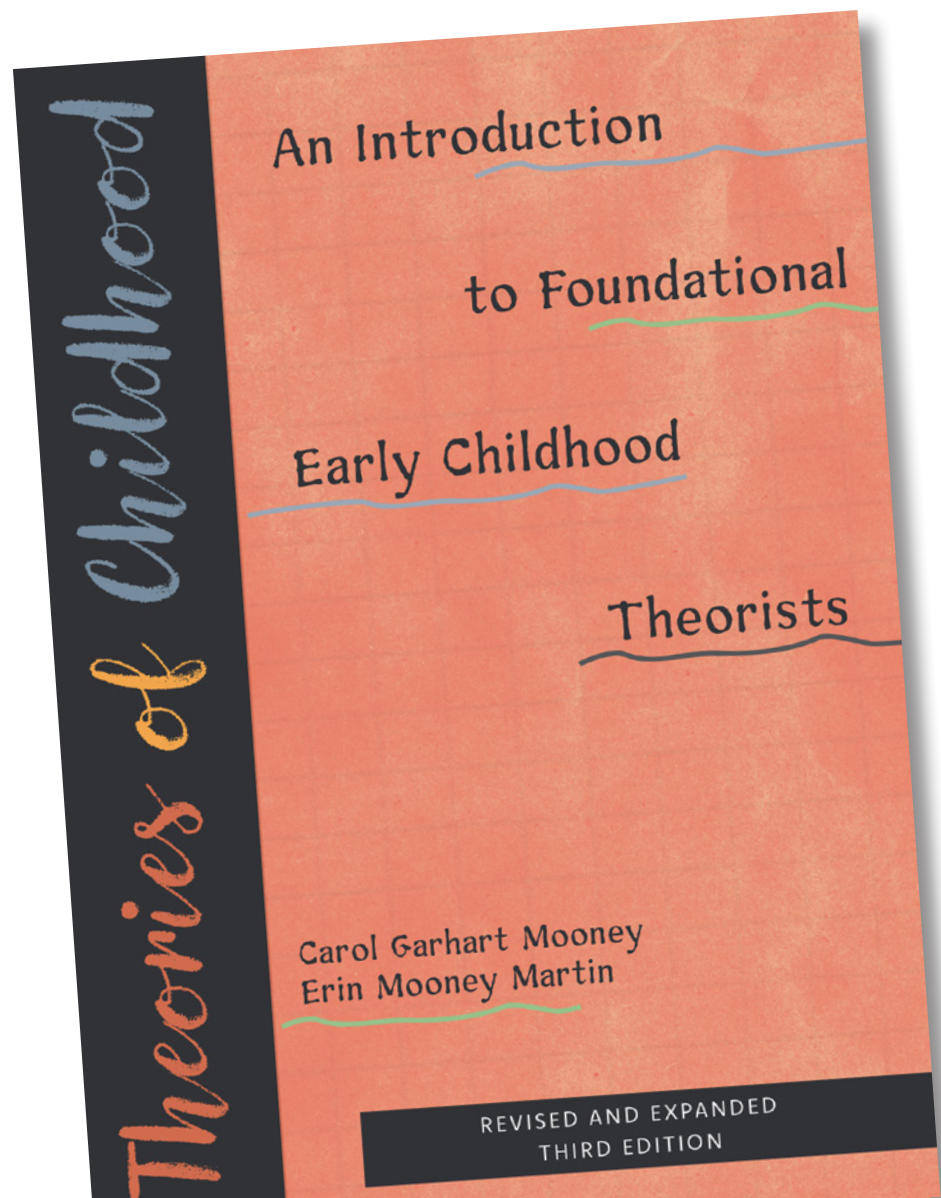




Instructor Guide

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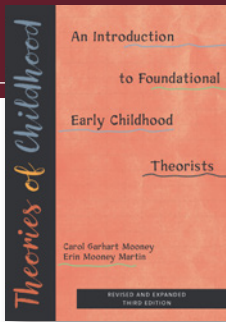
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Book Basics

Summary

Theories of Childhood, third edition, introduces eight major theorists: John Dewey, Maria Montessori, Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget, John Bowlby, Mary Ainsworth, Lev Vygotsky, and Janice E. Hale. A summary of each theorist's work is paired with stories from early childhood classrooms that illustrate how child development theory can be used to make decisions and shape teaching practices.

John Dewey founded the movement of progressive education in the United States. He asserts that classrooms should be child-centered and active and involve the social world of the child and the community. Teachers can use Dewey's ideas to organize, promote, and document meaningful, hands-on learning experiences for children.

Maria Montessori was an Italian doctor and educator who created schools where impoverished children could become successful learners. She argues that the preparation of the learning environment is one of the most important tasks of teachers. Teachers can use Montessori's ideas by providing children with child-size tools and materials and by encouraging children to take responsibility for organizing and caring for their environment.

Erik Erikson advanced a theory of human development that includes eight distinct stages. The stages of early childhood involve learning to trust, developing autonomy, and developing a sense of purpose. Understanding these developmental milestones helps teachers make smart decisions about how to care for, teach, and guide the infants, toddlers, and young children in their care.

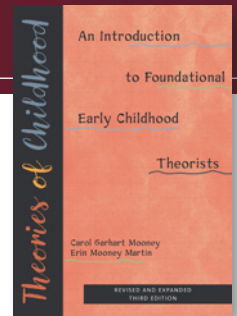
Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development is based on the idea that children construct their own knowledge from hands-on experiences. The theories of **Lev Vygotsky** are like Piaget, but Vygotsky's theories emphasize the importance of social interactions. Knowledge of the work of Piaget and Vygotsky helps teachers focus on the importance of play and conversations in the classroom.

John Bowlby was the originator of attachment theory, which considers children's emotional attachments to their mothers and caregivers, studies the observable behaviors that indicated attachment, and explains the consequences of separation from a familiar attachment figure. **Mary Ainsworth** worked with Bowlby and expanded his ideas. She categorized infant behaviors into three types of attachment: secure attachment, anxious-ambivalent insecure attachment, and anxious-avoidant insecure attachment. She developed the Strange Situation, a twenty-minute observation of an infant's attachment-related behavior. She also pioneered research with a cultural context. Attachment theory is an important lens for educators to understand children's behavior, especially surrounding separation from trusted adults and how they interact with the world.

Janice E. Hale conducted extensive research on Black children and the cultural contexts in which Black children live and learn. Hale looked at Piaget and the limited discussion on how development varies from culture to culture. She believed a theory needed to be developed to better understand the learning and growth of Black children and developed a framework for improving their education. Her ideas help educators understand child development in myriad cultural contexts and improve outcomes for Black children.

For teachers to understand and appreciate child development theory, they must see clear evidence that these theories have relevance to their daily experiences with children. *Theories of Childhood*, third edition, explores the bridge between theory and practice.

Book Basics



Learning Objectives

1. Explain what a theory is and why child development theories are important to best practice in early childhood education.
2. Identify major early childhood education theorists and accurately connect their ideas to key concepts in child development and learning.
3. Apply foundational ECE theories and observational evidence to propose thoughtful responses to children's developmental needs in classroom settings.
4. Describe how evidence of Maria Montessori's philosophy can be found in the classroom environments of almost every early childhood program in America and give three specific examples.
5. Explain how Erikson's first three stages of human development can inform teachers' decision making around practical matters, such as when to pick up an infant, how to respond to a toddler's temper tantrum, and how to help pre-schoolers learn to dress themselves.
6. Explain the Piagetian concepts of object permanence and separation anxiety and describe the practical applications of these concepts in an early childhood classroom.
7. Discuss Vygotsky's view of the significant role of social interactions in learning and give two examples of how this relates to dramatic play in an early childhood classroom.
8. Explain attachment theory and the contributions of Bowlby and Ainsworth to these understandings.
9. Describe Janice E. Hale's theories about Black children and education and discuss how they are applicable today.
10. Discuss the significant role observation plays in teaching young children and give three examples of ways teachers can use observation to improve their teaching practices.

About the Authors

Carol Garhart Mooney has been an early childhood educator for more than forty years. Carol has received the Distinguished Faculty Award for teaching at Granite State College and was twice named Early Educator of the year. She won NH Press Woman's Awards for Family Pages writing and is a past president of NHAEYC. She lives in Dover, New Hampshire. She is also the author of *Use Your Words: How Teacher Talk Helps Children Learn*.

Erin Mooney Martin holds a doctorate in educational leadership from Plymouth State University and has devoted her career to both the practice and study of teaching. She currently teaches visual arts at the high school level and brings her expertise to higher education as an adjunct lecturer, where she teaches courses in educational leadership, ethics, and research methods. With a career spanning elementary, middle, and high school classrooms, Erin's work is grounded in a deep commitment to teaching, learning, and equity. Her research focuses on teacher empowerment and retention, and she has contributed scholarly work to peer-reviewed journals and national conferences. Coming from a long line of educators, she continues to champion the belief that strong, supported teachers change the trajectory of students' lives.

