

Institut Pendidikan Guru Kampus Dato' Razali Ismail

# LGA3103 Stories for Young Learners

Topic 5: Stories in the ESL Classroom



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## Topic 5: Stories in the ESL classroom

### Aesthetic and Efferent Responses

When we use stories in the ESL classroom, we are teaching more than just language. Besides the sense of fun and enjoyment of activities that provide the vital motivation that children need to keep them focussed, a growing appreciation of beauty and art is important for their personal development.

In the past, teachers sometimes thought that if students were having too much fun, then their teaching methods were not serious enough and true learning was not happening. Even enjoyable topics from literature were weighed down with questions demanding an efferent response.

Educators are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of children's valid aesthetic response to literature and art.

### Exploring Aesthetic Values

In her textbook *Teaching Language Arts: A student-centred classroom*, in the chapter on the reader's response to literature, Carole Cox talks about some research she did about the two types of questioning a teacher can use and the children's responses.

**Read the passage and answer the questions below:**

#### Children's Stance toward Literature

A key to teaching literature is knowing about how children respond. This knowledge should provide the basis for asking questions and planning further teaching with literature. I have done research in this area: a nine-year longitudinal study of children's responses and the stances they take from a reader-response perspective (Cox C. , 1997, 2002). I have read to the same group of children as they moved from kindergarten through fifth grade. Here's what I have found:

1. Children took a predominantly aesthetic (71.6 per cent), rather than efferent (28.4 per cent), stance in their responses. Table 3.1 shows types of responses when they took a more aesthetic or more efferent stance and examples of what they said. Here is a list of the types in order from most to least with percentages (A = aesthetic and E = efferent):

Stance	Type of Response	Percentage of Responses
A	Questioning	19.0
A	Text part	17.4
A	Associating	15.0
A	Hypothesizing	13.6
E	Explanations	10.2
E	Print and language	8.0
E	Content	7.0
A	Performance	6.8
E	Analysis	4.1

2. There was a dynamic interplay between the two types of stances, but more efferent responses, such as understanding print and expanding a story, were always part of a broader aesthetic response.

3. Children most often asked questions about the text when they were puzzled or wondered about something they wanted to know about.

In their student-centred classrooms, teachers focus on students' responses, rather than their own predetermined ideas or those found in a teacher's guide to using literature. Children are encouraged to respond openly, drawing on their own experiences and funds of knowledge. In transactional teaching with literature, teachers begin by asking open questions – "So what did you think of it?" – and directing children to take an aesthetic stance toward literature.

(Cox, 2008, pp. 65-7)

Here are examples of both aesthetic and efferent questions and prompts:

**Aesthetic** (more open)

**Efferent** (more closed)

What do you think about the story?

What was the main idea of the story?

Tell anything you want about the story.

What did the author mean by -- ?

What was your favourite part? Tell about it

Retell your favourite part.  
Tell the order of the story events.

Has anything like this every happened to you?  
Tell about it.

Describe the main characters.  
Explain the characters' actions.

Does the story remind you of anything? Tell about it.

What other stories are like this one?  
Compare and contrast the stories.

What did you wonder about? Tell about it.

What was the problem in the story?  
How did the author solve the problem?

What would you change in the story?

How did the author make the story believable?

What else do you think might happen in the story?

Is it fact or fiction?

What would you say or do if you were a character in the story?

How do you think the characters felt?

(Cox C. , 2008, p. 151)

## Questions about Children's Stance toward Literature

1. What provides "the basis for asking questions and planning further teaching with literature"?

.....

2. Look at this statement:

"There was a dynamic interplay between the two types of stances, but more efferent responses, such as understanding print and expanding a story, were always part of a broader aesthetic response."

This is stating that even when children gave an 'efferent' response (to do with facts and information), it was still part of.....

3. When did children ask questions about the text? .....

.....

4. In student-centred classrooms, what do teachers focus on? .....

rather than .....

5. What are children encouraged to do? .....

6. In transactional teaching with literature, how do teachers ask questions?

.....

**Look carefully at the chart of efferent and aesthetic questions. Mark you favourites with a highlighter pen – you may need to refer back to this page when you do your assignment.**

## Strategies to Explore Aesthetic Values

From the articles that we read in Topic 4 (Selecting Stories) we can find many useful strategies to explore Aesthetic Values through the stories we teach. Refer back to:

### *Responding to visuals*

The pictures in the book – or your gestures/puppet/realia when you tell a story, evoke the first aesthetic responses from the children, even at the pre-reading/pre-telling stage. Right away they will be interested/fascinated/curious/puzzled ... Attraction to whatever visual aid is offered becomes the 'hook' – as discussed in the Hook, Book, Look, Took article below – to draw the children into the story.

