

*Developmental Studies Center*

**SCALES FROM STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE,  
CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT  
FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS  
(GRADES 3-6)**

(Grades at which the scales have been used, and for which we therefore have normative data, are indicated for each scale and item). Items that are reverse-scored are indicated by an R.

**A. STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF, FEELINGS ABOUT CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL**

**Sense of Classroom as a Community** (Grades 3-6). A combination of the following two subscales. Degree to which students feel their class is a community, in which the members are supportive, helpful, and mutually concerned, and have the opportunity to exert effective influence. Internal consistency reliability = .87, 24 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

**Student Autonomy and Influence in the Classroom.** Degree to which students feel they have the opportunity to participate in classroom planning and decision-making. Internal consistency reliability = .81, 10 Likert-type items (1= never to 5 = always).

*Items:*

In my class students have a say in deciding what goes on.

The teacher lets us do things our own way.

In my class the teacher is the only one who decides on the rules. (R)

The teacher lets me choose what I will work on.

In my class the teacher and students together plan what we will do.

In my class I get to do things that I want to do.

In my class the teacher and students decide together what the rules will be.

The teacher in my class asks the students to help decide what the class should do.

Students in my class can get a rule changed if they think it is unfair.

In my class the students get to help plan what they will do.

**Classroom Supportiveness.** Degree to which students feel their classmates are supportive, helpful, and mutually concerned. Internal consistency reliability = .85, 14 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

Students in my class are willing to go out of their way to help someone.

My classmates care about my work just as much as their own.

My class is like a family.

The students in my class don't really care about each other. (R)

A lot of students in my class like to put others down. (R)

Students in my class help each other learn.

Students in my class help each other, even if they are not friends.

Students in my class don't get along together very well. (R)

Students in my class just look out for themselves. (R)

Students in my class are mean to each other. (R)

When I'm having trouble with my schoolwork, at least one of my classmates will try to help.

Students in my class treat each other with respect.

Students in my class work together to solve problems.

When someone in my class does well, everyone in the class feels good.

**Sense of School as a Community** (Grades 3-6). Degree to which students feel their school as a whole is supportive, welcoming, and safe. The following 14 items are added to the above classroom as community items to make a total scale of 38 items. Total internal consistency reliability = .87, 38 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Additional items:*

When I'm having a problem, some other student will help me.

Students at this school really care about each other.

Students at this school are willing to go out of their way to help someone.

Teachers and students treat each other with respect in this school.

People care about each other in this school.

Students at this school work together to solve problems.

Students in this school don't seem to like each other very well. (R)

Students in this school are just looking out for themselves. (R)

Students in this school treat each other with respect.

My school is like a family.

The students in this school don't really care about each other. (R)

I feel that I can talk to the teachers in this school about things that are bothering me.

Teachers and students in this school don't seem to like each other. (R)

Students in this school help each other, even if they are not friends.

**Liking for School** (Grades 3-6). Students' enjoyment of, feeling of attachment to school. Internal consistency reliability = .81, 7 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

I like my school.

I wish I didn't have to go to school. (R)

I wish I could go to a different school. (R)

I'm bored in school. (R)

I am glad to get back to school after summer vacation.

I would be very sad if I had to go to a different school.

I hate being in school. (R)

**Enjoyment of Class** (Grades 3-6). Students' positive feelings about being in the class. Internal consistency reliability = .66, 4 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

My classroom is a fun place to be.

What we do in class is a waste of time. (R)

I would rather be in my class than any other one.

I enjoy what I do in class.

**Trust in and Respect for Teachers** (Grades 4,5). Students' feelings that teachers in the school are trustworthy, supportive, fair and consistent. Internal consistency reliability = .84, 10 Likert-type items (1 = Not at all true, 2 = Sort of true, 3 = Very true).

*Items:*

The teachers here really care about me.

Teachers can't be trusted; they say one thing one time and something different the next time. (R)

The teachers here always keep their promises.

The teachers here don't care what I think. (R)

The teachers here always try to be fair.

Teachers here punish kids without even knowing what really happened. (R)

I feel safe and comfortable with the teachers in this school.

Teachers in this school get mad whenever you make a mistake. (R)

When my teacher tells me not to do something I want to do, I know he or she must have a good reason.

Our teacher will always listen to our ideas about how to make the class rules better.

**Quality of Group Interaction** (Grades 3-5). Students' description of the quality of work and interaction in classroom group activities. Internal consistency reliability = .81, 12 Likert-type items (1= Never to 5 = Always).

*Items:*

*When you've been in groups in your class where everyone in the group worked together on something, how often did the group members:*

Pay attention to what every member had to say?

Make sure that every member had a chance to participate?

Work together to solve the group's problems?

