



EXAMINERS' REPORTS

LEVEL 3 CHILDREN'S CARE, PLAY, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: PRACTICE AND THEORY

UNIT 330: Principles and theories that influence children's care, play, learning and development in the 21st century in Wales

Unit 331: Investigating current issues in children's care, play, learning and development in Wales

SUMMER 2022



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CHILDREN'S CARE, PLAY, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: PRACTICE AND THEORY

Level 3

June 2022

Unit 330: Principles and theories that influence children's care, play, learning and development in the 21st century in Wales

General Comments

Level 3 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development: Practice and Theory examination provides questions to address one or more assessment objective: from AO1, AO2 or AO3. The question types provided a range of lower and higher tariff questions across the content of the unit 300 specification. The questions test the candidate's ability to use their knowledge and understanding of the principles and theories of topics 1-5. The question types used in this paper are similar to those used in the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs) paper, there were no unexpected questions, and the candidates responded well to the questions throughout the paper.

The unit aim is to build on the knowledge of theoretical learning and extend the practical component to equip candidates to respond the questions based on their experiences, knowledge and understanding. Questions were generally responded to very well with clear attempts to answer based on the command verbs used and the structure of the question as their focus throughout the response provided. The questions proved to be accessible to the majority of candidates and timing of the paper was gauged well. All papers were completed on-line and as written paper in making use of the English and Welsh versions. The responses were generally clear and enhanced using the additional sheets to further expand when the candidate required. All questions were attempted as candidates progressed through the on-line and written paper. The candidate answers varied in their responses although very often were unsuccessful in answering the question as required by the command verbs. Some candidates simply listed or used bullet points which unfortunately greatly reduced the illustration of clear knowledge and understanding required at level 3.

Number of Entries:	
English – On screen:	10
Welsh – On Screen:	4
English – Paper:	116
Welsh – Paper:	20

Individual question feedback.

Q.1 Many children enjoy participating in after school leisure and sporting activities.

Describe how engaging in group or team activities can support children's physical development during adolescence.

This question provided a good start to the paper as many learners were well informed of how the benefits of engaging in group or team activities can support children's physical development during adolescence, and candidates provided a clear understanding of the benefits of adolescents engaging in sporting activities. This question enables candidates to express their viewpoints on a topic that would be an area of experience for them throughout their own childhood. Many candidates linked their discussion to well-being and the importance engaging in group or team activities for positive mental and emotional health through making new friends, forming relationships with different peer groups and being with people who share similar interests. Responses may refer to the benefits of being part of group or team activities as well as benefits for physical development. All these valuable reasons enhance physical development through participation and being involved in group or team activities. This question enabled candidates to reflect on the range of learning opportunities that can be gained which promote gross and fine motor skills, agility and strength and keeping fit during adolescence being important for overall well-being and support health in the short and long-term. Higher band marks were awarded to candidates expressing a good discussion showing knowledge and understanding. A small number of candidates discussed early years physical development, and some lacked in discussion although the majority developed further discussion into the importance of teamwork, leadership and supporting development motivation in learning through sports. Overall, this was a highly marked question and candidates gained a good start to their exam.

Q.2 Schools have a significant role in providing positive sexual health and well-being education.

Discuss the benefits of raising awareness of sexual health and understanding contraception, to promote the health and well-being of adolescents.

A good understanding was shown for this question as candidates discussed the benefits of raising awareness of sexual health and understanding contraception, to promote the health and well-being of adolescents. Clear reflection was provided which relate to personal experiences, and the importance of the knowledge gained to help protect themselves and make responsible choices about their bodies. Discussions were focused on the understanding of contraception to reduce teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, through having open and clear discussions around contraception, relationships, and sex in schools to ensure everyone is having the same information. Overall, very good responses, further discussion and candidates were frequently awarded high band marks based on the knowledge and understanding shown to raising awareness of sexual health and understanding contraception.

Q.3 Female genital mutilation (FGM) is an illegal cultural practice and a violation of human rights causing long term psychological and physical health consequences.

Recommend how professionals can identify and safeguard females at risk.

