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Examiners' Report
June 2017

GCSE Psychology 5PS01 01

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June 2017

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Introduction

Unit 1 of GCSE Psychology tests two topics, 'perception' and 'dreaming', both carrying equal weight in a 60-mark paper. There are no options in the paper, which is designed to test a range of skills. Specifically, candidates need sound knowledge of the concepts in both topics, including methodology (e.g. Question 12), and the ability to evaluate some of the content (e.g. Questions 10(b) and 23(dii) and (iii)). In addition, candidates must be able to use their understanding to answer applied questions relating to both content and methodology, e.g. in questions 5-8, 11 and 24(b).

This paper offered candidates many accessible questions. Marks in longer questions offered opportunities to earn credit across the mark range (e.g. Questions 10 and 11). Many candidates demonstrated good understanding in their ability to apply their knowledge to scenarios and figures, although others need practice with this skill. Such individuals would benefit from underlining parts of the text or figures and reading the question carefully (e.g. in Questions 11, 12 and 24(b)).

More successful candidates were readily able to extract key points from the text in Questions 11 and 24(b) and link it to their answers, and this was sometimes evident in their annotation – this would be a useful strategy for all candidates. Less successful candidates frequently muddled depth cues and Gestalt laws (e.g. in questions 10 and 11). In addition, although many candidates were able to answer the question set, less successful candidates tended not to do so, e.g. in Question 12(b), they did not follow the instruction for a variable 'relating to the words or pictures' and in 12(e) that the problem '…**must** be drawn from the description of Sarah's experiment'.

Question 10 (a)

This question presented a familiar illusion that candidates could recognise easily. Many candidates unnecessarily provided the name, and others used the name to ease their explanation.

This candidate has set off on the wrong track, a common error.

10 Gregory's theory helps us to understand visual illusions.

(a) Use Gregory's theory to explain why we see lines X and Y in Figure 1 as different lengths.

(4)

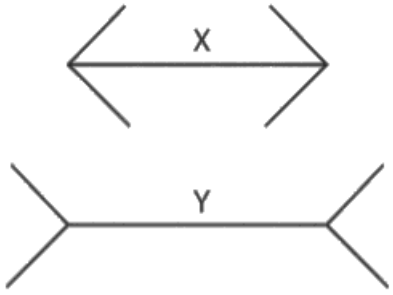

Figure 1

Gregory says we see the lines as a whole, so the outward facing pins act as a continuation of the line - again seeing the object as a whole. Line X's inward facing pins make us see the line as shorter as opposed to Y which has outward facing pins. When shown together there is a visible difference due to look at them as entire objects. This is due to lines looking as if they are going towards

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Examiner Comments

This candidate has provided an effective explanation of the illusion, but is not answering the question. Their explanation is based on Gestalt ideas, not Gregory's theory.

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Examiner Tip

Always read the question carefully – underlining key words might help you to make sure that you are answering the question asked.

Many candidates had learned the buildings analogy, but not all could recall it well. Some candidates attempted to describe figure Y as the outside of a building, which was incorrect. This was not, of course, the only way to earn full marks.

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(a) Use Gregory's theory to explain why we see lines X and Y in Figure 1 as different lengths.

(4)

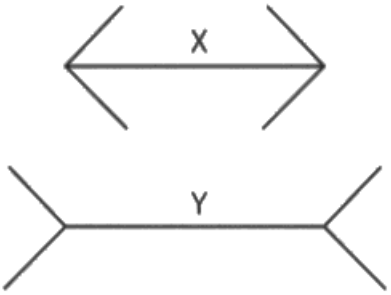

Figure 1

Gregory's explains the Muller-Lyer illusion with fins by using 3D depth cues of the inside and outside corners of a room. X is the outside corner of a room, therefore is seems closer as it is pointing out towards us. So we scale down. Y is the inside corner of a ~~room~~ room, so it appears further away meaning we scale it up, & therefore Y looks longer than X.

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Examiner Comments

This candidate used the analogy to the inside and outside of a building effectively to explain the illusion.

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Examiner Tip

You may find it useful to be able to make a very brief sketch of key illusions, to help with remembering or explaining them.