All agree before writing down a group answer or making a group decision?

Share supplies and materials with each other?

Ask questions of each other when they didn't understand something?

*How often do the following things happen when you work in groups?*

*When I work in groups:* (same response scale as above)

I have a good time working with the other students.

I get upset because the group doesn't do as good a job as I could by myself. (R)

The other students do nothing but ask stupid questions. (R)

I learn a lot while helping the other students.

The other students act like I don't know anything. (R)

The other students just take over and I don't get to do much. (R)

***Individual Items*** (Grades 3-6)

How much time do you spend *in school* reading books that you picked yourself?

How often does your teacher read books or stories aloud in class?

How often do you have discussions about books or stories that the class has read?

How often do you have discussions where you talk about why characters in books or stories did what they did?

How often do you work together with one other student during class?

How often do you work together with a few other students during class?

How often do you have class meetings in your class, when students and teachers get together to make plans or talk about problems?

## B. ACADEMIC MOTIVATION

**Intrinsic Academic Motivation** (Grades 3-4). Students' inclination to do academic work because of inherent interest and personal motivation. Internal consistency reliability = .76, 6 items (1= Not a reason, 2= A small reason, 3=A big reason). (Items are presented mixed with those in the following scale, Extrinsic Academic Motivation.)

*Items:*

*When you work hard in this class, why do you usually do it?*

Because the work is interesting to me.

Because I want to learn as much as I can.

Because I want to see how well I can understand the work.

*When you do your homework, why do you usually do it?*

Because I am interested in the work.

Because I want to learn as much as I can.

Because I know that doing my homework now will help me in the future.

**Extrinsic Academic Motivation** (Grades 3-4). Students' inclination to do academic work to gain rewards or avoid punishments. Internal consistency reliability = .64, 6 items (1= Not a reason, 2= A small reason, 3=A big reason). (Items are presented mixed with those in the preceding scale, Intrinsic Academic Motivation.)

*Items:*

*When you work hard in this class, why do you usually do it?*

Because I'll get in trouble if I don't.

Because I want to get good grades.

Because I want the teacher to think well of me.

*When you do your homework, why do you usually do it?*

Because I want to get a good grade.

Because the teacher assigned the work and I have to do it.

Because I'll get in trouble if I don't do it.

Note: Intrinsic Motivation is often scored as the ratio of the intrinsic to the extrinsic score (or as the proportion of the sum of the intrinsic items to the sum of intrinsic plus the extrinsic items).

**Preference for Challenging Tasks** (Grades 3-4). Students' preferences for academic tasks that are difficult over those that are easy. Internal consistency reliability = .67, 5 items, each a choice between two alternatives. Score is the sum of bolded items selected.

*Items:*

I would rather

- A. work a puzzle I know I can do.
- B. work a hard puzzle I've never done before.**

I like a puzzle

- A. that takes hard work to solve.**
- B. that is easy to solve.

I would rather

- A. get hints to help me solve a hard problem.
- B. try to solve a hard problem without any hints.**

I would rather

- A. play checkers against someone who plays a little better than I do.**
- B. play checkers against someone who plays a little worse than I do.

I would rather

- A. play a game that is hard for me to win.**
- B. play a game that is easy for me to win.

**Individual Item** (Grades 3-6)

How do you feel about reading?

- A. I hate it
- B. I don't like it
- C. I don't like **or** dislike it
- D. I like it
- E. I like it very much

**C. PERSONAL FEELINGS / SELF-ASSESSMENTS**

**General Self-Esteem** (Grades 4-5). Students' general feelings about themselves. Internal consistency reliability = .80, 4 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

I like myself just the way I am.

I wish I were different from the way I am. (R)

I am happy with myself.

I like myself.

**Academic Self-Esteem** (Grades 4-5). Students' assessment of their own academic skills and performance. Internal consistency reliability = .74, 4 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

I am not a very good student. (R)

I think I'm a good student.

I have trouble figuring things out in school. (R)

I am doing a good job in school.

I don't do very well in school. (R)

**Sense of Autonomy** (Grades 3-6). Students' feelings that they can make decisions that affect them. Internal consistency reliability = .58, 8 Likert-type items (1= Not at all true, 2= Sort of true, 3 = Very true).

*Items:*

I decide what I think is right, and then I do it.

I am the one who decides what happens to me.

I decide most important things for myself.

I decide what I want to do, and then I do it.

Even when I have the choice, I don't like to decide things for myself. (R)

I usually don't get to choose what I do. (R)

I make my own decisions, even when people don't want me to.