This question required candidates to express their knowledge and understanding of how professionals can identify and safeguard females at risk female genital mutilation. Candidates generally responded well to this question and were able to recommend how to intervene appropriately and effectively before the illegal cultural practice of FGM occurs. This question required an understanding of identifying a girl or young woman at risk and responding appropriately to protect them. The reasons for concern discussed, related to families suspected of practicing FGM, included being reluctant to access medical support or have routine treatments. If a family is from a community known to practice FGM, plans to travel abroad with the child may present a risk that the child is likely to undergo a cultural practice of FGM outside of the legal boundaries of the UK. Many candidates further described the FGM procedure, and the violation enforced on the child to complete the cultural practice and the impact of effects of the genital mutilation on the child or young person in the long term. Recommendations were consistently expressed to pass onto any concern to a range of professionals such as, the safeguarding officer, social worker and reporting to the police as soon as possible to protect the health and well-being of a child at risk of harm.

Q.4 Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can have a significant impact on a child's development.

Outline a range of adverse childhood experiences.

This question required candidates to outline a range of adverse childhood experiences. Candidates discussed a ranges of adverse childhood experiences that can have a significant impact on a child's development, such as physical, emotional, or sexual abuse and briefly outline impact that can be caused. Overall, there were very good responses, and many candidates outlined the concerns of a child living with an alcohol or drug dependant parent or a parent experiencing mental health issues which can cause personal mental health or anxiety and implications for the child's overall well-being. Candidates also expressed an understanding of the impact when outlining concern relating to child experiencing economic hardship, neglect and domestic violence in the home and the experiences of bereavement and parental separation through divorce or incarceration. Some candidates were unable to reach the higher mark band as they used bullet points to list the ACEs. The command verb outline requires a response reflecting clear understanding through providing a brief description for each point which would have enhanced the candidate's outline of the ACEs discussed and demonstrated a higher level of knowledge and understanding.

Q.5 Evaluate how specialist behaviour support can have an impact on children with challenging behaviour.

This question provided an opportunity to evaluate the role that specialist behaviour support can have for children exhibiting challenging behaviour. Candidates generally were able to discuss the importance of improving a child's behaviour through positive behavioural support and individual interventions to help and support a child such as individual behaviour plans and working in partnership with parents and teachers to develop positive working relationships and a consistent approach. Candidates discussed the impact of specialist behaviour support to raise awareness and provide support to help a child understand their emotions and feelings and to be able to understand boundaries and expectations of their behaviour around others. Many candidates gained higher marks through providing a good evaluation through showing knowledge and understanding of a number of areas such as, the benefits of early intervention, positive approaches building resilience and enabling a better understanding of emotions while weighing up how specialist behaviour support can impact on children with challenging behaviour.

Q.6 As part of pre-conceptual and anti-natal health care there are a number of routine screening, monitoring and tests carried out during pregnancy.

(a) Identify a range of types of routine screening, monitoring, and tests during pregnancy.

This question required candidates to identify a range of types of routine screening, monitoring, and tests during pregnancy and as the command verb states to identify. Candidates were able to briefly provide names and facts around each identified screening, monitoring and test types used routinely during pregnancy. Many learners focused on ultrasound testing and the reasons for its use, blood pressure tests, urine tests and checks during pregnancy such as weight and growth checks to support a healthy pregnancy. Some candidates responses were unfortunately based on screening, monitoring, and tests after birth as the question was not read clearly, therefore they were not awarded marks for their responses. Overall, this was a highly marked question and candidates were able to access full marks for their responses.

(b) Reflect on the purpose and value of routine screening, monitoring, and tests for the benefit of the mother and child.

This question further developed 6(a) identify a range of types of routine screening, monitoring, and tests during pregnancy through providing a reflection of the purpose and value of routine screening, monitoring, and tests for the benefit of the mother and child. Good discussions were created around the health and well-being of the mother and child during pregnancy and the specific tests that are done routinely through the NHS to support the mother for a safer pregnancy. Many candidates discussed the tests that can be completed to inform mothers and fathers of any concerns or health needs that a child may have, in order to make an informed decision relating to the pregnancy and the care interventions that may be needed. Candidates were able to access higher marks through providing a clear purpose and value and expressing knowledge and understanding of the significance of protecting health and reducing risks during pregnancy.

