

A Level Psychology Transition Pack 2023



An Introduction to Psychology

Introduction

Hi Y11s

Welcome to Psychology.

This subject is taught jointly at both KSHS and SGA. We very much hope that you will enjoy our subject. It really does combine mathematical and scientific skills with the added requirement of being able to compose detailed critically evaluated essays. Therefore, we need to assess you on a wide range of skills throughout this transition pack.

Why study Psychology?

Psychology is a useful entry point into a wide range of degree choices or careers because it builds on skills developed in science and humanities. You can find out more information about options available at www.bps.or.uk/careers

What is Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of the way we behave and what we do.

What do we study in Psychology?

Visit www.aqa.org.uk for the full course specification

Year 1 - Subject Content

- 1. Social influence*
- 2. Memory*
- 3. Attachment*
- 4. Psychopathology*
- 5. Approaches in Psychology*
- 6. Biopsychology*
- 7. Research methods*

Year 2 - Subject Content

- 1. Issues and Debates*
- 2. Relationships*
- 3. Schizophrenia*
- 4. Forensic Psychology*

Classroom activities

(Wednesday 28th June & Thursday 29th June 2023)

Psychology



What is Psychology?

The Biological Approach

This approach argues that all human behaviour is determined by biology, this includes the role of the brain, nervous system, neurotransmitters, hormones and genetics. Typically in this approach behaviours studied include gender acquisition, criminal behaviour, aggression, addiction and clinical disorders.

How could the following behaviours be explained using biology?

- Aggression
- Addiction
- Personality
- Criminal behaviour



The Learning Approach

This approach argues that all human behaviour is determined by our environment, specifically through learning processes. We are born a 'tabula rasa', which means blank slate. We then learn all of our behaviours. This is acquired through 3 main methods:

- Learning via association
- Learning via rewards and punishment
- Learning via observing and imitating

Typically in this approach behaviours studied include gender acquisition, behaviour modification, clinical disorders and criminal behaviour.

How could the following behaviours be explained using Learning Psychology?

- Aggression
- Criminal behaviour

How is Learning Psychology used in adverts?



The Psychodynamic Approach

This approach argues that all human behaviour is determined by our childhood. According to Freud, the founding father of psychodynamic psychology, the behaviour of your parents determines how you will behave. For example, if they feed you at set times every day, then you may grow up to be quite regimented. Or, if your parents fed you whenever you were hungry, then you may grow up to be quite demanding, whilst having the expectation that you can have whatever you want whenever you want it. If you suffered extreme embarrassment or trauma (of any kind) during childhood, Freud would say that these memories would be stored in the unconscious. This means that these memories are not available for conscious recollection, but they will still exert an effect from there. For example, if you were home when someone with dark hair burgled the house, you may become wary of all people with dark hair.

How can Psychodynamic Psychology explain how the experiences we have as children affect us later in life?



The Cognitive Approach

This approach argues that all human behaviour is determined by the way information is processed from the environment. Behaviour is based on the thought processes we go through and the way information is interpreted, as well as the information we pay attention to and don't pay attention to. Typically in this approach behaviours studied include eye witness testimony, clinical disorders, attention, perception and memory.

How can memory influence our behaviour?

How is the cognitive approach used to study eye witness testimony?



MARY

Mary is a 26 year old smoker. She started smoking at the age of 14 when quite a few of her friends did. Soon after this she became quite concerned about her weight (a concern she still has) and used cigarettes as an appetite suppressant. Mary decided at the age of 21 that she no longer wanted to smoke but despite many attempts she has never, in the last 5 years, manage to succeed. Now she has reluctantly given up trying because she thinks she will not succeed.

Use the psychodynamic approach, the biological approach, the learning approach and cognitive approach to explain why Mary started smoking, why she continued to smoke and why she cannot give up.



Biological Approach	Psychodynamic Approach
Cognitive Approach	Learning Approach

Homework Activities

You are required to complete the tasks detailed in the following pages, and to create your own topic folder. You will need to hand this topic folder in for assessment during the first week of the A level Psychology course.

