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Human Growth and Development: At a Glance

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Description of the Examination

The Human Growth and Development examination (Infancy, Childhood, Adolescence, Adulthood and Aging) covers material that is generally taught in a one-semester introductory course in developmental psychology or human development. An understanding of the major theories and research related to the broad categories of physical development, cognitive development and social development is required, as is the ability to apply this knowledge.

The examination contains approximately 90 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of them are pretest questions that will not be scored.

The questions on the CLEP Human Growth and Development exam adhere to the terminology, criteria and classifications referred to in the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5).

Knowledge and Skills Required

Questions on the Human Growth and Development exam require candidates to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities:

- ▶ Knowledge of basic facts and terminology
- ▶ Understanding of generally accepted concepts and principles
- ▶ Understanding of theories and recurrent developmental issues
- ▶ Applications of knowledge to particular problems or situations

The subject matter of the Human Growth and Development examination is drawn from the following categories. For each category, several key words and phrases identify topics with which candidates should be familiar. The percentages next to the main categories indicate the approximate percentage of exam questions on that topic.

10% Theoretical Perspectives

Biological
Cognitive developmental
Ecological
Evolutionary
Learning
Psychodynamic

Social cognitive
Sociocultural

6% Research Strategies and Methodology

Case study
Correlational
Cross-sectional
Cross sequential
Experimental
Longitudinal
Observational

12% Biological Development Throughout the Life Span

Development of the brain and nervous system
Genetic disorders
Heredity, genetics and genetic testing
Hormonal influences
Influences of drugs
Motor development
Nutritional influences
Perinatal influences
Physical growth and maturation, aging
Prenatal influences
Sexual maturation
Teratogens

6% Perceptual Development Throughout the Life Span

Habituation
Sensitive periods
Sensorimotor activities
Sensory acuity
Sensory deprivation

12% Cognitive Development Throughout the Life Span

Attention
Environmental influences
Executive function
Expertise

Information processing
Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory
Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory
Memory
Play
Problem solving and planning
Thinking
Wisdom

8% Language Development

Bilingualism
Development of syntax
Environmental, cultural and genetic influences
Language and thought
Pragmatics
Semantic development
Vocalization and sound

6% Intelligence Throughout the Life Span

Concepts of intelligence and creativity
Developmental stability and change
Giftedness
Heredity and environment
Intelligence tests
Reaction range

12% Social Development Throughout the Life Span

Aggression
Attachment
Gender
Interpersonal relationships
Moral development
Prosocial behavior
Risk and resilience
Self
Social cognition
Social learning and modeling
Wellness

8% Family, Home and Society Throughout the Life Span

Abuse and neglect
Bronfenbrenner, Urie
Death and dying
Family relationships
Family structures
Media and technology
Multicultural perspectives
Parenting styles
Social and class influences

8% Personality and Emotion

Attribution styles
Development of emotions
Emotional expression and regulation
Emotional intelligence
Erikson, Erik
Freud, Sigmund
Psychosocial theory
Stability and change
Temperament

5% Schooling, Work and Interventions

Applications of developmental principles
Facilitation of role transitions
Intervention programs and services
Learning styles
Occupational development
Operant conditioning
Preschool care, day care and elder care
Retirement

6% Developmental Psychopathology

Antisocial behavior
Anxiety and mood disorders
Asocial behavior, fears, phobias and obsessions
Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder
Autism spectrum disorders
Chronic illnesses and physical disabilities
Cognitive disorders, including dementia
Intellectual disability
Learning disabilities
Trauma-based syndromes

Study Resources

Most textbooks used in college-level human growth and development courses cover the topics in the outline above, but the approaches to certain topics and the emphases given to them may differ. To prepare for the Human Growth and Development exam, it is advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found for sale online and in most college bookstores. When selecting a textbook, check the table of contents against the knowledge and skills required for this test.

You may also find it helpful to supplement your reading with books and articles listed in the bibliographies found in most developmental psychology textbooks.

Parents and others who work with children may have gained some preparation for this test through experience. However, knowledge of the basic facts, theories and principles of child psychology and lifespan development is necessary to provide background for taking the exam.

A recent survey conducted by CLEP found that the following textbooks are among those used by college faculty who teach the equivalent course. You might find one or more of these online or at your local college bookstore.

