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# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK JOURNAL GUIDE

The guide you hold in your hand doesn’t have very many words, but it does have a lot of ideas. Some of these ideas come from thousands of hours of research. Others come from parents, educators, and volunteers who spend every day with kids the same age as yours. This guide won’t tell you everything about your kid, but it will tell you a few things about kids at this age.

The best way to use this guide is to take what these pages tell you about babies and combine it with what you know is true about your baby.

Let’s sum it up:

**THING ABOUT BABIES + THOUGHTS ABOUT YOUR BABY = YOUR GUIDE TO THE NEXT 52 WEEKS OF PARENTING**

After each idea in this guide, there are pages with a few questions designed to prompt you to think about your kid, your family, and yourself as a parent. The only guarantee we give to parents who use this guide is: You will mess up some things as a parent this year. Actually, that’s a guarantee to every parent, regardless. But you, you picked up this book! You want to be a better parent. And that’s what we hope this guide will do: help you parent your baby just a little better, simply because you paused to consider a few ideas that can help you make the most of this phase.
Physically
- Loses incisor teeth (6-8 years)
- Grows two to three inches and gains an average of five pounds
- Able to ride a bicycle, roller skate, and jump rope
- Draws a person with a body
- Needs 10-12 hours of sleep each night

Socially
- Wants to please and help adults
- Has a hard time asking for help
- Needs guidance taking turns and losing well
- May show some (not much) gender preference for playmates

Mentally
- Can focus on one activity for 5-15 minutes
- Recognizes and names numbers, shapes, and colors
- Knows the difference between need vs. want and real vs. pretend
- Doesn’t logically interpret cause and effect

Emotionally
- Tends to be optimistic
- Can be fanatical about the truth
- Benefits from relaxation techniques (take a deep breath)
- Expresses feelings better through play and art rather than words
- Deals with fear and anxiety by distracting themselves
- Highly sensitive to harsh criticism, tone, and body language
MEASURE IT OUT.
Write down the number of weeks that have already passed since your sixth grader was born. Then, write down the number of weeks you have left before they potentially graduate high school.

HINT: If you want a little help counting it out, you can download the free Parent Cue app on all mobile platforms.

What day of the week is best for you to remove a marble?

Is there anything you want to do each week as you remove a marble? (Example: Say a prayer, write your kid a note, or retell one favorite memory from this past week)

CREATE A VISUAL COUNTDOWN.
Find a jar and fill it with one marble for each week you have remaining with your sixth grader. Then, make a habit of removing one marble every week as a reminder to make the most of your time.
Where can you place your visual countdown so you will see it frequently?
EVERY KID NEEDS STORIES OVER TIME — TO GIVE THEM A BIGGER PERSPECTIVE.

BOOKS YOUR NINTH GRADER MIGHT BE READING

THE HITCHHIKER’S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
by Douglas Adams

THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS
by Ann Brashares

THE AWAKENING
by Kate Chopin

GREAT EXPECTATIONS
by Charles Dickens

ALAS, BABYLON
by Pat Frank

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME
by Mark Haddon

CATCH-22
by Joseph Heller

THE ILIAD / THE ODYSSEY
by Homer

THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD
by Zora Neale Hurston

BRAVE NEW WORLD
by Aldous Huxley

ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO’S NEST
by Ken Kesey

THE POISONWOOD BIBLE
by Barbara Kingsolver

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
by Harper Lee

ANIMAL FARM
by George Orwell

ANTHEM
by Ayn Rand

ROMEO AND JULIET
by Shakespeare

FRANKENSTEIN
by Mary Shelley

THE HELP
by Kathryn Stockett

NIGHT
by Elie Wiesel