

How They Grow in First Grade

Where They Are

The average six-year-old is extremely egocentric and wants to be the center of attention. She:

- Wants to be the "best" and "first."
- Has boundless energy.
- May be oppositional, silly, brash, and critical.
- Cries easily; shows a variety of tension-releasing behavior.
- Is attached to the teacher.
- Has difficulty being flexible.
- Often considers fantasy real.

Where They're Going

At six years old, your child is learning to understand himself. You can help by encouraging him as he:

- Develops a positive, realistic self-concept.
- Learns to respect himself.
- Begins to understand his own uniqueness.
- Gains awareness of his feelings.
- Learns to express feelings.
- Learns how to participate in groups.
- Begins to learn from his mistakes.

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First Grade: Short and Sweet Activities

Why should the learning stop when the kids leave the classroom? Here are some simple things you and your first grader can do at home to build academic skills in reading, math, geography, and science.

READ A STORY, TELL A STORY

Read a story to your child, then ask her to tell the story back to you. This is essentially an effort to see what listening skills your child has developed. Is she able to relate the major elements of the story? Does she understand the story?

CARDBOARD SQUARES

Cut out cardboard squares, triangles, and circles (five of each, at least two to three inches in size). Make a game of putting the shapes that are the same together. This is an exercise in classification. Does your child recognize the difference in the shapes? Does he know what the shapes are called? If not, ask again at a later time.

PHOTO MATCH

Look at photographs of children in other parts of the world. See whether your child knows where these children come from. Ask how she knows.

WHAT DO I SEE?

Close observation is a primary objective of the science program. You and your child can examine a rock, a tree, a leaf, or an insect. Take turns asking, "What do I see?"

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