Q.7 Seren is seven years old and attends a mainstream primary school. Seren has experienced abuse and domestic violence in the family home and is now in foster care. The school is considering referring Seren to the support of a play therapist to help her through this difficult time, and will be discussing this with her foster carers.

Recommend to Seren's foster carers the support that Seren could receive through the intervention of regular play therapy sessions.

This question prompted good recommendations of the role of a play therapist and how a play therapist can support Seren's needs. There were a range of discussions relating to the structured approach of play therapy and how it aims to support Seren's needs through relieving feelings of stress and anxiety which may be caused by difficult or traumatic experiences. Many candidates related the implications and impact of children having adverse childhood experiences and the process of how play therapy can help with the healing process. The responses were generally detailed and knowledgeable with clear understanding shown of the support that Seren could receive through the intervention of regular play therapy sessions.

Q.8 The Early Years Curriculum in Wales offers opportunities for children to develop their creative abilities across varied areas of learning. The children are taking part in the development of a vegetable patch in the outdoor garden.

(a) Suggest creative development learning opportunities within the outdoor garden.

This question creates an opportunity to suggest creative development learning opportunities within the outdoor garden. Candidates were able to reflect through their practical experiences the value of hands-on experiences in childcare settings and provided a broad range of responses. Many candidates focused on the physical skills children can gain in the outdoors environment, such as the importance of planting and the value of growth and changes in the vegetable garden. Many candidates suggested learning opportunities which incorporated various areas of the curriculum and enhance children's skills of literacy and numeracy through the development of the outdoor garden. Higher marks were awarded to candidates who developed good suggestions for active and experiential learning, such as developing ideas around opportunities for learning, for example, relating the cycle of life, learning about healthy growth and healthy eating.

(b) Analyse the benefits of developing creative learning opportunities for children.

Candidates were clear in their understanding of the importance of creative learning opportunities to enhance and benefit children's imagination and creativity and many addressed this point across the curriculum. Candidates were able to respond to the importance of freedom through the arts and expression of feelings and emotions through creative activities to build on independence, confidence and self-esteem which may be through drawing, painting, creating, and exploring. Opportunities for the high band marks were missed through a lack of analysis and detail of understanding expressed through the points made, many candidates provided a basic or good mark band response. Higher marks were awarded to candidates which provided an excellent analysis showing knowledge and understanding of the benefits of developing creative learning opportunities for children.

Q.9 Improving and maintaining high levels of attendance is vital for children’s academic achievement in schools.

(a) Describe the key factors that can have a negative impact on a child’s attendance in school.

There was a clear understanding of the varied factors that can affect a child’s attendance at school, the majority of candidates described the impact of bullying and the reasons why a child may not come into school due to this, such as being scared and afraid of what the bully/bullies may do to them. There were also descriptions relating to anxiety or mental health, holidays during term time and the impact of long-term illness and how it may not be possible for a child to attend school due to regular hospital appointments or feeling too ill. Although this question was generally responded to well and awarded highly, some candidates provided a short list or a couple of bullet points which unfortunately does not meet the required expectation of the assessment criteria.

(b) Discuss the importance of early intervention strategies to raise attendance as a whole school approach.

This question prompted a well-rounded response for many as they were able to draw on their knowledge and understanding of the attendance policies used within schools. The responses were broad and varied and generally provided discussions relating to the importance of engaging parents in encouraging attendance and seeking to find the reason behind any absence on a regular basis. Candidates were clear in the importance of providing incentives for attendance, such as rewards, certificates, and house points to create a challenge and motivational team work to achieve high attendance as a class or year group. Candidates responded well and provided good discussions to gain a range of marks based on the knowledge and understanding shown in their responses.

Q.10 The Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has seven goals. One of the goals is to achieve a ‘Healthier Wales’.

Summarise the ambition of the ‘Healthier Wales’ goal for Future Generations.

