



PSYCHOLOGY

Exam board: AQA

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Are you interested in studying A level Psychology? The activities below will give you an insight into some of the fascinating topics we study within the course, as well as allowing you to practice some of the necessary skills you will need to develop to be a successful psychology student. It is a subject that requires a broad range of skills from scientific planning and investigation, to reading and critically evaluating/analysing theories, to statistical analysis and interpretation of data. Therefore, we have incorporated a mixture of tasks below to show you just how varied and interesting psychology is!

Week 1: Approaches

One of the first topics we will study in first year (AS) is approaches. This topic looks at our understanding of human behaviour from four different views/theories/perspectives as each approach has its own way of explaining why we behave in certain ways. The approaches we cover at AS are: The Behaviourist Approach, Social Learning Theory, The Cognitive Approach and the Biological Approach then in the second year we cover two additional approaches: The Psychodynamic Approach and the Humanistic Approach. To give you a flavour of just a couple of the approaches, please complete the tasks below:

To help you complete the following tasks you can use this section of an online textbook: <http://fdslive.oup.com/www.oup.com/oxed/secondary/psychology/complete-companions-approaches-psychology.pdf>, as well as general searches on the internet including Wikipedia.

Particularly useful websites are: www.simplypsychology.org and www.psychology4a.com

Approach Number 1: Behaviourist Approach

Background: The behaviourist approach emerged at the beginning of the 20th century and became the dominant approach in Psychology for half of that century. It is also credited as being the driving force in the development of psychology as a scientific discipline

Task 1: Key terms: Research and write a definition for the following terms:

1. Classical Conditioning:
2. Operant Conditioning:
3. Positive Reinforcement.
4. Negative Reinforcement:

Task 2: Key study: Research and find videos on YouTube of Pavlov's Dogs. Produce a summary paragraph of what happened in this study and why it shows Classical Conditioning.

Task 3: Key study: Research and find videos on YouTube of Skinner's Rats. Produce a summary paragraph of what happened in this study and why it shows Operant Conditioning.

Week 1 continued

Task 4: Application: Using the principles of classical and operant conditioning (especially negative reinforcement) explain how the behaviourist approach would explain the following case study:

30-year-old Jackie has a fear of lifts because she got stuck in one for an hour when she was 21 years-old. She has not been in a lift since and now will only use the stairs wherever she goes, even if it means she must climb 10 flights!

Approach Number 2: Social Learning Theory

Background: Albert Bandura proposes the Social Learning Theory as a development of the behaviourist approach. He argues that classical and operant conditioning could not account for all human learning – there are important mental processes that bridge between stimulus and response.

Task 1: Key terms: Research and write a definition of the following terms:

1. Identification:
2. Observation:
3. Imitation:
4. Vicarious Reinforcement:
5. Mediation Processes:

Task 2: Key study: Research and watch videos on YouTube of Bandura's Bobo Doll study. Produce a summary paragraph of what happened in this study and how it illustrates the key principles of Social Learning Theory mentioned above especially identification, observation and imitation.

Task 3: Get creative! Draw a storyboard to illustrate Bandura's Bobo Doll study. Google storyboards for ideas if needed.

Task 3: Application: Bandura's Bobo doll experiments have implications for the media – are children, and indeed some adults influenced by the violence and aggression they see on television, in movies and video games? There have been many incidences of copycat killing where perpetrators have said they were inspired by violent TV and films.

Using the Social Learning Theory key terms in task 1 above, explain why the media may potentially have a negative impact on children's behaviour. Think of as many examples as possible.

Task 4: Application: Mrs Hill is a primary school teacher in a Year 1 class. She notices that some of the students in her class constantly call out answers without raising their hands, which ruins the learning for other students.

How might Mrs Hill use vicarious reinforcement to change the behaviour of these students? Think of as many examples as possible.

