

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/11

Theory Paper

It was helpful for candidates to have a good understanding of terminology when responding to questions in this paper. For example, the term 'pre-school' referring to children who have not yet started school and 'new-born' being babies who have just been born. As ever, the best responses which received the most marks were those in which candidates had understood the command words. Candidates who had given one word responses to questions which asked them to 'describe' or 'explain' did not score well.

Question 1

This question was answered well by most candidates.

Question 2

This was generally answered well by candidates. There were some responses which gave the resources used for measuring growth, such as 'scales' or 'tape measure' instead of how the growth is measured.

Question 3

This question was generally answered well by candidates. Most candidates could give at least one response along with an explanation. Normal body responses, such as breathing and blinking were not awarded a mark. This is because these are not primitive/primary responses and continue throughout life.

Question 4

There were some good responses which were well-informed. Others were confused, with contrary suggestions being given, such as 'lay the baby on their stomach'. Responses that suggested that watching the child or being a better parent would prevent cot death were not awarded a mark. Many correctly suggested that removing soft toys was recommended: this received a mark.

Question 5

- (a) There was some confusion over this question for some candidates. Many gave suggestion for care practices for the baby, which is not what was asked for. Changing nappies/diapers was not awarded a mark. However, if candidates elaborated to discuss how these were disposed of, a mark was awarded. Many candidates knew that hand washing was a good way to reduce the risk of infection.
- (b) Many learners scored well in this question. Where candidates had responded by saying 'drinking too much' marks were only awarded if the candidate had specifically stated the word 'alcohol' to show their understanding.

Question 6

There were mixed responses to this question. Many gave very good suggestions. No marks were awarded where candidates had suggested attending the clinic prevented ill health, but if immunisation was discussed a mark was awarded.

Question 7

Many candidates gave good examples of places where children might meet with others. However, the question was not fully understood by all. Some candidates described the benefit for attending these places rather than describing what the actual place was. Any responses which suggested 'class', 'school' or 'after school groups' were not awarded a mark because the question relates to 'pre-school' children.

Question 8

There were many good responses to this question. To score full marks it was important for candidates to elaborate their responses. For example, describing solitary play as 'playing alone within a group' or that 'looking on' was when children do the same thing while watching others without involvement.

Question 9

- (a) There were diverse responses to this question. Many candidates answered all correctly, while others repeated the same response to each question. The majority of learners knew that prolactin was involved in milk production during breastfeeding.
- (b) Most candidates knew what ovulation meant and gave clear responses.
- (c) Most candidates correctly identified what fertilisation meant and gave accurate responses. Many suggested that implantation was artificial insemination. These responses did not achieve a mark.
- (d) Most candidates could identify natural and surgical types of contraception. Many candidates gave very descriptive explanations for each answer and many received high marks for this question.

Question 10

- (a) Some candidates had an idea of what genetic counselling is. There was some confusion amongst other candidates who believed that this is treatment for infertility.
- (b) Few learners gave correct responses to this question. Those who did gave very good responses. Many related this question to infertility incorrectly, missing out on marks as a result.
- (c) This question was answered well by candidates. Most candidates could suggest 'cystic fibrosis and haemophilia' as examples. The majority of learners gave explanations for each condition.

Question 11

- (a) There were really good responses from many candidates to this question. The questions needed to be fully developed to gain a mark, for example, saying 'nurses are available' would not receive a mark, whereas 'nurses are available to offer pain relief' was awarded a mark.
- (b) Generally, there were good responses to this question. Many candidates suggested that breech pregnancies require medical attention. Marks were awarded where candidates had been specific, such as 'mother has high blood pressure' but 'high blood pressure' did not receive a mark.
- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question and gave good responses.
- (d) This question was answered well by the majority of candidates.

Question 12

This question was answered well with an even split between those choosing to answer A and B. Candidates scored very highly in this question.

- (a) Many candidates chose to answer this question. Generally, candidates answered the question well and were able to identify, as a minimum, the position in relation to three children, stating the positive and negatives for each. Some discussed twins and only children. The responses from some candidates were judgemental, such as only children are spoilt. There were a few responses which did not fully understand the question and discussed variations of family groupings. Most marks were awarded where candidates gave differing examples and positive and negatives for each which were non-judgemental and accurate.
- (b) Many candidates chose to answer this question and some excellent responses for which full marks were awarded. Many gave good examples of how to be a good role model and discussed how children use play, especially role play, to imitate what they have seen. Some discussed superheroes and the influence of television. There were some very good quality responses which discussed the theoretical approach of Albert Bandura and his experiment with Bobo dolls. The relevance of this to the question meant that this was awarded a mark.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/12

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CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/02
Child Development Study

General comments

The child studies were on the whole a pleasure to read and many of reasonable quality. Still generally over-marked by Centre teachers with one or two notable exceptions; if candidates do not provide any indication of analysis of the appropriateness of their approach to and methods of study or do not identify their own strengths and weaknesses or opportunities for further study, they cannot be awarded marks for those sections. Candidates continue to use the mark scheme to organise the presentation of their studies, providing a logical path, including all the relevant parts. Candidates vary in choosing to observe one child aged up to 5 and compare with the norm or compare with another child. Centres obviously offer advice on this and it varies according to the availability of opportunities to observe other children of a similar age. I stress the usefulness for the candidates' analytical skills of recording the age of the child in years and months for each observation. The candidates who gain higher marks tend to be the ones who have been very specific about the area of child development under study.