Question 10 (b)

Many candidates answered this question well, with few giving strengths instead of weaknesses and a few giving too much detail (as each weakness was only for 1 mark).

This was a good answer, with enough detail.

(b) Describe **two** weaknesses of Gregory's theory.

(2)

It cannot explain some versions of the muller-lyer illusion & for example the ones with circles as opposed to fins. It also cannot explain ambiguous figures such as Leeper's

It can't explain pictions such as the Penrose Triangle very well.

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Examiner Comments

Both points provide a clear weakness. Even the crossed out answer was creditworthy. Note that 'such as Leeper's (Lady)', i.e. the use of examples, or in the case of the replacement second weakness saying 'very well' is good practice as Gregory's theory can explain a wider range of illusions than just distortions, albeit a limited range.

It is often possible to explain weaknesses by comparing one theory to another.

(b) Describe **two** weaknesses of Gregory's theory.

(2)

One weakness of this theory is it cannot explain the muller-lyer illusion when it has circles, because Gregory explains it as we think one is furthure away from us but that doesn't work with circles. Another is Gestalt explains ambiguous figures better because it uses figure-ground.

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Examiner Comments

The first weakness is sufficient, and even provides the beginnings of an explanation of why.

The second weakness is also sufficient, but note that to have just said 'it is better than Gestalt' would not have been adequate.

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Examiner Tip

When using one theory to explain a weakness in another, always justify why one is better.

Question 11

Many candidates answered this question very well. Some were only able to give the names of depth cues, or did not link their descriptions of the cues to the stem, i.e. explained the cue without reference to the question. Those candidates who did not earn credit often mistakenly attempted to use Gestalt laws instead of depth cues.

This is not a perfect answer, but is quite sufficient to earn 6 marks.

11 Kelly is walking along a country road. The way she sees some objects can be understood using different depth cues. The following passage is a description of what Kelly sees:

> In the distance the hedgerows seem to come together. There is a post box on the roadside in front of a wall so Kelly can only see some of the bricks in the wall. As Kelly looks up the road, there is a line of trees. The closest tree is making a big image on Kelly's retina and each tree that is further away is making a smaller image. There is gravel on the road. Kelly can see individual stones when looking at them in front of her but not when looking further away. Kelly looks out towards the sea. She can see some boats close to the shore which are lower down in the scene than the boats in the distance.

Name **three** different monocular depth cues that are described in the passage.

Use each cue that you have named to explain what Kelly can see.

(6)

Name of cue 1

Height in plane

Explanation

She sees boats above other boats on the sea. The closer the boats are - the lower and closer to her. boats further away are higher in the plane.

Name of cue 2

Super-impesition

Explanation

She sees a post-box infront of a wall which is an object imposed on another so the post-box is closer than the wall.

Name of cue 3

Texture Gradient

Explanation

The stones she sees close to her are in great detail but this starts to fade as she looks further away. It all merges together - this is texture gradient.

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Examiner Comments

This candidate has used the simplistic view of height in the plane, as 'closer things are lower, higher things are further away'. This is adequate in this case, as boats are not in the air. However, it would not apply to anything above the horizon, so it is better to refer to things that are 'further from the horizon' as being closer to the viewer and things that are 'closer to the horizon' as being further away.

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Examiner Tip

You might consider making up a mnemonic for the Gestalt laws and another for the list of depth cues, to avoid muddling them up.

This candidate has used a mixture of depth cues and Gestalt laws.

11 Kelly is walking along a country road. The way she sees some objects can be understood using different depth cues. The following passage is a description of what Kelly sees:

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Name **three** different monocular depth cues that are described in the passage.

Use each cue that you have named to explain what Kelly can see.

(6)

Name of cue 1

texture Gradiant

Explanation

she can see the gravel on the road and can see individual stones.

Name of cue 2

Figure ~~ground~~ ground

Explanation

Because of the line of tree and the closest one look bigger when they are all the same size.

Name of cue 3 Continuity

Explanation

for the boats in the sea looking like they are really small.

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Examiner Comments

The tiny insertion of 'texture' in front of 'gradient' enabled this candidate to earn 1 mark for identification of an appropriate cue, but the explanation is not sufficiently clear to earn the second mark.

