Question 1

Assessment criteria
- show interest and enthusiasm in their learning tasks
- Explain concepts in own word
- Correct interpretation of the concepts

Explain the following concepts in your own words. Do not write more than 10 sentences per concept.

(a) Creativity
(b) Career identity
(c) Adolescent depression
(d) Self concept
(e) Juvenile delinquency

Question 2

Assessment criteria
- show interest and enthusiasm in their learning tasks
- Identification of the different characteristics
- Discussion of the characteristics

The crux of Piaget’s approach to cognitive development is that learners’ development follows an orderly pattern.

Name and discuss the characteristics of the formal-operational phase.

Question 3

Assessment criteria
- Show interest and enthusiasm in their learning tasks
- Motivation and discussion of various functions.

The peer group fulfils important functions in the life of the adolescent. Do you agree with this statement? Substantiate your answer.
Question 1

Explain the following concepts in your own words. Do not write more than 10 sentences per concept. 10X5

(a) Creativity
According to Van der Zanden (1980), creativity refers to that which is new and useful. Since novelty and utility are a matter of subjective opinion, some researchers recommend that reference be made instead to divergent and convergent thought, since typically, creative people’s thinking is divergent. Guilford proposed his model of the intellect in the early 1950s. He maintained that the intellect embraces several cognitive operations, including those of divergent and convergent thought (Van der Zanden 1980; Jordan & Porath 2006). Therefore, creativity refers to a person who identifies the problem, seeks solutions and formulates hypotheses about possible solutions, which are then put into practice. However, the real key to being creative lies in what one does with one’s knowledge! The Nobel Prize-winning physician Albert Szent-Györgyi put it well when he said: ‘Discovery (creativity) consists of looking at the same thing as everyone else and thinking something different’ (Von Oech 1990).

(b) Career identity
Whereas young children usually base their career choices on that with which they are familiar, or on fantasies (policeman, doctor, educator, ballet dancer, astronaut), adolescents begin to form an increasingly realistic conception of their own abilities and interests, with the result that their career interests also become gradually more realistic.

The acquisition of a career identity takes place in two phases (Super, in Steinberg & Belsky 1991):
• During the first phase, from approximately 14 to 18 years of age, the adolescent begins to think in broad categories of work without taking any definite decisions. This is referred to as the crystallisation phase because the adolescent begins to form ideas about careers and to gather information about categories of careers.
• In the second or specification phase, the adolescent’s choices are narrowed down increasingly to more specific careers. By the end of this period, extending from approximately 18 to 21 years of age, the adolescent has usually chosen a career that forms an important part of his or her identity.

(c) Adolescent depression
Depression can be defined as a serious psychological disorder marked by sadness, helplessness and hopelessness (Rice & Dolgin 2008). In the past several decades there have been enormous changes in the recognition of depression as a problem of adolescence. Perspectives have changed from an initial view that depression could not occur in children and adolescents to an acknowledgement of depression as a major mental health concern among children and adolescents. Furthermore, it is now widely recognised that depression during adolescence has a tendency to occur with other disorders such as internalising problems (e.g. anxiety) and externalising problems (e.g. aggression) (Compas, Connor & Hinden 1998). A recent study pointed out that depression increases in children of school-going age (Jensen 2000a) and that depression is quite common during adolescence (Rice & Dolgin 2008).

Depression may make adolescents vulnerable to other problems: they may experience scholastic problems, interpersonal and social problems, and they may contemplate and attempt suicide. These adolescents are in need of our help; we must try to understand what adolescent depression is, what may cause it and what we can do to help and support them.

(d) Self concept
The self concept is complex—physical self, personal self, family self, social self, moral self
The self concept is dynamic in the sense that it may change from time to time and form situation to situation.
- the self concept is also dynamic in that it exerts a dynamic influence on the behaviour of the individual
- Every experience and ever situation that adolescents find pleasant or unpleasant has an influence on the forming of their self-concept actively influence the way in which they experience any given situation.

Positive self image / self concept (p.84-85)
- parental warmth, concern / interest are important in helping adolescents build a positive ego identity.
- use a democratic, authoritative, disciplinary style.
- consistently strict and demand high standards—but sufficiently flexible and allows deviations from rules if need to be.
- value and accept all learners.
- make standards of evaluation clear.
- model appropriate methods of self – criticism and self reward.
- encourage them to compile with their own prior levels of achievement rather than with each other.
- Provide opportunities for all learners to experience success.

