

Presentation Notes

A Look at Theories: Part I

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**A Look at
Theories: Part I**

Human Growth and Development

There are many great thinkers who have spent time thinking about how human beings grow and develop. This unit will focus on some of the more famous theories of human development.

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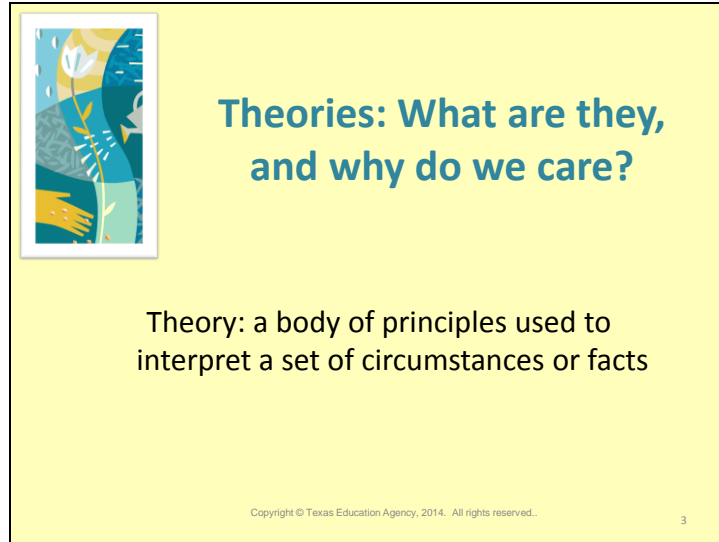
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**Theories: What are they,
and why do we care?**

Theory: a body of principles used to interpret a set of circumstances or facts

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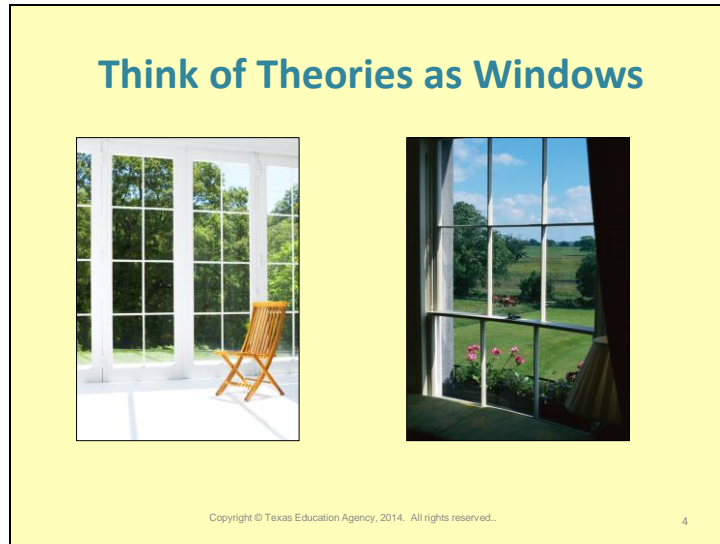
Over time, many people have studied human growth and development. Some of these people have developed a theory or a way of thinking to explain that growth and development. There are many theories in this area, and they look at development in many different ways. Good theories organize information, provide a focus for searching for new information and explain findings. Interestingly, the theories also spotlight disagreements among the researchers, allowing us to determine what needs more research and more thinking!

We are going to look at some of the best known theories. We'll learn about the founder(s) of the theory and the basic ideas behind it. As we go through this unit, think about what YOU believe to be true about growth and development. Can you find a theory that explains your beliefs?

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Every window gives us a different view, even if we are looking at the same landscape. That's the way it is with theories. They allow us to view a situation and people from different perspectives.


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Pedagogy versus Andragogy

- What are they?
 - Pedagogy defined: The art of teaching (children)
 - Andragogy defined: The art of helping adults learn
 - How do these ideas impact the way we see people?



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The term “pedagogy” comes from the Greek words *paid*, meaning "child," and *agogus* meaning "leader of." So, pedagogy literally means the art and science of teaching children, although in our society we have used the word to simply mean “teaching.” During the 1960s, some educators began to question using this term as more and more non-traditional students began to enter the educational system. Researchers began to wonder if teaching children and teaching adults could be handled in the same manner. Would adults have different learning styles and needs? A new word was coined in the 1930s, based on the Greek word *aner*, with the stem *andra* meaning "man, not boy" or adult, and *agogus* meaning "leader of.”