Task 5: History of Psychology: To help you understand how psychology has evolved as a subject, from initially being closely linked with philosophy in the early days, to more recently being widely accepted as a scientific discipline. We would like you to create a Psychology Timeline with significant years and events/publication of books/theories etc. on it. You must include at least the following 7 key examples below, but you can include as many additional ones on there as you like:

1. Wilhelm Wundt
2. Behaviourist Approach and the work of Pavlov, Watson & Skinner.
3. Psychodynamic Approach and the work of Sigmund Freud
4. Social Learning Theory and the work of Albert Bandura.
5. Cognitive Approach and the work of Piaget, Beck or Ellis.
6. Biological Approach.

Week 1 continued

7. Cognitive Neuroscience.

You can use general Google searches of "Psychology Timeline" to help you put this together but the following links are particularly helpful for this task:

<https://allpsych.com/timeline/>

<https://hh3245.weebly.com/psychological-approaches-timeline.html>

Week 2 Task: Biopsychology

As you should now realise from completing your timeline, psychology is a science. The most recent school of thought within psychology is based on the biological approach and cognitive neuroscience which suggests, and has lots of evidence to support, that most behaviours and disorders have an underlying biological cause. Bio-psychologists and cognitive neuroscientists look for different parts of the brain, or different hormones and neurotransmitters that link to specific behaviours and disorders. Therefore to help you understand the biological basis of these explanations, we study biopsychology early in the first year. Some of the content you will have already covered at GCSE and the following tasks give you a taste of what to expect.

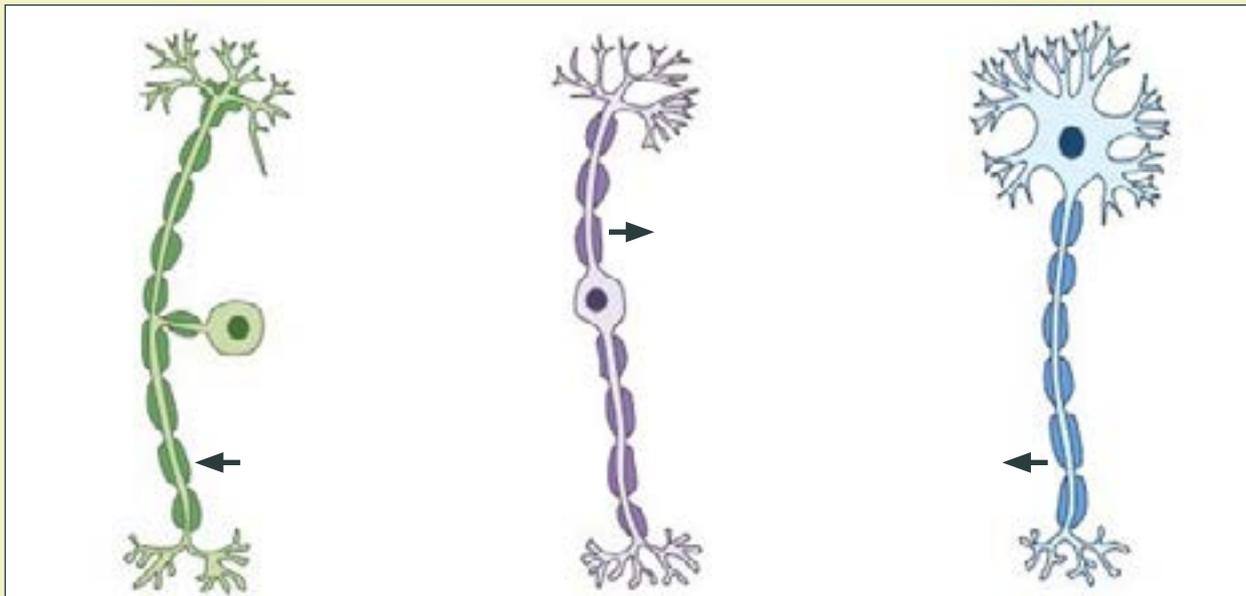
Task 1: Neurons:

Definitions: Research and write a definition of the following types of neurons:

1. Sensory neuron:
2. Relay neuron:
3. Motor neuron:

Task 2: Knowing the difference:

Using the internet or your own knowledge, can you identify which neuron below is the sensory, relay and motor neuron?



