



**General Certificate of Education (A-level) Applied  
June 2011**

**Health and Social Care**

**HC12**

**(Specification  
8621/8623/8626/8627/8629)**

**Unit 12: Human Development: Factors and  
Theories**

***Report on the Examination***

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**Unit 12: Human Development**  
**June 2011**  
**Principal Examiner's Report**

**General comments**

Candidates' responses to the cognitive development scenario questions (Question 2) showed an improved ability to apply relevant concepts, compared with previous series. The question on implications for child rearing was handled quite well.

A significant number of candidates was not awarded marks because they did not directly answer some of the questions. This was most noticeable in questions 07, 11 and 15.

**Comments on specific questions**

**Question 1**

01 There were many accurate descriptions of the procedure of the more conclusive of Bandura's 'Bobo doll' studies. Full-mark answers occurred often. Some candidates went on to describe the findings of the study, which were not required by the question.

02 Relatively few candidates were able to draw valid conclusions from the study described in 01. A common error was to state that the behaviour of the children had been rewarded. However, most candidates gained three marks for referring to three key features of social learning theory.

03 Asked about the limitations of social learning theory, many candidates made appropriate reference to genetic and biological explanations for anti-social behaviour. A minority of answers treated the theory as if it were a prescription for child-rearing, rather than a description of how development occurs. These, and answers that simply described the theory, gained no credit.

04 Asked to suggest two types of development explained by social learning theory, many candidates correctly named language development. Fewer named sex differences in behaviour.

**Question 2**

05 A majority of candidates recognised the illustration of schema development given in the scenario and were able to link this with assimilation and accommodation. Candidates with less grasp of the process tended to name the two relevant terms but fail to link them with the illustration.

06 Most candidates correctly named the likely stage of development of the child in the scenario, and some of these also correctly named the relevant sub-stage. The example of animism was recognised by a majority, and some of these also identified egocentrism. Full-mark answers occurred often.

Some candidates only described features of the preoperational stage, and did not use this information to analyse Bronwen's statements, as required by the question.

07 Most candidates recognised that the actions of the parent in the scenario were appropriate. Giving the child opportunities for discovery learning and providing play materials was also often commented on, although few candidates gained the full 5 marks. Some candidates did not state whether or not Carol's actions were appropriate, although this was what the question asked.

08 Asked to criticise the idea that Piaget's stages of development are distinct, few candidates gave relevant answers. Candidates who gained full marks usually referred to an example of a child achieving conservation of number, but not of volume, implying they were straddling the boundary between two stages. Many answers claimed erroneously that Piaget set rigid ages for transition between stages. Other unsuccessful answers focussed not on the stage theory but on Piaget's test methodology.

### **Question 3**

09 Given four statements and asked to identify which were examples of gender role stereotypes and which were actual sex differences, almost all candidates gained full marks.

10 Despite succeeding on the previous section, many candidates, when asked to explain sex differences in occupational choice, answered in terms of gender role stereotypes. To gain full marks candidates merely had to say that this referred to men and women sometimes choosing different careers, and give a couple of examples. Instead some candidates referred to what men and women are expected to, or supposed to, choose.

11 Candidates were asked to describe and evaluate a Freudian explanation for sex differences in behaviour, with reference to the Oedipus/Electra conflicts. Most gave some accurate description of the phallic stage, though relatively few attempted to evaluate the explanation. A majority of candidates failed to focus on sex differences in behaviour, as required by the question, but instead based their answers around moral development.

### **Question 4**

12 Asked about three short-term effects of separation, many candidates were able to name protest, despair and detachment and link these with examples from the scenario given.

13 The scenario described an infant who had been neglected. Asked to suggest the likely type of attachment (according to Ainsworth) the infant would have developed, a large minority correctly suggested an insecure attachment/anxious-avoidant.

14 Asked to outline the infant's likely behaviour in the Strange Situation, most candidates gave one or two valid points.

15 The scenario also described the new foster parents of the infant child showing sensitive responsiveness. Asked to evaluate the parents' behaviour with reference to the caregiver hypothesis, most candidates showed some awareness of the parents' sensitive responsiveness or the likelihood of the infant developing a secure attachment. A significant number of candidates failed to make evaluative comments. The weakest answers showed no awareness of the caregiver hypothesis and merely recycled the information given in the scenario.

16 Asked to discuss whether or not it would have been better for the infant to be adopted rather than fostered, most candidates stated that it would, but gave little to support this judgement. Some made appropriate reference to a relevant study, and some referred to the permanence of adoption.  
Full-mark answers were rare.

### **Grade boundaries**

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