

Examiners' Report
June 2013

GCSE Psychology 5PS01 01

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Introduction

This paper enabled candidates across the ability range to demonstrate their understanding of Psychology. Pleasingly, they also demonstrated that access to past papers and excellent teaching with classroom experience provides useful practice of exam-related activities and is contributing to their success. For example, in question 12, many candidates were able to indicate some appropriate cues. This is perhaps because they have done similar tasks in class. This highlights the benefits to candidates of learning to use their knowledge in practical ways. The second part of this question was intended to be more challenging and gave an appropriate spread of responses, allowing candidates to show how they could apply their knowledge. Similarly, in the questions on dreaming, most candidates were able to respond to question 20 with a strength of Freud's little Hans study and there was a good spread of one and two mark answers about activation and synthesis with regard to Hobson and McCarley's theory in question 24.

Many candidates showed evidence of having learned the content well and their answers suggested that they had actively engaged with the material during their studies, producing clear and detailed responses that demonstrated thorough understanding and meaningful evaluation. This GCSE course continues to provide an interesting and effective way to assess Psychology at an introductory level and a sound basis for stepping up to AS level.

Question 10 and question 12 (a) provided accessible ways for candidates to demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge without requiring long written answers.

Many candidates also demonstrated that they were readily able to tackle the range of question types on the paper. Very few made fundamental mistakes like ticking too few or many boxes on multiple choice questions.

One area that continues to present candidates with difficulties however, is the difference between privacy and confidentiality, which is discussed in the report.

Question 10

Candidates tend to perform understandably well on fill-in-the-gaps questions when possible words are supplied, however, it is still possible to make a mistake.

10 You have studied three types of visual illusions.

Choose four **different** answers from this list to fill in the gaps in the paragraph below.

Fictions
Müller-Lyer
Necker cube
Distortions
Ponzo
Ambiguous figures

An example of illusions called *fictions* is Leeper's Lady.

These illusions happen because we cannot choose between two possible

interpretations of the image. *Ambiguous figures* are illusions in

which we perceive something that is not present in the stimulus, such as seeing a

green dot after staring at a red dot. Gregory says a third group of illusions happen

because we interpret images as if they were real, three dimensional scenes. This

group of illusions is called *Distortions*. An example of these

illusions is the *Müller-Lyer* illusion.

(Total for Question 10 = 4 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has incorrectly labelled Leeper's Lady as a fiction and, having used this word from the list, then also incorrectly identifies the description of colour after effects as ambiguous figures instead of fictions.

Question 11

Although candidates could earn one mark with a simple statement, such as 'Gestalt theory can explain some fictions', for further marks elaborated points were required. This elaboration was generally achieved by providing a simple explanation, eg 'because of closure' or by providing some explanation using an example, such as 'so we see the Kanizsa triangle because it looks like a figure against a ground'.

11 There are two theories which explain illusions, Gregory's theory and Gestalt theory.

Evaluate the **Gestalt** theory of illusions, giving **two** strengths and **two** weaknesses.

Strength 1

It can explain ambiguous figures well using the figure-ground rules. When we encounter a situation where both are meaningful objects, and we can't distinguish which is figure and which is ground, the image become ambiguous, and we can see two different possible interpretations.

Strength 2

It can explain the distortion illusion Müller-Lyer. The reason why we see the ^{same size} arrows as different size because ~~we add~~ ^{to make a more complete figure} we add the arrow head to the central line. If the head extend beyond the line, we see one line as longer than the other.

Weakness 1

It can't really explain the ^{fiction illusion} Kanizsa triangle well. If we use closure to complete the figure, we would see a complete shape of a 6 pointed star, but we see 2 triangles instead.

Weakness 2

The alternate Gregory's theory using perspective cues explain illusions like distortions better than using Gestalt's theory. ~~The~~ ^{Gestalt's} theory can't really explain any of the distortions except for Müller-Lyer.

(Total for Question 11 - 4 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has provided an excellent answer, with elaboration of each of their four points. The very last sentence in fact provides a fifth point - the only one which is not elaborated.

11 There are two theories which explain illusions, Gregory's theory and Gestalt theory.

Evaluate the **Gestalt** theory of illusions, giving **two** strengths and **two** weaknesses.

Strength 1

It can help explain the Müller-Lyer illusion quite well.