This question proved challenging for many candidates as it focused on the candidate being able to retrieve their knowledge and understanding of legislation in relation to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Positive health and well-being for children were key points of discussion and successful responses demonstrated a good summary of how the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 aims to support the goal ‘A Healthier Wales’ for current and future generations through the opportunities for promoting ‘A Healthier Wales’. Some candidates expressed links with healthy eating and nutrition relating to health improvement in Wales. Some discussed gaining knowledge and understanding to increase life expectancy through improving healthy choices and behaviours and having a positive approach to people’s lives. There was a clear understanding of the importance of protecting the environment and having access to open air spaces for exercise and well-being and the impact of The Well-being and Future Generations Act to improve the lives of people in Wales for current and future generations.

Q.11 Describe the benefits of attending Flying Start for children, families and carers.

The question focused on the knowledge and understanding of the Flying Start Programme. The majority of responses were broad in discussion and responses provided generally demonstrated a good understanding of the benefits of attending Flying Start for children, families, and carers. The majority of candidates emphasised the purpose of the flying start programme and the structure of the day in relation to providing a secure and high-quality environment to support children's learning and development. Discussions were focused on the areas of deprivation and poverty and how the flying start setting enhances the speech and language development of children and aims to improve their social relationships as they make friends and socialise with others. The benefits described that support the families, and carers were the parenting programmes, and the health visitor support to improve the development and family lives of the children attending the setting. This was the last question in the paper and was generally answered to a very high standard with detail and descriptions illustrating a clear understanding of the benefits of the Flying Start for children, families, and carers.

CHILDREN'S CARE, PLAY, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: PRACTICE AND THEORY

Level 3

June 2022

Unit 331: Investigating current issues in children's care, play, learning and development in Wales

Extended Investigation

The extended investigation of current issues in children's care, play, learning and development in Wales requires learners to investigate a contemporary issue for the sector selecting one of the following topics to research:

Topic 1

Research and evidence-based practice impacts on current legislation and government initiatives.

Research how current policy and legislation have informed changes in early years education in Wales.

Topic 2

Health care professionals/workers have a crucial role in promoting child health from conception to 19 years.

Research how the different roles work together to support children's health and development in Wales.

This unit requires candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of key concepts, values and issues that are relevant to children's care, play, learning and development settings and contexts, and apply knowledge and understanding to analyse evidence-based practices (their own and those of others) within children's care, play, learning and development. Candidates are required to research and evaluate theories and practice that relate to children's care, play, learning and development and reflect on how they can influence practice.

Candidates are required to undertake independent research using a range of resources to investigate your chosen topic and focus areas and will need to collect adequate and reliable evidence in preparation for the completion of the tasks, to express a fundamental understanding of key legislation and how this underpins the work of early years and childcare workers.

Principle Examiner key points:

This is the first examination for unit 331 and the majority of the candidates addressed the tasks appropriately, with detail of their knowledge and understanding which enabled access across a wide range of marks and was very successful. There were a number of key points raised throughout the examination marking process by the examination team which are key areas for future practice, teaching and learning relating to the structure of the investigation. The following key areas will support clarity and effectiveness of the extended investigation and enable candidates to access the range of marks available.

- Title and topic choice are to be clearly indicated on first page of paper
- Candidate centre number, candidate number and page numbers on each page
- Tasks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 must be clearly labelled to identify task boundaries
- Candidates cannot include links for further information, survey or questionnaires as they are outside the boundary of the mark scheme. Any further information gained from research must be discussed with the set tasks.
- Avoid the use of tables and bullet points.
- Observe the evidence required including consideration of the emboldened '**must** include or **could** include' to ensure good coverage of the mark scheme
- Discussions of laws, legislation and frameworks must relate to Wales and be referenced appropriately
- Word count stated clearly excluding reference and bibliography list
- Word count should not exceed 5500
- The topic focus area is central to their whole investigation. The assessment paper is marked as a whole and must link to topic choice throughout each task
- Presenting material copied directly from books or other sources without acknowledgment will be left unmarked
- Proformas should be avoided, the unit 331 examination paper is the main source of guidance for successful completion.
- Word documents are required to be uploaded by centres rather than pdf documents

Some candidates did not reflect on the tasks effectively as they progressed through and very often changed their topic focus in varied tasks of the investigation, therefore significantly reducing the marks awarded. Many candidates took on too many focus areas within their chosen topic and their discussions were too broad and very often were lost as the investigation progressed. Candidates should only take on areas of discussion that they are able to discuss effectively as an individual choice rather than a centre choice. The focus for candidates is on their topic choice and interpretation based on their own learning and experience.

