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Torrey Maloof, *Editor*
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Teacher Created Materials

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Dear Family,

Welcome to third grade, a year that is full of fun! Students at this age usually enjoy school, having mastered most of the routines and having acquired many of the basic skills. Your child will explore reading longer books this year. Your child might need to prepare book reports. And get ready to practice those multiplication tables! You will probably find yourself helping with school projects for science and social studies, too.

If your third grader hasn't changed schools, he or she should have some close friends by now. That always makes school more fun. If your child is new to the school, making friends will be important. After-school time gets busier, but your child is also ready to assume more responsibility for his or her after-school activities. Fortunately, most third graders love school—and still love their teacher. You can help solidify that relationship by staying involved, too.

We know you are a busy parent, perhaps with other children and a job outside the home. This parent guide is organized to give you ideas that you can adapt to make the day smoother and to integrate learning into your routines.

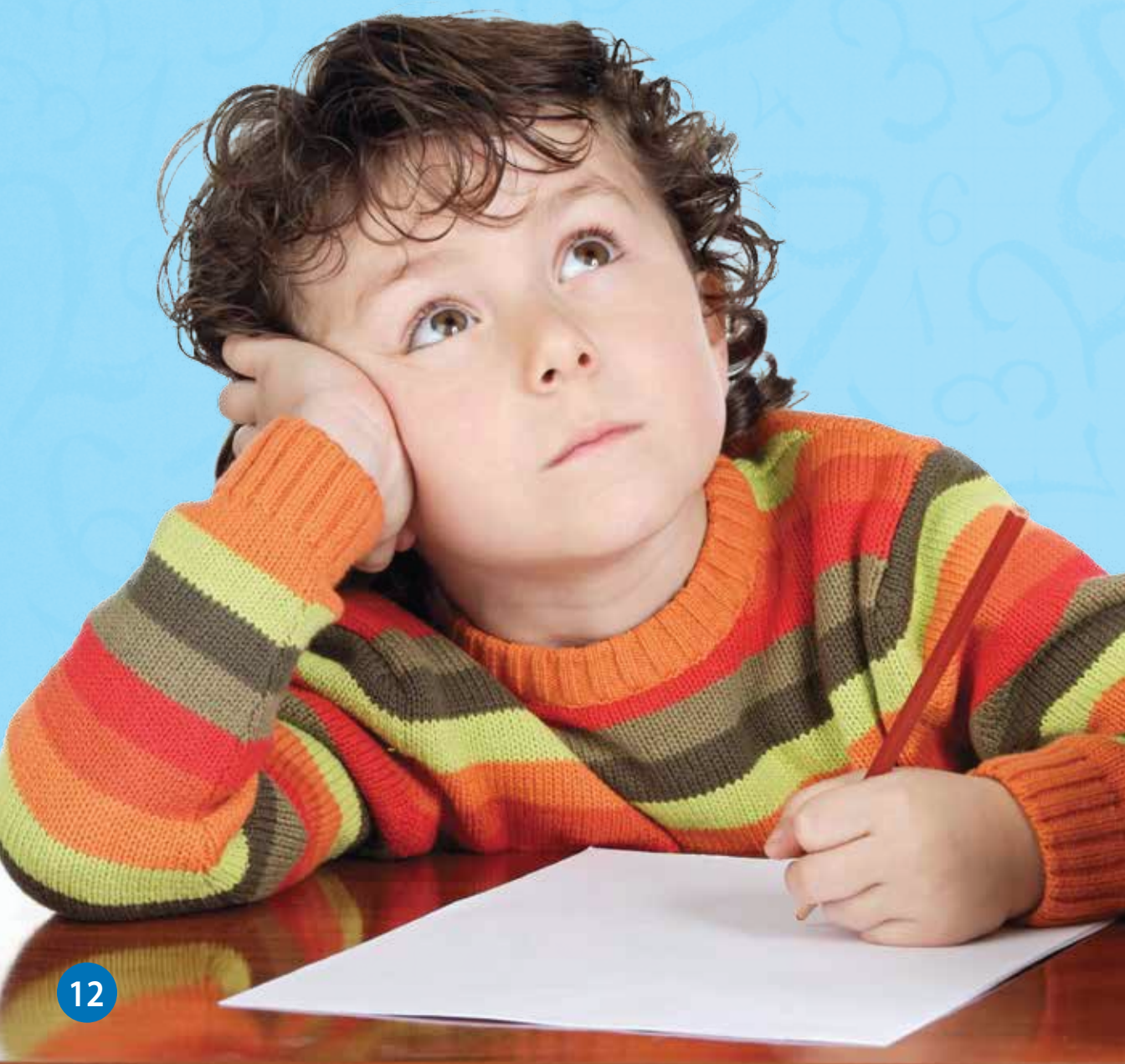


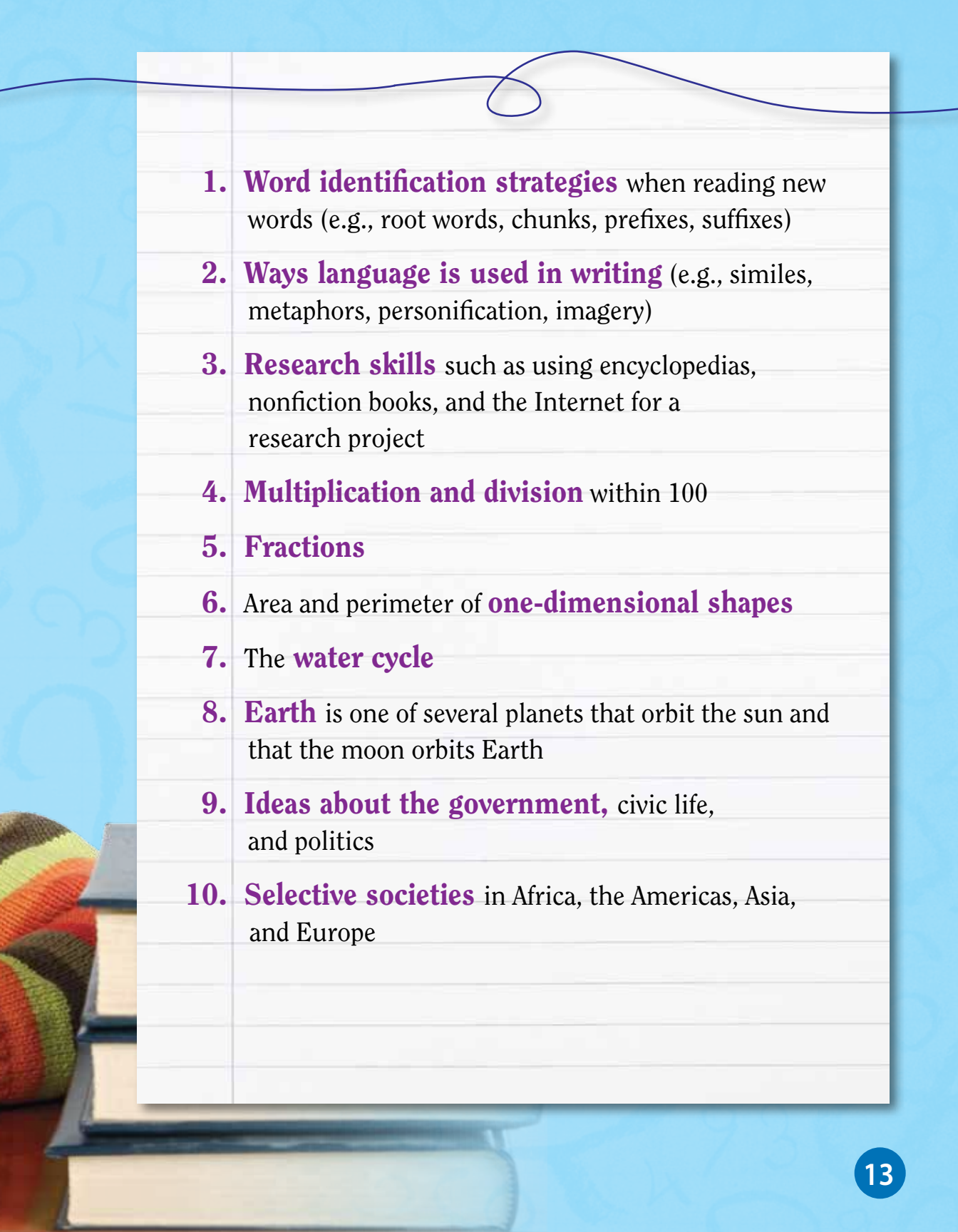
One last thought...

Your child may seem old enough to be very independent. But he or she still needs adults—parents, grandparents, or caretakers—who are working together to ensure that grade three is a year of learning and fun!

Top 10

Things Your Third Grader Needs to Know



- 
1. **Word identification strategies** when reading new words (e.g., root words, chunks, prefixes, suffixes)
 2. **Ways language is used in writing** (e.g., similes, metaphors, personification, imagery)
