

Humans - Birth to Old Age

When humans are first born, there is very little they can do except drink milk, and cry to remind people they need feeding. Soon, though, the most rapid and extraordinary learning sequence takes place, as young children learn to walk, to talk and to use their hands to pick things up and move them around.

By the age of around four or five, most children have already mastered a most impressive set of skills, which, as older children, they are then able to put to good use finding out all about the world around them. Children's bodies are usually full of energy, and their minds are excited and interested in new information and ideas.

Around the age of twelve, children start to change, as they begin the long process, known as puberty, of turning into adults. Hair starts to grow in different areas of the body, boys' voices become deeper, and girls begin to grow breasts.

The process is usually complete around the age of eighteen. Most people are now fully grown and their muscles have more or less reached full strength. They should remain in this condition, providing they are not affected by illness, for the next forty years or so of their adult lives.

Gradually, though, as people become older, different parts of the body start to deteriorate. Hair turns grey or falls out and skin becomes saggy and wrinkly. Eyesight and hearing can also start to become weaker. Thankfully, though, for most of us, the brain still continues to work well, perhaps better than ever because of all the experiences we have had, and we are able to put all the different skills we have acquired through life to better use than ever before.

1. Are babies born with many skills? Explain some of the things they can and can't do.

2. Which is the most intense and rapid learning period, and which skills are acquired at this time?

3. When and how is the transition made from childhood to adulthood?

4. What changes occur as people go through their adult lives?

5. Would you rather be a child or an adult? Explain why.
