



Grade 3

Parents' Guide to Student Success

THIS GUIDE INCLUDES:

- An overview of some of the key things your child will learn in English/Literacy, Math, Social Studies and Science in elementary school
- Ideas for activities to help your child learn more at home
- Topics of discussion for talking to your child's teacher about his or her academic progress

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The Parent Guide provides an overview of what your child will learn by the end of Grade 3 in Mathematics, English Language Arts/Literacy, Social Studies and Science. This guide is based on the MA Curriculum Framework for ELA and Literacy, the MA Mathematics Framework, the MA History and Social Science Framework, and the MA Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework. If your child is meeting the expectations outlined in the standards, he or she will be well prepared for fourth grade.

Why Are Academic Standards Important?

Academic standards are important because they help ensure that all students, no matter where they live, are prepared for success in college and the workforce. Standards provide an important first step – a clear roadmap for learning for teachers, parents, and students. Having clearly defined goals helps families and teachers work together to ensure that students succeed. Clearly defined goals also help your child develop critical thinking skills that will prepare him or her for college and career.

English Language Arts & Literacy

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Grade 3

- Reading stories and poems aloud fluently
- Reading closely to determine the central message or theme in a story or poem and the main idea in a non-fiction text
- Explaining key supporting details in fiction and non-fiction text
- Describing the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs (e.g., cause/effect, comparison)
- Comparing the most important points and key details presented in two books on the same topic
- Asking and answering questions while participating in classroom discussions, building on what others have said
- Distinguishing between the literal and nonliteral meanings of words
- Spelling correctly and consulting resources to clarify meanings of words
- Writing opinions on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons
- Independently conducting short research projects that build knowledge about various topics
- Writing informational texts to develop a topic with facts, definitions, and details
- Writing stories, real or imagined, that establish a situation including details and a clear sequence of events and that describe the actions, thoughts, and feelings of the characters

**Talking to
Your Child's
Teacher**

Keeping the Conversation Focused

When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Grade 3, these include:

- Reading grade-level stories, poems, and informational text with understanding and fluency
- Speaking and writing well, following basic rules of spelling, punctuation, and grammar
- Writing to develop a topic with details and closure

Ask to see a sample of your child's work. Ask the teacher questions such as: What does this show about my child as a learner? Does my child need extra support or want to learn more about a subject; are there resources to help his or her learning outside the classroom?

Mathematics

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Grade 3

- Multiplying and dividing up to 10×10 quickly and accurately, including knowing the times tables from memory
- Solving word problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division
- Beginning to multiply and divide within 100
- Understanding fractions are whole numbers and relating them to whole number systems
- Measuring and estimating weights and liquid volume, and solving word problems involving these quantities
- Understanding concepts of area and how they relate to multiplication and addition
- Recognizing the differences between area and perimeter

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When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Grade 3, these include:

- Using understanding of place value to add and subtract
- Solving more challenging addition and subtraction word problems
- Measuring lengths, and solving word problems involving addition and subtraction of lengths

Science

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Grade 3

- Obtaining, recording and charting data in order to analyze and study the environment
- Studying the interaction between humans and earth systems, humans and the environment, and humans and the designed world
- Observing behaviors, reactions, and traits of organisms with relation to human impact
- Analyzing weather patterns and considering humans' interactions with their surroundings to meet their needs
- Using the engineering and design processes to identify a problem and design and enhance solutions that enhance humans' interactions with their surroundings in order to meet their needs
- Considering the interactions and consequent reactions between objects and forces, including forces that are balanced or not
- Providing reasons and evidence to support arguments for the influence of humans on nature and nature on human experience

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When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Grade 3, these include:

- Understanding that plants and animals are dependent on their environment
- Understanding that wind and water shape landforms and how changes are recorded on maps
- Classifying and testing materials – identifying important properties

Social Studies

A Sample of What Your Child Will Work On in Grade 3

- Explaining the meaning of time periods or dates in historical narratives (e.g., decade, century, 1776)
- Observing and describing details from visual sources such as historical paintings, photographs, or illustrations that accompany historical narratives
- Observing and describing local or regional artifacts and sites
- Using cardinal directions, map scales, legends, and titles to locate places on maps of New England, Massachusetts, and Framingham
- Identifying when Framingham was founded as well as its historic buildings, monuments, or sites
- Explaining why it is necessary for communities to have governments (e.g., governments provide order and protect rights)
- Giving examples of the different ways people in a community can influence their local government (e.g., voting, running for office)
- Explaining what a tax is and giving examples of different kinds of taxes (e.g., property, sales, income taxes)
- Identifying the Wampanoags and describing their way of life
- Identifying the Pilgrims and explaining why they left Europe to seek religious freedom; describing the Pilgrims' journey and their early years in the Plymouth Colony
- Explaining Massachusetts' role in the American Revolution (e.g., Boston Tea Party, Lexington/Concord, Battle of Bunker Hill, and leaders such as John Adams, Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Paul Revere)
- Reading a biography of a person in Massachusetts and summarizing their life and achievements (e.g., Alexander Graham Bell, Louisa May Alcott, Emily Dickinson, John Singleton Copley, Clara Barton, John F. Kennedy)
- Identifying the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights as key American documents

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When you talk to the teacher, do not worry about covering everything. Instead, keep the conversation focused on the most important topics. In Grade 3, these include:

- Participating in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Third Grade topics and texts
- Determining the main idea of a text and the key supportive details
- Asking and answering questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers
- Using maps and other visual information to demonstrate understanding of a topic
- Writing informative and opinion pieces to develop a topic with details and closure

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