

3.6 Social-Emotional Development Across the Lifespan

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 11 marks

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **attachment** 依恋 and social development.

You must be able to:

- describe the attachment styles identified in the **strange situation** 陌生情境
- state what research on contact comfort demonstrated
- describe the main **parenting styles** 教养方式 and their associations
- state what a **psychosocial stage** account proposes

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Attachment styles

In the strange situation, infants are observed through separations and reunions. **Secure** infants explore, are distressed by separation and are comforted on reunion. **Insecure** patterns include avoiding the caregiver or being anxious and hard to soothe.

■ Contact comfort

Classic primate research showed infants preferring a soft surrogate to a wire one that supplied food, indicating that attachment depends on comfort and contact rather than feeding alone.

■ Parenting styles

Authoritative: high demands with high responsiveness; associated with the best outcomes. **Authoritarian**: high demands, low responsiveness. **Permissive**: low demands, high responsiveness. These are correlational associations, not proven causes.

■ Psychosocial stages

Development is described as a sequence of social tasks, each posing a conflict —trust, identity, generativity —whose resolution shapes later functioning. The value of the account is the framework, not a fixed timetable.

2 Practice

2.1 Describe the behaviour of a securely attached infant in the strange situation. [2]

2.2 State what contact comfort research demonstrated. [2]

2.3 A parent sets clear rules and explains them, and responds warmly to the child.

(a) Name the parenting style. [1]

(b) State one caution about inferring its effects. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 An infant who ignores the caregiver on reunion shows [1]

- **A** secure attachment
- **B** an insecure-avoidant pattern
- **C** contact comfort
- **D** generativity

3.2 Parenting-style findings are correlational, which means they cannot establish [1]

- **A** that an association exists
- **B** that the style causes the outcome
- **C** the direction of the association
- **D** the sample size

3.3 A study finds that children of authoritative parents have better school outcomes.

(a) State one alternative explanation for the association. [1]

(b) Explain what evidence would be needed for a causal claim.

[2]

4 Go further

- work through the **3.6 Social-Emotional Development Across the Lifespan** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Development and Learning** section of the AP Psychology handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 explores while the caregiver is present; is distressed by separation and comforted on reunion.

2.2 infants preferred a soft surrogate to a wire one that provided food, showing attachment depends on comfort and contact rather than feeding alone.

2.3 (a) authoritative. (b) the association is correlational, so the style may not be the cause.

3.1 B. avoiding the caregiver on reunion defines the insecure-avoidant pattern.

3.2 B. correlation cannot establish causation.

3.3 (a) an underlying factor such as family resources may produce both. (b) an experimental or longitudinal design with controls for confounding variables that shows the outcome changing when parenting changes.