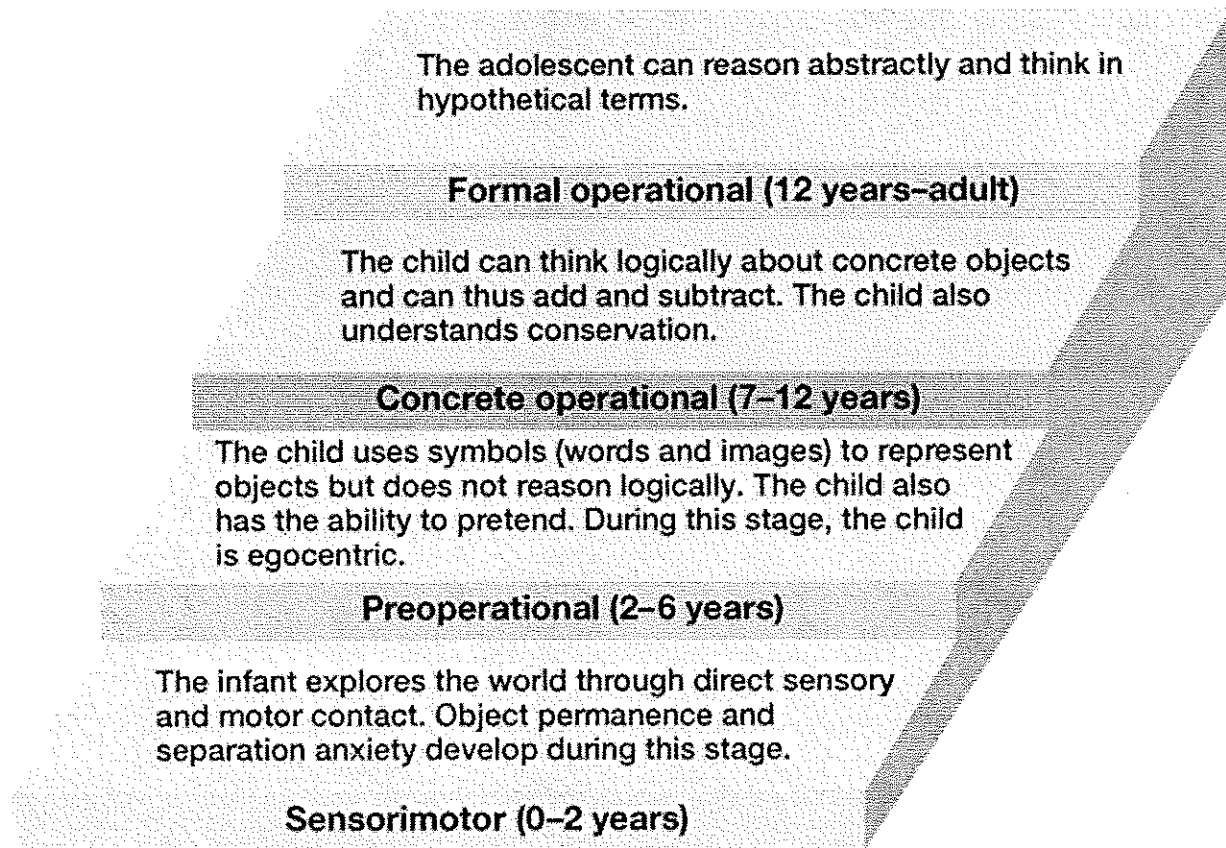


**MODULE 47 INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD: COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT****CHILD'S MIND DEVELOPS**

- Jean Piaget spent his life searching for the answers to such questions on child's development. **COGNITIVE** is all the mental activities associated with thinking, knowing, remembering, and communicating.
- The maturing brain creates **SCHEMAS**, concepts or mental molds into which we pour our experiences. First, we **ASSIMILATE**. This is interpreting our new experiences in terms of our existing schemas. We then adjust our schemas, or **ACCOMMODATE**, to incorporate information provided by new experiences.

**PIAGET'S THEORY AND CURRENT THINKING**

- Piaget's cognitive development consisted of four major stages: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational.
- **SENSORIMOTOR STAGE** is the stage from birth to about 2 years of age during which infants know the world mostly in terms of their sensory impressions and motor activities. Young infants lack **OBJECT PERMANENCE** or the awareness that objects continue to exist when not perceived. Usually after 6 months is when object permanence takes hold.
- **PREOPERATIONAL STAGE** is around age 6 to 7 where mental operations are still hard to perform (such as imagining an action and mentally reversing it). During this stage, children lack the concept of **CONSERVATION** – the principle that quantity remains the same despite changes in shape. Judy DeLoache discovered that 3 year olds could understand conservation compared to the 2 ½ years old participants. **EGOCENTRISM** is Piaget's theory during the preoperational stage where the child shows difficulty of taking another's point of view. **THEORY OF MIND** is people's ideas about their own and other's mental stages – about their feelings, perceptions, and thoughts, and the behaviors these might predict. **AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)** is a disorder that appears in childhood and is marked by significant deficiencies in communication and social interaction, and by rigidly fixated interests and repetitive behaviors.
- **CONCRETE OPERATIONAL STAGE** is the stage of cognitive development (from about 6 or 7 to 11 years of age) during which children gain the mental operations that enable them to think logically about concrete events. Children during this stage are able to comprehend mathematical transformations and conservation.
- **FORMAL OPERATIONAL STAGE** in Piaget's theory, the stage of cognitive development (normally beginning about age 12) during which people begin to think logically about abstract concepts.



### AN ALTERNATIVE VIEWPOINT: LEV VYGOTSKY'S SCAFFOLDING

- By age 7, children begin to think in words and use words to solve problems that are internalized by their culture's language and relying on inner speech. Children who talk to themselves help control their behavior and emotions and master new skills. Language provides the building block for thinking. Zone of proximal development is the zone between what a child can and can't do.

**BE ABLE TO ANSWER:** Use Piaget's first three stages of cognitive development to explain why children are not just miniature adults in the way they think.

**PRACTICE FRQ:** Describe Lev Vygotsky's ideas on the role of language, scaffolding, and the zone of proximal development in cognitive development. How did his theory differ that of Jean Piaget?