Academic Growth Charts Third Grade

Adult & Child

Therapeutic Foster Care Licensing Program

Academic Benchmarks

* **States across the country are implementing new standards for student achievement, designed to better prepare young people for careers and college.**
  * **These academic benchmarks are meant to help parents understand the course material for each grade.**
  * **They are based on the standards in most of the country and are intended as a general resource for parents, not as a comprehensive breakdown of the contents of your child's curriculum.**
* http://www.parenttoolkit.com/

Third Grade Overview

* **Your 3rd grader will be developing more sophisticated textual analysis skills, his/her ability to write and organize information will improve, and he/she will begin learning to think critically and support his/her ideas with evidence.**
* **In math, your child will be moving beyond the basics of addition and subtraction to tackle multiplication, division, and fractions, among other concepts.**

English/Language Arts

* In 3rd grade, children practice reading with fluency, comfortably using a variety of strategies to make sense of unknown words.
* Third graders write clear sentences and paragraphs to show understanding of the topics they have studied and the books they have read.
* In writing and speaking, 3rd graders apply the conventions of written and spoken English in order to express ideas and opinions clearly.
* Your 3rd grader's growing vocabulary will include words learned in science and social studies, as well words and phrases used to describe thoughts and feelings.

Reading

* Vocabulary
  * Use a variety of strategies for determining the meaning of unknown words.
* Figurative Language and Relationships
  * Understand figurative language and word relationships.
* Read 3rd Grade Text Fluently
  * Read 3rd grade text fluently and with expression, without pausing to figure out words and phrases.

Reading

* Paying Attention to Details
  * Pay close attention to the details in a text, getting information from the words, illustrations, and graphics.
* Retelling Stories
  * Retell stories, fables, folktales, and myths from many cultures, use details from the text to explain their central message.
* Comparing & Contrasting Texts
  * Compare and contrast two texts about the same topic or written by the same author.

Reading

* Making Connections
  * Describe the connections between specific sentences and paragraphs and the overall text (e.g., comparison, cause/ effect, first/second/third in series).
* Engaging With a Variety of Texts
  * Actively engage with a variety of rich and challenging texts to build a foundation of knowledge in literature, science, social studies, and other subjects.

Writing

* Conventions & Usage
  * Use basic rules of English grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
* Writing Structured Stories
  * Write a story with a clear beginning, middle, and end, using dialogue and description.
* Writing Informational Pieces
  * Write an informational piece that introduces a topic, groups related information clearly, uses facts and details, and ends with a concluding statement or section.

Writing

* Writing an Opinion Piece
  * Write an opinion piece that introduces a topic or text, states an opinion, clearly organizes and explains the reasons for the opinion.
* Using Technology
  * Produce and share writing using technology (including keyboarding skills) with guidance and support from adults.

Listening & Speaking

* Presenting Information Orally
  * Speak in complete sentences with appropriate detail, at an understandable pace, when presenting information orally.
* Participating in Conversations
  * Participate in conversations about topics and texts being studied, listening carefully to the ideas of others and asking and answering questions in order to gather more information or deepen understanding of the topic.
* Main Ideas & Supporting Details
  * Determine the main ideas and supporting details from media presentations or books read aloud.

Research & Inquiry

* Short Research Projects
  * Independently conduct short research projects to gather information from print and digital sources and build knowledge about a topic.
* Take Notes & Sort Information
  * Take brief notes and sort information into categories.

Tips & Advice

* ***Make the Most of Your Library***
  * By now your child should have a library card and be familiar with your local library. Encourage him/her to develop his/her own taste in reading and to borrow books that interest him/her. Make sure that he/she has time at home, away from computers and television, to focus on reading independently.
* ***Use Technology as a Reading Tool***
  * Learn how to use technology to help develop your 3rd grader's growing interest in reading. There is a large selection of online books for children, many with interactive features such as animations or voice recording. You can also encourage his/her interest in reading by helping him/her find online sites about topics that interest him/her.
* ***Include Non-Fiction Books***
  * Make sure to incorporate non-fiction books into your child's reading list, such as books about how plants grow or how machines operate, depending on his/her interests. If he/she's interested in dinosaurs and other animals, appoint him/her the family "animal detective" and have him/her present a new animal to the family every week.

Tips & Advice

* ***Use Incentives to Encourage Reading***
  * Model good reading habits for your child by making sure that he/she sees you and other adults enjoying reading. This will help him/her view reading in a positive light. Never leave home without reading materials for both of you. Always having a book or a magazine on hand for moments like a wait at a doctor's office, a long car ride, or just waiting in the car to pick up a sibling helps your child understand that reading is an enjoyable activity that he/she can do at any time.
* ***Keep a Dictionary and Thesaurus Accessible***
  * Keep a dictionary and a thesaurus accessible in the house, and bookmark some dictionary sites online, so that when an unfamiliar word comes up, your child can easily consult these handy references. Encourage him/her to always look up words he/she doesn't know.