Internet Resources

American Montessori Society

www.amshq.org

The American Montessori Society, the largest Montessori organization in the world, is a service organization dedicated to encouraging and supporting the use of the Montessori teaching approach. This site features information about the history of Montessori schools, teacher training opportunities, and other online resources.

The Bowlby Centre

www.johnbowlbycentre.org.uk

The Bowlby Center is based in London and follows Bowlby's ideas of attachment in treating patients using psychotherapy. Their website describes the center's purpose and goals and has many links to information about attachment theory.

The Center for Dewey Studies at SIUC

<https://deweycenter.siu.edu>

The Center for Dewey Studies is a project of Southern Illinois University Carbondale. It has become an international hub for research on John Dewey's life and work. The Center's website includes resources and links related to Dewey's work, writings, and philosophy.

Featured Author: Erik H. Erikson

www.nytimes.com/books/99/08/22/specials/erikson.html

This Web page provides links to news and reviews related to the work of Erik Erikson stored in the archives of *The New York Times*. Links include a review of Erikson's *Childhood and Society* that was published when the book was originally released in 1950 as well as Erikson's 1994 obituary.

Jean Piaget Society

<https://piaget.org>

The Jean Piaget Society is an international membership organization dedicated to the study of knowledge and development. The society's website offers biographical information about Jean Piaget as well as a wide variety of resources and links related to Piaget's work and the work of those influenced by him.

The Montessori Foundation

www.montessori.org

The Montessori Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of Montessori education in the United States and abroad. This site offers online information and Montessori resources, including a directory of Montessori schools and online articles and monographs.

The National African American Child and Family Research Center

www.naacfrc.org

With funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services and housed within the Prevention Research Center at Morehouse School of Medicine, the NAACFRC leads community-engaged research to better serve African American children and families. The website includes a wealth of publications and data based in community based participatory research.

National Black Child Development Institute

www.nbcdi.org

This nonprofit organization works to bring about equality and a better future for Black children and their families. The organization researches and publishes a library of resources on issues related to the unique attributes and needs of Black children, birth through age 8.

Sprouts: Piaget's Schema

www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYbCE1udazw&t=4s

Watch a video created by Sprouts educational video company explaining Piaget's ideas about schema.

University of Chicago Laboratory School

www.ucls.uchicago.edu

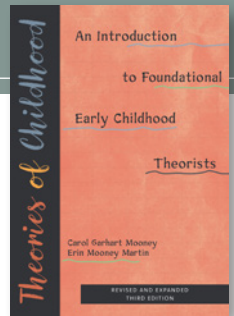
The University of Chicago Laboratory School was founded by John Dewey and is considered one of the first schools in America to practice progressive education. The school's website includes information about Dewey's role in the history and philosophy of the school.

Vygotsky's Legacy: Understanding and Beyond

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8566400>

Learn more about Vygotsky's life and the sociocultural forces that shaped him and his legacy in this article by René van der Veer from the journal *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*.

Chapter 1



Summary

Theories of Early Childhood Education

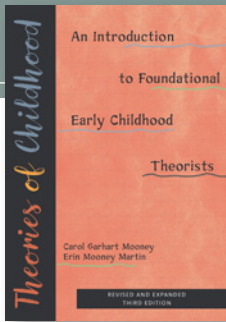
Early childhood educators need a strong understanding of foundational theories to make classroom practice more meaningful and effective. During an activity at a professional development event, experienced teachers easily recognized advertising slogans and pop-culture references but struggled to match major ECE theorists with their theories. This contrast revealed a gap between what teachers may have learned in college or workshops and what they actively connect to their daily work with children.

The chapter explains that theory is not merely opinion or abstract knowledge; it is developed through research, observation, testing, and analysis over time. While teachers also form useful hypotheses from classroom observations, these differ from broader theories supported by evidence across many children and contexts. The chapter emphasizes that high-quality ECE practice requires both care for children and knowledge of child development theory, because understanding theories helps educators make thoughtful decisions and improve children's learning experiences.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to

1. Explain the importance of foundational early childhood education theories in shaping meaningful, developmentally appropriate classroom practice.
2. Distinguish between personal hypotheses based on classroom observations and research-based theories supported by evidence over time.
3. Identify the pathways through which child development theories are developed.
4. Understand why there is no one universal theory of child development but many.
5. Analyze how teachers' beliefs about theory and practice influence curriculum planning, interactions with children, and professional decision-making.

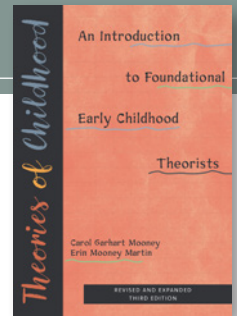


Chapter 1

Discussion Questions

1. What does the chapter suggest about the gap between what teachers learn in college and what they apply in daily classroom practice? (The chapter suggests that many educators learn theories in coursework but do not always connect them to daily practice. As a result, their classroom routines may become automatic, and they may struggle to explain the theoretical reasons behind the activities, interactions, and decisions they use with children.)
2. How might early childhood educators make theory feel more relevant and useful in real classroom situations? (Answers will vary. Educators might use theory to interpret behavior, design activities, support relationships, and reflect on their own practice. They might link theory directly to classroom examples, child observations, curriculum planning, and problem-solving.)
3. What is the difference between a personal hypothesis based on classroom observation and a research-based theory in early childhood education? (A personal hypothesis is an initial explanation based on a teacher's observations of a specific child or classroom situation. A research-based theory has been tested, analyzed, and supported by evidence across many children, contexts, and time periods, making it broader and more reliable than an individual observation.)
4. The chapter argues that loving children and knowing child development theory are both necessary. Why might one without the other be insufficient for high-quality teaching? (Loving children is essential because early educators need warmth, patience, and respect for children's experiences. However, care alone may not provide the knowledge needed to understand development or plan appropriate responses. Theory helps teachers make informed decisions, while care helps ensure those decisions are responsive and humane.)
5. How might an eclectic, wide-ranging approach to theory help teachers respond to the diverse needs of children and families? (An eclectic approach allows teachers to draw from multiple theories instead of relying on only one explanation of child development. This can help educators respond more flexibly to children's varied abilities, cultures, family backgrounds, learning styles, and developmental needs.)
6. What changes could teacher educators make to help students connect foundational theories to meaningful classroom practices? (Answers will vary. Teacher educators could use case studies, classroom videos, observation assignments, and reflective discussions to help students connect theory to real practice. They might also ask students to explain why they would choose certain classroom strategies and identify which theoretical ideas support those choices.)

Chapter 1

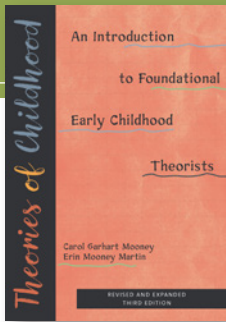


In-Class Activities

1. Discuss why slogans and pop-culture references may be easier to remember than educational theories. Create a short, memorable slogan that accurately communicates the importance of connecting ECE theory to classroom practice.
2. Sort the teacher quotes from the chapter into categories, such as “theory as useful,” “theory as disconnected,” “practice as routine,” or “theory and practice as integrated.” Explain what the quotes reveal about attitudes toward professional knowledge.
3. Think about what the word *theory* means to you. Brainstorm examples of “theory” from science, pop culture, and/or your life or work. Consider which are true theories and which are hypotheses or informal uses of the word.

Out-of-Class Activities

1. Reflect on a recent challenge you observed in your practice with children (i.e. separation anxiety, peer conflict, lack of engagement). How might applying one or more lenses of child development theory help you better meet this challenge the next time you encounter it?
2. Consider how the teachers in the story about Ana formed a hypothesis about her behavior. Observe a child in your care and form a hypothesis about something you note. Discuss your hypothesis with colleagues and/or the child’s family and consider how your hypothesis might be supported by child development theories.
3. Think about a familiar classroom activity, such as finger painting, story time, outdoor play, or snack, that might become routine or mundane. Choose one of the theorists in this book and apply their ideas to revise the experience to make it more intentional, meaningful, and developmentally appropriate.



Chapter 2

Summary

John Dewey

Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 9

In 1896, John Dewey founded the University of Chicago Laboratory School establishing the movement toward progressive education, a more democratic and child-centered approach to teaching and learning. Dewey's theory is based on the concept that children's interests should form the basis of curriculum planning, education should be both active and interactive, and curriculum should be purposeful, growing out of real experiences in the social world of the child and community. The chapter describes several classroom situations that demonstrate the practical applications of Dewey's theory to early childhood education practices today.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to

1. Define progressive education and describe the influence of this movement on early childhood education.
2. Explain what Dewey meant when he said that education must be both active and interactive.
3. Identify a common criticism of progressive education and how Dewey would have responded to that criticism.
4. Explain the role of the teacher according to Dewey's theory.
5. Describe how progressive education includes the social world of the child and community.
6. Apply Dewey's theory of a purposeful curriculum to the concept of developmentally appropriate practice.
7. Use Dewey's ideas to explain why "It's fun" is not a good enough reason to include an activity in an early childhood classroom.