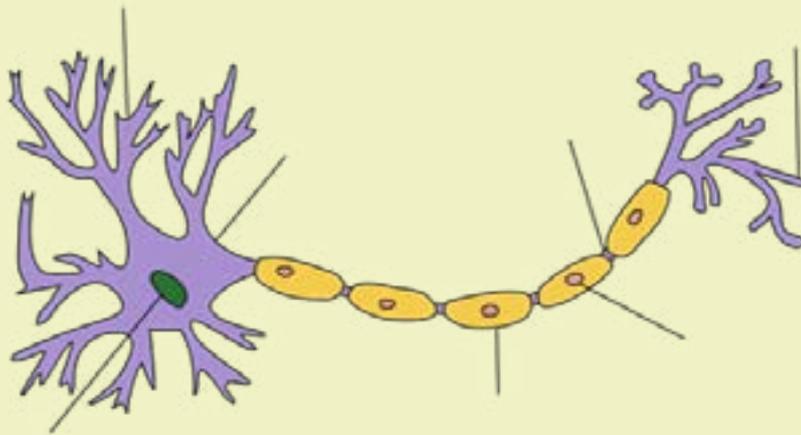
Week 2 continued

Task 3: What makes up a neuron?

Use the internet to write a definition for the following parts of a neuron:

1. Axon:
2. Dendrites:
3. Cell Body:
4. Myelin Sheath:
5. Terminal Buttons/Axon Terminal:
6. Nodes of Ranvier:

Task 4: Labelling a neuron:



Using all the key parts of a neuron above in task 3, label the diagram below using the lines:

Task 5: Neurotransmitters:

Within biopsychology and other topics such as psychopathology we also consider the role of chemicals within the brain known as neurotransmitters, and the varying levels of hormones produced from glands within the body, and their impact on behaviour.

Research the following and write down what behaviours and disorders e.g. depression, OCD, anxiety etc. they are associated with:

Challenge: Is it too much or too little of this neurotransmitter that causes that disorder?

1. Serotonin:
2. Dopamine:
3. Adrenaline:
4. ACTH:
5. Oxytocin:
6. Cortisol:
7. Acetylcholine:
8. GABA:
9. Oestrogen:
10. Testosterone:

Week 3 Task: Research Methods

In Psychology around 10% of the marks available are maths skills – in terms of overall marks this equates to about a grade. Most of the maths skills you will have already covered at GCSE, so to help you practice and see how these are applied in psychology please complete the following tasks below:

Task 1: Rounding to decimal places:

Round to 1 decimal place:

- a) 0.374
- b) 0.798
- c) 0.393
- d) 0.584

Round to 2 decimal places

- e) 0.136
- f) 0.138
- g) 0.464

Round to 3 decimal places:

- h) 29.9757
- i) 46.2317
- j) 79.0919

Round the numbers in the table.

Number	1 decimal place	2 decimal places
0.181	0.2	k)
8.928	l)	m)
0.4923	n)	o)
45.7053	p)	q)

Task 2: Using percentages, fractions and decimals:

Convert to a decimal:

- a) $\frac{1}{2}$
- b) $\frac{3}{40}$
- c) 65%
- d) 153%
- e) 51.6%
- f) 41%

Convert to a fraction, reduced to simplest form:

- g) 0.2
- h) 0.62
- i) 90%

Convert to a percentage:

