

Welcome to AQA A Level Psychology. Psychology is the science of the mind (Yes, it is a Science!). Most importantly Psychologists study behaviour and you will find that throughout the course your behaviour and your friends' behaviour will be reflected in the topics studied. Our course is 100% assessed via 3 external written examinations (AQA Board) and we are a literacy based subject. Please complete **both parts** of our **Compulsory Transition Task** below, as well as at least one task from wider reading and preparation on the following pages. This work will need to be submitted by Friday 15 September.

Should you require any help or if you have any questions, please contact the Deputy Head:

hfay@cardinalnewmanschool.net

Compulsory Transition Task

Practical based task 1

Memory Mini Experiment: In this experiment you must have a minimum of 10 results (eg do it with 10 different people). As the experimenter you should read out one line at a time of the triangle of numbers to the right to your participant starting from the top line. When you have finished reading out the line, your participant should recite back to you as many of the numbers they can remember in order. Only read the line once and at the same speed throughout, quite quickly. The line at which they make their first mistake is their digit span, so if they get a number incorrect or in the wrong order on line 6, stop the experiment and record 6 as their digit span.

6
 27 35
 10 28 22
 38 46 10 11
 52 81 9 8 11 7
 55 38 29 13 8 7 1
 75 17 20 61 82 51 2
 61 38 17 40 49 84 57 8
 71 22 31 89 47 51 16 94
 18 95 48 30 89 67 18 11 15 17
 76 83 40 28 25 12 15 53 95 49 20
 16 9 11 17 49 50 28 69 24 53 78 10
 77 53 49 76 19 94 87 64 23 19 15 51 2
 78 56 34 19 27 20 80 42 38 64 29 10 79 31

Now research and answer the following...

1. What is memory? Does it have different types? If so, explain them...
2. What is the capacity and duration of the average memory in humans?
3. What did Jacobs do in 1887? What did he discover about memory?
4. How does this link to the results from your experiment above?

Written based task 1

Write up your results as a Psychological Report. The headings are:

Abstract (a brief summary of results: What you did and found)

Introduction (the aim of this study and general theories that support the aim)

Method (details on how you did the experiment, instructions, materials, participants, ethics)

Results (Explain what you found. Present data in a table or graph)

Discussion (Discuss your results and any limitations of study)

References (site your sources)

Wider reading and preparation for A Level Task 1- Approaches



Born to kill?

What are the key approaches in Psychology?

Biological Approach- The biological approach believes behaviour to be as a consequence of our genetics and physiology. It is the only approach in psychology that examines thoughts, feelings, and behaviours from a biological point. Neurochemical imbalances in the brain are often associated with abnormal behaviour

Psychodynamic Approach- Psychodynamic approach believes unconscious activity is the key determinant of how we behave. We possess innate 'drives' (or 'instincts') that 'energize' our minds to motivate behaviour as we develop through our lives. Childhood experiences have significant importance in determining our personality when we reach adulthood.

Learning Approach- Children observe the people around them behaving in various ways. In society, children are surrounded by many influential models, such as parents, TV, friends and teachers. These models provide examples of behavior to observe and imitate, e.g., masculine and feminine, pro and anti-social

Cognitive Approach- Cognitive psychologists try to build up cognitive models of the information processing that goes on inside people's minds, including perception, attention, language, memory, thinking, and consciousness. Cognitive psychology has been applied to the theory of moral development, education, learning styles, perception

Find more information here: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/perspective.html>

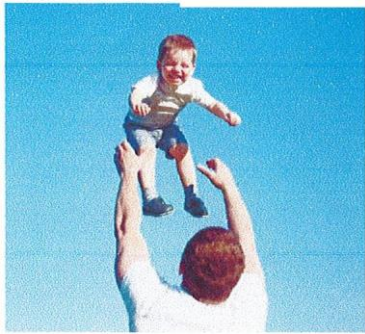
Read about the serial killer Pedro Filho: <https://soserial.wordpress.com/2017/05/15/pedro-rodriques-filho/>

Answer the following questions:

- How would the Biological Approach explain the criminal behaviour of Pedro?
- How would the Psychodynamic Approach explain the criminal behaviour of Pedro?
- How would the Learning Approach explain the criminal behaviour of Pedro?
- How would the Cognitive Approach explain the criminal behaviour?
- In your opinion, which is the strongest explanation? Explain why?
- Do you believe killers are born to kill? Explain why?



