

## **Task A**

Read pages 2-3 on the Origins of Psychology

Answer the following questions:

1. What is meant by the term 'Psychology'?
2. What does the scientific approach consist of?
3. How did psychology emerge as a science? Write 2-3 sentences summarising the text

## **Task B**

Read the article titled 'Wilhelm Wundt and the emergence of scientific psychology'

Complete the following activities on page 4 using the article:

1. Write down at least 2 key highlights of from the article.
2. Define what Wundt meant by introspection
3. Determine whether introspection is a scientific process or not and justify your response.

## **Task C**

Go to pages 5-6

1. Define the following key terms:

- Independent variable
- Dependent variable
- Hypothesis

2. Answer questions 1a and 1b

## TASK A

**THE SPECIFICATION SAYS...**

Origins of psychology: Wundt, introspection and the emergence of psychology as a science.

The idea of psychology as a distinct branch of study in its own right is generally dated at around 1880 when the first experimental lab was established.

That said, the philosophical roots of psychology stretch back much earlier than this. We shall consider these early roots as well as chart the emergence of psychology as a scientific discipline.

**KEY TERMS**

**Psychology** – The scientific study of the human mind and its functions, especially those functions affecting behaviour in a given context.

**Science** – A means of acquiring knowledge through systematic and objective investigation. The aim is to discover general laws.

**Introspection** – The first systematic experimental attempt to study the mind by breaking up conscious awareness into basic structures of thoughts, images and sensations.

1. What is meant by the term Psychology?

2. What does the scientific approach consist of?

## The emergence of psychology as a science

### Watson and the early behaviourists

By the beginning of the 20th century, the scientific status and value of introspection was being questioned by many, most notably the behaviourist John B. Watson (1913). Watson's main problem with introspection was that it produced data that was subjective, in that it varied greatly from person to person, so it became very difficult to establish general principles. Watson was also highly critical of introspection's focus on 'private' mental processes and proposed that a truly scientific psychology should restrict itself only to studying phenomena that could be observed and measured. Thus, the behaviourist approach was born, and with it the emergence of psychology as a science.

### Scientific approach

Watson (1913), and later Skinner (1953), brought the language, rigour and methods of the natural sciences into psychology. The behaviourist focus on the scientific processes involved in learning, alongside the use of carefully controlled **lab experiments**, would go on to dominate the discipline for the next five decades.

The legacy of behaviourism can still be observed today. Many modern psychologists continue to rely on the **experimental method** as part of their research and practices. However, the scope of this research has broadened considerably since the behaviourists first studied learning in the lab. Following the cognitive revolution of the 1960s, the study of mental processes is now seen

as a legitimate and highly scientific area within psychology. Although mental processes remain 'private', cognitive psychologists are able to make inferences about how these work on the basis of lab tests.

The biological approach also makes use of experimental data. Researchers within this area have taken advantage of recent advances in technology to investigate physiological processes as they happen, including live activity in the brain using sophisticated **scanning** techniques such as **fMRI** and **EEG**. Suffice to say that, even though the scientific method is still a major cornerstone psychology, it has come a long way since its early beginnings.

## TASK A



3. How did psychology emerge as a science? Write 2-3 sentences summarising the text on page 2 and 3

## **TASK B**

### **Article – Wilhelm Wundt and the emergence of scientific psychology**

Write down two key highlights from the article

Define what Wundt meant by introspection

Determine whether introspection is a scientific process or not and justify your response.

## TASK C

### Activity 2: Research methods

We will now focus on the following aspects of Working Scientifically/Research methods:

- hypothesis
- independent and dependent variables
- correlational research
- undertaking a practical investigation.

#### Research methods 1: Hypothesis, independent and dependent variables

What do you need to know?

##### A-level Psychology specification

- Hypotheses: directional and non-directional
- Variables: manipulation and control of variables, including independent, dependent.

Add a clear definition to each of the terms in the table below. These links may help:

[Independent and Dependent Variables | tutor2u](#)

[What is a Hypothesis? | Simply Psychology](#)

Term	Definition
Hypothesis	
Independent variable	
Dependent variable	

**Question 1**

A Psychology teacher had the idea that her students were more alert in the mornings than in the afternoons. To test this idea, she conducted an experiment.

This is what she did.

- She measured alertness by giving her students a page of writing to read that contained 30 spelling errors. They had to find these errors.
- She gave each of her students two minutes to underline every error that they could find.
- She then counted the number of errors that they correctly underlined.
- 19 students took part in the experiment. She used random allocation to assign the students to either Condition A or Condition B.
- In Condition A the students completed the task in the morning.
- In Condition B the other students completed the task in the afternoon.

(a) Identify the dependent variable in this experiment.

Tick the correct box.

Whether participants worked in the morning or in the afternoon	<input type="checkbox"/>
The 30 errors	<input type="checkbox"/>
The number of errors correctly underlined	<input type="checkbox"/>

**[1 mark]**

(b) Write a suitable hypothesis for this experiment.

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**[2 marks]**