



Parent & Family Engagement in Student Learning ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS IN THIRD GRADE

English Language Arts combines instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and effective language use to build literacy. Early literacy skills are foundational in third grade.

BUILDING AND EXPANDING READING SKILLS

The third grade New Jersey Student Learning Standards for English Language Arts expand and grow students' foundational literacy skills to strengthen reading and writing independence. Families can support and build these reading and writing skills at home throughout the school year.

During the school year, third grade readers continue to master more complex phonics skills (i.e., understanding how letters or combinations of letters represent the sounds in spoken and written words) as well as reading comprehension skills in appropriate texts.

By the end of third grade, children will describe the development of individual character's traits, motivations, or feelings and explain how characters' actions contribute to the plot within a text. Parents can also ask their child to recall the main topic and supporting details of an informational text referring back to the text as the basis for the answers. Students will describe the overall structure of a text and effectively use various text features (e.g., graphics, images, captions, headings) to locate key facts or information. They will compare and contrast the elements (theme, settings, and plots) of similar literary texts as well as similar informational texts regarding the most important points and key details. Taking time to talk about texts will nurture a love for learning as children grow and read about many topics.

YOU MAY HEAR YOUR CHILD OR THEIR TEACHER TALK ABOUT...

A multisyllabic word: A word that contains more than one syllable (e.g., fantastic has 3 syllables: fan-tas-tic).

Fluency: The ability to read a text with accuracy, speed, and expression, allowing readers to understand and make meaning of what they are reading.

Reading Comprehension: The ability to understand what is written in a text, including both the facts and the ideas or messages that are implied.



FUN ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Compare/contrast how characters in different stories respond to major events and challenges using key details within the texts.

Ask "how do you know that?" when reading nonfiction materials, then have your child look back in the text to explain.

Retell and compare main idea(s) and determine important ideas from two different stories or two informational texts.

Ask your child to write a few sentences about what they read each day in a "Book Journal" and add favorite parts, new words or drawings.

Practice fluency by rereading texts.



About Learning Standards

The State of New Jersey sets developmentally appropriate learning standards for what every student will know and be able to do when they complete each grade level or grade band. This resource is designed to help families understand those standards and partner with teachers to support their child's learning during third grade.

New Jersey Department of Education | Division of Teaching and Learning Services
Office of Standards | K-3Unit@doe.nj.gov

SUPPORTING LITERACY AT HOME



Creating a positive and comfortable space for reading and writing at home helps your child's growth and development. Set aside time to read together, investigate unfamiliar words, compliment your child's efforts, and make literacy activities enjoyable. Show your child how reading and writing are part of everyday life, like writing a note or reading the mail, or an online news article. These small daily moments can boost your child's language skills and grow their vocabulary.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Throughout all stages of growth and development, it is essential for families to make time for reading and writing activities, here are some ideas:

- Encourage independent reading, have follow up discussions, create a new ending, or act like a character from the story.
- Prompt imagination and perspective-taking (e.g., "If I were a superhero, what powers would I have and how would I use them?").
- Spark the joy of reading by choosing a new book (or a new book section) each week, reading it together, talking about favorite parts, and making predictions.
- Encourage your child to relate a story they are reading to their own experiences (e.g., "Have you ever felt like that?" "What would you do?").
- Build vocabulary skills by engaging in games [e.g., pick a word and think of other words that mean the same (synonyms) or the opposite (antonyms)].
- Celebrate literacy by encouraging your child to spot and use new words in daily life (e.g., reading signs, instructions, or conversations).
- Choose a few newly learned words and challenge your child to include them in a story. Help them to use words in context and inspire creativity.
- Encourage your third grader to start a "Question of the Day" board where your child writes one question daily that they're curious about, then explore the answer together.
- Visit the library together to find sources on a topic of interest, to try a new book series, to look in a new section, or to review a favorite magazine.

Consistency and enthusiasm are key when implementing these ELA activities. By integrating language and literacy activities into everyday interactions, families can foster vocabulary and language development in young children.

BUILDING WRITING SKILLS

Write and spell singular and plural possessives (e.g., teacher's, teachers') and words with common prefixes (e.g., re, pre, sub, un, dis, mis) and suffixes (e.g., ing, able, ness, ful, tion).

Write to inform, to narrate and/or to give an opinion to convey ideas and inform. Use appropriate dialogue, text features and/or conclusions as needed in various type of writing.

Engage in both collaborative and independent writing regularly for longer periods of time. Use transition words and phrases to manage the sequence of events (i.e., first, next, then, last).

Resources

[NJ Student Learning Standards](#) - Details the student learning for English Language Arts at each grade level.

[NJDOE K-3 Early Elementary Alignment](#) - Provides families and educators with valuable resources for early learning success.

[NJDOE Learning Equity and Academic Recovery](#) - Family and educator resources for literacy.

[NJDOE Special Education Parent Rights and Engagement](#) - Resources for families.

[NJDOE Title III Guidance for Families](#) - Information to help parents/ guardians fully participate in school events and activities.