

Piaget Application

PART 1. Match each of the following examples with one of Piaget's stages and briefly **explain** your choice (why is this an example of that stage).

A. formal operational B. preoperational C. sensorimotor D. concrete operational

_____ 1. When you see water poured from a tall and thin container into a short and wide container, you know that it is still the same amount of liquid.

_____ 2. Terry's father shows him 7 apples and 3 oranges and asks, "Do I have more apples or more fruit?" Terry answers, "More apples."

_____ 3. You grab your little sister's favorite toy out of her hand and hide it behind your back, and she does not try to find it.

_____ 4. Monica is able to think of two different hypotheses for her science project.

_____ 5. Whenever you argue with your friends, you try to understand their point of view.

_____ 6. While speeding up to a stop light that has just turned yellow, I beg the light to hold on for just another minute so that I can get through the intersection.

PART 2. Although we progress to higher levels of cognitive functioning as we get older, we do not spend all of our time at these higher levels. Piaget himself once observed that he spent only a fraction of each day in thought processes associated with the formal operational stage. Examples or traces of preoperational thought can be found in everyday adult behavior. **Identify** the characteristic of **preoperational** thought that each of the following examples illustrates and briefly **explain** your choices.

Characteristics –

- Centration - refers to one's tendency to focus on only one dimension of reality
- Irreversibility describes one's inability to imagine reversing the physical action
- Concrete – use of appearances rather than systematic reasoning
- Egocentrism – the inability to see things from another's point of view or overestimate your power in situations.
- Magical thinking (animism – giving life to inanimate objects)
- Perceptually Bound - the use of perceptual cues rather than logical principles, in drawing conclusions.

_____ 1. You have a terrible time putting away leftover food because you always choose the wrong container. You usually think that if there is not much food left in the bottom of a large pot, then surely it will fit into a small container.

_____ 2. Your 1985 Toyota Celica starts to sputter on the way to work, and steam is leaking out from under the hood. You gently pat the dash board and say aloud, "Come on sweetheart, you can make it. Please, just get me to the next service station and I promise to take good care of you. We'll get this fixed and I'll even get you washed and waxed."

_____ 3. Your cousin has come to stay with you for a week. It rains every day, spoiling many of your plans. You apologize over and over, while feeling personally responsible for the unpleasant weather and its consequences.

_____ 4. Your elderly aunt persists in making bigoted remarks about your closest friend. Finally you have a confrontation, which ends in harsh words. You say that you would like nothing better than to have her get out of your life for good. A few days later your aunt dies. Although you know it's not possible, you feel as if you caused her death. You feel intensely guilty.

_____ 5. Student X (no one we know, of course!) has just finished typing up a research paper for his/her psychology course. After printing out the paper, X is very anxious to see that it is only 5 pages long when the assignment called for an 8-10 page paper. Unfortunately, the paper is due in 30 minutes so there is not time to go back and elaborate on some of the important points. X decides to increase the margins and font size. When X prints the paper again, it has now stretched to 7.5 pages so X feels very relieved.