

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Psychology A

Additional Sample Questions:

- PSYA1
- PSYA2



ADDITIONAL SAMPLE QUESTIONS

PSYA1 Memory question (Cognitive Psychology)

- 1 Four of the following statements are descriptions of different components of the Working Memory Model.
- A Stores acoustically coded items for a short period
 - B Stores and deals with what items look like and the physical relationship between them
 - C Encodes data in terms of its meaning
 - D Acts as a form of attention and controls slave systems
 - E Silently repeats words that are heard or seen

(a) In the table below, write down which description, **A, B, C, D** or **E**, matches each component part of the model. *(4 marks)*

Table to show components of working memory model

Components of working memory model	Descriptions of components
Phonological store	
Visuo-spatial sketch pad	
Articulatory process	
Central executive	

(b) Identify and explain **one** weakness of the working memory model. *(4 marks)*

- 2 Explain **one** way in which anxiety can affect the accuracy of eyewitness testimony. *(4 marks)*

- 3 One strategy often used by students to try to improve their memory ability is to repeat information that they wish to learn over and over again. In order to investigate this, an experimenter gave a group of participants a list of unconnected words with the instruction that they were to repeat the list over and over verbally. A second group of participants were given the same list of words, but were only allowed to read them once. Ten minutes later each group was asked to recall the list. The number of words recalled by the two groups was compared.
- (a) Give a directional hypothesis for this study. (2 marks)
- (b) Explain why it is important that the same list of words was used with both groups of participants. (2 marks)
- (c) (i) State what the independent variable is in this study. (1 mark)
- (ii) State what the dependent variable would be in this study. (1 mark)
- (d) A volunteer sample was used in this study.
Outline **one** weakness of this type of sampling for this study. (2 marks)
- (e) The findings from this investigation are shown in the table below.

Table to show mean number of words remembered by participants using repetition and participants not using repetition

	Mean number of words recalled
Participants using repetition	13.6
Participants not using repetition	8.4

Explain **one** conclusion that can be drawn from these findings. (4 marks)

- 4 Outline and evaluate the multi-store model of memory. (12 marks)

PSYA1 Attachment question (Developmental Psychology)

- 1 Outline two behaviours characteristic of an infant with:
- (i) an insecure-resistant attachment type;
 - (ii) an insecure-avoidant type. (2 marks + 2 marks)

- 2 (a) Outline key features of the evolutionary perspective explanation of attachment. (6 marks)

- (b) Explain **two** limitations of the evolutionary perspective explanation of attachment. (2 marks + 2 marks)

- 3 Lilleth is an experienced nurse who has been put in charge of a newly-established children's ward in a local hospital. Being placed under hospital care can cause disruption to attachments and this can have negative effects for children. Therefore it is Lilleth's aim to use her knowledge of childcare practice to try to ensure that any such negative effects do not occur in the children's ward.

Outline **two** strategies that Lilleth could use to try to reduce the negative effects of disruption to attachments. (3 marks + 3 marks)

- 4 A psychologist conducted a research study to investigate the implications of providing caregivers with training designed to increase their sensitivity.

Using an independent groups design, twenty caregivers were randomly assigned to the group receiving training to increase their sensitivity. The remaining twenty, a control group, received no such training.

The findings were that caregivers in receipt of sensitivity training were rated as more sensitive than caregivers in the control group. For children around the age of two, those in the care of the caregivers who received the sensitivity training were more secure in their attachments than those cared for by the control group.

The researcher concluded that the findings were directly due to the sensitivity training.

- (a) (i) Select from the following options, **A**, **B** or **C**, which aspect of the experimental design allowed the researcher to reach this conclusion.

- A** That an independent groups design was used.
- B** That participants were randomly allocated to the training or control group
- C** That an equal number of participants were used in both groups. (1 mark)

- (a) (ii) Explain, using the option selected in (a) (i), why the researcher was able to reach this conclusion. (2 marks)

- (b) Each caregiver was assessed on a sensitivity scale with a maximum possible individual score of 100. The data was placed into a table.

Table to show sensitivity scores

	Received sensitivity training	No sensitivity training
Total sensitivity scores	1404	1022
Measure of central tendency	70.2	51.1
Standard deviation	9.88	5.02

The measure of central tendency for each group was calculated by dividing the total sensitivity score by the number of caregivers in that group.