Strength 2

It can help explain pictons like the Kanisa triangle

Weakness 1

It cannot explain ambiguous figures

Weakness 2

It cannot explain any other distortions other than Müller-Lyer



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Examiner Comments

This answer is a useful contrast to the first. The candidate has made four correct points, but only the first earns a mark because they are all unelaborated evaluation points.



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Examiner Tip

When you are evaluating a theory, try to explain the point you are making, for example show why a strength you are writing about is a good thing, or why a weakness is a problem.

Question 12

This question asked candidates to apply their knowledge of depth cues to a picture. This is likely to be the kind of task they have done in class and many were able to offer very good answers as a consequence.

12 Look at the picture below.

- (a) In **each** box **name** one depth cue you can see in the picture and **draw arrows** linking each box to an example of that depth cue.

You must use **four** different depth cues.

(4)

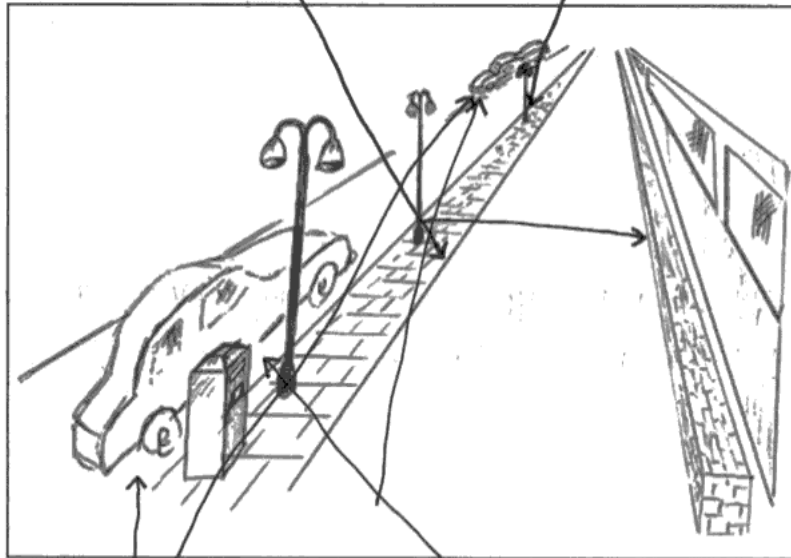
(i) Name of **depth cue 1**

linear perspective

(ii) Name of **depth cue 2**

Superimposition

lamppost in front of car



(iii) Name of **depth cue 3**

Figure ground

(iv) Name of **depth cue 4**

height in the plane

(b) (i) Describe how the picture illustrates your **depth cue 1**.

(1)

linear perspective : the parallel lines are the two kerbs on either side of the road. As the road gets further away the parallel lines (kerbs) appear to converge.

(ii) Describe how the picture illustrates your **depth cue 2**.

(1)

Superimposition = As the lamppost is in front of the car in the distance, the lamppost is therefore closer to the viewer.

(iii) Describe how the picture illustrates your **depth cue 3**.

(1)

Figure ground = although the car in the distance appears to be smaller than the car that is close. due to figure ground we know that the car is the same size.

(iv) Describe how the picture illustrates your **depth cue 4**.

(1)

height in the plane = objects on the horizon appear smaller than the same object closer to the viewer. the car^A is smaller than the car close to the viewer.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has carefully indicated the parts of the picture to which they are referring. Their comment in (a)(ii) is not necessary, but may have helped them to remember what the arrow meant. The error in (a)(iii) was quite a common one, with candidates mistakenly offering a range of Gestalt laws. In part (b), the responses are effective because the candidate has answered the question in relation to the picture (mentioning the kerb, lamp post and car). Their answer in (b)(iii) is a correct description of relative size, with appropriate reference to the picture, but it could not earn marks as an incorrect depth cue had been given in (a)(iii)



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Examiner Tip

Try making two mnemonics, one to remember the names of the depth cues and another to remember the names of the Gestalt laws.

12 Look at the picture below.

(a) In **each** box **name** one depth cue you can see in the picture and **draw arrows** linking each box to an example of that depth cue.

You must use **four** different depth cues.