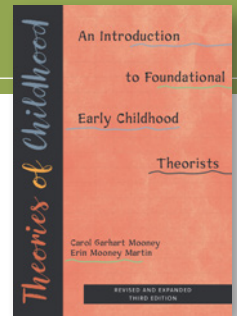
Discussion Questions

1. What was new about Dewey's ideas and why were they considered "progressive"? (Dewey's progressive movement was more democratic and child-centered than the rigid and formal style of traditional education in the nineteenth century.)
2. In 1897, Dewey wrote that children's interests should form the basis for curriculum planning. How does this concept compare with curriculum planning practices in early childhood education today? (Today, many curriculum planning practices are based on the idea that children's interests should guide the curriculum. These practices include emergent curriculum, the project approach, and practices inspired by the Reggio Emilia schools in Italy.)
3. What does Dewey mean when he writes that teachers should have confidence? What might a teacher do or say that demonstrates Dewey's interpretation of confidence? (Dewey means that teachers should not be afraid that their instruction might dampen the freedom and creativity of their students. Dewey asserts that children need assistance from teachers in

Chapter 2

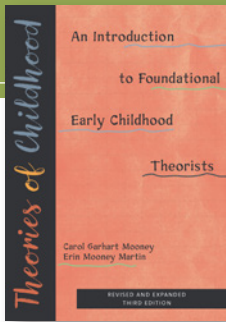
making sense of their world. For example, if a child draws a picture of an octopus and it only has six legs, a teacher with confidence might ask questions and show photographs of real sea creatures to help guide the child to discover what a real octopus looks like.)

4. How does the story of Kathy and her class's investigation of winter birds illustrate Dewey's ideas about a purposeful curriculum? (Dewey argues that teachers should use their greater knowledge to help children make sense of their world. Children in her class were using art as a tool for scientific investigation. By limiting the colors of paint available to the children, Kathy helped the students look closely at the birds they were studying.)
5. What does Dewey mean when he warns that some experiences are mis-educative? What is an example of a mis-educative experience? What activities and strategies can turn a mis-educative experience into a purposeful, meaningful experience? (Dewey insists that mis-educative experiences are experiences that are not educational at all because they lack purpose and organization. An example would be serving children ice cream in school. The children have fun and enjoy eating the ice cream, but if the teacher does not organize or document the experience, no learning can take place. Examples of activities and strategies that can enrich a learning experience include inviting parents and family members to contribute ideas and information, documenting children's predictions about what will happen, allowing children to take an active role in gathering information and designing the activity, documenting children's observations, and observing children's interests for future activities.)
6. Dewey's theories came about during a cultural shift from an agricultural to an industrial society. With technological developments in this digital age, many recognize the beginning of another major cultural transition. Compare today's societal transition with that of Dewey's time and discuss how his theories might be applied today. What concerns are the same, and what of Dewey's work is still relevant to today? (Answers will vary. Although cultural contexts change throughout history, Dewey's ideas of individual observation and child-focused education ensure that his approach will be relevant to all children.)



In-Class Activities

1. Think back to your own childhood experiences going to school. In what ways was your own education consistent or inconsistent with Dewey's ideas about education, and how did that affect your overall educational experience?
2. Suppose you are a teacher of a classroom of three- and four-year-olds. A parent comes to you with a concern that there is no teaching going on and the children "just play all day." Using Dewey's ideas, how would you explain to the parent the value of play?
3. For each of the following, give at least one example of an activity or situation in which a teacher could apply Dewey's theory to
 - use children's interests as a basis for curriculum planning;
 - demonstrate sensitivity to the values and needs of families;
 - document children's learning;
 - nurture children's sense of wonder and curiosity.

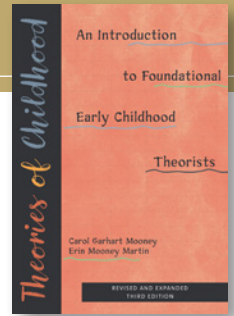


Chapter 2

Out-of-Class Activities

1. Visit the website of an early childhood program and read the program's statement of philosophy. Look for and record examples of Dewey's influence on that program's philosophy.
2. Observe a young child playing outdoors and take notes. In what ways does this child exhibit wonder and curiosity about the world? What interests this child? Describe how a teacher might use an observation of this child's play to plan curriculum.
3. Think of three activities that young children would describe as "fun." Choose one activity and brainstorm a list of ways to organize and document the activity to make it an educational experience.

Chapter 3



Summary

Maria Montessori

Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 27

Maria Montessori was an Italian doctor and educator who created schools where impoverished children could become successful learners. She opened her first school in 1907, and today there are thousands of schools that call themselves “Montessori” programs. Montessori’s ideas, such as providing children with child-size tools and materials, have influenced the structure of almost every early childhood program today. Montessori states that environments for children should be beautiful and orderly, and she encourages children to take responsibility for caring for their environment. Montessori’s influence on early childhood can be found in every classroom where materials for children are organized on low, open shelves. Montessori also encourages teachers to carefully observe children’s behavior to gain insight into children’s needs and interests.

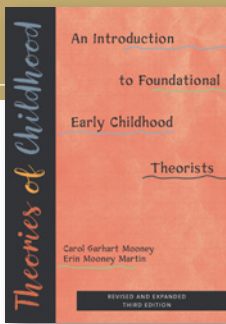
Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to

1. Summarize the major accomplishments of Maria Montessori’s work with children and describe her influence on early childhood education today.
2. Explain the significance of preparing the classroom environment for children using Montessori’s theories.
3. Identify three examples of child-size tools and materials that you might find in a Montessori classroom and explain why the size of these items is an important consideration.
4. Explain what Montessori meant when she said that the classroom environment should “educate the senses” and give three examples.
5. Use Montessori’s theories to explain why children benefit from attempting difficult tasks on their own, rather than having an adult assist them.
6. Identify three reasons why large blocks of open-ended time are important to both teachers and children in early childhood classrooms.
7. Explain why Montessori asserts that careful observation is an essential teaching practice and provide one example of how observation helps to determine children’s needs and interests.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Montessori was successful in teaching children whom others had labeled as “unteachable”? (She used observation to determine the needs of the children. She determined that the problems existed not in the children but in the adults, their approaches, and the environment they provided.)
2. If Montessori were alive today, what might she say if she saw a teacher giving children “safe” plastic knives to cut apples? (She might say that children need real tools if they are going



Chapter 3

to learn to do real work. Dull tools can make simple tasks much more difficult. Even young children can learn to use sharp tools properly.)

3. Based on Montessori's theories, what are some specific examples of ways teachers can create a beautiful and orderly environment for children? (Every material has a place that is clearly marked in a child-friendly way with photographs or drawings as well as the printed name of the material that belongs there so children get what they need and put it away when they are done. Teachers can open windows and bring plants and flowers into the classroom to engage children's senses. Lamps can be used to create soft light, rather than using only fluorescent lights.)
4. Sometimes it is quicker and easier to do something for a child rather than having the child do it himself, such as zipping up a jacket. According to Montessori, why is it important to allow children to do these tasks themselves? (Children who are not allowed to do something for themselves do not learn how to do it. It is important to foster children's independence. Children learn best by doing and through repetition.)
5. What does Montessori mean when she writes, "teach little and observe much"? (Teachers must plan activities and have materials on hand that support children's interests, but they should also step back and observe. The only way to know how to schedule the day and manage behavior is through observation.)
6. How does the story about the classroom with too much physical aggression illustrate Montessori's theories? (The teachers learned to use observation to determine the needs of the children. When given real tools, the children used their aggressive energy to hammer on wood instead of hit each other.)
7. Have you observed or experienced adults "serving" children in a way that hinders their development? Discuss ways to use Montessori's theories to encourage children's growth and development in these areas. (Answers will vary. Montessori encouraged children to participate responsibly in the daily activities around them; allowing children to do so teaches skills and gives them confidence in their own capabilities.)

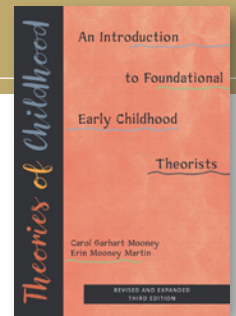
In-Class Activities

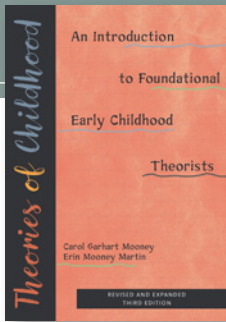
1. Discuss the pros and cons of using sharp tools, such as knives, scissors, or saws, in an early childhood classroom. Under what circumstances would you allow children to use these tools? How would you explain the benefits of using these tools to parents?
2. Brainstorm a list of ways teachers can create environments that engage children's senses. Include at least one idea for each of the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.
3. Think about how your own home is organized. Is it orderly? Is there a place for everything? Is it easy to clean up and put things away? Discuss how organizing your own home may be like organizing a learning environment for children.
4. The Reggio Emilia schools in Italy are known for their beautiful facilities that feature courtyards, skylights, and plants. Discuss the similarities between programs following a Montessori approach and programs inspired by Reggio Emilia.