 3. **Research skills** such as using encyclopedias, nonfiction books, and the Internet for a research project
 4. **Multiplication and division** within 100
 5. **Fractions**
 6. Area and perimeter of **one-dimensional shapes**
 7. The **water cycle**
 8. **Earth** is one of several planets that orbit the sun and that the moon orbits Earth
 9. **Ideas about the government**, civic life, and politics
 10. **Selective societies** in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe

Science

Fun!

Third graders will be exploring more about Earth and the life-forms that inhabit it. They will also learn about the water cycle. That is what third grade is all about—understanding how things react, combine, reform, and change.

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These activities will help your child to explore and think more critically.

Animal Habitats

Have your third grader build a habitat. Fill an aquarium with one inch of mud. Collect pond water and let it sit in direct sunlight for a few days. Next, slowly add the pond water to the aquarium through a strainer. Once the aquarium is set up, add tadpoles or other insects.



Kitchen Science

Learn about density by layering liquids. Slowly pour vegetable oil, water mixed with food coloring, and rubbing alcohol into a clear container. Watch the denser liquids sink!

Investigate

If a plant dies, try to figure out the cause. Not enough water? Too much water? Encourage your child to think like an investigator.

Water Cycle

Fill a clear cup with water. Place plastic wrap on top of the cup and seal with a rubber band. Place in the sun and watch precipitation form.



One last thought...

Your third grader probably still likes to make messes—even in the dirt! There is a lot of learning going on, so just enjoy the mess. And then help your inventor do the clean up!