

# Parent Guide

## Third Grade

Reading Public Schools  
Reading, MA 01867



This guide provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of 3rd grade in mathematics and English language arts/literacy. It focuses on the key skills your child will learn in these subjects, which will build a strong foundation for success in the other subjects he or she studies throughout the school year. This guide is based on the new Massachusetts State Frameworks. These K–12 standards are informed by the highest state standards from across the country. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in these standards, he or she will be well prepared for 4th grade.

### A sample of what your child will be working on in THIRD GRADE:

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#### Mathematics:

Students will continue to build their concept of numbers, developing an understanding of fractions as numbers. They will learn the concepts behind multiplication and division and apply problem-solving skills and strategies for multiplying and dividing numbers up through 100 to solve word problems. Students 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 include:

- Multiplying and dividing up to  $9 \times 9$  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  $9 \times 80$ )
- 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 masses of objects 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  $9 \times 7$ ?)

#### English Language Arts:

Students will build important reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. They will think, talk, and write about what they read in a variety of articles, books, and other texts. In their writing, students will pay more attention to organizing information, developing ideas, and supporting these ideas with facts, details, and reasons. Activities in these areas will include:

- Reading stories and poems aloud fluently, without pausing to figure out what each word means
- Reading and retelling a wide range of stories and describing how a story teaches a lesson
- Describing characters in a story and how their actions contributed to events
- Reading closely to find main ideas and supporting details in a story
- Referring to information from illustrations such as maps or pictures as well as the words in a text to support their answers
- 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
- Participating in class discussions by listening, asking questions, sharing ideas, and building on the ideas of others
- Giving a class presentation on a topic or telling a story using relevant facts and details and speaking clearly
- Learning the rules of spoken and written English
- Spelling correctly and consulting dictionaries to clarify meanings of words
- Learning and using new words, including words related to specific subjects (such as science words)

## Tips for Third Grade Families to Support Students at Home

Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and carve out time every day when your child can concentrate. You should also try to sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics. Additionally, here are some activities you can do with your child to support learning at home:



### Mathematics:

1. 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 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.
2. Play math games with your child. For example, “I’m thinking of two numbers whose product is between 20 and 30. How many pairs 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?
3. Encourage your child 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.

4. Use everyday objects to allow your child to explore the concept of fractions. For example, use measuring cups to have students demonstrate how many  $\frac{1}{3}$ 's are in a whole, how many  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups you need to make  $1\frac{1}{4}$  cups, and how many times you have to refill a  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup measure to make  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups.
5. Practice math facts regularly.
6. Have your child use a ruler and tape measure to measure objects to the nearest  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch.
7. Encourage your child to stick with it whenever a problem seems difficult. This will help your child see that everyone can learn math.
8. Praise your child when he or she makes an effort and share in the excitement when he or she solves a problem or understands something for the first time.

### **English Language Arts:**

1. Provide time and space for your child to read independently. This time should be free from distractions such as television.
2. Ask your child what topics, events, or activities he or she likes. Then look for books, magazines, or other materials about those topics that would motivate your child to read.
3. It is also helpful when your child sees other people reading at home. You could share what you have read.
4. Start a family book club. Let different members of the family pick the book. This could be a good way to enjoy quality family time while experiencing the joy of reading together!
5. Be sure your child has a library card. Children should select books they are interested in to develop a passion for reading. Many libraries have book clubs and family activities that make reading fun for the entire family.
6. Use technology to help build your child's interest in reading. There are several websites where students can read books or articles online. The computer will help with words the student cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers students can use to access those sites. Feel free to ask a librarian or teacher for suggestions.
7. 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.

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