defining effective strategies for successful completion of various physical activities
- Identifying positive and negative behavioral choices and their impact on wellness levels
- Identifying and discuss the need for individual and shared goals during group physical activity and apply strategies for resolving conflicts
- Recognizing health- and safety-related services within the home, school and community and how one's health practices influence others
- Communicating the effects of lifestyle choices on growth and development.
- Recognizing how feelings and emotions affect one's physical, mental, and emotional health
- Telling how body parts work together to form systems

Fine Arts: Your child will explore the four art forms (dance, drama, music, and visual art) as a means of promoting creativity and self-expression. Students will build knowledge of the arts, arts skills, and an appreciation of the arts a means of communicating ideas and feelings related to the time in which they are created.

A sample of the skills your child will be working on

- Identify and distinguish among arts elements and principles when talking about works of art in the four arts disciplines
- Combine elements and principles in each arts discipline to communicate an idea, express a feeling, or solve a creative problem
- Observe and respond to the arts (dance, drama, music, visual art) in a respectful manner.

Social/Emotional Learning: Your child will acquire the knowledge and skills needed to recognize and manage his or her emotions, demonstrate caring and concern for others, develop positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

A sample of the skills your child will be working on

- Recognizing emotions and situations that cause them. Displaying and controlling emotions in a socially acceptable manner.
- Describing personal skills and interests one wants to develop. Setting a short-term goal and monitoring progress for school behavior and academic performance with assistance.
- Identifying ways to effectively communicate and work productively.
- Applying constructive approaches in resolving conflicts.
- Demonstrating knowledge of how social norms affect decision-making and behavior.

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Technology: Students will apply the use of technology to solve problems, create projects, collaborate, and extend their learning in all subjects.

A sample of the skills your child will be working on

- Modifying or creating images for use in a digital presentation
- Selecting and using appropriate digital tools to investigate a content-related topic, issue, or problem, generate possible solutions, and report results (including collecting, organizing, and analyzing data, examining patterns)
- Performing research-related tasks
- Recognizing age-appropriate issues related to the use of technology and setting personally challenging goals in the area of technology
- Using basic keyboarding skills like 'home row', tab key to indent, and thumb for the space bar



Helping your Child Learn at Home

- Try to carve out a quiet place to study, and carve out time every day when your child can concentrate on his or her studies without distractions from friends or family.
- Sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 – 30 minutes while he or she does homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on and help you be the first to know if he or she needs help with a specific topic.
- Make reading for fun a part of your child's daily routine. Set aside quiet time, with no phones, computers, or other distractions, when your child can read for pleasure.
- 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
- Look for "word problems" in real life.
- Notice those everyday occasions when you find yourself using your times tables — such as to determine how many days there are in four weeks. Ask your child for the answer.
- Involve your child when you notice yourself using division to "work backward" in the times tables — such as determining how many candies each child will get if 36 candies are shared equally among nine children at a party, or determining how many six-inch lengths can be cut from a string 18 inches long.

Tips for Talking with Your Child's Teacher

- Keep the conversation focused on a few critical areas, like:
 - reading grade level stories, poems, articles and books with understanding and fluency
 - writing and speaking well, following rules for grammar and punctuation
 - multiplication and division
 - fractions
- Ask to see a sample of your child's work. Ask the teacher questions such as:
 - Is this piece of work meeting the expectations?
 - Is my child on track?
 - How can I support my child in this area?
 - Are there resources outside the classroom to help his or her learning in a particular area?

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