UNIT 6
Developmental Psychology

AP EXAM WEIGHTING
7–9%

CLASS PERIODS
~9–10
Remember to go to AP Classroom to assign students the online Personal Progress Check for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the Personal Progress Check provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit’s topics and skills.

**Personal Progress Check 6**

*Multiple-choice: ~20 questions*

*Free-response: 1 question*

- Research Design
Developmental Psychology

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
- How do we perceive and understand ourselves?

Developing Understanding

Developmental psychology encompasses the study of the behavior of organisms from conception to death. In this unit, students will learn to examine the processes that contribute to behavioral change throughout a person's life. The major areas of emphasis in the course include prenatal development, motor development, socialization, cognitive development, adolescence, and adulthood. Developmental psychologists seek to understand how changes in our biology and social situations over a lifespan influence our behaviors and mental processes. Development can be studied from several different perspectives, including biological or cognitive perspectives. Developmental psychologists may focus on one or more developmental periods or the entire course of a lifespan, using cross-sectional and longitudinal research methods.

Building Course Skills

Building on knowledge from earlier units, students will pull together aspects of physiological, cognitive, psychological, and moral development to understand how behavior and mental processes change over the course of a person's life. This includes the role of adolescent development and the decline of adults as they age. Students will reinforce biological, cognitive, and cultural perspectives studied in earlier units while discussing theories of stage development and continuous development. Students are also introduced to cross-sectional research and longitudinal research designs, which build on the research methods learned in Unit 1. Students will further their understanding of analyzing and interpreting data through these new research designs and in relation to the specific context of developmental psychology.

Preparing for the AP Exam

Students should be able to explain physical, intellectual, social, and moral development, along with the development of personality, in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Additionally, they should be able to explain the comparison between stages of development. A common student error on the AP Exam is failure to provide specific outcomes about how life experience helps or hinders development. Students should provide a thorough explanation of the relationship between life experience and development within the given scenario. Students tend to discuss the stages of development but fail to expand on the concepts to show mastery. It is important to a student's success on the exam that they write complete thoughts with cogent, accurate information. Teachers can provide students with opportunities to write about development at each stage of life in real-world contexts. Students may be asked about experimental design and should be prepared to answer questions such as What are the flaws in a research study? Would this design pass IRB? What is the appropriate method for a research question?
## UNIT AT A GLANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Suggested Skill</th>
<th>Class Periods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1 The Lifespan and Physical Development in Childhood</td>
<td>3 Analyze psychological research studies.</td>
<td>~9–10 CLASS PERIODS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Social Development in Childhood</td>
<td>1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Cognitive Development in Childhood</td>
<td>1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.4 Adolescent Development</td>
<td>1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.5 Adulthood and Aging</td>
<td>1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6 Moral Development</td>
<td>3 Analyze psychological research studies.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.7 Gender and Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>1.A Define and/or apply concepts.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 6. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.
SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Sample Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Debate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have students complete the activity Piaget Meets Santa, which can be found online. Have them read the given statements and then match them with the appropriate developmental stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Misconception Check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ask students to predict if a scientific method could test whether babies as young as three months old can tell right from wrong or have morals. Have them watch the segment “The Baby Lab” from 60 Minutes and then ask them to identify the research method and evaluate the ethics of the experiment. Students can then summarize the results of the study and debate whether babies are born with morality using evidence (or the lack thereof) from the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Quickwrite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide students with a published gender roles experiment and then ask them to identify the research method and evaluate the ethics of the experiment. Have students summarize the results of the study and then design a study that can be conducted as a follow-up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.
### LEARNING TARGET

**6.A**
Explain the process of conception and gestation, including factors that influence successful pre-natal development.

**6.B**
Discuss the interaction of nature and nurture (including cultural variations), specifically physical development, in the determination of behavior.

**6.C**
Discuss maturation of motor skills.

### EXAMPLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.A.1</strong> Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.A.2</strong> Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.A.3</strong> Substance abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.A.4</strong> Teratogens</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**SUGGESTED SKILL**

Scientific Investigation

Analyze psychological research studies.
TOPIC 6.2
Social Development in Childhood

LEARNING TARGET

6.D Describe the influence of temperament and other social factors on attachment and appropriate socialization.

6.E Identify the contributions of major researchers in developmental psychology in the area of social development in childhood.

6.F Discuss the interaction of nature and nurture (including cultural variations), specifically social development, in the determination of behavior.


EXAMPLES

6.E.1 Contributions of Albert Bandura, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.2 Contributions of Diana Baumrind, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.3 Contributions of Konrad Lorenz, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.4 Contributions of Harry Harlow, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.5 Contributions of Mary Ainsworth, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.6 Contributions of Sigmund Freud, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood
TOPIC 6.3
Cognitive Development in Childhood

LEARNING TARGET

6.H Explain the maturation of cognitive abilities (Piaget’s stages, Information process).

6.I Identify the contributions of major researchers in the area of cognitive development in childhood.

EXAMPLES

6.I.1 Contributions of Lev Vygotsky, key researcher in the area of cognitive development in childhood

6.I.2 Contributions of Jean Piaget, key researcher in the area of cognitive development in childhood

Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.
TOPIC 6.4
Adolescent Development

LEARNING TARGET
6.J Discuss maturational challenges in adolescence, including related family conflicts.

Topic Planning Notes
Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.
TOPIC 6.5
Adulthood and Aging

LEARNING TARGET

6.K
Characterize the development of decisions related to intimacy as people mature.

6.L
Predict the physical and cognitive changes that emerge through the lifespan, including steps that can be taken to maximize function.

6.M
Identify the contributions of key researchers in the area of adulthood and aging.

EXAMPLES

6.M.1
Contributions of Erik Erikson, key researcher in the area of lifespan development

Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.
## TOPIC 6.6
Moral Development

### LEARNING TARGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.N</th>
<th>Identify the contributions of major researchers in the area of moral development.</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.O</th>
<th>Compare and contrast models of moral development.</th>
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### EXAMPLES

| 6.N.1 | Contributions of Carol Gilligan |

| 6.N.2 | Contributions of Lawrence Kohlberg |

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**Topic Planning Notes**

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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**LEARNING TARGET**

6.P Describe how sex and gender influence socialization and other aspects of development.

**Topic Planning Notes**

*Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.*

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