

2020 Colorado Academic Standards

Family and Community Guides



3rd Grade

To support families, communities, and teachers in realizing the goals of the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS), this guide provides an overview of the learning expectations for preschool. This guide offers some learning experiences students may engage in at school that may also be supported at home.



The comprehensive health standards in the elementary years focus on developing individual skills to enhance physical, emotional, and social wellness and using those individual skills in family, school, and community environments. In each grade, the standards ask students to investigate healthy eating and living habits, explore positive communication strategies, examine effective decision-making, and identify ways to ensure personal and community safety.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Physical and Personal Wellness:** Make and communicate appropriate food choices.
- **Social and Emotional Wellness:** Treat self and others with care and respect through interpersonal communication.
- **Prevention and Risk Management:** Examine the dangers of using tobacco products or being exposed to second-hand smoke; describe behaviors that enhance healthy interactions with others; identify ways to prevent injuries at home, in school, and in the community.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Identifying healthy food choices; making decisions about proper food portions; recognizing factors for healthy and unhealthy eating.
- Describing self-respect and self-esteem.
- Communicating ways to express personal space and boundaries.
- Describing examples of positive behavior and care toward others.
- Learning positive interpersonal communication skills; expressing verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Following a safety plan; utilizing safe pedestrian and bicycle behavior; identifying and developing fire safety practices to reduce and avoid risky or potentially unsafe situations.
- Explaining the effects of second-hand smoke on the body; discussing the benefits of not using tobacco and marijuana.
- Exploring the negative impact of providing personal information on social media.



The dance standards in the elementary years focus on general dance knowledge and skills to ensure a solid foundation for more specialized dance studies. In each grade, students explore various dance forms, gain body awareness and movement skills, develop problem-solving skills through dance making, and respond to dance performances.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Movement, Technique, and Performance (Perform/Present):** Demonstrate basic dance combinations; demonstrate transitional movements (walk, skip, jump) between dance combinations.
- **Create, Compose and Choreograph (Create):** Create a group dance that follows a basic pattern; use the areas of a dance space effectively; demonstrate a steady rhythm and varying speeds of movement.
- **Historical and Cultural Context (Know/Comprehend):** Discuss dance as a non-verbal form of communication; identify different dance movements and traditions used in classic dances (ballet, ballroom).
- **Reflect, Connect, and Respond (Critique/Evaluate/Refine):** Discuss the background and experiences of famous choreographers; describe elements of dance when watching a dance performance (how space is used, how rhythm/beat changes, how fast or slow the movements are performed).

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Mimicking a basic dance combination modeled by the teacher.
- Using feelings about personal communities (neighborhoods/towns) to inform a dance.
- Changing a well-known dance by changing the pattern or structure (adding three hops instead of one between each segment of the Hokey Pokey).
- Discussing the life of a famous choreographer; finding similarities and differences between dance segments created by the choreographer.
- Explaining the patterns seen in dances (how dancers fill space around them by repeatedly raising hands high in the air or how dancers repeatedly travel in a circle or an "x" shape).



The drama and theatre arts standards in the elementary years focus on general drama knowledge/skills and basic theatre elements to ensure a solid foundation for more specialized study in later grades, including technical theatre, creative movement, improvisation, acting/writing/directing, and film studies. Students discover techniques; perform theatrical works; explore characters, plot, and themes; investigate dramatic texts; discover and describe personal theatre preferences; and explore constructive ways to reflect and respond to various dramatic works.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Create:** Use a variety of vocal and physical explorations to create characters, collaborate with others to make appropriate dramatic choices, and depict the setting/mood/locale of a scene through costumes, props, and sets.
- **Perform:** Investigate character individually and collaboratively through movement and vocal choices; make various design and technical choices to enhance the dramatic work.
- **Critically Respond:** Interpret various purposes behind artistic choices, use personal experiences to examine dramatic works. Explore how technical elements reflect various cultures in dramatic works; identify ways to critique.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Building sets and settings for various story plots; researching the customs, traditions, mannerisms, costuming, and environments of different characters.
- Improvising characters' reactions to environments; participating in improvisation games (pretend you are _____).
- Examining key elements of a basic plot: people, problems, conflicts, and solutions.
- Collaborating with peers to make character, setting, and thematic choices.
- Using personal experiences to connect and evaluate dramatic work.