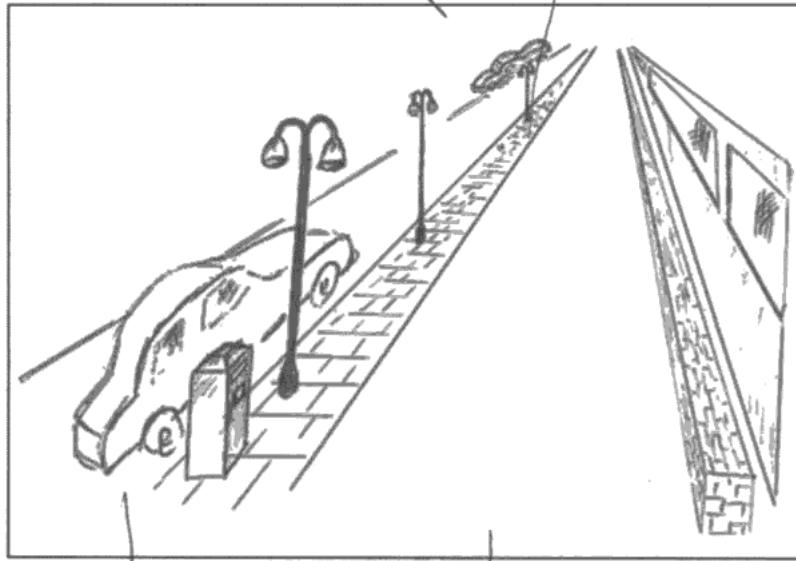
(4)

(i) Name of **depth cue 1**

Relative Size

(ii) Name of **depth cue 2**

Texture gradient



(iii) Name of **depth cue 3**

Superimposition

(iv) Name of **depth cue 4**

Linear

Perspective

(b) (i) Describe how the picture illustrates your **depth cue 1**.

(1)

You are still able to tell the car in the distance

is the same size as the one that is closer

(ii) Describe how the picture illustrates your **depth cue 2**.

(1)

You are able to see the smooth road and the pavement being sectional.

(iii) Describe how the picture illustrates your **depth cue 3**.

(1)

Because you can tell the car is behind an object and you can spot the two layers

(iv) Describe how the picture illustrates your **depth cue 4**.

(1)

It looks like the path narrow as it get closer to the horizon



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate has identified four correct depth cues in part (a). In part (b) they give descriptions of how the depth cues of superimposition (b)(iii) and linear perspective (b)(iv) are illustrated in the picture. In the case of the other two depth cues, the answers are simply definitions of the depth cues rather than applying these to the picture.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

'Height in the plane' wasn't commonly used and when it was it often was not explained well in part (b). Note that things which are further away appear to be closer to the horizon rather than 'higher up'.

Question 13 (c)

Very few candidates offered a research method instead of an experimental design, which was pleasing and those who did give the name of an experimental design typically named the correct one. A small number of candidates muddled up 'repeated measures design' with the 'repeated reproduction' technique from Bartlett's study.

(c) What was the **experimental design** of Zara's study?

(1)

The experimental design is repeated measures, as the participants did both test A and B.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has identified the experimental design correctly and then given an explanation. An explanation was not asked for in this question.

(c) What was the **experimental design** of Zara's study?

(1)

To see which test the participants did better on A or B



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Examiner Comments

This was a common error. The candidate knows what determines the experimental design - that there are, in this case, two separate groups of participants which are compared, but does not know the answer to the question - what this design is called.



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Examiner Tip

Try to learn the whole term 'repeated measures design' rather than just 'repeated' or 'repeated measures'.

Question 13 (d)

This question was about keeping the participants' identities hidden. This is the ethical guideline of confidentiality, not privacy.

(d) Explain why Zara should **not** have recorded her participants' names.

(2)

Zara should not have recorded her participants names because it is breaking the ethical rule of Confidentiality, when the persons identity is kept private or hidden for private



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Examiner Comments

This candidate correctly names the ethical guideline of confidentiality and then explains that this is about hiding their identity, ie keeping them anonymous. Note that they use the word 'privacy' but this is not what has earned them marks.

(d) Explain why Zara should **not** have recorded her participants' names.

(2)

Zara should not have recorded her participants names because it is an ethical issue. This ethical issue is privacy.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has recognised that recording the participants' names raises an ethical issue, but this alone is not enough to earn a mark. They then incorrectly identify the issue of privacy.



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Examiner Tip

Remember that the ethical issue of confidentiality is about keeping the information participants have given about themselves safe, so that other people do not know who they are or about their results. Whereas the ethical issue of privacy is about not invading personal aspects of the participant's life, such as expecting them to share their inner feelings or beliefs.

Question 19

Even though the question had 'two' and 'only two' in bold, some candidates still marked the wrong number of boxes.

19 From the list of statements below, choose **two** that could be weaknesses of Freud's case study of little Hans. (Mark **only two** boxes.)

