

Examiners' Report
June 2015

GCSE Psychology 5PS01 01

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Introduction

Candidates demonstrated some excellent knowledge and understanding of the specification in this paper, over a diverse range of ideas. In questions 4-8 many candidates showed thorough knowledge of the Gestalt laws in an applied situation. In questions 9 a and b candidates again referred to the Gestalt laws, this time generating an application for themselves. Cognitive explanations, including ideas about misapplied depth cues, were also excellent in this context. Further application of knowledge was seen in question 12, to identify the depth cues being described. In question 13, candidates were required to use their knowledge of research methods, and many showed the ability to explain how they would measure variables, and an understanding of controls and problems with procedures. It is useful for students to have had practical experience of studies in order to tackle such questions well. In questions 21, 22 and 23, candidates demonstrated their knowledge of therapies in training of psychoanalysts, Freud's dream theory, and how dream analysis can help with mental health problems.

Question 9 (a)

This question (and 9b) were often well answered. Most candidates chose to use an example to help them to explain. The most consistently good answers were for ambiguous figures, although distortions and fictions using the Kanizsa triangle were also often excellent. After-effects were generally less well explained, although there were some good physiological explanations.

Several different approaches could be used to explain illusions: Gestalt laws, Gregory's theory and physiological explanations. More than one explanation could be applied to any one type of illusion.

9 To answer this question, choose **two** types of illusion from the list below.

- Distortions
- Fictions
- Ambiguous figures

(a) First type of illusion Fictions

Explain how this type of illusion works.

You can include an example in your answer.

as whole objects or shapes
(4)

Fictions occur when 'parts' are perceived but are not actually present in the stimulus. For example, the Kanizsa triangle is perceived as two interlocking triangles ~~are~~ even when parts of it are missing. (These 'missing' parts are seen as lines and are called illusory contours - they're not actually there). The figure is 'fiction' (untrue) but we perceive it anyway. Fiction illusions occur due to the brain 'filling in the gaps' to help it make sense in our brain. It works because even though we perceive something, it's not actually there.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate earns all 4 marks, although the answer is a little repetitive. The first mark is earned for explaining that fictions cause us to see something in the stimulus which is not actually there. In the same sentence the candidate attempts to explain the idea of 'the whole being more than the sum of the parts', but this isn't quite clear. A second mark is then earned for naming the Kanizsa triangle as an example. There is then some description which is unnecessary, although it helps to explain the idea that illusory contours contribute to seeing fiction illusions, which earns the third mark. The final mark is earned for explaining the idea that the brain 'fills the gaps' to make sense of a fiction illusion (i.e. for explaining the Gestalt law of closure).



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Examiner Tip

Remember that the Gestalt laws can be used to explain lots of different things, so learn them well.

This is an illustration of a cognitive explanation, using the Gestalt law of figure-ground. Some answers used this very effectively to earn an elaboration mark by explaining that each of the ladies could be the figure, other elements of image becoming the ground.

9 To answer this question, choose **two** types of illusion from the list below.

- Distortions
- Fictions
- Ambiguous figures

(a) First type of illusion *Ambiguous figures*
Explain how this type of illusion works.
You can include an example in your answer.

(4)

The ambiguous figure has two possible interpretations of the image. Therefore two different images can be seen but not at the same time. This works because each image can be figure or ground but not both at the same time. An example of an ambiguous figure is Leeper's Lady, where either a young woman can be seen or an old woman's face. Only one can be seen at once.



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Examiner Comments

This is a clear 4 mark answer. The first 4 sentences each earn a mark. There is a little unnecessary description of Leeper's Lady after naming the illusion and then a further repetition of the idea that each interpretation can only be seen once.



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Examiner Tip

You can use white space that is under a question but within the grey box if you want to draw a diagram or need extra space.

Question 9 (b)

This is the second part of question 9 and the same marking rules apply. It was critical that candidates included explanation, as required by the question, rather than just description. Look at the difference between the two responses. Candidates typically found this question harder as it was their second choice.

Although still an accomplished answer, this response has more description and is less detailed than the one that follows. The candidate's use of diagrams and notes around the answer may have helped them to focus their answer.

(b) Second type of illusion Distortions
Explain how this type of illusion works.
You can include an example in your answer.

muller lyer
ebbinghaus
illusion
(4)

An example of a distortion is the muller-lyer illusion, this has two lines the same length with arrows facing the opposite way. We perceive the one with lines facing outwards to be longer when they are actually the same length.

Gregory's theory suggests we scale the longer arrow up, as if it was the corner of a room be using depth cues. ~~As a result~~, in distortions an aspect of the image is changed, so we perceive it to be different than it is.

