

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01

Theory Paper

General comments

It was pleasing to see that all candidates appeared to use the examination time wisely. In addition, all candidates demonstrated that they benefited from the course and showed understanding at different levels of the syllabus content.

One pointer for candidates is to ensure that they *“read the questions carefully, and underline the key words”* for example: - **Question 7b**

“Give **two** ways in which anaemia affects a pregnant woman”

The word “*two*” is in bold therefore many candidates gave two ways, but they only gave ways in which it affected the baby and not the mother, and so they did not earn the marks that were available.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Usually the correct answer for where conception takes place, i.e. the fallopian tubes, was given. The incorrect answer was the vagina.

Question 2

The majority of candidates knew that only one sperm fertilised one egg.

Question 3

Knowledge about twins is excellent, with only a few candidates getting confused with their answers.

Question 4

(a) and (b) Produced mainly correct responses.

(c) and (d) This was less well known and in some cases candidates named parts of the female reproduction organs.

Question 5

There were excellent responses to this question, as the topic of puberty, when a boy becomes a man, is really well known.

Question 6

The common error in this question was that candidates wrote about the functions of the placenta, rather than the amniotic fluid. However, many candidates gave correct responses.

Question 7

- (b) The Examiner has already commented on this question.
- (c) "Foods containing iron" is not a sufficient answer, an example of a food should also be given, e.g. red meat or spinach.

Question 8

Many candidates showed knowledge about breast and bottle feeding, however, by using the same point and making it into negative and positive meaning will not gain the maximum marks available. The candidate should use different points for advantages and disadvantages.

Section B

Question 9

- (a) and (b) An excellent response from candidates to these questions.
- (c) A few candidates used "*the extended family*" example although the question required "**three** other types of family to be **named** and **described**". A few candidates did not name and only described.
- (d) These parts of the question were less well known, in particular, the advantage of being a young and/or older parent are not.

Question 10

The four stages of play were generally well known, although occasionally candidates named the types of play from (b).

- (b) A few excellent answers, but often answers were confused - examples were better known than the explanation of the type of play.
- (c) Rather worryingly the disadvantages often given of a child going to a nursery were that the child would be bullied, and that the child would feel abandoned, in many cases.

The advantages often given were to give the mother a chance for a rest or to meet her friends, rather than the points suggested in the mark scheme.

Section C

Question 11

- (a) Very few candidates answered this question, and often answers were superficial.
- (b) This was a more popular question and there were some excellent answers.

The only frequent error was that the question was misread and "*areas in the home*" was not read, and road, garden and car safety, were discussed, so leaving less time to concentrate with the possible dangers in the home. The importance of reading the question carefully and underlining key words should be emphasised.

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Paper 0637/02
Coursework (Child Study)

General comments

Much of what was said in previous reports applies for this set of papers too. The child studies were on the whole a pleasure to read and of good quality. Most candidates followed the mark scheme to help organise the presentation of their studies. This offered a logical path and ensured that all of the relevant parts were included. Most candidates chose to observe one child aged up to five 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 names for the child/children and their families. This needs reinforcing for every session.

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, they should not be included.

Excessive use of plastic wallets should be firmly discouraged – it makes the work cumbersome to examine and expensive to send between centre, CIE and Examiner. The coursework needs only to be secured in a simple project wallet that is strong enough to hold the study.

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, and then whether they were looking at physical, cognitive, social, language or emotional development. Whilst some candidates are clearly writing their plan at the end of the process and using the past tense in doing so, this was less common than in previous sessions.
- (b) Background information in 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 the 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 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 observed and why, followed by the actual observation. The use of dates and times by a candidate would help the analysis of the information gleaned through observation, as would reporting the exact age of the child/ren in years and months.
- (b) The 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 consequence of their study. As you would expect, stronger candidates did well on this part 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 of 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 and was also the case for the November 2010 session. It is also the section where it becomes obvious if the time frame for the study is too limited, as the development observed is also limited and therefore there is 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 weak. Candidates need encouragement to be concise about what it is they are going to observe – for example, to narrow the field right down and make it specific to one aspect of intellectual development, rather than intellectual development as a whole. This would also help with the final section which asks candidates to identify areas for further development and improvement of a child study.

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, 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, but a worthwhile one.

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Paper 0637/03 Coursework (Practical Investigation)

The Moderator would like to thank the Centres for some excellent presentations of candidates work.

A spiral binding with a front and back cover only (and without the many plastic covers for each page), gave a very "professional" look to the Investigations. In addition, it must also have given satisfaction to the Candidates to be able to appreciate such a finish to their work.

The choice of topics for investigation has also greatly improved, but it is worth reminding candidates that work should be kept focused on those relevant to children up to the age of five only.

It is clear that centres are using the "*CIE Handbook for Centres*" relating to coursework and because of this the overall standard of Investigations has greatly improved.

Candidates who produced the best work had clearly laid out the topic for the investigation, and included "a *table of contents*". The choice of topic should give the candidate the scope to include a range and variety of investigation procedures. Indeed, it should be possible to use **four** different methods to obtain higher marks, and this could be a specific teaching point.

The Moderator was delighted to see some very interesting and useful leaflets/posters that were produced. These were generally eye catching, and aimed to create the interest of the target group. They were concise but included all the major findings from the investigation, as you would expect from a leaflet or on a poster.

During the moderation process, it is sometimes observed that candidates appear to lose interest when it comes to the Analysis and Evaluation section. However pleasingly this has not been observed recently.

It is also pleasing to see the high quality of the self evaluation taking place when strengths and weaknesses are discussed together with points that could reduce the weaknesses. In addition candidates who have worked through the investigation process will often have an awareness of further developments in that area.

The comment on each candidates work on the back of the *Child Development Practical Investigation Individual Candidate Record Card* also makes the moderation process more straight forward. This enables the Moderator the opportunity to understand the rationale behind the awarding of marks at the Centre.

It is also very helpful to have included the *Practical Investigation Coursework Summary Form (0637/03/CW/S/10)*, a copy of which is in the back of the syllabus booklet.