During the reading/telling the children can simply enjoy the pictures or other visual offering - at the same time as benefitting by understanding the story vocabulary or concepts better. This is what Cox was talking about with the 'dynamic interplay': while the children may be responding to the factual information – "oh, so that's what a Gruffalo is!" – and they may be learning vocabulary or other information, they are also responding aesthetically.

As a post-telling/post-reading activity, children always enjoy creating their own visual representation of the story or something they liked about it using media such as pencils, crayons, paint or even play-dough.

### *Performance*

In topic 4, in the article by Brown (2004), we read about 'Sequencing Activities' to keep an active classroom and allow for variety in your lessons. As a reminder:

#### *Sequencing Activities*

Young learners in particular need a very active classroom and variety throughout the lesson. Ten minutes is probably the maximum length of time you can expect students of this age to focus their attention before you need to change gears. One guideline that works well with young learners is to assure that, in any given lesson, there is always a little enthusiastic singing, a little quiet listening, a little enthusiastic dancing, and a little quiet artwork.

The following approach is one that works very well:

- **Sing.** Students sing, recite, or read a passage from the story in teams.
- **Listen.** Students listen to the story from beginning to end.
- **Dance.** Students get out of their chairs for some physical activity. Often, this can be acting out the actions from the story, but there are unlimited possibilities.
- **Draw.** Students sit back down and illustrate new vocabulary.

(Brown, 2004)

## Questioning

As mentioned earlier, we tend to think of questions as seeking information, and teachers ask questions to receive a 'correct' answer. With an aesthetic response there is no one right answer and children are encouraged to express their own responses to a poem, story, song, play or other piece of literature. Cox (2008, pp. 74-5) has this to say about Questioning:

### *Questions: Aesthetic and Efferent*

The types of questions teachers ask direct children to take aesthetic or efferent stances toward any text. Ideally, teachers should first direct students to take aesthetic stances toward literature. Think about the analysis of children's response types described earlier. Their preferred types were aesthetic. They questioned, talked about favourite parts, hypothesized, and made associations. Out of these broad, rich, aesthetic responses (which were focussed on the development of personal meaning), more efferent concerns will emerge, such as developing explanations or attending to print and language, content, and analysis.

Focus first on aesthetic questions and prompts. Begin with an open question or prompt that has many possible responses:

#### 1. Questioning

- What did you think of the story?
- Tell me anything you want about the story.

Many times, children will state a preference, such as "I liked it," "I didn't like it," or "It was okay." Follow up on this response by asking the children to tell why they did or didn't like the story. Next, ask questions or prompts that are based on the children's comments or that invite them to respond first aesthetically and then more efferently. The following questions and prompts are based on characteristic responses of children described in the earlier section on aesthetic and efferent stances.

#### 2. Focussing on a part

- What was your favourite part of the story? Tell about it.

#### 3. Making associations

- Has anything like this happened to you? Tell about it.
- Have you ever had feelings like a character in the story? Tell about them.
- Does this story remind you of other stories? Tell about them.

#### 4. Hypothesizing

- Was there anything in the story you wondered about? Tell about it.
- Did something puzzle you? Tell about it.
- What else do you think might happen?
- Is there anything you would change in the story? What? How?

## 5. Explaining

- Explain a character's actions
- What did the author mean by \_\_\_\_\_?

## 6. Considering print and language

- What does this word or letter say? What does it mean? How is it used in the story?
- Tell about how the author used language: words, sentences, rhyming patterns, and so on.

## 7. Considering content

- What happened in the story? Tell the order of the story's events.
- What happened in the beginning, the middle, and the end?
- What was the main idea of the story?

## 8. Performing

- If you were a character in the story, what would you say? Show how you would act.
- If you could talk to a character in the story, what would you say?
- What sounds would you like to hear in the story?

## 9. Analysing

- Is the story true (factual) or made up (fictional)?
- Compare and contrast this story to other stories.
- What did you think of how the story was written or illustrated?

(Cox, 2008)

### Questioning Exercise:

Did you notice how the questions (above) moved from aesthetic to efferent? The '*Considering Print and Language*' and '*Considering Content*' ones in the middle are clearly efferent. But the final question is once again aesthetic.

***Take two different highlighter pens and try to mark which is which. Compare with your partner/group.***



## Exploring Linguistic Features

The article above contains some aesthetic and some efferent questions. Obviously, in this case, 'efferent' refers generally to linguistic questions.