(Total for Question 9 = 8 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This response earned three marks, although it is not all creditworthy. The first mark is earned for naming the Muller-Lyer illusion as an example. The description that follows appears to be unnecessary but makes the explanation that follows understandable. The second mark is earned for applying Gregory's idea of scaling to scaling up the line with the outward facing arrows. The final mark is earned for the elaboration of this, explaining that this scaling up is like the use of depth cues to understand the corner of a room. The description that follows is unnecessary and has cost the candidate time in the exam.



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Examiner Tip

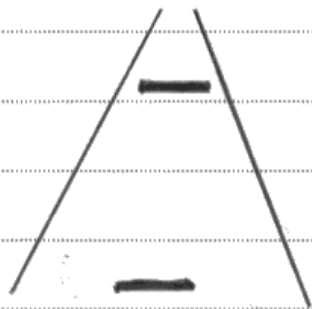
Try to practise writing answers to 'describe' and 'explain' questions so that you are certain that you know how to respond to each command.

As with question part 9a, there were several possible ways to gain full marks. Note that this candidate has the scaling up and down the right way round - some candidates were muddled over this.

- (b) Second type of illusion Distortions.
Explain how this type of illusion works.
You can include an example in your answer.

(4)

These are the illusions when our perception is deceived by the stimulus, making us perceive things differently.



In the ponzo illusion, we think that the radiating lines act as a linear depth cue and so we perceive the top bar to be far away and we scale it up, making it look bigger. The bottom bar is perceived as closer and so we scale it down to make it look smaller. This is done by size constancy. So, this explains how the stimulus has tricked our mind into perceiving something incorrectly.

(Total for Question 9 = 8 marks)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a 4 mark answer for distortion illusions. The candidate has both named and drawn their chosen example, either would have been sufficient for the example mark. Some candidates found it particularly useful to draw the Ponzo illusion so that they could label the two horizontal lines to refer to them in their explanation (although this candidate has not done so). The answer begins with some unnecessary description but then gains the first mark for the example and a second mark for explaining that the radiating lines act as a linear depth cue. This is a good explanation - rather better than simply saying 'it can be explained by linear depth cues'. The third mark is for saying that this results in the top bar being scaled up making it look bigger. The final mark is for the explanation that the scaling down of the bottom bar is a consequence of size constancy.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

For terms like 'linear perspective' and 'size constancy' learn to apply them as well as being able to define them.

Question 13

This question tested candidates' knowledge of and ability to apply research methods ideas, as well as their understanding of serial reproduction.

Parts (a) and (b) were asking 'how' something could be done so the candidate needed to offer a method to measure the variable in question.

Part (c) Asked for a reason for controlling the variable of time given to the first participant to read the story, i.e. it was asking why it was important that every first participant had the same amount of time to read.

Part (d) presented the candidates with a mistake made in the study and asked for an explanation of why this was a problem.

Part (e) asked candidates to identify another mistake within the given procedure.

13 Carmen and Tooba did a study about serial reproduction, this is when information is passed on from one participant to another. They wrote a story about dogs and used it to test serial reproduction on four groups, with five participants in each group.

In each group one participant read the story and told it to another participant, who then retold the story to another participant, and so on. The final participant told the story either to Carmen or Tooba who wrote it down afterwards.

In all four groups they found that the story was shorter, and important details were lost.

(a) Carmen and Tooba needed to measure the length of the story told by the final participant in each group. Suggest how they might have done this.

(1)

~~read~~ Compare the story that the participants told to the original story.

(b) Describe how they might have measured the loss of details from the final story.

(1)

They could write down the categories e.g. Form, detail and then compare them to the original.

- (c) One control that Carmen and Tooba used was to always give the first participant the same amount of time to read the story.

Explain why this was important.

(2)

This is important because then the first participant can have enough time to get all of the details from the story in order to pass them on to the next participant. Also, this would make their study fair.

- (d) Carmen and Tooba wrote down the final story rather than getting the participants to write it down themselves.

Explain why this might have been a mistake.

(2)

This may have been a mistake because Carmen and Tooba may have misheard a part of the story when it was being told which could affect their results. Also, they could have interpreted it.

- (e) Identify and explain **one** other problem with the procedure of their study.

(2)

They may not have tested all of the groups after the same time intervals, so then the results from each group ~~be~~ could be different because of having a longer / shorter time.



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Examiner Comments

(a) This candidate made a common mistake. 'Comparing the stories' does not enable you to measure anything and the question asked 'how', i.e. wanted to know 'How were they compared?' or 'What were they being compared for?' Similarly, candidates who said 'record the story', 'type it up' or 'write the story down' were not offering a way to measure. If, however, the candidate said 'type it up and use the word count', this was a way to measure the length of the story (as well as counting the words or timing). Candidates offering a method, e.g. with a stopwatch or tallying words also earned credit.

