Introduction to Child Psychology
PSYCH 320 – Section 1
Winter 2013
Harold B. Lee Library 3710
12:05 to 1:20 Tuesdays & Thursdays

Ross Flom
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1044 Spencer W. Kimball Tower (SWKT)
422-1147
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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-3 or by appointment

Overview
Within the first two-years of postnatal life human infants go through a marvelous and magical period of development. We began life as a relatively simple sperm and egg and within a short period of time (i.e., 35-months) we can walk, talk, have amassed a wealth of cognitive abilities – and are even beginning to understand that others have minds and have thoughts. As such I am hard pressed to find a more complicated and compelling question to study. This process of development during the first eight-years of life will be our focus of study.

Course Objectives
The purpose of this course is to increase students’ knowledge and comprehension of early development. In this course we will examine some of the basic theoretical and empirical issues and concepts associated with development. Topics covered will include: prenatal development, sensory, motor, and cognitive development, as well as social-emotional development, and the effects of parenting and day care on early development. This course will emphasize the period of prenatal development up to about three years of age.

BS in Psychology Program Objectives
Graduates will:
(1) Be able to demonstrate more extensive knowledge and deeper understanding of the major core content areas of psychology at a depth that clearly exceeds the undergraduate level.

2) Be able to demonstrate technical sophistication related to their self-selected area of scholarly specialty by using laboratory apparatus, software applications, survey instruments, etc.

(3) Be able to design, produce, analyze, and report original research that contributes to their self-selected area of scholarly specialty.

(4) Be able to weigh evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and reflect other values that are the underpinnings of psychology as an academic and professional discipline. In particular, they should be able to critically reflect on these values in light of their knowledge of and commitment to the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and to sustain personal values that are true to the gospel while maintaining their scholarly study of psychology.

Course Specific Learning Outcomes

1. Theories and research in human development
Students will describe current theories and research in human development from pre-natal development through late childhood, demonstrating an understanding of developmental processes that lead to normative development, including perceptual, cognitive, biological, genetic, and social domains, as well as factors that lead to psychopathology and mental illness.
2. Assess and critique a key issue
   Students will assess and critique a key issue in a group format presented to the class.

3. Integrate current research studies
   Students will assess critical issues in early childhood development, integrating current research studies on topics in development psychology.

Required Text

Additional Required Readings
Are posted on Learning Suite. The timing of when these papers are to be read is posted on Learning Suite.

General Course Design
There are four basic instructional activities: a) course lectures, b) assigned readings, c) one in-class group presentation and associated individual paper d) four exams (dropping the lowest score) and e) preschool observation paper. The lectures and readings are designed to convey the conceptual and logical foundations associated with developing an understanding of developmental psychology.

Course Presentation & Paper
Don’t you just love group work!!! NOT! If I were to lecture the entire time you would get bored, very quickly, with me talking “at you” for so long.... The goal of the presentation is to give each of us a chance to hear what you, individually, and as a group of about 4-5 students thought of the assigned readings (i.e., the additional articles for that week). In other words 4-5 of you will describe the research associated with the supplemental articles for that week. Part of the presentation is to try to engage your fellow students in discussion/conversation. Another part of the presentation is to convey the main points, issues, as well as the methods, results and significance of the research. Each member of a given group should read the articles carefully and thoroughly and then divide the points/areas of that topic between the 4-5 members of the group. Then the group will prepare a presentation for the class and each student within the group will take their respective turn during the presentation. The actual presentation is worth 5 of the 20 points. The remaining 15 points are based on the individual paper based on the associated articles.

The purpose of the individual paper is to assess your understanding of the research question, the method, results, and significance, etc: paper is to be typed/word-processed of about a page or two (length is not so much an issue as is what is said and how it is said). In essence content counts more than volume. In this paper I want you to cover what you believe to be the highlights or key points of the articles and you may add additional relevant sources as needed. The paper is worth 15 points and is due on the day of presentation.

Preschool Observation & Paper
Students are required to do an "observational paper" - based on their observing children at the BYU Preschool (1100 JFSB - the far west side of the building on the ground floor). The purpose of this observation is to increase your familiarity with observing (not interacting with) preschool children. Children in the preschool this term will be between 4- and 5-years of age. Each observation is done in the style of a naturalistic observation. A narrative account of each observation is to be written along with any insights as to what was observed. This assignment is worth 80 points. Additional details are posted on Learning Suite.

