

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01

Theory Paper

Key Messages

- **Section A** required candidates to elaborate upon answers where asking to 'explain' or 'describe'
- **Section B Question 7(a)** carried a high number of marks and required candidates to explain their answers. Candidates achieved maximum marks where they discussed correct terms rather than giving general responses.
- All candidates made good attempts to answer **Section C**. Some responses demonstrated that candidates had not fully read the questions asked.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

Candidates were asked to explain the *function* of each support system for a growing baby. Therefore, full marks were awarded where this had been done, rather than an a description of what each support system was.

Question 2

Some responses to this question discussed what happens at each stage, rather than what each stage each. Many candidates could correctly identify stage three.

Question 3

This question contained some responses that were inaccurate and could potentially be dangerous. Many candidates suggested putting peroxide or alcohol upon cuts. Some suggested putting butter or oil onto burns. This is not advised.

Question 4

Candidates gave good responses to this question and could identify factors in growth and development influenced by genes. Some discussed genetic factors upon health rather than growth and development.

Question 5

This question required candidates to explain that weaning is *gradual* process of introducing solid foods into a milk only diet. Some candidates suggested that giving of milk stops at this time.

Question 6

Candidates gave good responses to this question, often developing their answer even though the question did not ask for it. Some mistook the taking of blood pressure to assess for pre-eclampsia as a blood test.

Section B

Question 1

This question required candidates to explain their response. Therefore, responses that included 'cook food properly' would not have been awarded a mark. 'Cook all meat properly at a high temperature' would have achieved a mark. Two marks would have been awarded if the candidate went on to say 'bacteria in raw meat is killed off by cooking at high temperatures'.

- (b) Candidates generally answered this question well. There was sometimes a repetition of dangers without explaining how to make them safe. Candidates were awarded full marks where the explanation was relevant, full and logical.
- (c) Many candidates correctly identified the risk of obesity. A few discussed the benefit of exercise upon sleep in young children.

Question 8

Many candidates correctly answered this question and gave good examples of advantages to using disposable nappies. Some explained that these were 'in supermarkets'. This did not explain the advantage. Instead, 'widely available' would explain the benefit.

- (b) Many candidates correctly identified the disadvantage of expense and to the environment. Some candidates suggested that disposable nappies give babies nappy rash. This is not likely.
- (c) This question required candidates to *explain* their answers. Therefore, where candidates had put 'material' marks were not awarded. Some candidates suggested clothing must be made from cotton. Generally, this question was answered well.
- (d) Candidates were awarded a mark where they identified that children who had started to walk need shoes. Shoes are not needed when children are 'learning to walk' as this can be for an extended period of time. Exact ages were not awarded a mark because of the variation in children's development. Some candidates suggested 'stage 4' this was not awarded a mark.
- (e) Candidates gave limited responses to this question. Many focused upon the way the shoe looked or the cost. Less well developed responses did not focus upon detail e.g. - 'size' was often used without explanation such as 'correctly fitted' or 'the correct size for the child'.

Section C

Question 9

Most candidates chose to answer question a.

- (a) (i) Candidates answered this question well, giving full explanation and often developing their responses. At times candidates went 'off track' and discussed the stages of play of types of play that did not fully relate to the question asked.
- (ii) Candidates answered this part less well. The question asked for points to consider when choosing toys to encourage *physical* development. Many candidates discussed toys suitability for promoting different areas of development or made no reference to physical development. Answers were sometimes disjointed giving reasons for selecting toys and then discussing what toys were suitable for physical development. A more correct response might have been *'trampolines help children to develop gross motor skills by helping them to bounce and strengthen the muscles in their legs. However, adults need to make sure that the trampoline is suitable for the age of the child, positioned safely avoiding overhead dangers and that the child is supervised when using it'*. This makes the connection between the toy, and the points to consider.

- (b)(i)** Many candidates correctly identified the role of the pre-school group and its purpose. Few gave examples such as playgroups, pre-schools, parent and toddler groups.
- (ii)** Many candidates could explain who would benefit most from this. Although at times the reasons given were not fully accurate such as 'children who are developing well'.
- (iii)** This part was answered well and generally good examples were given.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/02
Coursework (Child Study)

Key messages

- Some candidates are still choosing to observe family members, which does compromise the anonymity for children. Where candidates do choose this option, they need to analyse the advantages and disadvantages of this in more detail than they are generally doing.
- It would also be useful for the candidates' analytical skills if they recorded the age of the child in years and months for each observation.
- As previously reported, candidates need to be explicit about using a pseudonym for their child to protect true identities and this needs repeating.

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. Although generally over-marked by Centre teachers with one or two notable exceptions, the degree of over-marking was less marked than previously. More candidates than previously appear to be using 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.

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.

It was good to see fewer plastic wallets being used for each page of a project. Work needs to be secured in a simple project wallet that is strong enough to hold the study. The use of thick card and lots of pictures which do not contribute to the analysis are not very helpful and should be discouraged. However, illustrations which support the context of the child's life and the area of development are useful.

Comments on specific questions

Section A - Introduction and Planning (All of this has been said before and is equally relevant for this entry)

- (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. 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 previously.
- (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.
- (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. 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 the observations is obviously a higher level skill than the simpler description of what happened, but a natural corollary. As you 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 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 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, as usual 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 Coursework (Practical Investigation)
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Key messages

- Candidates who produced the best work had clearly laid out the topic for the investigation, and included “*a table of contents*”. This is to be strongly encouraged.
- There must be written evidence to support marks awarded at all times.

Introduction

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’.

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.

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 any marks awarded.

Some of the graphics used were excellent.

The Moderator was delighted to see that some very interesting and useful leaflets/posters 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.

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 a high mark.

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.

Care must be taken to ensure that the addition of marks is correct and that the marks are transferred to the MSI accurately