

Reading/Language Arts: Grade 3 Resources

The following is cited from E.D. Hirsch, Jr' Core Knowledge Foundation, www.coreknowledge.org

In an open **letter** in March 2010, founder E.D. Hirsch announced that the entire Core Knowledge *Sequence* would be made available for free for non-commercial use on the Foundation's website. This is a wonderful opportunity and an important education resource. Please refer to the online site for all content areas, lesson plans, etc. A partial amount for the content has been provided below.

Why Knowledge Matters

Is it really important that kids know things? Shouldn't they just learn to think?

It's natural to assume that teaching lots of "stuff" isn't important anymore when students can simply Google anything they need to know. But you probably take for granted how much "walking-around knowledge" you carry inside your head—and how much it helps you. If you have a rich base of background knowledge, it's easier to learn more. And it's much harder to read with comprehension, solve problems and think critically if you don't.

The idea that we have to choose between knowledge and thinking skills is a false choice. Kids need both. "The richer the knowledge base, the more smoothly and effectively cognitive processes — the very ones that teachers target — operate," notes University of Virginia cognitive scientist Daniel T. Willingham. "So, the more knowledge students accumulate the smarter they become."

An education grounded in shared knowledge of history, science, art and music is also the great equalizer. The Core Knowledge Foundation believes that for the sake of academic excellence, greater equity, and higher literacy, elementary and middle schools need to teach a coherent, cumulative, and content-specific core curriculum.

Our society cannot afford a two-tiered system in which the affluent have access to a superior education, while everyone else is subjected to a dull and incoherent classroom experience. Academic excellence, educational equity and fairness demand a strong foundation of knowledge for *all* learners.

— E. D. Hirsch, Jr.

Core Knowledge Closes the Opportunity Gap

By giving all children an equal opportunity to learn essential academic knowledge and skills through a well-rounded, content-rich curriculum, Core Knowledge closes the opportunity gap.

Coherent

Although current events and technology are constantly changing, there is a body of lasting knowledge and skills that form the core of a strong preschool–grade 8 curriculum. Explicit identification of what children should learn at each grade level ensures a coherent approach to building knowledge across all grade levels. Every child should learn the fundamentals of science, basic principles of government, important events in world history, essential elements of mathematics, widely acknowledged masterpieces of art and music from around the world, and stories and poems passed down from generation to generation.

Content-Specific

A typical state or district curriculum says, “Students will demonstrate knowledge of people, events, ideas, and movements that contributed to the development of the United States.” But which people and events? Which ideas and movements?

A full curriculum will address and answer these questions.

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Vocabulary

- Know what prefixes and suffixes are and how the following affect word meaning:
Prefixes:
re meaning “again” (as in reuse, refill)
un meaning “not” (as in unfriendly, unpleasant)
dis meaning “not” (as in dishonest, disobey)
un meaning “opposite of” or “reversing an action” (as in disappear, dismount)

Suffixes:
er and *or* (as in singer, painter, actor)
less (as in careless, hopeless)
ly (as in quickly, calmly)
- Know what homophone are (for example, by, buy,; hole, whole) and correct usage of homophones that commonly cause problems:
Their, there, they’re
Your, you’re
Its, it’s
Here, hear
To, too, two
- Recognize common abbreviations (for example, St., Rd., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., U.S.A., ft., in., lb.).

Poetry

The poems listed here constitute a selected core of poetry of this grade. You are encouraged to expose children to more poetry, old and new, and to have children write their own poetry. To bring children into the spirit of poetry, read it aloud and encourage them to read it aloud so they can experience the music in the words. At this grade, poetry should be a source of delight; technical analysis should be delayed until later grades.

Song of Solomon

Psalms

Adventures of Isabel (Ogden Nash)

The Bee (Isaac Watts; see also below, “The Crocodile”)

Catch a Little Rhyme (Eve Merriam)

The Crocodile (Lewis Carroll)

Dream Variations (Langston Hughes)

Elelephony (Laura Richards)

Father William (Lewis Carroll)
First Thanksgiving of All (Nancy Byrd Turner)
For want of a nail, the shoe was lost . . .(traditional)
Jimmy Jet and His TV Set (Shel Silverstein)
Knoxville, Tennessee, (Nikki Giovanni)
Trees 9Sergeant Joyce Kilmer)

Fiction

Titles are selected core. Children need to be exposed to many more stories, and encourage children to write their own stories. Children should be exposed to nonfiction prose; biographies, books about science, history, religion, art, music, etc. Also, engage children in dramatic activities with some of the stories.

I. Stories

Alice in Wonderland (Lewis Carroll)
From the Arabian Nights: Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp
Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves
The Hunting of the Great Bear (an Iroquois legend about the origin of the Big Dipper)
The Husband Who Was to Mind the House (a Norse/English folktale, also known as “Gone is Gone”)
The Little Match Girl (Hans Christian Andersen)
The People Could Fly (an African American folktale)
Three Words of Wisdom (a folktale from Mexico)
William Tell
Selections from The Wind in the Willows: “The River Bank” and “The Open Road” (Kenneth Grahame)

II. Myths and Mythical Characters

- Norse Mythology
 - Asgard (home of the gods)
 - Valhalla
 - Hel (underworld)
 - Odin
 - Thor
 - Trolls
 - Norse gods and English names for days of the week: Tyr; Odin (Wodin), Thor, Frigg (Freya)
- More myths and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome
 - Jason and the Golden Fleece
 - Perseus and Medusa
 - Cupid and Psyche
 - The Sword of Damocles
 - Damon and Pythias
 - Androcles and the Lion
 - Horatius at the Bridge
- **Literary terms**
 - Bibliography and autobiography
 - Fiction and nonfiction

III. Sayings and Phrases

Every culture has phrases and proverbs that make no sense when carried over literally into another culture. For many children, this section may not be needed; they will have picked up

these sayings by hearing them at home and among friends. But the sayings have been one of the categories most appreciated by teachers who work with children from home cultures that differ from the standard culture of literate American English. As our classrooms increasingly become mixed with children whose first language is something other than English or in their home another language is spoken other than English, it is important not to forget about these. For native speakers, sometimes it may be fun to research the historical context of these sayings and why they became phrases in American English.

Actions speak louder than words.

His bark is worse than his bite.

Beat around the bush.

Beggars can't be choosers.

Clean bill of health

Cold shoulder

A feather in your cap

Last straw

Let bygones be bygones.

One rotten apple spoils the whole barrel.

On its last legs

Rule the roost

The show must go on.

Touch and go

When in Rome do as the Romans do.

Rome wasn't built in a day.