Tips & Advice

* ***Encourage Storytelling***
  * Kids love to tell stories with each other — the more outlandish, the better. Encourage your child to start a progressive story with a group of friends. Begin it with a catchy opening, like "The robot stepped off of the bright purple spaceship into a vivid green golf course." Then, have the kids pass the paper around. Each writer adds a sentence or two until the writers collectively decide the story is finished. Watch the kids explode with laughter when they read the collaborative story out loud.
* ***Play Word Games***
  * Word games are a great way to get your child to see the magic of language, and playing with language can be a start toward good writing. Here's one idea to try with your 3rd grader: When you're driving in the car, taking a bus or walking in your neighborhood, spot the license plates on the cars that pass. Using the letters from the plate, try to create a sentence in which each letter becomes the beginning of a word. The license plate NJC124 could become "Nancy joins clubs" or "Nick juggles carrots." Be creative and have fun!

Tips & Advice

* ***Write and Stage a Play***
  * Drama and performance can hook both lovers and non-lovers of reading and writing into enjoying language. Here's one idea to try with your 3rd grader: Write and stage a play! Gather a group of your child's friends and have them choose a favorite book. Help them pick a scene they love from the book and write a simple script—just by writing down what the characters said (or might have said). Help them pick a character to act out, find some props and dress-up clothes for costumes, and you're set to go!
* ***Encourage Writing About Holidays***
  * Writing can be an important addition to your holiday observances. Invite your child to write and illustrate stories about his/her favorite holiday traditions. Encourage him/her to add lots of details by using all his/her senses in descriptions: How the potato pancakes smell at Hannukah, how the candles glisten at Kwanzaa, what the Christmas carols sound like, how the wrapping paper feels as he/she rips open his/her presents. Make the story into a book—either on the computer or handwritten and stapled together—and save as a new family tradition to read and reread each year.

Tips & Advice

* ***Play Vocabulary Games***
  * Make a game out of broadening your child's vocabulary. Choose five unfamiliar new words for him/her to learn each week and see how often everyone in the family can use those words in everyday conversation. This will help improve your 3rd grader's vocabulary, reading comprehension, and speaking skills.
* ***Play "Another Way to Say..."***
  * Another great game to play in the car is "Another way to say..." The goal is to find words that have a similar meaning to the selected word. So if you choose the word "big," your child can take turns with his/her siblings or friends finding similar words, such as "huge," "enormous," or "large." Give each child 10 seconds to come up with a suggestion. This helps build vocabulary and memory skills, and discussing how exactly the chosen words differ from each other adds another dimension to the game.

Mathematics

* **In 3rd grade, students focus most on developing an understanding of multiplication and division of numbers up to 100, and fractions.**

Multiplication & Division

* Multiplying Numbers
  * Understand what it means to multiply numbers – for example: 5 x 3 can be thought of as the total number of objects in 3 groups where each group contains 5 objects – or the total number of objects in 5 groups where each group contains 3 objects.
  * Relate the concept of addition to multiplication.
* Times Table
  * Know the times table.
  * By the end of 3rd grade, quickly and accurately multiply any one-digit number by any other one-digit number.

Multiplication & Division

* Multiplication & Addition
  * Use knowledge of addition to understand that 4 x 7 is the same as 4 x 5 + 4 x 2.
* Dividing Numbers
  * Understand that dividing numbers can be looked at as separating numbers of objects into equal groups.
* The Relationship
  * Understand the relationship between multiplication and division. For example, understand that if 9 x 3 = 27, then 27 ÷ 9 = 3, and 27 ÷ 3 = 9.

Multiplication & Division

* Division With an Unknown
  * Solve division problems involving an unknown – for example, solve 27 ÷ 9 = ? by thinking 9 x ? = 27.
* Understanding Place Value
  * Use understanding of place value to add, subtract, multiply and divide multi-digit numbers.
* Solving Word Problems
  * Solve word problems involving multiplication and division of numbers within 100.

Fractions

* Fractions as Numbers
  * Understand fractions as numbers.
  * Using visual models or number lines (example below), understand that two fractions are equivalent (equal) if they are the same size, or are on the same point on a number line. For example, $\frac{2}{4}$ is the same as $\frac{1}{2}$.
* Unit Fractions
  * Understand unit fractions – fractions with 1 as the numerator (top number): $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ – as one part of a whole when that whole is divided into equal parts.