(e) Juvenile delinquency

It refers to the violation of the law or established code of conduct, by a young person, usually under 18 years of age. It therefore refers to criminal behaviour committed by minors.

Juvenile delinquent – refers to the person violating the law. The term was established to avoid the disgrace and stigma of the classification of ‘criminal’, as well as to separate underage people and treat them differently from adult criminals.

According to Newman and Newman (1986), juvenile delinquents are thought to be:
- sufficiently mature to be somewhat responsible for their actions
- out of control
- in need of control, guidance and rehabilitation by society.

Delinquent behaviour can therefore be seen as an indication that the person engaging in it cannot be controlled by his or her parents and should therefore be controlled by means of society’s judicial system.

Various kinds of delinquents can be distinguished (Newman & Newman 1986). The different types of delinquency are not unrelated and overlapping takes place.

- The psychopathic delinquent. The personality of this delinquent is typically expressed in impulsiveness, absence of guilt feelings, an inability to learn from experience, and defiance.
- The neurotic delinquent. The behaviour of this delinquent emanates from psychological conflict and anxiety. It can also result from inadvertent parental fostering of antisocial behaviour or can be the result of ‘scapegoating’.
- The psychotic delinquent. This delinquent usually resorts to violence as a result of an inability to control personal impulses and exercise sound judgement.
- The organic delinquent. The two main causes of this kind of delinquency are mental retardation and brain damage. In the first case, low intelligence can disable a person’s judgement and make him or her the instrument of a brighter delinquent. Brain damage may interfere with behavioural control and may induce periodic outbursts of violence.
- The gang delinquent. Gang delinquency usually serves some social cause and fulfils the members’ need for status, resources and relationship. Accordingly, delinquent gangs often take the protection of members of society upon themselves.
- The socialised delinquent. A person in this category engages in delinquency in a subcultural environment where this type of social behaviour is encouraged. In such environments many persons (individuals or groups) are involved in illegal activities, because they acquire status and prestige through their antisocial behaviour (Manaster 1989). Socialised delinquency is common in resistance movements that advocate extreme left- or right-wing causes.
Question 2

**Assessment criteria**
- **show interest and enthusiasm in their learning tasks**
- **Identification of the different characteristics**
- **Discussion of the characteristics**

The crux of Piaget's approach to cognitive development is that learners' development follows an orderly pattern.

Name and discuss the characteristics of the formal-operational phase. (30)

**Characteristics of the formal-operational phase**

The characteristics of the formal-operational phase are **abstract thought, propositional thought, hypothetical-deductive thought and interpropositional thought.**

**Abstract thought**

A comparison between adolescents in the concrete-operational phase and those in the formal-operational phase shows that:

- Adolescents in the concrete-operational phase:
  - are more dependent on direct personal experience, and comments on any issue will be less sophisticated than those of the adolescent capable of formal-operational thought
  - have less advanced spatio-temporal mobility
  - are less critical about themselves.

- Adolescents in the formal-operational phase are capable of abstract thoughts dealing with abstract concepts and understanding abstract relationships. For example they:
  - think and reason about such concepts as love and hate, justice and injustice
  - comprehend relationships between such concepts as mass, energy and force
  - begin to display an understanding of the rationales, intentions and behaviours of other people and start to question them, Adolescents question and examine social, political and religious systems
  - have more advanced spatio-temporal mobility. They are capable of projecting into the past and the future, and of creating new, original situations
  - are far more critical about themselves. They constantly measure themselves against ideal models (for example the Barbie doll image) or against the peer group
  - are capable of reflecting on their own ideas, and they try to penetrate the conceptual world of others
• are extremely sensitive about the impression they make on others, Besides reflecting on their own ideas, adolescents try to enter imaginatively into the world of other people's ideas

• want to be part of the group

• are egocentric in that they think others are just as preoccupied with them as they are with themselves. This egocentricity differs from that displayed in the concrete-operational phase in that they persuade themselves that others share their favourite concerns. Adolescents' egocentrism manifests in the creation of an imaginary audience and a personal fable.

