Features of Developmental Theories

Unit: Acquisition of Knowledge Base

Problem Area: Review Development Theories

Lesson: Features of Developmental Theories

■ **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

1 Identify and define developmental domains.

2 Discuss the major developmental theories and theorists in each domain.

3 Identify common themes among developmental theories.

■ **List of Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

Bukatko, Danuta. *Child and Adolescent Development: A Chronological Approach*. Houghton Mifflin, 2008.

Conditioning: Classical and Operant. AllPsych Online—The Virtual Psychology Classroom. Accessed April 12, 2008. <http://allpsych.com/psychology101/conditioning.html>.

Craine, W. C. *Kohlberg's Theories of Moral Development*. Accessed April 12, 2008. <http://faculty.plts.edu/gpence/html/Kohlberg.htm>.

Dreikurs, Rudolph, and Vicki Soltz. *Children: The Challenge*. Plume, 1994.

Nelsen, Jane, Cheryl Erwin, and Roslyn Duffy. *Positive Discipline for Pre-schoolers* (Ch.10). Prima, 1995.

Operant Conditioning. TIP: Theories. Accessed April 12, 2008. <http://tip.psychology.org/skinner.html>.

Piaget's Developmental Theory. Learning and Teaching. Accessed April 12, 2008. <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/piaget.htm>.

■ List of Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

■ Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ➤ biosocial domain
- ➤ cognitive domain
- ➤ development
- ➤ psychosocial domain

■ Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situation. A possible approach is included here.

Conduct a general discussion leading students to recognize the importance of the structures that leading theorists of the past have on our lives today. Any of the discussion topics below may be used to begin the conversation.

♦ *In medieval times, it was commonly accepted that children had no need for special toys or games, and they should be comfortable in the same style of clothes as the adults in their lives. Children were expected to be seen and not heard.*

♦ *During the Industrial Revolution, children as young as seven were expected to be self-supporting and were considered prime workers. Due to their small size and stature, children were in great demand as chimney sweeps and mine workers. Accidents and pollution frequently killed them within a few years of employment.*

♦ *During the 15th century, philosopher John Locke suggested that at birth children are "blank slates." They have no innate personality, abilities, or intelligence; these are developed as a result of environmental influences.*

♦ *Early schools used only memorization and repetition to teach. There were no picture books, alphabet blocks, learning games, or pretend toys. When a child was slow to learn, humiliation and harsh discipline were commonly applied.*

Ask students to comment on these practices or viewpoints and to discuss their experiences with comparable situations today. Discuss the attitudes about and

the treatment of children and how it may have changed throughout the years. Remind students that toys and experiences for young children have changed because Piaget, Vygotsky, and Montessori observed and investigated the way children think and learn; Freud, Erikson, and Bronfenbrenner researched how children develop their personalities; Gesell looked at the physical development of children and established norms for growth and development; and, Skinner, Pavlov, and Dreikurs investigated alternative ways to motivate expected behaviors. Lead students to the conclusion that such practical issues as standards for care of children and the elderly, child custody, child and elder abuse, parenting techniques, and teaching methodology have all changed over the years based upon research and resultant theories.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Identify and define developmental domains.

Anticipated Problem: What are the developmental domains?

I. Developmental domains

  A. **Development** refers to the changes in every domain (area) of human development throughout life, from birth to death.

  B. The **biosocial domain** is physical growth, strength and coordination, brain development, sensory and motor development, and behavior.

  C. The **cognitive domain** refers to the processes of thinking, attention, memory, problem solving, and communication.

  D. The **psychosocial domain** refers to the development, understanding, and regulation of emotions and morals, personality, and social relationships.

Have students brainstorm in class, creating a list of 20 or more actions or activities that are common to humans. You may choose to limit the assignment or brainstorming to humans of a specific age. Some starter action or activity suggestions include self-help skills, communication, locomotion, learning, playing, or relating to others.