Lectures
Outlines/power-points for each lecture will be made available on Course-content via Learning Suite. These are intended to supplement your note taking - some material covered in lecture may not appear on the on-line notes but will be included on the exams.

There are no formal requirements concerning the attendance at lectures or the completion of readings. The lectures and reading are simply the means by which students can prepare themselves for the examinations. Performance on the
examinations, the presentation, and the paper are the bases for student evaluation in this course. These are described below in greater detail.

Exams
There will be FOUR major course examinations. The exams are not comprehensive; however, they do build upon those concepts previously covered. Each exam will be given in the testing center on the dates listed covering those chapters indicated on the Course Outline. I will drop your lowest score on one of the four exams — thus three exams contribute to your grade.

Grade Assignment
Grades will be based on each student’s cumulative score on the following items.
There are a total of 340 points possible.
80 points for each exam = 240 points
80 points for the preschool observation paper
20 points for the presentation (5 points) and research paper (15 points)

A total of 5 extra credit points can be earned via participation in SONA studies.

Grade assignments will be based on the following basis
(total of 340 points)
A = 93% or 316 points
A- = 90% or 306 points
B+ = 87% or 295 points
B = 83% or 282 points
B- = 80% or 272 points
C+ = 77% or 261 points
C = 73% or 248 points
C- = 70% or 238 points
D+ = 67% or 227 points
D = 63% or 214 points
D- = 60% or 204 point

A note regarding the exams: As you will see each exam is given in the testing center over a span of several days for your flexibility. If, you miss, forget, or otherwise fail to take an exam — do not email me asking, “What can I do for you?” My answer is I am sorry but you cannot take the exam — consider it the exam you will drop!

Some excuses that are often provided — but are not acceptable.
1) I was planning on taking the test on such-and-such a day — but became sick/ill thus I did not take the exam.
2) I was traveling or otherwise out of town and missed the exam.
3) I arrived at the testing center at such-and-such a time but the lines were so long and I did not have enough time to start/finish the exam.
4) Weddings, family reunions, etc. are not excuses for missing an exam.

IF YOU KNOW OF A CONFLICT REGARDING AN EXAM LET ME KNOW BEFORE THE EXAM BEGINS — THEN ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE. HOWEVER, PER UNIVERSITY POLICY, EARLY FLIGHTS HOME DURING FINALS WEEK IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE EXCUSE FOR TAKING THE EXAM AT A DIFFERENT TIME.

Honor Code Standards
In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the University.

Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university’s expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

PSYCH 320 Winter 2013
Statement on Learning Objectives
Each program at BYU has developed a set of expected student learning outcomes. These will help you understand the objectives of the curriculum in the program, including this class. To learn the expected student outcomes for the programs in this department and college go to https://learning.outcomes.byu.edu and click on the College of Family, Home and Social Sciences and then this department. We welcome feedback on the expected student learning outcomes. Any comments or suggestions you have can be sent to FHSS@byu.edu.

Statement on Academic Honesty
While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet; as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that as your professor I will notice instances of cheating on exams or plagiarizing on papers. See http://www.byu.edu/honorcode for specific examples of intentional, inadvertent plagiarism, and fabrication, falsification.

Statement on Discrimination
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU's policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 378-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 378-2847.

Students with Disabilities
Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (378-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD office.

