

Topic 2 Part 1

Text 1

Pre-reading

What, in your opinion, are the most important factors for the healthy psychological development of a child? Think of the answer individually and write down 2 – 3 factors you consider to be very important. Then discuss your answers with your schoolmates.

Make sure you know the meanings of the following words or phrases, which appear in the text. Match the words 1 – 10 in the list below with their meanings a - j

1 acquire (v), 2 anticipate (v), 3 appropriate (adj), 4 cognition (n), 5 differentiate (v), 6 increase (v), 7 insecure about (adj), 8 perception (n), 9 synthesize (v), 10 undermine (v)

a the ability to notice or understand; b suitable or right for a particular situation, person, use, etc.; c to see or show how things are different; d to obtain or buy sth; e to make sth weaker; f to expect sth to happen (and prepare for it); g to combine separate ideas, beliefs, styles, etc.; h the process by which knowledge and understanding is developed in the mind; i not confident about yourself or your relationships with other people; j to become or to make sth larger in number or amount

1?

Read the text

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Developmental psychology is concerned with all the psychological changes in the course of life of a human being. It includes the development of perception, cognition, language, skills, and social relationships. In human beings, the sense organs are now known to be fully functional from birth, but a great deal must be learnt before infants can perceive the outside world as adults do. Human development involves a continuous interaction between **heredity** (biological predispositions determined by the individual's genes) and **environment** (the experiences encountered while growing up in a particular family and culture).

Development proceeds in orderly sequences from simple behaviours to those that are more differentiated and complex. An unresolved question, however, is whether development should be viewed as a continuous process of acquiring new behaviours through experience or a series of successive stages that are qualitatively different from each other.

Although the development of physical skills depends largely on maturation, restricted environments can delay motor development, and increased stimulation can accelerate it. Although early deprivation or stimulation does not appear to have a lasting effect on motor skills, development in other areas – language, intelligence, personality – may be permanently affected by early experiences.

Early social attachments form the basis for close interpersonal relationships in adulthood. Insensitive mothering or repeated separations may undermine the child's trust and produce insecure attachment. Children who are securely attached are better able to cope with new experiences and relate to others. Interactions with siblings and peers are also important for normal development.

Children's concepts of right and wrong change as they mature. Younger children tend to evaluate moral actions in terms of anticipated rewards and punishments; with increasing age, avoiding disapproval and conforming to social norms become important. In the highest stage of moral reasoning, actions are evaluated in terms of one's ethical principles. Moral behaviour depends on a number of factors in addition to the ability to reason about moral issues.

Children acquire the attitudes and behaviours expected by society – self-control, a conscience, and the appropriate sex role – largely through the process of identification. Sex typing, the tendency to view certain activities as appropriate only for one sex, develops through parental and cultural influences. Children are most apt to identify with adults who are warm, nurturing, and powerful, and whom they view as similar to themselves in some way.

The age at which adolescents reach puberty, or sexual maturity, varies greatly although girls, on the average, mature two years earlier than boys. Late developers of either sex tend to have poorer self-concepts than early developers. Survey data indicate that adolescents today are experiencing sexual intercourse at an earlier age than did their parents.

In their search for personal identity, adolescents try to synthesise the values of people important to them (parents, teachers, and peers) into a cohesive self-picture. When these values are not consistent, adolescents may experience role confusion: trying out one social role after another before finding a sense of individual identity.

Development is a life-long process: individuals change both physically and psychologically, and they encounter new adjustment problems throughout life. You may know the popular saying: "The first half of our lives is ruined by our parents and the second by our children."



After reading

Reading comprehension

Read the following sentences and mark them T if you think they are true, F if you think they are false or DS (doesn't say) if the article does not provide an answer to the question.

- 1 The development of physical skills depends mainly on maturation. **T/F/DS**
- 2 The social attachments in one's early childhood have a great effect on the person's ability to form close relationships in adulthood. **T/F/DS**
- 3 For the child's normal development it is very important to have interactions with their peers. **T/F/DS**
- 4 Children are most likely to identify with adults who they view as different from themselves in some way. **T/F/DS**
- 5 Boys mature two years before girls. **T/F/DS**
- 6 Girls usually reach puberty at the age of 11. **T/F/DS**
- 7 Children acquire the concepts of right and wrong only if they grow up in a complete family. **T/F/DS**

Scan the text again and answer the following questions.

- 1 What kind of influence does a restricted environment have on an individual?
- 2 How do younger children evaluate moral actions?
- 3 How are actions evaluated in the highest stage of moral reasoning?
- 4 What does 'sex typing' mean?
- 5 What kind of adult personalities do children usually identify with?

Taken and adapted from:

Gill, Nora. Coufalová, Ruth. Ingrová, Olga. Kollárová, Jana. Vacek, Jiří. Communicative ESP Practice for Pre-Service Teachers. Olomouc: Palacký University, 2003. ISBN 80-244-0652-7

Ages and stages

The first stage of our life is **childhood**. Then we experience **adolescence** and **adulthood**. Each stage of our life can be divided to shorter periods.

Match stages of life with ages.

| Age | Stage | Notes/Translation |
|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 0 – 1 approximately | | |
| 1 – 2 | | |
| 2 – 12 approximately | | |
| 13 – 17 approximately | | |
| 18+ | | |
| 20 – 30 | | |
| 30 – 40 | | |
| 40+ | | |
| 60 or 65 | | |
| 75+ | | |

Stages

in your twenties (24 – 26 = mid twenties), a toddler, old age, an adult, middle-aged people (in middle age), a baby, a teenager (14 = early teens), retirement, in your thirties (38 = late thirties), a child – this period is your childhood

Note: The period between 13 – 17 approximately is called adolescence (young persons are teenagers, adolescents). In law you are an adult at the age of 18, but many people think of you as an adult when you leave school.

Experience of life

Childhood and adolescence, romance, marriage

Complete with the correct form of the verb (past tense)

Sam _____ (be born) in Scotland but when he was two, his father _____ (get) a new job in London and he _____ (grow up) in the south of England. He _____ (go) to university at 18 where he _____ (meet) Alice. He _____ (go out) with her for three years, but towards the end they _____ (have) lots of rows and they _____ (split up, break up). In his mid twenties he _____ (get to know) Maureen. They _____ (fall in love) and _____ (get married) within six months. A year later she _____ (get pregnant) and they _____ (have) their first child, a boy. She is now expecting their second child. But sadly Sam _____ (meet) another woman and he _____ (leave) Maureen two months ago to live with the other woman.

rows – arguments

to be pregnant – to be expecting a baby

Adapted from:

Redman, S. English Vocabulary in Use (pre-intermediate+intermediate). Cambridge: CUP, 2000, p.98