Display VM–A. Ask students to identify an action or activity from their list and the domain(s) listed on VM–A for which that item would relate. Actions may very well contain elements from more than one domain. For example, riding a tricycle requires strength and coordination to move the pedals (biosocial domain) and problem solving (cognitive domain) as children determine which way to push the

pedals to make the tricycle move in addition to the way they deal with the
frustration of failure (psychosocial domain).

Objective 2: Discuss the major developmental theories and theorists in each domain.

Anticipated Problem: What are the major developmental theories and theorists in each domain?

II. Major theories and theorists from the domains of human development

    A. Biosocial developmental theorists and theories

        1. Gesell—developmental norms

        2. Dreikurs—goals of misbehavior

        3. Skinner—operant conditioning

        4. Pavlov—classical conditioning

    B. Cognitive developmental theorists and theories

        1. Piaget—cognitive construction theory

        2. Bandura—social learning theory

        3. Numerous researchers and theorists—information processing (how the brain inputs, processes, and responds to stimuli)

        4. Vygotsky—zone of proximal development

    C. Psychosocial developmental theorists and theories

        1. Freud—psychosexual theory

        2. Erikson—psychosocial theory

        3. Kohlberg—theory of moral development

        4. Bronfenbrenner—ecological theory

Assign students to read appropriate selections from their classroom text or the
identified resource materials and relevant Web sites. Next, students should
research one or more theories and theorists of interest. Each student should be
prepared to participate in a class discussion with the teacher and classmates.
Use VM–B to summarize the major developmental theorists and theories.

Objective 3: Identify common themes among developmental theories.

Anticipated Problem: What are the recurring themes in developmental theories?

III. Five common themes exist throughout developmental theories.

    A. The interaction of nature (genetics) and nurture (environment) affect human development.

    B. The social and cultural context in which humans exist affects their development.

C. Development may be viewed as continuous (gradual steady progress) or discontinuous (progressing in stages of sudden changes followed by periods of relatively unchanged behavior).

D. Changes in one domain may affect development in another domain.

E. Children have differing degrees of resilience to risk factors in development.

Display VM–C to assist students in learning the information in this objective. Review each theory with the students to determine how each theorist addresses the recurring themes.

■ **Review/Summary.** Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at the ends of chapters in the textbook may also be used in the review/ summary.

■ **Application.** Use the included visual masters and lab sheet to apply the information presented in the lesson.

■ **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Short Answer

1. Answers will vary but should contain at least three of the following: The interaction of nature (genetics) and nurture (environment) affect human development. The social and cultural context in which humans exist affects their development. Development may be viewed as continuous (gradual steady progress) or discontinuous (progressing in stages of sudden changes followed by periods of relatively unchanged behavior). Changes in one domain may affect development in another domain. Children have differing degrees of resilience to risk factors in development.

2. Answers will vary. Some examples are Arnold Gesell, Rudolph Dreikurs, B. F. Skinner, and Ivan Pavlov.

3. Answers will vary. Some examples are Jean Piaget, Albert Bandura, and Lev Vygotsky.

4. Answers will vary. Some examples are Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Uri Bronfenbrenner.

Part Two: Completion

1. biophysical

2. cognitive
3. psychosocial
4. Development
5. Continuous
6. Discontinuous
7. genetics
8. environment

Part Three: Multiple Choice

1. b
2. d
3. c
4. b
5. a
6. a

Name _____

Features of Developmental Theories

▶ **Part One: Short Answer**

Instructions: **Complete the following.**

1. List at least three recurring themes among developmental theories.

2. List at least one theorist from the biosocial domain.

3. List at least one theorist from the cognitive domain.

4. List at least one theorist from the psychosocial domain.

▶ Part Two: Completion

Instructions: **Provide the word or words to complete the following statements.**

1. Physical growth, strength and coordination, brain development, sensory and motor development, and behavior are part of the _____ domain.

2. The processes of thinking, attention, memory, problem solving, and communication are part of the _____ domain.

3. The development, understanding, and regulation of emotions and morals, personality, and social relationships are included in the _____ domain.

