

Tips for Parents of Second Graders (Rising Third Graders):

Tip #1: Make learning fun! You definitely don't want summer practice to become a battle between you and your child. Keep things fun and light by using games, technology, and educational day trips to engage your child.

Tip #2: Use what's free and close by. The library is your best friend! Visit it every week or every two weeks so your child can check out new reading material. Many libraries have summer reading programs with incentives (prizes!). You and your child can also use the library computers to access the links I've included in this list. Use the internet to search for other summer activities in your area. Local museums, planetariums, and even hardware stores may offer fun (and sometimes free) activities for children, especially during the summer.

Tip #3: Motivate your child with technology! Here are some helpful links that you and your child can visit over the summer:

- [ABCya.com](#) (variety of fun math and reading games)
- [Sheppard Software](#) (reading, math, science, and social studies games)
- [FunBrain.com](#) (math, reading, and other games)

Tip #4: Use apps! Many families have smartphones, iPads, or other tablets. Turn playtime into learning time by downloading educational apps. Check out the links below for some reviews of age-appropriate apps for your rising third grader:

- [A variety of app reviews](#) by teacherswithapps
- [Educational app reviews](#) by Smart Kids' Apps
- [Second grade apps](#) by Best Apps for Kids

Tip #5: Read, read, and read some more! Kids' reading skills can easily decline over the summer without practice. Look for authors or series that your child particularly enjoys. I also recommend asking your local librarian for some lists or ideas to help your child branch out from what she normally enjoys reading. Here are some books that your soon-to-be third grader may enjoy:

Titles: Pee Wee Scouts: Cookies and Crutches (Judy Delton), Judy Moody Was In a Mood (Megan McDonald), Magic Tree House: Dinosaurs Before Dark (Mary Pope Osborne), Jigsaw Jones: The Case of the Missing Hamster (James Preller), Bailey School Kids: Vampires Don't Wear Polka Dots (Debbie Dadey, Marcia Jones), Chameleons are Cool (Martin

Jenkins), One Tiny Turtle (Nicole Davies), Heart Stopping Roller Coasters (Meish Goldish), Great White Sharks (Sandra Merkle)

Tip #6: Keep practicing those math facts! In third grade, your child will be doing more complex multiplication and division. Knowing addition and subtraction facts by heart is key to your child's success with higher level math. You don't have to rely on flashcards to practice, however. Here are some links with ideas to get you started:

- Awesome list of card and dice games for practicing addition and subtraction facts (click [HERE](#))
- Free website with math fact practice by grade levels (click [HERE](#))

Tip #7: Cook up something in the kitchen! Choose a simple recipe and have your child take charge (with your supervision, of course!). Reading comprehension is so important at this age, so have your child read the directions and then try to explain them to you. Have your child do the measuring, too, and help your child learn how to double a recipe or cut it in half. Here are some links to child-friendly recipes:

- [Kids' Recipes from Kraft](#)
- [Recipes Kids Can Make from Food Network](#)

Tip #8: Bring out the scientist in your child! Here are a few ideas:

- Help your child record and track the weather from day to day, using TV reports or the Internet. Discuss temperature, humidity, wind speed, precipitation, etc. Have your child predict what the weather will be like the following day.
- Build something! Make a marble run from household items, such as paper towel tubes, PVC pipe, plastic funnels, cardboard, and tape. See if your child can figure out how to make the marble go the fastest.
- Have your child help you grow a vegetable garden. Experiment with sun exposure, amount of water, fertilizer, etc. to see what makes the best conditions for growing plants. Track the plants' heights from week to week.
- Visit a local nature center. Forest preserves, botanical gardens, and park districts also often have nature programs designed for kids.

Tip #9: Take out the camera! Kids love working with pictures of themselves! Here are a few writing activities that you can do with photos:

- Have your child use toys, action figures, blocks, dolls, etc. to take a series of photos. Your child can stage a few scenes in order, take photos, print the photos, and then write a story to go with them.
- After taking a vacation or special trip, print out photos (1 per page). Have your child write captions for the photos and staple them together to create a memory book.
- Take photos of your child playing outside, swimming in the pool, and doing other fun summer activities. Print them out for your child and have your child write a letter to a family member, friend, or teacher about the fun things they are doing over the summer.

Tip #10: Last but not least...don't forget to take time to relax! Summer camps, vacations, sports games, and summer homework are great, but don't forget to leave your child some "down time." When your child has free time, she'll have the opportunity to use her imagination, be creative, and get to know herself better. Even if your family has a busy schedule, be sure to build in some down time before the new school year begins. Enjoy the summer!!