

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01

Theory Paper

It was very pleasing to see so many excellent examination papers from many different Centres this year. The majority of candidates attempted all the sections of the paper, but it must be remembered that the syllabus only requires knowledge of children up to five years of age.

Section A

- 1 (a) Most candidates gained the two marks, popular answers including 'acts as a cushion', 'protects baby from being damaged'. A few candidates muddled 'amniotic fluid' and the 'placenta' therefore failing to gain the available marks.

(b) Again, most candidates gained the full available marks.
- 2 (i) & (ii) Where there were errors it was because candidates thought that prolactin was a male hormone.
- 3 The most frequent error was a list of vague comments that were repetitive. However, there were some correct ones which included 'respect for all family members', 'consider children more than housework', 'realisation that they themselves are not perfect', 'realisation that no child is perfect' and 'those who do not expect too much from children'.
- 4 Candidates were very accurate with the response of 'inherited genes', 'environment' and 'baby's health'.
- 5 Some candidates became muddled in their responses. The starting point could be any stage - but the four stages to be explained were the period of menstruation, the repair phase, the receptive phase and the premenstrual phase.
- 6 Many good responses were seen. Those that were mainly omitted were 'say name and address clearly' and 'eat with knife and fork'.
- 7 This produced a wide variety of correct answers.

Section B

- 8 (a) Many candidates gained high marks on this question. The reflex actions least known were Rooting, Startle and Moro.

(b) Candidates were required to make reference to reflexes disappearing at about 3 months and being replaced by actions which have to be learnt.

(c) A majority of candidates correctly identified the four senses. The descriptions varied, but many gained high marks.

(d) Many excellent answers were seen to this question.
- 9 (a) Marks were not gained because although six ways were identified, they were not explained.

(b) Many candidates knew all about Tetanus, the symptoms and vaccination for this.

(c) Candidates were able to show their knowledge of first aid. This was a very high scoring question.

Section C

10 Every candidate followed the rubric by reading the instructions and answering **(a)** or **(b)**.

There was a massive improvement in this section of the paper compared with previous sessions. Candidates were able to 'describe' and 'explain' in their answers. Both **(a)** and **(b)** were equally popular and the marks across each were very similar.

The only real error occurred in **(b)** where care after birth was identified.

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Paper 0637/02

Coursework (Child Study)

General comments

It was very pleasing to see the high standard of work which was produced by many of the candidates. Areas of development for investigation were chosen well, candidates usually studying one recognised area, e.g. physical development. This usually works best as candidates can concentrate fully on only one area rather than trying to examine several areas of development in their chosen child and becoming confused in the process or giving minimal information on many areas. A few Centres chose to study areas which were not clearly development, so research was difficult and it was not really possible to study progress in the development over a period of time. Teachers should be prepared to give advice/suggestions on the chosen area of development to ensure that it is suitable for the age of the chosen child in the situations where observations could take place.

Candidates should present their work in thin folders with a recommended length of approximately 3000 words. A few Centres sent thick heavy folders, while others enclosed each piece of paper in a separate clear plastic pocket. This is not necessary and it makes the work more bulky and difficult to handle. Some Centres failed to label the work of candidates clearly with Centre number, candidate name and candidate number and some did not include the MS1/attendance registers and coursework assessment summary forms. It is vital that all work is labelled clearly and that all relevant forms are enclosed with the work. It is also important that candidates give a clear title to their work at the beginning of the folder of work. On a few occasions it was not clear what area candidates were studying until several pages into the work.

Introduction and Planning

(a) Planning of the Study

Quite a number of candidates included detailed plans with their work which usually structured the work well and led to excellent, organised folders. In some cases candidates included a few brief ideas about the work while others had no plan at all. One possible way of producing an organised plan would be to construct a table in this section showing proposed dates of observations, aims of the visits, activities to be done with the child and equipment required. This enables the candidate to have a definite framework for the observation section. Planning could include forethoughts about producing the other sections required in this piece of coursework.

(b) Background Information

This section was usually approached well, giving good detail about the child and his/her family. Most candidates respected the privacy of the family and did not include too many private details. However, few candidates considered the development already achieved by their chosen child. It would help the candidates if they briefly mentioned the stages already reached by the child in the chosen area of development as this can be used later in the work to show progress throughout the study and could be referred to in the comparison section.

