

Piaget's Four Stage Theory of Cognitive Development: Jigsaw/Expert Groups Activity

In this activity, students work in groups investigate a particular stage of Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development, recording the key points and information for each stage on an A3 data sheet (refer to attached graphic organiser example). You may like to photocopy onto colour A3 paper if available to provide students with more cues for memory and recall. The information they record should include both written and visual information. Students should be instructed to focus on the key developments and concepts for each stage in addition to the methods used to assess and test the concepts and key developments related to that stage.

Each initial group is to investigate one stage of Piaget's theory. Once each group has collected their information, students should be reallocated to new groups of at least four so that in each group, each stage is represented at least once. Each student is then required to teach and present to the other students in their group the key information about their stage. At the end of the activity, students should have completed their data sheet for each of the four stages of Piaget's theory.

Note: This data sheet and activity can be adapted to suit any topic in Psychology which requires students to look at multiple aspects/components of a specific topic. Other suggested topics for this type of activity include:

- *four major perspectives of psychology*: biological, behavioural, cognitive and socio-cultural
- *significant contributors towards the biological perspective of Psychology* (or any other perspective and significant contributors): Broca, Sperry, Penfield & Kandel
- *psychological development of a five-year old* (or any other chosen age/age group): emotional development, cognitive development, psycho-social development, moral development
- *stages of the lifespan*: infancy, childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle age, old age
- *explanations of aggression*: ethological, biological, psychodynamic and social learning perspectives
- *approaches to describing intelligence*: Howard Gardiner's theory of multiple intelligences, Robert Sternberg's triarchic theory of intelligence, Cattell-Horn-Carroll model of psychometric abilities, Salovey and Mayer's ability-based model of emotional intelligence
- *factors that may reduce prejudice* – intergroup contact; sustained contact, mutual interdependence, superordinate goals, equality of status (refer to attached graphic organiser example)

Related Key Skills

Inquire and investigate scientifically

- work independently and collaboratively as appropriate and within identified research constraints;
- analyse and interpret data, and draw conclusions consistent with the research question;

Apply psychological understandings

- use research literature to demonstrate how psychological concepts and theories have developed over time;
- process and interpret information, and make connections between concepts;
- apply understandings to both familiar and new contexts;

Communicate psychological information and understandings

- communicate psychological information, ideas and research findings accurately and effectively;
- use communication methods suitable for different audiences and purposes;
- use scientific language, conventions and referencing of information sources appropriate to the medium of communication.

Sensorimotor stage (birth to 2 years)

Written Summary

Visual Images

Pre-operational stage (2–7 years)

Written Summary

Visual Images

*Piaget's four-stage
theory of cognitive
development*

Concrete operational stage (7 to 12 years)

Written Summary

Visual Images

Formal operational stage (12 years and over)

Written Summary

Visual Images