Chapter 3

Out-of-Class Activities

1. On the Internet, find a company that sells Montessori materials. View the company's website and find two examples of items you think children would especially enjoy using. Describe the items and why children would find them appealing.
2. Observe a young child during a meal. Which tasks, such as using a fork, is the child able to accomplish independently, and which does the child struggle to accomplish? Does an adult rush in to assist the child, or is the child allowed to struggle until she completes the task? Record your observations and your ideas about how to best support this child's learning.
3. Interview an early childhood teacher. Ask what strategies the teacher uses to prepare the classroom environment for learning. Record specific examples of the strategies.





Chapter 4

Summary

Erik Erikson

Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 43

Born in Germany in 1902, Erik Erikson studied child psychoanalysis at the Vienna Psychoanalytic Institute. As a young man he moved to the United States, and in 1950 he published *Childhood and Society*, a book that has become a classic resource for educators, psychologists, and sociologists. Erikson explains that in early childhood children build the foundation for emotional and social development through the development of trust, autonomy, and initiative. Infants develop trust when they bond with the important people in their lives, a process called attachment. Toddlers develop autonomy when they have reasonable opportunities for choice and control and when adults provide consistent, firm limits. Preschoolers develop initiative, or a sense of purpose, when their caregivers allow them to independently practice challenging tasks. These three developmental tasks of early childhood are part of Erikson's framework for understanding human development, called the Eight Stages of Man.

Learning Objectives

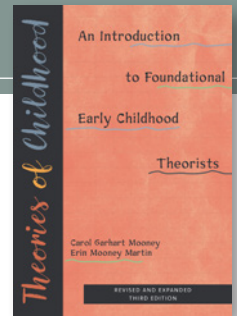
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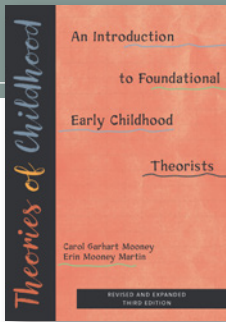
1. Summarize Erik Erikson's contribution to the field of early childhood education.
2. Identify and explain the three developmental tasks of early childhood according to Erikson's stages of psychosocial development.
3. Define attachment in relation to infant development and describe the significant role attachment plays in Erikson's theory.
4. Describe at least two strategies caregivers can use to support an infant's development of trust.
5. Explain how setting clear limits supports a toddler's development of autonomy.
6. Use Erikson's theory to identify at least two ways teachers can help preschoolers develop confidence and a sense of purpose.
7. Identify and acknowledge at least two factors, besides development, that can also influence children's classroom behavior.

Chapter 4

Discussion Questions

1. This chapter includes the statement that “Erikson’s work has importance for every early childhood educator.” Could it also be said that Erikson’s work has importance for every parent of a young child? Why or why not? (Answers will vary. Erikson’s work shows how children acquire the foundation for emotional and social development. Erikson feels the early childhood years are critical in children’s development of trust, autonomy, and initiative. This theory is especially relevant for professionals, who can use theory to make sound decisions about practice. The theory may also be useful to parents who find that information about child development helps them understand their children.)
2. Suppose a child does not experience consistent, responsive care during the first year of life. According to Erikson, will that child still have opportunities in the future to develop into a healthy and happy person? Why or why not? (Erikson claims that it is always possible to go back and renegotiate issues from a previous stage in development. In this case, this child may continue to struggle with issues of trust, but opportunities to build trust will continue to arise throughout the child’s life.)
3. How would you respond to a mother who complains that because her baby is too attached to the teacher, the baby cries all day when the teacher has a day off? (Attachment is essential, even if it is not permanent, and the process of mourning for a special adult and being comforted by other reliable adults is another indication to babies that their needs will be met.)
4. The chapter warns against offering toddlers false choices. What is a false choice and what is the harm in offering one? (Teachers sometimes make the mistake of offering a choice when there really isn’t one. For example, “Would you like to clean up your toys?” is a false choice. This is very confusing for toddlers because they are not old enough to understand the differences between a rhetorical question and a real choice. It is better to phrase questions in a way that offers a choice of how the task will be done, not whether the task will be accomplished, such as, “Do you want to pick up your toys all by yourself or do you want me to help you do it?”)
5. How does the story of the teacher who hovered around the water table, “wiping up every drop that hit the floor,” relate to Erikson’s stage of Initiative versus Guilt? (The teacher’s constant vigilance gave the message that the children’s normal spills and splashes were not acceptable. They could not feel competent and develop initiative in the face of this teacher’s behavior. According to Erikson, this situation would contribute to children’s feelings of guilt and prevent them from developing a sense of initiative.)
6. How could you use your knowledge of Erikson’s first three stages to address the trend of parents who push children toward unreasonably high achievement or positive self-esteem? (Answers will vary. Erikson’s work, and recent cognitive research, shows that children’s cognitive, emotional, and social development during Erikson’s first three stages is primarily focused elsewhere. A full understanding of early childhood development could suggest that adults wait a while before emphasizing things that, from a child development perspective, may be valuable, but not as significant at these stages.)





Chapter 4

In-Class Activities

1. The chapter advocates for organizing infant care around a primary caregiver structure. In this structure, staff schedules are designed so that there are very consistent relationships between caregivers and infants. Discuss the benefits and challenges of a primary caregiver structure in an early childhood program.
2. Brainstorm a list of things that toddlers can be allowed to do by themselves. Discuss how providing the opportunities to do these things will help children develop a sense of autonomy.
3. Think about a time when you made a mistake. It might be something that happened recently or a memory from your own childhood. How did others respond to your mistake? What was said or done that made you feel supported? What was said or done that made you feel embarrassed or guilty? What does your experience tell you about how to help children understand that it's okay to make mistakes?

Out-of-Class Activities

1. Interview a parent of an infant. Ask the parent if he or she believes it is possible to spoil a baby with too much attention. Record your thoughts about whether this parent's views are consistent with Erikson's theory.
2. Observe a toddler—a child between eighteen and thirty-six months old—during play or during an interaction with a caregiver. Does the child demonstrate that he or she is developing autonomy? Why or why not? Does the child alternate between defiance and dependence, as described in the chapter? Record your thoughts and observations.
3. Look at the chart titled “Erikson’s Stages of Psychosocial Development” on page 44 of *Theories of Childhood*, third edition. Find the stage that best corresponds to your own age and consider how the issues of this stage might relate to your personal growth and development. Record your thoughts and reflections.

Chapter 5

Summary

Jean Piaget

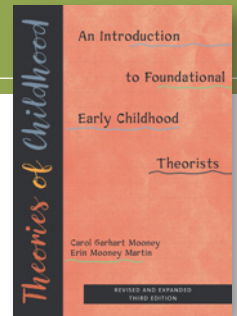
Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 65

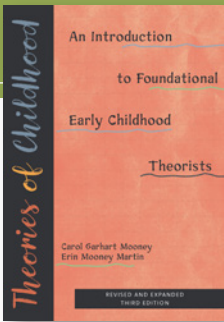
Jean Piaget, born in 1896, was a Swiss biologist who became fascinated with how children develop knowledge. His research and writing have been a primary influence in US preschool programs for many decades. He believed that children construct their own knowledge and that children's curiosity drives their learning. Piaget advanced a theory of cognitive development that includes four stages. He asserts that all children pass through the same stages when developing their thinking skills, though they may move through them at different rates. The first stage of development, which begins at birth and usually lasts until about twenty-four months, is the sensorimotor stage. During this stage, an infant's actions are reflexive, which means that they are without thought. Eventually the baby develops a sense of object permanence, which means that the infant has come to realize that something exists even when he can't see it. At this point, the infant may experience separation anxiety because he understands that when his parent or caregiver is not in sight, that person exists somewhere else. Early childhood educators can use their knowledge of Piaget's theory to develop programs with consistent caregivers and predictable routines. Piaget's second stage, the preoperational stage, usually lasts from the age of twenty-four months to about seven years old. During this stage, children are egocentric, which means they can only see the world from their point of view. Because preoperational children form ideas from direct experience, they benefit from large blocks of free-play time, real-world experiences, and open-ended activities and questions.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to

1. Summarize Piaget's contributions to the field of early childhood education.
2. Identify and describe Piaget's first two stages of cognitive development.
3. Define object permanence and separation anxiety and describe the relationship between the two concepts.
4. Apply Piaget's concept of separation anxiety to how early childhood professionals work with infants and their parents in child care settings.
5. Define egocentrism and identify two examples of egocentric thinking in preschool children.
6. Using Piaget's concepts of accommodation and equilibrium, explain how young children take in new information.
7. Use Piaget's idea that children construct their own knowledge to explain why it is important that early childhood programs provide large blocks of free-play time, real-world experiences, and open-ended activities and questions.



