

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01

Theory Paper

Key messages

- To score full marks candidates must attempt to answer all questions in **Sections A** and **B**. Leaving gaps cannot gain any marks, but attempted answers may pick up some, and it is pleasing to see this is usually happening.
- In **Section C**, in order to gain full marks, it is vital to read the question carefully to understand what is required. See below for an example relating to question 9.

General comments

Many candidates are now reading questions carefully before thinking and writing their answers. It is important that candidates understand the wording in questions, for example, **Question 7(a)** - "describe with reasons". This required a description of the utensils - an example could be "a plastic cup with a spout and two handles" - the description and the reason "so the child can grip the cup easily and is less likely to spill because of the spout".

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question, as reflected in the answers, led the candidates effectively into the question paper as the key term "growth" was well understood.

Question 2

(a) Many excellent responses, 'Prolactin' being the hormone that controls milk production.

(b) and (c) Many correct responses, others quoted the question by saying:-

(b) "The female hormone", and

(c) "The male hormone".

These answers interfered with the correct answers. The question asked for the 'role' of the hormones, thus the answers required for example (b) development and functioning of the female sex organ and (c) responsible for the enlargement of the penis etc.

Question 3

(a) This question produced excellent answers; candidates fully understood what should be avoided during pregnancy.

(b) Again a well answered question.

(c) Many candidates understood that dietary fibre / NSP prevented constipation; a few also knew that the hormones during pregnancy cause the bowels to work more slowly, hence the need for dietary fibre.

Question 4

- (a), (b) and (c) Many excellent responses to this question although a few did not know that a pre-term baby is born before thirty seven weeks.

Question 5

- (a) The ways in which 'Rubella' can affect an unborn baby was well known.
- (b) Candidates need to understand that a definite answer is required, and should be 'the first four months'.

Question 6

- (a) The answer to the question 'How babies suffer from wind' was often vague or incorrect. The key answer would have included swallowing air by taking too long over feed, if the teat is too small, or breast-fed babies taking in too much air if too little milk is present.
- (b) Many good responses to this question. An additional point was to place a cloth on the shoulder to catch any milk that comes up. Also, gently patting or rubbing the baby's back, not hitting or thumping.

Section B

Question 7

- (a) This answer was given as an example in the General comments introduction. Key words in the question were describing with reasons types of utensils. There were some excellent responses.
- (b) The question required ways to encourage a young child to enjoy mealtimes. There were some interesting and correct answers, but the child cooking the meal and setting the table would not be appropriate for a young child.
- (c) A few excellent responses; others need to understand that the question focused on the way the child learns bladder control and not how the parent reacts.
- (d) The question requires an explanation of how a parent can help a child who is bed-wetting. This means that each point must be described and then fully explained, for example: - Do not give fizzy drinks or caffeine based drinks before bedtime and then an explanation - they stimulate the kidneys to produce more urine.

Question 8

- (a) and (b) Candidates produced excellent answers to these questions.
- (c) Candidates need to understand and be able to describe reusable nappies. Answers could include:
- Terry nappies, square cotton material that requires folding and holding in place with a nappy pin.
- (d) Some excellent answers to this question. Points to remember could be - prepare all necessary equipment before starting, place baby on a flat surface so both hands are free, safest place on the floor, remove waste matter with cotton wool or tissue, wipe bottom with a baby wipe / cotton wool with water, make sure skin is dry, apply a little 'nappy cream' before putting on a clean nappy.

Section C

Question 9

- (a) To achieve full marks on this section it is necessary to read the question carefully to understand what is required. Firstly a 'family' has to be explained in full. After this the features of a nuclear family should be discussed, followed by the advantages and disadvantages of this type of family. The same depth should then be given to an extended family. Repetition and opposites do not achieve credit, and this is a common error in this type of question.
- (b) There were only a few responses to this question but those that did attempt this question answered satisfactorily.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/02
Coursework (Child Study)

Key messages

- 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 reiterating for future exam sessions too.
- In **Section A** there is a need for explanation, with the relevant theoretical information, of the developmental area chosen with reasons for choice, as this is an area where many candidates could improve.
- To do well in **Section C** candidates need much greater direction and support than they appear in many cases to be receiving.
- There is no requirement to use plastic wallets. 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. Work needs to be secured in a simple project wallet that is strong enough to hold the study.

General comments

Much of what was said in previous reports applies for this set of papers too. The child studies were generally well-structured with most candidates following the mark scheme to organise the presentation of their work, and this offered a logical path and ensured 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. Again to reiterate: 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.

Comments on specific questions

Section A - Introduction and Planning

- (a) Candidates at this level often 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. Weaker candidates tended to record what they had done, after the event, so more of a retrospective plan than a real plan.
- (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 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. Weaker candidates gave little background information, especially of family, culture and social/environmental contexts.

- (c) A clear statement of the developmental area chosen is required and although this seems obvious, it was not consistently provided by the candidates. Some candidates choose to look at several areas of development; although this can give breadth, it is often at the expense of depth of understanding.

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/ren in years and months.
- (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 you would expect, and as detailed in previous reports, 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 is generally the area where candidates need the most direction and support and this is the case again for June 2011. 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 weak. 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 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 – although this is not an easy aspect of the study for Level 2 candidates who may only just be beginning to develop reflective practices.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/03
Coursework (Practical Investigation)

Key Messages

- Candidates should choose areas of study which are easy to research and which would allow a full range of investigative procedures to be undertaken. Most do so.
- Whilst most candidates are discussing their reasons for choice, there are still a few who just give a list or state 'because it is interesting'.
- Some candidates did submit quite detailed plans; however, most candidates just gave 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. However, a few candidates are relying on only secondary sources of information – in these cases high marks should not be awarded. 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 generally of a good standard. However, leaflets should be 'leaflet style' and not just two or three pages of A4 paper.

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

Appropriateness of methods used

Some candidates tended to discuss their own study skills and did not discuss the effectiveness of their methods. The candidates need to comment on why the questionnaires, surveys, books, use of the Internet etc. helped them e.g. 'my questionnaires helped me because I was able to note similarities and/or differences' in whichever area that they are researching. 'This in turn has helped me to plot graphs etc. which I could then analyse and draw conclusions'.

Another point could mention the use of the Internet and how easy it is to access a lot of information quickly.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Some candidates completed this section well, but some are still saying that a lack of time or other exam commitments stops them from producing an Investigation of a high standard.

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.