While pedagogy generally uses the style of passing on information (lectures, assigned readings, drills, memorization and quizzes), andragogy focuses on helping adults learn how to learn. This style of teaching recognizes learners as adults who understand what they need to learn and methods for achieving those goals. While children need someone to teach them all manner of things (their knowledge base is still limited), adults are self-directed, have a knowledge base of education and experiences, and tend to be problem-centered in their approach to learning. In short, they want to know why this information will be helpful to them in their current lives.

Knowing these differences can help us as we look at theories. There are theories that focus more on children than on adults, and we will start with these.

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The Way We Look at Things

- Behaviorism, constructivism, attachment theory, normative development or systems theory.
- Each one offers a view



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Every theory offers a way to look at things, people, development, change or reactions. If we are looking at things through the “window” of behaviorism or constructivism or systems, we will expect people to behave in a certain way. This expectation will cause us to react accordingly. In other words, theory directly influences our thoughts about and behavior with people.

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Attachment Theory

- John Bowlby
 - first researcher in this area
 - believed attachment was all or nothing
- Ainsworth (1913 – 1999)
 - determined three types of attachment
 - secure
 - ambivalent
 - avoidant

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Working from John Bowlby's theory, Mary Ainsworth decided to try to create empirical evidence (her own research) to support his idea whether children are attached to their mothers or not. Her experiments led her to determine that there are three types of attachment. Children can be securely attached. In this type of attachment, they are unhappy if their mothers leave, but are easily reassured and ready to go back to play once she has returned. These children have generally had their mothers as their primary caregivers. Insecure ambivalent attached infants have generally had inconsistent care. Their needs are sometimes met and sometimes not. They are upset when their mothers leave, but almost angry when their mothers return. They are ambivalent in their feelings about their mothers. The third type of attachment is insecure avoidant. These children have learned that their needs will not be met, no matter what they do. Therefore, they do not care when their mothers come or go. They often react to a stranger with this same type of non-reaction.

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Ainsworth and Attachment



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Ainsworth and Attachment: Part I

This first part looks at the early influences on the work of Mary Ainsworth, including John Bowlby and Konrad Lorenz

<http://youtu.be/4HHTohtXEq8>

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What does it mean?

- Early responsive, nurturing care
 - Teaches infants that the world is a safe place
 - Teaches infants that their needs will be met
 - Provides the foundation for successful social-emotional development throughout life



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In order to be securely attached, infants need loving, responsive care. Early experiences that teach a baby that the world is a safe place and that his/her needs will be met are the experiences that provide the firm foundation for successful social-emotional growth.

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Behaviorism Theory

- Experience guides development and behavior
- System of rewards and punishment



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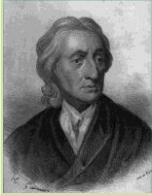
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Locke



John Locke (1632-1704)

- Parents as primary educators
- Children learn through experiences
- Play is the primary experience
- Tabula rasa – “blank slate”



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John Locke was one of the first people to talk about educational theory. He believed that parents were the primary educators of their children and that they should offer rich and rewarding experiences to their children throughout childhood. He believed that play was the primary learning experience for children and that learning should occur within a play situation whenever possible. He also stated that children were like blank slates. How could a newborn child be compared to a blank slate? Poor John Locke was usually misunderstood. He didn't believe that children were incapable of learning, but simply that their minds were blank and ready to be filled with ideas, concepts and knowledge in general.

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Other Behaviorists

- Ivan Pavlov
- John Watson
- B.F. Skinner



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You may have heard of the Pavlovian response. This is when we react to something based on past experiences. Pavlov studied animals and noticed that his dogs began salivating BEFORE they tasted any food - when they saw the trainer who fed them. He reasoned that a neutral stimulus (trainer) associated with another stimulus (food), produced a reaction (salivation). His theory states that we can control behavior by using appropriate positive or negative stimuli. This is called classical conditioning.

John Watson, wanting to explore further, did a now infamous experiment with a young child named Albert. Albert was 11-months-old and Watson, through classical conditioning, taught him to be scared of a soft white rat by making a loud, sharp sound every time the baby was confronted with the rat. He soon turned his head and began to cry when he even saw the animal.