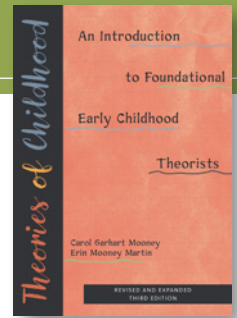


Chapter 5

Discussion Questions

1. A common criticism of Piaget is that he was too focused on cognitive development and did not pay enough attention to social relationships. Do you think this criticism is fair? Why or why not? (Answers will vary. Students may feel that the criticism is fair, because Piaget's theory focuses on children's patterns of thought, not their feelings. Others may feel it is not a fair criticism, because some of Piaget's concepts, such as separation anxiety, are very much related to how a young child or infant relates to others.)
2. Suppose you are a teacher in an infant program and one of the babies frequently cries when separated from her parents in the morning. How would you go about determining if this child is experiencing separation anxiety or if the crying has another cause? And if you determine that it is separation anxiety, how would you talk with the baby's parents about their child's behavior? (According to Piaget, separation anxiety does not occur until a baby has developed object permanence. This milestone of cognitive development usually occurs when a baby is eight to ten months old. This means that the age of the baby would help the teacher determine whether the child is experiencing separation anxiety. If so, it would be helpful to the parents if the teacher explains that this is a normal part of development. The parents need reassurance that their baby will be fine.)
3. Discuss the concept of egocentrism. What is an example of egocentric thinking? How does the egocentric thought of young children differ from the way adults think? (Egocentrism means seeing the world only from one's own point of view. An example is the desire of a child to give a toy as a gift to a grandparent. The gift would please the child, so the child thinks that the grandparent would like it too. Egocentric thinking is different from the way adults think because young children in Piaget's preoperational stage are only able to understand one attribute or perspective at a time.)
4. How does the story of the Head Start classroom that did a project on building, which included visiting a construction site and doing woodworking, illustrate Piaget's theory of preoperational learning? (The children in this classroom literally constructed their own knowledge. According to Piaget, preschool children are in a stage of preoperational cognitive development, which means they form their ideas from direct experiences. The hands-on activities of this Head Start classroom provided opportunities for the children to "accommodate" new knowledge through direct experience.)
5. Compare Piaget's theory of cognitive development to Maria Montessori's idea that children should be allowed to use real tools to do real-life work. In what ways are the theories of Piaget and Montessori similar? In what ways do they differ? (Both Piaget and Montessori state that children must have real-world experiences to learn. They both also emphasize the importance of learning through sensory experiences. One difference between the two is that Montessori's work focuses more on children learning practical life skills, while Piaget's work is more abstract, focusing on how children think and perceive the world.)
6. How does the story of the boy resisting a haircut demonstrate Piaget's theories? How would you help this child construct and expand his knowledge of the world and haircutting specifically? (Answers will vary. Piaget's ideas of preoperational cognitive development and egocentrism help explain the boy's misunderstanding based on previous experiences. Talking about how fingernail clippings don't hurt and observing others getting their hair cut might be some ways to help construct his new knowledge.)

Chapter 5

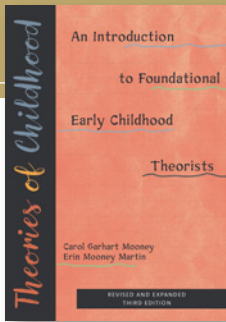


In-Class Activities

1. Suppose a preschool child hates pumpkin pie. As an egocentric thinker, this child believes that everyone shares his view of pumpkin pie. Discuss what experiences or activities might help this preoperational child accommodate new knowledge and consider that others might have a different opinion of pumpkin pie.
2. The chapter points out that preoperational children often confuse heavy with large. Brainstorm a list of open-ended questions that might help children begin to understand that a beach ball can be both large and light.
3. Imagine that you are the founder of a new early childhood program called Piaget Preschool. How would you arrange the classroom environment and schedule the classroom routines to create a program that is consistent with Piaget's theories?

Out-of-Class Activities

1. Design an activity that would measure whether a baby has mastered object permanence. Try out the activity with an actual baby. Note the baby's age, in months, and describe the baby's behavior during the activity.
2. Have an informal, open-ended conversation with a preschool child or observe a conversation between preschool children. Note any examples of egocentric thinking.
3. Go to the children's department of your local library and browse through the collection of board books for infants and toddlers. Find an example of a book that incorporates some kind of variation of a peekaboo game, where a person or object is hidden and then revealed. Describe how this peekaboo element relates to Piaget's concept of object permanence.



Chapter 6

Summary

John Bowlby

Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 85

John Bowlby and his five siblings had little contact with their parents and were raised by nannies until they were sent to boarding school. This way of child rearing was common in England in the early 1900s. Later in life, Bowlby's childhood would have a great effect on his professional ideas. His childhood experiences formed the basis for his belief that troubled behaviors in adolescence and adulthood could be traced to the first relationships in infancy. Contrary to psychoanalysts at the time, Bowlby believed that external factors, such as the mother-child relationship, had great effects on an individual. His research on maternal deprivation led him to advocate for supportive programs for parents and children. He worked to have national policies changed in favor of supporting families. He argued that these preventive programs would cost far less than dealing with delinquency later. His ideas came together in the 1950s forming the basis for attachment theory. He believed children had emotional attachments to their mothers and caregivers, displayed observable behaviors that indicated attachment, and suffered consequences of separation from a familiar attachment figure.

Learning Objectives

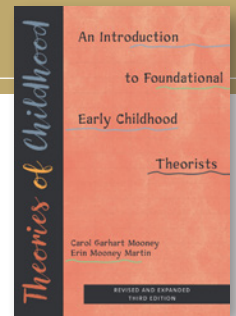
After reading this chapter, students will be able to

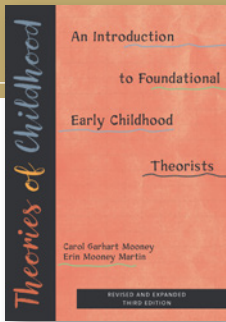
1. Identify how John Bowlby's childhood affected his ideas and theories on the emotional health of children.
2. Contrast Bowlby's ideas with the prevailing thoughts in the psychoanalytic community at the time and explain why Bowlby's ideas were largely dismissed by the psychoanalytic community.
3. Describe the two environmental factors that Bowlby believed could lead to lifelong challenges for individuals.
4. Discuss Bowlby's efforts to change policies to support children and young families.
5. Explain how Harry Harlow's studies supported Bowlby's work on maternal deprivation.
6. Summarize the main points of Bowlby's attachment theory and discuss how his concepts influence contemporary thought.
7. Define infant determinism and describe how Bowlby's attachment theory supports this assumption.
8. Summarize and place in context the current criticisms of Bowlby, including how his ideas were shaped by social conditions and historical events during his lifetime.

Chapter 6

Discussion Questions

1. How were Bowlby's ideas different from the commonly accepted ideas of his time? (Bowlby's ideas focus on external causes rooted in early experiences to explain the problems of troubled youths, whereas the idea that dreams and fantasies held the key to deviant behaviors was commonly accepted in the psychoanalytic community at the time.)
2. For many years, Bowlby's ideas were not acknowledged by fellow psychoanalysts. Why do you think his childhood experiences enabled psychoanalysts to discount his findings? Explain. (Answers will vary. Psychoanalysts could discredit his findings because they could attribute many of his ideas to his childhood. He did not receive much attention or affection from his parents and described his childhood as unhappy. Psychoanalysts could argue that his theories are based in his own experience and are not scientific.)
3. Discuss the two environmental factors that Bowlby describes as able to introduce lifelong challenges for individuals. Give an example of a specific behavior you may see in a child for each of the environmental factors. (Bowlby determined that separation from a mother or the death of a mother creates lifelong struggles. In a child that has lost her mother, you may see anger and sadness in the way she approaches her daily life. The second factor is the emotional attitude of the parent toward the child. This can be very evident in children. Those who are praised and shown love and affection will be more self-confident, while those who are berated or put down will have less self-confidence and greater adjustment issues.)
4. What effect do you think Bowlby's efforts to change policies in support of families and children had on policies that are in effect today? (Answers will vary. Although it is likely that the current policies in support of parents and young children would have come about eventually, Bowlby's efforts were a catalyst and greatly helped the policies come into existence. His observations of troubled youth and maternal deprivation provided strong evidence that supportive programs are vital.)
5. Why were Harry Harlow's studies with rhesus monkeys so important to Bowlby's attachment theories? (Harlow's studies provided the first scientific evidence that nursing was not the basis for attachment. The monkeys that were given nourishment but not comfort in his studies fared worse than those that were also given comfort.)
6. How is Bowlby's work with maternal deprivation and attachment theory in line with the concept of infant determinism? (Bowlby's theories support the idea that what does and doesn't happen in the earliest stages of life affects development. He saw these effects in his work with troubled youth. The difficulties of the youth with whom he worked could be attributed to their unmet needs, which is the basis of the concept of infant determinism.)
7. In what ways should contemporary scholars and educators both value Bowlby's contributions to attachment theory and critically test his claims against current research and observations of children and families? (Contemporary scholars and educators should value Bowlby's work for showing the importance of emotional bonds, caregiving, and security in children's development. At the same time, they should test his claims against current research, diverse family structures, cultural differences, and classroom observations. A balanced view recognizes Bowlby's foundational role while acknowledging that development is shaped by both early and later relationships.)





