What social skills will ease a child’s entry into kindergarten?

Kindergarten teachers’ expectations of beginning kindergarten students vary. They may include the social and emotional ability to function within a cooperative learning environment, in which the child works both independently and as a member of small and large groups. Children may be expected to attend to and finish a task; to listen to a story in a group; to follow two or three oral directions; to take turns and share; to care for their personal needs such as going to the restroom and putting on their coat; and to care for their belongings. They may also be expected to follow rules, respect the property of others, and work within the time and space constraints of the school program.

What cognitive and motor skills are generally expected by kindergarten teachers?

Teachers expect children to develop certain physical skills before they enter kindergarten. Children are expected to have mastered many large muscle skills, such as running and climbing, and fine motor skills requiring eye-hand coordination, such as use of a pencil, crayons or scissors. Some may expect the child to be able to print his or her own name.

Teachers may assume children can see and hear when objects or sounds are alike or different. Many children will learn the names of sounds of letters as well as the names and quantities of numerals before or during kindergarten.

Children are expected to have developed the concepts of ‘same’ and ‘different’ so that they can sort objects into groups that share a similar characteristic, such as, ‘all are red’ or ‘all are something you can wear’. Usually, the kindergarten teacher expects the children to recognize their own names in writing, and to name colors, shapes, and sizes. Children may be expected to know their own address and telephone number.

Most 5-year-olds can express themselves fluently with a variety of words and can understand an even larger variety of words used in conversations and stories. They may be expected to be able to retell a simple story in their own words and understand that words are read from left to right.