

# Jean Piaget

Jean Piaget, the pioneering Swiss philosopher and psychologist, became famous for his theories on child development. A child prodigy, he became interested in the scientific study of nature at an early age. He developed a special fascination for biology, having some of his work published before graduating from high school. When, aged 10, his observations led to questions that could be answered only by access to the university library, Piaget wrote and published some notes on the sighting of an albino sparrow in the hope that this would persuade the librarian to stop treating him like a child. It worked. Piaget was launched on a path that led to his doctorate in zoology and a lifelong conviction that the way to understand anything is to know how it evolves.

Piaget went on to spend much of his professional life listening to and watching children, and poring over reports of researchers who were doing the same. He found, to put it succinctly, that children don't think like adults. After thousands of interactions with young people often barely old enough to talk, Piaget began to suspect that behind their cute and seemingly illogical utterances were thought processes that had their own kind of order and their own special logic. Albert Einstein, the renowned physicist, deemed this a discovery 'so simple that only a genius could have thought of it'.

Piaget's insight opened a new window into the inner workings of the mind. Several new fields of science, among them developmental psychology and cognitive theory, came into being as a result of his research. Although not an educational reformer, he championed a way of thinking about children that provided the foundation for today's education reform movements. One might say that Piaget was the first to take children's thinking seriously. Others who shared this respect for children may have fought harder for immediate change in schools, but Piaget's influence on education remains deeper and more pervasive.

Piaget has been revered by generations of teachers inspired by the belief that children are not empty vessels to be filled with knowledge, as traditional academic thinking had it, but active builders of knowledge – little scientists who are constantly creating and testing their own theories of the world. And while he may not be as famous as Sigmund Freud, Piaget's contribution to psychology may be longer lasting. As computers and the Internet give children greater autonomy to explore ever larger digital worlds, the ideas he pioneered become ever more relevant.

In the 1940s, working in Alfred Binet's child-psychology lab in Paris, Piaget noticed that children of the same age, regardless of their background or gender, made comparable errors on true-false intelligence tests. Back in Switzerland, the young scientist began watching children play, scrupulously recording their words and actions as their minds raced to find reasons for why things are the way they are. Piaget recognised that a five-year-old's beliefs, while not correct by any adult criterion, are not 'incorrect' either. They are entirely sensible and coherent within the framework of the child's 'way of knowing'. In Piaget's view, classifying them as 'true' or 'false' misses the point and shows a lack of respect for the child. What Piaget was after was a theory that could find coherence and ingenuity in the child's justification, and evidence of a kind of explanatory principle that stands young children in very good stead when they don't know enough or don't have enough skill to handle the kind of explanation that grown-ups prefer.

The core of Piaget's work is his belief that looking carefully at how children acquire knowledge sheds light on how adults think and understand the world. Whether this has, in fact, led to deeper understanding remains, like everything about Piaget, contentious. In recent years, Piaget has been vigorously challenged by the current emphasis on viewing knowledge as an intrinsic property of the brain. Ingenious experiments have demonstrated that newborn infants already have some of the knowledge that Piaget believed children constructed. But for those of us who still see Piaget as the giant in the field of cognitive theory, the disparity between what the baby brings and what the adult has is so immense that the new discoveries do not significantly reduce the gap, only increase the mystery.

## 1. Multiple choice

Circle the correct answer, A, B, C or D. Only **one** answer is correct.

(12 POINTS)

- 1 In the first paragraph, the writer suggests that as a child Piaget
  - A was particularly eager to teach others about animals.
  - B was confident his research would help other children.
  - C was already certain about the career he would follow.
  - D was determined that nothing should hold back his progress.
  
- 2 In quoting Einstein, the writer is
  - A questioning the simplicity of Piaget's ideas.
  - B supporting the conclusion that Piaget reached.
  - C suggesting that Piaget's research methods were unprecedented.
  - D recommending a less complicated approach than Piaget's.
  
- 3 In the third paragraph, the writer puts forward the view that
  - A Piaget's work with children was difficult to put to a practical use.
  - B Piaget's theories about children were less revolutionary than he thought.
  - C Piaget laid the basis for our current understanding of how children's minds work.
  - D Piaget was actually committed to radical change in the education system.
  