Wider reading and preparation for A Level Task 2- Attachment



Weighing up the role of the father

People are interested in finding out whether it is essential that the mother should be the primary caregiver and attachment figure. The role of the father was not considered in early attachment theory and research, which tended to focus on mother-infant attachments. More recently, researchers have focused on the importance of the father in infant development and whether they have a distinct role.

Consider the following questions:

- Is it possible for fathers to be equally good/better than mothers?
- Will there be a long-term impact in terms of attachment if the primary caregiver is male?

Research the following questions:

- Are there biological reasons why men should not be the ones to provide emotional care?
- Do social stereotypes prevent fathers from providing emotional care?
- What evidence is there that the role of the father is changing?
- Aside from emotional care what other factors are important in attachment?



Read this and answer the following questions: <https://www.tutor2u.net/psycho1ogy/reference/multiple-attachments-and-the-role-of-the-father>

6 ▪ What does this research mean for prospective dads?

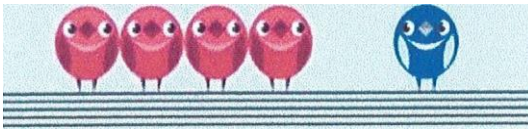
i} Should they take their paternity leave?

- Should they consider being the one to be the full-time carer if that makes financial sense for the family?

If they meet people who question whether fathers can do as good a job as mothers and whether they can be a suitable - how could they respond with reference to the research?

Wider reading and preparation for A Level Task 3- Social Influence

Would you conform?



What is conformity?

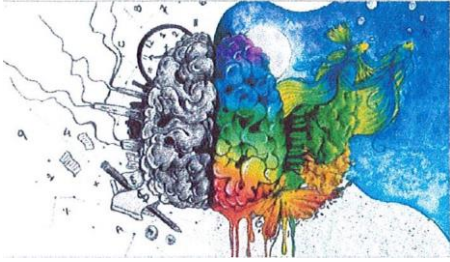
Conformity is a type of social influence involving a change in belief or behaviour in order to fit in with a group. This change is in response to real (involving the physical presence of others) or imagined (involving the pressure of social norms/ expectations) group pressure.

Watch this and answer the following questions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgRoiTWkBHU>

- What might have been the cause of the people's behaviour?
- How might they have felt if they had not conformed?
- Would you have conformed?
- Some people do not conform in similar circumstances - what reasons might there be for this?
- Psychology such as this has useful applications - what common situations could this research help us understand?
- Can you think of any ways that this research could be misused - in other words not for helpful purposes?
- Consider the ethical costs and benefits of repeating this research as a Psychology investigation. Do you think it is ethical?



Wider reading and preparation for A Level Task 4- Psychopathology



What is abnormality?

Psychopathology is the study of psychological disorders. Abnormal Psychology is a division of Psychology that studies people who are "abnormal" or "atypical" compared to the members of a given society. The definition of the word abnormal is simple enough but applying this to Psychology poses a complex problem: what is normal?

Consider the following questions:

- How do we identify when someone is psychologically unwell?
- How does their behaviour differ from what is considered 'normal' and when is a person classified as 'abnormal'?

Psychologists and health professionals have put forward different definitions of abnormality, in an attempt to develop our understanding of abnormal behaviour.

What are the four definitions of abnormality? Read this: <https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology/reference/introduction-to-psychopathology>

Read this and answer the following question:

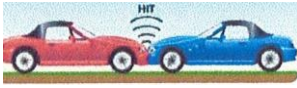
It is ex-Royal Marine Stephen Gough's heartfelt belief that being naked in public is a fundamental freedom and he wishes by doing so to separate nudity from sexual behaviour. So in 2003-04 and again in 2005-06 he walked from Land's End to John O'Groats in just his boots and occasionally (on sunny days) a hat. He was arrested 18 times and has spent 6 years in prison (naked) in isolation. His spells of freedom are often for a few seconds, with arrest following his refusal to wear clothes on leaving prison. The cost for his imprisonment now runs into several hundred thousand pounds. In 2012, he was allowed to walk home from Scotland to Hampshire, as long as he did so with 'consideration for others'. Three days later, he was arrested for walking past a children's playground in Fife and put back in prison, with Gough refusing to allow social workers to assess his mental health. The authorities have generally seen him as confrontational, intolerant and inconsiderate, and in January 2014, he was again jailed for 16 months for breaking an ASBO to not be naked in public.



