

Pre-course materials for T Level in Education and Early Years

One of the underpinning elements of the course is based on the theories of well-known child psychologists and how their theories can be seen and used in practice when working with young children.

Issues when looking at theories of development. A good starting point before looking at theories of development is to consider some of the issues that psychologists have found when looking at child development.

Nature or nurture? Is children's development tied closely to human instincts and genetics, or could it be that what happens to children shapes their learning and development? These are fundamental questions in psychology. Many of the early theories of development were influenced by the idea that we inherit skills, abilities and behaviours. Subsequent research has since shown that our behaviour can also be shaped. The issue for many psychologists is to define how much of our skills, personalities and so on is inherited and how much is influenced by our environment. Increasingly, the view that is being taken is that both cases apply, although we may be born with certain predispositions. This is sometimes called the nature versus nurture debate. Theories that come down in favour of nature can be described as **nativist**, and the theories that come down in favour of environment can be thought of as **behaviourist**.

Task 1

Research the Nature/Nurture debate and ensure you understand both points of view. **You will need to make notes as this information will be used in lessons.**

Reflect: Many people decide to work with children because they wish to make a difference. Why might this viewpoint be considered behaviourist?

Starting at the beginning. As well as theories on how children develop we also need to know the ages and stages of development. These are called expected milestones and you will be expected to learn them so you are able to recognise typical and atypical development.

Task 2

Research the new-born baby, find out about their appearance and the typical features of the new-born. Again you may wish to make notes and record any sources you have used (books, websites). You will need this for the first lesson when you will be asked to complete an essay.



Many other elements of the course as well as your professional practice will require you to look at adult support and create activities appropriate to the children's age and developmental ability. The next two tasks will help you to think about this. If you have any experience with children as a babysitter or helping in clubs this will be useful but if not do not worry as there are many useful websites such as imagination tree and Pinterest to help with ideas. These units will require you to undertake a range of coursework activities and you will learn to present your work in a variety of different ways. Many of these course work tasks will also be linked to your practical assessments within your placement setting.



Task 3

Case study activity

Write your case study in a text box

A case study is like a story – you will write in the present tense. Describe the scene in a nursery for children aged 2-4 years.

1. Give your nursery a name and say what age the children are in your case study
2. Describe what the children are playing
3. What are the adults doing?

Now evaluate your case study underneath

1. Say what the adults are doing well to support the children.
2. What is the effect on the children?
3. Say if there is anything they are doing less well.
4. How might this affect the children?
5. Overall, what is your evaluation (opinion) of how good the adult support is?
6. Could they do anything better?

This will be handed in when you start.

Task 4

Create an outside physical activity that would support a 3 year old. This should be based around a theme for example the Gruffalo or The hungry Caterpillar.

You should give your activity a title, describe the activity, describe your role during the activity (what will you be doing) and then go on to explain why you think it will support the child's development and learning (does it help gross motor skills – running, jumping etc., coordination, will it help with numbers or colours?)

This will be handed in when you start.



Optional Task 1

Exam type question:

Urie **Bronfenbrenner** (April 29, 1917 – September 25, 2005) was a Russian-born American psychologist who is most known for his ecological systems theory. This theory is used to look at, understand and support children's development and learning. You will need to read up on Bronfenbrenners Ecological Systems Theory but here are some useful links:

<https://www.psychologynoteshq.com/bronfenbrenner-ecological-theory/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4OQQYyA--E>

Now answer this long answer exam question.

Anna is 4 years old and attends a day nursery where she has gone for the last 3 years. She had the same key worker since she started and has a good relationship with her as does her parents. Anna has a large group of friends and socialises well. Dad is a primary school teacher and mum owns an old peoples home where Anna often visits after nursery. Mum and dad are part of an amateur dramatics group and so Anna often goes to rehearsals and had been in some of the plays. Anna has weekly swimming lessons.

How can Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory be used to explain how Anna's background may affect her overall development?

This will be marked and graded if submitted during your first week

Optional Task 2

There are many career opportunities available to anyone who has completed this course, some of them are quite specialised. Research the following job roles and identify what the role consists of and how you can progress in to this role.

- ✓ Neonatal Nurse
- ✓ Portage Worker
- ✓ Play specialist
- ✓ Conductive Education Practitioner
- ✓ SEND teacher
- ✓ Norland Nanny

Can you find 3 other job roles that would be possible when progressing from this course
