



Cultivated Lives

Peace of Mind List – Preschool

Suggested to be Learned Prior to Kindergarten

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Adults love check lists and to learn (and teach) systematically. But children under the age of five or so learn best in an organic, exploratory manner. Don't you want your child to have the best possible start?

Do NOT use this as a check list. Rather, use it as:

1. "He already does this list." Feel free to check off what the child already does.
2. "I wonder if she knows this list." If not, do NOT immediately start teaching, but...
3. Think of how to explore this concept in the context of living life.
 - a. As he is dressing, point out the colors and ask if he would like to wear the blue shirt or the green one. Do NOT drill. Just naturally talk about the colors. Point out that baby sister's shoes are small, his shoes are big, but mommy's are bigger and daddy's are the biggest.
 - b. As you are in the kitchen there are many opportunities to ask if he wants the red cup or yellow cup, the big or little spoon, etc., etc.
 - c. Sorting laundry is a great chance to discuss and learn all sorts of concepts naturally.
 - d. All the household chores, shopping, gardening, walking, playing offer multitude of opportunities to explore with your child.
 - e. Be aware that many nursery rhymes, traditional songs and finger plays teach these skills in a fun, natural way.
 - f. Many children's picture books also teach these concepts.
 - g. Most of these concepts should be covered over and over in different ways and in different contexts.

We have hot linked many of these skills to activities that naturally teach the child with fun and play!

Finally, some of you will say, my child already knows all these skills. Is this all there is to preschool? Should I have them skip a grade?

The answer is NO. The preschool years are a wonderful time where children should be exploring their world, hearing wonderful stories, learning all sorts of interesting things, doing art, making music, learning about God, learning how to get along with others, learning to obey authority, learning self discipline and chores. If your oldest is a preschooler, or if he is a tagalong with much older siblings, you might want to get some curriculum ideas on what to learn. If your preschooler has close age siblings, she might just want to tag along and learn what they are learning.

Colors and Shapes

- Recognizes and names primary colors (red, yellow, blue)
- Recognizes and names secondary colors (violet/purple, orange, green)
- Recognizes and names basic shapes (square, circle, rectangle, triangle)
- Matches basic shapes

Numbers and Mathematics

- Counts orally through 10
- Counts objects in one-to-one correspondence
- Recognizes numerals 1 – 10
- Understands ordinal number concepts (first through fifth)
- Identifies and creates sets of objects with more, less or equal amounts

Size, Position and Direction

- Understands big and little
- Understands tall and short
- Understands up and down
- Understands in and out
- Understands front and back
- Understands over (on) and under
- Understands top, bottom, middle
- Understands beside and next to
- Understands hot and cold
- Understands fast and slow
- Understands empty and full
- Understands more and less
- Compares objects (big, bigger, biggest; heavy, heavier, heaviest; etc.)
- Describes location of object using directional and position words

Gross Motor Skills: Skills that include large, whole body movement

- Runs
- Walks on a straight line
- Jumps
- Hops
- Marches
- Gallops
- Walks down stairs alternating feet
- Stands on one foot for five to ten seconds
- Walks backwards for five feet
- Throws a ball
- Kicks a ball

Fine Motor Skills: Skills that use the small hand movements needed for writing. The more your child uses his fingers in activities that help to strengthen hand coordination, the sooner he will master these skills. Note: computer games are NOT helpful.

- Claps hands
- Touches fingers
- Builds with blocks
- Pastes objects
- Able to button a garment
- Able to zip a zipper
- Completes simple puzzles (five pieces or less)
- Handles child-sized scissors well.
- Controls pencil/crayon well by holding with appropriate grip
- Pours small pitcher using pincher grip

Time and Scientific Concepts

- Understands day and night
- Knows age
- Knows common zoo and farm animals
- Identifies parts of body (“Heads and Shoulders, Knees and Toes” song, anyone?)

Social- Emotional Development: SELF

- Knows full name
- Pronounces full name
- Knows own sex
- Takes care of toilet needs independently
- Brushes teeth
- Cares for own belongings
- Knows how to use handkerchief or tissue
- Puts away toys
- Helps family with chores

Social- Emotional Development: OTHERS

- Talks easily
- Can listen without interrupting
- Expresses feelings
- Gets along well with other children
- Plays with other children cooperatively, including sharing and taking turns
- Identifies other children by name
- Is aware of property of others
- Is aware of the feelings of others
- Recognizes authority
- Meets visitors without shyness

Listening, Speaking and Sequencing

- Follows simple directions
- Listens to a short story
- Listens carefully
- Recognizes common sounds
- Repeats a sequence of sounds
- Repeats a sequence of orally given numbers (at least three)
- Retells simple stories in sequence
- Answers questions about a short story
- Tells the meaning of words heard in a story
- Tells the meaning of simple words
- Looks at pictures and tells a story
- Repeats a sentence of six to eight words

Language Arts: Book and Alphabet Awareness

- Has been read to frequently
- Looks at books and magazines
- Recognizes some nursery rhymes
- Understands that print carries a message
- Pretends to read
- Identifies parts of a book
- Follows words left to right and top to bottom
- Knows what a letter is