

FOCUS ON VOCABULARY AND LANGUAGE

Life is a journey, from womb to tomb. In the process of becoming who we are, and as we travel (*journey*) through life, from conception to death (*womb to tomb*) we change and mature physically, psychologically, and socially. (Another humorous expression describing the life span or life cycle is from “sperm to worm.”)

Prenatal Development, and the Newborn

Conception

. . . *the mind boggles* at the *improbable, unbroken, chain of events* that produced you and me. When something is startling, unexpected, or hard to comprehend, we say it “*boggles the mind.*” Thus, we are truly astounded and amazed (*the mind is boggled*) by the fact that we are here and exist given the unlikely (*improbable*) continuous series of occurrences (*unbroken chain of events*) that were needed to give rise to a human being.

Prenatal Development

. . . *blasé* . . . This means to be nonchalant or indifferent to stimulation, or to exhibit low responsiveness. **Fetuses** get used to the sounds and vibrations of a noisy hooting (*honking*) device placed on their mother’s abdomen. When compared with those not exposed to this stimulation, they show a very low level of responsiveness (*a blasé response*).

The Competent Newborn

Babies come with software preloaded on their neural hard drives. Similar to computers with preinstalled software applications, babies come equipped with automatic reflex responses perfectly suited for survival (*Babies come with software preloaded on their neural hard drives*).

. . . *toddler* . . . This term describes a child who is beginning to learn to walk and who walks with short, uneven steps.