Development and Learning

AP Psychology · Vocabulary in context

Word	Example
Developmental psychology /dɪˈveləpmentl saɪˈkɒlədʒi/	**Developmental psychology** studies how people change over their lives.
continuous /kənˈtɪnjuːəs/	Time is a **continuous** variable.
discontinuous /dɪskənˈtɪnjuːəs/	Piaget saw development as **discontinuous**: it happens in stages.
stable /ˈsteɪbl/	Is personality **stable**, or does it change with age?
cross-sectional study /krɒs ˈsekʃənl ˈstʌdi/	A **cross-sectional study** compares different age groups at one time.
longitudinal study /ˌlɒŋgɪˈtjuːdɪnl ˈstʌdi/	A **longitudinal study** follows the same people for many years.
teratogens /ˈterətədʒnz/	Alcohol and some drugs are **teratogens** that harm an unborn baby.
reflexes /ˈriːfleksɪz/	Babies are born with **reflexes** like sucking.
rooting reflex /ˈruːtɪŋ ˈriːfleks/	The **rooting reflex** makes a baby turn towards a touch on the cheek.
visual cliff /ˈvɪʒuːəl klɪf/	The **visual cliff** tests whether babies see depth.
critical period /ˈkrɪtɪkl ˈpɪərɪəd/	There is a **critical period** for learning to see in early childhood.
sensitive period /ˈsensɪtɪv ˈpɪərɪəd/	Early childhood is a **sensitive period** for learning languages.

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Word	Example
Adolescence /ˌædəˈlesəns/	**Adolescence** is the time between childhood and adulthood.
adolescent growth spurt /ˌædəˈlesənt grəʊθ spɜːt/	Teens grow fast during the **adolescent growth spurt**.
puberty /ˈpjuːbəti/	**Puberty** changes the body from child to adult.
primary sex characteristics /ˈpraɪməri seks ˌkærɪktəˈrɪstɪks/	The ovaries and testes are **primary sex characteristics**.
secondary sex characteristics /ˈsekəndəri seks ˌkærɪktəˈrɪstɪks/	A deeper voice is one of the **secondary sex characteristics**.
menopause /ˈmenəpɔːz/	**Menopause** is when a woman's periods stop.
Sex /seks/	**Sex** refers to the body's biology.
gender /ˈdʒendə/	**Gender** refers to roles and identity in society.
Gender roles /ˈdʒendə rəʊlz/	**Gender roles** are what a culture expects of men and women.
socialization /ˌsəʊʃəlaɪˈzeɪʃn/	**Socialization** teaches children the rules of their society.
Sexual orientation /ˈsekʃuːəl ˌɔːrɪənˈteɪʃn/	**Sexual orientation** is who a person is attracted to.
Piaget /ˈpaɪəgɪt/	**Piaget** said children think in four stages.
Sensorimotor stage /ˈsensɔːrɪməʊtə steɪdʒ/	In the **sensorimotor stage**, babies learn by touching and tasting.

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object permanence /ˈɒbdʒekt ˈpɜːmənəns/	**Object permanence** means knowing a hidden toy still exists.
Preoperational stage /prɪəʊˈpreɪʃənl steɪdʒ/	In the **preoperational stage**, children use words and pretend play.
egocentrism /ˈiːgəʊsentrɪzəm/	**Egocentrism** means a young child cannot see things from another view.
conservation /ˌkɒnsəˈveɪʃn/	**Conservation** means knowing water is the same amount in a tall or short glass.
Concrete operational stage /ˈkɒŋkriːt ˌɒpəˈreɪʃənl steɪdʒ/	In the **concrete operational stage**, children think logically about real things.
Formal operational stage /ˈfɔːml ˌɒpəˈreɪʃənl steɪdʒ/	In the **formal operational stage**, teens can think about ideas and “what if”. “what if”
Vygotsky /vaɪˈgɒtski/	**Vygotsky** said children learn through help from others.
zone of proximal development /zəʊn ɒv ˈprɒksɪml dɪˈveləpmənt/	The **zone of proximal development** is what a child can do with help.
scaffolding /ˈskæfəʊldɪŋ/	**Scaffolding** is help that is slowly taken away as the child learns.
Dementia /dɪˈmenʃə/	**Dementia** makes memory and thinking worse.
Language /ˈlæŋgwɪdʒ/	**Language** lets us share ideas with words.
gestures /ˈdʒestʃəz/	Babies use **gestures** like pointing before they can talk.

