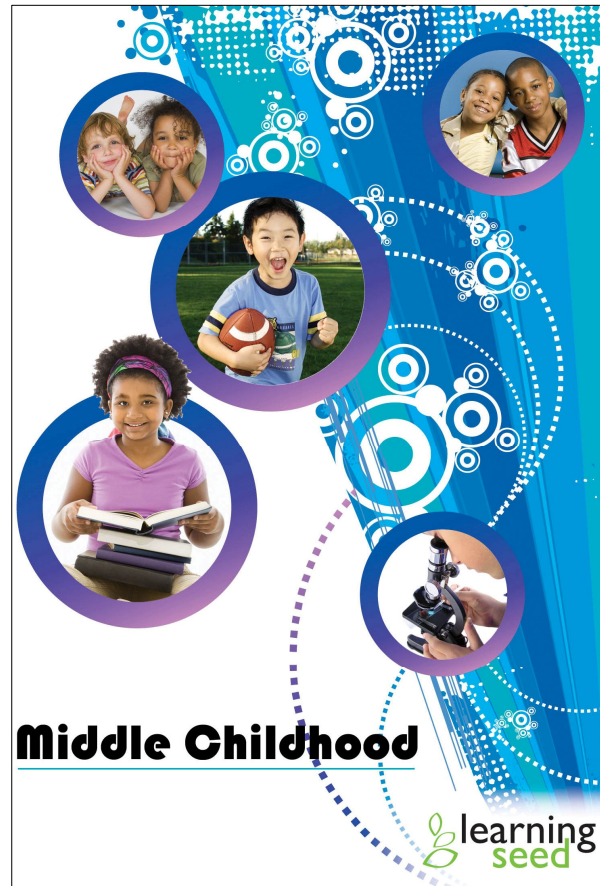


# Middle Childhood



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# Middle Childhood

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## Using This Guide/Using This Video

- Before watching this video, ask students to think about their early years in school. What were the things about early school years that continue to be immediate memories today?
- Use questions and activities for class discussion, small group activity, homework, or assessment.

# The Program

## Summary

Middle childhood is the stage of development between the ages of 6 and 12 years. The overall development of children includes their physical, cognitive, social and emotional growth. In this program we will take a look at the many factors that contribute to the development of the whole child.

During these middle childhood years, children gain body awareness, learn large amounts of information, and establish relationships with others outside of their families. They begin to manage their own behavior and start to find their place in the world.

### **Key points:**

- Children master both gross and fine motor skills in middle childhood, as well as experience a stage of general good health.
- Obesity in children ages 6 to 11 is increasing dramatically in the U.S.
- In this span of time children learn to read, write, and understand number relationships and historical time. Vocabulary increases and semantic development occurs, as reading becomes the main way that they learn.
- Children begin to note their internal qualities and realize that they are good at some things, and not good at others.
- Children develop self-concepts and self-esteem.
- Children also develop a conscience and internalize moral rules.
- Divorce can cause maladjustments in children from 6 months to 2 years after the divorce.
- Friendships in middle childhood are based on loyalty and supportiveness rather than similar activities.
- Bullying is prevalent during the middle school years and includes physical, verbal, emotional and extended to on-line harassment.
- Children with special needs can be accommodated and supported by adults to give them better success in the classroom.

# **Physical Development**

Children usually grow about 2 to 3 inches per year during their elementary school years. The onset of puberty occurs at the end of middle childhood. Children usually lose and replace about 4 baby teeth a year during this time as well.

During middle childhood, children master many gross and fine motor skills. Their muscle coordination increases, and children are able to do jumping jacks, skip, and stop and change directions while running. With fine motor abilities, children can write legibly, type on a keyboard, and cut with scissors.

While this is generally a stage of good health, some illnesses are more common during middle childhood, such as allergies and asthma. More than 15 million children in the U.S. have asthma. 15% of children in the U.S. are considered obese, which means that their body weight is more than 20% above the average for a child at a given age and height. The biggest increase in obesity is children between 6 and 11 years old.

# Cognitive Development

According to Jean Piaget, children fall into the concrete operational stage of development which is characterized by the active and appropriate use of logic. There are four important aspects of operational thought; decentration, reversibility, causality, and logic.

Lev Vygotsky proposed that language and social interaction play an essential role in development. He proposed that children use self-directed speech, especially while problem solving. He believed that another way children learn was within the zone of proximal development, or in a situation in which a task is just beyond a child's ability. In this zone adults can give hints or ask questions that allow a child to problem solve on their own.

Semantic development includes acquiring more adult definitions of words that children know. Their vocabulary expands and they create relationships among words. They advance in the use of syntax and pragmatics. Children with little or no English speaking abilities participate in bilingual education, where one strategy used is immersion.