If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/8</td>
<td>Introduction to course and historical foundations</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>Enduring themes and methods</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
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<td>Presentation # 1</td>
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<td>1/15</td>
<td>Research methods</td>
<td>Ch. 2</td>
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<td>1/17</td>
<td>Issues in research with infants</td>
<td>Ch. 2</td>
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<td>1/22</td>
<td>Genetics</td>
<td>Ch. 3</td>
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<td>1/24</td>
<td>Conception and prenatal Development</td>
<td>Ch. 3</td>
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<td>Presentation # 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>Prenatal Development</td>
<td>Ch. 3</td>
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<td>Exam 1: Tuesday 1/29 through Friday 2/1 in the Testing Center (Ch’s 1-3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/31</td>
<td>Birth process</td>
<td>Ch. 4</td>
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<td>Presentation # 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>Birth process</td>
<td>Ch. 4</td>
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<td>2/7</td>
<td>Early physical growth</td>
<td>Ch. 5</td>
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<td>Presentation # 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/12</td>
<td>Neural development</td>
<td>Ch. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/14</td>
<td>Perceptual development part 1</td>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Presentation # 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/21</td>
<td>Perceptual development part 2</td>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/26</td>
<td>Motor development</td>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
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<td>Presentation # 7</td>
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<td>Exam 2: Thursday 2/26 through Monday 3/4 in the Testing Center (Ch’s 4 - 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/28</td>
<td>Cognitive development part 1 - Piaget</td>
<td>Ch. 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Cognitive development part 2</td>
<td>Ch. 7</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Presentation # 8</td>
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<td>3/7</td>
<td>More recent theories in infant cognition</td>
<td>Ch. 7</td>
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<td>3/12</td>
<td>Language development</td>
<td>Ch. 8</td>
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<td>Presentation # 9</td>
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<td>3/14</td>
<td>Language development part 2</td>
<td>Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/19</td>
<td>Early social relationships and attachment</td>
<td>Ch. 9</td>
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<td>Presentation # 10</td>
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<td>3/21</td>
<td>Peer relationships</td>
<td>Ch. 9</td>
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<td>Exam 3: Thursday 3/21 through Tuesday 3/26 in the Testing Center (Ch’s 7 - 9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/26</td>
<td>Temperament</td>
<td>Ch. 10</td>
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<td>Presentation # 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/28</td>
<td>Emotion and the development of the self</td>
<td>Ch. 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Maternal employment and child care</td>
<td>Ch. 11</td>
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<td>Presentation # 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>*4/4</td>
<td>Early intervention</td>
<td>Ch. 11</td>
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<td>Preschool Observation Paper Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>Perception of Music</td>
<td>Ch. 12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation # 13</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/11</td>
<td>Ross out of town - no class</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/16</td>
<td>Media and early child development</td>
<td>Ch. 12</td>
</tr>
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<td>Exam 4 – will run during Finals Week in the Testing Center (April 19th - 24th; Ch’s 10 – 12)</td>
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PSYCH 320 Winter 2013
Introduction to Child Psychology:
Presentation and Paper Topics

1) 1-10 Chapter 1 Historical Perspectives
   History of Child Development – ICD History.

2) 1-17 Chapter 2 Research Methods with Human Infants

3) 1-24 Chapter 3 Genetics and Prenatal Development

4) 1-31 Chapter 4 Birth

5) 2-7 Chapter 5 Physical Growth and Neural Development

6) 2-14 Chapter 6 Perceptual Development

7) 2-26 Chapter 6 Motor Development
8) 3-5 Chapter 7 Cognitive Development


9) 3-12 Chapter 8 Language Development


10) 3-19 Chapter 9 Early Social Relationships and Attachment

11) 3-26 Chapter 10 Temperament

12) 4-2 Chapter 11 Emotional Development and the Development of the Self


13) 4-9 Chapter 12 Perception of Music
Psych 320
Winter 2013
Presentation

Name: ____________________________________________

Articles/Topic: ____________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Content or substance of the presentation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Ability to convey your thoughts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Ability to engage others – myself included</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \text{Total} = 5 \]

1) Content:

2) Conveying of thoughts & ideas:

3) Engagement:
Name: ______________________________

Articles/Topic: ______________________________

Grading Criteria

Introduction

___/2 Describe the research question.

___/3 What is the relevance, or importance of investigating this topic?

The paper(s)

___/5 In general what did the authors do (method) and what did they find (results).

___/5 How do these results contribute to our understanding of development (discussion)?

Your interpretation

___/5 Your interpretation of the results-study in terms of its significance and importance.

Miscellaneous

___/2 Writing is clear and concise

___/3 Spelling and grammar

___/25 POINTS
Preschool Observation Assignment
PSYCH 320
Ross Flom
Due April 4th in class

Adapted from David Rakison @ Carnegie Mellon University

Conduct at least two 45-minute observation sessions relevant to your question. You must submit your notes from the observation and a diagram of the space with your final paper. The diagram and notes do not need to be typed. Observe either Social or Physical behaviors and observe the same one on each visit.

Social

How does the sex of a child affect the social interactions of preschoolers?

Observe the social interactions of two-three girls and boys from one classroom during free play. Compare and contrast the girls and the boys with respect to at least two of the following features: social approaches, social behaviors, gender composition of play groups, enforcement of gender roles by peers, cross-gender behavior, sex segregation, differences in play types depending on the gender mix of the play group, etc (this list is not inclusive – but be specific in what features you want to observe). Are there any striking individual differences? What strategies do the teachers use to encourage or discourage sex-typed behavior? How does the environment (e.g., room arrangement, materials) affect gender development?