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Word	Example
cooing /ˈkuːɪŋ/	Babies start **cooing** at about two months.
babbling /ˈbæblɪŋ/	**Babbling** sounds like “ba-ba-ba”. “ba-ba-ba”
one-word stage /wʌn wɜːd steɪdʒ/	In the **one-word stage**, a child says “milk” to mean “I want milk”. “milk” “I want milk”
telegraphic speech /ˌtelɪˈgræfɪk spiːtʃ/	“Want cookie” is **telegraphic speech**. “Want cookie”
overgeneralization /ˌəʊvəˌdʒenərəlaɪˈzeɪʃn/	Saying “goed” instead of “went” is **overgeneralization**. “goed” “went”
Ecological systems theory /ˌekəˈlɒdʒɪkl ˈsɪstəmz ˈθɪəri/	**Ecological systems theory** shows family, school and culture as rings around the child.
parenting styles /ˈpeərəntɪŋ staɪlz/	There are four main **parenting styles**.
authoritarian /ˌɔːθɔːrɪˈteərɪən/	**Authoritarian** parents set strict rules and give little warmth.
authoritative /ɔːˈθɒrɪtətɪv/	**Authoritative** parents set clear rules and are warm.
permissive /pəˈmɪsɪv/	**Permissive** parents are warm but set few rules.
Attachment /əˈtætʃmənt/	**Attachment** is the close bond between a baby and a carer.
strange situation /streɪndʒ ˌsɪtʃuːˈeɪʃn/	The **strange situation** tests how a baby reacts when the mother leaves.
secure attachment /sɪˈkjʊə əˈtætʃmənt/	A baby with **secure attachment** is happy when the mother comes back.

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Word	Example
avoidant /əˈvɔɪdənt/	An **avoidant** baby ignores the mother when she returns.
anxious /ˈæŋʃəs/	An **anxious** baby clings and is hard to calm.
disorganized /dɪˈsɔːgənaɪzd/	A **disorganized** baby acts confused when the mother returns.
Separation anxiety /ˌsepəˈreɪʃn æŋˈzaɪəti/	**Separation anxiety** makes a toddler cry when a parent leaves.
contact comfort /ˈkɒntækt ˈkʌmfət/	Harlow's monkeys chose the soft mother for **contact comfort**.
parallel play /ˈpærəlel pleɪ/	In **parallel play**, toddlers play side by side but not together.
pretend play /prɪˈtend pleɪ/	In **pretend play**, a box becomes a car.
Erikson /ˈerɪksn/	**Erikson** described eight stages of life.
psychosocial development /ˈsaɪkəʊsəʊʃl dɪˈveləpmənt/	**Psychosocial development** is how we grow through our relationships.
identity versus role confusion /aɪˈdentɪti ˈvɜːsɪz rəʊl kənˈfjuːʒn/	Teens face **identity versus role confusion**: "Who am I?" " "
Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) /ædˈvɜːs ˈtʃaɪldhʊd ekˈspɪərɪənsɪz/	**Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)**, like abuse, can harm health later.
behavioral perspective /bɪˈheɪvjərəl pəˈspektɪv/	The **behavioral perspective** looks at how we learn from rewards.

