



<p><b>Third Grade Expectations</b> In third grade, your child will continue to build reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. He or she will be exposed to a wide range of complex texts used for different purposes, begin to use more complex vocabulary, and encounter longer, multisyllabic words.</p>	<p><b>Third grade students routinely:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read stories - including fables, folktales, and myths - and identify the lesson or moral of the story</li> <li>• Read informational texts - including history, social studies, and science - and identify the author's main idea</li> <li>• Use details found in the text to support their ideas</li> <li>• Use illustrations, maps, photographs, and other text features to gain understanding</li> <li>• Learn and use nonliteral language</li> <li>• Describe the similarities and differences of different texts</li> <li>• Independently determine the meanings of unknown words they encounter</li> </ul> <p>However, students' purpose in reading is always to gain new knowledge or understanding from what they have read rather than complete an activity with a text. So, the purpose for reading students do at school and at home should be focused on what they can learn from the text - whether it is fictional or informational.</p>
<p><b>Setting the Conditions</b> Success in school is built on healthy daily habits that set the conditions for learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure your student gets plenty of quality sleep every night. During sleep, the brain moves new learning to long-term memory and sets the stage for the learning to come.</li> <li>• Limit screen time. Setting boundaries on screen time can help your child spend more time in activities such as reading, talking, and being physically active. Limiting screen time also supports high quality sleep.</li> <li>• Engage in discussions with your child daily. Studies show that children who engage in rich discussions with their families have especially robust vocabularies.</li> <li>• At least once a week, set aside a block of time when the entire family reads together. Children can learn both from the act of reading and from the influence of family models of reading.</li> <li>• Build your child's background knowledge with visits to museums, zoos, and historical sites. Research shows that students with more background knowledge about the world around them tend to be stronger readers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phonemic Awareness</b> By third grade, students should be able to hear and change individual sounds in words.</p>	<p>Ensure your child can manipulate phonemes (sounds) in words. Your child should be able to change a sound within a word <i>automatically</i>. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the first phoneme in a word: You say 'ship', but change the /sh/ to /r/. Your child should automatically say 'rip'.</li> <li>• Change the last phoneme in a word: You say 'clown' but change the /n/ to /d/. Your child should automatically say 'cloud'.</li> <li>• Change the middle phoneme in a word: You say 'stick' but change the /i/ to /o/. Your child should automatically say 'stock'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phonics</b> By third grade, students should be able to sound out grade-level words smoothly and automatically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a list of words that contain more than one syllable from a text your child is reading. Have your child draw a line to separate the syllables. For example, helicopter = hel / i / cop / ter. Then have your child circle the vowels in each syllable. This will also help with understanding spelling.</li> <li>• Have your child practice reading and writing high frequency words from grades K-2. The more automatically children can read and write these words, the more fluently they can read, which improves comprehension.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Fluency</b> Fluency is the ability to read words in a text effortlessly, accurately, and with meaningful expression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read a familiar poem or nursery rhyme to your child, modeling fluency and appropriate expression. Then, ask your child to read it to you with similar fluency and expression.</li> <li>• With a text between you, sit on your child’s dominant side and read the text aloud, tracking the text with your finger. Invite your child to rest his or her finger on top of yours. As you read the text aloud together, set the pace by reading slightly faster than the student. As you read, model reading fluently, expressively, and pausing for punctuation. Gradually release the “lead” to your child.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> Expanding children’s vocabulary includes learning the meaning of new words and knowing how to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words from clues in the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you are reading with your child, ask your child to pick out unfamiliar words or phrases and discuss their meanings. Whenever possible, your child should try using clues in the text to determine word meanings.</li> <li>• If there aren’t enough clues, have your child look up the meaning of unknown words in a dictionary and replace the word with a familiar synonym. After replacing the unknown words, have your child reread the passage for comprehension.</li> <li>• Have your child provide synonyms and antonyms for the unknown words. He or she could then draw a picture to show understanding of the word.</li> <li>• Provide your child with a magazine and have him or her highlight words with prefixes and suffixes. Read the words together and check for their meanings. Ask, “What does this word literally mean?”</li> </ul> <p>Common prefixes: un = not, re = again, pre = before, mis = wrong, dis = not Common suffixes: -ful = full of, -less = without, -ly = to do something a certain way, -er = more, -est = most</p>
<p><b>Comprehension</b> Comprehension is the ability to understand and learn from what we read.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to read to and with your child from a variety of different genres. Choose from a variety of books, on grade level and beyond, when you are looking for something to read together.</li> <li>• Have your child read nonfiction, age-appropriate newspaper or magazine articles. When reading nonfiction text, discuss with your child how to read maps, graphs, headings, and similar text features. Talk about the purpose of these features, why the author chose to include them, and identify the information a reader learns from each one. Then, discuss what you learned from the text as a whole.</li> <li>• When reading a fictional story, identify and track the characters, setting, problem, and solution. Ask your child to explain how a character’s decisions or choices impacted how things occurred in the story and how different parts of the story build on each other.</li> <li>• Read poems with your child. Go through the different lines and have your child determine if the author really means what he says (literal language) or if the author means something different (nonliteral language). For example: “It’s raining cats and dogs” or “I’m as hungry as a horse.”</li> <li>• Read different books by the same author and discuss the similarities and differences between the two books. Or, read a variety of books on the same topic and discuss what is learned across all of the books.</li> <li>• With any text, play “Question Toss.” Ask a question then toss a ball to your child. Your child will refer to the text to give the answer to the question. Then, your child will ask a related follow-up question for you to answer and toss the ball back to you.</li> <li>• If your child struggles to remember what he or she has read, ask him or her to stop briefly to ask questions about how well they are understanding the text. If they are not understanding, have them reread a chunk of text and paraphrase or summarize it, then check again for understanding.</li> </ul>