

## **Examples for Piaget's Theories During the Pre-Operational Stage:**

*\*Keep in mind that the ages presented for each stage is a rough hypothesis*

### **Sensorimotor Stage (0-2 years)**

#### **Object Permanence –**

Example #1

A teacher and child are playing with a ball. The teacher holds the ball up in the air and the child reaches for it. The teacher holds the ball in front of the child and she reaches for it. The teacher hides the ball behind her back and the child looks away and crawls to a nearby puzzle to play and does not try to look for the ball behind the teacher's back. A few weeks later the teacher and child are playing the same game, however this time when the teacher hides the ball behind her back the child smiles and crawls behind the teacher's back to retrieve the ball, thus demonstrating object permanence.

### **Pre-Operational Stage (2-7 years)**

#### **Animism –**

Example # 1

A child closes her finger in a box and hurts herself. She gets mad at the box thinking it tried to hurt her.

Example # 2

A child mentions that a tree is sad because it's losing its leaves.

#### **Egocentrism –**

Example # 1

You invite a child to show their drawing to the rest of the class at meeting. The child excitedly stands up and holds up his drawing facing him, instead of the group, and begins to explain it to his peers.

Example #2

While examining a 3-dimensional block structure together, the child assumes that you have the same perspective she does even though you are on the other side of the structure.

Example # 3

Child A is crying and upset. Child B notices this and grabs Child B's favorite lovie to give to Child A, thinking since lovie helps Child B it will help Child A. *(Interesting to note, you will probably observe this in your children but instead of bringing their lovies to the sad child they seek out the sad child's lovie to bring.)*

*\*Egocentrism is commonly misunderstood to mean that the child is selfish, only thinking about him/herself and/or that s/he is the center of the universe, that everything revolves around him/her. Instead it is when one literally thinks that others*

*see, feel, hear, and experience the world in the exact same way – adults still struggle with aspects of egocentrism.*

## **Centration –**

### Example #1

A child complains that there is no paint left in her big cup, even though there is enough left for her to still paint with. In this situation the child is only considering how full the bowl appears to be as an indicator of having paint. If you transferred the little paint that was left to a smaller bowl, the child would be satisfied because then it would appear more full.

### Example #2

A child is unable to distinguish whether a group of wooden blocks contains more wooden blocks or more round blocks because he is only focusing on the characteristic of the block being wooden OR being round.

### Example # 3

A classic experimental demonstration of centration is to show a pre-operational child two equivalent glasses of liquid and ask the child if one glass has more liquid or if they are the same. The child should agree they are the same. Then pour one glass of liquid in plain view of the child into a different sized container (taller and more slender than the first) and ask the child again. A pre-operational will be persuaded by the change in the height of the container and fail to take into account the corresponding change in width, and will now respond that there is more liquid in the taller container. – *Check out the You Tube Video to see more!*

## **Concrete Operations Stage (7-11 years)**

### **Conservation –**

#### Example # 1

A child maintains that two rows of four blocks are still the same even after one of the rows has been spread apart to appear “bigger.”