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Word	Example
Classical conditioning /ˈklæsɪkl kənˈdɪʃənɪŋ/	In **classical conditioning**, Pavlov's dogs drooled at a bell.
unconditioned stimulus (UCS) /ʌŋkənˈdɪʃnd ˈstɪmjʊləs/	Food is the **unconditioned stimulus (UCS)**.
unconditioned response (UCR) /ʌŋkənˈdɪʃnd rɪˈspɒns/	Drooling at food is the **unconditioned response (UCR)**.
neutral stimulus /ˈnjuːtrəl ˈstɪmjʊləs/	At first, the bell is a **neutral stimulus**.
conditioned stimulus (CS) /kənˈdɪʃnd ˈstɪmjʊləs/	After training, the bell is a **conditioned stimulus (CS)**.
conditioned response (CR) /kənˈdɪʃnd rɪˈspɒns/	Drooling at the bell is the **conditioned response (CR)**.
Acquisition /əkwɪˈsɪʃn/	**Acquisition** is when the dog first learns the link.
Extinction /ekˈstɪŋkʃn/	**Extinction** happens when the bell no longer comes with food.
spontaneous recovery /spɒnˈteɪnɪəs rɪˈkʌvəri/	**Spontaneous recovery** brings back the drooling after a rest.
Generalization /ˌdʒenərəlaɪˈzeɪʃn/	**Generalization** makes the dog drool at similar sounds.
stimulus discrimination /ˈstɪmjʊləs dɪˌskrɪmɪˈneɪʃn/	**Stimulus discrimination** means the dog drools only at the right bell.
higher-order conditioning /ˈhaɪə ˈɔːdə kənˈdɪʃənɪŋ/	In **higher-order conditioning**, a light paired with the bell also causes drooling.

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taste aversion /teɪst əˈvɜːʃn/	After food poisoning, a **taste aversion** makes you avoid that food.
Habituation /ˌhæbɪtʃuːˈeɪʃn/	**Habituation** reduces a response after repeated harmless stimulation.
Operant conditioning /ˈɒpərənt kənˈdɪʃənɪŋ/	In **operant conditioning**, rewards and punishments change behaviour.
Reinforcement /ˌriːɪnˈfɔːsmənt/	**Reinforcement** makes a behaviour happen more.
punishment /ˈpʌnɪʃmənt/	**Punishment** makes a behaviour happen less.
Positive /ˈpɒzɪtɪv/	**Positive** means something is added.
negative /ˈnegətɪv/	**Negative** means something is taken away.
negative reinforcement /ˈnegətɪv ˌriːɪnˈfɔːsmənt/	Turning off a loud alarm is **negative reinforcement** for getting up.
primary reinforcer /ˈpraɪməri ˌriːɪnˈfɔːsə/	Food is a **primary reinforcer**.
secondary reinforcer /ˈsekəndəri ˌriːɪnˈfɔːsə/	Money is a **secondary reinforcer**.
Shaping /ˈʃeɪpɪŋ/	**Shaping** teaches a dog a trick step by step.
successive approximations /səkˈsesɪv əˌprɒksɪˈmeɪʃnz/	**Successive approximations** reward each small step closer to the goal.
Reinforcement schedules /ˌriːɪnˈfɔːsmənt ˈʃedjuːlz/	**Reinforcement schedules** decide when rewards are given.

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Word	Example
Continuous reinforcement /kənˈtɪnjuːəs ˌriːɪnˈfɔːsmənt/	**Continuous reinforcement** rewards every correct response.
Partial reinforcement /ˈpɑːʃl ˌriːɪnˈfɔːsmənt/	**Partial reinforcement** rewards only some responses.
fixed-ratio /fɪkst ˈreɪʃɪəʊ/	A **fixed-ratio** schedule rewards every 10th sale.
variable-ratio /ˈveərɪəbl ˈreɪʃɪəʊ/	A slot machine uses a **variable-ratio** schedule.
fixed-interval /fɪkst ˈɪntəvl/	A weekly pay cheque is a **fixed-interval** schedule.
variable-interval /ˈveərɪəbl ˈɪntəvl/	Checking for messages follows a **variable-interval** schedule.
Superstitious behavior /ˌsuːpəˈstɪʃəs bɪˈheɪvjə/	Wearing lucky socks is **superstitious behavior**.
Learned helplessness /lɜːnd ˈhelpləsnəs/	**Learned helplessness** makes an athlete believe that trying is pointless.
Social learning theory /ˈsəʊʃl ˈlɜːnɪŋ ˈθɪəri/	**Social learning theory** says we learn by watching others.
observation /ɒbzəˈveɪʃn/	In an **observation**, the researcher watches behaviour.
modeling /ˈmɒdəlɪŋ/	Children learn by **modeling** their parents.
Insight learning /ˈɪnsaɪt ˈlɜːnɪŋ/	**Insight learning** is the “aha!” moment.
Latent learning /ˈleɪtənt ˈlɜːnɪŋ/	**Latent learning** shows up only when there is a reason to use it.
cognitive map /ˈkɒgnɪtɪv mæp/	The rats built a **cognitive map** of the maze.