B.F. Skinner used many different reinforcers (food, praise, smiles, new toy) and many different items of punishment (disapproval, withdrawing of privileges). His work is called operant conditioning.


What does behaviorism mean when we are thinking about people? If you are a behaviorist, you will reward for positive behavior and punish (or provide negative feedback) for negative behavior. Behaviorists believe that behavior will change in order to always receive the positive feedback; that humans can be “conditioned” to react in a certain way. What do you think? Is this always true? Sometimes true?

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Instruction on Behaviorism



(click on picture)

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Behaviorism 101

Vanessa Monaghan/Claire Whitehead/Catherine Lonagan/Ciara McDonnell developed this video on behaviorism.

<http://youtu.be/RU0zEGWp56Y>


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Psychoanalytic Theory

- Exploration of the unconscious mind in order to cure
- All thoughts and activities are influenced by the unconscious mind



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The theory of psychoanalysis was made popular by Sigmund Freud and his daughter, Anna. It was one of the most popular theories used to explain behavior for much of the 20th century. In the last decades, the theory has dropped in popular favor as other theories have come to the forefront.

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Freud

- Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939)
 - Theorized that psychological development in childhood takes place in a series of fixed stages
 - Believed the first five years of life are crucial to the formation of adult personality
 - Developed the idea of the unconscious and the idea that all people are made up of an id, ego and superego

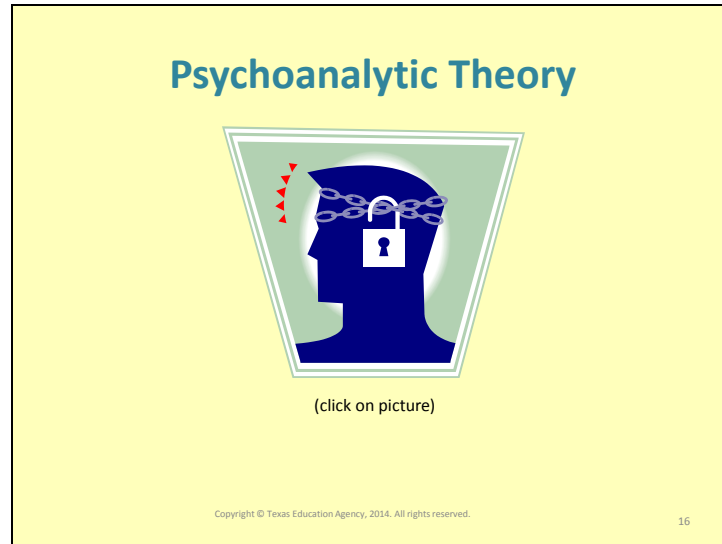
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Dr. Sigmund Freud was interested in how people develop psychologically. He stated that psychological development in childhood takes place in a series of fixed stages and that the first five years of life are crucial to the formation of adult personality. Society at large has accepted many pieces of Freud's theory, including his idea of the id (which houses all our basic instincts), the ego (the central part of our personality; the generally rational part) and the superego (our conscience).

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Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory on Instincts
Motivation, Personality and Development
<http://youtu.be/7vFf5CS27-Y>

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Cognitive Developmental Theory



Attempts to explain how people think and process information

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Cognitive developmental theory attempts to explain what stages people go through as they learn to think and process information.

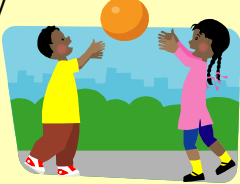
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Piaget

- Jean Piaget (1896 – 1980)
 - Born in Switzerland
 - Studied the development of his three children, Jacqueline, Lucienne and Laurent
 - Believed that children actively construct their own knowledge by means of exploration and activities



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Piaget believed that children learn in a distinctly different manner from older people. He believed that they move through a series of developmental stages for cognition in the same way that they move through stages of physical development. He is sometimes referred to as a “stage theorist.”

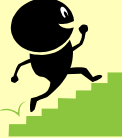
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Piaget

- Stages
 - Sensorimotor (Birth to 2 years)
 - Preoperational (2 – 7 years)
 - Concrete operations (7 – 11 years)
 - Formal operations (11 years and beyond)



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Piaget defined four stages of cognitive development for young children. The first is sensorimotor (from birth to about age two) when children learn primarily through the physical senses. Think of the infant who wants to put everything in his or her mouth or pound a toy on the floor or table. That child is using his or her physical senses to explore this new item. During this stage, children learn to manipulate the items in their world.

