

NOTES ON AGE/GRADE CHARACTERISTICS

AGES 3 TO 6 (preschool, kindergarten to first grade)

- ❖ Energetic—sometimes need warm up activities to calm down and focus; need a structured walk.
- ❖ Short attention span—need changes in pace, variety of activities, change in position.
- ❖ Use large body muscles—offer activities that don't rely only on fine motor skills.
- ❖ Learn about world through touching—offer sensory activities.
- ❖ Naturally curious, very verbal—allow time to ask questions.
- ❖ Vivid imaginations—storytelling important.
- ❖ Egocentric—need to relate outdoor experience to their world.
- ❖ Able to recognize common shapes and classify by alike/different.
- ❖ Understanding of concepts improved by repetition.
- ❖ Need to be actively involved in walk to focus attention.

AGES 7 TO 9 (first grade to fourth grade)

- ❖ Can see world as separate from themselves, can begin to see things from another point of view—encourage them to share observations and opinions..
- 3 Very active but can focus on observing details—plan fewer activities but don't focus on very small details.
- ❖ Imagination is strong, learn through senses.
- ❖ Can classify and analyze natural objects.
- ❖ Enjoy role-playing.
- ❖ Longer attention spans, beginning to work well as a group—emphasize active participation.

Contact with "real" objects makes tour more interesting.

❖ Many have collections at home—invite them to discuss interests.

AGES 9 TO 12 (fourth grade to seventh grade)

❖ Strong ties to peer group—provide activities that allow them to participate as a group.

❖ Base much of reasoning on observation—go into topics in more detail/bring out observation skills by asking questions. .

❖ Awareness of how things interact and of cause/effect—can understand ecological concepts.

❖ Can adapt information, exchange ideas.

❖ High level of absorption of new information—plan fewer activities.

❖ Interested in how and why things are made, happen, etc.

❖ Combination of talking and listening best—encourage discussion. ❖

Sensitive to success and failure; may compete to answer questions—ask open-ended questions.

❖ Display different interests according to sex.

AGES 12 TO 14 (seventh grade to ninth grade)

❖ Beginning to move from thinking concretely to abstract terms—can take information one step further.

❖ Tendency to question authority, so can be difficult to guide—emphasize rules of tour.

❖ Want to be treated like adults—don't talk down to this age; involve them in making some decisions about what to focus on.

❖ Don't usually want to guess answers because they don't want to look dumb—provide open-ended questions, not right or wrong answer questions.

❖ Socializing important—find out their interests.

❖ Interested in facts, enjoy interesting stories—tell them when you don't know something.

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