Grade 3 Reading Standards

Grade 3 Reading Standards for Literature [RL]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.*

Key Ideas and Details

1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
2. Retell stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in a text.

   For example, students read versions of classic fables attributed to Aesop, discussing how the stories can be told differently, yet have the same moral. Then they read a collection of modern fables, told mostly in dialogue, by Arnold Lobel. Students practice reading the fables aloud in pairs to develop fluency and expression, and then write a script from a fable to perform. By the end of the unit, students can explain what fables are, why they have endured over thousands of years, and how they reflect human experience. (RL.3.2, RL.3.9, RF.3.4, W.3.10, L.3.6)
3. Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from figurative language. (See grade 3 Language Standards 4–6 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading.)
5. Identify common structural elements of fiction (e.g., problem, solution); describe how each successive part of a text builds on earlier sections.
6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of a text's narrator or those of its characters.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).
8. (Not applicable. For expectations regarding central messages, lessons, or morals in stories, see RL.2.)
9. Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend literary texts representing a variety of genres, cultures, and perspectives and exhibiting complexity appropriate for at least grade 3. (See more on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of text complexity.)

Grade 3 Reading Standards for Informational Text [RI]

Key Ideas and Details

1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
2. Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

3. Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, mathematical ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 3 topic or subject area*. (See grade 3 Language Standards 4–6 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading.)
5. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
   For example, students study the characteristics and text features of informational text. Then they develop a research question about a topic of interest, conduct research to locate information, and write a report that uses the text features they have studied—such as a table of contents, headings and subheadings, informative illustrations, an index, and a glossary. (RI.3.5, W.3.2, W.3.7)
6. Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words, numbers, and symbols in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
   Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice
   2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
   6. Attend to precision.
   See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.
8. Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).
9. Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Independently and proficiently read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, mathematical, and technical texts, exhibiting complexity appropriate for at least grade 3. (See more on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of text complexity.)

Grade 3 Reading Standards for Foundational Skills [RF]

These standards are directed toward fostering students' understanding and working knowledge of concepts of print, the alphabetic principle, and other basic conventions of the English writing system. A research- and evidence-based scope and sequence for phonological and phonics development and the complete range of foundational skills are not ends in and of themselves. They are necessary and important components of an effective, comprehensive reading curriculum designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines. Instruction should be differentiated: as students become skilled readers, they will need much less practice with these concepts. Struggling readers may need more or different kinds of practice. The point is to teach students what they need to learn and not what they already know—to discern when particular children or activities warrant more or less attention.

Note: RF.1 and RF.2, on print concepts and phonological awareness, apply only to pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and grade 1.

Phonics and Word Recognition

3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
    a. Identify and know the meaning of the most common prefixes and derivational suffixes.
    b. Decode words with common Latin suffixes.
    c. Decode multisyllable words.
    d. Read grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words.

Fluency

4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
    a. Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
    b. Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.
    c. Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

Grade 3 Writing Standards [W]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.* The expected growth in student writing ability is reflected both in the standards themselves and in the collections of annotated student writing samples in Appendix C of the *Common Core State Standards* and the Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action Project.

Text Types and Purposes

Note: The intent of Writing Standards 1–3 is to ensure flexibility, not rigidity, in student writing. Many effective pieces of writing blend elements of more than one text type in service of a single purpose: for example, an argument may rely on anecdotal evidence, a short story may function to explain some phenomenon, or a literary analysis may use explication to develop an argument. In addition, each of the three types of writing is itself a broad category encompassing a variety of texts: for example, narrative poems, short stories, and memoirs represent three distinct forms of narrative writing. Finally, although the bulk of writing assigned in school should address the purposes described below, other forms of writing—for example, lists and notes, descriptive letters, personal reflections—should have a place in the classroom as well. To develop flexibility and nuance in their own writing, students need to engage with a wide range of complex model texts (see Reading Literature Standard 10 and Reading Informational Text Standard 10) and study authors who have written successfully across genres (see Appendix B: A Literary Heritage).

1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting an opinion with reasons.
    a. Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.
    b. Provide reasons that support the opinion.
    c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., *because, therefore, since, for example*) to connect opinion and reasons.
    d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

For example, as they study the colonial period in Massachusetts, students read and view print and digital resources on the colonists' conflicting views about separating from Britain. Sources include* Liberty! How the Revolutionary War Began *by Lucille Recht Penner, the PBS website History of US based on Joy Hakim's book series, and* Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak*, a collection of primary sources by Kay Winter. Students choose a character from the period and write a letter from the

character's point of view, giving an opinion and supporting either the revolutionary or the loyalist cause with reasons. (RI.3.6, RI.3.9, W.3.1).

In math, instead of writing opinions, students write or draw solutions to math word problems and present arguments to explain their thinking.

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.

3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.

See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
   a. Introduce a topic and group-related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
   b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
   c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., *also, another, and, more, but*) to connect ideas within categories of information.
   d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

In "Visions of Helen Keller," a solid example of biographical writing, a third grader presents details that reveal the significance of Keller's accomplishments as well as admiration and empathy for her life. See this example of informational writing at Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action. (W.3.2, W.3.4, W.3.7, W.3.8, RI.3.2, RI.3.3, L.3.2, L.3.3)

3. Write narratives in prose or poem form to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, descriptive details, and clear sequences.
   a. Establish a situation and introduce a speaker, narrator, and/or characters; organize an appropriate narrative sequence.
   b. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences or events or show responses to situations.
   c. Use figurative language to suggest images. (See grade 3 Reading Literature Standard 4.)
   d. Use temporal words and phrases to signal order where appropriate.
   e. Provide a sense of closure.
   f. For poems, use words and phrases that form patterns of sound (e.g., rhyme, repetition of sounds within words or within lines) to create meaning or effect.

