

3. Early Childhood (4-5)

a. Characteristics

- (1) Physically he is a player (Eating, sleeping, playing make up his life)
- (2) Play is a physical trainer. (Between ages of 4 and 7 there is great enlargement of limbs so running is an important part of games. Play your stories, verses, songs.)
- (3) Play is a mental instructor. Have good Bible story book with good, large pictures. Learn to share (yours and mine), teach truthfulness, some responsibility (put on and take off clothes, hang them up or put them away, pick up toys, etc.)
 - (a) Childish instincts expressed in play—work out through senses, learns self-control.
 - (b) Childish imaginations expressed in play. Thinks largely in mental pictures—pictures developed in play, story-telling important.
 - (c) Childish imitations expressed in play—imitates real life experiences.
 - [1] Stimulates childish thinking
 - [a] Remembers
 - [b] Understands actions, purposes, traits, and customs.
Here propensity of child to imitate someone he admires may be utilized by parent or teacher to gain a purpose.
- (4) Play is a social equalizer
 - (a) Wants to engage in games of others
 - (b) This checks spirit of egotism
- (5) Play is a moral teacher
 - (a) Attitude of peers important to him
 - [1] By their attitude learns to avoid selfishness, stubbornness, tantrums, tears, dishonesty, injustice.
- (6) Mentally he is a questioner. (Why?)
 - (a) Encouragement or discouragement of child's questions will affect his education—question is index to his mind.
 - (b) Encouragement or discouragement of child's questions will affect his personality—question is also index to his personality—himself—it is a manifestation of self-realization, self-seeking. This is time for developing personality.
- (7) Religiously he is a believer—believes everything you tell him because of lack of experience; therefore behooves parents and teachers to be scrupulously truthful.

b. Training—divided between home, S.S., and Kindergarten

- (1) Home—Mother is greatest teacher, but father should be involved too.
 - (a) Family Devotions
 - (b) Play observation
 - (c) Sunday afternoon occupation
- (2) S.S. and Church
 - (a) Organized Administration
 - (b) Graded lessons
 - (c) Trained teachers (should have helpers)
 - (d) Worship
 - [1] Praise (thanks—short sentence prayers or testimonies)
 - [2] " (singing)
 - [3] Giving
 - (a) Instruction
 - [1] God as Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus as real, present Friend
 - [2] Nature lessons
 - [3] Child lessons