

IS YOUR CHILD READY FOR KINDERGARTEN?

The School Readiness Checklist

Children grow and mature at different rates. Not all children are ready for school at the same time. Often, placing a child in a situation where they may encounter difficulties during their early years of school will negatively affect their later attitude toward school experiences and, of course, their later learning. Delayed development is not necessarily associated with later problems in children, but simply reflects different rates of growth. The items in this checklist were selected to provide a systematic method for parents and teachers to evaluate, in a general way, a child's development. They are samples of different growth patterns. Teaching children specific answers to these items does not affect the overall pattern of growth or readiness.

THE CONCEPT OF READINESS FOR LEARNING

- Some basic points:
1. Learning occurs most effectively when the child has reached a psychological and physical stage of readiness to learn.
 2. The stage of readiness is not affectively predicted by the child's chronological age.
 3. Most of the effort directed toward learning before readiness occurs is lost and is often detrimental to later effective learning of the task.

The rate at which a child grows and develops is unique for each individual. Not all children at five years of age are ready for formal school experiences, thus many children each year are subjected to pressures to learn material for which they are not ready. This initial failure in school frequently is the beginning of a long series of school difficulties. Some children who experience initial complications in school could have profited from a little more time to grow. Thus the automatic acceptance of all children into school on the basis of chronological age dooms some of these children to experiences in school that are less than satisfactory for their general growth and psychological well being.

Research studies show that the average child is not ready to learn to read until he/she has reached a mental age of approximately 6 years and 6 months. Evidence suggests that approximately 30% of all children who have reached a chronological age of 6 years, 6 months have not yet reached a stage of readiness that allows them to be successful in a reading program. Yet in many instances reading programs are initiated before some children are ready. This causes feelings of failure and attitudes toward school that are not conducive to later growth and development.

The question of whether a child is ready for school depends on the atmosphere and facilities of the school as well as on the development of the child. Small kindergarten classes and a wide variety of experiences can be helpful for children.

The fact that children develop at different rates of growth is an entirely normal pattern. Schools and parents should recognize this fact and make allowance for it. Why trade potential success in any situation for an increased chance of failure?

If a child is thought not to be ready for school, effort should be made to understand the reasons rather than push more formal learning.

The information and items on this readiness survey were developed by a team of consulting psychologists. Each item on the scale must be considered to have individual variations for all children, depending on growth and experience. The total score can only be used as a rough index to readiness and not as an absolute determination of school readiness.

THE SCHOOL READINESS CHECKLIST
Please complete and return to the school office.

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____ Present age of child: _____ yrs. _____ months

| DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| GROWTH AND AGE | | |
| Will your child be 5 yrs. 6 months or older when he/she begins kindergarten? | | |
| Is your child at or better than the following norms or averages in weight and height? Weight: 37 lbs. Height: 42 inches Weight: 40 lbs. Height: 43 inches | | |
| Can strangers easily understand your child's speech? | | |
| GENERAL ACTIVITY RELATED TO GROWTH | | |
| Can your child: | | |
| Pay attention to a short story when it is read and answer simple questions about it? | | |
| Draw and color beyond a simple scribble? | | |
| Tie a knot? | | |
| Zip or button up a coat? | | |
| Walk backward for a distance of 5-6 feet? | | |
| Stand on one foot for 5-10 seconds? | | |
| Alternate feet walking downstairs? | | |
| Walk in a straight line? | | |
| Fasten buttons he/she can see? | | |
| Tell left from right? | | |
| PRACTICAL SKILLS | | |
| Can your child: | | |
| Use a knife for spreading jam or butter? | | |
| Take care of her/his toilet needs by his/herself? | | |
| Be away from you 2-3 hours without being upset? | | |
| Cross a residential street safely? | | |
| REMEMBERING | | |
| Can your child: | | |
| Repeat a series of 4 numbers without practice, such as "say after me 6-1-7-4"? | | |
| Repeat an 8-10 word sentence if you say it once, i.e. "The boy ran all the way home from the store"? | | |
| Remember instructions and carry out 2 or 3 simple errands or tasks in the home after being told once, i.e. "Pick up the book, bring me the pencil and close the door"? | | |
| UNDERSTANDING | | |
| Can your child: | | |
| Tell you the meaning of simple words like bicycle, apple, shoe, hammer, water, shirt, horse? | | |
| Count 4 objects? | | |
| Supply the last word to all of the following: Mother is a woman; Father is a _____. A fire is hot; an ice cube is _____. A plane goes fast; a turtle goes _____. | | |

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| Put together a simple puzzle of 3-6 pieces? | | |
| Tell what parts are missing if you draw a stick picture of a person and leave out a leg and an arm? | | |
| Draw or copy a square? | | |
| Name correctly a drawing of a cross, a square and a circle? | | |
| GENERAL KNOWLEDGE | | |
| Can your child tell you: | | |
| How many feet he/she has? | | |
| How many ears a dog has? | | |
| Which goes faster, a motor scooter or a bike? | | |
| What or where meat comes from? | | |
| What things are made from, like cars, chairs, shoes? | | |
| What a key is for? | | |
| What eyes are used for? | | |
| What ears are used for? | | |
| The names of 3 or 4 colors you point out? | | |
| In what way a sweater, shoe and hat are the same? | | |
| ATTITUDES AND INTERESTS | | |
| Do you have books, magazines and newspapers in your home that your child looks at? | | |
| Is your child unafraid of going to school? | | |
| Does your child ask often when he/she will go to school? | | |
| Does your child pretend to read? | | |
| Have you attempted to create in your child the idea of looking forward to school experiences rather than a fear of school? | | |
| | | |
| TOTALS | | |