

## Psy 206

# Developmental Theory Group Project Handout

One way to help you understand the relevance and applicability of theory in developmental psychology and to get you involved in the affairs of the world is to have you interview/observe individuals that you meet through your service experience and use the information you gathered to enrich your learning experience by assessing the validity of one of the developmental theories.

You will be need to team up with a group of 3-5 students, each involved in service learning with individuals from a different age group. Together, the group will pick a developmental theory to assess. Each member of the group would then choose a specific stage of the theory to focus on and assess through interviewing/observing individuals from the appropriate age group. Each group member should observe or interview at least one individual and, if possible, cover a different stage of the theory. The group would then work together on producing an overall report of the group's assessment of the validity of the theory.

To begin, you, as a group, should pick a developmental theory of interest to focus on. Examples: Piaget's theory of cognitive development, Erik Erikson's theory of personality development, Piaget's theory of moral development, Kohlberg's theory of moral development, or Kubler-Ross's theory of the stages of dying. You should then read about the theory and make sure you have a good understanding of all the concepts and stages discussed in the theory. You should decide which stages (pick at least 3) of the theory your group will focus on.

Each group member should then decide on the method(s) to be used for gathering information for the report. Examples: naturalistic observation, structured observation, interviews of individuals, their caregivers, and/or experts working in a relevant field. The individuals to be interviewed/observed should be people you interacted with in your service learning experience. Remember that you should not attempt to make any psychological evaluations of these individuals—you are not qualified to do so. Don't use full names when referring to the individuals you interviewed/observed in your report.

After all interviews/observations are completed, the group should put together a project report. All group members receive the same grade on the project multiplied by the individual percent effort, so it is in your best interest to make sure others are on the right track and to do your fair share of the work.

**Project Plan:** By the deadline indicated in the schedule section of the syllabus, you, as a group, need to submit a project plan that includes the following information:

- a) The theory picked out and the specific stages of the theory the group chose to focus on.
- b) A list of the observation/interview questions developed by the group. For each question, indicate the specific stage/concept it relates to and give an explanation of how the question relates to the stage/concept being assessed.
- c) The group's work plan (who will do what when), and signatures indicating each member's commitment to do their fair share of work in this project.

**Individual Sub-reports:** It is recommended that each group member prepare a typed sub-report on their portion of the project and share it with the group. After providing corrective feedback on the substance of the sub-reports, the group can then edit them to follow the same writing style and format and then use them to put together one cohesive project report. Sub-reports should include all of the following information:

- A summary of the key characteristics of the stage the member chose to focus on, and a brief description of the person interviewed/ observed and of the context in which the interview/observation took place.
- A list of the questions/ observations used. Follow each with a clear explanation of how it is related to the stage and how it would help test the validity of the theory and with a discussion of the findings and an explanation of how your findings support, or contrast with, the theory.
- Predictions about the past and/or future development of the individual interviewed/observed. These should not simply reflect personal opinion. They should be clearly derived from the theory.

**Format for the Group Project Report:** For each of the stages in the theory chosen by the group, the report should include:

- One paragraph summarizing the key characteristics of the stage.
- A list of the questions asked/behaviors observed. Follow with a clear explanation of how it is related to the stage and how it would help test the validity of the theory.
- One paragraph containing a brief description of the person interviewed/ observed and of the context in which the interview/observation took place.
- One or more paragraphs summarizing findings. Provide a detailed explanation of how each answer given or behavior observed seems to support, or contrast with, the theory.
- One paragraph offering your predictions about the past and/or future development of the individual interviewed/observed. Your predictions should not simply reflect personal opinion. They should be clearly derived from, and supported by, the theory.

**Project Grading Criteria**

	<u><b>Pts</b></u>
1. Project plan	5
2. Report is 10-12 pages long, double-spaced, typed, free from grammatical/spelling errors	5
3. Report has a clear introductory paragraph that explains what was done	5
4. Report body is well-organized by stage, and writing is logical and sequential	5
5. Observations/questions focus on important aspects of the theory, and individuals observed are carefully chosen to shed light on as many stages of the theory as possible	10
6. Group is selective in choosing facts and examples that are most relevant to the theory	10
7. The selected theory is used to make predictions about the past and/or future development	10
8. Report conclusion includes thoughtful reflection on whether the overall findings correspond to the theory or not and why	10
9. Power Point class presentation	10
<b>Total points possible</b>	<b>70</b>

# Psy 206 Group Project Plan

Group Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Theory Chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

Stages to Be Focused On:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Interview/Observation Questions Developed by the Group

Question 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Question 2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Question 3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Question 4: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Question 5: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Question 6: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 7:** \_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 8:** \_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 9:** \_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 10:** \_\_\_\_\_

Related Stage(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Related Concept(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Group's Specific Work Plan**

**Member1's responsibilities:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member2's responsibilities:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member3's responsibilities:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member4's responsibilities:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member5's responsibilities:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Names & Signatures of Group Members Submitting this Plan**

Do not include names of group members who did not actively and significantly contribute to this plan. They will have to talk to me in order to get reassigned to another group or to get permission to do an individual project.

Each member's signature indicates their agreement to work with the group within the framework of this plan and to do their fair share of work in the group project. A member can be dropped from the group for failure to cooperate with the group.

**Member1's name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member2's name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member3's name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member4's name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member5's name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Psy 206

### Info to Use in Forming Project Groups

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Learning agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Age group you are working with: \_\_\_\_\_

Theories of interest:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Names of any classmates you teamed up with:

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