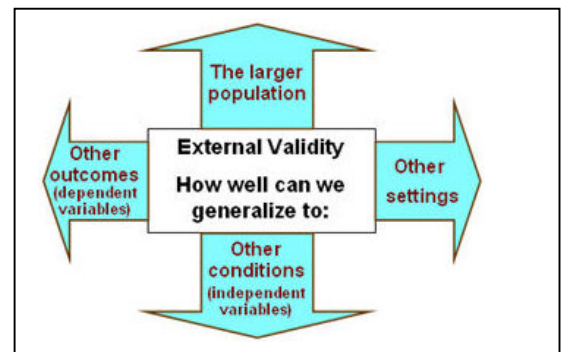
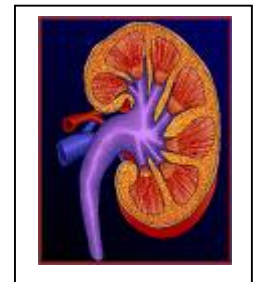
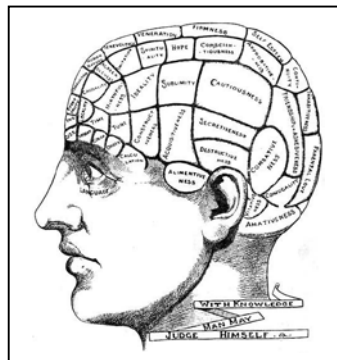
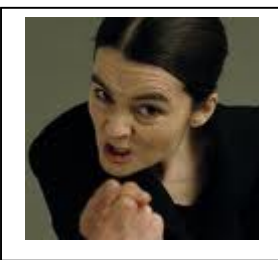
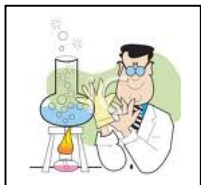


A-Level Psychology

Miss Bains



Course Structure

As the course is linear, the exams below will be completed at the end of year 13.

Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology

What's assessed

Compulsory content 1–4 above

Assessed

- written exam: 2 hours
- 96 marks in total
- 33.3% of A-level

Questions

- Section A: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks
- Section B: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks
- Section C: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks
- Section D: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

- 1 Social influence
- 2 Memory
- 3 Attachment
- 4 Psychopathology

Paper 2: Psychology in Context

What's assessed

Compulsory content 5–7 above

Assessed

- written exam: 2 hours
- 96 marks in total
- 33.3% of A-level

Questions

- Section A: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks
- Section B: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks
- Section C: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 48 marks

- 5 Approaches in Psychology
- 6 Biopsychology
- 7 Research methods

Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology

What's assessed

Compulsory content 8 above

Optional content, one from option 1, 9–11, one from option 2, 12–14, one from option 3, 15–17 above

Assessed

- written exam: 2 hours
- 96 marks in total
- 33.3% of A-level

Questions

- Section A: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks
- Section B: one topic from option 1, 9–11 above, multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks
- Section C: one topic from option 2, 12–14 above, multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks
- Section D: one topic from option 3, 15–17 above, multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