The mathematics standards in the elementary years focus on number and operations. Ideas from measurement and geometry help students learn about numbers and quantities. In each grade, students make sense of problems, explain their thinking, and describe their world with mathematics.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Number and Quantity:** Understand fractions as numbers that can be located on a number line.
- **Algebra and Functions:** Fluently (consistently) multiply and divide within 100 and add and subtract within 1000; understand the relationship between multiplication and division.
- **Data, Statistics, and Probability:** Create pictographs and bar graphs and connect them to the concepts of multiplication and division.
- **Geometry:** Find the area of a rectangle and connect area to the meaning of multiplication and division; create categories of shapes based on attributes.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Solving word problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Showing multiplication and division using pictures of equals groups and equations.
- Playing games to build fluency (consistency) with basic facts by discovering patterns related to multiplication and division.
- Connecting their work with fractions to their work with whole numbers (such as verbally counting with fractions).
- Drawing shapes to show fractions.
- Locating fractions on a number line and on a ruler.
- Covering shapes with squares to understand the difference between area and perimeter.



The music standards in the elementary years focus on general music knowledge and skills to ensure a solid foundation for the opportunity for more specialized musical study in later years. In each elementary grade, students investigate and perform various music styles and genres, examine the language of music through identifying and writing simple music notation, consider simple musical composition processes, and develop the ability to describe their own musical preferences as well as critique the music of others.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Expression of Music (Perform/Present):** Accurately demonstrate basic singing and playing techniques (singing using proper breathing, holding instruments/bows/mallets appropriately); demonstrate increased musical literacy such as keeping a steady beat with changing rhythmic patterns and following a simple accompaniment (background music).
- **Creation of Music (Create):** Create music to follow a plan.
- **Theory of Music (Know/Comprehend):** Read, write and demonstrate knowledge of various music notation symbols.
- **Aesthetic Valuation of Music (Appreciate and Understand):** Compare music from various cultures and evaluate the quality of performances.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Singing or playing songs.
- Putting new sounds and ideas into a plan.
- Matching rhythms and sounds heard in songs.
- Explaining and justifying personal musical choices.
- Discussing music of various cultures.



The physical education standards in the elementary years focus on enhancing movement concepts and skills, understanding basic health-related components and skill-related components of fitness and how it relates to personal fitness, demonstrating respect, and the ability to follow directions. In each grade, students demonstrate various movement concepts; assess personal behaviors; connect fitness development to body systems; demonstrate respect for self, others, and various physical activity environments; and utilize safety procedures during physical activities.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Movement Competence and Understanding:** Demonstrate a variety of motor patterns in simple combinations while participating in activities, games, and sports; perform cross-lateral and rhythmic exercises that make a brain-body connection; demonstrate understanding of how the use of self-assessment aids in skill development.
- **Physical and Personal Wellness:** Identify the benefits of sustained physical activity that causes increased heart rate and heavy breathing; understand that the body is composed of water, muscle, bones, organs, fat and other tissues.
- **Social and Emotional Wellness:** Demonstrate positive social behaviors during physical activity.
- **Prevention and Risk Management:** Identify ways to prevent injuries during physical activity.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Demonstrating changes of pathways, levels, forces, and direction with manipulatives (e.g., hoops, streamers, and balls).
- Demonstrating throwing, catching, striking, or trapping in an activity.
- Performing a variety of jump-rope skills using both short and long ropes successfully and jumping rope to various tempos.
- Using instructor or self-feedback to make adjustments that will improve performance.
- Explaining why the body perspires, the heart beats faster and breathing increases when participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Locating heart rate on at least two different pulse points on the body.
- Comparing heart rate before, during, and after exercise and explaining that increasing the heart rate during physical activity strengthens the heart muscles.
- Encouraging others regularly and refraining from put-down statements.
- Recognizing how injuries can occur during physical activity.



