General Certificate of Education

Health and Social Care 8621/8623

HC04   Child Development

Report on the Examination

January 2010

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HC04: Child Development

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

1(a)(i) Most candidates identified three agents of socialisation from the scenario. The most frequent error was to give behaviours rather than agents, e.g. 'Rachel is helping to organise the games'.

1(a)(ii) Most candidates gave a reasonable definition of prosocial behaviour and illustrated it appropriately with examples from the scenario. A few confused prosocial with antisocial behaviour.

1(a)(iii) Asked how Bill might have reinforced prosocial behaviour, some candidates referred correctly to reward, praise, etc. However, some assumed that modelling prosocial behaviour was the same as reinforcing it.

1(b) Most candidates were able to give some explanation of why hitting a child is not a good way of reducing anti-social behaviour. Explanations were usually based on the effects of modelling, though a few candidates correctly pointed out that hitting a child was morally wrong.

Question 2

2(a) Quite a lot of candidates showed accurate knowledge of stages of language development and gained the full 9 marks. Some candidates failed to follow the instruction to analyse the data in the table to draw their conclusions. Of these some just described the stages without reference to the table, and others reported the data points in the table without making a generalisation.

2(b) Some candidates were able to suggest two or more ways the parent could aid language development. Better answers referred to reading to the child, asking questions and correcting or recasting speech. Weaker answers suggested 'talking to the child all the time' and 'repeating words'.
Some candidates suggested actions that did not involve the parent aiding the child's development, such as turning on the TV. Such answers might have been prompted by the first statement in the question: "Young children mainly learn language without being taught." Some candidates might assume that any interaction between parent and child in which the child acquires language skills must be teaching. This is not the case. For example, a visit to the zoo in which parent and child chat, ask and answer questions, can aid language development but does not constitute teaching. Neither is it the case that anything which is learnt must have been taught. This sort of learning occurs rather infrequently, particularly in early childhood.

Question 3

3(a)(i) Knowledge of neonatal reflexes is required by the specification, yet very few candidates were able to outline the Moro reflex.

3(a)(ii) Most candidates were able to suggest and outline a different reflex.

3(b)(i) Most candidates had some idea of what is meant by maturation, though few were able to express this very clearly.

3(b)(ii) Most candidates were able to suggest at least one biological environmental factor, with diet and disease being the most commonly suggested. Relatively few candidates followed the instruction to explain how a factor could affect growth, for example by slowing it down.
Some ignored the requirement of the question to avoid genetic or maturational problems, for example they suggested conditions such as muscular dystrophy or dwarfism.

Question 4

4(a) Most candidates gave some advantages and disadvantages of the two children's environments, with better answers relating these to opportunities for different types of development.

4(b) Almost all candidates named three suitable types of fixed play equipment.

4(c) A large number of candidates suggested that in addition to play equipment, children needed space and human resources.

Grade boundaries
Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the AQA website at www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html