8 Issues and debates in Psychology

Option 1

- 9 Relationships
- 10 Gender
- 11 Cognition and development

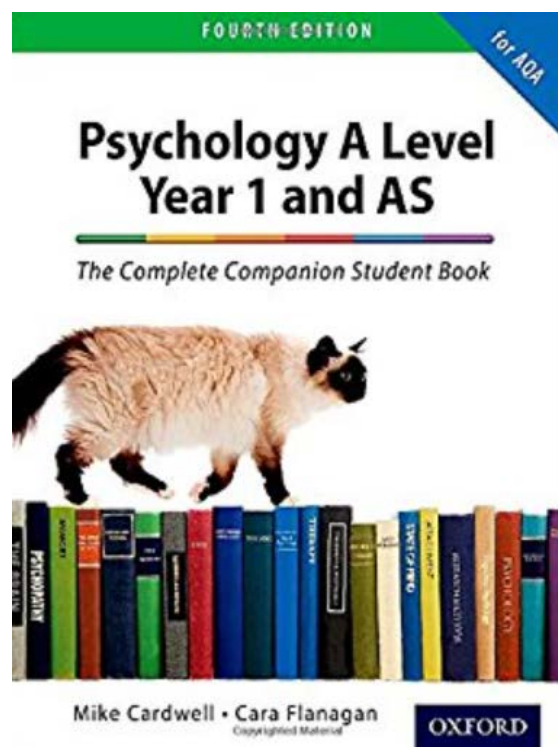
Option 2

- 12 Schizophrenia
- 13 Eating behaviour
- 14 Stress

Option 3

- 15 Aggression
- 16 Forensic Psychology
- 17 Addiction

Textbook for the course



Psychology A-Level: True or False

Write T or F by each idea

1. We tend to like people more and rate them more highly when we are familiar with them than when we are not	
2. Memory is like a tape recorder.	
3. Subliminal advertising is effective.	
4. Your relationship with your parents is more important than relationships with your siblings (brothers and sisters).	
5. Some people are left-brained, others are right-brained.	
6. People who feel stressed have weak personalities	
7. Psychologists all have the same views about behaviour	
8. Psychologists can read peoples' minds.	
9. Very few people have mental illnesses or significant emotional problems.	
10. Playing Mozart's music to infants boosts their IQ.	
11. Women are more likely to obey than men are	
12. By studying Psychology A Level, I will learn how to lie effectively and how to pull women/men.	
13. There is no point of studying animal behaviour	
14. Anyone who does not have ideal mental health should take a pill to make them better	
15. Most psychologists work as therapists or counsellors.	
16. Lie detectors are reliable indicators of whether someone is telling the truth or not.	
17. Psychologists go around analysing people all the time.	
18. Psychology is a scientific discipline, which has been officially classified as a science by A level exam boards.	

What kind of psychologist will you be?

Tick the answer which apply to you: a, b, c, or d



1. When recruiting participants for your experiment do you:
 - A. Give them all the information you can and explain it in detail
 - B. Give them a consent form to sign and then ignore it completely
 - C. Don't give them a consent form because you need to deceive them
 - D. Take absolute delight in deceiving your participants

2. When you design your experiment do you:
 - A. Try to avoid any research where someone might break a nail, never mind deception
 - B. Recruit students, sixth formers, and other powerless people because you think your research is the most important thing
 - C. Know that deception is part of your field of work but make sure everyone is looked after well and has counselling if they need it
 - D. Deception, that's how I make my living, go away minions...

3. Do you tell people at the outset that they have a right to withdraw from the experiment at any time.
 - A. Yes, I absolutely make it clear every single time
 - B. I try to, but sometimes I forget and my girlfriend has to remind me
 - C. No because it would ruin my experiment, they have to obey!
 - D. Excuse me, I have a contract to fulfil, are you mad?

4. Do you keep people's details confidential?
 - A. Yes, always because I am aware of their human rights and the data protection act
 - B. They are nameless, but I included details of their humiliation in my book, and on documentaries, but it was all done in the name of science and not for me, honest!
 - C. Yes, but there are still photos around
 - D. Are you stupid? I have to think of higher things like book deals, tours, after dinner speaking etc....

5. Do you protect your participants from physical or psychological harm
 - A. I try very hard to do no harm
 - B. Most of them, but you have to break eggs to make an omelette
 - C. Yes, everyone had debriefing and I had counsellors on standby any time they needed it
 - D. Are you some kind of killjoy? Do you understand entertainment at all?

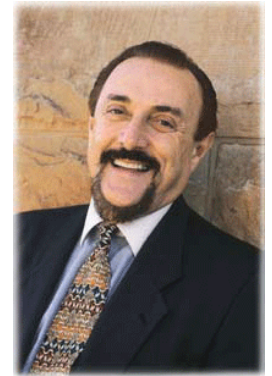
Now add up your a, b, c, or d and find out which psychologist you are:

What kind of psychologist will you be?



MOSTLY a

You are most likely going to turn into **Professor Elizabeth Loftus**. Elizabeth works on making Eyewitness testimony better so that only the right people go to Prison. Her experiment showed that Eyewitnesses are not very good at remembering details when under stress.



MOSTLY b

You are most likely going to turn into **Professor Philip Zimbardo**. He did the famous Stanford Prison experiment to show how social roles change behaviour. He got so carried away with the experiment he lost sight of the effects on participants until his girlfriend, also a psychologist stepped in and stopped him. Dr Phil is everywhere on the net so he did rather well out of it all...



MOSTLY C

You are probably going to turn into **Stanley Milgram**. His parents were Jewish Refugees during the war. He watched the trial of Adolph Eichmann whose defence for atrocities toward Jews was "I was only obeying orders" He set up an experiment to test this. He had to deceive participants but was uncomfortable about it



MOSTLY D

You wish you could turn into **Derren Brown**. You know a lot about the application (some would say misapplication) of psychology. You are highly intelligent, but because your laboratory is the TV and your audience will pay, you are not subject to the ethical codes that the rest of the psychological world is constrained by.