(b) Similar mistakes were made here, with better candidates noting that specific details could be looked for (such as types of dog, or names) or suggested checklists or categories, as this candidate has.

(c) One common mistake here was to simply refer to a 'fair test' rather than why it is fair. This candidate, however, has made another common error, in talking about individuals having enough time to read the story rather than why they should all have the same time (what is 'enough time' for one person might be different from rather than the same as another person). Better answers mentioned keeping the time to learn or memorise the story the same, giving an equal chance to recall later.

(d) This candidate has given a good answer here. Other good answers mentioned the possible role of schemas in causing experimenter bias.

(e) Good answers suggested a range of problems, such as the small sample size of only 4 groups, or only five people in each.



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Examiner Tip

The idea of a 'fair test' is not enough - you need to explain what makes it fair or not.

This was a good answer from this candidate, but was by no means the only way to earn full marks.

13 Carmen and Tooba did a study about serial reproduction, this is when information is passed on from one participant to another. They wrote a story about dogs and used it to test serial reproduction on four groups, with five participants in each group.

In each group one participant read the story and told it to another participant, who then retold the story to another participant, and so on. The final participant told the story either to Carmen or Tooba who wrote it down afterwards.

In all four groups they found that the story was shorter, and important details were lost.

(a) Carmen and Tooba needed to measure the length of the story told by the final participant in each group. Suggest how they might have done this.

(1)

~~Use a stop watch to time each individual~~
~~repeats~~ Use a stopwatch to time the final participant telling the story.

(b) Describe how they might have measured the loss of details from the final story.

(1)

They could have written each reproduction down and identified ~~the~~ where the details were lost, and added ~~to~~ the losses up at the end, to measure the loss.

(c) One control that Carmen and Tooba used was to always give the first participant the same amount of time to read the story.

Explain why this was important.

(2)

So there was no unfair advantages ~~to~~
This is important as if someone was given longer to ~~remember the~~ read the story, they would have had longer to remember the information. This may make the ~~data~~ findings less valid and prove the experiment unfair.

- (d) Carmen and Tooba wrote down the final story rather than getting the participants to write it down themselves.

Explain why this might have been a mistake.

(2)

They may misinterpret or forget information as they are relying on memory recall when writing the story down. They may also be subjective. As they are the researchers they may alter the findings to fit their hypothesis, ~~or~~ questioning the validity.

- (e) Identify and explain **one** other problem with the procedure of their study.

(2)

The sample size used was only 20 participants. This is quite a small study, therefore the sample used may not be representative, which means their results aren't generalisable.



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Examiner Comments

- (a) This candidate has said 'how' they will measure the length, with a stopwatch (so we know they are measuring time).
- (b) This is a weak answer here, but identifying where the details were lost and adding up the losses explains the procedure they will use to measure what is missing from the reproductions. Someone else should be able to follow this and would achieve the same results - it is replicable.
- (c) This candidate has correctly explained a reason for the control and gone on to say, appropriately, that if this was not the case it would be less valid (although the comment about 'fairness' adds nothing more).
- (d) This is an excellent answer with many more good points than are necessary for the two marks available!
- (e) This is a typical good answer to this question part.



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Examiner Tip

When you are writing 'how' you would do something in a methodology question, ie describing a procedure, think about whether someone else could follow your instructions - ie could they replicate what you have said to do?

Question 21 (a)

During their training, a potential psychoanalyst is supervised. This has a special meaning - it is about having an experienced professional to advise about the trainee's progress and any difficulties they may encounter. This is not the same meaning as to be 'supervised' i.e. watched over, although supervision may include observation by video link for today's trainee psychoanalysts.

This candidate has made a common mistake.

21 Eli is investigating the training that psychoanalysts have in order to gain accreditation.

(a) Describe the part of a psychoanalyst's training when they gain experience working with their own patients.

(2)

A psychoanalyst must be patient, supportive, ~~must not~~ must not judge there patients.



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Examiner Comments

This response described characteristics of a good (trainee) psychoanalyst rather than answering the question about describing how they would gain experience with their own patients.



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Examiner Tip

Try to avoid focusing on one word in the question, look for the command words and decide what they are referring to - training in this case rather than the psychoanalysts in training as individuals.

This candidate has gained full marks, even though their answer is not quite accurate.

21 Eli is investigating the training that psychoanalysts have in order to gain accreditation.

(a) Describe the part of a psychoanalyst's training when they gain experience working with their own patients.

(2)

In the second year of a psychoanalyst's training, they meet with about 2 patients, 3 or 4 times a week whilst being supervised by a qualified psychoanalyst. This continues in to the third and fourth year where their training is recognised by the BPS. They have to continue professional work.



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Examiner Comments

Many candidates simply referred to 'the patient', whereas this candidate correctly identifies that in the second year of training the trainee has two patients and sees them several times a week. Importantly, they know that during this training they are supervised - a critical part of the training and therefore of the answer.