4. _____ refers to the changes in every domain (area) of human development throughout life, from birth to death.

5. _____ development is gradual, steady progress.

6. _____ development is a sudden change followed by periods of relatively unchanging behavior.

7. Nature refers to characteristics that are primarily influenced by _____.

8. Nurture refers to characteristics that are primarily influenced by the _____ ____.

▶ Part Three: Multiple Choice

Instructions: **Write the letter of the correct answer.**

_____1. _____ formulated the four goals of misbehavior.

    a. Kohlberg
    b. Dreikurs
    c. Erikson
    d. Bandura

_____2. _____ addressed the area of moral development.

    a. Skinner
    b. Vygotsky
    c. Freud
    d. Kohlberg

_____3.   _____ references the zone of proximal development.

     a. Pavlov
     b. Piaget
     c. Vygotsky
     d. Bromfenbrenner

_____4.   _____ introduced the idea of operant conditioning.

     a. Pavlov
     b. Skinner
     c. Freud
     d. Erikson

_____5.   _____ is connected with social learning theory.

     a. Bandura
     b. Skinner
     c. Bromfenbrenner
     d. Kohlberg

_____6. Bromfenbrenner is associated with the _____ theory.

     a. ecological
     b. psychosocial
     c. psychosexual
     d. information processing

DOMAINS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

♦ Biosocial domain—physical growth, strength and coordination, brain development, sensory and motor development, and behavior

♦ Cognitive domain—processes of thinking, attention, memory, problem solving, and communication

♦ Psychosocial domain—development, understanding, and regulation of emotions and morals, personality, and social relationships

DEVELOPMENTAL THEORISTS AND THEORIES

Biosocial

♦ Gesell—developmental norms

♦ Dreikurs—goals of misbehavior

♦ Skinner—operant conditioning

♦ Pavlov—classical conditioning

Cognitive

♦ Piaget—cognitive construction theory

♦ Bandura—social learning theory

♦ Numerous researchers and theorists—information processing

♦ Vygotsky—zone of proximal development

Psychosocial

♦ Freud—psychosexual theory

♦ Erikson—psychosocial theory

♦ Kohlberg—theory of moral development

♦ Bronfenbrenner—ecological theory

RECURRING THEMES IN DEVELOPMENTAL THEORIES

- ♦ Nature and nurture

- ♦ Social and cultural influence

- ♦ Continuous or discontinuous development

- ♦ Interaction among domains

- ♦ Risk and resilience factors

Name _____

A Memory Game of Theorists

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to review the key phrases, concepts, and theory names of major developmental theorists.

Objective

Review key phrases, concepts, or names of theories and the theorist in a game format.

Materials

♦ lab sheet

♦ writing utensil

♦ text or other references

♦ scissors

Procedure

1. Write your name on every card in the space provided. For each pair of cards, write the name of a theorist discussed in class in the space provided (e.g., Skinner). In the same numbered card, write a key phrase, concept, or theory associated with that theorist (e.g., operant conditioning).

2. Cut the squares out.

3. In groups of two to four, play "A Memory Game of Theorists."

4. First, combine the cards of all players and shuffle. Next, place the cards face down in a grid formation on the table. The first player picks two cards and reads them aloud. If the two cards drawn by the player match (check name/numbers if there is a question), the player "wins" that card pair and takes another turn. When cards are drawn that are not a match, they are returned to their original spaces and play passes to the next player. Play continues until all cards are matched. The winner is the person with the most card pairs.

For extra points, identify the domain of the theory. Exchange decks of cards and change partners for additional practice.

A Memory Game of Theorists

Theorist	Key Phrase, Concept, Theory	Theorist	Key Phrase, Concept, Theory
1 Your name	1 Your name	2 Your name	2 Your name
Theorist	Key Phrase, Concept, Theory	Theorist	Key Phrase, Concept, Theory
3 Your name	3 Your name	4 Your name	4 Your name