

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/01

Theory Paper

General comments

It was pleasing to see so many excellent scripts this year, from a spread of Centres. Particularly pleasing were the responses to the **Section C** questions. Many candidates demonstrated a complete understanding of these two critical areas in child care i.e. first aid and food hygiene.

However, there is still a loss of marks when questions ask for explanations. This will be made clear in the detailed comments on specific questions.

Centres are reminded that the syllabus covers Child Development up to the age of 5 years.

Comments on individual questions

Section A

Question 1 (i), (ii) and (iii)

There were a few perfect answers, but many candidates confused their responses.

Question 2

A common mistake was illustrated by the answers to this question.

The question asks for the functions of the named parts of the male reproductive organs. It was therefore disappointing when a few candidates identified the parts as female reproductive organs.

Candidates should read the questions carefully, and underline the key words (as many candidates already do) so that they provide a correct response.

Question 3

Candidates seemed to have problems with this area of the syllabus.

Appearance required an outline description e.g. a cabinet, transparent opening lid, port holes etc. When mentioning use candidates should have included responses such as to filter and humidify air, and maintain a constant temperature etc.

Question 4 (a) (i), (ii) and (iii)

Correct answers.

Question 5

This question produced excellent answers.

Section B

Question 6

- (a) Many candidates could describe the types of play, but only a few could give an approximate age of the child. Some of the ages given went up to 12 years, hence the comment at the start of the report. The syllabus specifically states in a number of places that only the development of children up to the age of 5 years should be studied.
- (b) Although there were a few good answers, many candidates thought that a child's social experience could be gained from TV or books. Social experience is concerned with the interaction between the child and other people.
- (c) Emotional development appears not to be well understood by many candidates. No candidate identified limited language development, opportunities to socialise, cultural differences, or position in family.
- (d) This question produced better answers, but some were repetitious.

Question 6

- (a) The question required six needs explained. The common error was to produce a list, and although often correct, had no explanation, meaning that the six marks for the answer were not available. Candidates must read questions carefully and identify the command words. A question which asks the candidate to explain something requires more than just a list. It requires the candidate to show that they understand and can apply the ideas or concepts given in the question.
- (b) The composition of the nuclear and extended family were completely understood, but some candidates did not give any other differences e.g. help, support and financial assistance, grandparents missing contact with grand children etc.
- (c) and (d) These two questions often produced responses that only identified the obvious, thus producing narrow answers. However there were a few excellent responses especially for (d).

Section C

As stated previously, some of the responses to both these questions were excellent. Candidates who planned their responses carefully often gave better answers as they were able to highlight important factors and explain their reasons for including specific items or comments in their answer.

Where candidates did not gain high marks the reasons were as follows:

Question 8

- (a) (i) The question was to "Explain with reasons what you would include in a First Aid Box" but many candidates did not achieve the available marks as they just listed the contents. Responses in Section C clearly require the candidate to explain, analyse and evaluate. In this instance responses should have given reasons for the inclusion of the specific items
- (ii) The most dangerous accident was choking. Although the vast majority knew exactly how to treat this, very few explained very dangerous practises for examples "sticking fingers into the throat and giving drinks of water".
- (b) There were no particular errors seen in the answers to this question. Results depended on how widely the candidates went into the two sections, and if the answers were repetitious.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/02
Coursework (Child Study)

General comments

Many Centres produced work of a very high standard. Candidates generally chose to study children of the correct age and studied only one or two areas of development in the chosen child. It is usually best to limit the study to one area of development only, so that this can be studied thoroughly rather than the work becoming too long and confused by trying to cover too many areas. It is also sensible to choose an area which is easy to observe, e.g. physical development in a baby, rather than emotional development which would be much more difficult to observe in a very young child. Teachers should be prepared to give advice on the most suitable choice of child and/or choice of area of development.

Folders of work were usually well presented, containing work of the correct length, arranged in the correct order according to the assessment areas. Sometimes photographs of children were included in the work. Candidates need to ensure that the photographs are relevant to the area of development being studied, e.g. a child holding a pencil in a certain way showing a certain stage in development. There should not simply be a number of general family photos as in a photo album. Some candidates also included work produced by the child. This should only be included in the folder if it is relevant to the area being studied and should always be well labelled to indicate the particular development being shown.

