

Have you ever wondered what exactly your child *needs* to know before kindergarten? Here is a list based upon a Preschool Inventory given to children at the very end of our local Pre-Kindergarten program. I was looking through my old student-teaching notebook and came across this list (granted, it is six years old). It was used as both a guiding document as well as an assessment at the end of the year. *I did not come up with this list.*

Please keep in mind as you look over this list that kids learn best with hands-on experiences, *not memorization or drill practice!* **These early years with our children should be about fostering a love to play, explore, and learn!** Also, it is important to note that our children are *all different* and gifted in unique ways. Obviously, if your child has special needs, exceptionalities, or is delayed in a particular area, this won't necessarily be relevant to your child. This is simply a guide...not something to stress about!

Finally, **all areas of development are of equal importance to young children!** Gross motor and social development tasks are just as important as cognitive and pre-reading tasks at this age. Also, it is important to note that there is no prerequisite (besides age) for children to go to public schools here in the United States. Although it would be ideal for each child to come into kindergarten already mastering this list, this is obviously not the reality for many children. Schools are prepared to meet the needs of individual students, regardless of their current ability.

Have fun learning together through games and various experiences while still encouraging your child's natural creativity!

Personal and Social Development

Approach to learning

- Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner
- Persists in task and seeks help when encountering a problem
- Is generally pleasant and cooperative

Self-Control

- Follows rules and routines
- Manages transitions (going from one activity to the next)
- Demonstrates normal activity level

Interactions with Others

- Interacts easily with one or more children
- Interacts easily with familiar adults
- Participates in group activities
- Plays well with others
- Takes turns and shares
- Cleans up after play

Conflict Resolution

- Seeks adult help when needed to resolve conflicts
- Uses words to resolve conflicts

Language and Literacy

Listening

- Listens with understanding to directions and conversations
- Follows one-step directions
- Follows two-step directions

Speaking

- Speaks clearly enough to be understood without contextual clues
- Relates experiences with some understanding of sequences of events

Literature and Reading

- Listens with interest to stories read aloud
- Shows interest in reading-related activities
- Retells information from a story
- Sequences three pictures to tell a logical story

Writing

- Uses pictures to communicate ideas
- Uses scribbles, shapes, and letter-like symbols to write words or ideas

Alphabet Knowledge

- Recites/sings alphabet
- Matches upper-case letters
- Matches lower-case letters
- Identifies upper-case letters
- Identifies lower-case letters

Mathematical Thinking

Patterns and Relationships

- Sorts by color, shape, and size
- Orders or seriates several objects on the basis of one attribute

- Recognizes simple patterns and duplicates them

Number concept and operations

- Rote counts to 20
- Counts objects with meaning to 10
- Matches numerals
- Identifies by naming, numerals 0-10

Geometry and spatial relations

- Identifies 4 shapes- circle, square, rectangle, triangle
- Demonstrates concepts of positional/directional concepts (up/down, over/under, in/out, behind/in front of, beside/between, top/bottom, inside/outside, above/below, high/low, right/left, off/on, first/last, far/near, go/stop).

Measurement

- Shows understanding of and uses comparative words (big/little, large/small, short/long, tall/short, slow/fast, few/many, empty/full, less/more).

Physical Development

Gross-Motor Skills

- Pedals and steers a tricycle
- Jumps in place, landing on two feet
- Jumps consecutively- 7 jumps
- Balances on one foot for 5 seconds
- Hops on one foot 2-3 hops
- Hops on one foot- 6 ft.
- Throws a ball with direction- 5 ft.
- Catches a thrown ball with arms and body
- Climbs a playground ladder
- Skips smoothly for 20 feet

Fine-Motor Skills

- Stacks 10, one-inch blocks
- Strings 4 1/2" beads in two minutes
- Completes a seven piece interlocking puzzle
- Makes a pancake, snake, and ball from playdough
- Grasps pencil correctly
- Copies: vertical line, horizontal line, circle, cross, square, V, triangle

- Copies first name
- Prints first name without a model
- Grasps scissors correctly
- Cuts within 1/4" of a 6" straight line on construction paper
- Cuts out a 3" square on construction paper
- Cuts out a 3" triangle on construction paper
- Cuts out a 3" circle on construction paper
- Uses a glue stick appropriately
- Uses appropriate amount of glue for tasks

The Arts

Creative Arts

- Identifies 10 colors: red, yellow, blue, green, orange, purple, black, white, brown, pink
- Uses a variety of art materials for tactile experience and exploration

Music/Movement

- Participates in group music experiences
- Participates in creative movement/dance

Creative Dramatics

- Makes believe with objects
- Takes on pretend roles and situations