The next two responses for 'cues' are Gestalt laws, which means that the explanations (the first of which would be creditworthy for relative size) cannot earn credit.

Question 12 (a)

This question focused the candidate's attention on the words, which was important for the rest of the question parts.

This question asked for two words, and they had to be things that related to Picture C.

12 Sarah conducted a memory study in which participants were shown 10 pictures of scenes (three are shown in Figure 2). Each participant saw the scenes with either List 1 or List 2 (the independent variable) next to the picture. Two words from these lists are shown beside pictures A and B.

List 1	Scene	List 2
house	 *Picture A*	smoke
mice	 *Picture B*	hole
	 *Picture C*	

Figure 2

Sarah could only use two classes for her sample, one with lessons either side of break and the other with lessons either side of lunch. She showed the pictures and List 1 to the class of students in the morning and asked them to redraw the scenes after break. She showed the pictures and List 2 to the class of students before lunch and asked them to redraw the scenes after lunch.

(a) Suggest **two** words that could be used with Picture C.

(2)

Word 1

car

Word 2

bike

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Examiner Comments

This is the most common full mark answer, although there were many others.

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Examiner Tip

Making up your own studies is good practice. Try to think of experiments with an IV and DV and controls.

Sarah could only use two classes for her sample, one with lessons either side of break and the other with lessons either side of lunch. She showed the pictures and List 1 to the class of students in the morning and asked them to redraw the scenes after break. She showed the pictures and List 2 to the class of students before lunch and asked them to redraw the scenes after lunch.

(a) Suggest **two** words that could be used with Picture C.

(2)

Word 1

~~car~~ post / sign.

Word 2

Bike.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This answer earned two marks. However, note that if 'post' had not been a correct answer, no credit could have been given for 'sign'.

Question 12 (b)

Many candidates answered this question in a limited way, identifying a variable without giving an explanation. Candidates need to ensure they are focusing on the words of pictures, as required by the question, rather than the procedure in general.

This was a very common answer, but was only worth 1 mark.

(b) Explain **one** variable relating to the words or pictures of scenes that should be controlled.

(2)

~~the amount~~ how long the participants can look at the scene for.

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Examiner Comments

To earn the second mark, this candidate needed to explain more about the variable, such as why it should be controlled (because having longer to look at the scenes may have improved the participants' recall) or how it could be controlled (e.g. for 1 minute).

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Examiner Tip

Use the mark allocation for guidance about how much to write. If a question is worth 2 marks, a simple statement is unlikely to be sufficient.

(2)

When Sarah's participants are shown a picture of the scenes, each of her participants should see the picture for the same length of time. to make it fair

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Examiner Comments

The point that is being made is an appropriate one, but 'to make it fair' is not an adequate explanation. The candidate needs to either explain why this makes it fair (equal memorising opportunity) or why this matters (reliability).

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Examiner Tip

Remember that reliability is about consistency. If you refer to validity, this is different; it is about whether a study tests what it plans to test.

Question 12 (e)

Many candidates were able to identify an appropriate variable, but a minority tried to answer the question without adhering to the instruction that the problem '**must** be drawn from the description of Sarah's study'.

A range of answers were given here, with candidates showing a good understanding of practical problems in psychological research.

(e) Explain **one** problem with the procedure of Sarah's experiment.

Your problem **must** be drawn from the description of Sarah's experiment.

(2)

Each class of students didn't have the same amount of time between looking at the pictures and words ~~as the~~ and coming back to redraw them.

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Examiner Comments

The problem is identified for one mark. However, the candidate then needed to say "because..." (i.e. explain why it is a problem) or "so..." (i.e. explain how it is a problem).

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Examiner Tip

'Explain' questions are asking for more than just 'what'. The answer needs to be more than a description; it needs to give a reason.

The students could have spoke to each other about what they saw on the word lists at break or lunch and by doing this they couldve guessed the aim of the study.

(Total for Question 12 = 9 marks)

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Examiner Comments

This candidate has successfully identified a problem (that the students could have talked to each other) and explained why this is a problem (because it could have helped them to guess the aim).

Question 23 (a)

Whilst many candidates were able to answer this question, they often included irrelevant material as well.

