

# ALL I EVER REALLY NEEDED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN

By Robert Fulghum

Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be, I learned in Kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain but there in the sandbox at nursery school.

These are the things I learned:

Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you. Live a balanced life.

Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work some every day. Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands and stick together.

Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup – they all die. So do we.

And then remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word

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you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK! Everything you need to know is in there somewhere.

The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation, ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all- the whole world- had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap.

Or if we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations to always put

things back where we found them and cleaned up our own messes.

And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.



# WELCOME

Welcome to the GEM Express Kindergarten classroom. Let me know if you have any concerns or questions. I appreciate the privilege of teaching your children and believe that children learn best when there is open and frequent communication between the parents and the teachers. Please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Feel free to email me at:

Molly Wilaby at [molly@wilaby.net](mailto:molly@wilaby.net)

**School Hours** – The Kindergarten program is a four day a week program. We meet Monday through Thursday. Our school day begins at 9:00 am and ends at 1:45 pm.

**Carpool System** - We would like to stress that using the carpool system will help make our transition easier for all. Children should arrive between 8:50 am and 9:00 am. Afternoon carpool begins at 1:50 pm and ends at 2:10 pm. Review your GEM student handbook regarding attendance and carpool procedures.

**Weekly Newsletter** – The classroom newsletter is published every Friday on our classroom specific share site. This will keep you informed of up-coming events. This is the best way of keeping all the parents informed of classroom activities. Please make a habit of reading the newsletter weekly.

**Birthdays** – Children love sharing special treats and being recognized on their birthday. Please check with us if you would like to send a special snack on or near your child's birthday.

**Snack** – The teacher will be responsible for scheduling snacks for the class. Each student will be assigned on a rotating basis to bring the snack for the week. Please only send snacks low in sugar content. Some good choices: fresh fruit, crackers and cheese, raisins, trail mix, pretzels, goldfish, animal crackers, Cheerios, etc.

**Lunch** – The class eats at approximately 11:30 each day. Please remember to include in your child's lunch one item from each of the food groups. Please clearly label with your child's name their lunchbox, thermos, and any utensils. Remember to send straws, napkins and anything they might need. Unfortunately, we are unable to refrigerate or re-heat student's lunches. Please note the school has a strict policy regarding gum, candy or carbonated beverages in student's lunches. Please review the GEM student handbook if you have any questions.

**Rest Time** - There is no rest time allotted in the Kindergarten schedule. Make sure that your child gets plenty of rest. Setting and keeping a bedtime is a wonderful gift you can give to your

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child. It will help them to be alert and ready to learn each day! Most pediatricians suggest that 5 year olds get between 9 to 10 hours of sleep nightly.

**Labeling** - Please remember to label EVERY ITEM that comes to school!

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Molly Wilaby - [molly@wilaby.net](mailto:molly@wilaby.net)

I look forward to a great year! Together we can make your child's introduction to education a grand and wonderful experience.

Mrs. Molly Wilaby

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## KINDERGARTEN DISTINCTIVES

- Low student to teacher ratios
- Daily Bible / worship time
- Biblical integration throughout the day
- Shorter school days 9:00 am – 1:45 pm
- Shorter week (Monday – Thursday) which provides a great transition to longer days and weeks of public school
- Friday Enrichment is available for kindergarten students



## LEARNING STANDARDS FOR TEXAS CHILDREN

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills identify what Texas students should know and be able to do at every grade and in every course in the foundation and enrichment areas as they move successfully through our public schools. The following information summarizes the TEKS at the Kindergarten level in the four foundation areas of English Language Arts and Reading, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. If you would like to see all the TEKS that your child will learn, ask a teacher or principal to show you a copy; or order the TEKS from the Texas Education Agency; or see

[tea.texas.gov/curriculum/teks/](http://tea.texas.gov/curriculum/teks/)

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# KINDERGARTEN ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Kindergarten is for children who are five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Kindergarten curriculum is used within a developmentally appropriate kindergarten structure.

*Children who are not 5 by September 1st will need to be evaluated for placement in the program.*

Not sure if your child is ready to tackle the world of kindergarten? Our Kindergarten Assessment Checklist will give you an idea on what areas your child is doing well in, and where he may need some extra attention. It's a good idea to do the checklist, print it out and then work with your child in the areas she needs extra help. In a few weeks, do the checklist again to see how much your child has improved.

