

# TOPIC 3: Development

LI: What is Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development?

## Starter

No quiz to start the new topic. More of an introduction from me for you while you are at home.

Topic 3 Development is all about how babies develop and grow, how their brain develops and how they learn. We will learn about what mental activities children can do and when.

# Learning Intentions

4/5 (All) – Identify what a schema is.

6/7 (Most) – Explain how a schema grows/changes.

8/9 (Some) – Use key terminology from Piaget to explain changes to schemas.

Low

High

What is your initial confidence towards the LIs?

# Cognitive Development

What does **cognitive (cognition)** mean?

Cognition means 'acquiring new knowledge and thinking'. We are interested about how and when children acquire new knowledge.

What are we going to be learning about?

Jean Piaget (1896-1980)

One of the best known psychologists ever. He worked with children and babies and came up with a theory about how children develop.

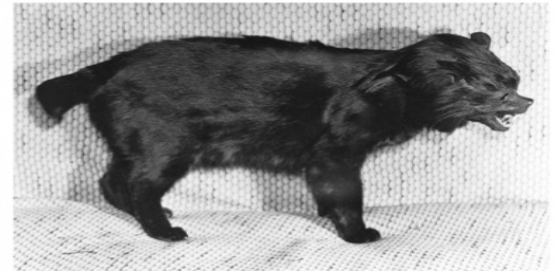


# Before Piaget?

People used to think that children were just like adults – except they knew a lot less. When children learnt enough, they would be just like adults.

Piaget changed that understanding. His research showed that children don't simply know less, they actually think in a very different way...

Older children and adult know that the picture on the right is the black cat with a wolf mask on. Younger children can't figure this out and think it is an actual wolf... even when they watch you put the mask on! They clearly think in a different way to adults!



# Piaget's Theory

## Stages

As children get older, their brain develops and different types of thinking is possible. Piaget called these stages. He said that there were 4 stages of development.

We will look at these in detail later.

# Piaget's Theory

## **Schemas**

Children use schemas to understand the world. As they grow and experience new things, they create new schemas or add to existing schemas.

So what exactly is a schema?

# Schemas

**A schema is a mental image (mental building blocks) of an object and what something should be like. As we experience new things, we get new schemas or expand old schemas.**

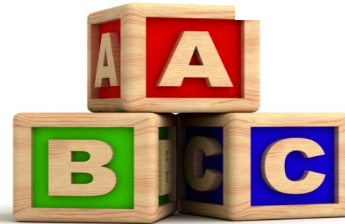
Examples:

Schema of a car

Schema of a table

Schema of a man/woman

Schema of a school



# Schemas Example

If I ask you to think of a car, you will probably create an image in your head of a 4-wheeled metal vehicle with a steering wheel and seats. It is probably even a car from your family that comes to mind!

And you would be correct!

Due to your experiences, this is the mental image you have of a car!

But don't forget, that this was once a car too.

Now that you have seen this, your schema has expanded!





# Schemas Task

Draw a few building blocks and explain how it is a basic schema.  
(someone who hasn't experienced much).

Draw a bigger set of building blocks and explain how the schema has grown due to new experiences.

