

Human development



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Teacher's Institute Human Development How does cognition develop from infancy through middle childhood? Identify the theorist (s) associated with cognitive development. Cognition is the ability to perceive and process information, it involves the intelligence as it develops through various stages from infancy to adulthood. The child gathers up the information in his view of the world at different ages and incorporates them in his mind in the form of conscious intelligence. The most renowned theory of cognition is given by Jean Piaget, who describes four stages of cognition (Sigelman et al 2009). The sensorimotor stage starts from birth until 2 years of age. Preoperational stage lasts from the time child learns to talk to 7 seven years of age. From the start of school going age to adolescence is the concrete stage. Formal Operation is the stage of cognitive learning during adolescence. Lev Vygotsky's theory of cognition relates cognition to be product of cultural influence on an individual thought.

2. What is a script (in relation to memory)? At what age do we typically begin to develop scripts? How might a script both support memory and interfere with memory? The term script was coined in relation to memory by Jack and Roepstorff. It is a response by the brain that allows the individual to retain particular information and regard it as relevant or irrelevant. It helps decide the brain to choose among what to retain and what to ignore (Frackowiak 1997). Children can develop scripts as early as 3 years of age, by forming a sequence of events and then recalling them the next time they are in that situation (Sigelman et al 2009). Scripts form the basis of memory as children recall more details of the events as their scripts become richer. However when children are presented with the scenarios inconsistent with their scripts, it interferes with their memory as they tend to misremember the events and try to fit them to their own pre-

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formed scripts. 3. Explain the relationship of language to memory. Consider the development of language and explain how that might influence the development of the concept of the self. Initially languages are just the sound stimuli as perceived by the infants. Young infants respond to phonetic changes. When their memory grows and they develop language-specific memory traces, they are able to differentiate better among the sounds in the one language they are acquainted with. Later on as the memory expands, they adapt to differentiate between foreign languages as well (Cheour et al 1998). Since language is fundamental to every stage of human life, a person often learns to relate himself or his experiences to a particular point in time by recalling those words or phrases. Sigelman and Rider (2009) defined it as autobiographical memory that promotes recalling the events associated with one's life and moulds his self conceptualization. 4. What is theory of the mind? How does it develop? Does it influence social development? The theory of mind is the very basic theory that explains human behavior based on its perceptions. According to the theory of mind, a person's particular behavior, response or his actions are because of the underlying desires, attitudes, beliefs or intentions. These underlying desires subconsciously guide the person to act in that particular way (Sigelman et al 2009). It develops through child's mental development years and is assessed by simple cartoon plays in which child is shown a particular scene, which the characters in the cartoon play are unaware of. A child above 4 years of age will recognize the event from the cartoon character's perspective. This is called as false belief test. Theory of mind helps a person adapt to his social environment as he starts seeing things from general perspectives as he grows. Impairment in shifting the perspectives and sticking to his underlying thoughts results in

disorders like autism and schizophrenia (Sigelman et al 2009). 5. How does moral development change from infancy through middle childhood? Moral development starts as the child starts appreciating right from wrong and on the basis of his conscious recognition of facts that support his thoughts; he acts and behaves in ways guided by his subtle feeling of pride or guilt.

Infants are considered to be amoral, as they cannot differentiate right from wrong in order to live up to the society's moral standards. Infants are thus spared of the moral limitations. By the age of 2 years, they start understanding certain limitations. By the age of 3, children develop moral judgments based on positive intentions and the consequences of one's actions. As they grow through the middle childhood, 6 to 10 years of age have major developmental influences as strong moral rules are laid down by authoritative figures in the eyes of children, like teachers. Works cited: 1.

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