I don't have any choice about most of the things I do. (R)

## D. SOCIAL/INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

**Social Competence** (Grades 4-5). Students' assessment of their own social skills. Internal consistency reliability = .80, 10 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

- I can always cheer up someone who is feeling sad.
- I can always find a way to help people end arguments.
- I listen carefully to what other people say to me.
- I'm good at taking turns, and sharing things with others.
- It's easy for me to make suggestions without being bossy.
- I'm very good at working with other children.
- I always know when people need help, and what kind of help to give.
- I know how to disagree without starting a fight or argument.
- I'm not very good at helping people. (R)
- I'm good at finding fair ways to solve problems.

**Conflict Resolution Skill** (Grades 3-6). Students' ability to suggest solutions to interpersonal conflicts that take both parties' positions into account. Internal consistency reliability = .83, 8 items, each describing a hypothetical conflict situation with five possible responses ranging from aggressive (scored 1) to collaborative and compromising (scored 5).

*Items:*

Suppose you put your pencil down for a minute and a boy in your class comes along and takes it. You ask him to give it back, but he says "no." What would you do next?

- A. Take the pencil away from him.
- B. Tell him that you really need your pencil to finish your work.
- C. Ask the teacher to make him give it back
- D. Help him try to find another pencil, or tell him he can use yours after you are finished with it.
- E. Tell him that you will hit him or take something of his if he doesn't give back your pencil.

What if that (what you just picked) didn't work? What would you do then?

- A. Take the pencil away from him.
- B. Ask the teacher to make him give it back.
- C. Help him try to find another pencil, or tell him that he can use your pencil after you are finished with it.
- D. Tell him that you will hit him or take something of his if he doesn't give you back your pencil.
- E. Find another pencil for yourself.

Suppose your class has gotten a new computer, and you've been waiting for a long time to have a chance to use it. Your turn finally comes, and you sit down and start working at it. You get up for a minute to get something, and when you come back, a girl is sitting at the computer. You ask her to leave, but she says, "I'm here now." What would you do next?

- A. Go and get the teacher.
- B. Tell the girl to leave or you'll beat her up later.
- C. Explain that it is your turn to use the computer.
- D. Push her out of the seat.
- E. Offer to share the computer with her.

What if that (what you just picked) didn't work? What would you do then?

- A. Go and get the teacher.
- B. Go back to your desk and find something else to do.
- C. Explain that it is your turn to use the computer.
- D. Push the girl out of the seat.
- E. Offer to share the computer with her.

Suppose you are at the beach, making a sand-castle. You have just about finished it, and are digging a tunnel, to let water come around the castle. Just then, a boy comes over and starts building another sand-castle right where your tunnel needs to go. You ask him to build his castle somewhere else, but he keeps on building it right there. What would you do next?

- A. Tell him to go away.
- B. See if the two of you can work together on both castles.
- C. Explain to him that he is blocking your tunnel.
- D. Get the lifeguard or some other adult to make him move.
- E. Knock down the other castle.

What if that (what you just picked) didn't work? What would you do then?

- A. Go away and do something else.
- B. See if the two of you of you can work together on both castles.
- C. Explain to him that he is blocking your tunnel.
- D. Get the lifeguard or some other adult to make him move.
- E. Hit him.

Suppose you're making a car out of legos. You have laid out all the pieces you think you'll need for the car. While you are working on it, a girl comes over and, without asking, takes some of your pieces. You ask for the pieces back, but she doesn't give them back. What would you do next?

- A. Explain why you need the pieces for the car you are making.
- B. Grab the pieces back.
- C. Suggest that the two of you make something together.
- D. Find someone to help you get the pieces back.
- E. Make something else that doesn't need as many pieces.

What if that (what you just picked) didn't work? What would you do then?

- A. Explain why you need the pieces for the car you are making.
- B. Let her have all the pieces, and find something else to do.
- C. Grab the pieces back.
- D. Suggest that the two of you make something together.
- E. Find someone to help you get the pieces back.

## E. SOCIAL/MORAL ORIENTATIONS

**Intrinsic Prosocial Motivation** (Grades 3-4). Students' inclination to act in prosocial ways because of personal feelings of empathy, concern for the others, or commitment to interpersonal values. Internal consistency reliability = .71, 6 items (1= Not a reason, 2= A small reason, 3=A big reason). (Items are presented mixed with those in the following scale, Extrinsic Prosocial Motivation.)

*Items:*

*When you help another student in this class ,why do you usually do it?*

Because I think it is good to help.

Because I am concerned about the other person.

Because I would feel bad if I didn't.

*When you try not to make noise in this class why do you usually do it?*

Because it would be wrong to disturb other students who are trying to work.

Because I would feel bad if my noisiness stopped someone else from learning something.

Because I am thinking about how I would feel if I was trying to concentrate, and others were making noise.