In the article by Brown (2004) in Topic 4 there is a list of possible activities to use in connection with a story telling/reading.

### *Types of Activities*

- Listen to the story on tape/as read by the teacher without looking at the text.
- Listen to the story and read along.
- Listen to the story and put illustrations depicting parts of the story in order.
- Read the book silently.
- Read the book to a partner, then switch.
- Write your favourite words/new words/words starting with A from the story in your notebook.
- Write a portion of the story in the workbook.
- Answer (or practice asking) simple who, what, when, where, and why questions about the story.
- Play "Pictionary". Divide students into teams. One member of the team draws a picture on the board while team members try to guess what it is within a limited time period.
- Speed reading game. Call out a word from the text, then let students race to find it. The first one to find it reads the sentence aloud. A word of caution: this game is rather hard on books.
- Have students display the flashcards they made, let them be the teacher and ask the class, "What is this?"
- Make up a dance or do actions to the words of the story. A good example of this kind of story is *The Foot Book*. The text repeats, "Left Foot/Left Foot/Right Foot/Right." Students can get out of their chairs and jump from left to right as suggested by the text.
- Do the opposite of dancing. Have students "freeze" a moment of the text by acting out exactly what is described in the text at some specific moment, and holding perfectly still. You could photograph these moments if you have a digital camera.
- Do a verbal fill-in-the-blank exercise. As you read, stop at random and have students shout out what word comes next.
- Check comprehension of key concepts by asking students to draw pictures. For example, students could demonstrate understanding of the difference between "I like *kimchi*."/"I don't like *kimchi*." by drawing two different pictures.
- A note about memorization. A lot of students really do enjoy memorizing the books. Allow them to recite what they've memorized in teams. Many students love to show off their English, and feel very proud of being able to produce a minute or so of non-stop English.

(Brown, 2004)

**Using your highlighter pens, identify which activities reinforce linguistic learning.**

Carole Cox (Literature-based teaching: A student response-centred classroom, 1997, pp. 207-8) offers these suggestions for activities in a reading aloud session. **Take note of which are aesthetic and which are linguistic strategies:**

### Reading Aloud

Here are some suggestions for reading aloud:

1. **When to Read Aloud:** Teachers should read aloud to students several times every day, such as at the close of sharing time in the morning, before or after recess, to initiate a writing or drama activity, before or after lunch, or at the end of the day. In addition to serving a modelling purpose, reading aloud is one of the best ways to create a quiet, peaceful atmosphere in the classroom. Teachers who feel they need more control in the classroom should get out a good book and read it aloud to students.
2. **How to Read Aloud:** Teachers should share books they love. By doing so, they will be more likely to read dramatically and with enthusiasm. Others should be invited to read, too: principals, counsellors, parents, and community members. Likewise, children should be encouraged to read aloud to each other (i.e. buddy reading), perhaps favourite books they have brought to share and even their own stories read from the Author's Chair. Children learn to read by hearing stories read aloud and by reading aloud themselves. Time should be provided to do both often.
3. **Predictable Pattern Books:** Most predictable pattern books are based on familiar cultural sequences, like the alphabet, numbers, days of the week, and seasons. Other such books use repeated phrases that invite children to chime in. Remember "Sam I am, that Sam I am" from Dr Seuss's *Green Eggs and Ham?* (Seuss 1988). Some pattern books are cumulative tales, in which new parts of the story are continually added, as in the nursery rhyme "The House that Jack Built". Many pattern books are based on traditional rhymes, songs, or folktales; others are new and original. Predictable pattern books encourage children to participate in the reading experience by guessing what will happen next, by joining in a repeated phrase, or by repeating everything that's been said before. Books such as these should be read often with young children.
4. **"Big Books and Shared Reading":** New Zealand educator Don Holdaway (1979) introduced the idea of using "big books" (i.e. books with oversized pages and print) and shared reading in emergent literacy classrooms. The purpose for doing so is to replicate the bedtime story experience and the good feeling children have when a parent or caretaker sits close to them and reads aloud. Today, many publishers have enlarged popular children's books to the "big book" size. Teachers can also create "big books" by copying stories on paper large enough so that the children can see the words from up to 20 feet away. (7 metres)

(Cox C. , 1997, pp. 207-8)

**Questions for Reading Aloud**

1. How often should teachers read aloud to their students? .....
2. Why? .....
3. Who should/could read aloud to the students? .....  
.....
4. What are most predictable pattern books based on? .....  
.....
5. What do books with repeated phrases invite children to do? .....
6. How can children participate in the reading experience in a predictable pattern story?  
.....  
or .....  
or .....
7. What was the original purpose of the shared reading experience?  
.....
8. How big should a “big book” be? .....
9. When you were at school, did your teacher(s) read aloud to you (in any language)? And, if so, how did you feel about it? .....
10. What kind of question is number 9 (above)? .....

