

Wernham West Centre for Learning
DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Inspired by the work of: Erik Erickson, Melvin Levine, Jean Piaget, Michael Thompson, Lev Semenovich Vygotsky

Research references: Cornell University-Language Acquisition

Internet sources: www.childdevelopmentinfo.com

Age and Developmental Stages	Cognitive Development	Language Development	Social-Emotional Development
4-7 years	Attention tends to be single focused.	Speech is more social, less egocentric.	Reality vs. fantasy not consistently differentiated.
	While attending to one aspect or idea-others tend to be “ignored”	Can tell a connected story.	Perceptions dominate judgment.
	Concepts formed are basic and irreversible.	Can relate past events.	Developmentally could be just coming out the stubbornness stage (late 4 year old).
	“This” does not necessarily lead to “that”. Viewed separately.	May have grammatical lapses-esp. with respect to verb tenses.	Active play is necessary to develop socially and emotionally.
	Reverse operations may be memorized but unlikely that it is understood.	Should be able to follow 3 commands-one on one.	Uses fantasy to construct play. (esp. 5 -6 year olds).
	Begins to order objects in a logical sequence.	Needs time to “chatter” in order to build skills and connect socially.	Learning to cooperate and to lead as well as follow
7-11 years	Thought becomes more organized and logical.	Should be able to follow 3 familiar commands in a group setting.	Learning the more formal social skills.
	Can perform multiple classification tasks.	Can follow complex conversation.	Can relate to peers according to the rules.
	Order ideas and a logical sequence.	Complex and compound sentences should be used easily,	Ready to move from free play to play that is structured by rules.
	Can solve concrete problems.	.	Is ready to use cognitive skills to learn content. I.e. Reading to learn.
	Understands reversibility.	Social amenities should be present in his speech in appropriate situations.	The need for self-discipline increase yearly. (I.e. delaying instant gratification)
	Higher level of sorting and classifying.	Control of rate, pitch and volume is established (around 8)	
		Writing begins to mirror language skills	

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11-15 years	Thought becomes more abstract, incorporating the principles of formal logic. The ability to generate abstract propositions, multiple hypotheses and their possible outcomes is evident. Thinking becomes less tied to concrete reality.	For boys: pitch and volume changes and then is reestablished.	Begins relating with peers according to rules. Progressing from free play to play that may be elaborately structured by rules and may demand formal teamwork.
	Pre Frontal Cortex is still developing. Impacts the child's ability to plan and organize consistently. Tends to act impulsively.	Due to Pre-Frontal Cortex development, the child may "speak before thinking".	Due to Pre-Frontal Cortex development, judgment and control in social situations is inconsistent.
	Formal logical systems can be acquired.	Development of a language with peers.	Considerations from the work of Erickson: The well-balanced and nurtured child is trusting, autonomous, and full of initiative and can be industrious. The mistrusting child can have doubts about the future. The shame - and guilt-filled child may experience defeat and inferiority.
	Prepositional logic, as-if and if-then steps.	Writing mirrors language skills	May find any "visible differences" from peers/friends challenging to accept.
			Feelings of inferiority may lead to a lack of confidence and lower self-esteem.

The work of Lev Semenovich Vygotsky suggests that learners move within levels reflected in the above developmental chart as a part of the learning process.

Learning is largely a social experience where thinking and learning are expressed through talking in a social context. It is why cooperative learning, coaching, peer tutoring, leadership opportunities, interactive classrooms, and adults listening to children can be such positive learning and effective learning experiences for students.