

5th Graders—nine year olds

Physical

- increased coordination
- Pushes self to physical limits
- Fatigues easily
- Numerous injuries
- Somatic complaints
- Tension outlets such as nail-biting, hair-twisting, lip-pursing

Social

- Highly competitive
- Self-aware / Individualistic
- Impatient
- Worrier; anxious / Aloof
- Complainer; fairness issues
- Sees adult inconsistencies and imperfections
- Critical
- Can be suffers and moody

Language

- Descriptive
- loves vocabulary language plan and information
- Baby-talk sometimes re-emerges
- Use of hyperbole
- Age of negatives: "I hate it, can't, boring
- "Dirty" jokes / Graffiti

Cognitive

- Industrious and self-critical
- Dawn of "bigger world"
- Less imaginative
- intellectual curiosity
- Ability to deal with multiple variables emerges
- Trouble with abstractions—large numbers, period of time or space

In the classroom

Vision & Fine Motor Ability

- Increased coordination=greater control, interest in detail; cursive can be mastered; watch overly tight pencil grip
- Practice with variety of fine motor tools & tasks (weaving, knitting, carving, drawing)
- Can copy from board, recopy assignments, produce beautiful final drafts

Gross motor Ability

- Push to the limit—love to challenge themselves, race vs. each other or clock
- Physical control an issue; knowing boundaries & staying within them is physical & social issue
- Boys love to rough-house –"puppy stage"
- Age of physical complaints--frequent injuries some real; some exaggerated
- Gym class a challenge—can't sit still

Cognitive Growth

- Can work in groups, arguing, disputes about facts, rules directions may take longer than activity
- Need reasonable homework related specifically to next day's work; asks, "Why do we have to do this?"
- Looking for explanations of facts, how things work, why things happen; scientific exploration good
- Reading to learn, instead of learning to read
- Pride in finished work, attention to detail; enjoys product, but may jump quick between interests

Social Behavior

- Likes to work with partner of choice; same gender; cliques may begin
- Fairness issues increase; serious about competitiveness—present with sense of fun, humor
- Likes to negotiate—age of "Let's make a deal"

- Worries; need teacher patience & understanding; clear language when giving directions, setting expectations important; avoid sarcastic humor, children their own worst critics
- Second chances important, tendency to give up; encourage/build up sense of ability to do tasks.
- Exasperation by teacher or whining voice leads to more complaints, whining, moodiness; laughing best medicine

Curriculum

Reading

- Reading groups continue; beginning research
- Intensive dictionary skills
- May volunteer to read aloud
- Major poetry unit or emphasis throughout year

Writing

- Emphasis on first draft & revision process; descriptive writing taught more deliberately,
- Character development, plot cohesiveness & believability
- Spelling—improving, weekly testing good, basic capitalization & punctuation mastered
- Writing Themes—moving away, divorce, death, disease, and other worries dominate; world issues; poetry about feelings, darker themes; "writer's block" common
- Handwriting—increasingly fluent in cursive.

Thematic Units

- Our country/world, long ago/far away, history of culture, diversity, environmental; theme focused around particular book

Mathematics

- Division
- Extensive experience with word problems
- Computation with money, introduction decimals.
- Practice with multiplication tables

5th Graders...ten year olds

In the classroom

Physical

- large muscle development
- Desperately need outdoor time & physical challenge
- Handwriting sloppier than at nine
- Snacks & rest periods helpful for growing bodies

Social

- Fairness issues peak & can be solved
- Quick to anger –quick to forgive
- Generally content
- Work very well in groups
- Enjoy family & peers
- Like clubs, activities, sports
- Usually truthful; developing more mature sense of right & wrong, good solving social issues

Language

- Good listeners, actively receptive
- Voracious readers
- Expressive, talkative, like to explain
- Cooperative & competitive
- Friendly, generally happy

Cognitive

- Memorization productive
- Increased ability to abstract
- Likes rules & logic
- Classification & collections of interest; likes to organize
- Able to concentrate, read for extended periods
- Good problem solvers
- Proud of academic products

Vision & Fine Motor Ability

- Able to focus, concentrate on task at hand; integrate spelling, dictation, penmanship, but may lack precision
- Enjoy tracing & copying; maps, “cartooning”
- Use of tools (compass, protractor, ruler, templates) need plenty of time to practice

Gross motor Ability

- Need a lot of physical activity, extra recess, play time or will become acting-out behavior
- Love group games, relays, group initiatives; class outings, “ropes courses,” double-dutch clubs, team sports, other organized activities

Cognitive Growth

- Highly productive with school work; usually conscientious with homework; pay close attention to form, structure, directions, organization
- Actively receptive learners; memorization key teaching strategy; love geography, World Book of Records, facts about sports & TV, spelling, math computer & electronic games; choral reading, singing, poetry, plays, popular
- Classification, serialization, exactness are strengths—collections, science & math projects productive; height of concrete organizational skills

Social Behavior

- Basically cooperative nature encourages group activity, whole class cohesion, cooperative learning; introduce & train for peer mediation, conflict resolution
- Friendship & fairness issues constantly being played out; use teams, groups, games, competition to allow practice in social interaction.
- Generally satisfied with own ability; happy & flexible; challenge to reach out to others; start

cross-age tutoring—love to teach younger children; enjoy community service projects

- Enjoy being noticed, reward for efforts; “noticing” language important teacher tool
- Quick tempers may lead to physical outbursts and tears, but usually quickly & easily solved

Reading

- Poetry captivating; love to memorize & recite; choral readings & plays favorites
- Trade books centered w/themes entice readers
- Independent reading favorite activity; allow other time without requiring book project
- High interest in comic books

Writing

- Writing—Lengthy chapter books, longer poems, first research papers, writing about famous people—light & descriptive language; humor emerges; use of dialogue deepens
- Spelling—Enjoy memorizing spelling lists & challenged positively by difficult words; ability to do well on tests & spelling no connection
- Writing Themes—Friends & more friends in many adventures; time travel, letter writing for info; note writing to friends; report writing
- Handwriting—Functionally fluent cursive or keyboarding for those having difficulty

Thematic Units

- Geography; immigration; history; how thing work; geology, land formations, weather; industry; games

Mathematics

- Multiplication tables mastered
- Decimals taught extensively
- Extensive computation with fractions
- Measurement; and computation w/maps
- Double-digit division

Curriculum