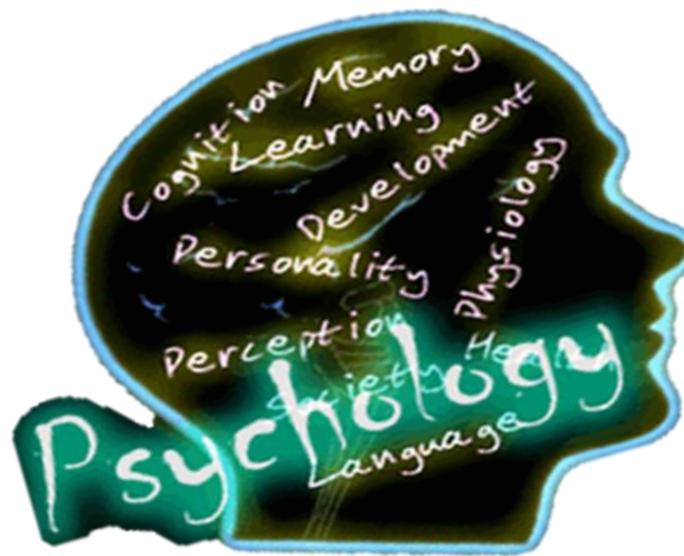


Year 12 Psychology



An Introduction to Psychology



Student workbook

Name:

Teacher:

Introducing Psychology A Level

Welcome to psychology A Level! You've made an excellent choice... in studying Psychology; you will begin to gain a deeper insight into your own behaviour and the behaviour of those around you. This bridging booklet will allow you to gain a deeper understanding of what psychology is, how to be an outstanding psychologist and the research process. It will also allow you to think about the first module you will study, approaches and biopsychology.



Task 1- What is Psychology?

Read through the article below and complete the activities below.

What is psychology?

What exactly is psychology? Popular television programs, books, and films have contributed to a number of misconceptions about this subject. The diverse career paths of those holding psychology degrees also contribute to this confusion.

Psychology is both an applied and academic field that studies the human mind and behavior. Research in psychology seeks to understand and explain how we think, act and feel. As most people already realize, a large part of psychology is devoted to the diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues, but that's just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to applications for psychology. In addition to mental health, psychology can be applied to a variety of issues that impact health and daily life including performance enhancement, self-help, ergonomics, motivation, productivity, and much more.



Early Psychology

Psychology evolved out of both philosophy and biology. Discussions of these two subjects date as far back as the early Greek thinkers including Aristotle and Socrates. The word psychology is derived from the Greek word *psyche*, meaning 'soul' or 'mind.'

A Separate Science

The emergence of psychology as a separate and independent field of study was truly born when Wilhelm

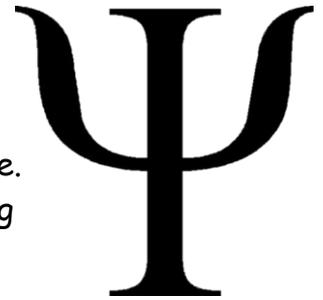


Wundt who established the first experimental psychology lab in Leipzig, Germany in 1879. Wundt's work was focused on describing the structures that compose the mind. This perspective relied heavily on the analysis of sensations and feelings through the use of introspection, a highly subjective process. Wundt believed that properly trained individuals would be able to accurately identify the mental processes that accompanied feelings, sensations and thoughts.

Schools of Thought/Approaches

Throughout Psychology's history, a number of different schools of thought have attempted to explain human thought and behavior. These schools of thought often rise to dominance for a period of time. While these schools of thought are sometimes perceived as competing forces, each perspective has contributed to our understanding of Psychology. The following are some of the major schools of thought/approaches in Psychology.

- 1) Behavioral
- 2) Cognitive
- 3) Biological
- 4) Humanistic
- 5) Psychodynamic



Psychology Today

Today, psychologists prefer to use more objective scientific methods to understand, explain, and predict human behavior. Psychological studies are highly structured,

beginning with a hypothesis (a theory) that is then empirically tested. The discipline has two major areas of focus: *academic psychology* and *applied psychology*.