- 4 The phrase 'empty vessels' (paragraph 4) refers to
  - A why children should be encouraged to study more independently.
  - B what traditional academic theory said about children and learning.
  - C how teachers can increase children's motivation to learn.
  - D the kind of knowledge that children need to acquire.
  
- 5 The writer says Piaget was unwilling to categorise children's ideas as true or false because
  - A he realised that the reasoning behind a child's statement was more important.
  - B he knew that this could have long-term effects on a child.
  - C he felt that this did not reflect what happens in real life.
  - D he felt that children are easily influenced by what adults have told them.
  
- 6 What does the writer conclude about newer theories that have appeared?
  - A They completely undermine Piaget's ideas.
  - B They put greater emphasis on scientific evidence.
  - C They are an interesting addition to the body of knowledge.
  - D They are based on flawed research.

## 2. Synonyms

Give a **synonym or a synonymous expression** for each of these words/expressions taken from the text. All your answers **must fit the context** in which the words/expressions are used in the article.

(10 POINTS)

1. to persuade (6) \_\_\_\_\_
2. to evolve (8) \_\_\_\_\_
3. barely (11) \_\_\_\_\_
4. to suspect (12) \_\_\_\_\_
5. constantly (24) \_\_\_\_\_
6. to notice (28) \_\_\_\_\_
7. adult (32) \_\_\_\_\_
8. in fact (40) \_\_\_\_\_
9. to demonstrate (43) \_\_\_\_\_
10. disparity (45) \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Antonyms

Give an **antonym or an antonymous expression** for each of these words taken from the text. All your answers **must fit the context** in which the words/expressions are used in the article.

(8 POINTS)

1. to work (7) \_\_\_\_\_
2. cute (12) \_\_\_\_\_
3. renowned (13) \_\_\_\_\_
4. traditional (23) \_\_\_\_\_
5. relevant (27) \_\_\_\_\_
6. to miss (34) \_\_\_\_\_
7. deep (40) \_\_\_\_\_
8. a giant (45) \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Find the correct word or expression

*Find words or expressions in the text to match the following definitions. All these words/expressions can be found **between lines 15 and 46** and are in chronological order. Singular forms and infinitives have been used for the definitions throughout.* (10 POINTS)

1. to fight or speak in support of \_\_\_\_\_
2. to feel great respect or admiration for \_\_\_\_\_
3. sth that helps to achieve sth or make it successful \_\_\_\_\_
4. paying no attention to \_\_\_\_\_
5. the ability to solve problems in new and clever ways \_\_\_\_\_
6. the most important or central part of sth \_\_\_\_\_
7. to gain sth by your own efforts or by learning it \_\_\_\_\_
8. controversial, likely to cause disagreement \_\_\_\_\_
9. happening or fashionable now \_\_\_\_\_
10. the process of learning sth that was not known before \_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Translations

*Translate these words/expressions into German, giving the meaning they have in the text.* (10 POINTS)

1. access (5) \_\_\_\_\_
2. conviction (8) \_\_\_\_\_
3. seemingly (12) \_\_\_\_\_
4. foundation (18) \_\_\_\_\_
5. comparable (29) \_\_\_\_\_
6. sensible (33) \_\_\_\_\_
7. a lack of (34/5) \_\_\_\_\_
8. justification (36) \_\_\_\_\_
9. to shed light on sth (40) \_\_\_\_\_
10. vigorously (42) \_\_\_\_\_



11. Perhaps Brian is in his room. He .....
- A might still be sleeping      B would still be sleeping  
C might still sleep              D would still sleep
12. When we landed, ..... on the plane for 18 hours.
- A we are                              B we've been  
C we were                             D we'd been
13. The man could have been sent to prison if the judge ..... his story.
- A wouldn't have believed      B wasn't believing  
C hadn't believed                D wouldn't believe
14. After finishing her course, Rachel went on ..... a well-known lawyer.
- A to become                        B becoming  
C to becoming                      D become
15. I'm afraid I'm a little short ..... money this month, so I can't lend you any.
- A of                                      B in  
C for                                     D with
16. I know you don't like saving money, but suppose you ..... your job. What then?
- A will lose                            B lost  
C are losing                         D would lose
17. I don't want anyone to know about our plan. You ..... anyone.
- A needn't tell                        B don't have to tell  
C mustn't tell                        D had to tell
18. My relationship with Isaac is one of ..... respect.
- A mutual                                B relative  
C compatible                         D integral
19. In Britain, most shops close at 6 pm, ..... in other countries they often open in the evening, too.
- A despite                              B whereas  
C nevertheless                      D moreover
20. I ..... so much about Jan's present. She loved it!
- A mustn't have worried      B needn't have worried  
C couldn't have worried      D didn't have to
21. 'Are you still taking your exams?' – 'Yes, but by this time next week ..... my last one!'
- A I'm finishing                      B I'll finish  
C I'll have finished                D I'll have been finishing
22. Someone's been in here, .....?
- A have they                            B don't they  
C aren't they                         D haven't they