1. As with all topics in Psychology you will be required to know names and concepts and to show that you have a good understanding of them. In addition, each of the various Psychological perspectives has its own views on the way that people behave, and the reasons for this.
2. You are required to produce a topic folder using a range of resources which will be a very useful reference aid for later on.
3. Included is a list of tasks to complete.
4. Completed topic folders will be due for submission in the first lesson of term. You will be assessed on the quality of written communication and comprehension of your topic folder.
5. Finally - this is a detailed and comprehensive assignment. Don't rush it. Remember you are going to be assessed on your work in enrolment week in September. Break it down into small management tasks and PLAN how you are going to spend your time over the coming weeks. The tasks do not have to be done in any particular order, but if you do little and often this will allow enough time, along with your other transition packs, to do a good thorough job.

Folder Checklist

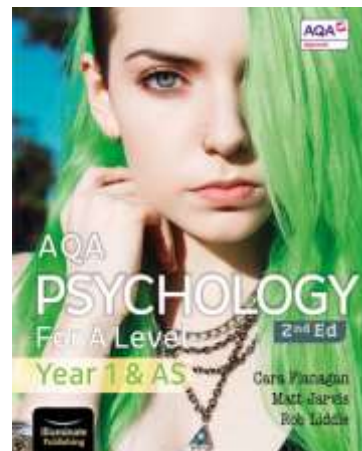
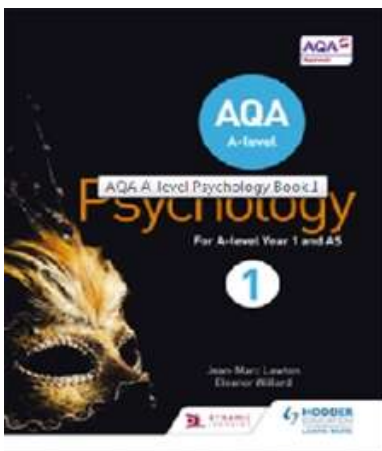
	Task	Nature of task	Suggested time to complete	Completed? (tick when done)
1	1: Notes	Cognitive Approach	1 hour	
2		Social Learning Theory	1 hour	
3		Behaviourist Approach	1 hour	
4		Biological Approach	1 hour	
5		Psychodynamic Approach	1 hour	
6	2: Key studies	Loftus & Palmer - cognitive approach	0.5 hours	
7		Bandura - social learning theory	0.5 hours	
8		Pavlov - behaviourist approach	0.5 hours	
9		Sperry - biological approach	0.5 hours	
10		Little Hans - psychodynamic approach	0.5 hours	
11	3: Application of approaches	Anne	30 mins	
12		Lewis	30 mins	
13		4: Glossary of Key Terms	1.5 hours	
Total			10 hours	

Resources

There are a good selection of resources in the school libraries. The textbooks that we shall be using for the course are

"Psychology For A-level Year 1 and AS", 2015, Jean-Marc Lawton, Eleanor Willard, Hodder Education

"Psychology For A-level Year 1 and AS", 2015, Cara Flanagan et al, Illuminate



We do subscribe to an electronic copy of the Flanagan textbook (which we affectionately refer to as the 'green haired girl book'). Please access this to help you with the work set in this transition pack.

<https://illuminate.digital/aqapsych2edy1/>

Username: SKESFORD7

Password: GREEN7

There are many useful websites for additional reading and referencing. These are the 3 most popular

<https://simplypsychology.org>

<https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqqIPOTshm8EM8CCWkCy9Pg>

(PsychBoost)

Your psychology prefects (RCT) & ambassadors (SGA) this year have also kindly offered to answer any questions that you may have about the work in this transition pack. You can contact them via email:

RCT Psychology Prefects:

- Amelie Green - puag117@kshs.uk
- George Fairhead - george.fairhead@carres.uk
- Isla Rogerson - puir117@kshs.uk

SGA Psychology Ambassadors:

- Maisie Lund - 05ML13@st-georges-academy.org
- Holly Gough - 05hg11@st-georges-academy.org

If you choose to contact any of these students, please be respectful and considerate. They are students too and deserve a holiday, so may not reply to your email(s) straight away. They will report any issues to a psychology teacher.

TASK 1 – Approaches in Psychology

You will need to start by reading and writing some notes about the following psychological approaches. Your preparation should be comprehensive and detailed enough so that you can compare and contrast various combinations of the approaches.