Chapter 6

In-Class Activities

1. Think about your relationship with your parents or caregivers during childhood. Did you have a strong or weak attachment to your parents or caregivers? How do you think this attachment affected your development? How do you think it affects the way you care for children now?
2. John Bowlby's work with troubled youths led him to ask: What policies could be put in place to avert these situations? If you could change policies that affect parents and their young children, what would you change? Who would it benefit and how?
3. What are your personal feelings on Bowlby's attachment theory? Specifically, do you agree with his idea that children need attention, affection, and freedom to develop optimally? How do your feelings and ideas influence how you work with young children?

Out-of-Class Activities

1. Observe a child who exhibits clear signs of attachment to his parents or caregivers. Apply Bowlby's theory of attachment to this child in the following ways:
 - Describe an observable behavior that indicates attachment.
 - Describe a reason for the child's emotional attachment to his parents or caregivers.
 - Describe a consequence of separation from a familiar attachment figure for the child.
2. Some parents practice what is commonly called attachment parenting. Research online to learn more about attachment parenting, including recent criticisms of the practice. Describe at least two ways that Bowlby's attachment theory can be seen in the practice of attachment parenting today.
3. Look for or consider a time you've seen separation, inconsistent caregiving, or a child seeking comfort. Identify which ideas from Bowlby's work help explain the child's behavior and then consider two supportive responses you could take in a similar situation.

Chapter 7

Summary

Mary Ainsworth

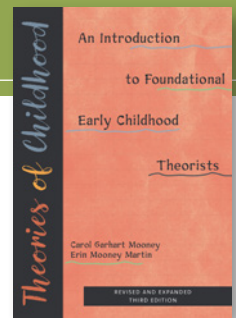
Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 95

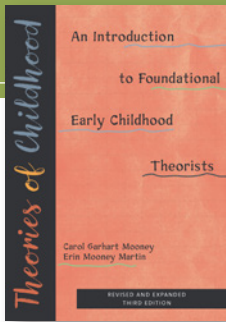
Mary Ainsworth was born in the United States, raised in Canada, and lived in London and Uganda as an adult before returning to the United States. While in London, she answered an advertisement for a research assistant placed by John Bowlby. She worked with him for three and a half years and they followed each other's work in subsequent years. She moved to Uganda with her husband in 1954 where she began to study infant development by observing babies and mothers in their homes at regular intervals. She developed a list of behaviors that indicated attachment between mothers and babies. During this research, she began to formulate the idea that securely attached infants have the courage to leave their mothers and explore their worlds because they know they can return to their mothers. When she returned to the United States, she began a similar study in Baltimore. One of her primary questions in this study was whether attachment behaviors were universal. Indeed, many of them were. However, babies in the United States were much more accustomed to their mothers entering and leaving a room than those in Uganda. This phenomenon led her to set up a procedure called the Strange Situation, a twenty-minute observation of an infant's behavior while familiar and unfamiliar people enter and leave the room. Ainsworth's results led her to categorize infant behaviors into three types of attachment: secure attachment, anxious-ambivalent insecure attachment, and anxious-avoidant insecure attachment. Her work clarifies and expands John Bowlby's work on attachment theory and highlights infants' needs for secure attachments.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to

1. Discuss the way Ainsworth divided maternal deprivation into three separate dimensions.
2. Identify common behaviors, according to Ainsworth, that indicate attachment between mothers and babies.
3. Explain why Mary Ainsworth can be considered a pioneer of cultural research.
4. Describe Ainsworth's Strange Situation, how it is carried out, what can be learned from it, and how it provides support for Ainsworth's secure-base theory.
5. Compare and contrast the three forms of attachment behavior: secure attachment, anxious-ambivalent insecure attachment, and anxious-avoidant insecure attachment.
6. Explain the importance of secure attachment in infants for teachers using Ainsworth's idea that securely attached infants can leave their mothers.
7. Explore ideas about how attachment behavior can change over time.



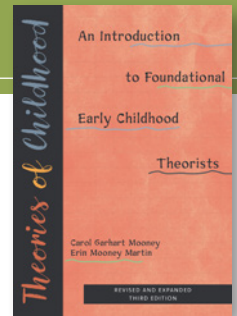


Chapter 7

Discussion Questions

1. Compare and contrast Ainsworth's and Bowlby's views on attachment. How do they complement each other? How do they differ? How do their research paths differ? (Bowlby's and Ainsworth's ideas on attachment are very similar. Both theorists argue that observing infants in their home environment is the best way to assess emotional stability. Ainsworth introduced the idea that a child's early relationships do not necessarily determine later social relationships. Ultimately, Bowlby went on to study maternal deprivation, specifically discontinuity of care, and Ainsworth studied relationships of mothers and infants during the first year of life.)
2. How did Ainsworth clarify the concept of maternal deprivation? Give a concrete example of a circumstance or behavior that defines each dimension. (Ainsworth broke it down into three dimensions: lack of maternal care, distortion of maternal care, and discontinuity in maternal care. An example of a lack of maternal care is a mother who does not recognize when her baby needs sleep. An example of distortion of maternal care is a mother that does not provide adequate food for her baby. An example of discontinuity in maternal care is the death of the mother.)
3. What is the significance of Ainsworth conducting similar studies in both Uganda and Baltimore? How would the significance have changed if she had studied mothers and babies in Baltimore and San Francisco instead? Why is she considered a pioneer of cultural research? (By studying mothers and babies in two different cultures, Ainsworth was able to draw parallels between attachment behaviors in the two cultures and identify many attachment behaviors as universal. If she had studied mothers and babies in Baltimore and San Francisco, critics could have argued that the behaviors were not universal because the ways of child rearing in the two cities were too similar. The way of life in Uganda is very different from that in Baltimore. She is considered a pioneer of cultural research because she was one of the first to be able to study behavior in the context of the culture in which it takes place.)
4. Based on Ainsworth's idea that babies who form secure attachments to their mothers feel comfortable exploring their worlds, what kind of behavior might you expect to see from a baby who does not have a strong attachment to her mother? (Answers will vary. An infant who does not have a strong attachment to her mother will likely not leave her mother to the same degree as an infant who is strongly attached. An infant who is not confident that her mother is a secure base to return to is less likely to leave her mother.)
5. Review the sequence of events of the Strange Situation and the two aspects of the child's behavior that researchers were observing. How does the sequence of events allow the researchers to observe the two aspects of the child's behavior? What do you think is the purpose of having the parent separate from the infant twice? (The sequence of events is designed so that the researchers can observe changes in the infant's behavior over a period that becomes more and more stressful for the infant. The first time the parent leaves, the infant may not immediately notice that the parent is gone. During the first separation, the stranger talks to the parent, which may signal to the infant that the stranger is okay. The second time the parent and infant separate is more stressful. The second separation is helpful in assessing how securely attached the infant is to the parent.)

Chapter 7



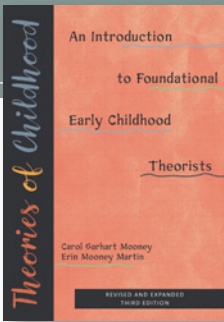
6. According to Ainsworth, both parents and infants have difficulties when an infant is insecurely attached to his parents. She argues that the parents of an insecurely attached infant respond to the infant on their own schedule, not the infant's. Based on the behaviors exhibited by parents of securely attached babies, what are some concrete ways you think parents of insecurely attached infants can begin to improve their baby's attachment? (Ainsworth describes parents of securely attached infants as responsive and sensitive to their infant's needs in an appropriate way. Parents of insecurely attached infants can work on changing their own behavior to become more responsive to their infant's needs. For example, even if a parent is busy, the parent can tell the child that they will attend to him in a few minutes and then follow through by doing so.)
7. The chapter says, "Ainsworth called our attention to the routine ways that the attachment relationship can be compromised if we are not mindful of its importance." What do you think this means? What is an example? (This means that inaction as much as action can lead to an insecure bond between parent and child. For example, parents who respond to their infant on their own schedule may inadvertently compromise the infant-parent attachment relationship.)