- **Using each definition of abnormality, analyse whether Stephen would be considered abnormal. Explain why.**

Wider reading and preparation for A Level Task 5- Memory

How reliable is your memory?



What is eye witness testimony?

Eyewitness testimony is a legal term. It refers to the account a bystander or victim gives in the courtroom, describing what that person observed that occurred during the specific incident under investigation. It is an important area of research in cognitive psychology and human memory. Ideally, this recollection of events is detailed; however, this is not always the case. Eyewitness memory, which is relied upon in the process of eyewitness identification, is thought to be fragile and easily distorted by information obtained post-event.

Read the key study by Loftus and Palmer: <https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology/reference/misleading-information-leading-questions>

What did Loftus & Palmer find about the accuracy of eye witness testimony?

So, what influences the accuracy of eye witness testimony?

Watch and make notes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-SBTRLoPuo>

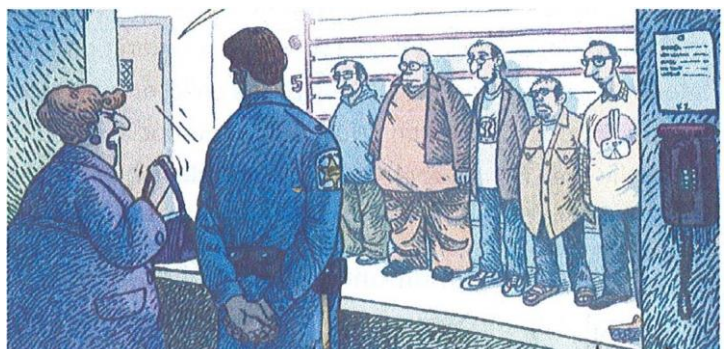
Watch and make notes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4V6aoYuDcg>

Can the accuracy of eye witness testimony be improved?

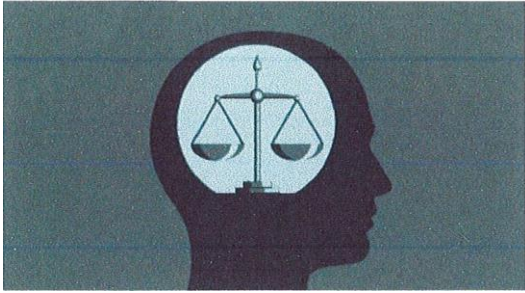
Watch and make notes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HwcMEwgWqQ>

Do you think these measures of improving eyewitness testimony are effective?

How has Psychological research into eyewitness testimony had practical applications in real life?



Wider reading and preparation for A Level Task 6- Issues and Debates



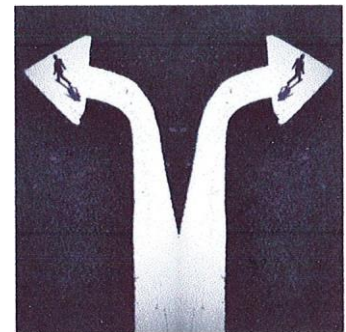
Does free will exist?

One of the oldest questions in Psychology, and in other fields such as Philosophy, is whether humans have free will. That is, are we able to choose what we will do with our lives? The free will issue is especially thorny because it represents a collision between two opposing, yet equally valid, perspectives. Determinism is the view that free will is an illusion, and that our behaviour is governed by internal or external forces over which we have no control. Consequently, our behaviour is viewed as predictable. The causal laws of determinism form the basis of science.

So, do we really have free will? Is this question even answerable?

Consider the following research:

Ben Libet (1985) scanned participants' brains as he instructed them to move their arm. Libet found that brain activity increased even before participants were aware of their decision to move their arm. Libet interpreted this finding as meaning that the brain had somehow "decided" to make the movement, and that the person became consciously aware of this decision only after it had already been made. Many other neuroscientists have used Libet's findings as evidence that human behaviour is controlled by neurobiology, and that free will does not exist.



Research and answer the following questions:

1. So, is there any hope for free will?

- Are we really controlled by our biology and our environments?
- Does it really matter whether we actually have free will? Or does it matter only whether we believe that we do?
- Do statements against free will encourage people to behave as though they are not responsible for their behaviour?

