

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01

Theory Paper

General comments

A positive approach to this paper was reflected in the responses made by the candidates. The knowledge and understanding displayed was wide and many papers showed some considerable depth of knowledge. Very few questions were left unanswered.

However, it is still obvious that some candidates do not read the questions carefully enough and that their responses do not answer the question set. These candidates often fail to gain any credit for their answers. A useful examination technique is to underline the 'Key' words in each question. Encouraging candidates to identify the key elements of the question decreases the chances of incorrect interpretation during the examination. This technique can be discussed and taught in revision lessons.

Section A

- (1) This produced some good responses, with many achieving full marks.
- (2) A disappointing response. Only a few candidates knew 'Folic Acid' – but those who did went on to answer each part correctly.
- (3) 'The changes in parent's lives' produced a wide variety of views. However, many answers described only one way, and applied it to both parts of the question, thus gaining only half the marks available.
- (4) The reasons why a mother's blood is tested during pregnancy is very well known.
- (5) The room temperature given varied from 16°C to 40°C, although there were many correct answers.
- (6) The question asked about how a mother would know when **labour** begins. However, many candidates wrote about how the mother would know if she were **pregnant**, which was **not** required. This illustrates the importance of reading questions carefully.

Candidates who read the question properly provided some excellent answers.

- (7) The question required 'examples of attention-seeking behaviour by a toddler'. This produced some unusual answers, including remedies for bad behaviour.
- (8) There was some evidence of personal knowledge in many answers, and this resulted in high level marks.
- (9) (a) A common mistake was to state that this meant that you could listen to the baby's heartbeat, instead of correct response that it provided pictures of the baby in the uterus.
- (b) Although there were some good responses, many stated that it was only to tell the sex of the baby.

Section B

- (10)(a) Many candidates did not take notice of the question which stated '**A very young baby**'.
Thus the answers given did not answer the question. This question was not well understood.
- (b) Infectious diseases were generally well known.

- (c) This aspect was far better understood than part (a).
- (d) Symptoms of illness in a child were described by many in clear detail.
- (e) Instead of discussing **types of emergencies** to be treated by a doctor or hospital, so candidates listed serious diseases.
- (f) Although some candidates knew how to prepare a child for going into hospital, many had only a limited idea. Some of the suggestions given would have caused unnecessary panic for the child.

11 (a) and (b) Both parts produced some good responses.

- (c) The menstrual cycle was thoroughly known and understood, and produced many answers that gained full marks.
- (d) Most candidates could name one or two female hormones, but some named a male hormone. Although there were examples of correct controls, this part was less well known.

Section C

All candidates read the instructions and answered 12(a) or 12(b).

Of the two questions **12(b)** produced the better responses, with many demonstrating a high level of knowledge and application.

The explanation as to how sugar can damage a child's teeth was clear and detailed in many cases, and continued with the details of how to avoid the problem.

Some candidates went into great depth in the discussion of exactly how and when to start brushing the child's teeth, including how this would progress.

(12)(a) was rather disappointing in that this question produced many lower level responses.

A common mistake was that candidates did not read the question carefully:

- Candidates were asked to **discuss**, not define, the different skills
- the question related to a **one-year old child**
- the last part of the question, about activities to help **develop** the skills, was either ignored or was linked to a much older child.

If the words 'discuss' and 'development' of a 'one year old child' had been underlined by the candidates on their question paper, then they may have focused their answers correctly to the question which was set and thus provided a better level of response.

This question illustrated a combination of the main difficulties candidates find in written examinations.

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Paper 0637/02

Coursework (Child Study)

General comments

Many Centres produced work of a very high standard, ensuring that their candidates had chosen suitable areas of development to study in children of suitable ages. The choice of area of development is most important, and those candidates who chose only one area to study were usually able to investigate this area in depth and to continue their study of this area in their observations of the child.

The most popular areas for study this year were physical development and social development. A few candidates chose to study emotional and/or intellectual development but found that these areas were much more difficult to study, particularly in a very small child. This often led to the observations being less focused as candidates were not always sure what they were looking for in their visits to the child. Candidates who chose to study many areas of development often wrote a little on each area but then found it difficult to look for all the different areas of development in their visits to the child. Those candidates who chose to study mainly one child, with others used for comparison only, were able to give much more detailed information than those who tried to study many children, for example in a nursery or a school.

A few Centres present their work in thick heavy folders which are expensive to buy and send and are liable to be damaged in transit. Thinner folders with light covers are much more acceptable. The recommended length for this piece of coursework is approximately 3000 words. A few candidates produced very much more than this. This should be discouraged. Candidates are expected to provide work which is within the word limit.

Candidates need to take care that the work is concise and relevant rather than too lengthy. The coursework for the Child Study should always be kept separate from the coursework for the Investigation and should be submitted in separate folders to the examination board. Some Centres submitted their pieces of work together and, as these may not be examined by the same Examiner, this can cause some time delay in assessing the work. Some Centres did not label their work clearly with all the relevant details. In addition to the Centre number, candidate name, etc. candidates should label their Study with a clear title indicating the area of study.

Introduction and Planning

(a) Planning of the Study

A few candidates produced detailed plans for their Study while many more listed a few simple ideas and sometimes there was no plan at all. A good plan at the start of the work would enable candidates to think ahead and consider exactly where and when they will visit the chosen child, what equipment they will need to take and exactly how they will try to study the correct area of development in this child. The plan could show how the work for the Child Study will progress and could include planned time for research and presentation of the final folder. Those candidates who planned well usually built on this good foundation and produced better work.

(b) Background Information

Candidates usually produced good research on the background of their chosen child. Care needs to be taken with privacy issues as too many candidates included full names, addresses, occupations, etc. which should not be shown in the work. Where photographs are included these should always be labelled to show their relevance to the study. In this area candidates could briefly discuss the stage of development already reached by the child in the chosen area. This could be used later in the work to show the progress made by the child throughout the time of the study.

