

Piaget's Cognitive Developmental Stages

Pre-Operational Cognitive Stage

Typical Age Band:

- Language development a hall mark of this stage
- Do not understand concrete logic
- Cannot mentally manipulate information
- Unable to understand the opinion of others
- Increased use of pretending and use of symbols
eg a broom is a horse
- Little understanding of the principles of 'conservation'
- 'Centration' – the tendency to focus on only one aspect of a situation at one time in both social and non-social contexts
- Speech is egocentric
- Animism: This is the belief that inanimate objects (such as toys and teddy bears) have human feelings and intentions.
- **Artificialism**: This is the belief that certain aspects of the environment are manufactured by people (e.g. clouds in the sky).
- **Irreversibility**: This is the inability to reverse the direction of a sequence of events to their starting point.

Concrete Operational Cognitive Stage

Typical Age Band:

- Grasp of logical concepts limited to tangible areas (can conserve numbers not mass)
- Can mentally manipulate information – begins to take others points of view
- Infers what another person is thinking
- Still magical in their thinking
- Still animism - During the second stage (5-7 years) only objects that move have a purpose. In the next stage (7-9 years), only objects that move spontaneously are thought to be alive.
- Able to justify their thinking
- Just learning to organise their thoughts cohesively
- No abstract reasoning yet
- Able to distinguish fantasy from reality
- Able to apply creative thinking to problem solving
- Increased memory, attention span
- Greater impulse to control persistence and resilience working on a project

Social Stages of Play

Social Types of Play:

- **Primarily parallel play**: playing alongside peers but focused on their own private world.
- **Symbolic play**: pretending to be people they are not or inventing imaginary friends.

- **Social Play: Children Who Initiate Play**: Young children move from parallel play to play where they are initiating interactions with each other. They are motivated to make friends and interested in other children. Depending on their temperament, impulsivity, attention span and knowledge of social skills their interactions may be cooperative or at times conflictual.

Teaching through Play: Effective Teaching & Learning through Play in NZ Primary Schools

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