## 2. Open Cloze

Put one appropriate word into the gaps of this text.

(20 POINTS)

### Pacifying\* Rio's Favelas (*The Observer*, 13/09/15)

On the morning of 10 November 2011, the people of Rio de Janeiro woke up to some fascinating footage (1) ..... played over and over on all major television networks. Editors (2) ..... cleared the decks to concentrate (3) ..... one story only.

(4) ..... after midnight, three competing police forces had assembled around a black Toyota Corolla. After an initial scuffle and a lot of accusatory shouting, they eventually all (5) ..... their weapons at the car's locked boot. Illuminating the scene was a searchlight mounted on a police helicopter to the delight of the surrounding camera crews (6) ..... the headquarters of Brazil's largest news channels, Globo and Record.

The hysteria grew (7) ..... Federal Police officers pulled a lanky, dazed and disoriented man into the car park of Rio's Naval Club by the side of Lagoa, the lagoon at the heart of the South Zone (8) ..... most of the city's swankiest residential areas (9) .....

It was a moment that José Mariano Beltrame, secretary of security in Rio State, could really enjoy (10) ..... being far away in Berlin, where he was discussing the policing of mega-sporting events. He could boast, not (11) ..... the first time, that his pacifying of Rio's lawless slums was working. His forces were clearing the city's favelas of drugs and guns. The country could look (12) ..... to the Olympics in 2016.

The man in the car-boot was known (13) ..... the country as Nem of Rocinha, after the favela in the South Zone where he was born and raised. Nem was public enemy No 1; (14) ..... six years he had been the undisputed boss of the drugs trade in Rocinha, (15) ..... police claim is responsible for 60 % of all cocaine consumed in Rio.

A favela, once decided on for pacification, would be prepared for an invasion of (16) ..... trained special forces. The aim was less to halt the drugs trade but (17) ..... to get rid of the heavy weaponry that had (18) ..... used by the gangs (19) ..... the early 1990s. Then a more community-friendly police force and enhanced social services, (20) ..... as creches, health care centres and schools, would be established.

With this method the authorities hope to create a more peaceful background to the summer Olympics in 2016.

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\*pacifying: 'making peace in'

### 3. Word Formation

Fill the gaps in the sentences with one appropriate word which is related to the word in the margin beside the sentence. (20 POINTS)

1. My flat consists of a very \_\_\_\_\_ living room and a kitchen. **SPACE**
2. Taxi drivers are often very \_\_\_\_\_ people. **TALK**
3. I wouldn't accept him as a business partner because he is completely \_\_\_\_\_ **RELY**
4. Your ideas are interesting but you must \_\_\_\_\_ the language. Nobody can understand it. **SIMPLE**
5. We need to call an \_\_\_\_\_ to repair the heater. **ELECTRIC**
6. She chose light-coloured furniture to \_\_\_\_\_ the room. **BRIGHT**
7. The new laser treatment can extract teeth \_\_\_\_\_. **PAIN**
8. Local residents are angry because \_\_\_\_\_ accidents have already happened there before. **NUMBER**
9. Even though he's already 21, he is still rather \_\_\_\_\_. **MATURE**
10. I do not know what to do now that my friends are gone. I'll probably die of \_\_\_\_\_. **BORE**
11. Freedom from \_\_\_\_\_ should be a human right. **POOR**
12. Local elections can often seem \_\_\_\_\_, but in fact they send an important signal to the government. **SIGNIFY**
13. Please contact reception regarding the storing of \_\_\_\_\_ in the hotel safe. **VALUE**
14. Are those flowers real or are they \_\_\_\_\_? **ART**
15. Too many families in this country still suffer from financial \_\_\_\_\_. **HARD**
16. Being the hardest natural substance, diamond is practically \_\_\_\_\_. **DESTROY**
17. You should make a list of things you are \_\_\_\_\_ about before planning your trip. **ANXIETY**

