

Cognitive Explanations - Mark Scheme

Q1.

[AO1 = 2]

Up to 2 marks for an outline of a difference between understanding of gender in the gender stability stage and that in the constancy stage.

In the stability stage, although the child understands his / her own gender remains fixed in spite of outward changes such as hair length / clothing, he / she believes that the gender of others might change if outward appearance changes – in the constancy stage they know that everyone's gender is fixed in all situations.

Q2.

(a) [AO3 = 1, AO2 = 3]

AO3

One mark for a description of the results which might be embedded in the application of knowledge of gender schema theory below.

The recall of the activities of *watching TV* and *mowing the lawn* was almost perfect / extremely high, **but** recall for *ironing* was only 23 / 50 or just less than half.

AO2

Up to 3 marks for use of knowledge of gender schema theory to explain the results of the study.

Likely points:

- explaining what a gender schema is – mental representation about gender-related behaviours **OR** one mark for reference to formation of stereotypes – expectations about what certain genders do
- relating results to the above – recall of information that fits the schema and stereotype
- reference to not fully processing or 'forgetting' the ironing behaviour which does not fit the schema or stereotype.

(b) [AO3 = 1]

One mark for a clear definition of opportunity sampling.

Likely answer: a sampling method in which people who are available to the researcher are used in the study.

Accept alternative wording, such as convenient. Do not accept just 'willing participants.'

(c) [AO3 = 3]

Up to 3 marks for an explanation of why unstructured interviews would be appropriate in this study.

Full marks can be credited for one fully elaborated issue.

Credit the following likely points:

- an unstructured interview would allow the interviewer to respond to the answer given by a child with a specific follow-on question
- the interviewer may gain new insight / lines of enquiry not explored so far
- it would enable the researcher to explore further the reason(s) given by the child for his answer – depth and detail
- it may overcome interpretation / communication issues by allowing the child to be clear about what they are trying to say.

Credit other valid points.

Credit reference to increased validity if there is explanation of how this is achieved. Maximum of 2 marks if answer not specific to this study.

Q3.

[AO2 = 3]

One mark for recognition that all the children have acquired gender identity / can label themselves (and others) as male or female accurately.

One mark for recognition that few have acquired gender constancy / understood that each person's gender is fixed across time and situations, despite superficial changes like clothing.

One mark for valid interpretation of the results in the table for both questions eg expressed as 'higher / fewer, more than.'

This mark might be embedded in the answers given above, ie the stage descriptions.

Q4.

[AO3 = 3]

One mark for identification of a methodological problem that could be relevant to asking young children questions.

Likely answers: children may not understand the questions being asked; children may have limited communication skills; subjectivity involved in categorising the responses; practical issue of gaining consent.

Can accept conferring.

One mark for an explanation of why / how this is a problem. Accept reliability / validity.

One mark for explanation of the impact of the problem identified on the results / investigation.

Possible answer: Children may have limited communication skills (1). This means that they may not be able to express their actual knowledge very clearly and / or the researcher may not be able to understand exactly what the child means (1). So the results of the study – the data obtained – may not reflect accurately the knowledge of the child – it is not measuring what it intends to measure so is not valid (1).

Q5.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / evaluation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Please note that although the content for this mark scheme remains the same, on most mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) content appears as a bulleted list.

AO1

Credit description of gender schema theory (Martin & Halverson). This is based on the development of gender identity (boy or girl) at about age 2-3, after which the child actively seeks out appropriate behaviours for their own gender and ignores information that does not 'fit' with their schema. Toys, for instance, become categorised as belonging to boys or girls. The development of gender schemas also leads to the formation of ingroups and outgroups. The origins of gender schemas would also be relevant. Although not completely detailed, there is evidence that parent's gender schemas play an important role.

AO3

Use of relevant research studies that would provide an effective route to credit. These generally focus on the early development of gender schemas (eg Campbell et al., 2004) or the influence of parents (eg Tenenbaum & Leaper, 2002). Other studies investigate ingroup and outgroup processes, or the rigidity of gender stereotypes. It is important for marks in the top band that implications of findings for gender schema theory are clear. Methodological evaluation of studies may only earn marks if implications for the theory / explanation are clear eg by explicit reference to

a lack of ecological validity affecting the generalisability of findings and hence of the theory / explanation.

Comparison with alternative theories eg Kohlberg or biological approaches to gender is also relevant, as long as the focus remains on gender schema theory. General commentary might include the success of gender schema theory in explaining the rigidity of gender stereotypes, or the lack of detail in explaining the origins of schema.

Relevant evaluation points also include the nature-nurture debate – gender schema theory emphasises the importance of parents and peers in the formation and maintenance of schema, while the biological approach emphasises the genetic unchangeable nature of gender development. There is evidence for both sides of the argument, which is why the biosocial approach to gender development is increasingly popular. Candidates may also refer to gender differences and biases, cultural differences and biases, free will and determinism, and the ethics of research with children.

Q6.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Evidence is clear. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Evidence is presented. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / evaluation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

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AO1

Candidates are likely to describe each of Kohlberg's three stages: Gender identity (2-3 years) – a child is able to label themselves as a boy or girl and label others as boys or girls. Gender stability (3-4 years) – a child understands that they will stay the same sex forever / fixed. Gender constancy (4½- 7 years) – a child understands that he or she does not change sex by changing appearance or being in different situations (applies to others too).

Candidates can receive some credit for the provision of examples / questions that may be asked to measure a child's understanding of their own gender development.

AO3

Candidates may focus on how there is support for Kohlberg's theory of gender development eg Damon's study; cross-cultural support eg Munroe. Candidates may criticise Kohlberg's theory as being more descriptive than explanatory. Kohlberg underestimated the age with which children can identify their own sex – there is evidence to suggest that gender identity occurs earlier than Kohlberg suggested. Alternatively, candidates may use other explanations of gender development as part of their evaluation. For example, the biological explanation states that gender is determined by genes, chromosomes, hormones – factors outside of the child's control.

Psychoanalytic psychologists would argue that Kohlberg does not consider the importance of the unconscious mind in the development of gender. Social learning theorists would criticise Kohlberg's assumption that the acquisition of a child's understanding of gender is passive in nature.

Q7.

[AO1 = 6 AO3 = 10]

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge of Kohlberg's explanation of gender development is accurate and generally well detailed. Evaluation is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge of Kohlberg's explanation of gender development is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Evaluation is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge of Kohlberg's explanation of gender development is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any evaluation is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge of Kohlberg's explanation of gender development is limited. Evaluation is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity,

		has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- cognitive theory – relates to child's understanding of gender
- stages of gender development: identity (awareness of own gender), stability (understanding of (own) gender as fixed over time), constancy (consistency) understanding that gender is unchanged despite changes in outward appearance (clothing, hair etc) or context
- approximate ages: identity (2–3 yrs), stability (4–6 yrs) constancy (7+ yrs)
- processes involved in transition through stages: maturation, socialisation, lessening egocentrism.

Possible evaluation points:

- sensible focus on cognition (thinking governs behaviour) compared to, eg behavioural explanations
- use of evidence to support stages (eg Slaby and Frey 1975; Damon 1977)
- cross-cultural findings confirm the three stages (eg Munro et al 1984)
- Kohlberg's underestimation of age at which gender identity occurs, eg children seek out same-sex playmates earlier than the proposed gender identity stage
- focus on description rather than explanation
- inability to explain why boys show stronger sex-typing than girls
- comparison with other explanations, eg gender schema theory.

Credit other relevant evaluation points.

Only credit evaluation of the methodology used in studies when made relevant to evaluation of the explanation.