By the beginning of middle childhood, children are moving into the transitional stage in which they spell out words and begin to write full sentences. By age 9, most children move on to the conventional stage where they begin to use correct spelling and apply spelling rules to their writing.

Reading development takes place in stages as well and around 6 or 7 years old, children in stage one sound out words and blend sounds. Eventually they move on to create a sight vocabulary, which they can recognize instantly. Around the age of 7 or 8 years, they learn to read aloud fluently. In stage three (9 and 13 years old) reading becomes the main way in which children learn.

IQ tests are traditionally used to measure a child's intelligence. Standard IQ tests focus on two types of intelligence, logical-mathematical and linguistic. Researchers have brought up concerns that IQ tests may be biased and not reveal fair judgments. Howard Gardner proposed a theory of multiple intelligences where he identified at least 8 different areas where people have different levels of competency. These areas are linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic.

# **Social And Emotional Development**

During middle childhood, children begin to note their internal qualities, and begin to identify that while they are good at some things, they struggle with others. Erik Erikson proposed that people move through stages of emotional development, and children in middle childhood struggle between industry and inferiority. The stage is characterized by efforts to attain competence.

Middle childhood is also the time when children begin to develop self-concepts and self-esteem. Self-concept is one's definition or description of attributes. Self-esteem is the evaluation of those attributes. Children have a physical, emotional, academic, social, and global self-concept. Global self esteem is an overall positive or negative evaluation of their self worth, and it is partially determined by the specific self-esteem in areas that are most important to them.

In the classroom, teachers can create an atmosphere that promotes positive development by providing students with experiences that lead to true success.

The middle childhood child develops a conscience and internalizes moral rules. Social learning theory suggests that people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modeling. Caregivers can model kindness and positive attributes to help children develop moral codes.

Middle childhood is a time of co-regulation; a period where caregivers and children jointly control children's behavior. Siblings can provide support, security, and companionship for a child, but can also be a source of rivalry and jealousy. Some children can develop maladjustments after a divorce from 6 months to 2 years after. Common maladjustments are phobias, depression, sleep disturbances, and anxiety.

During middle childhood, friendships gain importance and loyalty and supportiveness take a bigger role. Boys tend to have larger networks of friends based on competition while girls tend to have smaller groups based on popularity status and social competence. Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, repeated, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. It can be physical, verbal, or emotional including intimidation and social exclusion. Children who are bullied are more likely to be depressed, anxious, lonely, and have low self-esteem.

# **Special Needs**

Many children have challenging conditions that affect their physical and motor development and limit their movement, such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, and muscular dystrophy. Some children have sensory difficulties such as visual, hearing, and speech impairments. 3 to 5% of children in middle childhood experience speech difficulties, with stuttering being the most common. Myopia, or nearsightedness, is the most common vision problem in middle school.

Some children develop learning disorders, which can involve academic difficulties, perceptual-motor difficulties, faulty thinking, and language and speech delays. Approximately 1 to 3% of school-aged children have a form of intellectual disability and are performing below their appropriate grade level. At the same time, 3 to 5% of school-aged children are classified as gifted. To better meet these students' needs, some schools offer acceleration and enrichment programs.

Children with any special needs may need assistance with social interactions. Some children have serious emotional disturbances, which include hyperactive behavior such as short attention span and impulsiveness. Some children will exhibit aggressive behavior or social withdrawal. In any instance of a disability, regardless of which, school-aged children can be accommodated and mainstreamed into classrooms with their typically developing peers.

## **Review**

For the most part, middle childhood is a stage of good health where ailments are mild and short lasting. Increases in height and muscle coordination help contribute to the growing number of gross and fine motor abilities of the middle childhood child. Good nutrition provides the fuel for physical growth, but it has also been linked to positive cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Between the ages of 6 and 12, children make many advances in their development as they learn to read, write, and communicate effectively. There is significant growth in academics, logic, and memory. Children in middle childhood have a more developed theory of the mind, and are able to think about and understand their own thinking. They also establish their individual personalities and influence their family and friends. With support and encouragement, children in middle childhood can succeed and grow.

# **Interactive Elements**

## **Questions For Discussion**

1. Which one of Gardner's 8 areas of multiple intelligences do you most associate with now? Which areas did you most associate with when you were 10 years old? Are there trends in who associates with what?

*Students can engage in a discussion of the 8 areas of multiple intelligences, as well as recall if they have changed as they have developed.*

2. What are some trends and characteristics of the basis of friendships in middle childhood? What are they based on, and what are the differences between boys and girls (if any)?

