

LEVEL A: Assessing Readiness

Simply Classical Curriculum Overview

- Readiness Levels A, B, C (34 weeks of lessons with optional 8-week extension for B & C)
- Primary Levels 1, 2, 3 (34 weeks of lessons, with optional 8-week extensions included for 1, 2, 3)
- Grammar Levels 4, 5, 6 (34 weeks of lessons each)
- Scholar Levels 7, 8, 9, 10 (34 weeks of lessons each)
- Advanced Levels 11, 12 (34 weeks of lessons each)

Suggested Use

Print two copies per student. Administer as a pre-test before you begin this level. After you finish teaching this level, you may administer as a post-test for your student(s).

Date of Pre-Test: _____

Date of Post-Test: _____

(Yes, Emerging, or No?)

Skill: LANGUAGE	Yes	Em	No
Repeats sounds, tries to imitate words			
Says “dada” and “mama” specifically			
Makes consonant sounds			
“Tells” you what she wants, even if only by pointing			
Follows simple directions			
Responds to “no” (stops, turns, and looks)			
Links two words together (“more juice”)			
Uses pronouns (“me” or “mine”)			
Imitates phrases (“Go bye-bye”)			
Understands simple questions			
Points to body parts and items in books when named			
Shows increasing understanding of words spoken by others			
Repeats words she hears			
Shows increasing spoken vocabulary (20-50 words)			
Finishes sentences in predictable books (Mom: “Goodnight, cow jumping over the ...” Child: “moon!”)			
Enjoys conversation			
TOTAL Language – Score how many in each (Yes/Emerging/No).			

Tips to Improve Language at This Age:

- Talk, sing, and read to the child throughout the day, especially when feeding, diapering, or rocking.
- Engage in a daily song time (“Itsy Bitsy Spider,” Pat-a-Cake).
- For car, song time, or playtime: *Wee Sing Children’s Songs and Fingerplays* (Pamela Conn Beal, Susan Hagen Nipp).

- Share books, flashcards, or magazine pictures with realistic portrayals of real animals, objects, and people.
- Listen to words of child and expand on his statement:
Example:
Child: "More juice?"
Mom/Teacher: "Can you say, 'More juice, please?'"
Child: "More juice, please?"
Mom/Teacher: "Yes, very good! Here is your juice, Sara."
- Play pretend with puppets, stuffed animals, dolls.
- Tell stories with figures on flannelboards.
- Read nursery rhymes, children's poetry books, and predictable books.

Skill: COGNITIVE ABILITY	Yes	Em	No
Understands the uses of common objects, such as a cup, a spoon, or a shoe			
Responds to verbal directions			
Searches for objects when they are hidden from sight (rattle under a blanket)			
Seems aware of simple cause and effect, as with interactive toys			
Enjoys looking for people, as with Peek-a-boo or Hide-and-Seek			
Recognizes basic shapes (circle, triangle, square, rectangle)			
Begins to identify colors			
Identifies simple patterns (red, blue, red, blue)			
Indicates awareness of simple time concepts such as night and day			
Can sort objects by one characteristic (rough vs. smooth)			
Enjoys varying sensory play (fingerpainting, playdough, sand, water)			
Sorts objects by shape or size (squares vs. circles, or large vs. small)			
Solves simple problems such as finding shoes			
Learns from trial and error			
Begins to understand concepts of parts and wholes			
Enjoys filling and emptying containers (backpacks, buckets, bins)			
Understands more words than he can say			
TOTAL Cognitive – Score how many in each (Yes/Emerging/No).			

Tips to Improve Cognition at This Age:

- Play Peek-a-boo, Hide-and-Seek.
- Have the child help with laundry to learn sorting (big towels, washcloths) and matching (find the other sock that looks just like this one).
- Work puzzles with the child, beginning with whole objects (apple into place for apple) and moving to puzzles with parts of objects.
- Provide sensory play (fingerpainting, playdough, sand, water).
- Cut playdough (or apples) into parts or slices; play bakery or deli.
- Enjoy outdoor walks with a pail. Have the child collect treasures along the way. When home, empty and sort (twigs here, rocks there).

- Read nursery rhymes, storybooks, and predictable books interactively. Have him finish the sentence or complete the rhyme. Have him point to objects on the page. ("Where is the cow?" "Where is the pig?")
- Hide objects in containers or bins of rice, beans, or dried pasta for child to search and find (re-use the rice, beans, or pasta with large coins or plastic toys).

Skill: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (manners, behavior, service to others)	Yes	Em	No
Imitates others in play			
Points to or speaks about objects to communicate to other people			
Knows strangers from family			
Expresses delight at parent's face, mirror, familiar toys			
Looks when his name is called			
Expresses affection for and receives affection from others			
Demonstrates trust and security with parent			
Enjoys familiar objects (favorite stuffed animal, blanket, or cloth doll)			
Smiles and laughs			
Pretends in his play (feeding a baby doll, making a truck go)			
Shows delight with tasks (dropping items into a container, building a tower)			
Recognizes himself in photos			
Gains confidence with exploring, as on a playground or at a park			
Begins to demonstrate a preference for independence ("Me do it.")			
Learns the names of basic feelings (sad, happy, angry)			
Begins to identify sadness or stress in others and offers comfort to them			
Helps with chores to assist the family (putting away toys, feeding the dog)			
Helps to keep his own living space tidy, helps make his bed			
Shows a variety of emotions			
TOTAL Social-Emotional – Score how many in each (Yes/Emerging/No).			

