

# Comprehensive Examination in Experimental Psychology for Fall 2006

## Developmental Comprehensive Questions and Readings:

### *Developmental Comprehensive Questions*

1. Discuss the role of emotion in parent-child relationships and children's social relationships and interactions. Describe how emotions can affect these relationships and how these relationships can result in certain emotions. Draw upon a range of materials including the attachment literature, Lemise & Arsenio's model of social information processing and Thompson's discussion of emotional development. Provide enough detail to demonstrate your in-depth knowledge of this material.
2. Little Johnny Piaget is playing with his new motorized scooter. Another child approaches him and say "That scooter is so cool. Can I play with it? I'll bring it right back." Little Johnny has to decide what to do. Discuss how a developmental researcher focusing on each of the following areas would try to explain how Johnny would make his decision: 1) models of social information processing (a la Crick & Dodge, Lemerise & Arsenio), 2) attachment theory (a la Bowiby, Ainsworth, Sroufe), 3) mental representation, theory of mind and children's lying, and 4) moral development (a la Kohlberg, Eisenberg). Provide enough details to demonstrate your in-depth knowledge of these areas.
3. Piaget described 3 important characteristics of development: a) fixed order, b) qualitative change (rather than quantitative change) and c) structured wholeness of thinking within a stage. Explain each of these characteristics. Compare Piaget's view to the post-Piagetian views of cognitive development (e.g., Siegler's model). Indicate how well you think Piaget's theory has held up in the light of post-Piagetian research. Justify your answer by referring to research studies presented in class or in the literature (you don't have to go into detail about the studies).
4. Compare Piaget's theory of cognitive development, Bowiby & Ainsworth's theory of attachment development and nativist theories of language development (e.g., Chomsky, Pinker) in terms of: a) the role they give to biology in determining development, b) whether they believe there are universal aspects of development, c) the role they give to environment in determining development, d) their treatment of individual differences in development (i.e., differences among children).
5. Not surprisingly, Judith Harris' claim that parents play a trivial role in their children's social and personality development has met with considerable resistance from many developmental psychologists. Review Harris' position (i.e., describe her group socialization theory and some of the evidence she adduces to support it). Then critique her theory by describing alternative theories and empirical research supporting the notion that parents do affect their children's development. You don't have to describe specific details of specific studies-but your critique must be empirically based as well as theoretically based.

6. Briefly describe Ainsworth's four categories of infant attachment and the four mothering characteristics she believes promotes the development of a secure attachment relationship. Do all developmentalists agree with Ainsworth's claim that these mothering characteristics completely determine an infant's attachment category? Also, according to Ainsworth and Bowlby, why should securely attached infants develop into well-adjusted children and adults? Do all developmentalists believe that securely attached infants will always grow up to be well-adjusted children and adults? Explain your answers by referring to the readings and material that I presented in class.
7. Compare nativist and connectionist accounts of language development. What are the roles of biology vs environment within each point of view?

### ***Developmental Comprehensive Readings***

Cassidy, J. (1999). The nature of the child's tie. In J. Cassidy and P. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of Attachment*, (pp1-20). NY: Guilford Press.

Crick, N. & Dodge, K. (1994). A review and reformulation of social information processing mechanisms in children's social adjustment. *Psychological Bulletin*, **115**, 74-101.

Flavell, J., & Miller, P. (1998). Social cognition. In W. Damon (Series editor) and D. Kuhn & R. Siegler (Volume editors), *Handbook of child psychology, Vol. 2: Cognition, perception and language* (pp851-898). NY: Wiley.

Harris, J. (1995). Where is the child's environment? A group socialization theory of development. *Psychological Review*, **102(3)**, 458-489.

Lamb, M. and Lewis, C. (2005). The role of parent-child relationships in child development. In M. Bornstein and M. Lamb (Eds.), *Developmental Psychology: An advanced textbook*, 5th Ed, (pp 429-468), Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lemerise, E. & Arsenio, W. (2000). An integrated model of emotion processes and cognition in social information processing. *Child Development*, **71(1)**, 107-118.

Rubin, K., Coplan, R., Chen, X., Buskirk, A. & Wojslawowicz (2005). Peer relationships in childhood. In M. Bornstein and M. Lamb (Eds.), *Developmental Psychology: An advanced textbook*, 5th Ed, (pp 469 - 512), Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Siegler, R. (1998). *Children's Thinking*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Thompson, R. & Goodwin, R. (2005). The individual child: Temperament, emotion, self, and personality. In M. Bornstein and M. Lamb (Eds.), *Developmental Psychology: An advanced textbook*, 5th Ed, (pp 391 - 429), Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

NOTE: The student is also responsible for the material presented in Dr. Camras' lectures in Psych 439.