Adolescents imagine that other people are just as preoccupied with their appearance and behaviour as they are. They therefore react to an imaginary audience and are extremely self-conscious, and they also display a need for privacy.

The personal fable is closely related to the imaginary audience in that adolescents believe that they are important to their audience and that they are unique and singular as individuals. They believe, for example, that nobody has ever experienced as much agony over the break-up of a love affair as they have.

Egocentrism usually wanes towards the end of adolescence when adult roles and responsibilities are accepted. An adolescent whose thinking is still in the concrete-operational phase is not capable of abstract thought.

Propositional thought (the real compared to the possible)

Piaget sees the relationship between reality and possibility as the primary characteristic of the formal-operational phase. It is decisive for the other characteristics of this phase (Inhelder & Piaget 1958). Piaget also maintains that the possible is primary and the real secondary for the adolescent. Questions concerning the future now acquire immediacy and the formal-operational adolescent:

- adds concern about 'can' or 'maybe' to the present concern about the actual 'here-and-now'
- investigates certain accepted facts, formulates hypotheses and makes deductions
- is therefore analytical
- understands the arbitrary nature of methods better
- tries out alternative problem-solving methods
- thus has more dynamic thought processes
- takes longer to reach decisions
- engages in long conversations and arguments with confidante(s) about decisions.

In contrast, concrete-operational adolescents:

- cannot contemplate and deal with hypothetical and futuristic problems
- tend to adhere rigidly to a particular problem-solving method even if the correct solution cannot be found.
Propositional thought entails substitution of verbal statements for objects. Thus the importance of language for formal-operational thought can hardly be overestimated. Accordingly, adolescents with this mental capacity:

- are capable of understanding and making use of metaphor, satire and double meanings
- can appreciate and make use of subtle nuances of humour.

Education, experience and personality are important factors, however, in reaching this stage of mental competence. An adolescent who was relatively deprived of opportunities for language experience and discovery (in childhood) will therefore be at a relative disadvantage and this will be difficult to overcome.

**O Hypothetical-deductive/combinatory thought**

Adolescents who are capable of hypothetical-deductive thought can isolate all the variables involved in solving a problem systematically and then combine them to determine their individual or combined influence. Again, different variables are tested and the results compared. They are therefore capable of hypothetical-deductive reasoning.

Adolescents who have reached this phase are capable of formulating and testing hypotheses, after which results are compared. The adolescent proceeds deductively in a formal, scientific manner. By contrast, the adolescent in the concrete-operational phase tends to be unsystematic in dealing with the problem.

Hypothetical-deductive thought is important for the study of science and a prerequisite for researchers.

**O Interpropositional thought**

Adolescents who are capable of interpropositional logic can test for logical consistency, and can identify inconsistencies between statements (propositions). For example: All smokers die of cancer. David is a smoker. He will therefore die of cancer.

Interpropositional logic enables the adolescent to test these statements and, therefore, to conclude that they are not invariably true. Despite the logical validity of the statement, all smokers do not die of cancer. In addition to testing verbal statements, adolescents in this phase understand direct or indirect relationships.

Adolescents who reach the formal-operational phase begin to understand the inverse proportionality/balance between weight and distance without necessarily having to experiment with material objects to prove it. They comprehend intuitively that if one of two equal weights at opposite ends of the beam balanced on a fulcrum is increased it must be moved closer to the fulcrum to preserve a state of equilibrium. Adolescents in the concrete-operational phase would perform this experiment by trial and error.
**Assessment criteria**
- Show interest and enthusiasm in their learning tasks
- Motivation and discussion of various functions.

The peer group fulfils important functions in the life of the adolescent. Do you agree with this statement? Substantiate your answer. (20)

The peer group plays a crucial role in the socialisation of the adolescent. The following functions of the peer group are distinguishable (Vrey 1979; Monteith et al. 1988; Thom 1990):

**Emancipation**
The peer group offers adolescents a bridge that enables them to gradually gain independence from the parents. In their groups, adolescents are forced to stand on their own feet and make their own decisions. They also begin to share their thoughts and feelings with the peer group more than with their parents. If they are accepted into the group, they gain the security from it that they experienced earlier in the safe environment of their family life. They therefore translocate their safe base from the parental home to the peer group.

