


Gender and Cognitive Development



Researchers investigate cognitive aspects of gender by asking children questions about themselves and boys and girls, men and women. Cognitive developmentalists believe that a child's understanding of gender will develop alongside its more general ability to comprehend the world. Consequently, children of different ages will answer questions about gender in characteristically different ways.

In the table below are some of the questions that a researcher might ask a child (in this case, a **boy**) about gender. Suggest how the answers might differ between a 3-year-old and a 7-year-old boy.

Question	3 year-old answer	7 year-old answer
Are you a boy or a girl?		
Is this a girl or a boy? 		
When you were a baby, were you a boy or a girl?		
When you grow up, will you be a mummy or a daddy?		
Could you ever be a mummy?		
If you wore a dress, would you be a girl?		