

# End of Grade 3

## Understanding Provincial Achievement Standards in Reading and Writing

Helping your child to be successful



Your child's ability to read and write effectively will be one of the most important tools that she or he will use to build a successful future.

Be a part of your child's learning by encouraging his or her progress and providing everyday opportunities to read and write at home.



## You can be involved as your child learns to write.



Watch for ways to make language and writing fun.

- Share jokes or puns that use language in clever ways.
- Help your child create a "special words" notebook or poster for home that can help make his or her writing more interesting.
- Use interesting words when talking with your child.
- Ask questions that prompt your child to reveal more details.

Find everyday chances to encourage your child to write.

- Begin a family journal to keep favourite family stories and notes from each other.
- Talk with your child about daily activities. Ask for descriptions of what she or he saw, heard and felt.
- Have your child write grocery lists, "to do" lists, thank-you notes, invitations and emails.

Tear off these handy tips for helping your child develop strong reading and writing skills.

- Share examples of good writing with your child.
- Reread effective passages and sentences.
- Discuss your reactions to interesting words and phrases.

## Recognize the signs of a successful writer.

Teachers look at six areas of a student's writing to identify success, as reflected in the Provincial Achievement Standards for the end of Grade 3. *The Triathlon* on this page is an example of acceptable writing by a student at the end of Grade 3.

**Content** is what a student has written. In *The Triathlon* example, the content is a retelling of a family sporting event. It does include a few bits of unnecessary information (To pass the time I tried to catch fish. I only got one), but overall, stays focused on the larger topic.

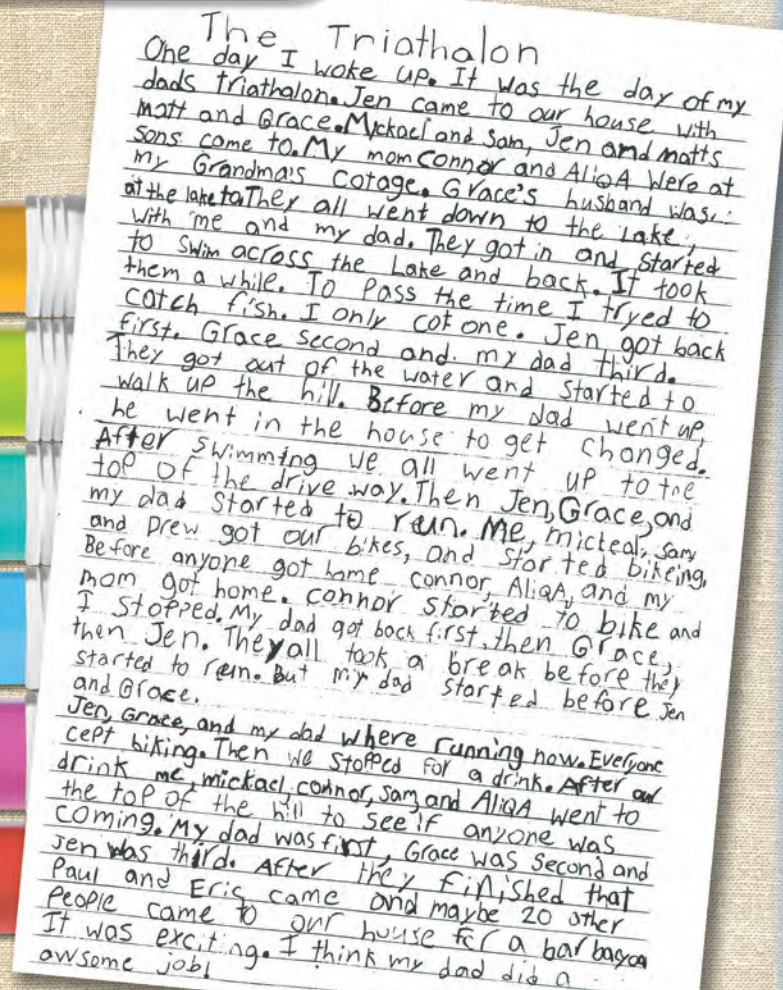
**Organization** means that the writing has a beginning, middle and end. *The Triathlon* begins as "the day of my dad's triathlon," tells what happens as the event progresses, and ends with a sentence that wraps everything up (I think my dad did an awesome job!).

**Word choice** means that everyday words and some interesting words are used. A few descriptive words (exciting, awesome) were included in this example.

**Voice** means that the student's personality or style comes through in the writing. In *The Triathlon*, the writer uses written language that sounds like "talk" and finishes up with a personal feeling (It was exciting. I think my dad did an awesome job!).

**Sentence Structure** means the type of sentence(s) used. In this example, the sentences are all complete. They are mostly short, though a few are longer and more complex. The writer uses a variety of beginnings when writing sentences (One day..., To pass the time..., Before my dad...).

**Conventions** means spelling and punctuation. In *The Triathlon*, almost all punctuation and use of capital letters is correct. Most everyday words are spelled correctly and any words spelled by sound are easily read.