The Approaches in Psychology

Approach	Explains abnormal behaviour as ...	Key Features	How the approach studies behaviour	Treatments
Biological	Abnormality is caused by a physical malfunction of a bodily system.	All mental disorders are related to some change in the body. Such changes influenced by: biochemistry, viruses, neuroanatomy, genetics.	Scientifically Use of laboratory experiments, blood tests, EEG, etc	Tackle somatic (bodily) causes of disorder. These include: - Neurosurgery - ECT - Drugs
Psychodynamic	Abnormality is a result of repression of unresolved conflicts between unconscious desires.	Behaviour is driven by unconscious desires. Conflict between desires is not resolved it may cause problems later e.g. phobia. Repression pushes traumatic events into unconscious.	Through individuals (case studies)	Psychoanalysis identifies and resolves unconscious, unresolved conflicts. Techniques include: - word association - dream analysis
Behavioural	Abnormal behaviour is a result of learning.	Behaviour is learnt via stimulus response links. Reinforcement (positive and negative) of behaviour important – Operant conditioning. Classical conditioning involved in phobia development.	Through observations	Systematic desensitisation. Patients taught to replace maladaptive responses with desirable ones as they are gradually exposed to their fear. Uses CBT as well
Cognitive	Abnormal behaviour is caused by faulty thinking patterns.	Maladaptive thought processes result in maladaptive behaviour. Extends behaviourist approach focusing on thinking between stimulus and response.	Through laboratory studies	Maladaptive thought processes identified and restructured to make them adaptive. e.g. CBT

Different Approaches in Psychology

Using the approaches to make an assessment

Here is an extract from a brief psychological assessment made by a psychiatrist:



'K' is a 30-year old man who has had a long history of violence.

He was most recently arrested (for the fifth time) for an attack on another man in a crowded pub. 'K' claimed that the man had knocked his drink and laughed about it.

At the time of the arrest, 'K' was found to have abnormally high levels of testosterone (as well as high blood alcohol level).

He reported many experiences of seeing his father being aggressive and suffered himself in the form of beatings. 'K' said very little about his mother, who appeared to have been absent during this time, although this did not seem to be a concern for 'K'. 'K' was excluded from school on many occasions for bullying other children.

If 'K' had a philosophy on life, and it was 'never show weakness to others'

I recommend further detailed psychological assessment.

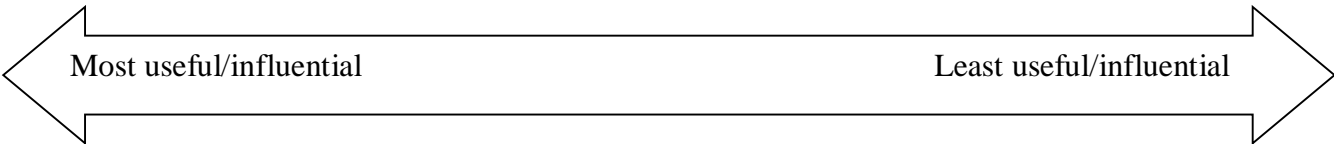
The task is to analyse the case of 'K' using six different approaches. You need to address the following questions:

- How would the approach explain the causes of 'K's behaviour?
- What methods might psychologists adopting this approach use to assess 'K'?
- What therapeutic strategies or treatment may be advocated by psychologists using this approach?

Different Approaches in Psychology Using the approaches to make an assessment

	Why does K behave in the way he does?	How might this approach assess K?	Treatment?
Biological			
Cognitive			
Behavioural			
Psychodynamic			
Developmental			
Evolutionary			

In pairs put the approaches into a hierarchy (order) from the most influential at the left, least influential at the right.



Which approaches do you think work well together?

Research Task

- Read the following pieces of research and answer the questions for each study.

Piliavin et al (1969)

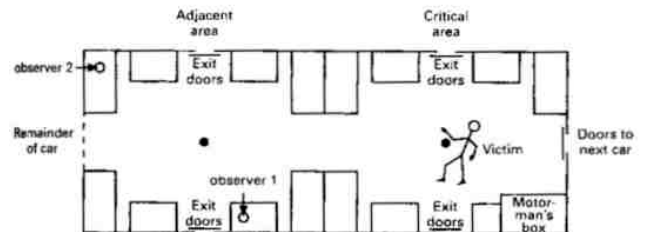
The aim of this study was to investigate whether train passengers were more likely to help someone who appeared to be ill, rather than one who appeared to be drunk.

The participants were approximately 4450 men and women travelling on a particular stretch of the New York underground system between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on weekdays during April and June 1968. Two particular trains were selected for the study because they did not make any stops for about 7.5 minutes.