Academic psychology focuses on the study of different sub-topics within psychology including personality, social behavior and human development. These psychologists conduct basic research that seeks to expand our theoretical knowledge, while other researchers conduct applied research that seeks to solve everyday problems.



Applied psychology focuses on the use of different psychological principles to solve real world problems. Examples of applied areas of psychology include forensic psychology, educational psychology, and occupational. Many other psychologists work as therapists, helping people overcome mental, behavioral, and emotional disorders.

Psychology Research Methods

As psychology moved away from its philosophical roots and towards science, psychologists began to employ more and more scientific methods to study human behavior. Contemporary researchers employ a variety of scientific techniques

including experiments, observational methods, interviews, questionnaires, correlational studies longitudinal research to test, explain, and predict behavior.

Areas of Psychology

Psychology is a broad and diverse field. A number of different subfields and specialty areas have emerged. The following are some of the major areas of research and application within psychology:

- **Biological Psychology**, also known as biopsychology, studies how biological processes influence the mind and behavior. This area is closely linked to neuroscience and utilizes tools such as MRI and PET scans to look at brain injury or brain abnormalities.
- **Clinical /Abnormal Psychology** is focused on the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental disorders. It is also considered the largest employment area within psychology.
- **Cognitive Psychology** is the study of human thought processes and cognitions. Cognitive psychologists study topics such as attention, memory, perception, decision-making, problem-solving, and language acquisition.
- **Comparative Psychology** is the branch of psychology concerned with the study of animal behavior. This type of research can lead to a deeper and broader understanding of human psychology.
- **Developmental Psychology** is an area that looks at human growth and development over the lifespan. Theories often focus on the development of cognitive abilities, morality, social functioning, identity, and other life areas.
- **Forensic Psychology** is an applied field focused on using psychological research and principles in the legal and criminal justice system.
- **Occupational Psychology** is a field that uses psychological research to enhance work performance, select employee, improve product design, and enhance usability.
- **Personality Psychology** looks at the various elements that make up individual personalities. Well-known personality theories include Freud's structural model of personality and the "Big Five" theory of personality.
- **Educational Psychology** is the branch of psychology that works within the educational system to help children with emotional, social, and academic issues.
- **Social Psychology** is a discipline that uses scientific methods to study social influence, social perception and social interaction. Social psychology studies diverse subjects including group behavior, social perception, leadership, nonverbal behavior, conformity, aggression, and prejudice.





Questions

1. Define "Psychology"?

2. Is Psychology a science? Explain your answer.

3. Describe the types of research methods psychologists use?

4. Why is psychological research important?

5. State the different areas of psychology that psychologists study

Task 2: Approaches in Psychology

As the article above explained, there are various schools of thoughts or approaches in psychology. Each approach views behaviours differently. For example, the biological approach believes that all behaviour is due to our physical make up, whereas the psychodynamic approach completely disagrees and states that all behaviours occur because of experience.

Research each perspective mentioned below. In the boxes summarise each key approach. A good place to start is → → →

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/perspective.html>

Simply Psychology



The behavioural approach to psychology

Main assumption:

Classical conditioning:

1. What is it?
2. Describe what Ivan Pavlov did:

Operant conditioning:

1. What is it?
2. Which Psychologist investigated it?
3. What are the three main behaviour shaping techniques?

Limitations of the behaviourist approach:

The psychodynamic approach to psychology

Main Assumption:

The three components of the unconscious mind:

Id:

Ego:

Superego:

Psychosexual development:

Limitations of the psychodynamic approach:

The humanistic approach to psychology

Main Assumption:

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs (will need to research this):

Limitations of the Humanistic approach:

The cognitive approach to psychology

Main assumption:

Composition of memory:

Limitations of cognitive approach:

The Biological approach to Psychology

Main assumption:

Limitations of Biological Approach:

Task 3- Analysing psychological research

Why do psychologists carry out research? To change the world! To make it a better place. Improving our understanding means we can improve the current situation. You will look at LOTS of research across the course, and will be expected to explain what the researcher did (the procedures) and what they discovered (the findings).



← BBC Documentary (30 mins) The Stanford Prison Experiment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XsRQVRoIPWE&app=desktop>

Below is one of the most famous (and controversial!) pieces of research of all time. Read through the information and complete the questions underneath.