23 Katie manages a sleep disorders clinic. One of her patients has REM sleep disorder.

(a) Describe what is meant by REM (rapid eye movement) sleep.

(1)

A stage in sleep were movement inhibition and sensory blocuade occurs. Despite this, the brains activity levels are high and most dreams occur during REM sleep.

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Examiner Comments

Note that this candidate, in common with many others, has begun by describing what Hobson & McCarley *believe* about REM sleep, rather than describing what REM sleep is. They do, however, reach the general point about REM sleep, that it is when dreams occur which, in contrast, is something that is *known* about this stage of sleep.

When people act out there dreams

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Examiner Comments

This candidate has made a common error. They have read the stem of the question, but then not paid attention to this question part and have in fact given the answer to the next question because they have guessed what this one is asking rather than reading it carefully.

Question 23 (b)

Many candidates gave appropriate answers to this question, but other responses, suggesting that candidates had learned (unnecessarily) about many different disorders, were muddled. Responses describing a variety of symptoms, suggesting that candidates were simply guessing, were also quite common.

This candidate has given more information than is required for 1 mark.

(b) Describe the main symptom of REM sleep disorder.

(1)

Movement inhibition does not occur so the patient ~~sleep~~ 'acts' out their dream.

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Examiner Comments

Either of the ideas given here could have earned the mark: absence of movement inhibition or the patient 'acts' out their dream.

Movement inhibition is caused as no messages are sent to the body.

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Examiner Comments

This candidate has made a surprisingly common error. They are muddled about movement inhibition. Normally we *can move*. In REM sleep, movement is *inhibited,* i.e. stopped. In REM sleep disorder, that movement inhibition is *prevented,* so we can move.

Question 23 (c)

This question generated many incorrect answers as candidates gave examples instead of answering the question set, which was to identify the *type* of question.

(c) Katie wants to collect qualitative data from her patients about their experiences. Identify the type of question she should ask.

(1)

Open-ended, e.g. 'What is REM sleep disorder like?'

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Examiner Comments

This was a correct answer, but still provided more than was required for 1 mark.

(c) Katie wants to collect qualitative data from her patients about their experiences. Identify the type of question she should ask.

(1)

What experience did you have from these disorders?

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Examiner Comments

This example illustrates the common error of giving an example of a question rather than identifying the type of question. This candidate, in common with many others, was able to give a suitable example of an open question, but did not use this knowledge to answer the question set.

Question 23 (d) (i)

In answering this question, candidates often focused (correctly) on movement inhibition but many just described what movement inhibition is rather than explaining that it would not be working. Another common problem was to focus on the sensory blockade, which cannot account for the symptoms of REM sleep disorder. Other candidates made irrelevant references to Freud or gave muddled, general answers about neurons not working.

(d) The theory of dreaming suggested by Hobson & McCarley (1977) says that dreams are caused by the random activation of memories.

(i) Explain what could be malfunctioning in REM sleep disorder, according to this theory.

(2)

During REM sleep there is sensory blockade meaning that any ~~messe~~ messages from the senses are blocked from the brain so dreaming cannot occur.

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Examiner Comments

This answer was typical of many candidates trying to link sensory blockade to REM sleep disorder. It suggests that candidates believe that REM sleep disorder is a *lack* of REM sleep.

It could be movement inhibition failing meaning the person would suffer from sleep walking or lots of shuffling during the night. Another could be sensory blockade not being active.

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Examiner Comments

This candidate has correctly identified the problem (movement inhibition failing) and has described the consequence of this (lots of shuffling during the night).

Question 23 (d) (ii)

(ii) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of Hobson & McCarley's (1977) theory.

(4)

Strength

Hobson and McCarly used animal experiments to support their theory by scanning the brain activity of cats when they are asleep, finding that they also have random ~~memory~~ activation during sleep as humans do, proving that REM sleep is nature / biological

Weakness

When asked only 34% of dreams did not make* sense after the dreamer had woken up, which is discrediting as the random activation should not make sense because it is random, but still makes sense and sometimes relates to the dreamer's life, which could meaning dreaming is not random

*logical

(Total for Question 23 = 9 marks)

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Examiner Comments

Strength: The identification of a strength (based on scanning) plus the link to why this is good evidence (biological) is awarded two marks.
Weakness: Two marks: One for the idea that few dreams do *not* make sense plus the justification that this relates to the dreamer's life so dreams cannot be random.