Fractions

* Comparing Fractions
  * Compare two fractions with the same numerator (top number) or the same denominator (bottom number) by thinking about their size, and what the top numbers and bottom numbers represent. For example, understand that 3/4 of something is larger than $\frac{3}{5}$ of that same thing, because each 4th is larger than each 5th.
  * Understand that $\frac{4}{6}$ of something is larger than $\frac{3}{6}$ of that same thing because it has 4 of the 6ths.
* Whole Numbers
  * Recognize that a fraction with the same numerator and denominator is the same as 1 – for example, $\frac{2}{2} = 1$ (two halves are the same as one whole).
  * Write whole numbers as fractions – for example, $5/(1)$ is the same as 5.

Measurement & Data

* Reading Clocks
  * Read circular "face" clocks and digital clocks to tell time to the nearest minute.
  * Solve word problems requiring addition and subtraction of intervals of time, in minutes. For example: Soccer practice is over at 4:15 p.m. Jose texts his mother. She says she will pick him up in 20 minutes. If she is on time, what time will it be when she arrives?
* Mass & Volume
  * Measure and estimate the mass of objects and volume of liquids – in grams (g), kilograms (kg), and liters (l).
  * Solve word problems involving mass and volume.

Measurement & Data

* Data on Graphs
  * Represent and interpret data on picture graphs and bar graphs (for example one square represents 5 pets).
  * Solve one-and two- step word problems using information presented in bar graphs.

Shapes

* Classifying Shapes
  * Use similarities and differences in geometric shapes to categorize, or classify them – for example, recognize that rectangles, squares, and rhombuses all have four sides, which makes them all examples of quadrilaterals (four-sided shapes).
* Dividing Shapes
  * Divide shapes into parts with equal sizes.
  * Relate the parts to fractions of the whole.

Tips & Advice

* ***Discuss Math Class at Home***
  * Encourage your child to talk about the math concepts that he/she is learning at school. Don't just ask, "How was math today?" Instead, ask him/her to tell you about something he/she learned in math class today.
* ***Model Good Math Behavior***
  * Speak positively about math and reward effort, rather than grades or ability. Think about how important reading is and how we are told to model this behavior for our children. We need to place math in the same category. Don't discount the importance of math by saying, "I'm not a math person, I was never good at math." Help your child read books that incorporate math, such as *Millions of Cats*, by Wanda Gag, or *On Beyond a Million: An Amazing Math Journey*, by David Schwartz.

Tips & Advice

* ***Talk Through Math Problems***
  * If your child is struggling with math problems, have him/her read each problem out loud slowly and carefully so he/she can hear the problem and think about what is being asked. This helps him/her break down the problem and come up with problem-solving strategies.
* ***Highlight Real-Life Math Problems***
  * Continue to find as many opportunities as possible to highlight math problems in real life. If you're doubling a recipe and need to figure out measurements, enlist your 3rd grader's help. Measuring cups provide an especially good opportunity for your child to familiarize herself with the concept of fractions that he/she is leaning about in school. If a recipe calls for a cup and a half of something, ask him/her how many ½ or ¼ cups he/she would need until he/she had enough.

Tips & Advice

* ***Highlight Real-Life Examples of Fractions***
  * Encourage your child to spot real-life uses of fractions, such as menus that describe burgers as quarter pounders or sports games that are divided into halves. Have him/her practice fractions by drawing a shape, such as a circle or a square, and asking him/her to color in ½ or ¾ of it.
* ***Play Math Games***
  * Time spent commuting or waiting in a car is a great opportunity to play math games with your child. Multiplication is one of the key math concepts he/she is working on in school and you can help him/her practice by asking simple multiplication problems that relate to real life. Ask him/her to figure out the number of days until an event three weeks from today. Or have him/her calculate how many weeks he/she would have to save his/her allowance to buy a toy or game he/she wants.
* ***Use Money to Practice Math***
  * Make combinations of bills and coins using money from your wallet or your child's piggy bank. Have him/her write the amount for different groupings, using a dollar sign and decimal point.

Tips & Advice

* ***Explore Math with Sports***
  * Sports provide a fun and engaging way of exploring a host of mathematical concepts, starting with basic addition. The halves of a soccer game or the quarters of a football game offer an illustration of how fractions work in the real world. If your child enjoys a sport, encourage him/her to explore it through math.
* ***Practice Telling Time***
  * Have your child practice his/her time-telling skills as often as possible. Ask him/her to check the clock when you want to know what time it is, and to compare the time on a face clock to see if it's displaying the same time as a digital clock. If you have an appointment and need to leave by a certain time, have him/her help count down the minutes until then.