

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01
Theory Paper

This paper required candidates to have a good understanding of command words. Questions are worded to show candidates' depth of knowledge. Many candidates gave single word responses to questions which ask them to 'describe' or 'explain'. Those that gave a fuller response received most marks. It is important that candidates make sure they read the question fully in order to give appropriate responses for the questions asked. This is particularly the case for **Question 11**.

Question 1

This question was answered well by most candidates.

Question 2

Some candidates gave repetitive answers which meant the same thing. Higher marks were awarded to candidates who stated that the father could help doctors and medical staff. Responses which stated that the father or supportive adult could help were not awarded a mark.

Question 3

This question was answered well by candidates. The better responses described their answer stating that the voice deepens. Some answers were too general and needed to be more specific to gain higher marks.

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates gave a correct response to this question. To gain the highest marks candidates needed to explain the term correctly. Some candidates gave answers which suggested high self-esteem or used the term 'self-image' which did not receive marks.
- (b) The best answers suggested signs of low self-esteem. Responses that suggested different types of behaviour rather than signs of low self-esteem did not receive marks.

Question 5

- (a) Many learners scored well in this question. It was important to give two **different** responses to achieve full marks.
- (b) Candidates gave good responses to this question. Candidates needed to give clear answers to gain the highest marks, such as 'they feel unwell'. Some candidates suggested that drinking coffee affected sleep which is not an appropriate suggestion for a child under five.
- (c) This question was answered well by candidates who gave good responses which showed their understanding.

Question 6

- (a) The highest marks were awarded where candidates gave clear and concise answers. Marks were awarded where candidates discussed body language and facial expression if there was some explanation of this.
- (b) The highest marks were gained on this question when candidates correctly stated six stages of speech development. Some candidates gave over-complicated responses which gave types of early language rather than stages of speech development; these were not awarded any marks.

- (c) Candidates generally said that talking to children promotes speech. In order to achieve the highest marks candidates needed to explain why each way of promoting speech would help. Marks were given where candidates said 'singing songs and rhymes' as this shows the understanding that it is the **language** that helps children.
- (d) Some responses to this question were very accurate. The highest marks were awarded to candidates who were able to identify two different signs. Marks were not awarded where learners suggested that children did not 'understand' or 'ignored' people talking to them. Marks were not awarded where candidates suggested that children cannot hear as this is established in the question.
- (e) Some learners gave very good responses to this question which demonstrated their understanding of the advantages and disadvantages. Where candidates suggest that advantage related to academic knowledge, no marks were awarded.

Question 7

- (a) This question was answered well by most candidates. Specifically, candidates needed to mention that this related to mother and child to receive full marks and not just between two people.
- (b) Many misunderstood this question. Some candidates gave very good answers achieving full marks which demonstrated that they understood the bonding process. Some responses scoring lower marks suggested that candidates misread the question and gave ways that mother and baby can form attachment during pregnancy instead of birth.
- (c) This question was answered well by candidates. Responses that scored the highest marks correctly suggested post-natal depression. Marks were not awarded for 'baby blues', which is the term for the emotions experienced after birth when hormone levels drop, as these are not likely to have an impact on bonding. Some gave the answer of death of baby or mother, which did not gain a mark – the question asked why attachment might be disrupted.
- (d) Responses to this question were generally correct. Some learners gave good explanations of the support given and achieved high marks. When candidates did not explain the support to be given to the child, no marks were awarded.
- (e) The highest marks were only awarded where the response described the behaviour as the question asked. The lower scoring responses gave one-word answers without descriptions.

