



Three-year-olds . . .

- *are enthusiastic*
- *are egocentric*
- *like to please*
- *are full of wonder*

Physical Characteristics

- have developed large-muscle control
- are just developing small-muscle control; cannot manipulate scissors well
- are full of energy
- need to move and stretch often
- love to climb and run
- are developing a sense of rhythm

Socioemotional Characteristics

- do not like to be told what to do
- need freedom to make choices
- are still self-centered but may share with a friend
- need help to handle feelings and relate to others
- like to celebrate
- prefer to play alone
- need frequent encouragement and reassurance from grown-ups
- operate on an emotional level and spontaneously express their feelings
- like to be independent
- are amiable
- are continually growing in sensitivity to other people

Intellectual Characteristics

- are curious
- speak and understand short sentences
- have an attention span of about five minutes
- do not understand symbols
- are imaginative and creative
- like silliness, rhyming, and long words

Religious Characteristics

- begin to understand God's love by experiencing human love
- need to see that God made them and every other child unique and special
- need to experience success
- like to help
- are full of wonder at creation and at their own powers
- delight in simple prayer