***Discuss with your partner / group.***

This article by Tedjaatmadja and Renandya suggests a lesson framework that they have tried and found useful. Whether or not you would consider following their example, pay particular attention to the right-hand column of their table which lists the principles behind what they are doing.

**Read, answer the questions below, and discuss with your partner / group.**

## Hook, Book, Look, Took

by Herwindy M Tedjaatmadja and Willy A Renandya

### Introduction

Are you teaching English to young children and looking for a simple lesson framework that you can use and reuse productively?

The Hook Book Look Took (HBLT) lesson structure might be the answer. Originally developed by Lawrence O Richards and Gary J Bredfeldt (1998), HBLT is a four-step strategy that is particularly popular with Sunday school teachers. The four-step lesson structure enables the teacher to introduce and prepare the children for the lesson through various fun activities (the Hook), to focus the children's attention on the contents of a section of the Bible (the Book), to guide the children to think about how to apply the message in life (the Look), and to summarize the lesson in such a way so that the children finish the lesson with a concrete takeaway (the Took).

We stumbled on this lesson structure quite accidentally when someone mentioned it casually to us and said that she fell in love with it the moment she learned about it and had since then tried it out with her Sunday-school children. It dawned on us almost immediately that this could be adapted for teaching English to young children. The structure is simple, which goes down well with teachers working with young learners, and is versatile enough to allow for creative interpretations and variations within each of the steps. The name is also quite catchy and easy to remember, which we think is another plus point.

### The Hook Book Look Took lesson structure

We describe in Table 1 below our version of the HBLT lesson framework. We have kept the terms the same but given different meanings to the four steps, in particular the Book and Look steps, so that they are more reflective of current theories of and principles for teaching English to young learners. We describe the four steps along with the language learning principles that underpin the steps in the table below.

Step	Description	Principles
Hook	All good teachers understand the importance of this step, especially when working with young learners. This is where we introduce and prepare the students affectively, cognitively and also linguistically for the main part of the lesson. With young children, the hook should be fun and enjoyable. Fun activities include, but are not limited to, singing, playing games, dancing, drawing, or other activities that involve bodily	a. Learning is best facilitated when children are cognitively and affectively ready, when they can devote their full attention to what they are about to learn.  b. Learning is also best

	<p>movement. The use of a multi-sensory approach by appealing to the children's sense of sight, sound, touch, smell and taste is highly recommended to get their attention.</p> <p>Given that young learners have a short attention span, they will need to be hooked and rehooked as the main lesson progresses. In a 30-minute lesson, two or three hooking activities may need to be planned in order to keep the children engaged throughout the lesson.</p> <p>The best kind of hook should be related to the main objective of the lesson and also guide learners to the main activities of the lesson. This way, the hook provides a bridge between the aim of the lesson and the main activities of the lesson.</p>	<p>facilitated when children are in a happy state of mind. This state of mind can best be achieved through play or game-like activities.</p> <p>c. Schema theory is also at play here as the teacher tries to activate learners' prior knowledge and interest with the content of the lesson through fun activities.</p>
<p><b>Book</b></p>	<p>This is the main part of the lesson. The book here refers to any textual materials that appeal to young learners. Story books of various genres such as folklores, legends, fairy tales, fables and modern-day stories can be used to engage the learners. The key consideration when selecting stories is that they should be interesting, enjoyable and comprehensible to the learners. Materials of this type are likely to get the learners' full attention; while those that are uninteresting, unenjoyable and incomprehensible will just be noise to the children and will be filtered out.</p> <p>There are many book-based instructional procedures that teachers can use to explore the contents of the story. These procedures usually require the teacher to do some form of reading aloud; either reading to or with the children. The latter, reading with the children, is preferred because research has shown that this type of reading keeps the learners mentally engaged, which tends to result in deeper and durable learning (Blok, 1999).</p> <p>Teacher read-aloud techniques include the following: <i>Read and predict.</i> The teacher stops at interesting points in the story and encourages the children to predict what will happen next. This technique supports learner thinking and helps learners to think ahead and predict the contents of the next portion of the story. This is an important skill that good readers use to enhance their comprehension.</p> <p><i>Tell and check.</i> The students are paired up and assigned as either a teller or a checker. The teacher reads a</p>	<p>a. Books in general and stories in particular can provide a lot of comprehensible input to the children (Krashen, 2009), which is a necessary condition for language acquisition.</p> <p>b. Teacher read-aloud makes the language input more comprehensible, thus further enhancing language acquisition.</p> <p>c. This Book step reflects Paul Nation's (1996) first learning strand, i.e., learning through meaning focused input, where the learners' attention is primarily on the contents (meaning) of the stories, not on the form, thus promoting incidental learning.</p> <p>d. The teaching methods suggested for this step are geared towards developing learners' implicit knowledge of the English language, which is consistent with SLA theories (Ellis, 2005).</p>

