AP Psychology Essay Questions
Chapter 13: Life-Span Development

1. For many years, psychoanalysts and behaviorists were in rare agreement on the origins of attachment behavior, both linking it to feeding. Why was it that the psychoanalytic and behavioral approaches drew this conclusion? Explain how both theories were proven wrong in a series of experiments performed by Harry Harlow. Be sure to include a clear description of his methods, his findings, and the implication of these findings for human development.

2. Mary Ainsworth recognized that children vary in their responses to separation, finding that children respond to their mothers' absence and return in three basic ways. Describe the “Strange Situation” procedure Ainsworth employed to demonstrate these differences. Following that, identify and define each of these three attachment styles. Finally, describe the more recently identified “disorganized” attachment style.

3. If one wants to know how development occurs beyond early adulthood, one must look to Erik Erikson. What were his stages of development that related to adults? Do you think he is missing anything? Does his theory explain you, for example? If not, what needs to be added?

4. One of the most remarkable aspects of development is that a single cell, forged by the union of a sperm and an egg, contains the blueprint for an organism that will emerge complete with billions of specialized cells several months later. Identify and discuss the three stages of development that take place from conception to birth.

5. What is a teratogen? List at least four (4) that were mentioned in the chapter. Do you think a pregnant woman should drink? Explain your answer by making reference to what was stated in the textbook.

6. Identify and describe the four stages of Piaget's theory.

7. In recent years, Piaget's theory of cognitive development has come under fire. Discuss the four main criticisms this theory has received.

8. The Information-Processing approach argues that there are a number of variables that affect cognitive development. What are those variables? Discuss each briefly.

9. Without a doubt, one of the most famous developmental psychologists is Jean Piaget. What did he have to say about how children develop morals? How do they start out and how do they end up? Do you think it's true?

10. One of the most widely discussed theories of moral development is that proposed by Lawrence Kohlberg. What are his 3 levels of morality? Provide an example for each level. Also, make sure you identify each stage within each level.