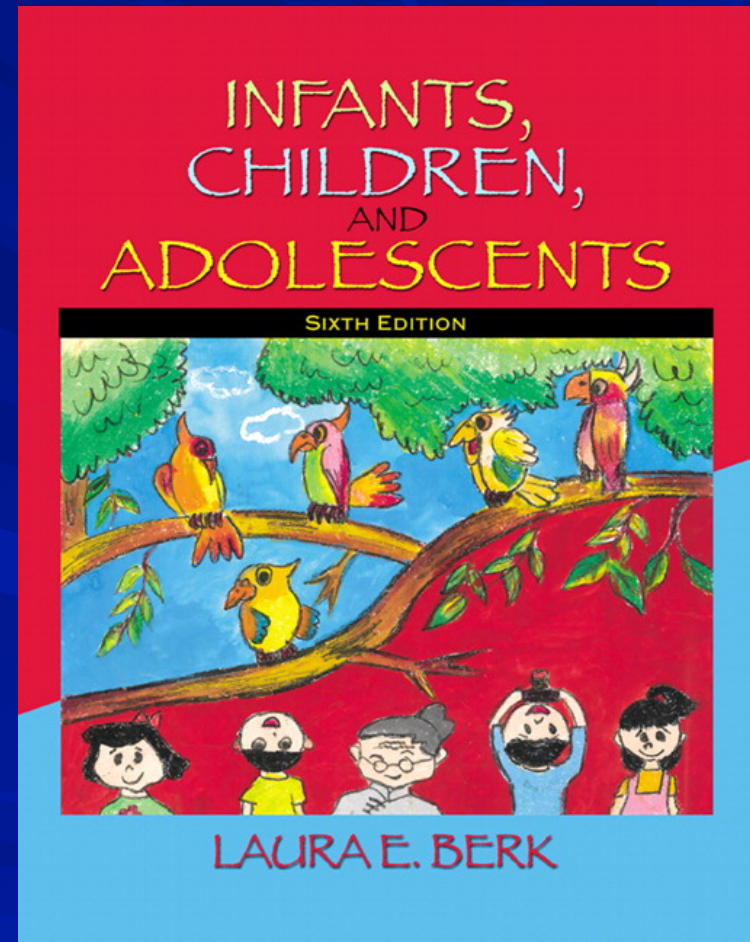


Chapter 12: Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood



Piaget's Theory: The Concrete Operational Stage

- Ages 7 to 11
- Thinking is more logical, flexible and organized
- *Cognitive maps* Mental Representation of an area (i.e. think of your house)
- Mental representations of larger spaces
- E.g., school



Key Information Processing Improvements

■ Increase in information-processing speed and capacity

i.e. Math and logic solutions are arrived at sooner
- Allows them to explore more complicated problems

■ Gains in Attention Selectivity

Allow themselves to inhibit unwanted or unproductive thought.

i.e. with increasing background noise volume, the children can focus on the problem at hand for a longer time



Planning

- Use of strategies to attend to a task
- E.g., Where's Waldo

Young children get frustrated with this task since they can't see waldo, but middle aged children use scanning techniques to search for waldo in the picture (up/down, left/right)

Memory Strategies

■ Rehearsal

- repetition *not seen in early childhood*

■ Organization

- Use of categories to remember items

■ Elaboration

- Creating relationships between objects

i.e. if a child has to remember two random words they may use nonsense relationships to remember the items:

1) Fish 2) Pipe

"The Fish was smoking a Pipe"

Language Development

- Numerous words in vocabulary
- Better understanding of meaning of words
- Able to choose from more than one possible word

i.e. they may say that they are "full" or they are "stuffed" interchangeably understanding that both mean the same thing

- Use of passive voice

i.e. the children can correctly use the past tense (no longer say "it broked", now they instead say "it is broken")

- Better/more clear communication skills