	<p>section of the story and asks the teller to retell that portion of the story to the checker. The checker checks if the teller has included all the relevant details. This technique keeps the students on task when listening to the story as they have to do the telling and checking afterward. The telling and checking can be done in either English or in the pupils' first language.</p> <p><i>Listen and draw.</i> The teacher can ask the students to draw pictures in response to what they are listening to to represent their understanding of the story. Listening and drawing keep them productively occupied throughout the lesson.</p> <p>A great book that contains a lot of practical tips and hundreds of recommended read-aloud titles is Jim Trealeas' now classic <i>The Read-aloud Handbook</i> (2006).</p> <p><i>Expressive reading.</i> Read with expression so that the story comes alive and the words become more vivid and meaningful. Use different voices when reading a dialogue. Bring a lot of excitement to your voice so that the children know that you are excited about the story. Slow down the speed to create suspense and read faster when the story gets exciting.</p> <p>Some teachers value student read-aloud and often ask pupils to do choral reading. While this activity can be useful (e.g., for fluency development), this can be a chore after a while and students may get bored.</p> <p>The benefits of reading aloud are many. Reading aloud, according to Kathleen Odean (2003), an expert on children's books, is most beneficial when it is done in a way that is enjoyable to both the teacher and the students. Her advice: "Just enjoy the books together; the increased vocabulary, understanding of story structure, exposure to correct grammar, and other benefits will follow naturally."</p>	
<p><b>Look</b></p>	<p>The third step is to get the students to look more closely at the language features of the story. After receiving a lot of meaningful language input at the Book step, students should be made aware of which particular aspects of the input need to be attended to. These can be the meanings, spellings or pronunciation of words used to describe the characters in the story, the structure of the storyline (e.g. how the author builds up the climax of the story), certain grammatical structures, etc.</p>	<p>a. Noticing language features increases the chance of these features being incorporated into the learners' developing language system.</p> <p>b. The Look step reflects Paul Nation's (1996) second strand: language focused learning. Research has shown that deliberate attention to</p>

	<p>This step can be integrated with the second step in which the teacher can explain briefly certain language features that are worth highlighting. It can also be done as a separate activity after the second step. What is important for the teachers to remember is that they should not spend too much classroom time on it or turn this step into traditional discrete grammar exercises (e.g., turning statements into questions, which is not a meaningful activity for young children).</p>	<p>language features enhances learning. Noticing language features (e.g. certain grammatical features or vocabulary) from a meaningful text is more productive than learning these features out of context.</p>
<b>Took</b>	<p>The 'Took' is the conclusion of the whole lesson. It is the takeaway of the lesson. The questions to ask are: what is it that we want our students to remember most from the lesson? Is it the meanings of some new words? Is it the pronunciation of certain vowel sounds? Some grammar points? Is it some newly introduced comprehension skills?</p> <p>With young children, the take-away activities should be fun and enjoyable. For example, if the focus of the lesson is on the pronunciation of /ei/, the teacher can end the lesson by showing a YouTube video clip (<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3v0rJqyCTM">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3v0rJqyCTM</a>) entitled "Rain, Rain, Go Away!", which contains a lot of words with the /ei/ sound and get the children to sing along.</p> <p>If the objective of the lesson is on adjectives, the children can be shown the following poem (<a href="http://hrsbstaff.ednet.ns.ca/davidc/6c_files/Poem%20pics/cinquaindescrip.htm">http://hrsbstaff.ednet.ns.ca/davidc/6c_files/Poem%20pics/cinquaindescrip.htm</a>), and asked to replace the three adjectives (messy, spicy and delicious) with their own adjectives. This is a meaningful activity as the pupils get to practice using some adjectives and at the same time be involved in a creative text reconstruction activity.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Spaghetti</b> <b>Messy, spicy</b> <b>Slurping, sliding, falling</b> <b>Between my plate and mouth</b> <b>Delicious</b></p>	<p>a. Ending the lesson in this way increases the retention of the key points of the lesson.</p> <p>b. This step also enables the students to apply or transfer learning to a new situation.</p>

Table 1: HBLT Lesson Structure

## Conclusion

As is clear from the foregoing discussion, the HBLT lesson structure is simple but flexible. The four steps are easy to remember but flexible enough for teachers to carry out the steps according to their preferences, teaching styles and creativity. The language learning principles that underpin this lesson structure are sound too and reflect what second language experts believe to be important for teaching young learners. The key steps of the HBLT lesson structure, the Book and the Look, reflect a

balanced view of instructed language learning principles that promote both meaning-focused and language-focused learning (Ellis, 2005; Nation, 2007) through the use of high interest story books (Elley, 2001).