Number of Entries:

English	376
Welsh	25

Task 1

Write an introduction to your extended investigation.

Outline:

- the main focus; areas you have chosen to research in relation to your selected topic
- why you have selected the topic and the focus areas; you may wish to refer to personal interest, taught content, sector engagement and work placement the methods of research that you have used
- sources used as part of investigating the topic and focus areas

This task requires a focused introduction to the whole extended investigation. Focus areas should be clearly identified and central to the chosen topic. One or two focus areas should be identified with reasons for choice which might be based on personal/practical experience within a work setting or learning environment which have raised interest and awareness to prompt further investigation. The focus areas need to be limited to ensure that the specific focus areas can be considered and evaluated thoroughly through the varied method of research involved through the whole process. Stating the evidence of research and chosen reading should be clearly identified.

Candidates developed a good start to their investigation with a firm clear start to their chosen research topic area. Task 1 provides an opportunity to set the scene of the whole investigation and how it will progress, candidates may come back and forth while completing the introductory outline to add to their plan of focus as their investigation progresses. The majority of candidates clearly stated their chosen topic and main focus areas within their chosen topic area. Candidates discussed the reasons for their choice of topic which may relate to personal interest, knowledge and understanding through taught content or involvement of the topic area through sector involvement or experiences in their work placement. Candidates outlined the specific areas of discussion and how they will be developed through the investigation. This task offers an opportunity to state the methods of research and the chosen sources of information that will be used, this may be indicating chosen books, journals and websites that will be included and used within the investigation and referenced appropriately although this area was not addressed with any detail in many investigations.

Task 2

Discuss how your selected topic and focus areas support children's care, play, learning and development.

Your evidence **must** include:

- how the focus areas support (positively or negatively) children's care, play learning and development
- a variety of viewpoints including your own and/or those of others
- appropriate examples from theory and/or practice to support your discussion
- how relevant theory/legislation or frameworks (as appropriate) have impacted on the topic and focus areas
- traceable references or quotes to support evidence

Candidates are required to show an understanding of theory/frameworks or legislation in relation to focus areas and apply this to practice. Positive and/or negative points should be considered as well as their own viewpoint with consideration to the thoughts of others, this might include work placement and practice observed during work placement experience which can be used to support viewpoints. Include appropriate and relevant theory, legislation or frameworks which will support the discussion. Candidates need to include effective use of relevant referencing.

Many candidates wrote descriptively for this task and stated professional roles and responsibilities in depth, although this did not involve any discussion, viewpoints, or development of their own understanding or practical examples as stated in the evidence list. This approach does not provide their knowledge and understanding of own experiences or reflection on learning as required. Frequently significant marks were lost due to the outcomes for each task not being met. Evidence required is stated clearly including emboldened must include or could include. This needs to be followed for effective completion. Candidates need to understand that they must follow each task as stated while remaining focused on their chosen topic. The tasks set out what is expected within the recommended word count and provides clear guidance for candidate response through a range of bullet points. This guidance reflects the mark scheme bandings.

The majority of candidates were able to effectively discuss how their chosen topic and focus areas will support children's care play, learning and development, which may be positively, negatively, or a discussion of both. Candidates reflected on a range of viewpoints from their research which supported their own opinion while discussing examples from practical experiences. Candidates were required to include theoretical and/or legislative examples which further clarify discussions around the chosen topic and focus areas and those that remained focused through their discussions were able to access the higher mark band. Many candidates lost track of the focus, and many discussed each task as a separate task; therefore, losing the thread of the investigation as a whole.

Task 3

Evaluate how the values and principles that underpin your selected topic and chosen focus areas are used in practice to support children’s care, play, learning and development.

Your evidence **could** include reference to:

- effective communication
- teamwork and collaborative working
- equality/inclusion/diversity
- freedom to participate
- children’s rights being upheld
- professional skills or any other as appropriate

This task’s focus is to evaluate a range of values and principles. Evaluation could be developed through knowledge gained as part of taught content and examples from practice.

