

A Guide for Parents and Families About What Your **THIRD GRADER** Should Be Learning In School This Year



This guide shares important information about the South Carolina Academic Standards. These standards outline state requirements for your child's learning program and what students across the state should be able to do in certain subjects.

A good educational system provides many tools that help children learn. Academic standards are useful for making sure:

- teachers know what is to be taught;
- children know what is to be learned; and
- parents and the public can determine how well the concepts are being learned.

The following pages provide information about the South Carolina Academic Standards for mathematics, English language arts, science and social studies for **Third Grade**. The information can help you become familiar with what your child is learning at school and may include activities to reinforce and support your child's learning, selected book titles for additional reading, and Web site addresses for extended learning. Because sites change, please preview before students begin work. This version does not include every standard taught in **Third Grade**. The complete South Carolina Academic Standards for each subject area can be found at www.sctlc.com or at <http://ed.sc.gov>.

The state-developed test, Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT), is based on the South Carolina Academic Standards. The most current released PACT questions for all subject areas can be found online at <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/assessment/PACT/PACTReleaseltms.html>.

South Carolina Academic Standards

Here are seven key reasons parents should be in the know about the academic standards:

1. Standards set clear, high expectations for student achievement. Standards tell what students need to do in order to progress through school on grade level.
2. Standards guide efforts to measure student achievement. Results of tests (PACT) on grade-level academic standards show if students have learned and teachers have taught for mastery.

3. Standards promote educational equity for all. Instruction in every school in the state will be based on the same academic standards.
4. Standards help parents determine if children in South Carolina are taught the same subject content as children across the nation. South Carolina Academic Standards have been compared with and matched to national standards as well as standards of other states to make sure that they are challenging.
5. Standards inform parents about the academic expectations for their child. Standards give parents more specific information for helping their child at home. Parents no longer have to guess the type of help their child needs to do better in school.
6. Standards enable parents to participate more actively in parent/teacher conferences. Knowledge of the academic standards helps parents understand more about what their child is learning and what they can do at each grade level. Parents are able to have conversations with teachers about student progress in specific areas and understand more completely the progress of their child.
7. Standards help parents see how the current grade level expectations are related to successive years' expectations. Parents are able to see how their child's knowledge is growing from one year to the next.

WEB RESOURCES

South Carolina Department of Education (SDE):
<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/cso/>

South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC):
<http://eoc.sc.gov>

South Carolina: Teaching, Learning, and Connecting (SCTL):
www.sctlc.com

South Carolina Education Television (SCETV):
www.knowitall.org

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Students should be able to:

Reading

- Use clues to make, revise, and confirm predictions about what will happen next in a story
- Understand the relationship between the person who tells a story and the point of view of the story
- Draw conclusions after reading
- Understand descriptions in stories that exaggerate, make comparisons between two unlike things, or give human qualities to non-human objects or animals
- Understand examples of words that mimic sounds or rhyme by beginning with the same sound
- Write, act, or draw to respond to reading
- Understand how characters, setting, and plot affect each other in a story
- Understand why authors choose particular words or sentence patterns
- Understand that poetry uses stanzas, rhyme, and repetition
- Read for extended periods of time to gain information
- Understand the use of headings, different print styles, and captions in books
- Use graphic organizers as sources of information
- Use tables of contents, glossaries, and indexes
- Find cause-and-effect relationships in reading
- Determine the meaning of a new word or a word with more than one meaning by using information from the text
- Break words into parts to determine what they mean
- Understand what similes and metaphors mean when reading
- Recognize commonly used age-appropriate words
- Understand when words have opposite meanings, mean the same thing, or sound the same but have different meanings

Writing

- Organize writing by using lists or graphic organizers
- Combine several short sentences to make one more complex sentence
- Write paragraphs that include a topic sentence, a logical sequence of supporting details, and transition words
- Use the correct form of an adjective, such as *better*, *best*, *happier*, and *happiest* to compare
- Use prepositional phrases such as *under the table* or *over the mountains* correctly
- Use conjunctions such as *because*, *since*, *yet*, or *until* correctly
- Use pronouns such as *I*, *me*, *he*, or *him* correctly
- Capitalize geographic names, holidays, and historical or special events
- Use commas in the greeting and closing of a letter and when combining two sentences with a conjunction such as *and* or *but*.
- Use apostrophes with possessive nouns such as *Jill's shirt*
- Use correct spelling for words that sound the same but have different meanings and spellings
- Write friendly letters that include a greeting, body, closing, and signature