The teacher read-aloud methodology is also well-suited for young children before they can read independently and later benefit even more from engaging in extensive or pleasure reading (Renandya, 2007).

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(Tedjaatmadja & Renandya, 2012)

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## Questions for Hook Book Took Look

1. When is learning best facilitated? .....
2. How can we make sure children are cognitively and affectively ready to learn? .....
3. How can we achieve the 'happy state of mind' that children need to be in to facilitate learning? .....
4. How is the 'schema theory' relevant in the 'Hook' part of the lesson? .....



5. Give some examples of activities to use in the 'Hook' stage of the lesson.

.....

6. What is the multi-sensory approach and why is it useful?

.....

7. How many hooking activities might be needed to keep children engaged in a 30-minute lesson?

.....

8. What is the 'best kind of hook' and why? .....

.....

9. What is a good way for teachers to provide 'comprehensible input' .....

.....

10. How does teacher read-aloud affect language input? .....

.....

11. What promotes 'incidental learning'? .....

.....

12. What kind of materials are likely to get the young learners full attention? .....

.....

13. What has research has shown about reading *with* children? .....

.....

14. How does the *Read and Predict* technique help learners? .....

.....

15. How does the *Tell and Check* technique assist students' learning? .....

.....

16. How does the *Listen and Draw* technique help during a lesson? .....

.....

17. What can be a problem with student read-aloud lessons? .....

.....

18. How can teachers increase the chance of language features being incorporated into the learners' developing language system? .....

19. What is a less productive way of learning language features? .....

20. Give two reasons why the 'Took' method is a good way to end the lesson.  
.....  
.....

***Discuss with your partner / group which of the activities involve aesthetic values, and which are more concerned with linguistic features.***

## Applying Developmental Theories – Piaget and Kohlberg

Some people have said that children are just “little adults”. Teachers know that this is just not true, and there are many more differences between adults and children than just size! Theorists have examined how children grow and develop, and the fact that they all go through the same stages, in the same order. (You have hopefully already studied the theories in other courses.)

To help you understand (or remind you about) the theories and answer questions relating to the stages of development and moral development put forward by these two famous theorists, here are two short articles.

This article is from the Web MD website (Benarock, 2012):

### Piaget Stages of Development

The Piaget *Stages of Development* is a blueprint that describes the stages of normal intellectual development, from infancy through adulthood. This includes thought, judgment, and knowledge. The stages were named after psychologist and developmental biologist Jean Piaget, who recorded the intellectual development and abilities of infants, children, and teens.

Piaget's four stages of intellectual (or cognitive) development are:

- Sensorimotor. Birth through ages 18-24 months.
- Preoperational. Toddlerhood (18-24 months) through early childhood (age 7).
- Concrete operational. Ages 7 to 12.
- Formal operational. Adolescence through adulthood.

Piaget acknowledged that some children may pass through the stages at different ages than the averages noted above and that some children may show characteristics of more than one stage at a given time. But he insisted that cognitive development always follows this sequence, that stages cannot be skipped, and that each stage is marked by new intellectual abilities and a more complex understanding of the world.

### Sensorimotor Stage

During the early stages, infants are only aware of what is immediately in front of them. They focus on what they see, what they are doing, and physical interactions with their immediate environment.

Because they don't yet know how things react, they're constantly experimenting with activities such as shaking or throwing things, putting things in their mouths, and learning about the world through trial and error. The later stages include goal-oriented behaviour which brings about a desired result.

At about age 7 to 9 months, infants begin to realize that an object exists even if it can no longer be seen. This important milestone -- known as object permanence -- is a sign that memory is developing.

After infants start crawling, standing, and walking, their increased physical mobility leads to increased cognitive development. Near the end of the sensorimotor stage, infants reach another

important milestone -- early language development, a sign that they are developing some symbolic abilities.

### **Preoperational Stage**

During this stage, young children are able to think about things symbolically. Their language use becomes more mature. They also develop memory and imagination, which allows them to understand the difference between past and future, and engage in make-believe.

