

Chapter 1: Children and Childhood

Describing Development

Directions: Identify the characteristic of development described in each situation. Remember that the characteristics of development are:

- Development is similar for everyone.
- Development builds on earlier learning.
- Development proceeds at an individual rate.
- Development is interrelated.
- Development is continuous throughout life.

1. Jessica is an active three-year-old who enjoys dressing herself. Lately, she has started choosing her clothes each morning. Her parents are amazed at her constant eagerness to learn new things. It seems she never stops wanting to learn.

Characteristic of development: _____

2. Michael always had trouble in school. He did poorly on tests and was seldom able to answer when the teacher called on him. Some of the other children teased Michael on the playground and called him “dummy.” As a result, Michael was very shy and had little self-confidence. Since he has started wearing glasses, however, he has been doing better in school. Now Michael feels good about himself and has been able to make friends more easily.

Characteristic of development: _____

3. Joshua and Nicole are cousins born two months apart. Although Joshua is older, Nicole began to sit and stand about the same time Joshua did. This has been slightly puzzling to Joshua’s parents. They are worried about Joshua’s apparently slow rate of development.

Characteristic of development: _____

4. Jim is babysitting his neighbor’s son Albert. To Jim, it seems as if it was only yesterday that Albert was crawling on the carpet in the living room. He remembers that Albert then learned to walk and is now running and jumping in the yard.

Characteristic of development: _____

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5. Ron has been watching his neighbor's daughter Cindy grow at a steady rate since he moved into the neighborhood almost two years earlier. Ron's sister Amy is the same age as Cindy. Ron has noticed that Amy and Cindy are able to do about the same things. This has been true throughout the two years Ron has lived next door to Cindy's family.

Characteristic of development: _____

6. Maria is helping her younger sister Joanie learn the alphabet. She seems to be catching on quickly. Yesterday, Joanie could even pick some of the letters out of written words in one of her books. Maria knows that soon Joanie will be able to point out a few simple words. Later she will be able to read short phrases and sound out words.

Characteristic of development: _____

7. Rachel, Martha, and Juan are all four-year-olds attending the same child care center. Martha is slightly shorter than the other two children. She is very good at playing with others. Rachel is the tallest of the three and the most coordinated. Juan is somewhere between the two girls in size and likes to play quietly by himself in the sandbox.

Characteristic of development: _____

8. Mark is a senior at his local high school. He has just received a scholarship for his literary achievement. Right now, Mark is looking forward to spring because he plans to run track and hopes to improve his speed from last year. Recently, his Uncle Joseph offered Mark a part-time job at the grocery store he manages. Mark plans to take the job and work until he starts college in the fall.

Characteristic of development: _____

9. Diane and her family spent a month last summer visiting relatives in Canada. Diane spent most of the month playing with her brother Brad and cousin Timothy, both two years old. She found that both boys could run fairly well, stand on one foot, and climb stairs. By the end of the visit, Diane could see that the two children did many things alike. She thought this was surprising since Brad was born in the United States and Timothy was born in Canada, and the two had never met before.

Characteristic of development: _____

10. At playschool one day, four-year-old Terry suddenly burst into tears. He had been given a worksheet to complete which required him to cut out a simple picture with blunt scissors, paste it to another picture, and color it. Terry knew exactly where to paste the picture, and pasting was an activity he enjoyed. He also liked coloring and had already chosen two colors he would use. But Terry could not complete his picture because he could not make the scissors work.

Characteristic of development: _____
