

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

There are many theories that describe personality and many speculations as to how it develops. The following are some popular theories for consideration:

1. Murray and Kluckhohn described four types of personality determinants:
 - a. Inherited and predisposed characteristics such as gender, height, facial features, body chemistry, body build, etc.
 - b. General culture in which a child is reared, and all the cultural sub-groups the child is exposed to such as family, socio-economic status, peer group, friends, religious background, geographical location, etc.
 - c. The role in which a person finds themselves or assumes; in a different situation personality traits change. Example: A boy who feels self-conscious about writing a poem in English acts differently when he is on the football field as the captain of the team.
 - d. Situational determinants are all of the experiences of a person which contribute to the development of his/her personality. This includes not only those experiences that happen over and over, but also traumatic or especially significant single experiences that alter the entire course of a life.
2. Greek mythology is full of wonderful stories of men and women who had unique strengths and limitations due to the influences of their many different gods.
3. Astrologers embraced the twelve signs of the zodiac as the determining factors in personality, substituting planetary power for the powers of the gods.
4. The Chinese Zodiac associated personality with the year a child was born such as the year of the rooster, dog, dragon, etc.
5. Elements of nature, such as earth, air, fire, and water, have also been used to categorize a person's personality.
6. Cultural traditions, such as superstitions, urban legends, and other myths or experiences, are often used to govern living patterns and thus influence personality development.

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7. The Color Code personality elements as outlined by author, Taylor Hartman:

"Personality is innate. Every child is born with a unique set of personality traits-- often quite different from those of siblings. Human personalities are like fingerprints, no two are alike. Personality is complete at conception. It is present along with various genetically inherited traits; however, it is not inherited from one's parents, nor is it shaped by environment.

Personality is that core of thoughts and feelings inside you that tells you how to conduct yourself. It is a checklist of responses, based on innate values and strongly held beliefs. It directs your emotional as well as your rational reaction to every life experience.

Personality points each of us in a particular direction and makes us feel uncomfortable when we deviate from its assigned route."

Hartman's test lists behaviors. Behaviors are determined by needs and wants. The answers help to categorize the student's needs and wants by color.

The information that follows will help students understand the motive for their actions. The Hartman theory states that motives, needs and wants are neither good or bad. They are neutral. They become healthy or unhealthy depending on how they relate to the truth. Every color has strengths and weaknesses. Most of us are more than one color, but our "core" color (the color with the highest score), determines our motives and sets our personality.

(It is recommended that the teacher review Hartman's book for more complete information on this subject before introducing and/or discussing this theory.)

NOTE: The teacher may want to explore birth order as a means to understanding personality development. This information can be found in UNIT II: Teenagers and Families, TOPIC C: Teens and Siblings.