But their thinking is based on intuition and still not completely logical. They cannot yet grasp more complex concepts such as cause and effect, time, and comparison.

### **Concrete Operational Stage**

At this time, elementary-age and preadolescent children demonstrate logical, concrete reasoning.

Children's thinking becomes less egocentric and they are increasingly aware of external events. They begin to realize that one's own thoughts and feelings are unique and may not be shared by others or may not even be part of reality. Children also develop operational thinking -- the ability to perform reversible mental actions.

During this stage, however, most children still can't tackle a problem with several variables in a systematic way.

### **Formal Operational Stage**

Adolescents who reach this fourth stage of intellectual development are able to logically use symbols related to abstract concepts, such as algebra and science. They can think about multiple variables in systematic ways, formulate hypotheses, and consider possibilities. They also can ponder abstract relationships and concepts such as justice.

Although Piaget believed in lifelong intellectual development, he insisted that the formal operational stage is the final stage of cognitive development, and that continued intellectual development in adults depends on the accumulation of knowledge.

(Benarock, 2012)

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*The second article, about Kohlberg, is from the Simply Psychology website (McLeod, 2011):*

### **Kohlberg**

*by Saul McLeod, published 2011*

Lawrence Kohlberg (1958) agreed with Piaget's (1932) theory of moral development in principle but wanted to develop his ideas further.

He used Piaget's story-telling technique to tell people stories involving moral dilemmas. In each case he presented a choice to be considered for example between the rights of some authority and the needs of some deserving individual who is being unfairly treated.

One of the best known of Kohlberg's (1958) stories concerns a man called Heinz who lived somewhere in Europe.

Heinz's wife was dying from a particular type of cancer. Doctors said a new drug might save her. The drug had been discovered by a local chemist and the Heinz tried desperately to buy some, but the chemist was charging ten times the money it cost to make the drug and this was much more than the Heinz could afford.

Heinz could only raise half the money, even after help from family and friends. He explained to the chemist that his wife was dying and asked if he could have the drug cheaper or pay the rest of the money later. The chemist refused saying that he had discovered the drug and was going to make money from it. The husband was desperate to save his wife, so later that night he broke into the chemist's and stole the drug.

Kohlberg asked a series of questions such as:

1. Should Heinz have stolen the drug?
2. Would it change anything if Heinz did not love his wife?
3. What if the person dying was a stranger, would it make any difference?
4. Should the police arrest the chemist for murder if the woman died?

By studying the answers from children of different ages to these questions Kohlberg hoped to discover the ways in which moral reasoning changed as people grew.

Kohlberg told several dilemma stories and asked many such questions to discover how people reasoned about moral issues. He identified three distinct levels of moral reasoning each with two sub stages. People can only pass through these levels in the order listed. Each new stage replaces the reasoning typical of the earlier stage. Not everyone achieves all the stages.

### ***Kohlberg Stages of Moral Development***

#### **Level 1 - Pre-conventional morality**

Authority is outside the individual and reasoning is based on the physical consequences of actions.

- Stage 1. Obedience and Punishment Orientation. The child/individual is good in order to avoid being punished. If a person is punished they must have done wrong.
- Stage 2. Individualism and Exchange. At this stage children recognize that there is not just one right view that is handed down by the authorities. Different individuals have different viewpoints.

#### **Level 2 - Conventional morality**

Authority is internalized but not questioned and reasoning is based on the norms of the group to which the person belongs.

- Stage 3. Good Interpersonal Relationships. The child/individual is good in order to be seen as being a good person by others. Therefore, answers are related to the approval of others.
- Stage 4. Maintaining the Social Order. The child/individual becomes aware of the wider rules of society so judgments concern obeying rules in order to uphold the law and to avoid guilt.

### **Level 3 - Post-conventional morality**

Individual judgment is based on self-chosen principles, and moral reasoning is based on individual rights and justice.

- Stage 5. Social Contract and Individual Rights. The child/individual becomes aware that while rules/laws might exist for the good of the greatest number, there are times when they will work against the interest of particular individuals. The issues are not always clear cut. For example, in Heinz's dilemma the protection of life is more important than breaking the law against stealing.
- Stage 6: Universal Principles. People at this stage have developed their own set of moral guidelines which may or may not fit the law. The principles apply to everyone. E.g. human rights, justice and equality. The person will be prepared to act to defend these principles even if it means going against the rest of society in the process and having to pay the consequences of disapproval and or imprisonment. Kohlberg doubted few people reached this stage.

