

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01

Theory Paper

General comments

It was pleasing to see that the candidates followed the examination rubric and attempted to answer the necessary questions. This is a very positive improvement which helps candidates to ensure that they use their time carefully and correctly.

However, it is also very important for candidates to look at the marks allocated for each question so that they can determine the level of response required and ensure that the content of their answers meets the requirement given.

Candidates are also producing far better answers to the **Section C** questions, interpreting the words 'discuss', 'describe' and 'explain' to a far higher standard in their responses.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question was well answered, often in a lot of detail.

Question 2

The function of the fallopian tube, uterus and ovary were well known, the vagina was less so. Some candidates confused this with weaning.

Question 3

This produced a wide variety of possible signs of separation anxiety, mostly correct.

Question 4

Two marks were available for this answer; therefore two points had to be made. The correct answer should have included:

- Babies change from an all milk diet
- To a diet of milk and solids.

Answers for the earliest age that weaning should occur varied from birth to two years. Those who said from three to five months were credited. The examiner does accept that this varies, but current accepted thinking is four months.

Question 5

This question gained either full marks or very few. The main weaknesses were that candidates did not describe how each worked, or clearly stated the advantages and disadvantages.

Please refer to the mark sheet for this question to see what was expected. Only one advantage and one disadvantage were required.

Method	How it works	Advantages	Disadvantages
Male condom	Sperm prevented from entering vagina	Free from some places Widely available Protects from STI's	May split Needs to be put on correctly etc.
Diaphragm	Prevents sperm meeting egg	No side effects Wide variety of choice	Must stay in place for 6 hours Fitted by Doctor etc.
Intra-uterine device	Prevents implantation of a fertilised egg	Works immediately Can stay in place for 3 to 10 years	May cause heavy bleeding Not suitable for all Must be fitted by Doctor etc.
Contraceptive implant	Prevents egg and sperm meeting and / or implantation	Effective for 3 years Fertility returns immediately	Can be difficult to remove Can have side effects

Question 6

This question produced very superficial answers e.g. soft mattress, comfortable. Safety points were required together with the reason.

An example of one correct answer would be:

Safety point - The bars should be 45 - 65mm apart

Reason - To prevent baby's head being caught between them

Section B

Question 7

- (a) The examiner is delighted to say that many candidates gained full marks or almost full marks for their answers. It was very pleasing to mark this question.
- (b) It is important to note that for a question that requires four explained reasons why babies cry, four different reasons are expected.
- (c) Similarly, three different ways to soothe a crying baby should be given.

Question 8

- (a) Candidates confused malnutrition with starvation. The correct answers should have been:
 - (i) Poor diet / not enough nutrients
 - (ii) Stunts growth / deficiency diseases / can effect brain development.
- (b) There were very many excellent answers. Candidates should be congratulated on the level of work and understanding shown in this question.
- (c) The question required four foods that should be avoided up to the age of six months, with reasons for this.

Answers could have included:

- Spicy foods
- Fatty foods
- Bran and wheat based cereals
- Nuts
- High in sugar etc.

- (d) Candidates knew why children required calcium - the use of vitamin D was less well known. The required answer was:
- To prevent rickets / for healthy teeth and bones.
- (e) A less well known topic.
The reasons why whole milk is given are:
- Children need the extra energy for growth and whole milk contains more energy.
 - Children have smaller stomachs and cannot take in a great quantity so need whole milk.
- (f) Candidates obviously knew why 'junk' food is attractive to children and also the reasons why it should be avoided.

Section C

Question 9

As the examiner has already said, the answers to this question were in general of a higher standard than in some previous sessions.

Both (a) and (b) produced equally good responses, with all parts of the question answered.

The only weakness was in part (b) when sometimes tests other than routine were named and reasons given. E.g. amniocentesis and chronic villous sampling.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/02
Coursework Child Study

General comments

The child studies were on the whole a pleasure to read. Most candidates followed the mark scheme to organise the presentation of their studies, and this offered a logical path and made sure that they included all the relevant parts. Most candidates chose to observe one child aged up to 5 years rather than a whole group and some compared and contrasted the observed development with one other child of a similar age. This latter approach helped with the evaluation relating to current theories of child development. It would be useful for the candidates' analytical skills if they recorded the age of the child in years and months for each observation.

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 guidelines emphasise the advisability of recognising the confidentiality of the nature of the study and it is good practice for candidates to say clearly that they are using a fictitious name for the child/children.

Some candidates chose to include lots of pictures from magazines or catalogues, but unless they are referred to in the written work, and are relevant to what is being discussed, perhaps they should not be included.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Introduction and Planning

- (a) Candidates at this level appeared to find this a real challenge, but 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 for the child/children was generally well presented. 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 and although this seems obvious, it was not consistently provided by the candidates. 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. Not all candidates followed this pattern and those who failed to date the entries did not generally perform as well as those who did.
- (b) Application of knowledge and understanding of accepted child development theories to the observations is obviously a higher level skill than the simpler description of what happened, but a natural corollary. As one would expect, stronger candidates did well and weaker 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 was generally the area where candidates need the most direction and support. It became obvious that the time frame for the study was limited, mostly because the development observed was also limited and so there was 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 was also necessarily weak.

Some candidates were 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.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/03

Coursework (Practical Investigation)

Introduction

Most candidates are choosing investigations that can be researched easily e.g. breast feeding versus bottle feeding, nappies etc. However there are still some candidates who choose difficult areas to study e.g. genetic disorders. Candidates are limiting themselves with these areas as they may have to rely mainly on secondary information because, understandably, people are not always willing to talk about such personal issues. Candidates must also carry out research relating to children under the age of five. Some candidates are researching areas such as puberty in adolescents which is outside the scope of the syllabus. The syllabus clearly states that investigations should be relevant to child development up to five years of age.

Candidates are discussing their reasons for choice and are also discussing why they are choosing their methods of acquiring information.

Again 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 along 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

Candidates are using a variety of ways to gain information. Questionnaires, surveys and interviews are the most popular ways. Candidates are also using experiments and comparisons. Graphs are the most popular ways of illustrating the results and these are usually of a high standard. Most candidates are analysing their results and are forming conclusions, but too many candidates are still not discussing their findings. There must be documentary evidence in this section to support marks awarded.

Leaflets and posters are of a good standard, but again some of the subjects chosen do not lend themselves to the production of successful posters and leaflets.

Analysis

Some candidates analyse their work thoroughly whilst others just give a brief review and all too often this section is mixed up with no sub headings used. Candidates need to discuss their work thoroughly to justify high marks.

Further developments - this is still a weak area as candidates tend to go off on a totally different tangent or just state that the investigation will help them in their future career.

Some of the marking was very inconsistent and on occasions it was necessary to adjust the marks accordingly. Again there must be written evidence to support marks awarded at all times.