## Help your child be a successful writer.

When looking at your child's writing together, ask these questions with your child to build effective writing skills:

### Did I

- ✓ write about something I know?
- ✓ think about who I am writing this for?
- ✓ share lots of description and detail?
- ✓ include a title, introduction and proper ending to my writing?
- ✓ organize my writing so that it makes sense?
- ✓ use a variety of sentences and start them in different ways?
- ✓ remember to use capital letters, periods, commas and other punctuation?
- ✓ try quotation marks when my characters talk?



## Help your child be a successful reader.

If you notice an error as your child reads, wait until the end of the sentence to ask:

- Does it sound right?
- Does it look right?
- Does it make sense?

Use these **reading strategies** for figuring out tricky words with your child. Encourage the use of the pictures as reminders of each strategy.

### Encourage Your Child to...

Reread for understanding.

#### Ask

What have you learned so far?



Say the beginning sound of the tricky word and read ahead to see what might fit.

#### Ask

What is the beginning sound?

Let's read to the end of the sentence to see if that helps to figure it out.



Look for a little word in the big word.

#### Ask

Is there a smaller word in the big word that can help you?



Cover the ending (ed, ing, s) and try again.

#### Ask

Can you cover the ending? Now try it.



Backtrack and read it again.

#### Ask

That didn't quite make sense; can you go back and try again?



## Recognize the signs of a successful reader.

In Grade 3, your child will be reading longer stories (fiction and non-fiction) independently. You and your child's teacher can tell whether your child is learning to read successfully by watching for growth in the following **reading behaviours**, drawn from the Provincial Achievement Standards for the **end of Grade 3**.

### Knowing when meaning is lost and attempting to self-correct using reading strategies

*Encourage your child to teach you about reading strategies he or she learns at school.*

### Automatically recognizing a growing number of common words, such as about, again, laugh, does, enough, knew...

*Practice reading every day. Encourage your child to read everyday words seen on websites and in cookbooks, newspapers, magazines, comics...*

### Improving in the use of strategies to solve unknown words

*Remind your child that breaking words apart to sound out is only one of the strategies to try when attempting to solve an unknown word.*

### Reading familiar books or other materials smoothly and with expression

*Encourage your child to read and reread sentences or pages until reading sounds like talking. Remind your child to watch the punctuation to know when to pause and use expression when reading aloud.*

### Retelling events from a story in order and including the important details

*Encourage your child to retell stories. Ask questions if something seems to be missing.*

## You can be involved as your child learns to read.

1

### Before reading, ask:

- Is this book fiction or non-fiction? How can you tell?
- What do you think this will be about?
- How can you tell which information is important on this page?

2

### During reading, ask:

- Find the part that tells \_\_\_\_\_.
- What does this word mean? How do you know?
- What can you learn from this diagram?
- Is there a problem in this story? How do you think it will be solved?

3

### After reading, ask:

- What lesson do you think the author wants us to learn?
- Why do you think \_\_\_\_\_ acted this way? How do you know that?
- Tell me about the important parts of the story in your own words.



By the end of Grade 3, your child should be able to read and understand text similar to the example on the right. Readings of fiction have few pictures and many lines of print on a page. Non-fiction pieces may include illustrations, charts, diagrams, glossaries, maps and other features that require reading. The writing is organized in paragraphs with longer sentences. New words, often with more syllables (evolution, sibling, considerably, traditional), and words relating to the topic (inventor, wheeled, underside) are introduced.

### The Evolution of Roller Skates

#### History

In 1790 an inventor, Joseph Merlin, was invited to a party. He wanted to make sure everyone noticed him, so that night he rolled into the party wearing his newly invented metal-wheeled boots and playing the violin. The skates were a smash hit, and I mean a smash hit. He rolled right across the floor and crashed into a very large mirror! Since then roller skates have changed considerably, even their name. We currently call them roller blades.

Ask your grandparents if they remember these roller skates. They were made to fit more than one size of foot. This meant that you and your siblings could use the same pair.



You also needed a key to wear these skates. The key would allow you to adjust the size of the skate. Many people put the key on a string and hung it around their necks!

#### How to Use Traditional Roller Skates

- Use the larger end of the key to loosen the bolts on the underside of the skate



## Books to build reading skills

### Early Grade 3

- **Frog and Toad Together** by Arnold Lobel
- **Emperor Penguins** by Roberta Edwards
- **Fires and Floods** by Kate Waters
- **Cam Jansen and the Mystery of the Dinosaur Bones** by David A. Adler
- **Freckle Juice** by Judy Blume

### End of Grade 3

- **The Twits** by Roald Dahl
- **Nana Upstairs & Nana Downstairs** by Tomie dePaola
- **Encyclopedia Brown Series** by Donald J. Sobol
- **What Do Sharks Eat for Dinner?** by Melvin & Gilda Berger
- **All About the Moon** by Wes Lipschultz
- **My Favorite Dinosaurs** by Ruth Ashby



## Contact Us

The Department of Education is committed to your child's reading and writing success. If you have any questions about your child's progress or about how you can be an active part of his or her learning, contact your child's teacher or the provincial literacy team at 506-453-2812.