### Common Developmental Stages & Milestones for Students in JK - 2nd Grade

#### Opportunities
- **Junior Kindergarten**
  - Friendly, talkative, “bubbly”
  - Love being with friends, though still often play near, not with, a friend
  - Learn from modeling and practice of appropriate behavior
  - Can make decisions based on interests, but need adult advice
  - Need adult help finding words to express needs
  - Love “jobs” -- counting, attendance, putting out snack, etc.

- **Kindergarten**
  - Early in the year, like to help, follow rules, and be “good”
  - Later may test or oppose adult authority or show uncertainty (not sure whether to be “good” or “naughty”)
  - Need consistent rules and enforcement, respond well to clear and simple expectations
  - Need empathetic discipline as they test limits and make mistakes

- **1st Grade**
  - Competitive, though not always good at sports, sometimes bossy or critical
  - Either rush to be first or dawdle to be last
  - Want to have friends, may have best friends
  - Enjoy dressing up, putting on plays, etc. with other children
  - Talkative and noisy
  - Easily upset when criticized or discouraged
  - Love encouragement, surprises, and treats
  - Might test authority with tantrums, complaining, or tattling

- **2nd Grade**
  - May be moody, shy, sulky, touchy, appearing sometimes depressed
  - Prefer playing and working alone or with one friend
  - May change friendships quickly and feel “nobody likes me”
  - Rely on adults for help and reassurance
  - Need the security of rules, routines, and physical boundaries

#### Challenges

- **Junior Kindergarten**
  - Often think out loud before acting “I’m going to do this...”
  - Often chew pencils, hair, or fingernails
  - Bodies growing rapidly
  - Ears maturing, so reading is improving but copying from board or chart is still hard

- **Kindergarten**
  - Like doing lots of work, not that concerned with the quality of the work
  - Like to work slowly and finish what they start
  - Easily upset when criticized or discouraged

- **1st Grade**
  - Excited but also nervous about exploring the broader world
  - Getting good at handwriting, handcrafts, and drawing
  - Indecisive, impatient, often take on more than they can handle

- **2nd Grade**
  - Interested in rules, logic, and fairness

#### Social
- Friendly, talkative, “bubbly”
- Love being with friends, though still often play near, not with, a friend
- Learn from modeling and practice of appropriate behavior
- Can make decisions based on interests, but need adult advice
- Need adult help finding words to express needs
- Love “jobs” -- counting, attendance, putting out snack, etc.

#### Physical
- Vision tends to focus on faraway objects
- Often clumsy, collisions and spills are common
- Awkward with writing, handicrafts, and other small fine-motor movements
- Need lots of physical activity
- Able to sit still only for short periods

#### Cognitive
- Need to move frequently from one activity and one classroom area to another
- Learn best by playing and exploring, such as through dress-up and drama
- Can do paper/pencil tasks only for very short periods
- Learn well through use of large muscles (easel painting, math manipulatives, large blocks, tumbling, and dancing)
- Love being read to
- Enjoy language, delighting in big words, long explanations, bathroom language, and swear words

#### Opportunities
- See only one way to do things, rarely see other’s viewpoints
- Imaginative and believe toys and other materials come to life
- Think very literally
- Often reverse letters and numbers
- Early on in this stage, like to copy and repeat activities, later like to try more new activities
- Often think out loud before acting “I’m going to do this...”
- Learn best by exploring materials such as blocks, clay, finger paints, rocks, shells, etc.

#### Challenges
- Beginning to understand past and present and how and why things happen
- More able to see other viewpoints and understand reasons for rules
- Love new ideas and asking questions
- Learn well through games, poems, riddles, and songs
- Very ambitious, often choosing projects that are too hard
- Learn well from field trips and hands-on projects
- Love encouragement, surprises, and treats
- Might test authority with tantrums, complaining, or tattling

#### Opportunities
- Better at understanding ideas such as time, space, and quantity
- Learn new words and meanings quickly, enjoy writing stories
- Open to learning math
- Good at classifying, such as sorting buttons, pictures, leaves and shapes
- Listen well and speak precisely
- Enjoy hands on exploration of how things work
- Bothered by mistakes and try hard to make their work perfect
- Like to work slowly and finish what they start
- Enjoy repeating tasks and reviewing learning