**Search for an individual identity**
During the emancipation process adolescents begin to realise that they must loosen the ties with their parents and live their lives as independent children. They have to prove themselves as individuals in their own right. According to Ausubel (1977), children have derived status which is granted to them by virtue of being the parents’ child, while adolescents attain primary status by their own efforts and through exerting their own abilities (Manaster 1989). The peer group offers adolescents the opportunity to develop primary status and serves as a source of feedback about personality, appearance and behaviour. The members of the group also help adolescents to resolve conflict within and about themselves and between themselves and others. Adolescents also attain self-knowledge, self-insight and self-evaluation in the group, and in all these ways the peer group contributes to adolescents’ forming of an own sense of identity.

Group identity also influences the development of a sense of individual identity. Thus a group with a high status and prestige will lend status and prestige to its individual members. Acceptance by the peer group leads to positive self-concept formation and self-acceptance. Rejection by the group will seriously prejudice the forming of self-concept and sense of identity.

**Social acceptability and support**
The peer group serves as a socialising agent and meets adolescents’ needs for comradeship and friendship. It gives them the opportunity to practise their social skills, form close friendships and communicate with members of the opposite sex. Acceptance by the group and popularity are highly important to them at this stage, because they fear loneliness, which they interpret as a symbol of social ostracism. The peer group’s acceptance and support of the adolescents’ behaviour, appearance and ideas often form a stark contrast with the criticism and disapproval of parents and society.

**The peer group as a reference and experimentation base**
The peer group acts as a reference in the sense that it helps members to find out how well or badly they are doing in life. Within the peer group, adolescents gain the opportunity to learn new roles and to experiment with them. Members therefore have the opportunity to experiment with behaviour patterns with the peer group as a reference framework, and to amend these when the feedback is negative.

Adolescents have the opportunity to assess the values and norms with which they have grown up against those of their peers, thus confirming and strengthening their values. If the group’s values do not coincide with those of the adolescents’ parents, however, they may begin to judge and question – or even reject – their parents’ judgement. The peer group is therefore a primary agent in the development of an outlook on life and the world at large.
**Competition**

In the peer group, adolescents have an opportunity to compete on an equal footing with members of their own age group for a place in society. In assessing themselves and others, adolescents find out what they are capable of in comparison with others. Healthy and moderate competition with peers is also an important preparation for adult life, which is highly competitive in all areas, especially in the occupational world.

**Social mobility**

The peer group in its various forms offers adolescents the opportunity to make contact with other adolescents who come from different backgrounds. Social mobility therefore concerns not only the different genders, but also relations between races and socio-economic classes. Adolescents can become better acquainted with each other in school, or through organised youth groups such as church and sports groups, and can influence each other in the same way.

**Recreation**

As a member of the group, adolescents can participate in sporting activities in groups. Adolescents’ greater dependence on and attraction to the peer group result in their spending almost all their leisure time with them, feeling intensely hurt and isolated when they are forbidden to go out with the group.

**Conformity**

As a result of adolescents’ need to be accepted, the motivation to conform to the group’s values, customs and fads increases. Although conforming behaviour is more common in adolescence than during any other phase, adolescents differ markedly from one another in the extent to which they conform.

The perception that conformity with the peer group is necessarily disadvantageous for adolescents is not correct. It is also not necessarily true that adolescents throw their parents’ values overboard and transfer their allegiance to the peer group. In cases where the social, economic, religious and educational values of the peer group correspond with those of adolescents’ own parents, conformity is beneficial to adolescents and will also be encouraged by the parents. Accordingly, adolescents tend to choose friends with the same background values as their own. Parents tend to emphasise popularity and success and encourage conformity, since popularity depends largely on group acceptance, in which case the rule of the group is supplementary to rather than in conflict with the parents’ needs.

Where the relationship between parents and their adolescents is completely dysfunctional, however, the adolescents may turn to the peer group for overall acceptance. Adolescents who conform to the peer group in all things, against the wishes and values of their own parents, are more a product of parental disregard than of the attractiveness of the peer group. Bronfenbrenner (in Jensen 1985) maintains that conforming children ‘turn to their age-mates less by choice than by default from the vacuum left by the withdrawal of parents and adults. The lives of such youths are filled with the undesired – and possibly undesirable – substitute of a ruling peer group.’