- A Hans's parents didn't know about Freud's theory.
- B Hans's parents knew about Freud's theory.
- C The case study of little Hans involved a lot of information and detail.
- D Other psychologists might have interpreted little Hans's fantasies differently from Freud.



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Examiner Comments

A is not a weakness because Hans's parents did know

B is therefore true and is a weakness, so is correct.

C this is a strength

D the candidate has correctly identified this as a weakness

E is not a weakness because other psychologists might have interpreted the fantasies differently



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Examiner Tip

Remember to read the question carefully so you do not miss out on marks.

Question 20

There were a huge number of possible correct answers to this question.

20 Outline **one strength** of the little Hans case study.

It had qualatative data so you can go into depth and interperate it.



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Examiner Comments

The observation that Freud collected qualitative data is not, in itself, a strength as it is a descriptive comment. This is followed, however, by the observation about being able to go into depth and interpret the findings, which earns the mark.

20 Outline **one strength** of the little Hans case study.

He work with the boy and his parents for a long time



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Examiner Comments

Again this answer contains a relevant but descriptive comment about studying the family for a long time. This answer, however, lacks a comment that outlines why this is a strength. For example, the candidate might have said '... so Freud could follow his development' or '...so that he could find out enough information to help Hans with his phobia'

Question 24 (a)

Many candidates gained marks here and in part (b). However, in both cases less able candidates' answers were often circular, using the term itself as part of the definition.

24 Hobson and McCarley (1977) suggested the activation-synthesis theory to explain dreaming.

(a) What did Hobson and McCarley mean by 'activation'?

Activation meant the neurons sending
impulses randomly during REM
sleep (2)



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has correctly described the random element of activation but does not indicate what has been activated, so only scores 1 of the 2 marks.

24 Hobson and McCarley (1977) suggested the activation-synthesis theory to explain dreaming.

(a) What did Hobson and McCarley mean by 'activation'?

How random thoughts occur to make
dreams. (2)



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Examiner Comments

A succinct, correct answer. It contains the two key elements: that activation involves random triggering of 'something' and that the 'something' is our thoughts or memories.



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Examiner Tip

When you are answering a question that asks about what something means, try not to use that word in your answer. Saying 'activation' means 'activating things' doesn't tell the examiner what you know about the psychology involved in activation.

Question 24 (b)

Although many candidates answered this question well, some had muddled the idea of synthesis, from Hobson and McCarley, with Freud's idea of secondary elaboration.

(b) What did Hobson and McCarley mean by 'synthesis'?

(2)

Hobson and McCarley meant 'synthesis' as the random messages in the brain being interpreted to form a story (the dream)



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer would have been perfect if the candidate had used 'organised' or 'put into a sequence' in place of 'interpreted'.

(b) What did Hobson and McCarley mean by 'synthesis'?

(2)

Synthesis meant the brain organising these messages in order to create a story we know as a dream.



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Examiner Comments

This is a good two mark answer, indicating how the 'story' is made, by organising messages into an order (to make a dream).

Question 24 (c)

Candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the theory so were generally able to evaluate it effectively. Two areas which presented some problems were the ideas of recurring dreams - which are very hard to explain if dreams are random and why psychoanalysis would work - since if dreams are random they could not have meaning.

(c) Evaluate Hobson and McCarley's theory of dreaming.

Include strengths and weaknesses in your answer.

(4)

a strength of Hobson and McCarley's dream theory would be that they performed an experiment on a cat. This could be generalisable to humans as the brain works in a similar way.

Another strength would be that it's biological and so can not be misinterpreted by one individual.

However, as the experiment was done on an animal ~~however~~ the results may not be applicable to humans as although our brains are similar a human's is more complex.

Another weakness would be that Hobson and McCarley said dreams have no meaning yet people still recall dreams that have reflected on past life events that happened to them.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has very sensibly given both strengths and weaknesses. Each evaluation point is explained well, with the first weakness gaining a second mark for the elaboration of the idea that the findings of animal experiments may not generalise to people by saying why not. There is then the beginning of another point which would not quite be worth a mark. The idea that dreams 'reflect past life events' hints at the idea that dreams may, in fact, have meaning but this is not clear from what the candidate has written.



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Examiner Tip

When a question asks you to include strengths and weaknesses make sure that you include some of each otherwise you will not be able to access the maximum marks.

Question 25 (a)

The simplest way to score on this question was to identify that there was only one participant and that in-depth data was collected. As this question was asking for a description of why Zim's investigation was a case study, unlike in the evaluation required in question 20, 'qualitative data' was acceptable here.