With sentences of various types, precise word choice, and appropriate figures of speech, a student paints a clear picture of the narrator's spirited response to the problem posed by a pet Guinea pig's escape from its cage. See "Runaway Rachel," from Massachusetts Writing Standards in Action. (W.3.3, W.3.4, L.3.1, L.3.2, L.3.3)

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
   a. Demonstrate command of standard English conventions (as described in Language Standards 1–3 up to and including grade 3).
   b. Demonstrate the ability to choose and use appropriate vocabulary (as described in Language Standards 4–6 up to and including grade 3).

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

6. Attend to precision.

See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.

6. Use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
9. (Begins in grade 4.)

Range of Writing

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Grade 3 Speaking and Listening Standards [SL]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.*

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 3 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
    a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. (See grade 3 Reading Literature Standard 1 and Reading Informational Text Standard 1 for specific expectations regarding use of textual evidence.)
    b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
    c. Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic, and link their comments to the remarks of others.
    d. Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

    Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice
    2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
    3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.
    See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.
2. Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
    Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice
    2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
    3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others.
    6. Attend to precision.
    See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.
3. Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Report on a topic, text, or solution to a mathematical problem, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace and using appropriate vocabulary. (See grade 3 Language Standards 4–6 for specific expectations regarding vocabulary.)
    For example, in a science and literacy unit, students study weather and weather-related hazards. The unit focuses on developing general academic and science-specific vocabulary using books such as

Inside Weather *by Mary Kay Carson,* Weather Words and What They Mean *by Gail Gibbons, and* Extreme Weather *by Michael Mogil and Barbara Levine. Students generate questions, conduct research, and analyze weather data from their own observations. They write up their findings and present them in oral reports. (W.3.7, SL.3.4, L.3.6)*

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively

3. Construct viable arguments and respond to the reasoning of others

6. Attend to precision

See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.

5. Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.
6. Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification. (See grade 3 Language Standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

Grade 3 Language Standards [L]

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. *Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades. For example, though sentence fragments may receive the most attention in grade 4, more nuanced discussions of the topic should develop throughout the later grades as students continue to analyze speakers' and authors' sentence structure, vary syntax for effect in their own speaking and writing, and more.*

Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking; retain and further develop language skills learned in previous grades. (See grade 3 Writing Standard 5 and Speaking and Listening Standard 6 on strengthening writing and presentations by applying knowledge of conventions.)

   Sentence Structure and Meaning

   a. Produce, expand, and rearrange complete simple, compound, and complex sentences.
   b. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.[7]
   c. Use verbs in the present, past, and future tenses and choose among them depending on the overall meaning of the sentence.
   d. Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and choose between them depending on the overall meaning of the sentence.
   e. Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs and choose between them depending on what is to be modified and the overall meaning of the sentence.

   Word Usage

   f. Use abstract nouns.
   g. Form and use regular and irregular plural nouns and the past tense of regular and irregular verbs.
2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   a. Write legibly and fluently by hand, using either printing or cursive handwriting.

[7] These skills are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking. See the table in the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework.

b. Capitalize appropriate words in titles.
c. Use commas in addresses.
d. Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.
e. Form and use possessives.
f. Use conventional spelling for high-frequency and other studied words and for adding suffixes to base words (e.g., *sitting, smiled, cries, happiness*).
g. Demonstrate understanding that numerals used at the beginning of a sentence are written as words and capitalized (e.g., "Three pandas could be seen eating leaves high in the bamboo grove.").
h. Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.
i. Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.

Knowledge of Language

3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
a. Choose words and phrases for effect.[8]
b. Recognize and observe differences between the conventions of spoken and written English.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 3 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
a. Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
b. Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., *agreeable/disagreeable*, *comfortable/uncomfortable*, *care/careless*, *heat/preheat*).
c. Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., *company*, *companion*).
d. Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.
e. Recognize and use appropriately abbreviations related to grade-level content or common in everyday life (e.g., *N, S, E, W* on a map).
f. Recognize and use appropriately symbols related to grade-level content or common in everyday life (e.g., <, >).

5. Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
a. Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., *take steps*).
b. Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are *friendly* or *helpful*).
c. Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., *knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered*).

6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases,[8] including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships. (See grade 3 Reading Literature Standard 4 and Reading Informational Text Standard 4 on applying knowledge of vocabulary to reading; see grade 3 Writing Standard 5 and Speaking and Listening Standard 4 on strengthening writing and presentations by applying knowledge of vocabulary.)
For example, as third graders are introduced to fractions in math, they learn to apply general academic vocabulary (e.g., half, part, equal). They also learn domain-specific words and phrases (e.g.,

[8] These skills are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking. See the table in the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework.

numerator, denominator, number line). They use both kinds of vocabulary to explain the reasoning behind their solutions to word problems.

Connections to the Standards for Mathematical Practice

6. Attend to precision.

See the pre-K–5 resource section in this Framework or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.