- (i) What measure of central tendency was used? *(1 mark)*
- (ii) Explain one strength and one weakness of the measure of central tendency used in this investigation. *(2 marks + 2 marks)*
- (c) What do the standard deviations tell us about the data in the table? *(3 marks)*
- 5** Ainsworth investigated attachment behaviour using a controlled observation called the Strange Situation. This involved testing levels of stranger anxiety and separation anxiety. However, the procedure has been accused of lacking validity.
- (a) Explain what is meant by the term validity. *(2 marks)*
- (b) Explain why the Strange Situation may be lacking in validity. *(3 marks)*

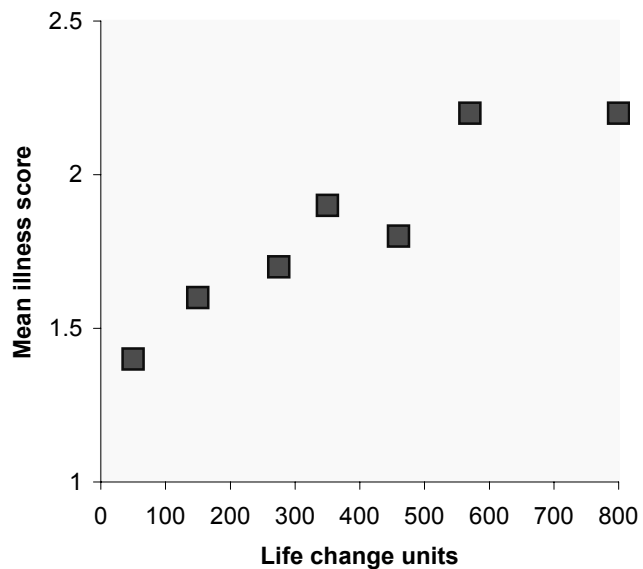
PSYA2 Stress question (Physiological Psychology)

- 1 Outline how the body responds to stress. (6 marks)
- 2 (a) Identify **one** source of stress in the workplace. (1 mark)
(b) Outline what research has shown about how this source of stress can affect an individual. (2 marks)
- 3 In response to rising stress levels in the local population, a Health Service Provider was keen to provide stress management techniques as part of the treatments they offered.

One technique that was introduced involved helping a client to identify his/her negative, irrational thoughts and to replace them with more positive, rational methods of thinking. The therapist helps a client to understand better where their faulty thinking is leading, by the client and therapist working together using role play so that the consequences of the faulty thinking can be plainly seen. New goals are then set for the client, so that more realistic and rational beliefs are included into his/her ways of thinking.

- (a) (i) Identify the stress management strategy outlined above. (1 mark)
- (a) (ii) Explain one reason why this stress management technique could prove to be effective. (2 marks)
- (b) Explain **one** limitation of the stress management technique described above. (2 marks)

- 4 In a study of stress, the number of life events individual participants experienced was measured as well as an illness score for each individual. Data from the study were plotted on the graph below.



Outline **two** conclusions that could be drawn from the graph. (4 marks)

- 5 Discuss psychological evidence that suggests personality can affect our experience of stress. (6 marks)

PSYA2 Social Influences question (Social Psychology)

1 Outline **one** explanation of why people obey. (4 marks)

2 Research studies investigating conformity have often used laboratory-based experiments.

Explain **two** limitations of laboratory-based experiments into conformity. (2 + 2 marks)

3 (a) What is meant by the term conformity? (2 marks)

(b) (i) Identify the type of social influence illustrated in the situation described below. Refer to features of the situation to justify your answer. (3 marks)

Situation A

Nazma had recently moved to a new area and school and was finding it difficult to make friends. She noticed that a large group of students had a strong allegiance to the local football team Vale City. Nazma purchased a replica team shirt and started to wear it daily to school. Almost immediately she was asked if she would like to attend games with fellow student supporters of the team. Nazma readily agreed, even though she actually had no interest or knowledge of football at all.

(ii) Identify the type of social influence illustrated in the situation described below. Refer to features of the situation to justify your answer. (3 marks)

Situation B

Bryher has been invited out on a date by her new boyfriend who has taken her to a fashionable restaurant. Bryher is keen to make a good impression and not embarrass herself in any way. However, she has never been to a restaurant before and is alarmed at the vast array of cutlery and crockery placed before her. Bryher decides to observe other diners' behaviour before selecting which utensils to eat her food with.

4 Discuss the influence of individual differences on independent behaviour. (8 marks)

PSYA2 Abnormality question (Individual Differences)

1 Three of the following statements describe limitations of different definitions of abnormality.

- A** What seems like abnormal behaviour may actually be beneficial to an individual.
- B** This definition does not tell us which infrequent behaviours are undesirable.
- C** It is difficult, maybe impossible, for an individual to achieve all the criteria that make up this definition.
- D** This criteria has sometimes been used as a justification to punish social deviants.

In the table below, insert the limitation **A, B, C** or **D** that matches the corresponding definition of abnormality. (3 marks)

Table showing definitions of abnormality

Definitions of abnormality	Limitation of definitions
Deviation from ideal mental health	
Failure to function adequately	
Deviation from social norms	

2 Some patients, especially children and those with mental impairments, may not be able to give informed consent for treatment of their mental disorders.

Explain how informed consent could be gained in an ethical manner for these types of patients. (4 marks)

3 (a) Which of the following three options describes ECT as a type of treatment? (1 mark)

- A** A biological therapy
- B** A form of psychoanalysis
- C** A cognitive behavioural therapy

(b) Evaluate ECT as a means of treating abnormality. (4 marks)

4 Discuss the behavioural approach to explaining psychological abnormality. (12 marks)