



## Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Psychology B

PSYB4: Homework Questions



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## PSYB4 Perspectives questions

### Biological approach

- 1 (a) Identify and briefly describe **two** divisions of the human nervous system  
(4 marks)
- (b) Briefly discuss **one** reason why some psychologists investigate the genetic basis of behaviour.  
(4 marks)
- 2 (a) Samantha described a frightening experience to her friends.
- “I was alone in the house and it was pitch black. I was just dropping off to sleep when I became aware of something moving outside my bedroom door. My heart leapt to my mouth and I sat bolt upright in bed, sweating and shaking. The door opened very slowly and in came the neighbour’s cat! I had left a window open.”
- Outline the role of the autonomic nervous system in behaviour. Refer to Samantha’s frightening experience in your answer. (4 marks)
- (b) Briefly discuss **one** limitation of the biological approach in explaining behaviour. (4 marks)
- (c) Discuss how the biological approach helps psychologists to understand human behaviour. In your answer, refer to **at least two** topics that you have studied in psychology. (12 marks)

### Behaviourist approach

- 3 (a) Outline and briefly explain **one** way in which classical and operant conditioning differ. (4 marks)
- (b) Outline **two** features of observational learning. (4 marks)
- 4 (a) According to behaviourists, the principles of conditioning can be applied to many aspects of human behaviour.
- Outline what is meant by operant conditioning and briefly explain how it can be applied to human behaviour. (4 marks)
- (b) A dentist tried to soothe the fears of his young patients by showing them cartoons whilst drilling their teeth. Many years later a former patient said, “After all these years I still cannot bear to watch cartoons”.
- Outline what is meant by classical conditioning, and show how it could be used to explain why this person cannot bear to watch cartoons. (4 marks)

- (c) The principles of classical and operant conditioning are often referred to in psychology in order to explain behaviour.

Select **at least two** topic areas that you have studied in psychology and discuss how well conditioning explains behaviour in these areas. (12 marks)

### Social learning theory

- 5 (a) Describe **one** key similarity and **one** key difference between the behaviourist approach and social learning theory. (4 marks)
- (b) Outline **two** features of observational learning. (4 marks)

### Cognitive approach

- 6 (a) Use an example of behaviour to explain what cognitive psychologists mean by *meditational processes*. (4 marks)
- (b) Outline **two** strengths of the cognitive approach in psychology. (4 marks)
- 7 (a) It is claimed that, "Computers can carry out some of the processes that occur in human cognition."
- (i) Outline **one** similarity in the way in which humans and computers process information. (2 marks)
- (ii) Explain **two** criticisms of computer models of human behaviour and thought. (6 marks)
- (b) Two students had the following conversation:
- Kate: "The cognitive approach is narrow. There is too much focus on human information processing".
- Sajida: "But the approach has influenced and informed many other areas of psychology".

Discuss how the cognitive approach has been applied in **two** areas of psychology. (12 marks)

### Psychoanalytic approach

- 8 (a) Jack is a young, inexperienced lawyer who finds that he often loses his temper at work. Outline how psychologists from the psychodynamic perspective might attempt to explain Jack's behaviour. (4 marks)
- (b) Describe **two** features of **one** post-Freudian psychodynamic theory. (4 marks)

9 (a) Outline what Freud meant by the **id** and explain why it is in conflict with the **ego**. (4 marks)

(b) A young woman known as “Anna O” suffered from paralysis in her right arm for which there was no physical explanation. Freud believed that the cause was a repressed memory and described her case as follows:

“Anna had nursed her father through a serious illness. Late one night she was sitting with him and, in her tired state, she thought she “saw” a large black snake about to bite her father. She tried to prevent this but could not move her right arm which had “gone to sleep”. When this was identified in therapy, the paralysis disappeared”.

Outline what Freud meant by the term **defence mechanism** and explain how this concept is illustrated in the case study above. (4 marks)

(c) Two students were discussing the psychodynamic approach.

One said, “The psychodynamic approach has too many limitations to have made any real contribution to psychology”.

The other replied, “I disagree. There are many ways the psychodynamic approach has contributed to our understanding of behaviour”.

Discuss contributions of the psychodynamic approach to understanding human behaviour. In your answer refer to **at least two** topics in psychology that you have studied. (12 marks)

### Humanistic approach

10 (a) Outline **two** features of the humanistic approach in psychology. (4 marks)

(b) Explain **one** reason why humanistic psychologists reject the traditional scientific experimental approach. (4 marks)

11 (a) Identify and explain **one** similarity between the theories of Maslow and Rogers. (4 marks)

(b) Describe **two** features of **either** Rogers’ or Maslow’s person-centred approach. (4 marks)

(c) The following conversation took place between two psychology students.

Adam: “Both Rogers and Maslow have contributed interesting theories to psychology”.

Sarah: “I do agree. However, the humanistic approach has many limitations.”

Discuss **two** limitations of the humanistic approach. Refer **to at least one** other approach in your answer. (12 marks)

### Comparison of approaches

- 12 (c) Outline and compare the cognitive and behaviourist approaches in psychology. (12 marks)
- 13 (c) Discuss **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of an eclectic approach to the understanding of human behaviour. In your answer, refer to **at least one** topic area in psychology. (12 marks)

### PSYB4 Debates questions

#### Freewill and Determinism

- 14 Discuss the freewill and determinism debate. Refer to **at least one** topic area you have studied in psychology to illustrate your answer. (12 marks)

**Or**

Discuss the freewill and determinism debate. Refer to the biological and humanistic approaches in your answer. (12 marks)

#### Nature and Nurture

- 15 (a) Explain what is meant by *nurture*. In your answer, refer to **one** approach in psychology. (4 marks)
- (b) Discuss nature and nurture approaches to understanding human behaviour. Refer to **at least two** topics in psychology to illustrate your answer. (12 marks)

#### Holism and Reductionism

- 16 (a) Distinguish between holistic and reductionist explanations of behaviour. (4 marks)
- (b) Outline why some psychologists favour reductionist explanations of human behaviour. (4 marks)
- (c) The following statement was made by a psychologist.
- “The best way to understand human beings is to reduce the whole to the simplest component parts.”
- Discuss the holism and reductionism debate. Refer to **at least one** topic area you have studied in psychology to illustrate your answer. (12 marks)

#### Idiographic and Nomothetic

- 17 (a) Explain what is meant by an idiographic approach. In your answer, refer to **one** approach in psychology. (4 marks)

- (b) Discuss idiographic and nomothetic approaches to understanding human behaviour. Refer to at least **two** topics in psychology to illustrate your answer. (12 marks)

### Psychology as a Science

- 18 (a) Outline what is meant by *private experience* and explain why such experiences are difficult for psychologists to study. (4 marks)
- (b) Discuss the use of the scientific approach in psychology. Refer to **at least one** topic you have studied. (12 marks)
- 19 (a) A physicist, speaking at a conference, claimed that, "Psychology can never be a science. Unlike physics, much of psychology is subjective and cannot test its hypotheses in objective ways."
- (i) Outline what is meant by *hypothesis testing* and explain the role of hypothesis testing in scientific research. (4 marks)
- (ii) Briefly discuss why some psychologists might disagree with the physicist's claims that psychology cannot test hypotheses in objective ways. Refer to **one** example of psychological research in your answer. (4 marks)
- (b) Discuss limitations of the scientific approach in the study of human behaviour. Illustrate your answer with examples from psychology. (12 marks)