#### Challenges
- Industrious, impatient, and full of ideas, often take on more than they can handle
- Listen well but may not always remember what they’ve heard
- Getting good at handwriting, handcrafts, and drawing
- Excited but also nervous about exploring the broader world
- May give up when things are hard but soon want to try again
- Interested in rules, logic, and fairness

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Common Developmental Stages & Milestones for Students in 2nd - 4th Grade

- Understanding developmental stages can help you support your child’s learning at home and school.
- All children move through these stages and changes, which are fairly predictable in the pattern they follow. They may go through these stages at different rates, and a child may go through one area of development more quickly or slowly than another.
- Children don’t change suddenly on their birthday. Each age and stage is unique. Enjoy your child at each one!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>3rd Grade</td>
<td>4th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- May be moody, shy, sulky, touchy, appearing sometimes depressed</td>
<td>- May do quiet work for longer periods than earlier</td>
<td>- Industrious, impatient, and full of ideas, often take on more than they can handle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Prefer playing and working alone or with one friend</td>
<td>- Eyes able to focus well on objects near and far</td>
<td>- Worry about world events, parents’ health, friends, school, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- May change friendships quickly and feel “nobody likes me”</td>
<td>- May have growth spurt</td>
<td>- Work hard and pay attention to detail, but may jump quickly between interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Rely on adults for help and reassurance</td>
<td>- Eyes able to focus well on objects near and far</td>
<td>- Less imaginative than at eight-years-old</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Need the security of rules, routines, and physical boundaries</td>
<td>- Better control of eyes and hands allows copying from board or chart</td>
<td>- Want factual explanations; enjoy scientific exploration</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Can get sick from worrying about tests, assignments, etc.</td>
<td>- Full of energy, play hard, work quickly, and tire easily</td>
<td>- Have trouble understanding abstractions such as large numbers, long periods of time, and vast areas of space</td>
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<td>- Often keep their eyes focused on a small, close area</td>
<td>- Do better with several short play breaks than one long one</td>
<td>- Love language and word play</td>
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<td>- Enjoy repeating tasks and reviewing learning</td>
<td>- Love group activities and cooperative work</td>
<td>- Begin to see the bigger world including issues of justice and fairness</td>
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<td>- Enjoy “interest” clubs such as arts and crafts, chess, sports</td>
<td>- Complain a lot; criticize self and others (including adults)</td>
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<td>- Open to learning mediation or problem solving skills</td>
<td>- Coordination is better, boys love to rough-house</td>
<td>- Improve at memorizing facts</td>
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<td>- Like to work with same-gender partner</td>
<td>- Listen well but also enjoy talking and explaining</td>
<td>- Enjoy collecting, organizing, and classifying</td>
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<td>- Often say ‘I hate it’, ‘I can’t’, ‘It’s boring’ etc.</td>
<td>- Good sense of humor</td>
<td>- Like rules and logic, open to learning about scientific principles, governmental structures, and meeting formats</td>
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<td>- Like to work slowly and finish what they start</td>
<td>- May have growth spurt</td>
<td>- Can concentrate on reading and thinking for longer periods</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Enjoy hands on exploration of how things work</td>
<td>- Better at small muscle movements, enjoy precision movements are developing quickly</td>
<td>- Hardworking, take more pride in school work</td>
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<td>- Better at understanding ideas such as time, space, and quantity</td>
<td>- May be moody, shy, sulky, touchy, appearing sometimes depressed</td>
<td>- Enjoy choral reading, poetry, plays, and singing</td>
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<td>- Learn new words and meanings quickly, enjoy writing stories</td>
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Northeast Foundation for Children, Inc. (2005); Center for Responsive Schools (2015); Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14 (2007)
Common Developmental Stages & Milestones for Students in 4th - 6th Grade

- Understanding developmental stages can help you support your child’s learning at home and school.
- All children move through these stages and changes, which are fairly predictable in the pattern they follow. They may go through these stages at different rates, and a child may go through one area of development more quickly or slowly than another.
- Children don’t change suddenly on their birthday. Each age and stage is unique. Enjoy your child at each one!