Physical

How does the sex of a child affect the social interactions of preschoolers?

Observe the physical development and motor skills of two-three boys/girls (pick at least one of each gender) from one classroom during free play. Compare and contrast the boys and girls with respect to activity level (however you define it), fine motor skills (e.g., fastening clothes, handling food, picking up small objects, using silverware, building with blocks, drawing), endurance, coordination as well as gross motor skills (e.g., running, jumping, hopping, eating, throwing, walking, sliding). Are there any striking individual differences? Be sure to consider a variety of action types (e.g., locomotor, stability, and manipulative), the level of proficiency, and the associated effort, space, and body awareness. What strategies do the teachers use to facilitate physical and motor development? How does the environment (e.g., classroom or playground arrangement, equipment) support these kinds of development?

Guidelines
Answer your question in a research paper essay. Be sure to include each of the following components:

a. State the question being addressed and indicate its relevance for understanding child development and working with young children.

b. Briefly describe the context for addressing the question, including site characteristics, day, date, activity and time of observation.

c. Summarize your observations, making sure to cover all the observation guidelines listed in the paragraph beneath the question. No real names please!
d. Relate your observations to specific concepts, research findings, and theories discussed in class or in the text. Cite at least three studies/theories to support your opinions (with names of the researchers/theories).

e. Draw conclusions about the meaning of what you observed.

f. Include references for all papers you have cited.

Your paper should be 4-5 double-spaced typed pages. Your paper should be written clearly and concisely in an organized essay format without spelling or grammatical errors. Put your references on a 6th page (or 5th if your paper is 4 pages long). Give the paper a title that summarizes the study. An example of a previous paper is posted on LearningSuite (this paper was written for early cognition- but it will give you an idea of what is required). Please attach ALL of your observation notes to your paper and one clean (that is, untarnished) coding sheet. Identify yourself on the paper with your name. All papers are due on Thursday, April 4th at the beginning of class. For a breakdown of the points for each section see the grading sheet.

More Guidelines

What question am I writing about?
The overarching impetus behind the observation is to think about “How advanced is the physical or social development of preschoolers?” Your paper should address a specific question (of your own formulation) about the physical or social development of preschoolers.

I’ve never done research or written a research paper like this using observations before. How do I go about it?

If you follow these steps in order you will be off to a good start...
1) Read the section on motor/social development in the textbook.
2) Brainstorm aspects of motor/social development that interest you (e.g. coordination, balance, handling objects, etc.).
3) Brainstorm questions, which interest you, that are related to these aspects of motor/social development. Draw on your personal experiences and the readings (e.g. I’ve noticed they sell big legos for little children and small legos for older children. Is that because younger children have a harder time handling small objects?)
4) Search Psych Info for additional articles related to your question. Reading these over can give you ideas for the kinds of things you should look for when you observe or how you might “rate” children’s behaviors. Take some time here in formulating your question – perhaps just go in and observe and see if observing kids without any question helps you to generate a question.
5) Try to predict the answer or the kinds of observations you will make based on your reading and the theories discussed in class.
6) Design an observation sheet that will allow you to record behaviors that will help you answer this question.
7) Conduct your observations. When you observe, try to choose a time that is going to allow you to see what you want and choose the same time for both groups! Talk with Ann or the teacher (talk with the teacher first - and only when they are not busy). For example, if your question is about children’s activity level, then observing during outdoor play would be better than snack time. On the other hand, if your question is about children’s fine motor skills than snack time might be better than outdoor play.)
8) Go over your notes and coding sheets looking for patterns and trends – you may need to make more observations based on emerging trends.
9) Develop some conclusions based on your observations.
10) Think about whether these conclusions are reasonable in light of the theories discussed in class and other research findings.
11) Draw conclusions about the implications of what you observed (e.g. provides support for theory X but not theory Y; parents/teachers should..., etc.)
12) HAVE FUN. This assignment is not hard – but it is time consuming in terms of observation.

**How’s my observation sheet?**

Generally, the more specific your observation sheet, the better. You only have 30-45 minutes to observe per session. A good observation sheet should make sure you stay focused! If you start taking notes on the way the children talk or how they interact with the teacher, you might leave with some great stories and some interesting observations, but you won’t be able to answer your question about physical development.