25 Zim conducted a case study. He asked his five-year-old sister Momina to tell him about her fantasies. Each evening for a month, Zim asked Momina to tell him the things she had wished about or imagined happening to her during the day. He kept a record of the different things she said.

(a) Outline **two** reasons why Zim's study is a case study.

(2)

Reason 1

He is only studying his sister and no one else

Reason 2

It was conducted over a long period of time



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The key word in the first reason is 'only' as this makes it clear that the candidate knows that a case study only uses a single participant (or 'instance'). The second reason makes the common mistake of confusing volume of data with depth.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Remember that many research methods, including both case studies and experiments, can collect 'lots of data' but only in a case study are these results detailed.

25 Zim conducted a case study. He asked his five-year-old sister Momina to tell him about her fantasies. Each evening for a month, Zim asked Momina to tell him the things she had wished about or imagined happening to her during the day. He kept a record of the different things she said.

(a) Outline **two** reasons why Zim's study is a case study.

(2)

Reason 1

about one person

Reason 2

gathering info over a long period of time.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate's first reason is clear and correct. The second may be true of some case studies, such as Freud's study of little Hans, but is not typical of case studies in general, so does not earn credit.

Question 25 (c)

Unlike question 13(d) about confidentiality, this question is asking about privacy, that is the need for participants to know that they do not have to reveal personal information to the researcher. Since this means that participants must have the right to refuse to answer intrusive questions, answers which argue from this angle, offering the importance of the right to withdraw, were also creditworthy. Similarly, for a participant to answer such questions might threaten their well being, so candidates could also gain marks by explaining the need to protect participants from psychological harm. Note that the word 'privacy' alone was sufficient to earn the mark.

(c) Why should Zim have told Momina that she didn't have to tell him everything if she wanted to keep some things secret?

(1)

Momina might have felt uncomfortable/
distressed talking about some things.



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Examiner Comments

This answer is creditworthy because it explains the reason for the need for privacy very effectively.

(c) Why should Zim have told Momina that she didn't have to tell him everything if she wanted to keep some things secret?

(1)

So to prevent her from feeling distressed or
uncomfortable talking about certain things (Protect participant
is an ethical guideline)



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Examiner Comments

Just to 'protect participants is an ethical guideline' would not be sufficient for a mark, but the explanation makes the answer clear.



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Examiner Tip

If you can see more than one way to answer a question, make sure that you explain your reasoning.

Question 25 (d) (i)

Many candidates referred to deception. This is specifically to actively misread participants, which Zim did not do. Nevertheless, there were some excellent answers, for example suggesting that Momina may have been disappointed because she may have thought that Zim would make her wishes come true.

(d) At the start of the study Zim considered telling Momina that he aimed to find out that all her fantasies related to wanting to grow up to be like her mum. But he decided not to.

(i) Why is this an **ethical** weakness of Zim's study?

(1)

*its an ethical weakness because momina didn't know
the aim of the study meaning she wasn't given a debrief*



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This candidate gives the impression of giving an answer but in fact repeats the question. They also refer to debriefing, which is irrelevant.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Remember the difference between:

- briefing (telling participants about the study before it happens so they can give consent)
- informed consent (knowing enough to agree)
- deception (deliberately misrepresenting the study)
- debriefing (explaining to the participants after the study what it was for and making sure that they are unharmed)

(d) At the start of the study Zim considered telling Momina that he aimed to find out that all her fantasies related to wanting to grow up to be like her mum. But he decided not to.

(i) Why is this an **ethical** weakness of Zim's study?

(1)

*Because Zim didn't explain what his study was
about and ~~didn't~~ ^{didn't} give Momina a chance to agree
on participating.*



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a good answer which contains both of the key elements of informed consent (the correct answer). Firstly, that participants must know enough about what the study is/what they are going to do and secondly that they are able to agree to take part.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates should:

- make sure that they can remember the difference between Gestalt laws and monocular depth cues
- try to give an explanation rather than just a definition in response to questions asking 'Describe *how*...'
- develop a strategy for themselves to remember that *privacy* is about making sure that a participant does not feel they have to reveal personal things about themselves and that *confidentiality* is about keeping data collected from participants secure and anonymous
- ensure that when answering questions on evaluation, they include both strengths and weaknesses
- practice recognising factors that are ethical strengths and weaknesses of studies and ones which are practical strengths and weaknesses.

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