(c) Explanation of Development Area Chosen

Some candidates produced very little work in this area, briefly summarising development in the chosen area while others produced many pages, often not in their own words. Quite a few candidates described development for a child of a different age, sometimes for a much younger child. The research should be presented in logical order and mainly in the candidates own words, not lengthy copied information which is not always relevant. The chosen area of development should be explained with reference to the particular child being studied.

Application**(a) Written Record of Observations Made**

Most candidates produced detailed, dated reports of their visits to the child, but many of these reports were simply stories about the visits with little detail about the particular development being observed. Every time contact is made with the child the candidate should be looking for and writing down any evidence of development in the chosen area. This should be written in their accounts of observations.

(b) Application of Knowledge and Understanding

This is one area which was particularly weak in many Child Studies. This should not be lengthy copied pages of research without relevance to the topic. There should be research on accepted Child Development theories and brief reports on these where they are relevant to the chosen area of study. Candidates should be looking for development in their chosen child which is relevant to the theories which have been investigated.

(c) Comparison of Evidence

A few candidates produced good work and compared the development of their child with other children or with accepted norms. Many more attempted this section but did not produce relevant work. Comparisons should be made with a child of the same age. Some candidates compared the development with a child of a different age, when, of course, the development could be very different. Comparisons should be made in the chosen area e.g. physical development, not in other areas which are not relevant to this study. A table or a chart in the study was usually used by the candidates to show this work and this seemed to work well.

Analysis and Evaluation

This is a very important area of the Child Study. Many candidates wrote very little, considering that this area carries the same number of marks (15) as the sections on Introduction and Planning.

(a) Comment on Appropriateness

Candidates often made one or two simple comments about their work. Each section of the work should be looked at in turn. Candidates should explain how they were able to complete the work in each area and whether the methods chosen were appropriate or effective in achieving their final results.

(b) Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses

Candidates often reflected briefly on their personal strengths and weaknesses in this section. Personal issues can be discussed but also practical problems in arranging visits, collecting and assembling the work could be considered. Particular good sections of work could be discussed. Suggestions could be made for improvements or alternative ways of approaching the study in sections where the work is weaker.

(c) Awareness of Opportunities for Further Developments

Some candidates again discussed this briefly as an issue of their own personal development. Much more consideration should be given to other areas of development, or to further aspects of the development already studied, which could be looked at with this particular child.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/03

Coursework (Practical Investigation)

General comments

Introduction

- (a) The subject content of the investigations varies greatly. Whilst many candidates chose straight-forward studies such as breast versus bottle feeding or homemade food versus convenience foods, some candidates chose more obscure topics such as Downs syndrome or other genetic disorders. These are very sensitive topics which do not easily lend themselves to the type of investigative procedures that the candidates are expected to carry out. It is also difficult to design a poster or a leaflet which deals with the subject of genetic disorders with care and understanding. Also, candidates need to remember that the Investigation should be about children up to **five years** of age and not about other related subjects, for example, Teenage pregnancy.

There should also be at least **three** fully explained reasons for the choice of topic. Statements such as 'because there is a lot of information' or 'because I am going to be a mum one day' are not good enough. They do not show any real thought about the subject being studied or why the subject interests the candidate.

- (b) Surveys, questionnaires and interviews are usually the most popular ways of gaining information. These methods should be described and reasons for the choice of method should be given. A few candidates are relying mainly on secondary information, which is not completely satisfactory. Some Investigations are just copied information. These can only attract low marks as they do not demonstrate the relevant skills and knowledge.
- (c) Many candidates did not submit a plan, although some did give a brief outline of the content of the investigation. The plan would ideally be a week-by-week plan of the work to be carried out, together with an explanation of the procedures used and the equipment necessary to complete the tasks. This would form a basic framework for the candidates to work to. On the whole, the organisation of the work was very good and usually followed a natural progression.

Application

- (a) Many candidates used graphs to illustrate their findings and, where used, these were usually of a good standard. Interviews were also recorded. It is not necessary to send all copies of the completed questionnaires – one copy as an example would be sufficient.
- (b) Many candidates attempted to interpret their results - to explain what they had found out - and were able to form conclusions. This is to be encouraged. However, quite a few candidates did not attempt to explain their findings and therefore lost valuable marks.
- (c) On the whole, leaflets and posters were of a good standard. Some candidates managed to produce a professional finish with the use of excellent graphics. It is now a requirement to provide some kind of informational product based on the findings and marks cannot be awarded if posters/leaflets/ or other informational products are not in evidence.

Analysis and Evaluation

- (a) Unfortunately this is the weakest part of the investigation as many candidates fail to review their work as a whole. Candidates should explain how they were able to complete the work in each area and whether the methods chosen were appropriate or effective in achieving their final results.

- (b) Strengths and weaknesses were often mentioned as candidates stated that one of the reasons for their investigation not being as detailed as they should have been was a lack of time. Personal issues can be discussed but also practical problems in arranging visits, collecting data and assembling the work could be considered. Particularly good sections of work could be discussed.

Suggestions could be made for improvements or alternative ways of approaching the study in sections where the work is weaker. Also Examiners feel that many candidates plan to have interviews with consultants in hospitals and then feel very upset when they find that these professionals do not have time to see them. It is very unrealistic for the candidates to turn up at a hospital and expect to see a doctor in the hope that they will help them with their investigation. Teachers could encourage candidates to draw up a more realistic list of people to be interviewed.

- (c) Developments should be about how the candidates could extend their investigations further, to think about further aspects of the area studied, and not how governments etc. could improve conditions.