

Cognitive Development

This area of development focuses on how we retain and repurpose learned information. Through cognitive development, children learn to observe, discover new things, note similarities and differences, solve problems, and ask questions — in other words, exercise their thinking skills.

The cognitive skills that children gain from everyday experiences are what helps children acquire new knowledge and information. The best environment for learning is created when children have multiple and varied opportunities to interact with their environment.

Children's cognitive development is boosted when they develop skills for keeping track of their own thinking processes. These skills help children to think through what to do, and to know whether they are succeeding or when to ask for help. Reflecting on their own thinking helps children become more independent learners.

Cognitive Readiness

To deem a child ready for school in terms of cognitive development, they should be able to do some or all of the following:

- Demonstrate a broad understanding of the world in which they live, including their homes, food, and bodies.
- Absorb and retain new knowledge.
- Make links to their own experience when reading.
- Show an interest in exploring their environment and learning more about nature and science (plants, animals, or weather).
- Participate in simple experiments to learn about science, and reflect on the results.
- Use reflective thinking to consider why things happen and what can be learned from these observations.
- Express opinions on matters that affect them.
- Make simple decisions on their own, for example, deciding what clothes to wear.
- Use their senses to explore the immediate inside and outside environment.
- Be interested and show a willingness to solve problems.

- Participate with others to solve problems and contribute to group outcomes.
- Sort and classify objects according to one or more properties.
- Match things that go together and compare things that are different, using appropriate language.

How to Play?

- Cut a set of stickers and scenes for students pairs in advance.
- Divide the class into pairs and hand them a set of mixed stickers.
- Ask students to set up the stickers into four different groups. For lower levels, give the name of the groups and ask for two or three examples, e. g., *Fruits! What fruits do you know? Apple!*
- Then give one of the scenes to each pair and ask them to complete the scenes by pasting the correct stickers.
- Encourage students to say the word they are using.
- Repeat the process for the other scenes or play them later.
- You can place their final work around the classroom and let them present their scenes. This will let them review the vocabulary one more time.

Teacher Tips

If you have a projector in your classroom, you can display the scenes and ask the students to draw and color the missing items. Then, give students time to paste them on the projected scene.

A variant of this activity would be giving students the scenes with the stickers placed on it (do not paste them). Include a random item that does not belong to the scene. Then ask students to identify the objects that should not be apart of the scene.

Another variant would be giving pairs one scene and placing the stickers facing down randomly. Ask students to pick up one and take turns to find the objects that belong to the given scene.