Four Development Lenses

How psychologists explain changes in thinking, learning, and identity

P.3.6 "Describe the theories of various developmental psychologists such as Piaget, Vygotsky, Freud, and Erikson."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle each psychologist's name, then underline one claim about development for each and number the claims 1 to 4.

One Afternoon, Four Perspectives

1. At a community center, a teen helps plan activities for younger children. Different psychologists would ask different questions about the same afternoon. Jean Piaget studied how children's thinking changes with age. In his theory, children move through stages. A child who can sort real objects may still struggle with abstract possibilities, while older students often become better at reasoning about hypothetical situations. Piaget would focus on what kinds of thinking a child can manage, rather than assuming every learner reasons like an adult.

2. Lev Vygotsky would pay close attention to people working together. He argued that learning grows through social interaction and language. A child may be unable to solve a puzzle alone but succeed when a more skilled partner offers hints. Vygotsky called the gap between what a learner can do alone and with help the zone of proximal development. Temporary support, often called scaffolding, lets a learner tackle a challenge before handling it independently.

3. Sigmund Freud and Erik Erikson both emphasized development over time, but they explained it differently. Freud proposed psychosexual stages and argued that early experiences and unconscious conflicts shape later personality. Erikson proposed psychosocial stages, each centered on a social challenge. For example, adolescence involves forming an identity rather than feeling confused about one's role. At the center, a teen deciding whether to lead a club might be exploring identity. These theories offer different lenses, not guaranteed predictions about any one person.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How would Piaget explain why a child can sort objects but struggles with abstract possibilities?

2. How does Vygotsky's theory explain a child solving a puzzle with hints but not alone?

3. According to Freud's theory, what could shape a person's later personality?

4. How would Erikson interpret a teen's decision about whether to lead a club?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a brief scene about a teenager learning a new skill with a peer. In three sentences, explain how Vygotsky and Erikson would interpret different parts of your scene.

Four Development Lenses

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle each psychologist's name, then underline one claim about development for each and number the claims 1 to 4. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How would Piaget explain why a child can sort objects but struggles with abstract possibilities?	**Piaget proposed stages of thinking. The child may be able to reason about real objects before reasoning about abstract possibilities.**
2	How does Vygotsky's theory explain a child solving a puzzle with hints but not alone?	**The puzzle is within the child's zone of proximal development: the child can solve it with support from a more skilled partner.**
3	According to Freud's theory, what could shape a person's later personality?	**Early experiences and unconscious conflicts could shape later personality.**
4	How would Erikson interpret a teen's decision about whether to lead a club?	**He might see the decision as part of the adolescent challenge of forming an identity.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A teen writes a song with an older friend who shows them how to change chords. Vygotsky would focus on the friend's hints, which help the teen do something they cannot yet do alone. Erikson would focus on the teen's growing sense of being a musician as part of forming an identity.

Accept explanations that accurately connect Piaget to stages of thinking, Vygotsky to learning with support, Freud to early experiences and unconscious conflicts, and Erikson to psychosocial challenges. For Part 3, the two interpretations should address distinct details of the invented scene.