The main approaches are:

- Cognitive
- Social Learning Theory
- Behaviourist
- Biological
- Psychodynamic

Some keywords to research and include in your presentation preparation are:

- **Cognitive** = schema, cognitive neuroscience, inference, introspection
- **Social Learning Theory** = imitation, role models, vicarious reinforcement
- **Behaviourist** = classical conditioning, operant conditioning
- **Biological** = genes, neurons, neurotransmitters, synaptic transmission, the brain, hormones
- **Psychodynamic** = structure of the mind, structure of personality, defence mechanisms, psychosexual stages of development

In summary we are looking for a total of five sets of notes, one for each approach. Each presentation should include the following:-

1. Assumptions of the approach – how does the approach explain behaviour?
2. Explanation of all key terms listed above
3. Anything else of interest to you

Task 2 – Key Studies Overview

Different psychological approaches often favour, or are biased towards, the use of particular research methods.

For each approach we have selected two key studies for you to focus on that cover a range of research methodological techniques to give you a flavour of the scope and breadth of psychology. It is important that you understand the key features of each research method. We also want to know what you think about these studies in terms of evaluation (i.e. please include at least one strength and one weakness for each study).

- **Cognitive**
 - Loftus and Palmer (1974) (experimental method)
- **Social Learning Theory**
 - Bandura (1961) (observation method)
- **Behaviourist**
 - Pavlov's dogs (experimental method)
- **Biological**
 - Sperry and Gazzaniga (1967) (experimental method)
- **Psychodynamic**
 - Little Hans (case study method)

You should complete the template below for **each** key study.

Aim What was the purpose of the study? What did the researcher(s) want to investigate?
Procedure Who were the participants? How was the study carried out? –Step 1, Step 2...?
Findings What results did the researcher find?
Conclusion What conclusions did the researcher make based off the results that were collected?

TASK 3 - Application of Approaches in Psychology

One of the most important skills in psychology is to be able to apply your knowledge to new scenarios. We want you to start practising this skill now! An example of how to do this has been included below. Please read this carefully and have a go at applying your new knowledge about the different psychological approaches from Task 1 to the situations that Anne and Lewis find themselves in: how could you use psychology to explain their behaviour?



MARY

Mary is a 26-year-old smoker. She started smoking at the age of 14 when quite a few of her friends did. Soon after this she became quite concerned about her weight (a concern she still has) and used cigarettes as an appetite suppressant. Mary decided at the age of 21 that she no longer wanted to smoke but despite many attempts she has never, in the last 5 years, managed to succeed. Now she has reluctantly given up trying because she thinks she will not succeed.

Use the psychodynamic approach, the biological approach, the social learning theory, behaviourist approach and cognitive approach to explain why Mary smokes and cannot give up smoking.

Psychodynamic

Perhaps Mary has repressed her worries about her weight into her unconscious, which has caused her to start smoking. According to Freud, it could be possible that Mary is fixated at the oral psychosexual stage of development, which means that she has started smoking in order to gratify her desire for oral stimulation.

Biological

Mary might have started to smoke because it suppresses her appetite (she seems particularly concerned about her weight). If she is not eating, then she will be slimmer. Mary might not be able to give up because she is physically addicted to the nicotine and/or other chemicals found in cigarettes, and experiences unpleasant withdrawal symptoms (such as headaches) when she tries to stop.

Social Learning Theory

Bandura would suggest that Mary has started to smoke because she has observed her friends (her role models) smoking and she is imitating this behaviour. In order for this to happen it is important that Mary pays attention to the smoking behaviour of her friends (e.g. which brand of cigarettes they smoke, how they actually smoke, when they smoke), she remembers this information and she is physically able to reproduce this behaviour. For example, it is important that she is able to physically get her hands on some cigarettes!

Behaviourist

According to classical conditioning, it seems that Mary has learnt to associate smoking with being 'cool'. She smokes, not because she likes smoking or because she wants to smoke, but because she wants to be cool like her friends. According to operant conditioning, Mary might have started to smoke because it was rewarding; perhaps people notice her more because she is part of the 'cool' smoking group. This is likely to make Mary feel good, so she continues to smoke. In addition, Mary may be unable to stop smoking because the withdrawal symptoms act as a form of punishment. Mary continues to smoke to avoid the unpleasant nausea associated with smoking.

