



# School to Home Connection

## Grade 3

Teachers expect their students to bring to the classroom certain levels of mental processing to empower mastery of reading, spelling, handwriting, mathematics and other basic and advanced curriculum content. So all students may improve their academic performance by developing the cognitive abilities that are foundational to all learning and behavior. Cognitive development is the purpose or by-product of the age-appropriate activities and products listed below. Depending on the student's developmental level and interests, the activities and products on our other lists (Grades K-2, 4, 5-6, Secondary) may also be appropriate.

### Figural Thinking

Figural thinking is the ability to process information in the form of images, shapes and simple sounds. It appeals to the senses of sight, sound and touch - what we can directly see, hear and touch. It may be a photo, a sound, a gesture. This is a very important ability for beginning learners. Figural thinking is required to learn such subjects as Science and Drama.

- Map-making
- String games
- Skill sports
- Telescope, microscope or magnifying glass, with associated activities
- Solar system puzzles, kits, etc.
- Croquet
- LEGO Systems* products
- Collections - shells, rocks, stamps, coins, etc.
- Science books published by Golden Books Press

### Symbolic Thinking

Symbolic thinking is the ability to process information in the form of numbers, letters, signs, musical notation and other code systems that combine their elements in many diverse ways. Symbolic thinking is required to learn such subjects as Math and Computer Programming.

- Making grocery lists
- Scrabble game or software
- Poetry
- Yahtzee* games or software
- Scavenger hunts
- Mastermind* games or software
- Wheel of Fortune* game or software
- Kid Pix* software
- Discovery Channel *Wild Logic* puzzles
- Puzzle books published by PennyPress or Dell

### Semantic Thinking

Semantic thinking is the ability to process information in the form of words and ideas. Semantic information is abstract because one person's interpretation of an idea can differ from another's. Nevertheless, this conceptual difference is usually not great enough to interfere with communication. Semantic thinking is required to learn such subjects as Language Arts and Social Studies.

- "Word Power" in *Reader's Digest* magazine
- Encyclopedias - 'junior' or 'children's'
- Clue* game or software
- Mysteries - reading and writing them
- Highlights for Children* magazine
- Ethnic and world folklore
- Strategy games or software
- Timelines

## Comprehension

Comprehension is understanding - the immediate awareness or recognition of new information in any form. Students must be able to comprehend before they can learn. Comprehension is required to learn all school subjects.

- Allowances, spending money, savings accounts
- Ranger Rick* magazine
- Checkers
- Ciphers and codes
- Origami
- Magic tricks
- Cooking and baking
- Chemistry sets

## Memory

Memory is the retention or storage of information - and the ability to recall it when needed. Memory is required to learn any subject that involves memorization of rules, vocabulary, formulas, etc.

- Chess
- Trivial Pursuit Junior* game
- Stare!* games or software
- Keeping lists for upcoming holiday or birthday cards
- Re-tell stories from TV and movies
- Vocalizing arithmetic problems and answers
- Roles in junior theater productions
- Stratego* game or software
- Bop It* or *Bop It Extreme* toy

## Evaluation

Evaluation is decision-making - the process used to judge, evaluate, prioritize and analyze. It requires that an individual be able to compare what is to what should be. Evaluation is not often taught in school, but it is critical to most life skills.

- Jigsaw puzzles
- Archaeology or anthropology books
- Museum trips
- Astronomy charts
- Card-collecting
- Carmen Sandiego* software

## Problem-Solving

Problem-Solving is working out the answer to a problem that requires more than mere retrieval from memory. The student is asked to interpret information and derive the accepted correct solution. Problem-Solving is required to learn all school subjects.

- Math Blaster* software
- Potato sculpting or carving
- Mazes
- Boggle* game or software
- Large-text books with two lines per page
- Dance lessons
- The New Way Things Work*, by David Macaulay
- Arts and crafts

## Creativity

Creativity is the production of unique or novel information where the emphasis is on variety and quality of output. It requires fluency, flexibility, originality, quality and discipline. There are no predefined correct answers, no rules to follow, so people use their creativity to invent something new. Creativity is not often taught in school, but it is the basis of the movies, music and art that we enjoy, and likewise of prize-winning discoveries in science and medicine.

- Writing stories and plays, and acting them out
- Sculpting kits and activities
- Thinking Upside Down*, by Doris Metcalf
- Pictionary Junior* game
- Activity books published by Dover or by Klutz
- Designing and planting a garden