



Teaching All Children

Children are introduced to more complex ideas and concepts as they progress in school. As catechists, we show our respect for God's creation by accepting all children as they are and mentoring them as they grow in their personal relationships with God. We recognize that each child is unique. We know that developmental age does not always coincide with chronological age. Furthermore, we recognize that some children have special needs. *Finding God: Our Response to God's Gifts*[®] effectively links faith formation to children by using lessons and activities designed to appeal to many different learners at various developmental stages.

Although no two children are alike, some general characteristics apply to children ages seven through eight. This is often a time of wonderful curiosity, rapid growth, endless imagination, excitement, and enthusiasm. Although children at this age are usually happy and optimistic, they may be moody at times and prefer to be alone. Second graders frequently work diligently to increase their skills, whether in handwriting, sports, or computers. Because of their high enthusiasm, second grade is a wonderful time for learning and faith development as they prepare to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in second grade often

- ▶ have vivid imaginations; love to read stories and to be read to.
- ▶ begin to use logic; are interested in the natural world and in understanding how things work.
- ▶ enjoy asking questions.
- ▶ are increasing their vocabularies.
- ▶ learn best by doing.
- ▶ like to work alone but increasingly enjoy working in groups.
- ▶ collect things and start planning ahead.
- ▶ are expanding their abilities so quickly that they may have difficulty knowing their own limits.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in second grade often

- ▶ have a fairly well-developed sense of right and wrong and begin to develop a conscience.
- ▶ begin to make moral decisions, although inconsistently, based on internal judgments.
- ▶ develop a moral sense through their own experiences.
- ▶ respond to clear and direct instruction and observe sound moral behavior in the lives of significant adults (in their own lives and in the lives of saints and holy people).

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in second grade often

- ▶ are impatient and have rapidly changing emotions.
- ▶ enjoy being a part of a group, team, or club.
- ▶ spend more time with peers.
- ▶ are sensitive, respond strongly to both encouragement and criticism, and need a great deal of affirmation.
- ▶ have a well-developed sense of humor and enjoy riddles and puzzles.
- ▶ need a sense of security and structure.
- ▶ rely heavily on parents, teachers, and significant adults.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in second grade often

- ▶ love to celebrate and enjoy ritual.
- ▶ have a natural sense of wonder and are comfortable with prayer.
- ▶ are capable of taking simple prayers to heart.
- ▶ are capable of praying spontaneously in a conversational style.
- ▶ enjoy quiet and can reflect for short periods of time.
- ▶ begin to appreciate the liturgical seasons, seasons of the year, and feast days.
- ▶ see nature as a reflection of God's love and greatness.
- ▶ view the Church as a community of friends who help one another.