Zimbardo: The Stanford Prison Experiment

Aim: To investigate how readily people would conform to the roles of guard and prisoner in a role-playing exercise that simulated prison life.

Zimbardo (1973) was interested in finding out whether the brutality reported among guards in American prisons was due to the sadistic personalities of the guards or had more to do with the prison environment.

Procedure: To study the roles people play in prison situations, Zimbardo converted a basement of the Stanford University psychology building into a mock prison. He advertised for students to play the roles of **prisoners and guards** for a fortnight. 21 male college students (chosen from 75 volunteers) were screened for psychological normality and paid \$15 per day to take part in the experiment.



Participants were randomly assigned to either the role of prisoner or guard in a simulated prison environment. The prison simulation was kept as "real life" as possible. **Prisoners** were arrested at their own homes, without warning, and taken to the local police station.

Guards were also issued a khaki uniform, together with whistles, handcuffs and dark glasses, to make eye contact with prisoners impossible. No physical violence was permitted. Zimbardo observed the behaviour of the prisoners and guards.

Here they were treated like every other criminal. They were fingerprinted, photographed and 'booked'. Then they were blindfolded and driven to the psychology

department of Stanford University, where Zimbardo had had the basement set out as a prison, with barred doors and windows, bare walls and small cells. Here the deindividuation process began.

When the prisoners arrived at the prison they were stripped naked, deloused, had all their personal possessions removed and locked away, and were given prison clothes and bedding. They were issued a uniform, and referred to by their number only. Their clothes comprised a smock with their number written on it, but no underclothes. They also had a tight nylon cap, and a chain around one ankle.

There were 3 guards to the 9 prisoners, taking shifts of eight hours each (the other guards remained on call) **Findings:** Within a very short time both guards and prisoners were settling into their new roles, the guards adopting theirs quickly and easily.

Within hours of beginning the experiment some guards began to harass prisoners. They behaved in a brutal and sadistic manner, apparently enjoying it. Other guards joined in, and other prisoners were also tormented. The prisoners were taunted with insults and petty orders, they were given pointless and boring tasks to accomplish, and they were generally dehumanised.



The prisoners soon adopted prisoner-like behaviour too. They talked about prison issues a great deal of the time. They 'told tales' on each other to the guards. They started taking the prison rules very seriously, as though they were there for the prisoners' benefit and infringement would spell disaster for all of them. Some even began siding with the guards against prisoners who did not conform to the rules.

Over the next few days the relationships between the guards and the prisoners changed, with a change in one leading to a change in the other. Remember that the guards were firmly in control and the prisoners were totally dependent on them. As the prisoners became more dependent, the guards became more derisive towards them. They held the prisoners in contempt and let the prisoners know it. As the guards' contempt for them grew, the prisoners became more submissive.

As the prisoners became more submissive, the guards became more aggressive and assertive. They demanded ever greater obedience from the prisoners. The prisoners were dependent on the guards for everything so tried to find ways to please the guards, such as telling tales on fellow prisoners.

One prisoner had to be released after 36 hours because of uncontrollable bursts of screaming, crying and anger. His thinking became disorganised and he appeared to be entering the early stages of a deep depression. Within the next few days three others also had to leave after showing signs of emotional disorder that could have had lasting consequences. (These were people who had been pronounced stable and normal a short while before.)

Zimbardo (1973) had intended that the experiment should run for a fortnight, but on the sixth day he closed it down. There was real danger that someone might be physically or mentally damaged if it was allowed to run on. After some time for the researchers to gather their data the subjects were called back for a follow-up, debriefing session.

Conclusion: People will readily conform to the social roles they are expected to play, especially if the roles are as strongly stereotyped as those of the prison guards. The "prison" environment was an important factor in creating the guards' brutal behaviour (none of the participants who acted as guards showed sadistic tendencies before the study). Therefore, the roles that people play can shape their behaviour and attitudes.

