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### Unit 4 Essay Questions

Required Question:

Adolescence is a period of human development that typically occurs between the ages of 10 and 19. Throughout this period, young people go through numerous physical and psychological changes that shape their sense of self and form the foundation for their future as adults.

An important transformation that occurs during adolescence is puberty, a natural process that initiates sexual maturation in girls and physical changes in both genders. The onset of puberty typically occurs between the ages of 8 and 13 for girls, and between the ages of 9 and 14 for boys. During puberty, girls experience breast development, menstruation, and the growth of pubic and underarm hair. On the other hand, boys undergo growth of their testicles and penis, development of facial and body hair, and a deepening of their voice.

Another important change that takes place during adolescence is the growth spurt. Teenagers undergo a rapid (and irregular) increase in their height and weight, which usually happens around the age of 11 for girls and 13 for boys. This sudden growth is attributed to the release of growth hormones that encourage the development of bones and muscles. During this period, adolescents also experience changes in their body composition, characterized by a

reduction in body fat and an increase in muscle mass. This transformation is more evident in boys compared to girls.

In addition, adolescence is a crucial time for the development of the brain, occurring concurrently with changes in its structure and function that facilitate advanced cognitive skills like abstract thinking, planning, and decision-making. Alongside these developments, hormonal changes also take place, with biological males experiencing a surge in testosterone and females experiencing a surge in estrogen. These hormones have a substantial impact on both the body and mind, leading to changes in behavior and mood.

In conclusion, adolescence is a crucial stage of development that comes with a multitude of transitions for both the mind and body. The changes that occur during this period lay the groundwork for adulthood, shaping one's identity and influencing their future health and well-being.

Question 7:

Anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa are two distinct eating disorders that involve atypical eating behaviors and an unhealthy perception of one's body. Despite having similar characteristics, these disorders vary in terms of their symptoms and how severe they can be.

Anorexia nervosa is a type of eating disorder that is characterized by a strong fear of weight gain, even in cases where the individual is already underweight. Those suffering from anorexia nervosa often limit their food intake severely, which results in significant weight loss. Additionally, they may engage in harmful habits such as excessive exercising or purging through vomiting or laxative abuse. People with anorexia nervosa typically have a distorted body image, perceiving themselves to be overweight, despite being significantly underweight.

Bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder in which individuals binge eat large amounts of food and then purge through vomiting or the use of laxatives to get rid of the extra calories. Unlike individuals with anorexia nervosa, individuals with bulimia nervosa are typical of normal weight or slightly overweight. They may engage in binge eating and purging cycles several times a week or even daily. Individuals with bulimia nervosa also often have a distorted body image and may feel ashamed or guilty about their eating behaviors.

In summary, while both anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa involve distorted body image perceptions and abnormal eating behaviors, anorexia nervosa is characterized by severe food restriction leading to significant weight loss, while bulimia nervosa involves binge eating followed by purging behaviors

Question 5:

According to "Essentials of Lifespan and Development Sixth Edition" by John W. Santrock, alcohol and cigarette use are two of the most prevalent and dangerous health behaviors among adolescents.

When it comes to alcohol use, Santrock notes that the majority of adolescents try alcohol at least once, and many begin using it on a regular basis during adolescence. Adolescents may use alcohol for a variety of reasons, such as to fit in with their peers, to cope with stress, or simply to experience the effects of the substance. However, excessive alcohol use can lead to a variety of negative consequences, including impaired judgment, risky sexual behavior, and alcohol poisoning.

In contrast, cigarette use among adolescents has been on the decline in recent years, but it still remains a significant health concern. Santrock notes that cigarette use is often associated with peer pressure, stress, or the desire to look cool. However, cigarette use can lead to a variety of negative health outcomes, including lung cancer, heart disease, and respiratory problems.

There are also some key differences between alcohol and cigarette use among adolescents. For example, while adolescents may binge drink on occasion, cigarette smoking tends to be a more habitual behavior. Additionally, alcohol use is often associated with social situations, while cigarette use is more likely to occur alone.

Overall, both alcohol and cigarette use pose significant health risks for adolescents. Parents and caregivers should be aware of the dangers associated with these behaviors and take steps to educate adolescents about the risks and discourage their use.

## Question 4:

Teenage sexual activity and pregnancy are important issues in both the United States and Europe. While the rates of adolescent sexual activity have been declining in both regions, there are still notable differences in the prevalence and outcomes of teenage pregnancy.

In the United States, the rate of adolescent pregnancy is higher than in most European countries. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the birth rate among American teenagers in 2019 was 16.7 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19. In contrast, the average birth rate in European Union countries in 2017 was 6.9 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 (Eurostat, 2019). These statistics indicate that adolescent pregnancy is more common in the United States than in Europe.

Furthermore, teenage mothers in the United States are more likely to experience negative outcomes, such as dropping out of school and living in poverty, than their European counterparts. A study by the Guttmacher Institute (2016) found that the United States had the highest rate of adolescent childbirth among developed countries, with a rate of 18.9 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19. In comparison, the adolescent birth rate in Sweden, which has one of the lowest rates of adolescent pregnancy in Europe, was 4.2 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 in 2017 (Eurostat, 2019). This suggests that teenage mothers in the United States are at a greater risk of facing negative outcomes than those in European countries.

However, it is important to note that the incidence of adolescent sexual activity in the United States and Europe is similar. According to a study by the World Health Organization

(2016), the percentage of teenagers who have had sexual intercourse by the age of 18 is approximately 50% in both the United States and Europe. This suggests that while there are differences in the prevalence and outcomes of teenage pregnancy, the rates of sexual activity among adolescents are relatively similar in both regions.