In-Class Activities

1. Look at the list of behaviors Ainsworth describes as indicating attachment to a parent. Which behaviors do you think would have been difficult for people at the time to accept as indicators of attachment? Why?
2. How do you think Ainsworth's research and results will affect the way you observe and interact with infants in an early childhood program? What behaviors will you look for in infants? How will you respond to these behaviors?
3. Imagine you are a teacher in an infant classroom. One of the infants exhibits all the signs of anxious-avoidant insecure attachment. Brainstorm a list of ideas that you and your fellow teachers might use to create stronger attachment connections with this child.

Out-of-Class Activities

1. Interview the parent of an infant to discover how the parent responds to the infant's needs. For example, how does the parent respond to the infant's crying in the middle of the night? Use the parent's responses to assess how you might expect the infant to respond in a Strange Situation.
2. Refer to Ainsworth's list of behaviors that indicate an attachment between mothers and babies. Observe a mother and baby in their home as Ainsworth did. Does the baby exhibit any of these attachment behaviors? How does the mother respond to these behaviors? Record your observations and assess whether the mother and baby have a secure or insecure attachment.
3. Observe the separation of a few infants and parents. Observe how the infants respond throughout the separation. Which type of attachment behavior best describes each infant? Explain how you made these assessments.



Chapter 8

Summary

Lev Vygotsky

Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 107

Lev Vygotsky, born in Russia in 1896, was a teacher who became passionately interested in how people learn. Although he died young, he advanced the theory that social and cognitive development work together. This means that children learn from each other, especially during play, and from interactions with adults. Vygotsky's theory includes the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), the distance between the most difficult task a child can do alone and the most difficult task a child can do with help.

This concept is important for teachers to consider because children who are in this zone, on the edge of learning a new concept, can benefit from interaction with a teacher or classmate. Vygotsky calls this assistance from a teacher or peer *scaffolding*. He explains that teachers must be keen observers to determine where children are in the learning process and what they need to reach the next step.

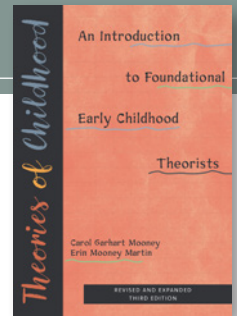
Vygotsky's work suggests that teachers can use strategies, such as pairing up children to learn from each other, that can stretch children's thinking and competence beyond what others, such as Piaget, thought possible. Vygotsky also asserts that language plays an especially important role in the learning process because talking is necessary to clarify important information and concepts.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to

1. Summarize Lev Vygotsky's contribution to our understanding of young children's cognitive development.
2. Define zone of proximal development and scaffolding and describe how these concepts can be useful to early childhood teachers.
3. Identify at least one similarity between Vygotsky's ideas and the ideas of Dewey, Piaget, and Montessori.
4. Describe at least two specific teaching strategies that can be used to scaffold young children's learning in an early childhood classroom.
5. Use Vygotsky's theory to explain how engaging in meaningful conversations supports children's cognitive development.
6. Explain why, according to Vygotsky, simply correcting children's mistakes does not help them learn and identify at least two strategies that help children discover and correct their own mistakes.
7. Identify at least two ways that Vygotsky's theory challenged conventional notions about early childhood education during the early 1900s and two ways that his theory is still controversial today.

Chapter 8

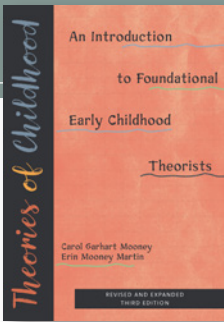


Discussion Questions

1. Discuss what Vygotsky means when he asserts that children gain knowledge through both personal and social experiences. (Unlike Piaget, who states that knowledge is formed almost exclusively through personal, or individual, learning experiences, Vygotsky believed that children also learn through their interactions with adults and other children in their lives. They develop language skills and grasp new concepts as they speak to and listen to each other.)
2. How does Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding compare to Dewey's ideas about providing purposeful learning experiences? (Both Vygotsky's and Dewey's ideas emphasize the significance of observation. Vygotsky states that information can be gathered through observation that helps teachers support, or scaffold, children's learning. Dewey states that teachers must observe children carefully and use their greater knowledge to help children make sense of the world.)
3. How does the story of Margaret, the child who was afraid to climb up and hammer shingles on the roof, illustrate Vygotsky's ideas about how children learn? (Margaret's teacher observed that Margaret was just on the edge of being able to accomplish this task independently. Hammering the shingles on the roof was within Margaret's zone of proximal development. The teacher scaffolded Margaret's learning through her own conversations with Margaret and by facilitating Margaret's interactions with another child.)
4. Vygotsky objects to the analysis of children's abilities based on intelligence tests. Discuss what methods of assessing children's cognitive growth might be more consistent with Vygotsky's theory. (Answers will vary. Assessment practices that incorporate observation would be consistent with Vygotsky's theory because he asserts that careful observation of children should be considered as valid as their scores on a test. Assessment practices that measure children's accomplishments when they work together in pairs or small groups, rather than individually, would also be consistent with Vygotsky's theory.)
5. When Vygotsky became interested in psychology and its impact on educational theory, he studied the work of Maria Montessori. What evidence of Montessori's influence can you find in Vygotsky's work? (Montessori emphasizes the importance of observing children to learn what they know. Observation also plays a key role in Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding children's learning. Montessori asserts that careful observation is the key to determining what children are interested in or need to learn; Vygotsky takes this idea further by naming the area where these interests and needs reside—the zone of proximal development.)

In-Class Activities

1. Vygotsky died young, at the age of thirty-eight. Discuss how you think his career might have progressed if he had lived as long as some of the other theorists featured in *Theories of Childhood*, third edition.
2. Think of your own recent experiences trying to master a complex task, such as driving a car or baking bread. Was your experience successful? Why or why not? Was this new task within your zone of proximal development? Did friends or other people help scaffold your learning? If so, how?



Chapter 8

3. Suppose you are about to teach a unit on insects in a preschool classroom. Think about how Vygotsky's ideas about learning through social interactions might apply to this unit. Brainstorm a list of activities you could include in the unit that would allow children to work together in pairs and small groups, maximizing the opportunities to learn from each other.
4. Discuss ways you could create opportunities for children to develop self-regulation and cognitive control. What are some ways that teachers model self-regulation, or lack of it, in the classroom? What kinds of activities might help develop self-regulation for both teachers and students?

Out-of-Class Activities

1. Observe an older child playing with a younger child. Does the older child scaffold the learning of the younger child in any way? Note the behavior of the children as well as the conversation between them.
2. Conduct a brief survey of five early childhood teachers. Ask the teachers if they have ever heard of Lev Vygotsky and, if so, what they know about his theory. Record the results of your survey.
3. Find an Internet site for an early childhood program that names the Reggio Emilia schools as an important influence. Can you find any evidence that this program's philosophy and practices are consistent with Vygotsky's theory? For example, does the information on this program's website describe how children learn from each other? Record your findings.

Chapter 9

Summary

Janice E. Hale

Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 123

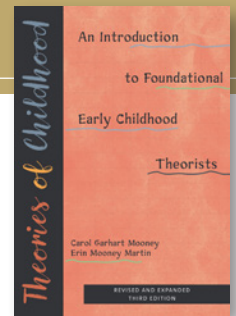
Janice Hale's work centered Black children's cultural strengths, histories, languages, and learning needs. She challenged deficit-based explanations for achievement gaps and argued that schools must take responsibility for creating affirming, intellectually rich environments for Black and Brown learners. She emphasized that educators should understand students' cultural contexts and use children's home knowledge, oral traditions, community experiences, and identities as assets rather than barriers to learning.

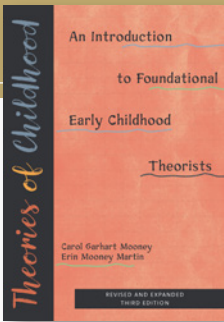
Hale's model of culturally appropriate, pro-Black pedagogy includes three interconnected components: classroom instruction, instructional accountability infrastructure, and cultural enrichment. Effective instruction for Black children should be interactive, nurturing, hands-on, and rooted in cultural relevance, while school leaders must build systems of mentorship, observation, family involvement, and community accountability. Educators have a responsibility to counter anti-Black messages and teach in pro-Black ways.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to

1. Explain Janice Hale's contributions to early childhood education and her significance as a Black scholar, educator, and advocate for Black children's educational success.
2. Analyze how Hale's work challenges deficit-based narratives about Black children and reframes children's cultural knowledge, language, and community experiences as educational assets.
3. Describe the three components of Hale's model of culturally appropriate pedagogy: classroom instruction, instructional accountability infrastructure, and cultural enrichment.
4. Evaluate how culturally responsive classroom instruction can support Black children's academic development, creativity, motivation, and higher-order thinking.
5. Assess the role of school leaders, mentorship, family engagement, and community accountability in creating instructional systems that support every child's progress.
6. Discuss how cultural enrichment opportunities, including mentorship, the arts, choice-based activities, and community partnerships, contribute to children's identity development and future aspirations.
7. Connect Hale's theory to contemporary pro-Black pedagogy and explain why early childhood educators must address race, racism, representation, and Black excellence in curriculum and instruction.





