

ALIGNING WITH DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

In addition to aligning expectations with program resources and among parents, teachers, and staff, attention has to be given to children's developmental stages. A basic think-through will help you structure the time and activities to operate most smoothly toward meeting learning goals.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES*				
Grade Level/ Age Range	Characteristics	Needs	Likes	Looks like during Homework time
Kindergarten– 2nd grade (5–7 year-olds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinking is concrete (learn by seeing, feeling and doing rather than through thinking alone) Very active Very competitive Very imaginative Very sensitive to praise and recognition; seeks adult approval Learning to master physical skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent breaks from tasks Things to do that are fun Rest periods Adult affirmation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More interested in doing things (process) than the end product 	<p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide frequent praise Provide focused attention and support <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math manipulatives Games that reinforce academic concepts Homework tracking system Art supplies <p>Scheduling and space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short focus periods with breaks for movement and games Options for working on the floor, standing up, etc.
3rd–5th grade (8–10-year-olds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prefer to find their own solutions rather than accept those offered by adults Wide discrepancies in reading ability Busy, active; can't sit still for long periods of time Acceptance by friends is very important Very sensitive to praise and recognition Sensitive to criticism; recognize failure Concerned with what is "fair" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent breaks Group approval Adult affirmation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs and groups Idolize heroes, TV stars, and sports figures 	<p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide frequent praise Use stamps, cards, etc. to communicate success to teachers and parents Help build up skills Form peer groups and small groups for helping <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-level reading materials Computers Homework logs and contracts <p>Scheduling and space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve children in setting up work space and rules Create student work groups Provide active breaks Involve children in decision making about homework

* Adapted from: Sniad, T., Weisburd, C. and Mello, S. (2007) Afterschool Style in Practice: 25 Skill-Building Meetings for Staff. See also YMCA and 4-H resources.