

Common Third-Grade Milestones

Reading, writing, talking, and playing help your child grow and learn in many ways. While you're home together, watch for some of the key milestones in growing third-grade readers. On the back, you'll find ideas for supporting these literacy developments at home.

Language

Breaking Down Words

- ▶ Recognize and use nouns (*house*), verbs (*run*), adjectives (*big*), and adverbs (*strongly*), as well as prefixes (*un-*) and suffixes (*-ly*).
- ▶ Recognize homographs (words that are spelled the same but have different meanings, such as *fly* a kite and a *fly* on the wall) and homophones (words that sound the same but are spelled differently, such as *wait* and *weight*).
- ▶ Use figurative speech (such as *small as a mouse* or *it was music to my ears*).

Talking About Texts

- ▶ Retell a story's beginning, middle, and end in detail.
- ▶ Follow respectful discussion rules (e.g., take turns).
- ▶ Connect their thoughts during discussion to others' remarks by listening intently, asking follow-up questions, and building off what someone else said.

Reading

Connecting to Texts

- ▶ Make predictions.
- ▶ Recognize sequence and cause and effect.
- ▶ Understand the motivations of a character.
- ▶ Identify the author's message or the story's moral.
- ▶ Begin to understand abstract concepts, humor, and complex themes.

Reading With Purpose

- ▶ Ask and answer questions about texts.
- ▶ Read to find the answer to a specific question.
- ▶ Identify the main idea and supporting evidence in a text.
- ▶ Pull important information from graphs, captions, diagrams, sidebars, and charts.
- ▶ Connect and compare information he or she reads in one book to another.

Writing

Writing With Purpose

- ▶ Make informed decisions about what to include in his or her writing.
- ▶ Create a story that flows from one event to another in an order that makes sense.
- ▶ Create strong beginnings and conclusions.
- ▶ Write pieces that include multiple perspectives.
- ▶ Plan and structure writing to support an opinion or argument.
- ▶ Use a range of descriptive and transition words.



Literacy Grows at Home

Children also become stronger readers the more time they spend reading. That includes choosing their own books and rereading favorites over and over again. Seeing you read encourages them, too, as does having books and magazines available to explore.

Sharing Books

Your child often reads independently. But third graders still enjoy being read to! Make sure to read with expression, and don't be afraid to ham it up! Use different voices, and don't try to be perfect! If you make a mistake, correct it. You'll show your child that going back to get it right is part of being a good reader.

Take your time and take turns reading to each other! You won't always complete a book in one sitting. Your child will look forward to finding out more when you return to read another part of the book together.

Your Independent Reader

Your child may already love to explore reading on his or her own, or may need encouragement. Invite your child to choose a new book, revisit a book you have read together, or finish a book you may have started as a read-aloud.

When school is in session, ideally a child will spend 20 minutes per day or more reading independently in school, and an equal amount of time reading at home. Today, reading at home is even more important. Split up the time or binge-read—just get those eyes on the page!



Making Connections

As important as reading time is, so is talking about what your child reads. Conversations can happen anytime—while you cook, fold laundry, or share a meal. Bond with your child about events and people in books that remind you of events and people from your own lives.

Literacy Builders

Encourage your child to use reading as a springboard into other enjoyable literacy-building activities like these.

TRUE OR FALSE? Have your child show off what he or she has learned by coming up with book-based true-or-false questions to ask family and friends. Whether or not people answer the questions correctly, they may become interested enough to want to read the book to find out more for themselves!

KEEP A JOURNAL Create a reader's journal using a notebook or stapled-together paper so your child can jot down thoughts about his or her daily reading. Your child can include new and interesting words and ideas, special notes to share with family or friends, and labeled drawings that reflect his or her thinking.

WORDS OF THE WEEK Invite your child and other family members to write and display an interesting word, phrase, or sentence that he or she has read or heard. Talk together about each person's selection and why he or she chose it.

CHARACTER PORTRAIT Ask your child to draw a picture that shows off a favorite character's personality. Your child can complete the portrait by adding descriptive words or phrases that reflect the character's personality and actions. Display the finished artwork in your home or through safe social media.