The approach to current theories of child development varied considerably between Centres. The most in-depth responses compared what they had observed with what current literature says on the aspect of development and again used a compare and contrast method to look at two or more theories. The weaker projects provided a shallow comparison with a few key norms. A consideration of the context of the child's life and a 'picture' of the cultural and familial life would be useful as these factors can have an impact on child development.

Candidates need to be explicit about using a pseudonym for their child to protect true identities and this needs repeating.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Introduction and Planning

- (a) Candidates at this level appeared to find this a real challenge, the best studies provided a good introduction in which the candidate discussed what they **intended** to do and why, sometimes introducing a personal link to explain their choice of focus, whether they were looking at physical, cognitive, social, language or emotional development.
- (b) Background information on the child/children was generally well presented. The better candidates were able to give a well-rounded context, including physical, intellectual, emotional and language development as well as family situation and social/environmental background. From the candidate's point of view, this was what the study was all about and the relevance of the task was clear.
- (c) The explanation, with the relevant theoretical information, of the development area chosen with reasons for choice, is an area where many candidates could improve. Firstly, a clear statement of the developmental area chosen is required. The reasons for the choice could easily be linked to the interesting aspects of the relevant theories.

Section B – Application

- (a) The written report of each observation made was approached by candidates in different ways. The most logical was an observation report clearly dated and with a clear intention of what was to be observed and why, followed by the actual observation. Use of dates and times helps the analysis of the information gleaned through observation as would the exact age of the child/children in years and months.

- (b) Application of knowledge and understanding of accepted child development theories to observations is a higher level skill than the simpler description of what happened. As you would expect, stronger responses moved from description to applying their knowledge of theories to explain why. Some candidates needed more guidance on what are the relevant theories for their studies.
- (c) Comparing the evidence of their observations with the norms or other children of a similar age was generally well covered by candidates

Section C – Analysis and Evaluation

This is generally the area where candidates need the most direction and support. It is also the section where it becomes obvious if the time frame for the study is limited, mostly because the development observed was also limited and therefore less to analyse and discuss.

Again, if the original plan was unclear about what aspect of child development was to be observed, then the conclusion in this section is also necessarily unclear. Candidates need encouragement to be concise about what it is they are going to observe – narrow the field right down and make it specific to one aspect of intellectual development, rather than intellectual development as a whole, for instance. This would also help with the final section which asks candidates to identify areas for further development and improvement of a child study.

Some excellent responses were presented, with some candidates able to discuss the holistic nature of development whilst at the same time drawing on specific examples from their observations. Some were able to comment on the historical development of the theories to show how our understanding of child development is advancing, although these were in the minority.

There was quite a wide variation in candidates' ability to identify their own strengths and weaknesses – not an easy aspect of the study for level 2 candidates who may only just be beginning to develop reflective practices. However some honesty about what aspects of the study went well and what areas were more problematic was evident in the stronger candidates' work.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/03

Practical Investigation

General comments

The Practical Investigation gives candidates the opportunity to do some first-hand research whilst learning about an aspect of child care and development. The choice of what to investigate is the key to a successful learning experience. Those candidates who choose an area of care or development benefit much more than those who choose to carry out a piece of consumer research. So, for example, simply 'investigating' which nappy cream is the 'best' or most 'economical' is not really what the task demands. Try to encourage candidates to investigate whether nappy cream is beneficial, and if so how, so that they are asking deeper questions about children's care and development, not simply addressing consumer issues. Topics as varied as children's literature, food, behaviour management provide stimulating opportunities.

The methods used for the investigation do need some analysis, so being clear in **Section 1** about what methods candidates will be using is important. Most use internet literature search, interviews and questionnaires in combination, which is to be commended. Some candidates manage to arrange interviews with professionals about their chosen topic and others manage to trial their questionnaires with three people before distributing to 20 more.

It is the conclusions from the research that give candidates something useful to present in their leaflets or posters. The leaflets produced have been colourful and informative and demonstrate good use of IT skills. Candidates need to specify their target audience for the leaflet or poster, which many do.

Those candidates who show that they can see the project right through to the evaluation stage achieve the best grades. Being aware of how they can improve their own working methods and possibly achieve a more effective result next time is key.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Introduction and Planning

- (a) Candidates have covered a wide range of topics from different areas. Candidates should provide reasons for their choice and give examples from their own experiences.
- (b) Suggested Methods for acquiring information – most use internet literature search, interviews and questionnaires in combination, which is to be commended. Some candidates manage to arrange interviews with professionals about their chosen topic and others manage to trial their questionnaires with three people before distributing to 20 more.
- (c) Planning and organisation requires candidates to consider timing and the need to show some empathy with their target group. An understanding of the difficulty in getting the general public to respond to questionnaires, for instance, is good at this stage.

Section B – Application

- (a) Candidates need to be using four varied methods to acquire information and this is the stage where they will be able to comment on the usefulness of each method.
- (b) Application of knowledge and understanding; this section is where candidates present their findings, remembering that the findings may be very different from their initial expectations, so keeping an open mind is important.

- (c) Candidates generally enjoy producing the leaflet or poster, but the quality of this is affected by the quality of the information acquired through the different research methods.

Section C – Analysis and Evaluation

This is generally the area where candidates need the most direction and support. Candidates must ensure that they leave sufficient time for this section – they need to provide explicit analysis for each section in order to score the highest marks.