

Dear Rising Third Grade Parents,

There are two major components of learning to read: becoming competent readers, and equally important, becoming readers who turn to books for sheer pleasure. Some of your children are there already; they sink into books one after another with joy. Others will take more time, and may find that they discover themselves as readers in the middle of third grade.

We would like to ask that you make reading a part of your child's day throughout the summer. We are not asking for a specified time amount, and your child may certainly read more on some days than others, but it is essential that reading become a daily habit. You are welcome, and in fact, encouraged, to trade off reading aloud to or with your child in addition to quiet independent reading. Practice with oral reading and listening to stories will each improve different facets of your child's reading, as will independent reading. We would like for reading, in some form, to be as natural a part of your child's day as brushing teeth before bed!

We suggest that you take advantage of your local library for books. For developing readers who have not identified a favorite genre or author, it can be better to have a large pile of appealing books available, and have your child pick only a few from the pile to read completely, than it is to purchase a single book that may or may not live up to its promise. Please feel free to include chapter books and picture books, as well as books from any genre and at varying levels of difficulty. A child's ability to understand spoken vocabulary is typically higher than their ability to read words independently, so you could read a challenging chapter book or picture book to them aloud, while they choose a simpler chapter book or picture book to read on their own. Go for variety, try it all, and feel free to say no thanks if a book isn't living up to its hype! Audiobooks, ebooks, and sites like Epic! and Sora are also great resources for expanding your access to books in different forms.

We feel that increasing reading fluency and encouraging a lifelong enjoyment of books is deeply important, and devoting some amount of time to reading every day will result in significant gains both for next year and for life!

Thank You,  
The Third Grade Teachers