Piaget

- **Maturation**: the biological growth process that enable orderly changes in behavior, relatively uninfluenced by experience
- Piaget argued that humans go through specific stages of cognitive development and intellectual progression
  - As we grow, we create **schemas**
  - We are constantly striving for **cognitive equilibrium**: harmony between our thought processes and our environments
- Proposed that we adapt to new experiences through **assimilation** (interpret through our existing schemas) and **accommodation** (adjusting to new experiences and schemas)
  - Assimilation → disequilibrium → accommodation
- His theory is based on the idea of a constructivist approach to learning
  - The child learns via his/her experiences of the world, using and building on blocks of knowledge
- More nature than nurture
- Schemas is important in cognitive development as it allows for the organization of knowledge in order to understand the world
- Piaget thought that children are born with an inherited mental structure that is the basis for all subsequent learning and knowledge
  - At each stage the child will acquire more complex skills and abilities
  - They will gradually progress through one stage into the next one
  - = maturation-based theory
- Constructivist approach → cognitive development is dependent on how the individual child interacts with the social and physical world

**Four stage theory of cognitive development:**

1. Sensorimotor stage
   a. Birth to age 2
   b. Babies experience the world through their senses
   c. Have to see something to know it exists
   d. Live fully in the present
   e. Lack object permanence (major achievements)
2. Preoperational (age 2 to 6-7)
   a. **Egocentrism**: can only see the world in their own view
   b. Hard imagining other people’s point of view
   c. Mentally represent objects
   d. Kids don’t understand the concept of conservation and the notion of reversibility
      i. Deal with **centration**: a child’s tendency to fixate on just one aspect of a problem or object
   e. Kids form the **theory of mind**: the ability to understand other’s feelings, thoughts and perceptions - as well as their own - and also how to predicting behavior