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- Very competitive, yet may form cliques
- Complain a lot; criticize self and others (including adults)
- Often say “I hate it”, “I can’t”, “It’s boring” etc.
- Like to work with same-gender partner
- Can work in groups but with lots of arguing
- Enjoy exaggeration and “dirty” jokes
- Need adults to be patient and explain clearly
- Need adult lightheartedness, humor, and encouragement to lighten their mood and relieve anxiety | 
- Muscles for jumping, running, and other big movements are developing quickly
- Need lots of outdoor play and physical challenges
- Snacks and rest periods help rapidly growing bodies
- Better at small muscle movements, enjoy precision tasks such as tracing and copying
- Ready to start using tools such as compasses, rules, and templates | 
- Improving at memorizing facts
- Enjoy collecting, organizing, and classifying
- Have trouble understanding abstractions such as large numbers, long periods of time, and vast areas of space
- Love language and word play
- Begin to see the bigger world including issues of justice and fairness
- Enjoy “interest” clubs such as arts and crafts, chess, sports |
| 5th Grade | 
- Coordination is better, boys love to rough-house
- Like to push physical limits; get tired easily
- Complain about aches, pains, and injuries
- Restless, can’t sit still for long
- May bite nails or twist hair to relieve tension | 
- Muscles for jumping, running, and other big movements are developing quickly
- Need lots of outdoor play and physical challenges
- Snacks and rest periods help rapidly growing bodies
- Better at small muscle movements, enjoy precision tasks such as tracing and copying
- Ready to start using tools such as compasses, rules, and templates | 
- Can think abstractly—for example, more able to understand ideas such as “justice”
- Beginning to challenge adult explanations and their own assumptions
- Would rather learn new skills than review or improve previous work
- Enjoy using their developing thinking skills to do brain teasers and puzzles
- Like “adult” tasks (researching, interviewing, footnoting, etc.) and “adult” studies (history, biography, etc.), though may outwardly fuss while secretly enjoying the work |
| 6th Grade | 
- Moody, self-absorbed
- Easily embarrassed; need to “save face” in front of peers
- Sensitive about their changing bodies
- Need lots of time to talk with peers
- Common age for girls to form cliques
- Worry about who’s “in” and who’s “out” | 
- Restless and very energetic
- Need lots of food, physical activity, and sleep
- “Growing pains” (bone outgrowing muscle) may cause nightly aches and daily complaints
- More colds, ear infections, flu, etc. | 
- May begin to excel at a subject (such as science) or skill (such as drawing)
- Understand and enjoy sarcasm, double meanings, and more sophisticated jokes
- Enthusiastic about schoolwork they see as purposeful, such as research projects, science experiments, and drama productions
- Can set goals and concentrate well
- Very interested in civics, history, current events, environmental issues, and social justice |

4th Grade
- Enjoy choral reading, poetry, plays, and singing
- Hardworking, take more pride in school work
- Can concentrate on reading and thinking for longer periods
- More colds, ear infections, flu, etc. | 
- Improve at memorizing facts
- Enjoy collecting, organizing, and classifying
- Have trouble understanding abstractions such as large numbers, long periods of time, and vast areas of space
- Love language and word play
- Begin to see the bigger world including issues of justice and fairness
- Enjoy “interest” clubs such as arts and crafts, chess, sports |

5th Grade
- Moody, self-absorbed
- Easily embarrassed; need to “save face” in front of peers
- Sensitive about their changing bodies
- Need lots of time to talk with peers
- Common age for girls to form cliques
- Worry about who’s “in” and who’s “out” | 
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6th Grade
- Peer opinions matter more than those of teachers and parents
- Question and argue with adults about rules; need adults to listen to their ideas
- More willing to accept guidance from adults other than teachers and parents
- Need ceremonies and rituals to mark turning points on their way to adulthood
- Capable of self-awareness, insight, and empathy
- Can take on major responsibilities such as running a school store or raising money
- Careless with “unimportant” things such as cleaning their room and keeping track of assignments
- Like both group and individual work | 
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### Common Developmental Stages & Milestones for Students in 6th - 8th Grade

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- Children don’t change suddenly on their birthday. Each age and stage is unique. Enjoy your child at each one!

