

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01
Theory Paper

Key messages

Overall, candidates performed well, understood the questions and responded to all question parts.

General comments

Generally, candidates attempted all questions and demonstrated a good understanding of the syllabus. Candidates were able to give extended responses where asked and understood different command words such as 'describe' and 'explain'.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Generally, most candidates answered this question correctly. A few provided a range between 38-42 weeks which was acceptable. Outside of this range was not acceptable as this would not be deemed to be full-term pregnancy.

Question 2

Almost all candidates answered this question correctly and gave clear, logical responses. Where candidates simply said 'medication' a mark was not awarded as some mothers-to-be must take medication in order to maintain their health.

Question 3

- (a) Many candidates labelled this diagram correctly. Some incorrectly labelled the cervix as the vagina.
- (b) Where candidates had correctly answered **Question 3 (a)**, most went on to get **Question 3 (b)** correct also. There were a few instances where responses did not provide enough information, e.g. 'connects baby to mother' does not state the function so no mark would be awarded in this case.

Question 4

- (a) Some candidates became confused and did not follow the question which stated 'equipment'. In these cases some mentioned clothing, for example, which is not a piece of equipment and would not be awarded a mark. Where candidates correctly stated a piece of equipment, it was important they demonstrated the use. For example, where candidates wrote 'cot' it was important to state the reason for this. A valid reason would be, for example, 'to keep the baby safe while they sleep', rather than stating, 'to sleep in'.
- (b) Candidates gave good responses to this question with explanations for their choice. Some wrote 'swim suit' which was not given a mark. Some also stated 'nappies' but these are not a piece of clothing and so no mark was awarded.

Question 5

Candidates would sometimes state 'medication' without an explanation as to where this would be obtained and under what guidance. Many correctly stated that children with diarrhoea required rehydration showing good knowledge of the danger of dehydration in young children.

Question 6

There were some good responses to this question. Most candidates were able to identify that immunisation prevents ill-health and this has implications for children's health in the long-term.

Question 7

- (a) Most candidates gave correct and logical responses to this question. It appeared that some candidates confused the question and discussed extended families. In some cases, negative responses demonstrated stereotypical ideas and these were not awarded a mark. The majority of candidates identified lack of privacy as a negative.
- (b) Most candidates gave responses for each section of this question. The majority were able to show that there would be a variation between ages, demonstrating their good awareness of child development. On some occasions, responses were repeated gaining a mark only for the first instance. Some did not make the connection between the question asking 'showing affection' and talked about anxiety children might show. In these instances, no mark was awarded.
- (c) Some candidates stated the stages of play without explaining aspects of social behaviour. This was not awarded a mark. Many candidates correctly identified that young children need to learn how to share and will not do this automatically when they play. Others gave good responses about children copying behaviours and understanding rules.
- (d) In some instances, candidates did not follow the question and described physical development rather than cognitive development. This did not receive a mark. In many cases, candidates demonstrated a very good awareness of how parents support their children's learning and the benefit of this for their cognitive learning.

Question 8

- (a) This question required the candidate to give a detailed response. Many candidates did not describe the pattern for becoming independent in feeding and eating and talked about dressing or toileting. This did not receive a mark. Some candidates gave very detailed responses starting from first feeds of breast or bottle milk. The candidates were able to demonstrate their awareness of how independence changes over time as children get older.
- (b) Many candidates were able to identify food types but not provide suitable examples. In some cases, stronger candidates gave excellent examples and demonstrated very good knowledge of healthy eating and how this affects the body.

Question 9

- (a) This question was answered extremely well. More candidates attempted this question than **Question 9 (b)**. Many candidates received full marks and gave very extensive responses and clear, detailed knowledge. Some candidates discussed 'emergency contraception' as a means of controlling birth control. This is not considered to be a preventative measure and is meant for use in emergency situations. Therefore, this response was not marked as correct. However, in all circumstances where this was the case it did not impact on the final mark the learner received.
- (b) Fewer candidates attempted this question and, in general, fewer marks were awarded for responses. In some cases, there was no development of understanding. The candidates did not always state what the possible behaviours were for each emotion and how parents can respond to this. However, in many cases where candidates had discussed parents' responses, very positive suggestions were given showing that candidates have good knowledge of managing children's behaviour.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/02
Child Development Study

General comments

Thank you to all Centres who sent completed candidate work and Individual Candidate Record Cards and MS1's in a timely manner. 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 there were many of reasonable quality. Although generally over-marked by Centre teachers with one or two notable exceptions, the degree of over-marking was less so than in previous sessions. Most candidates appeared to be using the mark scheme to organise the presentation of their studies, providing a logical path, including all the relevant parts. Remember that the word count guidance is 3000 words – encourage candidates to record their own word count at the end of the project. Candidates varied in choosing to observe one child aged up to 5 years 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 chose 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 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.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

- (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/ren was generally presented well. 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

- (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. Weaker candidates needed more guidance on 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 covered well by candidates.

Section C

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 there is, 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 – not an easy aspect of the study for 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 work from the stronger candidates.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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

Well done to all Centres which sent in candidate work and Teacher/Centre marking records promptly. Much of what has been said before is worth repeating: 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. Try to encourage candidates to 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. Topics as varied as children's literature, food, and behaviour management provide stimulating opportunities.

The methods used for the investigation do need some analysis, so being clear in **Section 1** about what methods they will be using is important for candidates. 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. So, a variety of methods and a range of 'research' should be encouraged. Ask candidates to begin thinking about how they find out about anything – the answers are the same: some reading of books, journals, internet and asking people: friends, parent(s), experts, professionals, some observing and listening.

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. Students 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 better grades. Being aware of how they can improve their own working methods and possibly achieve a more effective result next time is key to all human development. Admitting that the present research is less than perfect is admirable.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

- (a) Candidates were generally good at choosing topics, but perhaps some needed help to refine their choices. If candidates can provide the reasons for their choice with examples from their own experiences, that is useful.
- (b) Suggested Methods for acquiring information – see above. This must be explored and at least four methods used.
- (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

- (a) Students need to be using four varied methods to acquire information and this is the stage where they will be able to comment on the usefulness of each method.

- (b) This section 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) Students 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.

Section C

This is generally the area where candidates need the most direction and support. Sufficient time has to be given for this section – sometimes candidates have not given themselves enough time, so valuable marks are lost. Candidates need to provide explicit analysis for each section. Students who realise that their plans were unrealistic in the timescale often do better – an honest approach to the task provides the ideal opportunity to analyse and evaluate.

Keep up the good work. Students are showing a lively interest in their research.