### ***Critical Evaluation***

Criticism of Kohlberg's theory comes from Gilligan, who argues that the theory is androcentric (male bias) after Kohlberg reporting that most men were at stage 4 while most women were at stage 3.

Gilligan (1982) claims that the female participants of Kohlberg's study were being judged using a male standard due to the gender bias of Kohlberg's original research, which was based solely on studying men. Gilligan reached the conclusion that Kohlberg's theory did not account for the fact that women approach moral problems from an 'ethics of care', rather than an 'ethics of justice' perspective, which challenges some of the fundamental assumptions of Kohlberg's theory.

The fact that Kohlberg's theory is heavily dependent on an individual's response to an artificial dilemma brings question to the validity of the results obtained through this research. People may respond very differently to real life situations that they find themselves in than they do to an artificial dilemma presented to them in the comfort of a research environment. Further, the gender bias issue raised by Gilligan is a reminded of the significant gender debate still present in psychology, which when ignored, can have a large impact on results obtained through psychological research.

The way in which Kohlberg carried out his research when constructing this theory may not have been the best way to test whether all children follow the same sequence of stage progression. His research was cross-sectional, meaning that he interviewed children of different ages to see what level of moral development they were at.

A better way to see if all children follow the same order through the stages would have been to carry out longitudinal research on the same children. However, longitudinal research on Kohlberg's theory has since been carried out by Colby et al. (1983) who tested 58 male participants of Kohlberg's

original study. He tested them 6 times in the span of 27 years and found support for Kohlberg's original conclusion, that we all pass through the stages of moral development in the same order.

### ***References (for Kohlberg article)***

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(McLeod, 2011)

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### **Discussion questions**

***Consider these questions with your group (or partner).***

According to Piaget's stages of development:

- What stage(s) do you expect the children you teach to be at?
- How will this affect your teaching – particularly considering story reading/telling and related activities?

Look at Kohlberg's theory and the story about Heinz. Discuss the questions.

- What level/stage are you at?
- What level/stage (s) do you expect the children you are teaching to be at?
- How will this affect your teaching – particularly considering story reading/telling and related activities?

***Write a summary statement about each to present back to the class.***

## Creating Activities and Materials

One of the first tasks a teacher - especially a new inexperienced teacher - faces when entering a classroom is gaining 'control' of the class. It may be a large, unruly class, and unfamiliar to the teacher. The most comfortable time in the classroom (for the teacher) is when the children are all sitting quietly at their desks, reading and/or writing, under control!

However, if you look back at the articles we have been reading in topic 4 and topic 5, you will notice that most of the activities surrounding story telling/reading are not reading and writing activities. After all, we are talking about 'young learners' for whom reading/writing may be a chore which detracts from the enjoyment of the story.

### A lot of the activities talked about use words such as:

listening, speaking, voice variations, intonation, whispering, moving, dancing, gestures, mime, freeze games, rhyming words, predictive patterns repeated, artistic response, setting stories to music, drama, singing, actions, reciting, drawing, enjoying illustrations, creating illustrations, Pictionary, flashcard games, photographing, verbal fill-in-the-banks, memorising, puppets, realia ...

These activities are mostly oral/aural active, and can be quite *noisy* and hard to control at first. That doesn't mean you can't use worksheets and other *quiet* reading/writing/drawing activities. Remember the sequencing activities from Brown (2004), where he talks about alternating activities:

One guideline that works well with young learners is to assure that, in any given lesson, there is always a little enthusiastic singing, a little quiet listening, a little enthusiastic dancing, and a little quiet artwork.

Keep this in mind as you attempt the exercises below:

## Assessment / Exercises

These exercises are designed to help you apply what you have been reading. Your lecturers may choose to use one or more of them as assessment tasks.

### 1. Turn a story into a drama activity

- Identify a story or story book you could use to develop a drama performance.
- Why is the book suitable?
- What are the benefits of such activities?
- Which of the activities / questions require an aesthetic response from the children, and which are strategies to teach linguistic features?
- Prepare a presentation (PowerPoint OR other) to tell the class about your ideas.

### 2. Create language focussed activities

Using the same book or a different one:

- Create 3 (different!) language focused activities or worksheets. (Refer to the notes above!)



### 3. Explore development

Choose a story / book that you could tell to children.

- Choose some questions and/or activities.
- Consider how the story / questions / activities could help to explore and develop
  - the children's intellectual development (Piaget's developmental stages)
  - the children's moral/personality development (Kohlberg's model)
- Prepare a presentation (PowerPoint or other) to share your ideas.

### Works cited in this topic

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