- Write invitations that include the time, date, and place of the event
- Write stories that include characters, a setting, and follow a logical sequence of events
- Write descriptions of historical people, places, or events
- Create riddles or jokes

Research

- Generate a topic for research
- Gather information from sources such as books, magazines, charts, dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases, thesauri, and nonprint media (e.g., television, Internet)
- Organize information by classifying or sequencing
- Paraphrase information gathered from research
- Use vocabulary that is appropriate for a particular audience or purpose when speaking
- Use pictures, objects, or charts to support oral presentations

Activities

- Encourage your child to write letters or send e-mails to family and friends
- Play “Concentration” with your child, matching words that go together based on various word categories (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, words that sound the same)
- Provide a variety of types of reading materials for your child to use—books, magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, atlases, thesauri, and nonprint media
- Allow your child to compile a “pretend” order for something he wants in a magazine or catalog
- Get your child a library card and visit the library regularly
- Discuss the point of view of a character in a story
- Discuss exaggerations, comparisons between two unlike things or human qualities given to non-human objects or animals when reading aloud to your child
- Have your child make predictions about a story he/she is going to read based on the book jacket or title of the book. Have him/her confirm or reject his/her predictions using evidence from the story.
- Have your child use the Internet to find information, such as the time schedule for a movie
- Encourage your child to look up unknown words in a dictionary
- Create invitations for a party with your child
- Have your child write a descriptive paragraph about a picture in a magazine
- Discuss topics that your child is interested in
- Have your child tell you a story. Ask questions about the characters, setting, and plot.
- Make up riddles or jokes with your child and try them out on family or friends
- Make holiday signs capitalizing the name of the holiday
- Discuss cause-and-effect relationships in a book or television show

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MATHEMATICS

Students should be able to:

Numbers and Operations

- Compare number quantities using the symbols $<$, $>$ or $=$
- Apply an algorithm (method of solving a problem) to add and subtract whole numbers fluently
- Apply the concept of fractions
- Recall basic multiplication and division facts
- Generate strategies to multiply one single-digit whole-number factor and one double-digit whole-number factor

Algebra

- Use symbols to represent an unknown quantity in a simple addition, subtraction, or multiplication equation

Geometry

- Understand the attributes of circles
- Classify polygons
- Classify lines, line segments, and angles
- Predict the results of one transformation (slide, flip, and turn)
- Generate strategies to determine perimeters (distance around the outside) of polygons

Measurement

- Tell time to the nearest minute

Data Analysis and Probability

- Apply a procedure to find the range (the high and low number or the difference between the high and low number) of a data set
- Compare the benefits of multiple representations of a given data set
- Understand when the probability of an event is 0 or 1

Activities:

Have your child:

- Practice multiplication and related division facts through 12×12 (e.g., using flashcards, recitation)
- Play greater than, less than, or equal. Take turns opening a magazine to different pages. Record the page number then use the symbols $>$ (*is greater than*), $<$ (*is less than*), or $=$ (*equals*) to compare the two pages.
- Find examples of lines and angles in everyday objects. Classify each example of lines as being parallel, perpendicular, or intersecting and each angle as acute, obtuse, or right. Find at least two examples of each.
- Explain that the probability of an event is zero when that event is impossible and the probability of an event is one when that event is certain. Give examples of real life events that have probability 0 or 1 (e.g. – the probability that if you drop a rock it will fall is 1 and the probability that it will float is 0).
- Gather receipts from trips to the grocery store. Find the range of how much money was spent on groceries during one month.
- Find a circular object, such as a hula-hoop. Identify the circumference, diameter, radius, and center of the object.

Books:

- Dobson, Christina. *Pizza Counting*
- McMillan, Bruce. *Eating Fractions*
- Nolan, Helen. *How Much, How Many, How Far, How Heavy, How Long, How Tall is 1000?*
- Pinczes, Elinor J. *Inchworm and A Half*

Web Sites:

- <http://www.aplusmath.com> – Interactive site with games and a homework helper
- www.coolmath4kids.com – Interactive site for students
- <http://www.edu4kids.com> – Interactive site to practice basic facts
- <http://www.funbrain.com/index.html> – Interactive math activities

SCIENCE

Students should be able to:

