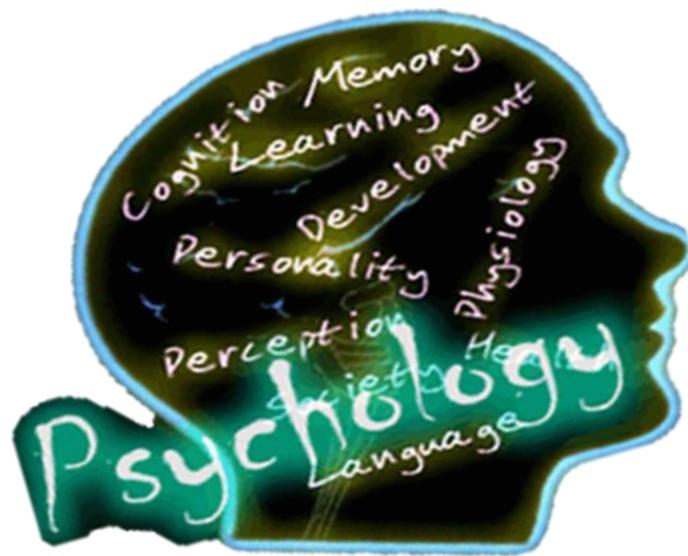


Year 1 Psychology

# 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

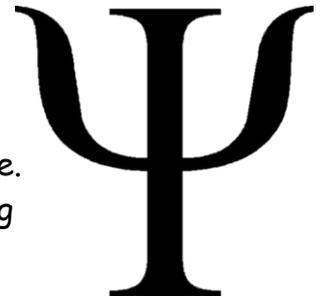


Wundt who established the first experimental psychology lab in Leipzig, Germany in 1879. Wundt's work was focused on describing the structures that compose the mind. This perspective relied heavily on the analysis of sensations and feelings through the use of introspection, a highly subjective process. 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) Behavioural
- 2) Cognitive
- 3) Biological
- 4) Evolutionary
- 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 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. What is Psychology?
2. Is Psychology a science? Why/why not?
3. What different approaches/schools of thought are there in Psychology?
4. What types of research methods do psychologists use?
5. Why is psychological research important?
6. What different areas of psychology do 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.

Simply Psychology



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

**The biological approach to psychology**

**The psychodynamic approach to psychology**

**The behavioural approach to psychology**

**The cognitive approach to psychology**

**The evolutionary approach to psychology**

### 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

*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. Skinner's Rats
3. Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiment
4. Freud's Little Hans Study
5. The case study of Phineas Gage



**Study 1:**

**Study 2:**

#### Task 4: An introduction to mental health

Our understanding of mental health and how to treat those with mental health disorders has changed dramatically over the centuries. These next activities will help you gain an understanding of how our understanding and treatments have developed over time, which will help prepare you for your first unit in September, when we will look at a variety of disorders and how we treat them.

*Read the article below and complete the activities below.*

#### Treatments in Mental Health: A Brief History

*Published by Kelly Erin Ludovici on October 10, 2010*

It's important for us to remember the history of mental illness treatment both because it was not very long ago, and because it is up to us to ensure that treatment continues to improve and does not revert to the horrible situations of the past. I am going to summarize a brief history of mental health:

**Europe in the 1600's:** Those considered mentally insane were chained in dungeons with criminals, vagrants, and people with disabilities. They were beaten, given little food, and had no clothing. Trepanning would be used, where a hole was cut in the skull to unleash evil spirits that caused mental health issues.



**Europe in the 1700's to early 1800's:** Medical treatment was both a remedy and a punishment. Treatments included bloodletting, purging and induced vomiting, cold water dunking (water torture), and the "swinging chair," a contraption designed to spin the patient at high speeds. The chair was thought useful in helping patients to vomit, evacuate the contents of their bladder, and lull them into a tranquilized state of mind.

**Europe in the late 1800's:** Concern for the mentally ill increased. The use of chains and shackles was forbidden. Patients were removed from dungeons and allowed to stay in sunny rooms and walk outside.

**The U.S. in the 1800's:** Mental patients were chained in basement cells. Public viewing of patients was allowed for entertainment purposes.

**1812:** Benjamin Rush, a founding father of psychiatry, writes *Medical Inquiries and Observations, Upon the Diseases of the Mind*. He saw mental illness as psychological and believed the cause to be abnormal blood circulation. Continued the use of

bloodletting, spinning therapy, and the "tranquilizer chair," a device used to control blood flow to the brain, reduce motor activity, and reduce the force and frequency of pulse.

**The U.S. in the late 1800's:** Moral treatment of patients was finally considered. Spinning devices were banned and patients were given food and clothing. Patients were trained to act in a civil manner in exchange for certain privileges.

**The U.S. in the early 1900's:** The Era of Institutionalization. Patients kept in



massive, overcrowded asylums. Treatment deteriorated. The Eugenic movement led to viewing mental patients as contaminants of the gene pool. Laws were enacted concerning compulsory sterilization.

**20<sup>th</sup> Century Asylum Medication:** Treatments included Insulin-induced coma, electro-convulsive therapy, lobotomy, and anti-psychotic medications.

These patients were brutal and often led to permanent, irreversible damage. Treatments were sometimes used as punishments.

**Today:** Today we use the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders to help diagnose patients. While the DSM says nothing about treatment, there is hope that a proper diagnosis will lead to proper treatment. Psychologists and doctors help to treat a range of disorders. Research is continually changing what we know about the causes and treatments of mental disorders. Some may be institutionalised in mental health hospitals if they are a risk to themselves and the public. However, there is much more care in the community; rather than locking patients away, many psychologists strive to treat them within their own environments using a variety of drug treatments, cognitive behavioural therapies and talking therapies.

**How did treatments for mental health patients change between the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in the US and in Europe?**

**How are mental health patients treated today?**

**Research one of the following mental health disorders and briefly outline the symptoms below: depression, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, schizophrenia.**

**How is the disorder you outlined above treated today? How was it treated in the past? How have the treatments for this disorder developed? Note your ideas below.**

*Watch the documentary, "BBC Mental: A History of the Madhouse" on Youtube and answer the questions below:*



- 1) Why were asylums opened?
- 2) What were some of the issues with asylums?
- 3) How were patients treated in the asylums?
- 4) Asylums started to take a biological approach to treating mental illness. What biological therapies were used in asylums? Briefly outline these below.
- 5) Were these therapies effective? How do you know?
- 6) Drug therapies were later introduced into asylums. Have these been more or less effective than previous therapies? Explain your answer.
- 7) What were the issues with drug therapies?
- 8) In the 1980's the asylums began to shut down. How did experiences and treatments for mental health patients begin to change?

### Task 5: Key terms

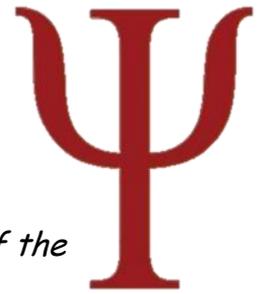


*Below are some key terms that you must know when you start psychology in September. Define the key terms below. Make sure you explain your definitions and give examples to strengthen where possible.*

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Aim	
Procedures	
Findings/ conclusion	
Evaluation	
Laboratory Experiment	
Observational techniques	
Independent variable	
Dependent variable	
Extraneous variable	
Ecological validity	
Ethical issue	

## 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 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://www.allpsych.com)



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



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