Question 22 (a)

Candidates often answered this question well. When they did not, this was sometimes because they simply described Freud's dream theory rather than explaining how it could be used in this instance.

Question 22 (b) (ii)

This question is the second part of Question 22(b) about ethics, specifically about privacy. Therefore the candidates' answer needed to consider Mark's decision about whether or not to ask his sister about her birthday wish from an ethical point of view. Although most candidates answered in terms of it not being ethical, some gave excellent answers about

what you want for your birthday being a perfectly normal thing to ask someone about, so it wouldn't cause Sian embarrassment. However, many candidates did not earn credit because they answered the question in terms of methodology rather than ethics. Others suggested how he could change the procedure to make it ethical - again this is not answering the question asked.

This candidate has attempted to answer the question, but their response is incomplete.

(ii) Explain whether or not Mark should ask his sister about her birthday wish.

(2)

NO because sian might feel uncomfortable telling him that, which would make this more unethical.



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Examiner Comments

Th One mark is earned for the idea that Mark may make her feel uncomfortable by asking her, but the comment that this is unethical adds nothing to the answer. The candidate needed to go on to elaborate this answer, perhaps by saying why -- for example, because he might think her wish is silly or by explaining that because he is her older brother she might feel she has to tell him.



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Examiner Tip

When a question has a 'stem' (e.g. a scenario at the beginning) it is important to think about this as you are deciding what to write, and to refer to it often in your answer.

(ii) Explain whether or not Mark should ask his sister about her birthday wish.

(2)

No as the participant may not ^{want} what others to be made aware of her wishes, resulting in the participant feeling uncomfortable. As well as not expressing her true feelings.



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This candidate also suggests that being asked will make Sian feel uncomfortable, but the reason for this is given (at the beginning of the answer) - because she may not want others to be aware of her wishes. Note that the final comment, suggesting that because of this she wouldn't tell Mark anyway, is not an ethical problem so is irrelevant here.



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Remember to read the question carefully - this question was not asking you to change the procedure to make it ethical but to give an opinion - should he or shouldn't he - and why.

Question 23

Answers to this question typically included a reference to dream analysis uncovering what is in the unconscious mind, but often included little else that was creditworthy. This was frequently because the candidate was side-tracked by a description of what dream analysis is, rather than focusing on how it could help someone with a mental health problem. Nevertheless, many candidates did refer to other benefits, commonly to the role of defence mechanisms, catharsis, transference, insight and making the unconscious conscious. Note that the candidate needed to explain how the concept helped rather than simply naming it.

This candidate has explained two ways in which dream analysis can help, although there is

redundant material at the start and end of their answer.

23 Psychologists can use dream analysis to help people to overcome mental health problems. For example, Freud used psychoanalysis to help little Hans with his phobia.

Explain how dream analysis could help a person with a mental health problem.

(3)

Dream analysis focuses on the emotions of people, the analyst uses both verbal and non-verbal context to help the client understand their emotions. Freud believed that people had mental health problems due to their unconscious desires, he believed that if these people underwent psychoanalysis it would help these desires to become conscious. He thought that once they knew what their unconscious desires were they could deal with them and move on, and therefore be cured of their mental health problem. The analyst would also listen to their dreams, working out the latent content from the manifest content and analysing the symbols in the dream.

This



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Examiner Comments

Although this is a lengthy answer, with some irrelevant description of dream analysis, the candidate identifies both uncovering the unconscious and the role this has in helping the individual to resolve the issues uncovered, making them consciously aware of them.



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Examiner Tip

Read the question carefully and ask, for example: does this question ask for a description of dream analysis?

23 Psychologists can use dream analysis to help people to overcome mental health problems. For example, Freud used psychoanalysis to help little Hans with his phobia.

Explain how dream analysis could help a person with a mental health problem.

(3)

Dream analysis could help a person with mental health problems a lot. One way it can help is using free association, this is where the person just talks with ~~the~~ what ever comes to mind, the ~~the~~ psychologist will then listen and be able to pick out things which keep coming up and highlight a problem. They could also use the Freudian slip / slip of the tongue where the client will ~~a~~ say a word but meaning another. The psychologist can then look into detail why they said the mistaken word and find a reason why. Psychologists also use psychoanalysis in dream analysis which is where they talk about their problems ^{with the psychologist} and they write it all down. (Total for Question 23 = 3 marks)

- read questions carefully for the topic being tested, for example whether the question is



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This is a detailed description of psychoanalysis that unfortunately does not gain marks because it does not answer the question - which asked for an explanation of how dream analysis could help.

- to describe or explain



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- Look at the command word in a question. Is it 'describe' or is it 'explain'?
- understand the methods used in the studies in the specification and reapply them.

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