(c) Explanation of Development Area Chosen

Some candidates produced excellent, relevant research on their chosen development area, mainly in their own words, showing clear understanding of how the child should be developing throughout the series of observations. Other candidates copied long sections of research without showing understanding of the development area, sometimes discussing development in children of a different age. Care should be taken to ensure that this area is always relevant to the particular child being studied.

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

Many written records of observations were lengthy and detailed but a few were simple statements about the visits. It is important to ensure that the accounts include evidence of the development being studied and are not simply stories about what happened on each visit. This is where detailed, logical planning at the beginning of the work, with definite aims, would help to guide the candidate through a series of meaningful observations which are relevant to the development area being studied.

(b) Application of Knowledge and Understanding

There was some excellent work presented in this section where candidates briefly considered theories on child development put forward by people such as Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky, etc. The ideas expressed in these theories were examined with reference to the behaviour/development seen in the child being studied. Many more candidates presented very little work in this section, some discussing accepted normal development which is not the purpose of this section of the work.

(c) Comparison of Evidence

This is the section of the work which should include comparisons between the development seen in the child and the development seen in other children of the same age or with the accepted norms. Some candidates produced detailed and relevant work here while others compared children of different ages or tried to compare a number of different areas of development in addition to their chosen area. It is important that candidates stay clearly with their chosen area of development so that they are not including irrelevant work.

Analysis and Evaluation**(a) Comment on Appropriateness**

Quite a number of candidates completed this section well, looking in turn at each section of the work, explaining how the work was completed in each area and discussing the effectiveness of methods used in achieving the final results. A smaller number of candidates simply gave brief summaries of the work that they had included in their folder.

(b) Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses

Many candidates were able to list their own strengths and weaknesses in completing the work. However, many candidates did not go further to include suggestions for improvements or alternative ways of approaching the study which would have improved the work.

(c) Awareness of Opportunities for Further Developments

Some candidates simply discussed ideas for their own future development. In this section consideration could be given to other areas of development which could be studied in their chosen child or to other aspects of the development already studied which could be explored further. Detailed suggestions should be given with reasons for the ideas put forward.

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Paper 0637/03

Coursework (Practical Investigation)

General comments

Overall this session the work was of a good standard with fewer changes to marks; where there were changes these were not as substantial as those in previous years.

Many candidates chose subjects which were reasonably easy to research such as investigations into nappies, breast versus bottle feeding and safety in the home. If candidates choose obscure subjects that are difficult to research then there is often a limited amount of material for candidates to access, which in turn means that the candidates cannot realise their full potential or make full use of the investigative procedures needed to gain high marks.

Whilst candidates are improving their reasons for choice there still need to be at least two or three well explained reasons if high marks are to be awarded.

Candidates are giving a wide range of methods of acquiring information but to gain high marks they need to explain why they have chosen the methods.

Plans are still weak with many candidates writing retrospective plans. Plans need to be detailed so that they form the framework of the investigation. The candidates can plan what they will do week by week and can state what they aim to do and hope to achieve.

Candidates who scored the highest marks usually employed a good range of investigative procedures - as primary research which was usually in the form of questionnaires, comparisons and interviews and then selective use of secondary research. Candidates who just use secondary research should not be given high marks. Some candidates are still relying too heavily on secondary research. Where questionnaires are used, it is not necessary to send them all to the Moderator, one copy as evidence is sufficient.

Candidates who gained high marks for the Application of Knowledge used the investigative procedures they employed to show their results in the form of graphs etc. which were then fully explained. The explanations should discuss findings and explain any hypotheses that the candidates have made. Quite a few candidates produced some excellent graphs but then failed to explain their results. Also many candidates conducted interviews but again did not explain their findings.

Some very good leaflets were produced showing excellent use of graphics. Candidates who do not have access to computers also produced leaflets of a good standard.

Again it is easier to produce an informative leaflet if the subject matter is straightforward.

Most candidates made a very good attempt to review their work and were able to comment on effectiveness of their investigative procedures.

Most candidates were able to list and in some cases discuss in detail their strengths and weaknesses.

The further opportunities section is still causing some problems as candidates list what governments etc. could do to help certain situations. The candidates need to state how they could develop their investigations further.

Some excellent work was produced.