**Use an example to back up your picture**  
**- Schema of a dog? Cat? Car? Girl? Boy?**

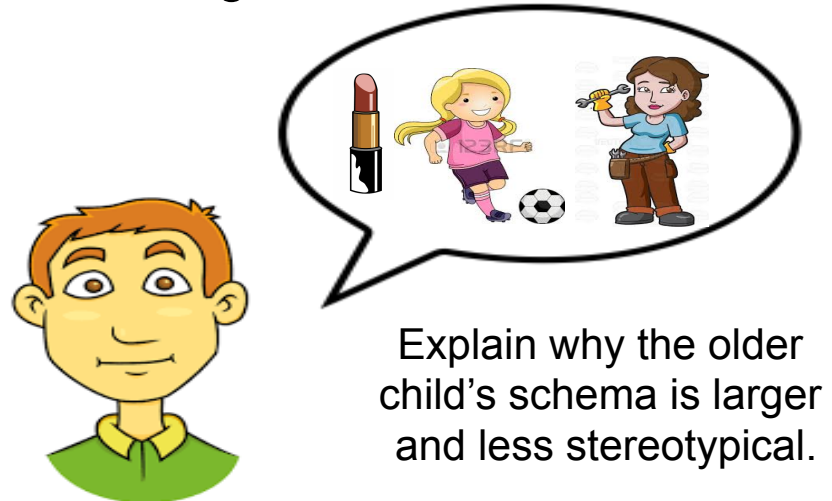
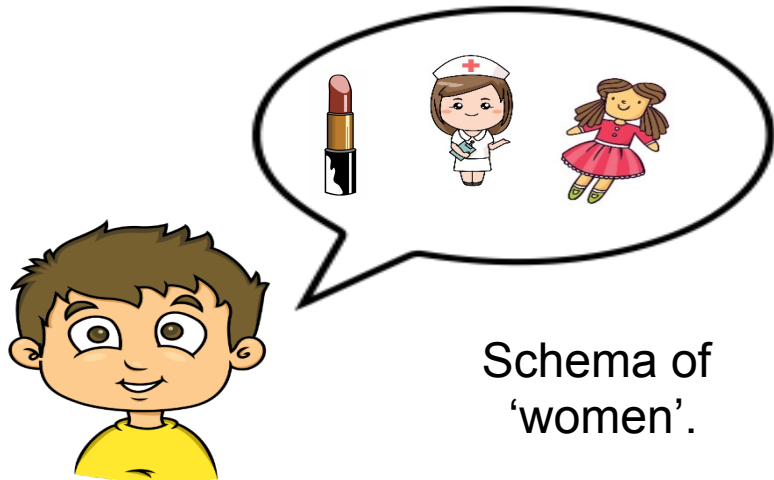


# Schemas Task 2

Draw a young child and an older child.

Draw a speech bubble to represent a schema.

Draw inside each of their schemas to show how the older child has a much bigger mental image of what something can be like.



# Assimilation and Accommodation

Piaget was very specific about how schemas developed.  
We either **create a new schema** or **add to an old one**.

**Accommodation** – when you create a new schema to cope with new information.



A toddler sees the puppy and the mother tells him that it is a doggy because it is fluffy and cute. Then, the toddler sees the kitten but says, “Mum, another doggy!” as the kitten fits the current schema! The mother has to explain that this is actually a kitty because it says ‘meow’ thus creating a new scheme (accommodation)

# Assimilation and Accommodation

Piaget was very specific about how schemas developed.

**Assimilation – when you add new information to an existing schema.**



A toddler sees the puppy and the mother tells him that it is a doggy because it is fluffy and cute. Then, the toddler sees the other puppy but says, “Mum, what is that?” as the other dog does not fit the schema! The mother has to explain that this is a different type of dog and the toddler expands their schema (assimilation)

# Assimilation and Accommodation with Maggie

Maggie is playing in the garden and correctly identifies a fly that lands on a tulip. Another buzzing insect lands and Maggie calls it a fly. Her mum corrects her and says that it is a wasp.

Maggie gets confused as she says that wasps can fly and make a buzzing noise like a fly so why do they have a different name. Maggie's mum says it is because wasps have yellow on them so they are slightly different.

Maggie then sees a yellow plane in the sky and says 'wasp, mummy'. Maggie's mum says no, this is a plane as it is a machine, a lot bigger and carries people in the sky.

**Explain how Maggie is experiencing assimilation and accommodation as she learns new things.**

**Challenge – come up with your own example of accommodation and assimilation.**

# Exam Questions

Explain the difference between accommodation and assimilation. (3)

Explain how accommodation might occur when a child recognises that a small fluttering creature is not a bird, but is told it is a butterfly. (3)

# Learning Intentions

4/5 (All) – Identify what a schema is.

6/7 (Most) – Explain how a schema grows/changes.

8/9 (Some) – Use key terminology from Piaget to explain changes to schemas.

Low

High

What is your new confidence towards the LIs?

# TOPIC 3: Development

LI: What is Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development?

## Exam Questions

1. What is a schema?
2. How does a schema grow?
3. When a schema is expanded, this is called...
4. When a new schema is created, this is called...