- j) 0.87
- k) 2.11
- l) 0.017
- m) 2.91
- n) $\frac{9}{10}$
- o) $\frac{2}{5}$

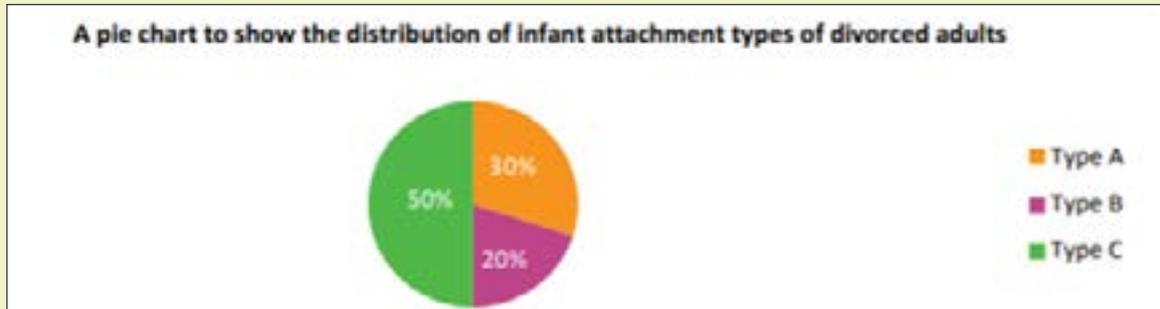
Week 3 continued

Convert to a fraction:

p) 67%

Sample Psychology Question:

Look at the pie chart below. What fraction of divorced adults had a type B attachment?



- A. $\frac{1}{5}$ B. $\frac{3}{10}$ C. $\frac{2}{5}$ D. $\frac{1}{2}$

Task 3: Ratios

Simplify the following:

- a) 5 : 10
- b) 15 : 5
- c) 5 : 50
- d) 52 : 56
- e) 52 : 12
- f) 18 : 22 : 12
- g) 16 : 52 : 48
- h) 42 : 15 : 24

Sample Psychology Question:

The findings from the study are presented below:

A table to show the number of participants who perceived the ambiguous image as a monkey or as a teapot from both conditions: image presented with animals and image presented with kitchen items.

- a) Identify and simplify the ratio of the number of participants who perceived a monkey in the first condition and the number who perceived a monkey in the second condition.

	Perceived as a monkey	Perceived as a teapot
Presented with animals	15	10
Presented with kitchen items	5	12

- b) Identify and simplify the ratio of the number of participants who perceived a teapot in the first condition and the number who perceived a teapot in the second condition.



Week 3 continued

Task 4 Measures of Central Tendency:

a) Find the mean of the data given below:

6 6 1 2 1 8

b) Find the mean of the given data below, rounding your answer to the nearest whole number:

11 12 28 17 21 24 27

c) Find the mean of the given data below, rounding your answer to 1 decimal place

11.9 4.8 16.4 18.2 12.3 3.6 2.8 25.6 10.8 0.6

d) Find the median of the data given below:

15 20 10 15 14 23 14

e) Find the median of the data given below:

20 13 10 20

f) Find the median of the data given below:

23.1 11.1 13.1 30.9 13.5 18.1 14.1 0.3

g) Find the median of the data given below:

26.3 18.6 8.8 23.2 29.3 20.9 1.5 0.2

h) Find the mode of the data given below:

1 4 6 2 10 11 12 8 10

i) Find the mode of the data given below:

9 2 4 3 6

j) Find the mode of the data given below:

8 6 5 3 3 6

Sample Psychology Question:

A Psychologist investigated whether recall was affected by the way the material was presented. One group was given pictures to recall, the other group were given words.

Number of Pictures Recalled	Number of Words Recalled
7	4
5	6
10	7
8	5
7	6
5	5
7	9
9	3

Calculate the measures of central tendency for the following set of raw data.

Condition 1 (Numbers of pictures recalled):

a) Mode b) Median c) Mean

Condition 2 (Number of words recalled):

d) Mode e) Median f) Mean



Week 3 continued

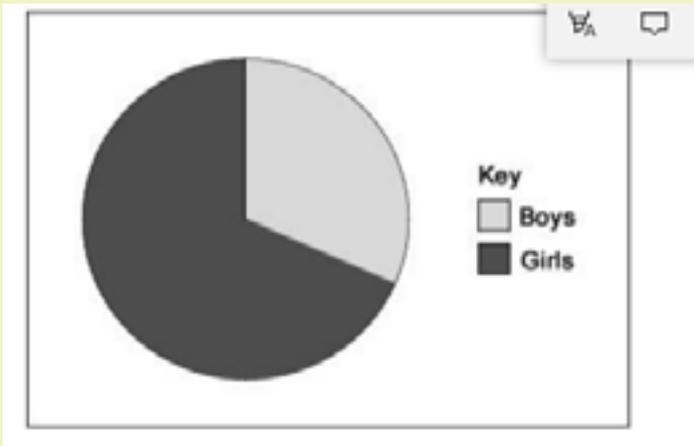
Task 5 Displaying Data:

