

What Is My Child Learning?

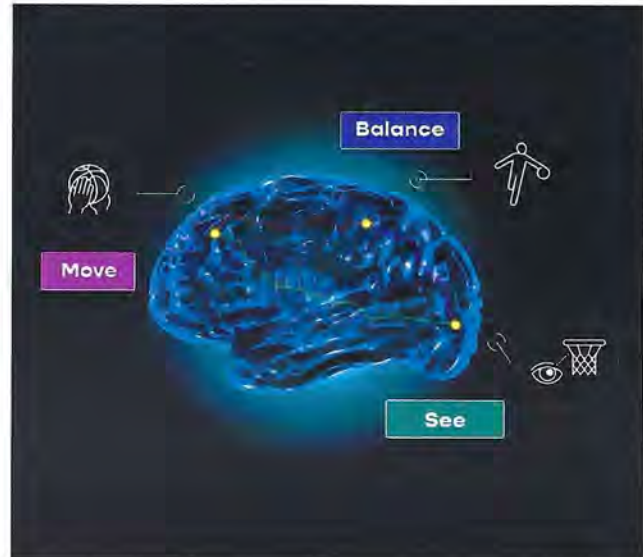
Unit Themes

Your child is learning about the importance of practice and how it changes the brain. Third graders see how trying repeatedly and making mistakes help their brain form and strengthen connections so that their skills improve. Later in the unit, students create their own plans to get better at something they've chosen. Their plans describe how they'll practice, as well as what they can do if they feel like they're not making progress. For example, your child's plan might include a different way to practice or the name of someone who could give them advice.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- ▲ Be better learners
- ▲ Be more adaptable
- ▲ Seek more challenge



Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when you see them trying hard and making mistakes as they work on improving their skills for school, a hobby, or a personal interest. Your third grader may work longer than usual, even after making mistakes. They might also try different ways of practicing or ask for help with their learning. You can say, **Way to keep going. You're helping your brain make connections.**

Try This!

Discuss: Take turns describing how you learned something new. Focus on things you did to practice and the people and resources that helped you. For example, **I've been learning to be a better cook. I watch a video online, then I try making the dish. It may not come out great, but then I think about what I'll do differently, and I get a little better each time. Sometimes I call Grandpa for help—he cooks a lot.**

Practice: When your child has trouble learning a new skill even though they're trying hard, help them think of ways to adjust their practice. For example, if your child has been using flashcards to learn math facts, you can suggest they make up a song or create a poster.

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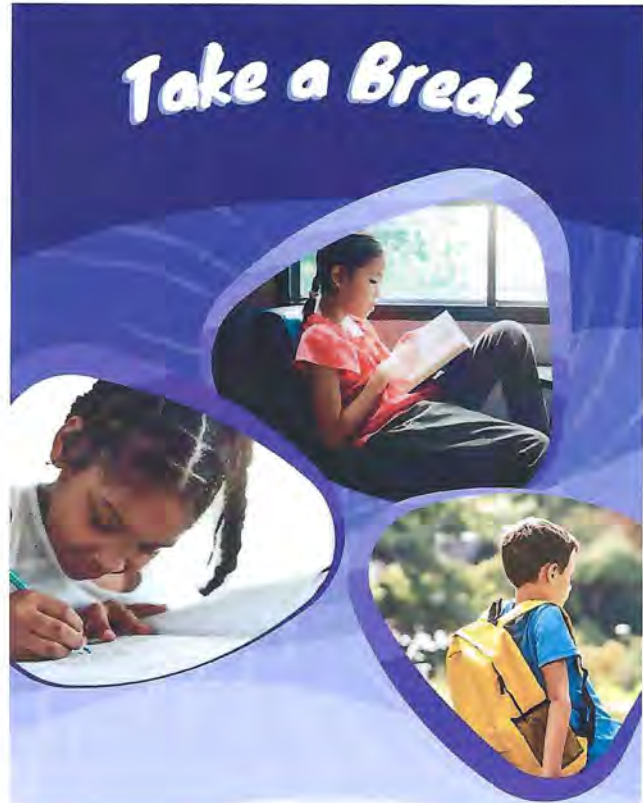
Unit Themes