Cognitive

It is likely that Mary started to smoke because she thinks that it is a 'cool' thing to do. She also thinks that she will lose weight by smoking. She thinks that she is unable to succeed at giving up. She has spent the last 5 years trying to give up, unsuccessfully. Mary thinks that she cannot give up smoking so she will always be a smoker.



ANNE

Anne has just had her first baby and feels very depressed and is thinking she may not be a good mother. She cannot understand why she feels like this- the baby was very much wanted and she has a loving and supportive husband. Anne had a very unhappy childhood: she was an only child with a mother who was cold and uncaring. Her father left when she was only 4 years old. He tried to keep in touch with her but her mother did her utmost to prevent him. Anne's best friend has also had a baby, and seems to be coping better than she is.

Use the psychodynamic approach, the biological approach, Social Learning Theory, the behaviourist approach and cognitive approach to explain why feeling depressed and doubting her abilities of being a mother.



LEWIS

Lewis is 15 years old and regularly 'skives' school with his friends in order to go to a local gym and box. Even though he is quite small in build, his ambition is to be a professional boxer and is now becoming more aggressive as he trains more. Lewis is not interested in any of the usual things that lads his age enjoy- not music, nor computer games, nor girls. He certainly is not interested in gaining qualifications and thinks they are totally pointless. He has never been successful in academic work and recently has been placed in the 'bottom' group in every school subject for which there is a banding system.

Use the psychodynamic approach, the biological approach, Social Learning Theory, the behaviourist approach and cognitive approach to explain why Lewis skives school, why he boxes and why he is not interested in education.

TASK 4 – Knowledge of Key Terms

Complete the Glossary of terms using textbooks and the internet. This simply means writing down a (psychological) definition of the term given. If you can, give an example (although this is optional). Remember, this is a reference document to be used later, so make it count. Use your initiative!!

TERMS

Bias	Dependent variable	Nature
Case Study	Determinism	Nurture
Confederate	Ecological validity	Observation
Conformity	Ethics	Questionnaire
Confounding variable	Experiment	Reductionism
Consent	Free-will	Reliability
Control group	Hypothesis	Sampling
Correlation	Independent variable	Self-report
Cross-cultural research	Innate	Variable
Debrief	Interview	Validity
Demand characteristics	Longitudinal study	

Once you have completed this task you will have your own ready-made psychological dictionary of key terms, and an excellent learning and revision aid.

Extension: Recommendations of Some Things to Watch, Read or Explore Further

Films:

- 12 Angry Men
- A Beautiful Mind
- Catfish
- Finding Nemo
- Good Will Hunting
- Inside Out
- The Stanford Prison Experiment
- Three Identical Strangers

Drama and Documentary Series

- 100 Humans (Netflix)
- Babies (Netflix)
- Criminal Minds (Prime)
- Eyewitness (BBC)
- Horizon (BBC)

TED Talks

- Are we in control of our own decisions? By Dan Ariely
- Flow, the secret to happiness by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
- The power of vulnerability by Brene Brown
- The psychology of evil by Philip Zimbardo

- Lots more recommendations at -

[https://www.ted.com/talks?topics\[\]=psychology](https://www.ted.com/talks?topics[]=psychology)

Podcasts

- All In The Mind
- Mind Changers

Twitter

1. Peter Kinderman (@peterkinderman) - president of BPS
2. Richard Wiseman (@RichardWiseman) - magician & Professor of Public Understanding of Psychology
3. @PsyBlog - very popular with news channels
4. Christian Jarrett @Psych_Writer - brief summaries of psych

5. @Psychreg - latest research & psychologist profiles
6. Paul Ekman (@PaulEkman) - highly regarded psychologist
7. Jo Hemmings (@TVpsychologist) - best celebrity psychologist
8. Sarah-Jayne Blakemore (@sjblakemore) - psychologist that specialises in understanding the adolescent brain
9. Welldoing (@Welldoing_Org) - created by founder of Psychologies magazine -> mental health, self-development & wellbeing
10. Mind (@MindCharity)