Graphs, charts and tables are all used to describe data and make it easier for the data to be understood. There are a number of graphs and charts that you need to be able to draw and interpret in psychology, they include: Tally chart (frequency table), Line graph, Pie chart, Bar chart, Histogram and Scattergraph/ Scattergram.

Sample Psychology Questions:

A researcher is investigating gender differences in classification of attachment. They conduct a study using Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation'. The results are shown in the figure below.

The proportions of boys and girls who are classified as securely attached



(a) Using the information in the figure, estimate the percentage of boys and girls that are securely attached.

Boys =

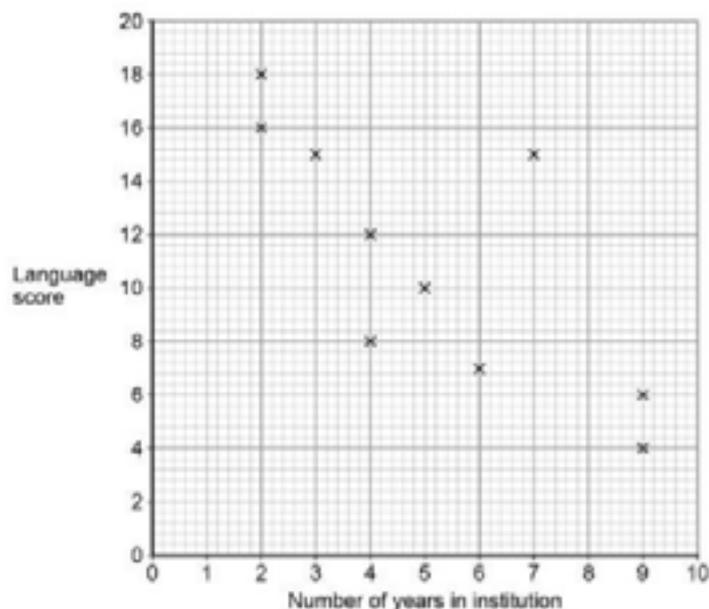
Girls =

(b) In a different study, 150 children were classified as securely attached. Of these, 40% were boys. How many of the 150 children were girls? Show your workings.

Sample Question 2:

A psychologist thinks that there may be a link between language ability and institutionalisation. She tests the language skills of 8-year-old institutionalised children. A high score on the test indicates good language ability and a low score on the test indicates poor language ability. She also records the

The relationship between time spent in institution and language score



number of years that each child has been institutionalised. The findings are shown in the figure below.

c) Identify the type of graph displayed in the figure to the left:

- 1) Histogram
- 2) Bar graph
- 3) Line graph
- 4) Scattergram

d) How many children took part in the study?

(e) What does the pattern of data in the figure suggest about language ability and institutionalisation?

(f) Calculate the range for the language scores. Show your workings.

Week 4: Psychopathology

Your final task is to conduct some research into mental health disorders. We cover this at AS in topic called psychopathology where we look specifically at OCD, depression and phobias. Then in second year we look at Schizophrenia in depth.