You may need to go through a couple of iterations – create one – try it out – modify it – then repeat until you are satisfied.

Think carefully about the *kind* of information that will be most helpful in answering your question. For example...

If your question is “Is there a difference in the way preschoolers handle small objects?”, then your observation sheet should include ways in which you think they are likely to differ (e.g. handle with one hand; move object with fingers, wrist, or arm; etc.) and a place to record whether you observed this and to what degree (e.g. a rating scale). For this question, tallying how many times a child fastens clothes or picks up small objects, for example, won’t tell you anything about the way they do so.

“Not so good”

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fastens clothes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses scissors</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picks up small objects</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Better”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Using one hand</th>
<th>Using two hands</th>
<th>Grasping with whole hand</th>
<th>Using fingers/pincer grip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picks up small objects</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastens clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If your question is "Is there a difference in preschoolers' and kindergartners' balance?" your observation sheet should include behaviors that demonstrate good/poor balance (i.e. bump into others or stumble) and a place to tally the occurrence of these behaviors.

The theories in the book only talk about infant motor/social development, how do I use them to answer my question about preschoolers and kindergartners?

The theories attempt to explain motor development in general, although most of the studies have been with infants. It is up to you to extrapolate and infer which aspects of the theory are applicable to your question.

The Children's School Observation Sheet - a "Not so good" example

Class:
Child # :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender:</th>
<th>Stature:</th>
<th>Fine Motor Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity:</td>
<td>Body proportions:</td>
<td>q Fastens clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity level:</td>
<td>q Handles food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Endurance:</td>
<td>q Plays in the sand</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordination:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Children's School Observation Sheet - a "Bette"r example

Class:
Child # :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group:</th>
<th>Stature:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex:</td>
<td>Approximate body proportions: (Measure head to body):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity:</td>
<td>Activity level: high medium low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explain:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Endurance: high medium low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordination: high medium low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain:</td>
<td></td>
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## Fine Motor Skills

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fastens clothes</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handles food</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plays in the sand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Picks up small object</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:

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INFORMATION FOR OBSERVING IN THE BYU
CHILD AND FAMILY STUDIES LABORATORY

Preschool Hours:
(Observation Rooms - 1103 JFSB, 1113 JFSB)

Monday - Thursday:
8:30 - 11:00 a.m. (10:30 on Tuesdays)
1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

*Important Note: Preschool children do not attend on Fridays.

Kindergarten Hours:
(Rm. 1093 JFSB)

Monday - Friday:
8:30 - 11:15 (Friday - early out day: 8:30 - 10:15)
12:30 - 3:15 (Friday - early out day: 12:30 - 2:15)

Please feel free to check the website http://preschool.byu.edu/ for any dates
the school is closed or the children are on a field trip.

Please read and know this information BEFORE you come to observe:
1. Please do not talk to or contact any child during your observation period.

2. Overhead sound will be turned on in the booths. You may go directly into the booths without informing
the secretary, unless you would like headphones. Headphones are helpful if you are interested in
focusing on a specific child's conversation. You may check out headphones with the secretary in 1100
JFSB with your BYU ID card. Do not adjust the overhead sound.

3. The booths are not open to observers before or after class time. Please do not enter the booths until
8:30am or 12:30pm, and exit the booth as soon as class is over.

4. Children are identified by the name-tags they wear. Their birth dates are posted in the booth for your
information.

5. When the children go outside on the playground, you may follow them, but please use the glass doors in
the main hallway to go outside. Please stay next to the building. Please keep your personal
belongings with you. Do not leave them in the booth.

6. Please speak softly while in the booths, since children can hear voices above a
whisper. Avoid discussing individual children while in the booth. Be aware parents are also in the booth
observing.

7. Please keep the lights off and the doors shut. The children can see into the booth if it is lit up.
Grading Criteria

Introduction

_____/7 Research question makes clear what was the topic of investigation.
_____/7 Relevance, or importance of investigating this topic.

Contextual & Background Elements

_____/2 Day, date, and time of each of two observations
_____/2 Activity that the children participated in during the observation (e.g., snack, free play, etc.)
_____/3 Site characteristics including layout and props when relevant (tricycles, large open area, etc)

Observations

_____/15 Observations are clearly related to motor skills (or social) and more specifically, to the research topic of interest.
_____/15 Comparisons are drawn across the behaviors of the two groups/gender/age – whatever you are comparing.
_____/15 Children’s actual behaviors are described and are used to discuss larger issues such as gross motor skills, coordination, etc.