Answer "Yes" or "Not yet" to the following statements:

## **Fine Motor Skills**

1. Puts a 10- to 12-piece puzzle together
2. Holds scissors correctly
3. Holds a pencil or crayon properly

## **Gross Motor Skills**

1. Runs, jumps and skips
2. Walks backward
3. Walks up and down stairs

## **Social Skills**

1. Uses words instead of being physical when angry
  2. Speaks clearly so an adult can understand him/her
  3. Plays with other children
  4. Follows simple multi-step directions
  5. Expresses feelings and needs
  6. Goes to the bathroom by him/herself
  7. Waits his/her turn and shares
  8. Talks in sentences
  9. Asks questions about things around him/her
  10. Enjoys having books read to him/her
  11. Can tell a story about a past event
  12. Says "please" and "thank you"
  13. Can spend extended periods away from Mom and Dad
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### **Academic Skills**

1. Recognizes shapes (square, circle, triangle, rectangle)
2. Can sort items by color, shape and size
3. Can identify six parts of his/her body
4. Understands concept words such as up, down, in, out, behind, over
5. Counts from 1 to 30
6. Recognizes at least five colors
7. Tries to write his/her name
8. Recognizes uppercase letters
9. Recognizes his / her written name
10. Recognizes numbers 0-20

### **Personal Information**

1. Knows his/her full name
2. Knows how old he/she is
3. Knows his/her mother's and father's first names

### **It is our belief that a strong Kindergarten program:**

- Views each child as a unique person and provides opportunities for success at each individual's own developmental level.
  - Provides learning activities that are meaningful to the child which results in the child being motivated to learn.
  - Provides hands-on learning by giving children the opportunity to interact with concrete materials, such as blocks, puzzles, paints, buttons, and other items that can be manipulated. Children learn by doing!
  - Sees play as a child's work. Play influences a child's thinking, problem-solving, language, and social growth.
  - Introduces the delights of good literature, encourages students to "write" their own books, and to listen and engage in a variety of literature. Children are encouraged to begin a lifelong love of reading.
  - Provides many opportunities to develop social skills, such as cooperating, helping, talking, and listening to each other to solve problems.
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## PARENTS' NOTES

Please read the following helpful information gathered from an AISD kindergarten teacher. Hopefully, this information will make your child's first day of school and all other days more successful for the child and for you. You are probably aware of some of the hints but may not remember nor think of others.

- Prepare for the first day of school in a positive way. Be upbeat and excited about the new experience. Separation anxiety that the child feels is often brought on by parent(s)' attitude towards his/her beginning school and is transferred to the child. The parent(s)' attitude towards the experience is very important as the first day of school sets the mood for the rest of the school year.
  - This is a new stage in your child's life. Create a continuous atmosphere of structure in his/her activities. Plan a routine of going to bed at an appropriate time so that he/she will have plenty of rest before having to awaken. This structure should carry over into other daily activities such as eating, dressing, etc. Additionally, children of this age become very frustrated when rushed to get ready to go somewhere on a time deadline. They feel complete and successful when given enough time to prepare.
  - Give your child responsibility for their belongings such as his/her school supplies, backpack, take-home papers, etc. Help them decide ahead of time where they will put papers to carry them to and from school so that such items will not be accidentally left behind or discarded. Also, set a goal to give your child the responsibility of entering school on his/her own. After the first day of walking to the designated room for the beginning of the school day with your child, encourage your child to use the carpool drop-off system.
  - Plan ahead for the bathroom times when your child must be able to successfully button/snap back into his/her clothing. Snaps located in the crotch or shoulder are difficult for this aged child. This situation causes frustration and embarrassment for the child if a teacher has to help him/her completely dress again. At recess time, playing on the playground and playground equipment can be a frustration for a child wearing flip-flops, slide shoes, or even sandals. These all have a tendency to slip off and/or collect sand and gravel.
  - Kindergarten curriculum is stressing reading preparedness more and more. Books that have a definite, predictable pattern or repetition and rhyme promote such preparedness. If possible, read an ongoing story such as a suitable chapter book to your child each evening and then share a picture book with him/her associating the words with what is happening in the picture
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# BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

In Kindergarten, we will be working on developing the students' ability to make the right choice because it is the right choice to make. Our guiding principles will be using the Fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control.