We would like you to choose 2 of the following disorders and for each one you need to create an information leaflet about that disorder. Imagine it is a leaflet that somebody who has just been diagnosed with the disorder would read. The disorders are:

1. Depression
2. Anorexia Nervosa
3. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
4. Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)
5. Schizophrenia
6. Agoraphobia
7. Binge Eating Disorder
8. Anxiety
9. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
10. Bipolar disorder

Your leaflet should include the following sections and is up to you how you design it (You can create this by hand or using the computer):

1. Information about the disorder. How many people does it affect in the UK? Does it affect men more than women? Is there a typical age of onset (beginning) of the disorder?
2. Characteristics/symptoms of the disorder. How many symptoms would somebody have to display in order to be diagnosed with the disorder and how long do they need to have displayed them for?
3. What are the causes/explanations of this disorder? Is it a biological cause to do with a lack of/too much of a certain neurotransmitter? Is there a certain gene you can inherit or a part of the brain responsible for this disorder? Are there any psychological explanations of the disorder too? Such as the person's upbringing including childhood trauma, influence of their environment on behaviour e.g. learnt from parents, childhood trauma, negative or irrational thought processes etc. (It is likely you will realise the best explanation for almost every disorder is a combination of both biological and psychological explanations)
4. What are the biological treatments for this disorder? Most likely to include some form of drug therapy such as anti-depressants, anti-anxiety medication etc. How long does the person have to take these drugs for to see a change? How often do they have to take them? Are there any side effects of taking this medication?
5. What are the psychological treatments for his disorder? including talking therapies like Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Explain how these work in treating the disorder – for biological treatments

Psychology reading and watching list

TED Talks: (Short clips, often by experts in the field, relating to lots of relevant areas of psychology):

[https://www.ted.com/talks/ben ambridge 10 myths about psychology debunked](https://www.ted.com/talks/ben_ambridge_10_myths_about_psychology_debunked)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/sherry turkle connected but alone](https://www.ted.com/talks/sherry_turkle_connected_but_alone)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/georgette mulheir the tragedy of orphanages](https://www.ted.com/talks/georgette_mulheir_the_tragedy_of_orphanages)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LiC0Gi0nK9g>

[https://www.ted.com/talks/ruby wax what s so funny about mental illness](https://www.ted.com/talks/ruby_wax_what_s_so_funny_about_mental_illness)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth loftus how reliable is your memory](https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_loftus_how_reliable_is_your_memory)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/gero miesenboeck re engineering the brain](https://www.ted.com/talks/gero_miesenboeck_re_engineering_the_brain)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/johann hari this could be why you re depressed or anxious](https://www.ted.com/talks/johann_hari_this_could_be_why_you_re_depressed_or_anxious)

https://www.ted.com/talks/dr_natascha_m_santos_debunking_the_myths_of OCD

https://www.ted.com/talks/philip_zimbardo_the_psychology_of_evil

https://www.ted.com/talks/anees_bahji_what_is_schizophrenia

https://www.ted.com/talks/derek_abbott_should_you_trust_unanimous_decisions

Films:

12 Angry Men

The Wave (Die Welle)

The Experimenter

A Beautiful Mind

Dangerous Method

Shutter Island

The Notebook

50 First Dates

Inside Out

Girl, Interrupted

Blackfish

Good Will Hunting

Mockingbird Don't Sing

The Troubled Child

About Time

Shutter Island

The Soloist

As Good As It Gets

Awakenings

It's Kind of a Funny Story

Little Miss Sunshine

Rain Man

Side Effects

The Men Who Stare At Goats A

Memento

The Man with the 7 Second Memory

Netflix/YouTube Documentaries:

The Mind Explained

Babies

100 Humans - Life's Questions Answered

I am Killer

Mindhunter

Innsaei

Take your pills

Afflicted

Three Identical Strangers

The Dark Matter of Love

From Romania with Love

BodyClock: What makes us tick?

The brain – A secret history parts 1-3

Living with half a brain

Inside the criminal mind

Making a murderer

Stacey Dooley – On The Psych Ward

Schizophrenia – Stolen minds, stolen lives

Reading List:

There are hundreds of books about different areas of psychology. Below are links with some interesting lists of books you might enjoy.

<https://www.sparringmind.com/psychology-books/>

<https://www.waterstones.com/category/politics-society-education/psychology>

Some specific recommendations include:

A long way from home – Cathy Glass.

We need to talk about Kevin

Hidden Valley Road – Inside the mind of an American Family

