

## Applied Early Childhood Development *Activity 1*

### Children's Development

Understanding child development is essential for professionals in education, health, or social care. This unit covers key theories and milestones across the five areas of development from birth to age eight. You will learn how to apply developmental theories and explore factors that can influence a child's progress. This knowledge supports progression to higher education and careers in teaching, nursing, social work, or early years care.

#### Research Activity: Understanding Piaget's Schema Theory

Objective: To explore how Piaget's concept of schemas helps children organise and adapt their knowledge as they grow.

1. Watch the videos <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYbCE1udazw> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g3JfSlptQqE>
2. Research Piaget's Schema Theory:
  - a. Schemas are mental structures that help children organise and understand the world.
  - b. Assimilation: Fitting new information into existing schemas (ideas or knowledge).
  - c. Accommodation: Changing or creating new schemas when existing ones don't work with new information.
  - d. Disequilibrium: When something doesn't fit into a schema, creating a feeling of confusion or discomfort.
  - e. Equilibrium: When the child's schema is adjusted to fit new information, restoring balance.
  - f.
3. Read the below Case Study: Jack (Age 2)

Jack is a 2-year-old boy who has learned the concept of a "dog." He has a picture book with different types of dogs in it, and every time he sees a dog, he says "dog!" One day, Jack sees a large dog and correctly says "dog." Later, he sees a smaller dog breed he has never seen before and says "dog." However, when Jack later sees a cat, he again says "dog."

Tasks:

Answer the following questions:

1. Identify Jack's Schema: What schema do you think Jack has for "dog" at this stage? Why?
  - a. Assimilation and Accommodation: How is Jack using assimilation and accommodation in this situation? What happens when he sees the cat?
  - b. Disequilibrium and Equilibrium: Do you think Jack is experiencing disequilibrium when he mistakes the cat for a dog? What might happen next to bring him back to equilibrium?
2. Write a short report (300-400 words) explaining the following:
  - a. What schema Jack has for "dog" and how he is applying it.
  - b. How assimilation and accommodation are happening when Jack sees new animals.
  - c. What disequilibrium Jack might feel and how he could reach equilibrium after encountering new animals.