Growing Up Together

Three theories, three ways to examine development

PS.4.2 "Examine major theories of human development."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail that helps explain development through each theory, and number the details 1 for Piaget, 2 for Erikson, and 3 for Vygotsky. Use your marks to compare what each theory helps you notice.

A Saturday at the Garden

1. On Saturday, sixteen-year-old Amira and her nine-year-old cousin Luis plan a community garden. Luis sorts seed packets by planting month and checks the printed spacing for each crop. Amira asks what might happen if the neighborhood had three weeks without rain and proposes several backup plans. Jean Piaget's theory describes changes in how children reason as they develop. Many school-age children reason well with concrete information, while adolescents often become better at exploring hypothetical possibilities. Piaget's stages describe broad patterns, not a schedule that every person follows exactly. Experience also affects what someone can do.

2. Amira also hesitates before volunteering to lead the garden project. She enjoys organizing people, but her friends expect her to spend Saturdays at soccer practice. Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory focuses on challenges involving relationships and a sense of self across the lifespan. For adolescents, forming an identity means exploring roles and commitments, not merely picking a career. Amira might try leading one meeting before deciding whether the role fits her values. Erikson's view draws attention to her question about who she wants to be. It does not, by itself, explain why Luis finds seed spacing easier than planning for a drought.

3. Luis cannot yet work out how many seed packets the garden needs. Amira shows him how to calculate one garden bed, then asks him to calculate the next one while she offers hints. Lev Vygotsky emphasized learning through social interaction and guidance. His idea of the zone of proximal development concerns tasks a learner cannot yet do alone but can do with help. Support can be reduced as skill grows. This view highlights what Luis can learn with Amira, rather than only what he can do independently. No single theory captures every part of the garden project.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How would Piaget's theory help explain the difference between Luis's seed work and Amira's drought plans?

2. How does Amira's decision about leading the project fit Erikson's view of adolescent development?

3. Why does Amira's help with the seed-packet calculation fit Vygotsky's zone of proximal development?

4. Why would it be a mistake to conclude that every nine-year-old would struggle to plan for a drought?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a situation outside a garden involving a teenager and a younger child. In 80 to 110 words, use two of the three theories to explain different parts of the situation, and state one thing each theory does not explain by itself.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail that helps explain development through each theory, and number the details 1 for Piaget, 2 for Erikson, and 3 for Vygotsky. Use your marks to compare what each theory helps you notice. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How would Piaget's theory help explain the difference between Luis's seed work and Amira's drought plans?	**Luis works with concrete information on the packets, while Amira considers a hypothetical drought and possible responses. Piaget described broad changes in these kinds of reasoning.**
2	How does Amira's decision about leading the project fit Erikson's view of adolescent development?	**She is exploring whether being a leader fits her values while weighing that role against her friends' expectations, which relates to forming an identity.**
3	Why does Amira's help with the seed-packet calculation fit Vygotsky's zone of proximal development?	**Luis cannot calculate the total alone yet, but Amira's example and hints help him work on the next bed.**
4	Why would it be a mistake to conclude that every nine-year-old would struggle to plan for a drought?	**Piaget's stages describe broad patterns, not an exact schedule for everyone. Experience also affects what a person can do.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At a school music club, fifteen-year-old Maya wonders whether to join a band or keep practicing alone. Her ten-year-old brother, Eli, comes to rehearsal. Erikson's theory focuses on Maya's effort to decide what kind of musician and teammate she wants to be. It does not, by itself, explain how Eli learns a difficult rhythm. When a drummer demonstrates the beat and offers cues until Eli can play it alone, Vygotsky's theory highlights learning with help. That explanation does not, by itself, tell us why Maya cares about finding her place in the group.

Accept interpretations that connect specific details to a theory's focus. For Part 3, check that the response applies two theories to different details and identifies a limitation of each without claiming that a theory can never address that topic.