Conclusions

_____/7 The observations are connected back to the research question.
_____/7 The implications of the observations is considered.

Miscellaneous

_____/5 Writing is clear and concise
_____/5 Spelling and grammar
_____/5 References are included at the end of the text
_____/5 Original Observation notes are attached

_____/100 POINTS (multiplied by .8 = 80 points)
Grading Criteria

Introduction

| 6 / 6 | Research question makes clear what was the topic of investigation. |
| 5 / 6 | Relevance, or importance of investigating this topic |

Contextual Elements

| 6 / 6 | Day, date, and time of each of two observations |
| 3 / 3 | Activity that the children participated in during the observation (e.g., snack, free play, etc.) |
| 3 / 3 | Site characteristics including layout and props when relevant (tricycles, large open area, etc) |

Observations

| 15 / 15 | Observations are clearly related to motor skills and more specifically, to the research topic of interest. |
| 3 / 15 | Comparisons are drawn across the behaviors of the two age groups. |
| 3 / 15 | Children's actual behaviors are described and are used to discuss larger issues such as gross motor skills, coordination, etc. |

Studies/Theories

| 18 / 18 | Three theories, ideas, or research findings that are relevant to motor development are considered and presented clearly enough (and in enough detail) to allow the reader to understand them (6 pts/each) |
| 9 / 27 | Each theory, idea, or finding cited is clearly related to the observations. (9 pts/each) |

Conclusions

| 6 / 6 | The observations are connected back to the research question. |
| 6 / 6 | The implications of the observations is considered. |

Miscellaneous

| 9 / 9 | Writing is clear and concise |
| 3 / 3 | Spelling and grammar |
| 3 / 3 | References are included |
| 9 / 9 | Observation notes are attached |

*** Penalty of 2.5 pts for each page over 6.

149 / 150 TOTAL POINTS (divide by 10 for score out of 15)
Question: Understanding the cognitive development of children, changes in attention, perception, problem solving, language, memory, reasoning and conceptual understanding that occur as they progress from infants to adolescents, is critical to the very fabric of our society. It helps parents raise their children, helps physicians heal corporal ailments, helps psychologists answer questions about human nature and helps our government chose appropriate social policies. A child's improvement in memory, attention, problem solving skills, understanding of psychological states and concept development are a fascinating and crucial part of this development because these skills can dictate their social interactions, mental progression and emotional growth. In an attempt to better understand this acquisition we can ask ourselves: is their one template model that the cognitive development of children follows, or are their two many varying aspects and circumstances that affect this development?

Context for addressing the question: Our observations were naturalistic and thus a laboratory did not mold the children's actions. Data was collected in their everyday classroom setting, giving the results more external validity. The pre-school children, ages thirty-seven to sixty-one months were observed on Tuesday, April 1, 2003 from 1:45 until 2:15 pm. Their activity time was in the playroom in the children's school (see figure 1). The children were given a variety of activities through which they were allowed to rotate. There was a sandbox, a water table, a painting station, an area to play with play dough, a large box full of shapes to explore and a light table. The activities required little individual instruction and were activities that children had the opportunity to explore on a nearly daily basis. The instructors helped to facilitate cognitive development by creating an environment that encourages interaction, curiosity, exploration and problem solving. The instructor's interactions with individual preschoolers, asking questions that provoked thought and required attention, also helped to facilitate development.

The kindergarten children, ages sixty-one to seventy-three months, were observed on Tuesday, April 1, 2003 from 9:45 to 10:15. Their activity time was in a classroom in the children's school (see figure 2). The children were given a variety of highly structured activities as well as some more open-ended activities through which they rotated. At one table
children splatter painted posters, at a second they made “backwards crowns” for April fool’s day and at a third they created small barnyard scenes. These activities were highly structured, carefully explained and unique to this particular day. The instructors were highly involved, and following directions, as well as learning new skills, were involved. At the same time a second set of activities were occurring: children could either play board games or draw pictures. This set of activities is available each day for the kindergarteners. This type of activity requires no individual instruction and encouraged interactions among the children, not with the instructors. The kindergarten instructors helped to facilitate cognitive development by encouraging interaction among children and with adults, by introducing new problems to explore and by fostering creativity. The instructor’s individual interactions also aid cognitive development by encouraging children to solve problems for themselves, as opposed to simply providing an immediate solution.