The reading, writing, and communicating standards in preschool are aligned to the expectations within Colorado’s Early Learning and Development Guidelines and the latest revision of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. They outline development expectations and indicators of progress for preschool age students in receptive and expressive language; understanding and obtaining meaning from stories and information from books and other texts; phonological awareness; concepts of early decoding; names and sounds associated with alphabetic knowledge; emerging skills to communicate through written representations, symbols, and letters; and asking a question to identify and define a problem and its possible solution.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Oral Expression and Listening:** Use informal and formal oral communication to work successfully and cooperatively with others.
- **Reading for All Purposes:** Use different strategies to make meaning of literary books (stories, poems), informational texts (science books, “how-to” books), and persuasive pieces (movie reviews, speeches); understand that prefixes (pre-, non-, un-) and suffixes (-est, -less, -ness) have meaning; develop vocabulary to understand different readings.
- **Writing and Composition:** Use a writing process (plan, draft, revise, edit, and share) to write a variety of stories, information, and opinion pieces; apply correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling to effectively communicate to an audience of readers.
- **Research Inquiry and Design:** Research a topic and share the findings of that research individually and with others; make connections between two texts to see different points of view on a topic.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Reading with fluency (appropriate speed, accuracy, and expression) to understand a variety of texts – narrative stories, information books (“how-to” and nonfiction books about the world around them), and opinion pieces (book and movie reviews, newspaper commentary); using different strategies (asking questions, summarizing, making connections) to better understand challenging readings.
- Writing about books, stories, poems to “think through” ideas; discussing readings or topics in group settings; recalling details and relevant facts from readings for discussions; making personal connections to books, stories, poems.
- Evaluating an author’s choice of words and point of view in a piece of writing; exploring the connections between words, illustrations, charts, photos and captions; comparing themes, characters, and setting; comparing key ideas and details between informational writings (science books, “how-to” books).
- Writing real and imagined stories, informational writings (brochures, “how-to” writings, “I’m an Expert On...”), and opinion pieces (movie and book reviews); writing with focus, organization, and details; finding questions to research, using sources to answer questions; presenting (in writing or verbally) knowledge gained from research.



Three-dimensional science standards in the elementary grades lay the foundation for students to work and think like scientists and engineers. We also see strong connections to skills students will use to be successful with reading, literacy, and mathematics. In elementary grades, we will explore disciplinary core ideas in physical, life, and Earth and space sciences via phenomena in the world around us. Learners in elementary grades develop and ask testable questions, collect, and analyze different types of evidence, and write and communicate our understanding. Mastery of these standards will result in young learners who have a deep understanding of how scientific knowledge can provide solutions to practical problems we see in our world.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Physical Science:** Recognize that objects in contact can exert a force on each other. Understand that electric and magnetic force between objects do not require contact, and that patterns of motion can be used to predict future motion.
- **Life Science:** Recognize that organisms have unique and diverse life cycles, and vary in how they look and function because they have different inherited information. Explain how being part of a group helps animals obtain food, defend themselves, and cope with changes. Understand that some living organisms resemble organisms that once lived on Earth.
- **Earth and Space Science:** Explain how climate describes patterns of typical weather conditions over different scales and variations. Understand that a variety of weather hazards result from natural processes, and that although humans cannot eliminate weather-related hazards, we can reduce their impact.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Asking questions to determine the cause and effect relationship of electric or magnetic forces between objects.
- Planning and conducting investigations about the effects of balanced and unbalanced force on an object.
- Developing models to describe how though organisms have unique and diverse life cycles, all organisms experience birth, growth, reproduction, and death.
- Obtaining and combining information to describe climates in different regions of the world.
- Making claims about the merit of a design solution that reduces the impacts of a weather-related hazard.