Question 8

- (a) The majority of candidates answered this question and gave good responses. Some responses were very well developed and gave multiple suggestions for encouraging children to develop an interest in books and included extended thinking, such as introducing bath books. These types of responses gained most marks. Some candidates spent too much time repeating the question without giving responses and lost marks as a result. Many candidates interpreted the question as asking how to encourage children to read; this was not what the question asked and therefore these answers could not gain high marks.
- (b) Fewer candidates chose to answer this question, but more marks were gained in their responses. Answers were detailed and followed the requirements of the question. Candidates explained the stages of development and included the primary reflexes present at birth. Maximum marks were awarded where there were two parts to the response that were detailed and clear.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/02
Coursework (Child Study)

General comments

The child studies were on the whole a pleasure to read and many of reasonable quality. Although mostly slightly over-marked by Centre teachers, the degree of over-marking was less than in previous sessions. Candidates appear to be using the mark scheme to organise the presentation of their studies, providing a logical path. Please encourage candidates to record the actual word count of their studies. The recommendation is 3000 words maximum – much less and candidates are undoubtedly missing something, much more and the candidates need to be encouraged to develop their editing skills.

Candidates vary in choosing to observe one child aged up to five 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. 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 pros and cons of this in more detail than they are generally doing. It is good to see more candidates' now recording the age of the child in years and months for each observation as this makes the analysis stage much easier for candidates.

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. Projects that provided a shallow comparison with a few key norms did not score as many marks. A consideration of the context of the child's life and a 'picture' of the cultural, environmental and familial life would be useful as these factors can have an impact on child development.

As previously reported, candidates need to be explicit about using a pseudonym for their child to protect true identities and this needs repeating.

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

- (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 whether they were looking at physical, cognitive, social, language or emotional development. Some candidates wrote their plan at the end of the process using the past tense: it is OK if the plan is not followed exactly; candidates cannot predict all the variables in their own, and the child's, life.
- (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/ cultural background. From the candidates' 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. To gain the highest marks

candidates needed to give a clear statement of the chosen development area and the reasons for their choice, if possible linked to relevant aspects of theories

Section B – Application

- (a) The written report of each observation made was approached by candidates in different ways. The responses gaining the highest marks were set out most logically and included an observation report clearly dated, 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 obtained through observation as would the exact age of the child/children in years and months. The advice is that candidates observe a child over a period of six months and this is not always followed. Those who try to squeeze the process into a reduced time-span, tend to offer less than the suggested six observations, which limits possibilities for analysis.
- (b) Application of knowledge and understanding of accepted child development theories to the observations is a higher level skill than the giving of a simple description of what happened. Candidates needed to identify relevant theories for their studies to gain the most marks.
- (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 there is less to analyse and discuss.

If the original plan was unclear about what aspect of child development was to be observed, then the conclusion in this section was also 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 those responses scoring higher marks.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/03

Coursework (Practical Investigation)

Introduction

Most candidates chose areas of study which were easy to research and which would allow a full range of investigative procedures to be undertaken. Some candidates are still choosing sensitive areas of study, which means that their investigative procedures are restricted.

Most candidates are discussing their reasons for their choice of topic. There should be at least two or three fully discussed reasons to gain the highest marks. A few candidates either gave a list or state 'because it is interesting' which scores fewer marks. Candidates need to discuss methods of acquiring information rather than giving a list.

Work was generally of a high standard and usually followed a natural progression. The strongest candidates submitted quite detailed plans, using the headings outlined in the syllabus. Some candidates dealt with the introduction as a whole, giving only a brief outline of the content of the investigation, this type of introduction did not achieve the highest marks, more details were required.

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. Candidates need to discuss their findings to achieve the highest marks. A few candidates are relying on only secondary sources of information – in these cases high marks have not been awarded. There must be documentary evidence in this section to support the marks awarded.

Leaflets and posters are generally of a good standard, they were eye-catching and informative with the majority of them looking very professional.

Analysis

Strong candidates achieving the highest marks analyse, discuss and evaluate their work thoroughly. Lower marks are awarded when only a brief review is given.

Appropriateness of methods used

In order to achieve the highest marks for this section, candidates must discuss the appropriateness and effectiveness of their research methods. For example, if a candidate conducted a questionnaire, they need to state why and how it helped them. Lower scores were given when candidates discussed their own study skills rather than the methods used.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Some candidates completed this section well. The majority of candidates were able to comment on what went well, what could have been done better and what improvements could have been made. The strongest candidates go on to state how their investigation and ideas could be developed further. The further developments section is an area a large minority of candidates could give further thought to.

There must be written evidence to support marks awarded at all times.