

Psychology Name \_\_\_\_\_ Development Piaget meets Santa

Directions: Match the stages of cognitive development with the correct observations, thoughts and feelings, and beliefs by placing a letter on the line in front of the statements that match. Note: All but one letter will be used more than once. Only one matches with formal operations. *Adapted from Halonen, J., & Gray, C. (2001). The Critical Thinking Companion for Introductory Psychology. New York: Worth Publishers.*

A. Sensorimotor  
Stage

B. Preoperational  
Stage

C. Concrete Operations  
Stage

D. Formal Operations  
Stage

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. A child at this stage would observe the consistency in Santa's clothing (red suit) and his demeanor (jolly, Ho-Ho-Ho).

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. A child at this stage might feel frightened or curious. He/she might cry at this oddly dressed hairy guy with a booming voice or he/she might reach out and want to touch the beard and the red suit.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. A child at this stage might begin to recognize the inconsistencies in Santa's appearance: "How *can there be so many Santas all over town?*" or "*Why are some Santa's thin?*"

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. A child at this stage might appreciate the cultural custom of Santa. They enjoy Santa as a symbol of seasonal celebration in keeping with their ability to understand abstract ideas. They recognize the importance of shared customs as a means of promoting closeness in their families and culture.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. A child at this stage would observe a mass of bright red and white, deep booming sounds, a soft lap, and a tickly

beard.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. A child at this stage would begin to think and question:

*How can Santa get to kids' homes all over the world in one night? How can reindeer fly? Just how does Santa keep track of good behavior????*

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. A child at this stage would believe in the physical reality of Santa--that Santa lives at the North

Pole and that he stays warm because he wears the red suit and boots, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. For a child at this stage, belief in Santa's existence is not an issue because they have no existing

organizing schema in which to put him.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. A child at this stage will feel disappointment at realizing that Santa doesn't exist; however, they

may experience new fun in assisting younger siblings in continuing their belief in Santa.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. A child at this stage, think that Santa has the ability to watch over them and determine who is

naughty and nice—this encourages a child at this stage to behave. A child at this stage is excited about encounters with Santa and may create obnoxiously long lists of wishes that he/she expects Santa to fulfill via his reindeer-drawn sleigh.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. A child at this stage will no longer believe in Santa, but may think it is important to

continue the tradition because having developed conservation abilities will realize that the number of presents will decrease if there are no "Santa" presents under the tree.