▶ Berger, <i>The Developing Person Through the Life Span</i> (Worth)
▶ Berk, <i>Exploring Lifespan Development</i> (Allyn & Bacon)
▶ Berryman et al., <i>Developmental Psychology and You</i> (Wiley)
▶ Boyd and Bee, <i>Lifespan Development</i> (Allyn & Bacon)
▶ Brown, <i>Developmental Psychology: A Course Companion</i> (SAGE)
▶ Craig and Dunn, <i>Understanding Human Development</i> (Prentice Hall)
▶ Feldman, <i>Development Across the Life Span</i> (Prentice Hall)
▶ Harris and Butterworth, <i>Developmental Psychology: A Student's Handbook</i> (Psychology Press)
▶ Kail and Cavanaugh, <i>Human Development: A Life-Span View</i> (Wadsworth)
▶ Newman and Newman, <i>Development Through Life: A Psychosocial Approach</i> (Wadsworth)
▶ Papalia et al., <i>Human Development</i> (McGraw-Hill)
▶ Sigelman and Rider, <i>Life-Span Human Development</i> (Wadsworth)
▶ Santrock, <i>Essentials of Life-Span Development</i> (McGraw-Hill)
▶ Slater and Bremner, <i>An Introduction to Developmental Psychology</i> (Wiley-Blackwell)
▶ Thornton, <i>Understanding Human Development</i> (Macmillan)

The online resource below may help you study for your exam. However, it is not designed specifically to provide preparation for a CLEP exam. The College Board has no control over the content and cannot vouch for accuracy.

<http://ocw.tufts.edu/Course/35/Coursehome> "blank" Tufts OpenCourseWare: PPM 100 Human Growth and Development: <http://ocw.tufts.edu/Course/35/Coursehome>

You can also find suggestions for exam preparation in Chapter IV of the *Official Study Guide*. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

Sample Test Questions

The following sample questions do not appear on an actual CLEP examination. They are intended to give potential test-takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the examination and to provide content for practice and review. For more sample questions and info about the test, see the *CLEP Official Study Guide*.

- Charles is a businessman who made a great deal of money over the past 20 years. Throughout his life he has always been self-absorbed and competitive in his business dealings and in social settings. He is now 48 years old and has no spouse or children. Charles has decided to start a charitable foundation for the benefit of needy children. Charles is most likely in Erik Erikson's stage of
A. industry versus inferiority
B. generativity versus stagnation
C. initiative versus guilt
D. trust versus mistrust
E. autonomy versus shame and doubt
- Which of the following research methods would most likely be used when examining the behavior of a group of children on the playground?
A. Case study
B. Archival
C. Observational
D. Cross-sectional
E. Experimental
- The prenatal defects caused by the use of thalidomide can be detected using which screening procedure?
A. Ultrasound
B. Amniocentesis
C. Chorionic villus sampling
D. Apgar test
E. Alpha-fetoprotein test

4. A cognitive-developmental-stage theorist like Jean Piaget would expect which of the following to be true?
- Children perform at a higher stage level when novel tasks and materials are used.
 - Children often skip one stage of development when their IQs fall in the gifted range.
 - Children in different cultures go through the same stages in the same order.
 - Children move from one stage to the next stage more quickly in response to intense training.
 - Children move through the stages more quickly when they are rewarded for successful problem solving.
5. Research suggests that which of the following types of intelligence may increase throughout the life span?
- Fluid
 - Performance
 - Mathematical
 - Crystallized
 - Spatial
6. Fifteen-year-old Tabatha sees someone steal something from a convenience store. She decides to tell the clerk because she knows that it is important to uphold the laws of society in order to help maintain social order. According to Lawrence Kohlberg's theory, Tabatha is at a level of moral reasoning known as
- conventional
 - preconventional
 - postconventional
 - formal operational
 - preoperational
7. Timothy is an 8-year-old who gets into a lot of fights at school, does not do well academically, frequently breaks rules and is self-centered. If Timothy's behavior stems from a particular parenting style, his parents' style of parenting is most likely to be
- authoritative
 - permissive
 - authoritarian
 - neglectful
 - autonomous
8. John tends to be hardworking, ambitious and persevering. He rates high on which of the following Big Five personality dimensions?
- Agreeableness
 - Neuroticism
 - Extraversion
 - Openness
 - Conscientiousness
9. A behaviorist who is studying the link between parenting style and childhood aggression would be most likely to focus on
- how parents punish their children's aggressive behavior
 - how parents in different communities interpret their children's aggressive behavior
 - what parents believe about their children's aggressive behavior
 - the point at which parents seek professional advice about their children's aggressive behavior
 - whether or not parents emotionally reject aggressive children
10. A community decides to improve its health-care system by creating hospices that provide support to families with terminally ill family members. This type of hospice program is an example of
- a home health aid program
 - palliative care
 - euthanasia
 - an advance directive
 - a life review

Credit Recommendations

The American Council on Education has recommended that colleges grant 3 credits for a score of 50, which is equivalent to a course grade of C, on the CLEP Human Growth and Development exam. Each college, however, is responsible for setting its own policy. For candidates with satisfactory scores on the Human Growth and Development examination, colleges may grant credit toward fulfillment of a distribution requirement, or for a particular course that matches the exam in content. Check with your school to find out the score it requires for granting credit, the number of credit hours granted and the course that can be bypassed with a passing score.

Answers to Sample Questions: 1-B; 2-C; 3-A; 4-C; 5-D; 6-A; 7-B; 8-E; 9-A; 10-B.