Introduction and Planning

(a) Planning of the Study

Detailed plans were often included at the beginning of the work and these worked well when they were presented clearly as a table. The plans should show where and when the observations would take place, the aims of the visits, the activities to be observed and the equipment required. This helps the candidate to have a definite framework for the observation section. Some candidates who produced very brief outline plans, or none at all, usually continued their work in a disorganised way and did not discover as much about the development of the child as they might have done with good preparation.

(b) Background Information

All candidates provided some background information about the child and its family. Most candidates included photographs which were interesting but not vital to the work. Care should be taken in maintaining confidentiality of the child and its family. A few candidates explained the stages of development reached by the child at the beginning of the study. It is useful to include this information as this can be used to show progress in development throughout the observations and it is useful in the comparison section.

(c) Explanation of Development Area Chosen

Candidates researched into their chosen area of development but this was of varying length and relevance. This area should explain how the child should be developing in the chosen area over the few months of the study and should be relevant to the correct age of the child. A number of candidates simply copied long sections about development from books. Sometimes this was about a different type of development from the one being studied and sometimes the research was about the development of a child of a different age from the chosen child. Short sections from books or Internet research may be included but these should always acknowledge the original author and should be interpreted in the candidate's own words.

Application

(a) Written Record of Observations Made

There were some good records of observations explaining what happened on each visit and detailing the development seen each time. Good planning helped here so that candidates knew what to look for at each visit. A small number of candidates recorded observations very briefly as simple accounts of what the child did with no reference to development. Candidates should be looking for progress in the chosen area of development in the child over a period of time.

(b) Application of Knowledge and Understanding

The work in this section was much improved this year. Most candidates discussed some commonly accepted theories about child development and attempted to relate these theories to the development they had observed in their chosen child.

(c) Comparison of Evidence

Candidates were able to make some comparisons between their child and another child or with normal accepted development. However, many of these comparisons were brief, sometimes discussing general features about the children rather than comparing the levels of development. Sometimes children of different ages were compared and, of course, the development seen was different and thus not a fair comparison. This section works well when there is a clear table setting out a range of developments in the area of study which would be accepted within the normal range. The chosen child can then be compared against this table and/or the same range of development shown by another child.

Analysis and Evaluation

(a) Comment on Appropriateness

Many candidates summarised the work they had done in each section but often failed to discuss the effectiveness of the methods used for the study. Candidates could explain which methods of obtaining information worked best and could explain how they organised their observations and could comment on the outcome.

(b) Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths and weaknesses were listed but sometimes only one or two simple points were given with little explanation. Candidates need to include much more work here. It is important in this section that candidates are critical of their own work and are able to suggest areas where the work could have been improved.

(c) Awareness of Opportunities for Further Developments

A number of candidates completed this section well suggesting the study of a different area of development in their child, studying another aspect of the same development in their child or studying a child of a different age or a child in a different place. There are many further opportunities which could be discussed but candidates need to take care that supporting reasons are always included.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Paper 0637/03

Coursework (Practical Investigation)

There were some excellent Investigations submitted for moderation this session. Topics in the main were ones that could be researched easily with access to a lot of information and which could be sourced using both primary and secondary means.

Introduction

Many candidates gave relevant background information.

Reasons for choice is a category which in some instances is still causing problems. In some instances candidates mentioned that the investigation titles were 'given to me'. It is difficult for candidates to give valid reasons for choice if they have not actually chosen the subject that they intend to investigate for themselves. Methods of acquiring information should be explained. All too often teachers award five marks for a list of methods, which is not justified. Candidates also need to explain why they have chosen specific methods if they are to gain the higher marks. Examples of ways in which candidates could explain why they have chosen methods are as follows:

Use of questionnaires

It is a systematic way to obtain statistically useful information about a topic.

Easy to analyse

Inexpensive way to gather data

A good way to reach a reasonable number of people.

Familiar to most people and most people are willing to fill one in as long as the questions are not of a sensitive nature.