*Students can discuss the change to loyalty and supportiveness as a basis for friendship. Students can also talk about their own experiences in middle childhood and their own relationships with peers.*

3. Children grow physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually during middle childhood. What do you think are some good ways to cope with the changes that occur socially and emotionally during this stage of development?

*Students should touch upon the following ideas: Talking to caregivers and teachers to learn that all changes are natural and normal. Teachers can foster self-esteem growth by providing opportunities that will make the student successful. Caregivers, even in blended families can provide support for all of their children.*

4. What is bilingual education? What are some strategies to enhance learning for non-English speakers?

*Students can talk about immersion techniques and bilingual education in middle school.*

5. Is intelligence testing biased? Should IQ tests be given in school or by psychologists/doctors?

*Students can talk about how research has shown that IQ tests can be biased, and have students talk about what they could do to overcome that bias. Students can debate on the importance of general IQ in success in school.*

## **Suggested Activities**

1. Have students create an interactive school-wide campaign against childhood obesity.
2. Role-play some different types of bullying (physical, verbal, emotional, on-line) and discuss the ramifications of them on the child being bullied. (Include physical, emotional, social and cognitive consequences of bullying)

## **Research Project**

Have students research a physical, visual, hearing, speech, learning, or emotional disability that could effect a mainstream classroom. Have them prepare accommodations for that student. What are some organizations representing and promoting inclusion in mainstream classrooms for those with disabilities?

# Middle Childhood Evaluation/Testing Fill-In-The-Blank

Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the bank at the bottom of the page.

\_\_\_\_\_ may cause psychological maladjustment from six months to two years after.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, sleep disturbances, and \_\_\_\_\_ are some examples.

According to Lev Vygotsky, one way children learn is through the zone of \_\_\_\_\_ development.

Two common classroom practices that encourage this learning are \_\_\_\_\_ learning and \_\_\_\_\_ teaching.

\_\_\_\_\_ is aggressive behavior that is \_\_\_\_\_, repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power. It can be \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_ such as intimidation, threatening gestures, and social exclusion.

\_\_\_\_\_ is the most common \_\_\_\_\_. It is a substantial disruption in the rhythm and fluency in speech.

According to Jean Piaget's theory of development, children of the middle childhood age are in the \_\_\_\_\_ stage, which focuses on developing logical thinking. The four main aspects of this stage are logic, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

## Word Bank:

depression	proximal	verbal	reciprocal	concrete operational
phobias	reversibility	intentional	emotional	stuttering
decentration	cooperative	bullying	divorce	speech impairment
physical	anxiety	causality		

# Middle Childhood

## Fill-In-The-Blank Answer Key

Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the bank at the bottom of the page.

**Divorce** may cause psychological maladjustment from six months to two years after. **Phobias**, **depression**, sleep disturbances, and **anxiety** are some examples.

According to Lev Vygotsky, one way children learn is through the zone of **proximal** development. Two common classroom practices that encourage this learning are **cooperative** learning and **reciprocal** teaching.

**Bullying** is aggressive behavior that is **intentional**, repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power. It can be **physical**, **verbal**, or **emotional** such as intimidation, threatening gestures, and social exclusion.

**Stuttering** is the most common **speech impairment**. It is a substantial disruption in the rhythm and fluency in speech.

According to Jean Piaget's theory of development, children of the middle childhood age are in the **concrete operational** stage, which focuses on developing logical thinking. The four main aspects of this stage are logic, **decentration**, **reversibility**, and **causality**.

### Word Bank:

depression	proximal	verbal	reciprocal	concrete operational
phobias	reversibility	intentional	emotional	stuttering
decentration	cooperative	bullying	divorce	speech impairment
physical	anxiety	causality		

# Middle Childhood

## Multiple Choice Worksheet

Circle the best available answer for each of the following:

- 1) All of these are physical milestones EXCEPT:
- a) losing baby teeth
  - b) increased height
  - c) increased weight
  - d) thinking faster
- 2) All are examples of bullying EXCEPT:
- a) calling names
  - b) pushing in the hallways
  - c) starting vicious rumors
  - d) playing football
- 3) The theory of multiple intelligences was proposed by:
- a) Lev Vygotsky
  - b) Howard Gardner
  - c) Jean Piaget
  - d) Sigmund Freud
- 4) The most common middle childhood illness is:
- a) asthma
  - b) diabetes
  - c) tuberculosis
  - d) cancer
- 5) An individual's overall positive or negative evaluation of their self worth is:
- a) self-concept
  - b) self-esteem
  - c) global self-esteem
  - d) moral self-worth
- 6) Divorce may cause psychological maladjustment from six months to this long after the divorce:
- a) 1 year
  - b) 9 months
  - c) 5 years
  - d) 2 years
- 7) Gross motor skills allow children to:
- a) use scissors
  - b) play a musical instrument
  - c) type on a keyboard
  - d) change direction while running
- 8) During this stage of learning to write, children begin to spell out words and begin to write full sentences:
- a) phonemic
  - b) transitional
  - c) conventional
  - d) operational
- 9) \_\_\_\_\_ is the strategy that places non-native speaking children in classrooms where the dominant language is spoken:
- a) bilingual education
  - b) sheltered instruction
  - c) immersion
  - d) reciprocal teaching
- 10) An academic learning disability would include:
- a) inability to understand instructions
  - b) dyslexia
  - c) conduct disorder
  - d) attention deficit