#### 6th Grade

**Social**
- Moody, self-absorbed; need to “save face” in front of peers
- Easily embarrassed; need to “save face” in front of peers
- Sensitive about their changing bodies
- Need lots of time to talk with peers
- Common age for girls to form cliques
- Worry about who’s “in” and who’s “out”
- Like to challenge rules, argue, and test limits
- Need adult empathy, humor, and light attitude to help them take things less seriously

**Physical**
- Restless and very energetic
- Need lots of food, physical activity, and sleep
- Growth spurt for many girls; some begin menstruating
- “Growing pains” (bone outgrowing muscle) may cause nightly aches and daily complaints
- More colds, ear infections, flu, etc.

**Cognitive**
- Can think abstractly--for example, more able to understand ideas such as “justice”
- Beginning to challenge adult explanations and their own assumptions
- Would rather learn new skills than review or improve previous work
- Enjoy using their developing thinking skills to do brain teasers and puzzles
- Like “adult” tasks (researching, interviewing, footnoting, etc.) and “adult” studies (history, biography, etc.), though may outwardly fuss while secretly enjoying the work

#### 7th Grade

**Social**
- Peer opinions matter more than those of teachers and parents
- Question and argue with adults about rules; need adults to listen to their ideas
- More willing to accept guidance from adults other than teachers and parents
- Need ceremonies and rituals to mark turning points on their way to adulthood
- Can take on major responsibilities such as running a school store or raising money
- Careless with “unimportant” things such as cleaning their room and keeping track of assignments
- Like both group and individual work

**Physical**
- Very energetic; need lots of sleep, exercise, and food (including in-school snack)
- Enjoy physical education and sports
- Boys and girls both have growth spurts
- Girls show signs of puberty; most are menstruating

**Cognitive**
- May begin to excel at a subject (such as science) or skill (such as drawing)
- Understand and enjoy sarcasm, double meanings, and more sophisticated jokes
- Enthusiastic about schoolwork they see as purposeful, such as research projects, science experiments, and drama productions
- Can set goals and concentrate well
- Very interested in civics, history, current events, environmental issues, and social justice

#### 8th Grade

**Social**
- Moody and sensitive; anger can flare up suddenly
- Feelings are easily hurt; can easily hurt others’ feelings
- Very concerned about personal appearance
- Like to be left alone when home
- Prefer working alone or with one partner
- Spend hours on the phone or computer, and with video games and TV
- Decorate their bedrooms to show personality and independence
- A lot of peer pressure in what to wear, how to talk, what music to listen to
- Girls tend to focus on close friendships; boys tend to travel in small groups or gangs
- Challenge the ideas and authority of parents and teachers
- Answer parents with a single word or loud, extreme language
- Often mean (may stem from being insecure or scared)

**Physical**
- Lots of physical energy
- Skin problems are common; hygiene becomes more important
- Most girls are menstruating and have almost reached full physical development
- Most boys are showing first signs of puberty (will reach full physical development)
- Girls almost fully developed
- Boys may continue growth spurts and show signs of puberty

**Cognitive**
- Tentative, worried, unwilling to take risks on tough intellectual tasks
- Interested in fairness, justice, discrimination, etc.
- Often write better than they speak, so better at written work than oral explanations
- Need short, predictable homework assignments to build good study habits
- Starting to enjoy thinking about the many sides of an issue

**Environment**
- Better at thinking abstractly-for example, understanding ideas such as “freedom”
- Enjoy individual skills (music, art, etc.)
- Like technology and learning how things work
- Respond well to variety and challenge; enjoy research
- Complain about homework, but often the challenge
- Like having a chance to revise and improve work
- Often say “I’m bored” to mean “I don’t understand”
- May see academic success as “nerdy” and “uncool”

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