Your child is learning that emotions are important because they give us helpful information about what's happening in our daily lives. For example, fear tells us we might be in danger. In this unit, third graders practice accurately labeling different levels of happiness using the words "content," "happy," and "excited." They also practice labeling different levels of anger with the words "annoyed," "angry," and "furious." In addition, third graders learn to identify when and how they can take a break to help calm strong emotions.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- ▲ **Develop stronger coping skills**
- ▲ **Be better problem-solvers**
- ▲ **Make better decisions**
- ▲ **Build stronger relationships**



Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when they choose to take a break at home. They may find a comfortable corner or just put their head down for a few minutes. You can say, **Good job taking a break when you needed it.**

Try This!

Discuss: Take turns talking about a time when you felt content and a time you felt excited. Explain how you knew the difference. For example, **I felt content after dinner because we were relaxing and talking together. I felt excited when my good friend was coming to visit. It was all I could think about all day.**

Practice: Help your child think about when and how to take a break at home. Then, when your third grader is experiencing a strong emotion such as anger, ask, **Would now be a good time to take a break?**

What Is My Child Learning?

Unit Themes

Your child is learning how empathy and kindness can help them strengthen friendships as well as make new friends. Third graders learn the meaning of empathy—feeling or understanding what someone else is feeling—and how it can help them be kind in ways their friends will appreciate. They practice empathy in action by asking questions to learn more about what someone might want or need and then following up with an act of kindness.



Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- ▲ **Build stronger relationships**
- ▲ **Resolve conflicts more effectively**
- ▲ **Exhibit positive behaviors**
- ▲ **Develop increased empathy**



Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when they talk about how other people might be feeling. For example, your child might say, “Marco broke his ankle. During recess, he seemed sad that he couldn’t run around with us.” You can say, **It’s nice to hear you’re thinking about your friend’s feelings.**

Try This!

Discuss: Talk about kind things that friends can do for each other. Take turns naming something kind that you did for a friend to show you care about them, and then talk about a time a friend did something nice for you.

Practice: Look for opportunities for your child to show kindness. If you hear your child mention a friend who’s going through a hard time, encourage them to think of something they could do to show they care. For example, your child could make a get-well card for a friend who stayed home sick. Likewise, if a friend has something to celebrate, your child could tell them, “I’m so happy for you!”

What Is My Child Learning?**Unit Themes**

Your child is learning a four-part process that can help them solve common interpersonal problems—disagreements between two or more people, such as disagreeing with a friend about how to play or work together. The process is called STEP (Say the problem, Think of solutions, Explore the outcomes, Pick a solution). Third graders practice thinking about what each person wants as a way to say the problem without blame and to help them think of different possible solutions. They also learn that finding a compromise, so that both sides get some of what they want, is one good way to pick a successful solution. Another way is to show kindness.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- ▲ **Have better mental health**
- ▲ **Make better decisions**
- ▲ **Resolve conflicts more effectively**

**Practice at Home****What to Look For**

Notice and praise your child when they resolve a conflict on their own—reaching an agreement with a friend on the rules of a game, for example, or letting a sibling have their way. You can say, **It's nice to see you work things out without any help.**

Try This!

Discuss: Take turns describing a time when you reached a compromise with someone. Explain why the compromise worked for both of you. For example, **When I was growing up, my sister and I both wanted the top bunk in the bedroom we shared. We agreed on a compromise: for one week, I'd sleep there, and then we'd trade and she'd get it the next week. We both got what we wanted part of the time.**

Practice: Help your child practice exploring different possible solutions to an interpersonal problem. For example, you could say, **If you take turns, would you get what you want? Would your sister? Is there a way to solve the problem that shows kindness?**