The majority of candidates were able to show a good evaluation of how their chosen topic and focus areas are used in practice. This task involves reflection and effective discussion based on a range of values and principles that are fundamental to good professional practice. Candidates related well to their own experiences of the range of points suggested or key areas which linked in well with their topic area. The majority of candidates successfully discussed the importance of effective communication, teamwork and professional skills working with children while remaining focused on their selected topic and chosen focus area. The principles of equality, diversity and inclusion were frequently linked well to the opportunities for all provided through adaptations in the environment and practical examples were discussed to children with additional needs with firm discussions around children’s rights and making choices to ensure freedom and participation for all.

Task 4

Consider how relevant theories, legislation or frameworks (as appropriate) have influenced practice in children’s care, play, learning and development settings.

Evidence **must** include clear links to how the theories, legislation or frameworks have influenced practice in the settings you have experienced.

This task requires candidates to include links to the influences of relevant theory, legislation and or frameworks relating to Wales (as appropriate to the topic focus) could be considered; to show depth and breadth of understanding with reference to the strengths and weaknesses in practice. Evidence should be developed to make clear links to placement. Candidates must discuss how legislation, frameworks and or theoretical perspectives have influenced current practice and made changes to the practice in children’s settings through providing an interpretation of their own experiences of the effects on professional practice.

This task required candidates to consider how their research (as applicable) on their chosen topic area has influenced practice in children’s care, play, learning and development although many candidates went completely off topic here and drifted into the alternative choice of topic, or stated in very general or textbook terms. This unfortunately reduced their marks as they did not show any understanding of the influences of these areas have on practice in real terms. The topic area is required to be maintained throughout the whole investigation. The appropriate legislation, theories or frameworks that link to their chosen topic and focus areas must be connected and relevant.

Task 5

Assess how having knowledge of the selected topic and related theories and legislation can be used to bring about change in children's care, play, learning and development provision in the 21st century in Wales.

Your evidence **must**:

- Demonstrate an awareness of new and developing practice approaches
- Refer to a range of settings within the sector
- Make judgements that link practice with theory (topic focus, related theories and legislation)
- Make suggestions for future change that could be adopted in practice to support children's care, play, learning and development.

Evidence **must** refer to research undertaken and **must** relate to experiences in practice.

This task looks towards changes for the future based on the candidate's research and understanding of their chosen topic and focus areas. Candidates are required to consider the knowledge they have gained through the research of their topic and related focus areas and assess how the related theories and legislation can be used to bring about change in children's care, play, learning and development provision in the 21st century in Wales.

There was a clear understanding shown of the progression of new and developing approaches that would benefit practice in appropriate settings within the sector of the topic. Change and the ideas of change were discussed in great depth, and candidates frequently expressed a keen understanding of the development of innovative ideas and the progression of adaptations to current or outdated practices due to new legislation, frameworks, or theoretical perspectives. Candidates reflected on their various experiences in practice and were able to make suggestions of how the future changes could support in developing children of the 21st century in Wales.

Task 6

Discuss how your research and learning will support your own individual practice moving forward.

Your evidence must include:

- a reflection of the value or benefits of what you have learnt as part of investigating this topic and focus areas
- what you would like to do, based on your findings, to improve your own future practice
- reference to any impact changes to your own practice could have on the practice of others

Candidates are required to reflect on their own personal learning of the topic and focus areas chosen. This reflection will bring together the varied discussions and viewpoints throughout the whole investigation. Candidates will be able to discuss the value or benefits of what they have learnt as part of investigating their chosen topic and focus areas. Candidates can discuss what they would like to do based on their findings to enable a better understanding of practice with the aim of improving their own future practice. Candidates will be required to refer to any impact changes will have to their own practice and the changes to the practice of others in the future.

Many candidates were able to bring together their points and their investigation to a conclusion. There was clear understanding shown of the investigation through reflections on their findings. Candidates frequently discussed the value of their overall learning through the whole process. This task is a significant area to discuss future practice and examine the benefits of the research undertaken on their own future practice. Candidates who created a thorough research investigation were able to discuss how their learning would enhance their practice. Many also discussed the importance of sharing their knowledge and understanding to also support others in practice and develop new and innovative ideas for the setting. Frequently candidates discussed how an enhanced development of knowledge through the extended investigation would benefit future professional practice when working with children.



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