Chapter 9

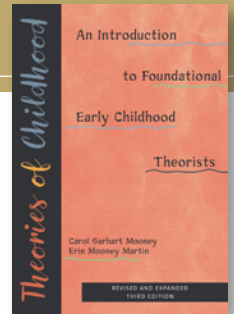
Discussion Questions

1. How does Janice Hale's work challenge deficit-based explanations for the achievement gap, and what responsibilities does she place on schools and educators instead? (Hale argues that the achievement gap should not be blamed on Black children, their families, or their cultures. Instead, schools and educators must create culturally affirming, intellectually rich, and accountable learning environments that recognize Black children's strengths and provide the support they need to thrive.)
2. In what ways does understanding Black children's cultural contexts, histories, languages, and community experiences change how educators might interpret children's behavior and learning? (Understanding children's cultural contexts helps educators interpret behavior and learning through a more informed and respectful lens. Rather than viewing Black children's learning and play styles, communication/language, or community knowledge as problems, teachers can recognize them as meaningful forms of knowledge and use them as bridges to new academic skills.)
3. What are the benefits and challenges of using Black children's home knowledge, oral traditions, and cultural literacies as foundations for classroom learning? (Benefits may include increasing engagement, validating identity, strengthening relationships, and making learning more meaningful. Challenges may include teachers' lack of preparation, biases about language and culture, limited curricular resources, or institutional resistance to moving beyond Eurocentric models of instruction.)
4. What might an "academic safety net" for every child look like in an early childhood or elementary school setting, and what systems would be needed to sustain it? (An academic safety net might include regular assessment of children's progress, small-group instruction, tutoring, counseling, family conferences, mentoring, teacher coaching, and community support. To sustain it, schools would need committed leadership, scheduled collaboration time, trained volunteers, clear accountability systems, and ongoing communication among teachers, families, and community partners.)
5. What is your understanding of Black excellence, and what are some examples you could use in teaching children? (Answers will vary. Responses might include examples from personal experiences, friends or family members, or famous people or events.)
6. Why is it important for early childhood educators to address race, racism, Black history, and pro-Black curriculum with young children, and how can this be done in developmentally appropriate ways? (Young children notice race and absorb social messages about identity, power, and belonging. Educators can address race, racism, Black history, and pro-Black curriculum in developmentally appropriate ways by using accurate children's books, inclusive materials, discussions about fairness, representation of Black artists and scientists, celebration of Black joy, and honest but age-appropriate conversations about history and equity.)

Chapter 9

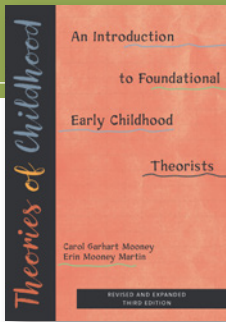
In-Class Activities

1. Brainstorm cultural enrichment opportunities such as mentorship, choice-based activities, community partnerships, and other celebrations of Black excellence you could implement in your program.
2. List three to four developmentally appropriate strategies for creating affirming, culturally grounded, and academically rigorous learning environments for young Black children.
3. Using Hale's idea of an instructional accountability infrastructure, design a support plan for a child who is not yet meeting grade-level expectations. Include the roles of the teacher, principal, family, community volunteer, mentor, and any additional support services.



Out-of-Class Activities (3–4)

1. Choose a traditional skill-and-drill activity, worksheet, or textbook-based lesson for young children. Redesign it using Hale's recommendations for hands-on learning, interaction, cultural relevance, creativity, and higher-order thinking.
2. Identify community members, organizations, cultural institutions, artists, family members, or mentors who could enrich an early childhood program. Design one partnership activity and explain how it supports children's identity, motivation, talents, and sense of future possibility.
3. Choose a classroom library, lesson plan, dramatic play area, science center, music playlist, or digital learning resource to evaluate. Determine whether Black children, histories, cultures, artists, scientists, inventors, and experiences are represented in meaningful and nonstereotypical ways. Recommend specific improvements.



Chapter 10

Summary

Putting Theory to Practice

Theories of Childhood, revised and expanded third edition, p. 137

Effective early childhood education depends on teachers' ability to connect theory, research, and daily practice. Practice is not limited to planned curriculum activities such as art, literacy, science, or music; it also includes how educators respond to children with respect, cultural awareness, knowledge of development, and sensitivity to individual needs. Finger painting as an example shows how an activity becomes meaningful when grounded in developmental theory: a well-prepared teacher understands it as both an expressive art experience and a therapeutic outlet for children coping with stress, while an untrained teacher may simply offer the activity without purpose or intentionality.

The chapter argues that early childhood-specific education is a key predictor of high-quality programs, alongside small group size and low adult-to-child ratios. Research and experience suggest that loving children is essential but not enough; teaching young children is a learned professional practice that requires rigorous preparation in child development and early education. Without this training, educators may struggle to translate foundational theories into responsive, developmentally appropriate experiences. Children deserve teachers who can intentionally merge knowledge, reflection, and practice in their daily work.

Learning Objectives

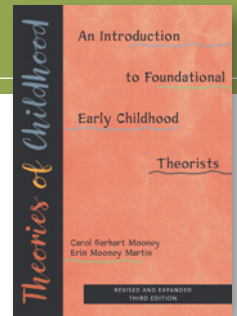
After reading this chapter, students will be able to

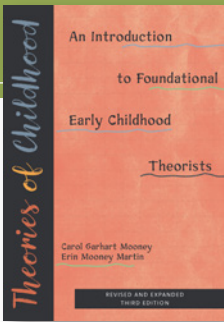
1. Explain how theory, research, and practice work together to inform high-quality early childhood education.
2. Analyze the meaning of “practice” in ECE as both planned curriculum experiences and responsive interactions with children and families.
3. Evaluate how developmentally appropriate practice can guide intentional teaching decisions in everyday classroom activities.
4. Compare examples of theory-informed practice and practice without theory, using finger painting as a case study.
5. Discuss the role of early childhood-specific education and professional preparation in improving program quality and child outcomes.

Chapter 10

Discussion Questions

1. How does this chapter challenge the idea that theory and practice are separate parts of early childhood education? (Effective teaching requires both to operate together. Theory helps teachers understand why they make certain decisions, while practice shows how those ideas are applied in real classroom settings.)
2. Why might early childhood-specific education be especially important for teachers working with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers? (Young children's development is rapid, complex, and highly dependent on responsive caregiving. Educators need to understand typical and atypical development, attachment, temperament, family culture, and appropriate curriculum. Without this preparation, educators may miss important learning opportunities or misunderstand children's behavior and needs.)
3. How should the ECE field balance the importance of loving and enjoying children with the need for professional training and credentials? (The field should use a both/and approach rather than an either/or approach. Effective early childhood educators need warmth, commitment, and specialized knowledge. Training helps teachers make intentional decisions that support children's growth, while care and respect help those decisions feel responsive and humane.)
4. What barriers might prevent ECE programs from requiring more specialized education for teachers, and how could the field address those barriers respectfully? (Barriers may include low wages, staffing shortages, limited access to affordable higher education, and concerns that stricter credential requirements could exclude experienced caregivers. The field could address these barriers by creating respectful pathways for current educators, such as scholarships, paid professional development, mentoring, and flexible degree programs. Honest conversations about credentials should recognize the value of existing experience while still emphasizing that children deserve well-prepared teachers.)
5. What does the phrase "we are still practicing at our practices" suggest about professional growth, reflection, and lifelong learning in early childhood education? (It suggests that teaching is never fully finished or perfected; educators continue learning how to apply theory, research, and experience in more thoughtful ways. Professional growth requires reflection, mentoring, supervision, and openness to change. For college students preparing to enter the field, this idea emphasizes that becoming an effective early childhood educator is an ongoing process rather than a one-time achievement.)





Chapter 10

In-Class Activities

1. Compare the two teachers described in the finger-painting example. List the knowledge, assumptions, and decisions each teacher brings to the activity, then explain how those differences affect children's experiences.
2. Imagine you could give advice to the second teacher in the finger-painting example. How might you help them understand the theory behind their practice?
3. Design a short professional growth plan for an early childhood educator. The plan should include postsecondary learning, mentoring, supervision, reflection, and practical classroom application.

Out-of-Class Activities

1. Consider a common early childhood activity, such as block play, outdoor play, music, or storytelling, you have observed in your setting. Explain how the activity could become a theory-informed practice when guided by developmental knowledge.
2. Think about your own temperament. Begin a reflective journal noting events of your day that considers how your temperament affected your response. Use your findings to make plans to react with intention the next time a similar event occurs.
3. Consider your practice before you read this book. Based on what you have learned, make a theory-backed list of ideas or changes you will bring to your setting.