**Extrinsic Prosocial Motivation** (Grades 3-4). Students' inclination to act in prosocial ways in order to gain rewards or avoid punishments. Internal consistency reliability = .64, 6 items (1= Not a reason, 2= A small reason, 3=A big reason). (Items are presented mixed with those in the preceding scale, Intrinsic Prosocial Motivation.)

*Items:*

*When you help another student in this class, why do you usually do it?*

So I will get help in return.

Because the teacher told me to help.

Because I want to get a reward or praise from the teacher.

*When you try not to make noise in this class why do you usually do it?*

So I (or my group) will get points or a prize if I (we) can keep quiet.

Because I'll get in trouble if I make noise.

Because the teacher told us to be quiet.

Note: Intrinsic Motivation is often scored as the ratio of the intrinsic to the extrinsic score (or as the proportion of the sum of the intrinsic items to the sum of intrinsic plus the extrinsic items).

**Democratic Values** (Grades 3-5). Students' endorsement of statements favoring equality of representation and participation, willingness to compromise, and belief in one's responsibility to state opinions, even if unpopular. Internal consistency reliability = .70, 10 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

Four kids are making up some rules for a new game. Three of them agree on a rule, but the fourth one doesn't like it. Since the others agree, he should not say anything about it. (R)

Students who get in trouble on one class trip should not be allowed to vote on where to go for the next class trip. (R)

Your work group is deciding what project to do for the next science class. Before you say what you would like, everyone else says they want to study volcanoes. You should not bother to say what you would like to study. (R)

When two people really disagree about something, talking about it is just a waste of time. (R)

When the students in a class at school are voting on something, the students who are always making noise should not be allowed to vote. (R)

Some students are trying to make up a play for a school assembly. One of them has thought of something, but is sure the others won't like it. She should keep quiet about it. (R)

Students who get in trouble on one field trip should not be allowed to go on the next field trip. (R)

Two friends are trying to decide what to do on a Saturday afternoon. One thinks they should go to a movie; the other thinks they should go to the park. Each one should do what he wants to by himself. (R)

Terry's family is planning an outing. She already knows that everyone else except her wants to go to a museum. She should not say what she wants to do. (R)

The best students in a class should be the ones to decide which new project the class should start. (R)

**Enjoyment of Helping Others Learn** (Grades 4-5). Students' enjoyment of helping other students in learning activities. Internal consistency reliability = .78, 5 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

I think it's boring to try to help someone learn something. (R)

I always enjoy helping other students in my class.

I don't like to help other students with their school work. (R)

It makes me feel good to help someone learn something.

I like to help other students learn.

**Concern for Others** (Grades 3-6). Students' feeling of concern for, and desire to help other people. Internal consistency reliability = .80, 10 Likert-type items (1= Disagree a lot to 5 = Agree a lot).

*Items:*

People should work out their own problems by themselves. (R)

I care about my family and my friends; other people can take care of themselves. (R)

Problems in other parts of the world are no concern of mine. (R)

When I hear about people who are sad or lonely, I want to do something to help.

Most people who ask for help are just being lazy. (R)

When I see someone having a problem, I want to help.

I should just take care of myself and let others take care of themselves. (R)

Everybody has enough problems of their own without worrying about other people's problems. (R)

A student has enough schoolwork to do without worrying about other students' work. (R)

People should look after themselves and not try to solve other people's problems. (R)

**Outgroup Acceptance** (Grades 3-4). Students' "social distance" from people in other groups. Internal consistency reliability = .80, 10 Likert-type items (with 3 additional anchor items); (1= I would **not** want to work with, 2 = I **might** want to work with, 3 = I **would** want to work with). The following hypothetical situation is presented:

*Suppose the city you live in has decided to clean up an empty, overgrown lot, and turn it into a playground. The city has asked for volunteers to pick up trash, pull weeds and things like that. Let's say you volunteered to help with this. How would you feel about working with each of the following people?*

*Items:*

*Would you want to work with:*

kids from other neighborhoods?

kids from your school?

people from other countries?

kids from other schools?

homeless people?

kids you know from your neighborhood?

heavy people?

skinny people?

people who look different?

people who wear funny clothes?

people whose religion is different from yours?

friends of your family?

people who speak a different language than you do?

**Altruistic Behavior** (Grades 3-5). Students' self-reports of their own behaviors that helped others. Internal consistency reliability = .82, 10 frequency items (1= Never to 4 = Many times).

*Items:*

*Since the start of this school year...*

I helped someone who was hurt.

I cheered up someone who was feeling sad.

I helped someone who was being picked on.

I helped someone who fell down.

I got help for someone who was hurt.

I shared my lunch with someone who didn't have any.

I helped an older person.

I stopped someone from hurting another child.

I helped a younger child who was lost.

I stopped someone from hurting an animal.