In conclusion, while rates of adolescent sexual activity have been decreasing in both the United States and Europe, there are notable differences in the prevalence and outcomes of teenage pregnancy. The United States has a higher rate of adolescent pregnancy than most European countries and teenage mothers in the United States are more likely to face negative outcomes than those in Europe. However, the incidence of adolescent sexual activity is similar in both regions. It is important for policymakers to address the root causes of teenage pregnancy and provide education and resources to reduce its incidence and negative outcomes in both the United States and Europe.

## Question 16:

Attachment and autonomy are two crucial aspects of human development that are intricately linked. Attachment refers to the emotional bond that a child develops with their primary caregiver, typically their mother, during the early years of life. Autonomy, on the other hand, is the child's ability to become independent and make their own decisions as they grow older. In this essay, we will explore the relationship between attachment and autonomy, and evaluate the claim that secure attachment promotes personal autonomy.

According to Santrock (2019), a secure attachment bond is characterized by a child's ability to seek comfort and reassurance from their caregiver when they feel anxious or distressed. A secure attachment bond is formed when a caregiver consistently responds to the child's needs in a sensitive and responsive manner. This type of attachment bond provides a secure base from which the child can explore their environment and develop their sense of autonomy.

Research suggests that children who develop a secure attachment bond with their caregiver are more likely to have higher levels of autonomy as they grow older (Cohn & Tronick, 1987). This is because a secure attachment bond provides the child with a sense of security and trust in their caregiver, which allows them to feel more confident in exploring their environment and making their own decisions. On the other hand, children who develop an insecure attachment bond with their caregiver may have difficulty developing autonomy, as they may feel anxious or unsure when their caregiver is not present.

However, it is important to note that the relationship between attachment and autonomy is complex and can be influenced by many factors, such as culture and individual temperament. For example, in some cultures, a strong attachment bond with the mother may be seen as more important than developing independence and autonomy (Santrock, 2019). Additionally, some children may have a more naturally independent temperament, which can lead to earlier and more rapid development of autonomy regardless of their attachment style (Cassidy & Shaver, 2016).

In conclusion, attachment and autonomy are closely related aspects of human development, with a secure attachment bond promoting the development of personal autonomy. However, the relationship between these two aspects is complex and can be influenced by various factors. As such, it is important to consider individual and cultural differences when evaluating the relationship between attachment and autonomy

## Question 22:

Ethnicity and race are significant aspects of human diversity, and they can shape individuals' experiences and opportunities throughout their lives. Researchers and laypeople alike must be sensitive to differences between and within ethnic groups to avoid perpetuating harmful stereotypes and biases. Failure to do so can lead to various forms of harm, including discrimination, prejudice, and inequality.

One way in which researchers and laypeople harm ethnic groups is through essentialism, which is the belief that members of a group share innate, unchanging characteristics. Essentialism can lead to stereotypes that reinforce cultural prejudices and biases. It is important to note that these stereotypes are often based on incomplete and inaccurate information. For instance, some researchers and laypeople have promoted the stereotype that all Asians are naturally intelligent, ignoring the diverse experiences and backgrounds of people from this group (Santrock, 2020).

Another way in which researchers and laypeople harm ethnic groups is through neglecting individual differences within groups. When individuals from an ethnic group are treated as a homogenous group, it can result in overlooking their unique experiences and needs. This neglect can lead to stereotyping and stigmatization, especially for those who do not fit the perceived norm for their ethnic group. For instance, African Americans who speak "proper" English are sometimes accused of "acting white" or being inauthentic, while those who speak in

a dialect or vernacular may be stigmatized for not conforming to mainstream language norms (Santrock, 2020).

Researchers and laypeople must also be mindful of the harm caused by cultural appropriation, which occurs when aspects of a minority culture are taken and used by members of the dominant culture without permission or recognition. Examples of cultural appropriation include wearing a headdress as a costume or decorating a bedroom with a dreamcatcher. Cultural appropriation can be harmful because it reduces the original culture to a mere commodity, and it ignores the historical and cultural significance of the artifact or tradition (Boucher, 2019).

In conclusion, researchers and laypeople alike can cause harm when they fail to respect differences between and within ethnic groups. Essentialism, neglect of individual differences, and cultural appropriation are some of the ways in which harm can occur. To avoid perpetuating stereotypes and biases, it is essential to recognize the diversity within and between ethnic groups and to promote a culture of inclusivity, respect, and understanding.

Question 24:

It is important to know how to respond appropriately when faced with a potentially suicidal individual. According to Santrock (2019), suicidal behavior can be influenced by a variety of factors, including mental illness, substance abuse, family and relationship issues, and past traumatic experiences.

If I was in a situation with a potentially suicidal individual, the first step I'd do is take the situation seriously and provide a listening ear. As suggested by the National Institute of Mental Health (2021), one should express empathy and avoid judgemental statements, and provide reassurance that help is available. One should also ask direct questions to gauge the level of suicidal ideation and intent, while remaining calm and non-confrontational.

However, it is important that I don't promise confidentiality or secrecy, as this may lead to a lack of action that could endanger the individual's life. Instead, I would take immediate action and seek help from a mental health professional, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist, or a crisis intervention service, such as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) or Crisis Text Line (741741).

It is also important not to leave the individual alone, especially if they express a specific plan or means of suicide. I'd remove any means of harm, such as firearms or medications, and stay by their side until help arrives. Additionally, I wouldn't try to handle the situation alone as I'm not trained to do so. As emphasized by the American Psychological Association (2021), seeking help from a trained professional is crucial in managing a suicidal crisis.

In conclusion, being in a situation with a potentially suicidal individual can be overwhelming and challenging, but taking appropriate steps can help to prevent harm. One should take the situation seriously, provide a listening ear, ask direct questions, seek immediate help, and avoid handling the situation alone.

## Collection of Citations for All Essays:

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