Attachment

Caregiver-Infant Interactions
Question 1: What is meant by the term attachment?

An emotional tie or bond between an infant and a caregiver.

The relationship is said to be reciprocal (two-way).
Attachment

Task: On a mini-whiteboard answer the following question:

Question 2 – List three behaviours or characteristics that demonstrate attachment.

Hint: For those of you with younger siblings, how do your little brothers and sisters get mum’s attention?

1. Proximity
2. Separation distress
3. Secure-base behaviour
Attachment

1. **Proximity.** Children remain physically close to those they are attached to.

2. **Separation distress.** People are distressed when an attachment figure leaves their presence.

3. **Secure-base behaviour.** Infants display secure-base behaviour when they return to their attachment figure while playing.
Attachment

- This is a lovely example of attachment which is so cute it has reached 23 million views on YouTube.

Task: While watching the video consider the following questions:

1. What attachment behaviours is this infant demonstrating?
Lesson Objectives:

- Define **caregiver-infant interactions** in humans, including: **reciprocity** and **interactional synchrony**.

- Outline & evaluate Meltzoff and Moore’s research on interaction synchrony.
Caregiver-Infant Interactions

**Reciprocate**

**VERB**

“Respond to (a gesture or action) by making a corresponding one”. (Oxford University Press, 2016).

**Synchrony**

**NOUN**

“Simultaneous action, development, or occurrence.”

“Example sentence - The state of operating or developing according to the same time”. (Oxford University Press, 2016).

**Question:** What do you think the terms ‘reciprocity’ and ‘interactional synchrony’ mean in relation to attachment.

**Hint:** Think about the way in which infants interact with their parents/carers.
Caregiver-Infant Interactions

Reciprocity
- Where an infant responds to the action of another person, or where the actions of one partner (e.g. the infant) elicits a response from the other (e.g. the mother).

Interactional Synchrony
- Where an infant mirrors the actions of another person; for example, an infant imitating behaviours and/or the emotions of their parents/carer.
Caregiver-Infant Interactions

- Task: Let’s check you were paying attention. Now answer the following two definition questions on your handout.

Task: Answer the following questions.

What is meant by the term reciprocal in the context of caregiver-infant interactions? (2 marks)

What is meant by the term interactional synchrony in relation to caregiver-infant interactions? (2 marks)

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4 Minutes
Caregiver-Infant Interactions

- Meltzoff and Moore (1977) conducted research into caregiver-infant interactions. Here’s a video of Meltzoff explaining the importance of caregiver-infant interactions.

Task: While watching the video, consider the following question:

1. Why is social interaction so important for infants?
Meltzoff and Moore (1977)

- **Aim:** To examine caregiver-infant interactions.

- **Method:** An adult model would display one of three facial expressions or hand movements. The child’s response was filmed.

RM Question: What type of research method did Meltzoff and Moore use?

- **Uncontrolled observation**

- **Results:** There was an association between infant behaviour and the adult model.
Evaluating Meltzoff and Moore (1977)

- Task: On your handout are a series of burger paragraphs that have not been completed. Complete the burger paragraphs to create three perfect evaluation points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point</th>
<th>Evidence/Example</th>
<th>Explain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One issue with Meltzoff and Moore’s research is the questionable reliability of testing infants.</td>
<td>Infants do funny faces all the time and it is not uncommon for an infant to randomly stick their tongue out, yawn or smile and therefore it is difficult to distinguish between normal behavior and imitation.</td>
<td>This matters because...</td>
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<td>Meltzoff and Moore (1985) replicated their study with infants as young as three-days old. They found that even infants this young demonstrated the same synchrony suggesting that the behavior is innate.</td>
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10 Minutes
Evaluating Meltzoff and Moore (1977)

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<td>Infants pull ‘funny faces’ all the time and it is not uncommon for an infant to randomly stick their tongue out, yawn or smile and therefore it is difficult to distinguish between normal behavior and imitation.</td>
<td>This matters because we are unable to conclude whether the results of Meltzoff and Moore’s research demonstrate caregiver-infant interactions or everyday infant behavior, and therefore further research is required to test the reliability of these findings.</td>
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<td>One strength of Meltzoff and Moore comes from a replication of the study conducted by the authors six years later.</td>
<td>Meltzoff and Moore (1983) replicated their study with infants as young as three-days old. They found that even infants this young demonstrated the same synchrony, suggesting that the behavior is innate.</td>
<td>This suggests that the original findings were reliable and that caregiver-infant interactions are an innate mechanism used to help develop an attachment bond.</td>
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<td>However, one issue with Meltzoff and Moore’s research is that other researchers have been unable to replicate their findings.</td>
<td>Koepke et al. (1983) attempted to replicate Meltzoff and Moore’s findings, but failed to produce the same results.</td>
<td>This matters because it questions the reliability of Meltzoff and Moore’s findings and their replication conducted 6 years later, and further illustrates the need for additional research in this area.</td>
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Tronick’s Still Face Paradigm

- This is an interesting experiment conducted by Dr. Edward Tronick to end the lesson with.

Task: While watching the video consider the following question:

1. What does Tronick’s Still Face Paradigm show us about the nature of attachments?
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**Question:** What do you think the terms ‘reciprocity’ and ‘interactional synchrony’ mean in relation to attachment.

**Hint:** Think about the way in which infants interact with their parents/carers.

**Task:** Answer the following questions.

What is meant by the term reciprocity in the context of caregiver-infant interactions? (2 marks)

What is meant by the term interactional synchrony in relation to caregiver-infant interactions? (2 marks)
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