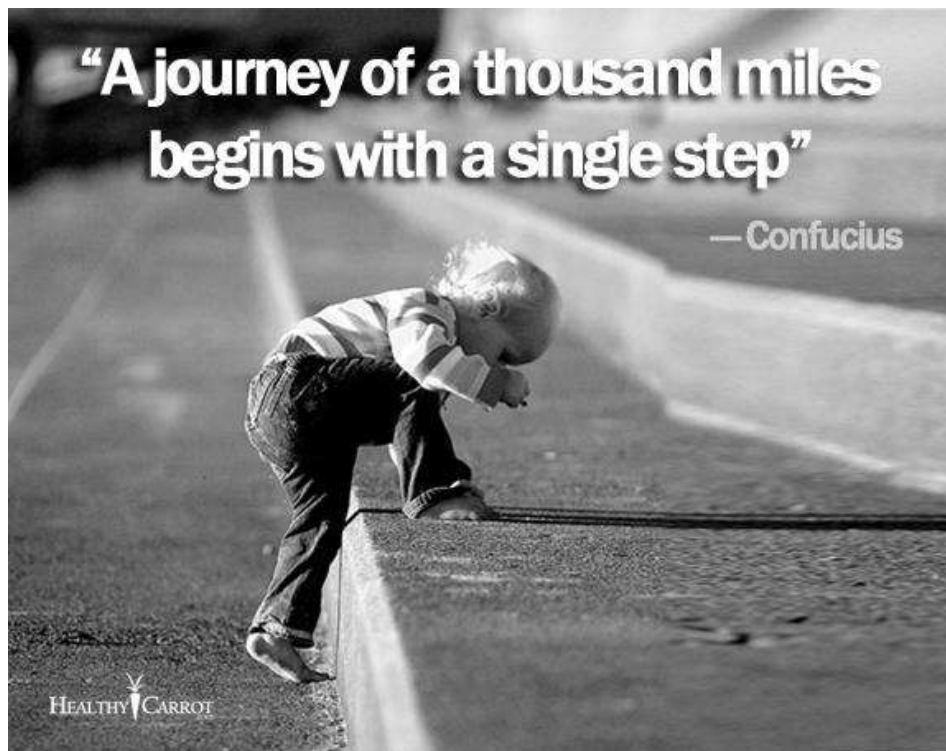
Books

- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey
- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time by Mark Haddon
- A Boy Called It by David Peltzer (there are 3 in this series - this is the first)
- Prozac Nation: Young and Depressed in America - A Memoir by Elizabeth Wurtzel
- Elephants On Acid and Other Bizarre Experiments by Alex Boese
- Why We Sleep by Matthew Walker
- The Jigsaw Man by Paul Britton (warning: this book contains some descriptions that you may find upsetting)
- Authentic Happiness by Martin E.P. Seligman
- Opening Skinners Box by Lauren Slater
- The Lucifer Effect by Philip Zimbardo
- Grit by Angela Duckworth
- Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor E Frankl
- Working Memories: Postmen, Divers & Cognitive Revolution by Alan Baddeley
- Inventing Ourselves: The Secret Life of the Teenage Brain by Sarah-Jayne Blakemore
- The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat by Oliver Sacks
- Blame My Brain: The Amazing Teenage Brain Revealed by Nicola Morgan
- The Gift: 12 Lessons to Save Your Life by Edith Eger
- The Human Mind: And How to Make the Most Of It by Professor Lord Robert Winston
- How to Build a Healthy Brain: Reduce Stress, Anxiety and Depression and Future-Proof Your Brain by Kimberley Wilson

Finally...

Remember: completed properly, this transition pack and the production of a comprehensive topic folder should give you a huge advantage at the beginning of Year 12 in terms of your knowledge and understanding. This will take a lot of pressure away from you when we begin the teaching of the specification. It will also give you a deeper insight into the course content and hopefully increase your enthusiasm and desire to study Psychology.

The assessment of your transition pack will be a major part of judging whether you will be able to cope with the demands of the course.



Do your best, good luck and have fun!!!

Mrs Tofrik (SGA) & Mrs Brooks (KSHS)