

Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development
The Sensorimotor Period

Reflexes <i>Birth to 1 month</i>
The baby primarily responds to his environment through pre-conditioned reflexes. Some of these reflexes become refined as the baby learns that, for example, some objects are "suckable" and some are not.
Primary Circular Reactions <i>1 to 4 months</i>
The baby begins to repeat actions that he finds pleasant or that produce pleasant results, like, for example, sucking his thumb. These actions are usually directed toward the baby's own body and not external objects.
Secondary Circular Reactions <i>4 to 8 months</i>
The baby begins to repeat actions that he feels creates pleasing results in the external environment. This is where the baby begins to really interact with the external world.
Coordination of Secondary Circular Reactions <i>8 to 12 months</i>
The baby coordinates his behavior in response to the outside world. He begins to use specific means to attain specific ends and begins to anticipate his effect on objects and people.
Tertiary Circular Reactions <i>12 to 18 months</i>
The baby begins active trial and error experimentation. He becomes more flexible, clearly tries to obtain certain goals, and seeks out new experiences in order to learn more about his world.
Internalization of Thought <i>18 months to 2 years</i>
The baby doesn't have to do something to know what the outcome will be; he can now simply think about possible behaviors and what may happen. This is where babies learn "right" and "wrong" and know what the consequences of their actions will be.