



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. As catechists, 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.

Getting to Know a Second-Grade Child (Ages 7–8)

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

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in second grade often

- ▶ have vivid imaginations; love to hear stories and to be read to.
- ▶ begin to use logic; are interested in the natural world and 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.
- ▶ love structure and routine.
- ▶ are expanding their abilities so quickly that they may have difficulty knowing their own limits.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in second grade often

- ▶ have a sense of right and wrong and begin to form a conscience.
- ▶ develop a moral sense through their own experiences when given opportunities.
- ▶ respond to clear and direct instruction and the opportunity to 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 truly the center of their own worlds.
- ▶ consider being part of a group, primarily of the same gender, extremely important.
- ▶ spend significant amounts of time alone, engaged in their own thoughts and activities.
- ▶ are sensitive to both encouragement and criticism, and need a great deal of affirmation.
- ▶ underestimate the limits of their abilities but are able to recover quickly from mistakes and failures.
- ▶ 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 for example and guidance.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Children in second grade often

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