Next is preoperational, when preschool children learn to use symbols, language and pretend play to represent the discoveries they have made.

Concrete operations are next. Children in this stage begin to think in a logical, organized manner, and problem-solving is in full swing!



Finally, at around age 11, children move into formal operations. The formal operational stage is when children are able to think in abstract ways, evaluate the logic of statements, form a hypothesis to problem-solve and think of various outcomes before deciding on a path. Typically developing people remain in the formal operational stage throughout the rest of their lives.

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Jean Piaget



(click on picture) (click on picture)

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Instruction on Piaget
Stages of development
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRF27F2bn-A>

Instruction on Piaget
Conservation Experiment
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtLEWVu815o>


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Sociocultural Theory

- Social interaction leads to continuous step-by-step changes in children's thought and behavior
- Can vary greatly from culture to culture

A cartoon illustration of a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a green shirt, holding a baby. The man and baby are centered within a circular orange glow.

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Sociocultural theory states that social interactions and language are the key components that allow children to successfully grow and develop. These interactions lead to a step-by-step change in children's thought and behavior and can vary greatly from culture to culture. In other words, children's interactions with others within their culture will, to a great extent, determine their development.

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Vygotsky



- Lev Vygotsky (1896 – 1934)
 - Born in Western Russia (Belorussia)
 - Scaffolding -- Children will acquire the ways of thinking and behaving that make up a culture by interacting with an adult or a more knowledgeable peer

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Lev Vygotsky was born in Western Russia. Because Russia did not encourage scientific interchange with other nations, Vygotsky's theory was not known in the Western world until the late 1950s. In addition to stating that culture vitally impacts development, he believed that language helps to acculturate children; that it connects them to others and to the culture at large.

A primary piece of Vygotsky's theory is that children will often need "scaffolding" to help them to the next level of learning. Think of a construction scaffold and how it moves workers to a higher level. Vygotsky stated that, with the help of adults or more knowledgeable peers, children can move to the next higher level of thinking and learning. This is called "scaffolding."

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Vygotsky and Socioculturalism



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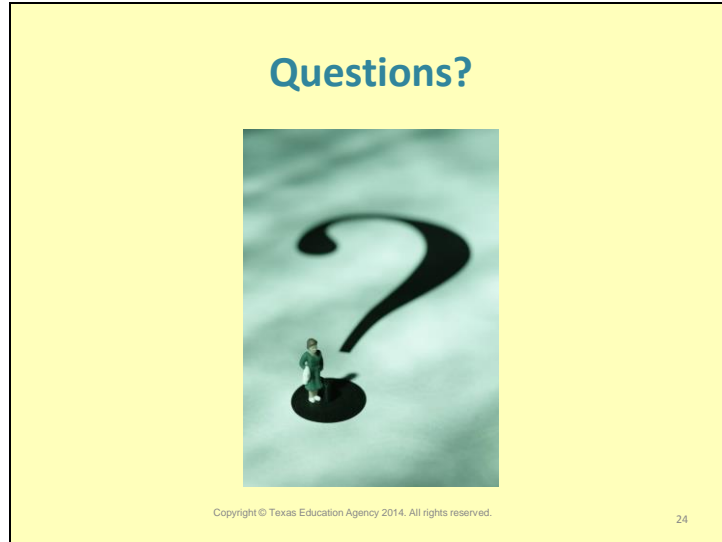
Instruction on Vygotsky
An Introduction to Socioculturalism
<http://youtu.be/lnzmZtHuZPY>

Instruction on Vygotsky
Scaffolding
<http://youtu.be/12TcwDSrdnM>

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Discovery Education

Puzzle Maker

<http://www.puzzlemaker.com>

Jean Piaget Society

Society of scholars, teachers and researchers interested in exploring the nature of the developmental construction of human knowledge.

<http://www.piaget.org/aboutPiaget.html>

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PBS – Public Broadcasting System
Sigmund Freud
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aso/databank/entries/bhfreu.html>
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Ainsworth and Attachment: Part I

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An Introduction to Socioculturalism

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Scaffolding

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Jean Piaget

Piaget on Piaget

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