# Middle Childhood

## Multiple Choice Worksheet Answer Key

Circle the best available answer for each of the following:

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# Middle Childhood

## Matching Quiz

Match the words in the first column to the best available answer in the second column.

- |       |   |                             |
|-------|---|-----------------------------|
| _____ | The ability to use written and oral language  | 1) middle childhood         |
| _____ | The struggle middle childhood children experience as they attain competence             | 2) spatial                  |
| _____ | This is the most common speech impairment in middle childhood                           | 3) Internal qualities       |
| _____ | The ability to visualize and graphically represent objects in the mind                  | 4) Social learning theory   |
| _____ | Stage of development that occurs between the ages of 6 and 12                           | 5) linguistic               |
| _____ | In middle childhood, children move beyond physical achievements and begin to note these | 6) Industry vs. Inferiority |
| _____ | People learn from one another through observation, imitation, and modeling              | 7) gross motor abilities    |
| _____ | Running, jumping, climbing, skipping  | 8) stuttering               |

# Middle Childhood

## Matching Quiz Answer Key

Match the words in the first column to the best available answer in the second column.

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 5) linguistic               | The ability to use written and oral language  |
| 6) Industry vs. Inferiority | The struggle middle childhood children experience as they attain competence             |
| 8) stuttering               | This is the most common speech impairment in middle childhood                           |
| 2) spatial                  | The ability to visualize and graphically represent objects in the mind                  |
| 1) middle childhood         | Stage of development that occurs between the ages of 6 and 12                           |
| 3) Internal qualities       | In middle childhood, children move beyond physical achievements and begin to note these |
| 4) Social learning theory   | People learn from one another through observation, imitation, and modeling              |
| 7) gross motor abilities    | Running, jumping, climbing, skipping  |

# Glossary

## Bilingual Education

A variety of strategies used to assist students who speak different languages than that of the dominant culture

## Bullying

Aggressive behavior that is intentional, repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength

## Causality

An understanding of cause and effect paired with the ability to see how a child's actions and those of others relate to consequences

## Concrete Operational Stage

Stage of cognitive development which is characterized by the active and appropriate use of logic

## Co-Regulation

A period in which caregivers and children jointly control children's behavior

## Decentration

The ability to coordinate more than one aspect of a situation at the same time

## Emotional Disturbance

A condition exhibiting one or more characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affect a child's educational performance

## Fine Motor Development

The coordination of small muscle groups in the arms, hand and fingers used to complete tasks

## Gifted Or Talented

Showing high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or specific academic fields

## Global Self-Esteem

An individual's overall positive or negative evaluation of their self worth

## Gross Motor Development

Skills like running, jumping, climbing, that require the use of large muscle groups in the arms and legs, as well as strength and stamina

### Intelligence

The capacity to understand the world, think rationally, and use resources effectively when faced with a challenge

### Learning Disability

Impairment in some aspect of learning that can lead to putting a child below grade level in some academic subjects

### Obesity

Occurs when body weight is more than 20% above the average for a person for a given age and height

### Pragmatics

The rules which govern the use of language used to communicate in social situations

### Reversibility

The understanding that numbers or objects can be changed, and then returned to their original state

### Self-directed Speech

Verbal behavior in which children talk to themselves, naming objects and narrating their actions, especially while problem solving

### Semantic Development

Acquiring more adult definitions of words that they know by creating relationships among words, understanding synonyms and antonyms, and grasping how prefixes and suffixes affect word meaning

### Social Competence

The collection of skills that allow individuals to perform successfully in social situations

### Social Learning Theory

Theory that suggests that we learn from one another through observations, imitation, and modeling

### Speech Impairment

Speech that calls attention to itself in comparison to that of others, interferes with communication, or causes the speaker difficulty in adapting to his environment

### Syntax

The part of language that involves creating sentences

### Zone Of Proximal Development

A situation in which a task is just beyond a child's ability

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