

## Common Characteristics of 9-Year-Olds

The enthusiasm of eight often turns to brooding and worrying at nine. Nines tend to be critical of the world around them- nothing seems fair to a nine-year old. But nine can also be a time of budding intellectual curiosity. Children this age look hard for explanations of how things work and why things happen as they do.

### SOCIAL

- Very competitive, yet may form cliques
- Complain a lot; criticize self/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 exaggerations, "dirty" jokes and graffiti
- Need adults to be patient and explain clearly
- Need adult lightheartedness, humor, and encouragement to lighten mood and relieve anxiety

### COGNITIVE

- Worry about world events, parents, friends, school, etc.
- Work hard and pay attention to detail, but may jump quickly between interests
- Less imaginative than at eight years old
- Want factual explanations, enjoy sci. exploration
- Have trouble understanding abstractions- large numbers, long periods of time, & vast area of space
- Love language and word play
- Begin to see the bigger world, including issues of justice and fairness
- Enjoy "interests" clubs such as chess

### PHYSICAL

- 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

## Common Characteristics of 10-Year-Olds

Ten-year olds are generally happy and relaxed, enjoying themselves and their peers, parents, even siblings. Proud of all they have accomplished, they like to share their knowledge with others. Tens usually do well with group projects because they tend to be calm and naturally cooperative.

### SOCIAL

- Good age for clubs, team sports, and whole class activities
- Eager to reach out and help others
- Boys and girls work well together
- Quick to anger and quick to forgive
- Competitive but also cooperative
- Listen well but also enjoy talking and explaining
- Enjoy adult recognition

### COGNITIVE

- Very good at memorizing facts
- Enjoy collecting, organizing, and classifying
- Like rules and logic; open to learning about scientific principles, governmental structures, and meeting formats
- Can concentrate on reading and thinking for long periods
- Hardworking; take pride in schoolwork
- Enjoy choral reading, poetry, plays, and singing
- Open to learning mediation and problem solving skills

### PHYSICAL

- 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 (compasses, rulers, and templates)

## Common Characteristics of 11-Year-Olds

Elevens are going through huge changes in their bodies, minds, and social behaviors as they begin adolescence. The easy friendliness of tens often gives way to awkward, sometimes rude behavior at eleven. With their growing capacity for higher thinking, children this age like to try work that feels grown up, such as researching and interviewing.

### SOCIAL

- 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"
- Like to challenge rules, argue, and test limits
- Need adult empathy, humor, and light attitude to help them take things less seriously

### COGNITIVE

- Can think abstractly- able to understand ideas such as "justice"
- Beginning to challenge adult explanations and their own assumptions
- Would rather learn new skills than review/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

### PHYSICAL

- Restless and very energetic

- Need lots of food, physical activity, and sleep
- Growth spurt for many girls
- More colds, ear infections, flu, etc.