Inquiry

- Classify objects by two of their properties (attributes)
- Classify objects or events in sequential order
- Generate questions such as “What if?” or “How?” about objects, organisms, and events in the environment and use those questions to conduct a simple scientific investigation
- Predict the outcome of a simple investigation and compare the result with the prediction
- Use tools (including beakers, meter tapes and sticks, forceps/tweezers, tuning forks, graduated cylinders, and graduated syringes) safely, accurately, and appropriately when gathering specific data
- Infer meaning from data communicated in graphs, tables, and diagrams
- Explain why similar investigations might produce different results
- Use appropriate safety procedures when conducting investigations

Habitats and Adaptations

- Illustrate the life cycles of seed plants and various animals and summarize how they grow and are adapted to conditions within their habitats
- Explain how physical and behavioral adaptations allow organisms to survive
- Recall the characteristics of an organism’s habitat that allow the organism to survive there
- Explain how changes in the habitats of plants and animals affect their survival
- Summarize the organization of simple food chains

Earth’s Materials and Changes

- Classify rocks and soils on the basis of their properties
- Identify common minerals on the basis of their properties by using a minerals identification key
- Recognize types of fossils
- Infer ideas about Earth’s early environments from fossils of plants and animals that lived long ago
- Illustrate Earth’s saltwater and freshwater features
- Illustrate Earth’s land features by using models, pictures, diagrams, and maps
- Exemplify Earth materials that are used as fuel, as a resource for building materials, and as a medium for growing plants
- Illustrate changes in Earth’s surface that are due to slow processes and changes that are due to rapid processes

Heat and Changes in Matter

- Classify different forms of matter according to their observable and measurable properties
- Explain how water and other substances change from one state to another
- Explain how heat moves easily from one object to another through direct contact in some materials (conductors) and not so easily through other materials (insulators)
- Identify sources of heat and exemplify ways that heat can be produced (including rubbing, burning, and using electricity)

Motion and Sound

- Identify the position of an object relative to a reference point by using position terms such as “above,” “below,” “inside of,” “underneath,” or “on top of” and a distance scale or measurement
- Compare the motion of common objects in terms of speed and direction
- Explain how the motion of an object is affected by the strength of a push or pull and the mass of the object
- Explain the relationship between the motion of an object and the pull of gravity
- Recall that vibrating objects produce sound and that vibrations can be transferred from one material to another
- Compare the pitch and volume of different sounds
- Recognize ways to change the volume of sounds
- Explain how the vibration of an object affects pitch

Sample PACT Question

PACT questions are available at

<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/assessment/pact/PACTReleaseItems.html>

Activities:

Have your child:

- Write a letter to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources to research how habitats are managed and species are monitored in South Carolina
- Fill several glass bottles with different amounts of water, tap the sides of the bottles, and observe the sound. Describe how the pitch varies from one bottle to another.
- Identify and classify plants and animals found in the backyard as to their role in a food chain (producer, consumer, and decomposers)
- Classify household objects (such as items in the pantry, leaves, or toys) according to two attributes (such as size, color, or shape)
- Start a rock collection and create a field guide to identify the samples
- Compare soil samples from different areas in a backyard or park. Plant seeds in the different soils and observe and record their growth.
- Measure and record temperature changes every 5 minutes of hot water in a paper hot cup and a styrofoam cup

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SOCIAL STUDIES

Students should be able to:

South Carolina Studies

- Identify on a map the significant physical characteristics of South Carolina
- Interpret thematic maps of South Carolina places and regions that show how and where people live, work, and use land and transportation
- Categorize the six geographic regions of South Carolina by their different physical and human characteristics
- Explain the effects of human systems on the physical landscape of South Carolina over time
- Explain reasons for the exploration of South Carolina by Europeans
- Summarize the activities and accomplishments of explorers of South Carolina
- Use a map to identify the sea and land routes of explorers of South Carolina and compare the geographic features of areas they explored
- Compare the culture and location of different Native American nations in South Carolina
- Summarize the impact that the European colonization of South Carolina had on Native Americans
- Summarize the contributions of settlers in South Carolina under the Lords Proprietors and the Royal colonial government
- Explain the transfer of slavery into South Carolina from the West Indies
- Analyze the causes of the American Revolution and South Carolina's role in these events
- Summarize the key conflicts and key leaders of the American Revolution in South Carolina
- Summarize the effects of the American Revolution in South Carolina
- Outline the current structure of state government
- Compare the conditions of daily life for various classes of people in South Carolina
- Summarize features of the institution of slavery before the Civil War
- Explain the reasons for South Carolina's secession from the Union
- Outline the course of the Civil War and South Carolina's role in significant events
- Summarize the effects of the Civil War on the daily lives of people of different classes in South Carolina
- Explain how the Civil War affected South Carolina's economy
- Summarize the effects of Reconstruction in South Carolina
- Summarize developments in industry and technology in South Carolina in the late nineteenth century and the twentieth century
- Summarize the effects of the state and local laws known as Jim Crow laws on African Americans and on South Carolinians as a whole