18. At the \_\_\_\_\_ of his powers, Alfred Hitchcock was producing a hit movie every year in Hollywood. **HIGH**
19. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Rubik's Cube peaked in the early 1980s. **POPULAR**
20. Local planners admit they \_\_\_\_\_ the number of tourists that would come for the festival. **ESTIMATE**

#### 4. Tenses and Verb Forms

Complete the text with an appropriate tense / form of the verbs in brackets. Both active and passive forms are possible. (24 POINTS)

Fiona Maye, judge at the Family Law Court, was ready for the next case. She inclined her head towards Mr Berner, attorney for the Edith Cavell General Hospital, Wandsworth.

He was smoothly bald, stout, but with small feet (size five?) for which he (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (mock) behind his back. But he had a decent, rich tenor which they (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (last/hear) when he (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (sing) for a retiring law lord last year.

"I (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) brief, My Lady," he said. "The situation is pressing indeed. I (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (represent) the hospital which (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (seek) the court's permission to give blood transfusions to the boy, whose name is Adam Henry and who (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) eighteen in less than three months. He (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (experience) sharp stomach pains on 14 March when he (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (put on) his football boots to play for his school. During the following three days these pains (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (become) unbearable ..."

"Thank you, Mr Berner, I (11) \_\_\_\_\_ (read) the papers", Fiona interrupted him just a tiny bit impatiently.

"Very well, My Lady, suffice it to say then that it (12) \_\_\_\_\_ (accept) by all parties that Adam (13) \_\_\_\_\_ (suffer) from leukemia for quite a long time already. It is the hospital's determined wish therefore to treat him in the usual manner with four different drugs."

(14) \_\_\_\_\_ (shuffle) his papers, Berner went on quickly to outline the conventional course of treatment and Fiona (15) \_\_\_\_\_ (not intervene) again. He explained that it (16) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) usual to transfuse during this treatment. In this case, however, the hospital (17) \_\_\_\_\_ (prevent) from (18) \_\_\_\_\_ (do) so. The parents and Adam who were Jehova's Witnesses (19) \_\_\_\_\_ (not want) this, but (20) \_\_\_\_\_ (accept) anything else on offer.

"And what (21) \_\_\_\_\_ (offer) to them?" Fiona asked.

"My Lady, only the leukemia-specific drugs (22) \_\_\_\_\_ (administer) so far. They (23) \_\_\_\_\_ (not consider) sufficient, however. Therefore I (24) \_\_\_\_\_ (call) my first witness, a consultant haematologist with sufficient knowledge of the matter to clarify all relevant queries."

## 5. Transformation

Rewrite the following sentences using the word in bold ***without changing the meaning*** in any way.

(24 POINTS)

1. I didn't have the money so I didn't buy a new suit.

**WOULD**

If I \_\_\_\_\_ a new suit.

2. James started learning French five years ago.

**HAS**

James \_\_\_\_\_ five years.

3. "I'll call off the football match if you don't behave," the teacher said.

**THREATENED**

The teacher \_\_\_\_\_ the children's behaviour improved.

4. All that trouble I went to wasn't necessary in the end.

**NEEDN'T**

I \_\_\_\_\_ all that trouble.

5. I've been in this company for almost three years.

**WILL**

By the end of the month \_\_\_\_\_ in this company for three years.

6. The deaths of over fifty people were caused by the storm.

**RESULTED**

The storm \_\_\_\_\_ killed.

7. It is thought that the two injured men were repairing overhead cables.

**HAVE**

The two injured men \_\_\_\_\_ overhead cables.

8. Do you ever regret not going to university?

**WISH**

Do you ever \_\_\_\_\_ to university?

9. Although Sue looked for the book for a long time, she couldn't find it.

**SPENT**

Sue \_\_\_\_\_, without success.

10. If you don't get out right now, I'll ask the police to arrest you.

**HAVE**

If you don't get out right now, I \_\_\_\_\_ by the police.

11. I'd rather you didn't sit at the back of the room, please.

**IT**

I'd prefer \_\_\_\_\_ at the front of the room.

12. Joe doesn't like it when people treat him like a child.

**RESENTS**

Joe \_\_\_\_\_ like a child.