

# 10 Ways to Prepare Your Child for Kindergarten

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**1. GROSS MOTOR SKILLS** – large muscle development that helps with running, throwing, catching and moving through space. Stimulates balance, coordination and a spatial awareness

- Have your child hop, skip, gallop, or dance to rhythms of piano or drums.
- Walk a line four inches wide, eight to twelve feet long, in a heel-to-toe manner
- Roll, toss, bounce catch a ball. Start with larger balls and gradually change to smaller ball

**2. FINE MOTOR SKILLS** - small muscle development that helps children grip a pencil, use scissors and tie their shoelaces.

- Use clay, playdough, color, weave, fold cut lace and tie activities
- Fit objects together such as nesting cubes, simple jigsaw puzzles and cut-out stencils
- String beads in a reproduction of a pattern. String macaroni, sew with yarn
- Trace, outline, cut with scissors and finger pain

**3. VISUAL DISCRIMINATION** - the ability to differentiate between shapes, letters, numbers and other symbols. It is a crucial skill to the reading process.

- Sort objects by size, color content.
- Look at 4-5 items that are the same and one that is not. Child finds the one that is different
- Play card games such as “Slap Jack”, “Go Fish” or “Old Maid”.
- Cut pictures from magazines and cut off parts of the objects. Have your child draw the missing part.

**4. VISUAL MEMORY** - helps children accurately recall information they take in visually which

supports the sequence of stories and events and retention of ideas.

- Play the Memory Game by Milton Bradley or Concentration
- Show your child a picture in a story book. Close the book and have your child tell you three things he saw in the picture
- Arrange some items in order. Have your child close their eyes and mix them up. Child puts them back in order from memory.

**5. AUDITORY DISCRIMINATION** - provides the necessary skill to distinguish between the sounds of letters, beginning – middle-and ending sounds, rhyming words and more. It also contributes to proper enunciation and speech.

- Always verbalize experiences with your child. When traveling talk about what you see.
- Play a game that has two step directions then increase to three and four steps as child shows mastery
- Have child close their eyes and listen while you perform common sounds like bouncing a ball or snapping fingers. Child then identifies the sound.

**6. AUDITORY MEMORY** - the ability to retain information the student has heard. Children need to process and recall information continually in the classroom.

- Play games such as “I’m packing my suitcase and I put in \_\_\_\_\_”, and add more items one-by-one.
- Ask your child to recall outstanding events of the previous day.
- Clap your hands in a simple rhythm and have your child repeat it.

**7. RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE** -the understanding of age appropriate vocabulary, descriptive language and words in various contexts. A large part of comprehension is dependent on this skill.

- Play “I Spy” (a color, a shape or object) Say “I spy something you don’t see” and describe it. Child guesses the object.
- Ask child to pantomime activities such as: show me how you wash dishes, drive a car, brush your teeth, etc.
- Give directions which ask your child to place something on, behind, in front of, between, under and next to.

**8. EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE** - the ability for children to verbally express their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

- Have your child use a play or real telephone and play conversations.
- Have your child look at photographs or pictures and describe what he sees.
- Using a storybook, have your child “read” the story by telling you about the pictures.

**9. REASONING SKILLS** - are those that help children make good choices; demonstrate comprehension, and understand cause and effect relationships.

- While reading a story to your child, stop and ask him to make a prediction about what might happen next in the story.
- Show pictures or talk about opposites...front-back, hot-cold, old-new.
- Have your child sort items by various characteristics: plastic, metal, smooth, rough etc.

**10. SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT** - is the child’s self-esteem center along with the ability to form positive relationships in both one-to-one and group settings.

- Give reasonable tasks around the house for which he is expected to be responsible; caring for his belongings, clearing the

table, etc. Praise him when he starts and finishes those tasks.

- As you read to him, talk about how characters in the story might feel.
- Be an active listener to your child. Giving your full attention allows them time to build their thoughts and express them without being rushed.