The physical setup of both activity time rooms were very similar and the variety of different activities encouraged interaction and exploration. The creative activities presented by the teacher for the different age groups were appropriate for their skill and developmental level and thus facilitated cognitive, social and intellectual development. The preschooler’s activities helped improve their communication, fostered curiosity and encouraged creativity. At the same time, the kindergartener’s activities required that they have a basic ability to multitask and more extensive ability to follow careful instructions.

Observations as relating to specific theories and concepts: There are four particularly influential theories on cognitive development that our book explores: Piagetian, information processing, core knowledge, and sociocultural. The development of children however is so extensive and multifaceted that no single theory or model can capture it. Thus, in observing the children clear examples of all four theories became evident.

Piaget’s theory builds upon three assumptions: that children’s mental and physical activity contributes to their own development, that young children learn many important lessons on their own, and that children are intrinsically motivated to learn. An example of such self-teaching and motivation occurred in the preschool classroom. A group of children were placing small plastic shapes in a cup with a one-inch hole in its bottom and watching them fall through.
Every few minutes the shapes would stop falling through the hole, the children would be disappointed, dump the pieces out the other side and begin again. It was evident to me that they stopped flowing through the hole because the star shaped piece was too large and blocked the hole, however the children seemed confused. After cycling through this process numerous times one little girl jumped up excitedly and exclaimed “the star, the star.” Other children looked at her blankly and she replied, “It doesn't go.” The children had taught themselves that a shape larger than the hole could not fit through and consequently caused the hole to be blocked, stopping the flow of shapes. Kindergarteners also taught themselves during their activity period. While making the “backwards crowns” the children were trying to glue the two ends of somewhat waxy paper together. The glue kept coming apart and one of the children walked up to the instructor and said, “the glue doesn’t work, can we have the stapler?” These scenes clearly exhibit Piaget’s theory that children teach themselves through their own actions and interactions. They are also ideal examples of a basic function of cognitive growth, organization, or integrating observations into coherent knowledge. The young girl observed the cup and shapes, integrated her knowledge and formed a conclusion as to what was occurring. The kindergarteners quickly integrated their knowledge to conclude that the glue could not hold such slippery paper. There was a drastic difference however between the two age groups when it came to their ability to organize observations. It took the preschoolers numerous trials to discover that the star was blocking the hole, a fairly simple concept. On the other hand it took the kindergarteners only a minute to discover that the glue would not hold and devise an alternate plan. Thus, we see that Piaget’s fundamental assumptions about children teaching themselves are true and that this rate of self-education grows exponentially as children gain more knowledge of the world.

Core knowledge theorists suggest that children enter our world with specialized learning abilities that allow them to quickly acquire crucial knowledge. They argue that this innate knowledge is domain specific, limited to a specific area. A preschool aged girl had some basic knowledge of psychology, or knowledge of people. As a little boy walked out of the room holding his mom’s hand and looking ready to cry she called out his name. When he came over she gave him a big hug, smiled and said bye. He walked away with a grin on his face. It seemed
as if she knew he was upset and that this simple gesture would make him happy. A kindergartner also seemed to have basic knowledge of another one of the categories, biology. When a teacher angrily asked a young boy why he had left the room with out a teacher he responded, “I was thirsty” and upon further questioning said “but I couldn’t find you.” He continued to explain that if you’re thirsty you have to drink or you might get sick because your body needs water. We see that even young children do seem to have some knowledge of biology, physics and psychology as core knowledge theorists suggest. It is also apparent that children build on innate knowledge very rapidly. The kindergarten aged children seemed to understand more, have more knowledge and draw connections within categories far better.