There were two male and two female researchers who boarded the train using different doors. The female researchers sat and observed while one of the male researchers stood and helped if necessary, while the other male was the victim and remained standing. The male victim always stood next to a pole in the centre of the train carriage. As the train passed the first station, the victim staggered forward and collapsed. If he received no help by the time the train slowed to a stop, the other male researcher helped him to his feet. At the stop the team got off the train. This was repeated 6-8 times a day.

The victim either smelled of alcohol (and carried a bottle wrapped tightly in a brown bag (drunk condition), or appeared sober and carried a black cane (cane condition). The female observers noted the race, sex and location of every passenger, seated or standing, in the train carriage, together with the total number of passengers and the total number who came to help the victim, plus their race, sex and location. The second female observer on the train did the same and both observers recorded comments made by nearby passengers.

The results showed that helping was very high. The cane victim received spontaneous help on 62 out of the 65 times the research was conducted, and the drunk victim received spontaneous help on 19 out of 38 times the research was conducted. On 60% of the 81 trials where spontaneous help was given, more than one person offered help.



Answer the following questions:

1. Explain at least two strengths and two weaknesses of the way that the research was carried out
2. Identify and explain at least two ethical issues that may have arisen in this research (ethics are the way in which you treat the people who take part in your research).
3. Suggest one way in which this research could be improved.

Zimbardo et al (1971)

In 1971, psychologist Philip Zimbardo and his colleagues set out to create an experiment that looked at the impact of becoming a prisoner or prison guard. Zimbardo and his researchers set up a mock prison in the basement of Stanford University's psychology building, and then selected 24 students to play the roles of both prisoners and guards. The participants were selected from a larger group of 70 volunteers because they had no criminal background, lacked psychological issues and had no major medical conditions. The volunteers agreed to participate for a one- to two-week period in exchange for \$15 a day.



The fake (simulated) prison included three 6 x9 foot prison cells. Each cell held 3 prisoners and included 3 beds. Other rooms across from the cells were used by the prison guards and warden. One very small space was designated as the solitary confinement room, and another small room served as the prison yard.

The 24 volunteers were randomly assigned to being either in the prisoner group or the guard group. Prisoners were to remain in the mock prison 24-hours a day for the whole length of the study. Guards, on the other hand, had to work in three-man teams for eight-hour shifts. After each shift, guards were allowed to return to their homes until their next shift. Researchers were able to observe the behavior of the prisoners and guards using hidden cameras and microphones.

While the Stanford Prison Experiment was originally going to last 14 days, it had to be stopped after just 6 days due to what was happening to the students. The guards were abusive and the prisoners began to show signs of extreme stress and anxiety.

While the prisoners and guards were allowed to interact in any way they wanted, the interactions were generally hostile. The guards began to behave in ways that were aggressive and abusive toward the prisoners, while the prisoners became depressed. Five of the prisoners began to experience such severe negative emotions, including crying, that they had to be released from the fake prison early.

Answer the following questions:

1. Explain at least two strengths and two weaknesses of the way that the research was carried out
2. Identify and explain at least two ethical issues that may have arisen in this research (ethics are the way in which you treat the people who take part in your research).
3. Suggest one way in which this research could be improved.

Little Albert (1920)

The "Little Albert" experiment was a famous psychology experiment conducted by Watson and Raynor.

The participant in the experiment was a child that Watson and Raynor called "Albert B.", but is known popularly today as Little Albert. Around the age of nine months, Watson and Raynor exposed the child to a many animals and objects including a white rat, a rabbit, a monkey, masks and pillows and observed the boy's reactions. The boy initially showed no fear of any of the objects he was shown.



The next time Albert was exposed to the rat, Watson made a loud noise by hitting a metal pipe with a hammer behind Albert's head. Naturally, the child began to cry after hearing the loud noise. After repeatedly pairing the white rat with the loud noise, Albert began to cry simply after seeing the rat. That fear then generalised to the other white fluffy objects also.

You can watch (very old) video footage of this experiment on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xt0ucxOrPQE&feature=related>

Answer the following questions:

1. Explain at least two strengths and two weaknesses of the way that the research was carried out
2. Identify and explain at least two ethical issues that may have arisen in this research (ethics are the way in which you treat the people who take part in your research).
3. Suggest one way in which this research could be improved.

Research task

Find a newspaper/journal article relevant to Psychology.

Articles from Journals will follow the structure below →

Abstract	To provide the reader with a brief summary of the study.
Introduction	To introduce the background and rationale of the study.
*Method	To describe how the study was conducted.
*Results	To summarise the findings.
*Discussion	To discuss the findings and their implications
References / bibliography	To inform the reader about the sources of information used.
Appendices	Can be used for detailed information not in the report.

Summarise your chosen article using the headings above with a star next to them.