After the prison experiment was terminated Zimbardo interviewed the participants. Here's an excerpt:

'Most of the participants said they had felt involved and committed. The research had felt "real" to them. One guard said, "I was surprised at myself. I made them call each other names and clean the toilets out with their bare hands. I practically considered the prisoners cattle and I kept thinking I had to watch out for them in case they tried something." Another guard said "Acting authoritatively can be fun. Power can be a great pleasure." And another: "... during the inspection I went to Cell Two to mess up a bed which a prisoner had just made and he grabbed me, screaming that he had just made it and that he was not going to let me mess it up. He grabbed me by the throat and although he was laughing I was pretty scared. I lashed out with my stick and hit him on the chin although not very hard, and when I freed myself I became angry.'



Most of the guards found it difficult to believe that they had behaved in the brutalising ways that they had. Many said they hadn't known this side of them existed or that they were capable of such things. The prisoners, too, couldn't believe that they had responded in the submissive, cowering, dependent way they had. Several claimed to be assertive types normally. When asked about the guards, they described the usual three stereotypes that can be found in any prison: some guards were good, some were tough but fair, and some were cruel.

Questions for Research

- 1) Who carried out the research?
- 2) What area of psychology is this?
- 3) What research method did they use?
- 4) What was the aim of their research?
- 5) Outline the procedures used in the study.
- 6) What did they find/conclude?
- 7) What are the strengths of this study?
- 8) What are the limitations of this study? Consider ethics (how fair this research was- were the participants treated well?) and ecological validity (how realistic to real life was this study?)
- 9) Suggest one practical application that might arise from this research? How could it be used to change the world?



10) Choose two studies from the list below and research them using the internet. In the boxes outline the aims and procedure, and outline the findings and conclusions:

1. Pavlov's Dogs
2. Skinners' Rats
3. Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiment
4. Freud's Little Hans Study
5. The case study of Phineas Gage



Study 1:

Aim:

Procedures:

Findings/conclusion:

Study 2:

Aim:

Procedures:

Findings/conclusion:

Task 5: Key terms



Below are some key terms that you must know when you start psychology in September. Spend 30 minutes using look, cover, write, check to make sure you know these definitions.

Term	Definition
Aim	A general statement of what the researcher intends to investigate; the purpose of the study
Procedures	An outline of what was done in an experiment so that the study can be replicated.
Findings/ conclusion	Presentation of what was found in terms of the data collected
Evaluation	Examination of something to determine its worth, value or desirability
Laboratory Experiment	Experiment conducted in a controlled environment allowing the establishment of causality
Observational techniques	A set of systems to increase the objectivity and validity of data collected when a researcher watches or listens to participants engaging in whatever behaviour is being studied.
Independent variable	The factor manipulated by researchers in an investigation
Dependent variable	The factor measured by researchers in an investigation
Extraneous variable	Variables other than the independent variable that may affect the dependent variable if it is not controlled.
Ecological validity	The extent to which an experimental effect (the results) can be generalised to other settings/real-life.
Ethical issue	The rules governing the conduct of researchers in investigations. These arise when a conflict exists between the rights of participants and the goals of the research.

Task 6: Optional additional activities to develop psychological understanding

As you now know, psychology is all around us. That means that there is lots you can do to develop your psychological understanding.



The tasks below are optional- I do not expect you to complete all of these, but they will help you with your studies and you may wish to complete some of the tasks below over the summer.

Have a look in a psychology review magazine and write a summary of an article you have read.

Watch a film with a psychological theme (e.g. Black Swan, Girl Interrupted, Side Effects, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, A Beautiful Mind) and make a simple fact sheet on it (story, actors, opinion on film).

Watch a TV programme with psychological content. Record channel and date and main topics discussed (e.g. attachment, sleep, phobia, memory, aggression, eating behaviour)

Construct a model using recyclable material, to demonstrate a theory, model or process (strange situation, memory models etc)

Produce a power point about a psychological explanation of an aspect of psychology, e.g. slt, deindividuation, learning theory of attachment

Use the BBC website and find out 10 facts about the brain

Using the BBC website, take one of the tests. Note down what you have learned about your own behaviour.

Research 5 famous psychologists and explain why you have chosen them.

Useful websites:

www.allpsych.com



<http://bps-research-digest.blogspot.com/>



<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/>

