

MENU for Human Development Comprehensive Exam Question

We designed the human development comprehensive exam to provide you the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of issues in human development. Listed below are examples of the content that your comprehensive exam question may contain: theories of human development that you should know, contemporary issues in human development, and application.

Human Development Major Area:

- (A) Describe 3 theoretical perspectives;
- (B) compare these perspectives in terms of 2 issues;
- (C) extend your thinking: and
- (D) use examples related to your specific research area.

Human Development Minor Area:

- (A) Describe 2 theoretical perspectives (*marked only);
- (B) compare these perspectives in terms of 2 issues (*marked only);
- (C) extend your thinking (*marked only); and
- (D) not required.

A. Theoretical Understanding:

- Behavioral Genetics (Plomin, Thomas, Chess, & Birch; Kagan; Rothbart)
- Behaviorism (Skinner)
- *Cognitive Constructivism (Piaget)
- *Contextual (Bronfenbrenner)
- *Ethology (Bowlby, Ainsworth)
- Information Processing (Siegler, Case, Flavell)
- Psychodynamic (Freud)
- *Psychosocial (Erikson)
- Moral Development (Kohlberg)
- *Social Cognition (Bandura)
- *Sociohistorical (Vygotsky)

B. Analysis of Issues:

- *Cohort effects
- *Heredity and environment interaction
- *Individual differences vs. universals
- Methodological implications
- Motivation/mechanisms for change
- *Quantitative vs. qualitative change
- *Sensitive/critical periods in development, effects of early experience
- *Stability vs. plasticity

C. Extension of thought:

- Combine theories, create a new theory, apply a theory in a new direction, integrate research from more than one subject area
- *Generate research questions
- Apply knowledge to solve social problems or develop social policy tying methodological implications to other

issues

- *Discuss past and future impact of the theories
- *Discuss effects of culture, society, values, Zeitgeist on theories

D. Awareness of research areas in human development:

- Use all three theories to interpret and explain one or more contemporary issue(s) from your area of expertise. Cite current and seminal literature to support your response.