

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/02
Child Development Study

General comments

The child studies were on the whole a pleasure to read and many of reasonable quality. Although generally over-marked by centre teachers with one or two notable exceptions, the degree of over-marking was less marked than previously. Most candidates appear to be using the mark scheme to organise the presentation of their studies, providing a logical path, including all the relevant parts. The word-count guidance states around 3000 words – students should record their own word-count at the end of the work. 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. Some candidates are still choosing to observe family members, which does compromise the anonymity of the 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 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 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 societal, cultural 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.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Introduction and Planning.

- (a) Candidates 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 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 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 gathered 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 a higher level skill than the simpler description of what happened, but a natural progression. The stronger studies included theories that were relevant to the specific topic being investigated.
- (c) Comparing the evidence of observations with the norm 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 clear if the time frame for the study was limited, mostly because the development observed was also limited and therefore 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 generally weak. Candidates need 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 the 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. The best studies commented on the historical development of the theories to show how our understanding of child development is advancing.

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 students 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 work.

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<p>Paper 0637/03 Practical Investigation</p>
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General comments

The Practical Investigation gives candidates the opportunity to do some first-hand research whilst learning about an aspect of child care and development. The choice of what to investigate is the key to a successful learning experience. Those candidates who choose an area of care or development benefit much more than those who choose to carry out a piece of consumer research. So, for example, simply 'investigating' which nappy cream is the 'best' or most 'economical' is not really what we are wanting candidates to do for this module. Instead, candidates could investigate whether nappy cream is beneficial, and if so how, so that they are asking deeper questions about children's care and development, not simply addressing consumer issues.

The methods used for the investigation need some analysis, so candidates need to be clear in Section 1 about what investigative methods they will be using. Most use internet literature search, interviews and questionnaires in combination, which is to be commended. Some candidates manage to arrange interviews with professionals about their chosen topic and others manage to trial their questionnaires with three people before distributing to 20 more.

It is the conclusions from the research that give candidates something useful to present in their leaflets or posters. The leaflets produced have, in the main, been colourful and informative and demonstrate good use of IT skills. Candidates need to specify their target audience for the leaflet or poster, which many do.

Those candidates who show that they can see the project right through to the evaluation stage achieve the best grades. Being aware of how they can improve their own working methods and possibly achieve a more effective result next time is key to achieving the highest marks. Admitting that the present research is less than perfect is admirable.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Introduction and Planning

- (a) Candidates are generally good at choosing an investigation, but some candidates need to refine their choices. Some candidates provide the reasons for their choice of investigation using examples from their own experiences, which is useful.
- (b) Most use internet literature search, interviews and questionnaires in combination, which is to be commended. Some candidates manage to arrange interviews with professionals about their chosen topic and others manage to trial their questionnaires with three people before distributing to 20 more. At least four different methods of research should be included.
- (c) Planning and organisation requires candidates to consider timing and the need to show some empathy with their target group. An understanding of the difficulty in getting the general public to respond to questionnaires, for instance, is good at this stage.

Section B – Application

- (a) Candidates need to be using four varied methods of research to acquire information and they need to comment on the usefulness of each method.
- (b) Application of knowledge and understanding is where candidates present their findings, remembering that the findings may be very different from their initial expectations, so keeping an open mind is important.
- (c) Candidates generally enjoy producing the leaflet or poster, but the quality of this is dependent on the quality of the information acquired through the different research methods. The best leaflets or posters are informative and draw on the findings of the research done.

Section C – Analysis and Evaluation

This is generally the area where candidates need the most direction and support. Sufficient time has to be given for this section – sometimes candidates haven't given themselves enough time so are not able to evaluate and therefore do not achieve the highest marks. Candidates need to provide explicit analysis for each section. Candidates who realise that their plans were unrealistic in the timescale often do better – an honest approach to the task is the best!

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/11
Theory Paper

There were too few candidates for us to be able to produce a meaningful report.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/12
Theory Paper

Key Messages

The paper asked for candidates to recall their knowledge and use it in a number of different ways. Candidates needed to respond to direct questions through giving accurate information, offer their understanding and opinion.

In order to do well on this question paper it was essential that candidates read and understood each question.

General Comments

- Those who scored most marks had responded well to each question and extended their response where prompted.
- Some learners misread or misunderstood **Question 11(b)**, the extended response question costing them marks.
- The majority of learners had made good attempts to answer all of the questions.

Question 1

All candidates attempted this question. This question was generally answered well, although a few learners thought it related only to immunisations.

Question 2

Some learners gave limited responses that related only to tooth decay rather than giving a more rounded response.

Question 3

This question was answered well by learners with many being able to give several correct responses. Where learners did not provide enough information, such as 'expiry date', a mark was not awarded.

Question 4

Learners gave good responses to this question. They correctly identified at least one way that babies show they are ready for weaning. Several learners suggested that the appearance of teeth indicates a baby is ready for weaning, this is not the case and no marks were awarded for this response.

Question 5

This question was answered well by learners. Some learners wrote 'wash feet' this was not awarded a mark unless there was development, such as 'and dry between toes to prevent soreness'.

Question 6

Many candidates gave good responses to this question. A few learners did not read the question correctly and suggested the benefits of children attending a pre-school provision rather than how children in particular would benefit.

Question 7

Good responses were given to this question with many learners receiving maximum marks.

Question 8

Many learners correctly suggested that hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills were supported. Several learners gave good suggestions for mathematical learning, such as counting. On occasion, learners did not link the learning to physical or mathematical development and lost marks as a result.

Question 9(a)

Some learners did not recognise the main factors as genes and the environment, often regarded as nature versus nurture. Where learners did state this they gave well explained responses and gained maximum marks.

Question 9(b)

Good responses were given to this question with many learners showing their understanding of parental influence on learning.

Question 10(a)

Learners knew about droplet and direct contact infection and explained this well, including details about how the infection spread in the body.

Question 10(b)

Good responses were given to this question and some expansion was clear in most responses. The learners who scored highest demonstrated clearly how bacteria and viruses are spread and how they affect the body.

Question 10(c)

The vast majority of learners gained marks for this question. Some discretion was used in marking as the question stated 'common' childhood disease and some learners gave examples of very uncommon disease. However, marks were awarded where the response was correct and signs and symptoms were accurate.

Question 11(a)

Generally there was an even divide between the questions learners responded to. Those who answered question 11a tended to score well. Learners were able to demonstrate good awareness of the reasons for contraception in relation to preventing pregnancy and diseases. The learners were also able to discuss male forms of contraception well. A few learners did not keep specifically to male types of contraception and although they did not lose marks for this, they did not gain any marks for the extra responses. The responses that gained the most marks demonstrated an awareness of the types of contraception, the purpose, and the positives and the negatives.

Question 11(b)

This response proved more difficult for learners. This was mainly because they misread or misunderstood what the question asked. As a result, some learners gave responses covering several pages that did not relate to the question. This tended to be examples of variations on family functioning and did not cover how differing culture and religion affects parenting. Two marks were awarded where this was the case, one for responding, and one for providing essentially accurate, although not relevant, information. In these cases it had a significant impact on the learners overall mark. Those that did receive high marks gave very full and well-presented responses. Many drew on their personal experiences, offered opinion and gave non-stereotypical or judgemental responses that demonstrated a high level of understanding.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/13
Theory Paper

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