Tips to Improve Social-Emotional Development at This Age:

- Play Follow the Leader to develop observation of people.
- Meet the needs of the child predictably and regularly (nourishing meals, playtime, hugs before bed, gentle and clear discipline, rest).
- Allow time for dramatic play, dress-up, pretend with puppets.
- Allow basic choices within your own acceptable range of options:
"Would you like to wear the yellow shirt or the blue shirt today?"
"Would you like some more carrots or peas?"
- Provide dolls or stuffed animals for nurturing.
- Allow ample play with other children. Keep play times enjoyable, supervised, frequent, and, if necessary, brief.
- Teach manners, especially "please," "thank you," and "excuse me."
- Provide small ways for the child to assist with his own chores and chores to help the family.

Skill: FINE-MOTOR SKILLS (small muscle dexterity, pre-writing)	Yes	Em	No
Puts objects in a container and removes them (e.g., blocks in and out of a bin)			
Picks up small objects such as Cheerios with just thumb and forefinger			
Feeds himself with a spoon			
Claps his hands			
Unscrews lids and replaces them			
Uses wrist and fingers to wave bye-bye, shake rattles, grasp toys			
Scribbles with crayon or marker			
Stacks blocks			
Begins assisting with dressing (zipping, buttoning, pulling on socks)			
Completes 2- to 3-piece puzzles			
Attempts to cut along a line			
Can turn knobs			
Can peel a banana, unwrap a juice bar, tear lettuce, cut a banana with a plastic knife, spread jelly onto toast			
TOTAL Fine-Motor Skills – Score how many in each (Yes/Emerging/No).			

Tips to Improve Fine-Motor Skills at This Age:

- Provide squeak toys, plastic basting tools, and sponges in bathtub for hand strength.
- Provide funnels, small pitchers, and plastic cups in bathtub for filling and pouring.
- When reading books, have the child turn the page (“Let’s see what happens. Turn the page.”).
- Give him interlocking blocks, plastic gears, pop-beads, shape sorters, and nesting toys during independent playtime.
- Use a coffee can and lid. Cut a slit in the lid. Have the child drop 5 items through the slot by poking with one finger. (Bonus – Have him count 1-5 as he drops them.) Have the child use his wrist and fingers to remove the lid. Count objects. All 5 still here? Repeat with 10.
- Make instant pudding. Have child open box, tear package, empty into bowl, pour the milk from a measuring cup, stir while holding onto the bowl, and scrape with spatula into serving dishes while you hold the mixing bowl.
- Make jewelry: Tape a piece of yarn at one end. String large round cereal or large pasta onto the “necklace.”
- Include in his playtime or lessons peg boards, puzzles, large beads for stringing, and lacing cards.

Skill: GROSS-MOTOR SKILLS (large muscle coordination, strength, balance)	Yes	Em	No
Sits up on his own			
Pulls himself up to stand, walks on own			
Puts on (and pulls off) his own shirt, pants, and socks			
Rolls a ball back and forth, intentionally releasing			
Enjoys moving body to rhythm, dancing			
Climbs one step at a time			
Jumps with two feet			
Plays catch with a ball or balloon			
Rides cars and other riding toys with no pedals			
Rocks in a rocking chair or rocking horse			
Jumps off a step or curb with two feet (may still need hands held)			
Kicks a stationary ball			
Can “bowl” with a ball and empty plastic cups or plastic bowling pins			
Walks a balance beam or line on the floor, one foot in front of the other			
Can bounce, stomp feet, and twist			
Runs on a flat surface without falling down			
Helps with simple household tasks, such as carrying folded washcloths, helping to make the bed, helping to sweep, putting toys into a bin or toy chest			
TOTAL Gross-Motor Skills – Score how many in each (Yes/Emerging/No).			

Tips to Improve Gross-Motor Skills at This Age:

- Encourage reaching with bubbles (“Pop that one!”) and balls.
- Make bean bags (flannel squares, split peas) and have him toss into buckets, over horizontal jump ropes, and into targets.
- Roll a ball back and forth on the floor, kick a stationary ball, play catch—show child how to hold arms out to catch (use a balloon if a ball is too difficult).
- Make frequent trips to playgrounds or indoor kids’ gyms for climbing, sliding, balancing, strength (Bonus – coaching for social interactions).
- Provide push-and-pull toys, wagons for pulling dolls or animals.
- Provide opportunities for rocking (balance, body control), such as “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” or rocking toys on playgrounds.
- Play backyard tag (motor planning), basketball (reaching), soccer (kicking, running), and enjoy dancing to music (coordination).
- Play Follow the Leader, “flying” like an airplane, jumping, running, etc.