The first week of school, we will write a class constitution with the following statement:

In life and in our classroom we are responsible, respectful, and reverent.

This is what it looks like:

- We pray to God
- We thank God
- We put on listening ears
- We use walking feet
- We keep hands to self
- We use an inside voice
- We help others
- We raise our hands
- One person talks, we all listen
- We clean up
- We say please, thank you, excuse me (use manners)

We will not be sending home a daily report; we are fostering your child to make the best choice because it is following God's rules.

Should a student need extra guidance for behavioral expectations, they will go to the "Rest Stop". There they will take the time to get their selves in control and when ready they can rejoin the activity. If the behavior is something that is repeated or a concern, I will speak with you directly about it (usually via email).

Of course we will be honoring the "hooray" moments as well! That could be through high fives, fist bumps, applause, sending a note home, and occasionally a trip to the Hooray Wall for a special prize.

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# **BECOMING A READER**

## **Emergent Reading**

Children...

- Know what books are
- Build a repertoire of stories and rhyme
- Play at reading
- Develop early concepts and skills basic to reading
- Learn to use language both spoken and written

## **Tackling Print**

Children...

- Begin to figure out how written language works
- Recognize that marks on paper are not random
- Pay attention to the written language

## **Early Reading**

Children...

- See how language and written symbols work
- Read simple stories
- Learn how to decode

## **Extending Literacy**

Children...

- Know they can read and that reading contributes to their lives
  - Are ready to expand reading
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# **BECOMING A WRITER**

## **Scribbling Stage**

Children use a combination of picture and word scribble

## **Pre-Communicative Stage**

Children begin to “pretend-write” using random letters usually without meaning

## **Semi-Phonetic Stage**

Children begin to recognize that there is a relationship between sounds of words and letters

## **Phonetic Stage**

Children represent all sounds phonetically

## **Transitional Stage**

Children begin to use common vowel patterns and spell common words correctly

## **Independent Stage**

Children use many writing conventions correctly and begin to question inconsistencies

## **Kindergarten Language Curriculum**

Starfall

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# **BECOMING A MATHEMATICIAN**

Our focus at GEM Express Kindergarten is to foster number sense and develop logical thinking through a variety of experiences (literature, manipulatives, games, practice pages, journaling). We emphasize that math is everywhere and is a natural part of our thinking.

## **Math Workshop**

Our math learning time is structured as a workshop:

- Warm-up activity
- Mini Lesson
- Practice
- Math Stations/Guided Math Groups
- Review

## **Kindergarten Math Curriculum**

Starfall

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## **BLESSED IS THE CHILD...**

Whose teacher listens to him,  
for they will communicate.

Whose teacher helps him feel secure,  
for he will be free to learn.

Whose teacher loves him,  
for he will know his boundaries.

Whose teacher knows how he grows,  
for his needs can be met.

Whose teacher helps him achieve,  
for he develops a good concept of himself.

Whose teacher accepts him as he is,  
for he will learn not to be a hypocrite.

Whose teacher lets him work independently,  
for he will grow.

Whose teacher does not compare him with others,  
for he will grow as an individual.

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# **SAMPLE KINDERGARTEN CLASS SCHEDULE**

8:50 to 9:15	Arrival and warm up activities
9:15 to 9:30	Chapel (Wednesday) / Bible
9:30 to 9:50	Morning Meeting
9:50 to 10:00	Snack / Restroom Break
10:00 to 11:30	Language / Math
11:30 to 12:00	Lunch
12:00 to 1:00	Interest Centers
12:30 to 1:00	P.E. / Creative Movement (Monday) Science Guy (Tuesday) Music / Spanish (Wednesday) Interest Centers / Art (Thursday) *Days can change based on the current year's specials schedules
1:00 to 1:30	Playground
1:30 to 1:45	Pack Up / Chapter Book / Goodbyes
1:45 to 2:15	Carpool

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