



Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center
Science Course of Study
Third Grade – Vocabulary Definitions

(Ohio Department of Education. 2003. K-12 Science Academic Content Standards)

body covering	Feature that covers the body, such as fur or feathers.
capacity	The maximum amount or number that can be contained or accommodated.
characteristic	A distinguishing trait, feature, quality or property.
chrysalis	The pupa of a butterfly and some insects.
community	Interacting populations that live in a defined habitat.
composition	The qualitative and quantitative makeup of a chemical compound.
design	To create, fashion, execute or construct according to plan.
diversity	A great deal of variety.

egg	Female gamete; ovum.
environment	The complex of physical, chemical and biotic factors that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival.
evidence	Facts or observations on which a conclusion can be based.
extinct	A species of organisms that no longer exists.
force	An influence, that if applied to a free body, results chiefly in an acceleration of that body in the direction of its application.
fossil	Remnant, impression or trace of an organism of past geologic ages that has been preserved in the Earth's crust.

friction	The force that resists relative motion between two bodies in contact.
habitat	The place or environment where a plant or animal naturally or normally lives and grows.
heredity	The sum of the qualities and potentialities genetically derived from one's ancestors; the relation between successive generations, by which characteristics persist.
life	An organism that has the capacity for metabolism, growth, reaction to stimuli and reproduction.
life cycle	The series of stages in form and functional activity through which an organism passes from fertilized ovum to the fertilized ovum of the next generation.

method	A systematic procedure, technique or mode of inquiry employed by or proper to a particular discipline or art.
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metric system	A decimal system of weights and measures based on the meter and on the kilogram.
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motion	An act, process or instance of changing position through time.
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observe	To watch carefully, especially with attention to details or behavior for the purpose of arriving at a judgment.
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organism	An individual constituted to carry on the activities of life by means of organs separate in function but mutually dependent; a living being.
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reproduction	The process by which organisms give rise to offspring and which fundamentally consists of the segregation of a portion of the parental body by a sexual or an asexual process, and its subsequent growth and differentiation into a new individual.
structure	The arrangement of particles or parts in a substance or body.
survival	The continuation of life or existence.
system	1. A group of body organs that together perform one or more vital functions. 2. An organized group of devices, parts or factors that together perform a function or drive a process (weather systems, mechanical systems).

technology	Human innovation in action that involves the generation of knowledge and processes to develop systems that solve problems and extend human capabilities. The innovation, change, or modification of the natural environment to satisfy perceived human needs and wants.
tool	A device that aids in accomplishing a task, a form of technology.
unit	A determinate quantity (such as of length, time, heat or value) adopted as a standard of measurement.
weather	The state of the atmosphere with respect to heat or cold, wetness or dryness, calm or storm, clearness or cloudiness.