Media

Is a widely used form of gathering information. With increased use of the web it is easy to obtain large amounts of relevant and useful data. The source of the data must be given as well as any comments about the accuracy of information on the web.

Candidates are organising their work well but only a few are producing a detailed plan of work. The plan will form the basic framework of the Investigation and should be a week by week account of how they are going to organise their work and how it will progress.

Application

Many candidates used at least two ways to acquire their information and discussed these fully. In the main they showed excellent investigative procedures and were able to display their findings with the use of some excellent graphics. Quite a few candidates were able to discuss their findings thoroughly and were able to form conclusions. Posters and leaflets were often of a very high standard and in one or two cases looked very professional.

Analysis and Evaluation

In analysis candidates need to comment on the appropriateness of investigative procedures used, not why ones from the list they gave initially were not used e.g. 'the library was no use because I did not visit'. However, on the whole candidates are getting better at evaluating their own work and often give detailed reasons as to why some methods of acquiring information worked better than others.

Evaluation is an important section and candidates need to be aware of what is required in their response. The following points could be used to help candidates structure their analysis and evaluation. They should identify:

- The **strengths** and **weaknesses** of their work; what **problems** did they face and how did they **solve** them?
- Which **techniques** did they find **hard or easy**?
- What were the positive and negative points of how they **planned** and **carried out** the task?
- What **improvements** should they make **in terms of** planning, preparation, organisation, time management, write up, presentation of research, final outcome e.g. poster/leaflet?
- What would they **do differently** if given the opportunity to complete the task again?

Strengths and weaknesses are still a difficult area as some candidates are still blaming lack of time as a reason for not submitting a satisfactory piece of work. Weaknesses should provide constructive criticism and not comments like 'I wasted time' or 'I spent a lot of time moaning'. A solution to the problem is expected here rather than an excuse for inaction.

It is good practice to encourage candidates to evaluate their work right from the beginning of the course of study i.e. after the first piece of written work or investigative work, and at regular stages during their studies. As practice for the candidates, teachers may find it useful to ask candidates to evaluate each other's work. They can compare each other's plans using the following prompts:

Did the original plan cover all the techniques?

What was the outcome like?

Offer constructive advice...e.g.' what about doing it a different way? Or 'some other students tried it this way...' Or 'when I tried to do this I found that...'

Get the candidates to think about evaluating their work and performance as early in the course as possible. Do not leave this type of thinking and writing until just before the final submission date. Allow the candidates to practice evaluating their own, and each other's work, so they are confident about how to respond when submitting their final piece for assessment.

They could ask the following questions about their own and each other's work:

Preparation - Why did you choose this topic? How did you prepare for the Investigation/piece of work? Ask questions related to: interest in the topic; plan of action; time plan; resources used; methods used; information gathered etc.

Planning - Did you do enough planning for your task? Which area of the task did you plan well? Which area of the task could you have improved on?

Carrying out the Investigation/piece of work - ask questions related to: organisation and time management; course of action taken; equipment and research methods used; appropriate time scales; how did you respond to problems or unforeseen circumstances etc.

Outcome - quality of poster/leaflet/product/information - is the information easy to understand? Is it right for the target audience? What else might be useful to tell/show them? Did it achieve what it set out to do?

Evaluation - Ask questions related to: strengths - special achievements; weaknesses - areas for improvement; are the comments made relevant to the investigation/work? Has appropriate evidence been given?

Further developments is an area which is still causing problems. Candidates need to discuss how they could add further dimension to their Investigation by looking at another area, for example Investigations could be further extended by the following if not already included:

Car seats – price comparison or road safety.

Bath time products – safety at bath time or look at other nursery equipment.

Nappies – environmental effect of disposable nappies.

Outdoor toys – different types of play with outdoor toys e.g. social, imaginative, physical etc. and show how the toys can help the development of a child. Different toys for different ages and safety.

There are still some candidates who do not keep to the age limit of five years and look at older children or even teenagers. Marks cannot be awarded for work which is outside the scope of the syllabus, or for work which exceeds the word limit by a large margin.