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Word	Example
nature and nurture /ˈneɪtʃə ænd ˈnɜːtʃə/	**Nature and nurture** both shape a child.
cohort effect /ˈkəʊhɔːt ɪˈfekt/	A **cohort effect** comes from growing up at the same time.
Gross motor skills /ɡrəʊs ˈməʊtə skɪlz/	Running and jumping are **gross motor skills**.
fine motor skills /faɪn ˈməʊtə skɪlz/	Writing and using scissors are **fine motor skills**.
imprinting /ɪmˈprɪntɪŋ/	In **imprinting**, baby ducks follow the first moving thing they see.
Menarche /ˈmenɑːtʃ/	**Menarche** is a girl's first period.
spermarche /ˈspɜːmɑːtʃ/	**Spermarche** is a boy's first ejaculation.
schemas /ˈskiːməz/	Children use **schemas** to sort things into groups.
Assimilation /əˌsɪmɪˈleɪʃn/	**Assimilation** fits new things into old ideas: a child calls a horse a "big dog". "。
accommodation /əˌkɒməˈdeɪʃn/	**Accommodation** means changing your ideas to fit new facts.
reversibility /rɪˌvɜːsəˈbɪlɪti/	**Reversibility** means knowing that an action can be undone.
Animism /ˈænɪmɪzəm/	**Animism**: a child thinks the moon follows them.
Theory of mind /ˈθɪəri ɒv maɪnd/	**Theory of mind** lets a child know others can believe something false.

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Word	Example
Phonemes /ˈfəʊniːmz/	**Phonemes** are the smallest sounds, like /b/ and /k/. /b/ /k/
morphemes /ˈmɔːfiːmz/	**Morphemes** are the smallest parts with meaning, like “un-“ and “-s”. “un-” “-s”
Semantics /səˈmæntɪks/	**Semantics** is the meaning of words.
syntax /ˈsɪntæks/	**Syntax** is the order of words in a sentence.
grammar /ˈgræmə/	Good **grammar** makes your sentences correct and clear. `
microsystem /ˈmaɪkrəʊsɪstəm/	The **microsystem** is the child’s family and classroom.
mesosystem /ˈmesəsɪstəm/	The **mesosystem** links home and school.
exosystem /ˈeksəʊsɪstəm/	The **exosystem** includes a parent’s workplace.
macrosystem /ˈmækrəsɪstəm/	The **macrosystem** is the wider culture.
chronosystem /ˈkrɒnəsɪstəm/	The **chronosystem** is changes over time, like moving home.
Temperament /ˈtemprəmənt/	**Temperament** is a baby’s natural mood and energy.
imaginary audience /ɪˈmædʒɪnəri ˈɔːdiəns/	The **imaginary audience** makes teens feel everyone is watching them.
personal fable /ˈpɜːsənl ˈfeɪbl/	The **personal fable** makes a teen feel no one else understands.
social clock /ˈsəʊʃl klɒk/	The **social clock** says when people “should” marry or have children. “ ”

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emerging adulthood /ɪˈmɜːdʒɪŋ əˈdʌlthʊd/	**Emerging adulthood** is the time from about 18 to 25. 18 25
achievement /əˈtʃiːvmənt/	Identity **achievement** comes after exploring and then choosing.
moratorium /ˌmɔːrəˈtɔːrɪəm/	In **moratorium**, a young person explores without choosing yet.
foreclosure /fɔːˈkləʊʒə/	In **foreclosure**, a young person chooses without exploring, often following parents.
diffusion /dɪˈfjuːʒn/	In identity **diffusion**, a young person has not explored or chosen.
biological preparedness /ˌbaɪəˈlɒdʒɪkl prɪˈpeədnəs/	**Biological preparedness** makes us learn to fear snakes easily.
Counterconditioning /ˈkaʊntəkəndɪʃənɪŋ/	**Counterconditioning** links a feared thing with something calm.
law of effect /lɔː ɒv ɪˈfekt/	The **law of effect** says rewarded actions are repeated.
Instinctive drift /ɪnˈstɪŋktɪv drɪft/	**Instinctive drift** is when trained animals go back to natural habits.

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