

DEVELOPMENT OF THINKING SKILLS

AGE	THINKING SKILL	EXAMPLE
Infant	Observing, focusing	Learning mother's face, voice, smell, and touch
1-year-old	Symbolic thinking—substitutes words, gestures, and pictures for real things	Recognizes words for objects
2-year-old	Has inner world of thought and language—what he can say lags behind what he knows about the way the world is organized	May call all large four-legged creatures “horsie” but can distinguish them from small and two-legged creatures, and from one another
3-year-old	Can make many connections between new and previous experiences; can sort things and ideas	Has “big” ideas such as children are either boys or girls, that one can put all blue things together (only if one wants, of course), that other people have cars like their parents
4-year-old	Can sequence events, count, distinguish less and more, argue, explain, and rationalize; can think of more than one way to sort things	Can grasp ideas that plants grow, die, and grow again from seeds, that rain comes down, evaporates up, and comes down again
5-year-old	Can think their way through most situations, limited chiefly by lack of experience; can collect and organize data, sort out variables they are familiar with; trusting	Can strategize at board games, figure out how many kindergartners have backpacks, know how long a TV show is
6-year-old	Independent thinkers with a wide store of acquired and reasoned out knowledge	Can keep track of important variables such as who can run the fastest, attend to phenomena such as plant growth or temperature change when directed to, devise own ways of solving arithmetic problems