Information-Processing theorist think that children are undergoing continuous cognitive change and believe that analogical reasoning, or understanding new problems in familiar terms, is a key method that children use in their learning process. The instructors at the children’s school use analytical reasoning to help children solve problems. At the painting station in the preschool student’s activity room there were a series of sponge stamp figurines to dip in paint and stamp on paper. One little girl was trying to use the stamps as a paintbrush and creating a disaster. The teacher came over and said “do you remember the stamps and ink we used at the other table yesterday” the little girl nodded her head and the instructor continued. She picked up the sponge stamp saying “you do this exactly the same way” and demonstrated how to stamp the figure onto the page. In the kindergarten class one young boy was trying to reach a book on a shelf. He was standing on tiptoes but couldn’t quite make it. One of the assistants came over and asked if he needed help. When he said “no” she asked if he remember how they taught them to reach the cubbies on the top shelf. He immediately pulled over a small step stool and used it to reach the out of grasp object. Consequently, we see that in an attempt to facilitate problem solving teachers give young children hints that involve analogical reasoning. There is however a significant difference between the analogical reasoning ability of preschoolers and kindergarteners. The kindergarteners needed only to be reminded of the similar problem, while the preschoolers required that the familiar problem be not only referenced but also explained, compared and guided. Information processing theorist’s idea that children are problem solvers who use
analogical reasoning as a key tool is collaborated by my observation at the children’s school and it was also evident that the speed of analogical reasoning increased drastically with experience.

The final theory, sociocultural, suggests that children’s development is greatly facilitated by their interactions with other people. Teachers clearly encourage interaction between the children and also between children and adults as a learning mechanism at the children’s school. Guided participation was used again and again as a tool in both the preschool and kindergarten classes. After seeing several children unable to stamp the sponge figures the teachers began to stamp the figures for children and then simply allow them to decorate the figures. Thus, the children could create artwork that they would have been unable to make on their own. In the kindergarten classroom a similar setup was used. The fence rails and other aspects of the barnyard scene had already been cut out so the children could simply glue them on and color them. Yet again the children were then able to create a piece of artwork that would have been impossible to make at their level without this guided participation. Guided participation is key for the development of both age groups; The difference lies in the difficulty of the task for which guided participation is necessary in order to complete it. Preschool age children need help to complete tasks that kindergarteners can easily complete on their own. It was clear through the observations at the children’s school that the sociocultural theorists are correct in their perspective that human interaction is a fundamental aspect of cognitive development. We have thus seen that because the development of children is so extensive and multifaceted no single theory can capture it all and four theories shed light on important aspects of this development.

Conclusion: Thus we have learned through our observation; and in concordance with the theories of Piaget, Gelman, and Williams among others, that cognitive development is very multifaceted and can be explained only by combining and expanding upon a variety of models and theories. The one thread however that connects all these developments is that as children gain knowledge about the world and grow older they quickly become much more adept at employing strategies to further their development and gain more knowledge. Piaget was correct that children actively fathom their own learning and have a thirst for knowledge. Core knowledge theorists seem to be correct in their idea that children have innate knowledge in certain specified areas.
Information processing theorists were also correct in their statement that analytical reasoning is a crucial tool for cognitive development. Finally, sociocultural theorists were also correct with their perspective that human interaction is of utmost importance in development.
Child Observations:

Date: 4-1-03 1:45 - 2:15  
Age Category: preschool (37-41 months)  
Description of Space:  
4 doors (1 to playground, 1 to bathroom)  
1 large rectangular room, many tables  
Visually very open  
Description of Activities:  
sand box, light table, water table  
painting station  
craft tables with clay activity  
Notes:  
- filling cup with hole in bottom. One shape keeps getting stuck and blocking hole. One girl figures it out.  
- children having trouble stamping sponge figures in paint. Helped by teachers  
- seem to enjoy make believe cooking in sand and dish washing in water table  
Quotes:  
- "no, I want the shell" - crying  
- "bye, see you tomorrow" w/ big hug  
- "the star, the star" "it doesn't go"
Child Observations:

Date: 4-1-03 (9:45 - 10:15 am)
Age Category: Kindergarten (61 - 73 months)
Description of Space:
  2 doors (none directly to outside)
  1 large room divided in half by waist height wall
    many tables, three computers, carpet

Description of Activities:
  - Free activities: drawing, board games, etc.
  - Structures crafts: splatter painting, making of
    "backward day" crown, making of barnyard scene.

Notes:
  - Making crowns, discussing hockey game
    can not make clue stick, use stapler
  - Young boy gets in trouble for leaving room
    w/o teacher. Says he was thirsty.
  - Group of children are making "flags" out of
    colored tape.
  - Teachers help with finger painting and barnyard
  - Boy can't reach book, teacher gives clue to help

Quotes:

"I was thirsty. I could get sick if I don't
  drink water."

"She's my best friend. I am on one, two,
  three, four, five, six best friend lists."