- Summarize the changes in South Carolina's economy in the twentieth century
- Explain the impact and the causes of emigration from South Carolina and internal migration from the rural areas to the cities
- Explain the effects of the Great Depression and the New Deal on daily life in South Carolina
- Summarize the civil rights movement in South Carolina
- Summarize the rights and responsibilities that contemporary South Carolinians have in the schools, community, state, and nation

Activities:

Have your child:

- Visit Native American, Colonial settlement, Revolutionary War, and Civil War sites within South Carolina. Discuss why these sites are important in South Carolina or American history.
- Point out ways to act as a responsible citizen (for example, picking up litter, obeying traffic laws)
- Construct and complete a historical story map that shows the causes, effects, and key events of the American Revolution
- Interview a member of your family or community about the effects of the civil rights movement on the local community or South Carolina
- Listen to stories about local heroes and heroines of South Carolina. Describe their roles in events in South Carolina history.
- Go on a drive with you around the local area and observe how the land is used. Talk about how humans have changed the physical environment in South Carolina (for example, growing crops, and building towns/cities).

Books:

- Bodie, Idella. *The Revolutionary Swamp Fox*
- Bodie, Idella. *The Secret Message*
- Clary, Margie Willis. *A Sweet, Sweet Basket*
- Fritz, Jean. *Shh! We're Writing the Constitution*
- Hooks, William. *Freedom's Fruit*
- Karr, Kathleen. *Spy in the Sky*
- Palmer, Kate Sally. *Palmetto, Symbol of Courage*
- Raven, Margot Theis. *Circle Unbroken*
- Taylor, Belinda. *Joseph and the Cottonseed*
- Williams, Sherley Ann. *Working Cotton*

Web Sites:

- American Local History Network - www.alhn.org
- First Gov for Kids - www.kids.gov
- The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History - www.gilderlehrman.org
- White House Kids - <http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/>
- Story maps - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/graphicorganizers/storymap/>

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

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Books

- Danziger, Paula. *Amber Brown is Not a Crayon*
- DePaola, Tomie. *26 Fairmount Avenue*
- Hesse, Karen. *Sable*
- King-Smith, Dick. *Babe: The Gallant Pig*
- Sachar, Louis. *Sideway Stories from Wayside School*
- San Souci, Daniel. *Sukey and the Mermaid*
- Scieszka, John. *Knights of the Kitchen Table*
- Spinelli, Jerry. *Fourth Grade Rats*
- Williams, Vera. *Amber was Great, Essie Was Smart*

Web Sites

- Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site – <http://www.carolhurst.com>
- Learning Page.com – <http://www.sitesforteachers.com>
- National Parent Teacher Association – <http://www.pta.org>
- Surfing the Net with Kids – <http://www.surfnetkids.com>
- United States Department of Education – <http://www.ed.gov/parents>
- Stories from the Web – <http://www.storiesfromtheweb.org>
- American Library Association – <http://www.ala.org/ala/booklist/booklist.htm>
- Internet Public Library – <http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/>

SCIENCE

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Books:

- Aliki. *Fossils Tell of Long Ago*
- Cole, Joanna. *The Magic School Bus In The Haunted Museum: A Book About Sound*
- Crossingham, John. *What Is Hibernation?*
- Hewitt, Sally. *All Kinds of Habitats*
- Hewitt, Sally. *Heat*
- Loewer, Peter and Jean. *The Moonflower*
- Pellant, Chris. *Smithsonian Handbooks: Rocks & Minerals*
- Silver, Donald. *One Small Square: Woods*
- Wilkes, Angela. *Animal Homes (Kingfisher Young Knowledge)*

Web Sites:

- AAAS Science Netlinks - www.sciencenetlinks.com
- Bill Nye the Science Guy - www.billnye.com
- Department of Natural Resources - www.dnr.state.sc.us
- ENature - www.eNature.com
- Learning Network Parent Channel - www.familyeducation.com
- NASAs Web site for Earth Science - <http://kids.earth.nasa.gov>
- National Wildlife Federation - www.nwf.org/kids/
- Rocks and Minerals - www.libsci.sc.edu/miller/rocks.htm
- The Franklin Institute - www.fi.edu



SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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