The social studies standards in the elementary years begin with individuals and families and move from there to explorations of neighborhoods, communities, the state of Colorado, and the United States. In each grade, students investigate historical events, examine geographic features and resources, consider economic decision-making processes, and define civic roles and responsibilities.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **History:** Distinguish historical facts from myths/fiction; sequence events within their region or community into chronological order; use artifacts and documents as historical evidence.
- **Geography:** Identify similarities and differences among places, including their region, community, and neighborhood; analyze patterns to identify the connections among those places.
- **Economics:** Define producer, consumer, goods, and services; describe how goods are exchanged. **Personal Financial Literacy:** Identify a short term financial goal, including the steps necessary to reach that goal.
- **Civics:** Demonstrate how to engage in discussions in a respectful manner; identify the origins and structure of local government, including the types of services provided by local government.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Comparing past and present situations and events; creating a chronological sequence of events in the community or region; discussing important events and the diverse cultures and people that have shaped the history of their region and community.
- Reading and interpreting maps to locate geographic features in the community, state, neighboring states, and the world; identify the factors that make a region unique, such as cultural diversity, industry, agriculture, and landforms.
- Developing short-term money goals (saving and spending), and writing steps for achieving a money-related goal; demonstrating how the exchange of goods and services offered benefits the community.
- Discussing local forms of government (city councils); explaining what local governments do, how they started, who participates, and how they work.



The visual arts standards in preschool focus on experiences and exploration in art-making and with art materials. This helps to develop a foundation and appreciation for visual art. In preschool, students identify art in their daily surroundings, experience that art can be used to represent stories and ideas, explore various art-making processes, and begin to see how art is a part of their community.

Expectations for 3rd Grade Students:

- **Observe and Learn to Comprehend (Know/Comprehend):** Use specific art terms to explain what a piece of art is trying to express; identify how art is used to share a meaning or feeling.
- **Envision and Critique to Reflect (Critique/Evaluate/Refine):** Use art terms to talk about personal art and compare it to others' artwork.
- **Invent and Discover to Create (Create/Present):** Experiment with art materials to create artwork from personal experiences/ideas; use many different art materials and techniques.
- **Relate and Connect to Transfer (Connect/Apply/Transfer):** Give details when explaining the meaning in personal artworks; explain how places and experiences help artists come up with ideas.

Throughout 3rd Grade You May Find Students:

- Using art terms to explain what a piece of art is trying to say; identify how art is used to share a meaning or feeling; talking about why an artist made a work of art and the purpose of the artwork.
- Discovering how artists use specific techniques or art materials to create artwork.
- Exploring ways to plan and creatively use materials to make works of art.
- Connecting or finding patterns of ideas from diverse works of art.
- Creating and sharing an artist statement that describes a personal work of art.



The world language standards are organized in language proficiency range levels. Language proficiency refers to the degree of skill with which a person can use a language to understand, speak, read, write, and listen in real-life situations. Colorado's standards provide guidance for the introduction of a new language (novice-low) through the minimum proficiency range deemed postsecondary and workforce ready (advanced-low).

The world languages standards in the elementary years create a roadmap to guide K-5 students in the process of learning a new language and understanding diverse cultural perspectives, as well as developing insights into their own language and culture at the appropriate developmental stage. The standards reflect a performance-based discipline which emphasizes communication skills (interpersonal speaking and writing; interpretive reading, listening, and viewing and presentational speaking and writing) in a new language to navigate real-life situations. Students use the newly acquired language while making connections with other academic disciplines, comparing both the nature of language and the nature of culture with their own language and the one being learned and with investigation and interaction of cultural practices and products in order to better understand multiple perspectives. These standards prepare students to participate more fully in the interconnected global community and the international marketplace.

Why are world language standards organized in language proficiency range levels? Language proficiency refers to the degree of skill with which a person can use a language to understand, speak, read, write, and listen in real-life situations. Colorado's standards provide guidance for the introduction of a new language (novice-low) through the minimum proficiency range deemed postsecondary and workforce ready (advanced-low). Progression through levels of proficiency is influenced by program design such as grade levels, competency-based programs, time for language instruction, and immersion programs. Language programs in many schools districts have multiple entry points. Both the length and the type of program design impact both language acquisition and proficiency level for students.

To view the expectations for elementary students at the various proficiency ranges, go to:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/2020cas-wl-es-guides>