Many answers were too simplistic, simply listing similar, relevant words (e.g. scientific, biological, valid) without using them to give an explanation.

Strength

One strength is how objective their research was, Hobson and McCarley were biologists and they used science to prove their theory involving doing scans giving them quantitive data so they didn't have to interprate it.

Weakness

Hobson and McCarley used animals such as cats for their research, this is a weakness because cats brains might not act the same as humans would meaning it might not apply very well to humans. Also it could be seen as un-ethical to do tests on animals as they cannot consent to or leave the experiment.

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Examiner Comments

Strength: The idea of objectivity, illustrated by either reference to scans or 'didn't have to interpret' would earn the second mark.

Weakness: Two marks for the importance of the idea about cats not acting the same as humans.

Note, however, that the point about ethics cannot earn marks because consent and right to withdraw are irrelevant for animals. However, a comment saying experiments on animals could cause *distress* e.g. because they are restrained could earn marks.

Question 24 (a) (i)

This question had three linked question parts. Answers to the three parts of question 24(a) were sometimes muddled up, that is good definitions for one term were allocated to a different term by the candidate. The examples given here are all correct.

24 The terms below relate to dream analysis:

- displacement
- condensation
- secondary elaboration.

(a) Explain the meaning of each of the terms.

(i) displacement

(1)

displacement means ~~shifted~~ shifting the focus of the dream from the true, important unconscious symbol to an* unimportant idea. This is done to distract the dreamers attention from their real unconscious

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Examiner Comments
This is an excellent definition for displacement.

Displacement is where we think that something is important in a dream when in reality it isn't so as we are distracted by the actual meaning of the dream.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments
This candidate has defined displacement differently, and appears muddled at first, but it is still a very good answer.

Question 24 (a) (ii)

A very common problem in this question part was candidates giving circular definitions, e.g. 'Condensation is when two ideas are condensed in the dream'.

(ii) condensation

(1)

Multiple ideas being embodied by one object.

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Examiner Comments

This was a very basic definition, just worthy of 1 mark. It would have been better as 'Multiple ideas in the dream being embodied by one object (or symbol) in the dream'.

Question 24 (a) (iii)

Some candidates gave answers that reflected the idea of synthesis of the dream (from Hobson & McCarley) rather than Freud's concept of secondary elaboration.

(iii) secondary elaboration

(1)

where the dreamer adds details that were not there to make sense of the dream when retelling it.

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Examiner Comments
A good answer that mentions the key idea of adding information to the dream.

when someone is telling a dream and they add to or change what actualy happed, making it hard to ~~analyses~~ analise.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments
This is an excellent answer that is clearly focused in Freud's ideas.

Question 24 (b)

Having focused the candidate's attention on the three ideas, this question required them to apply this knowledge. They were free to choose any aspect of the dream that they could apply to each of the three dreamwork concepts.

(b) Your friend Alex had a dream about walking past some shops with frogs, guitars and clothes in the windows. Then a giant dog with big circular eyes tried to attack Alex.

↖ cond.

You think that the dream means that Alex is scared of being told off by his music teacher because he forgot his guitar. His music teacher is a very big man. His art teacher, who has large round glasses, is also cross because Alex threw a paintbrush.

Explain how each of the following three terms relates to the dream:

- displacement
- condensation
- secondary elaboration.

(3)

Secondary elaboration has been used to add the detail of Alex seeing frogs and clothes in a window. These details ~~add the~~ create a story from the dream.

The ~~giant~~ giant dog is condensation ~~for~~ of both Alex's art and music teachers. His ~~art~~ music teacher is 'very big' which relates to the giant dog, and his art teacher wears large round glasses represented by the dog's big circular eyes.

Finally, ~~the~~ displacement is used to draw attention to ~~the~~ him walking past the shops and away from the dogs attack. This is so that Alex's unconscious dread of being 'attacked'/'shouted at' seems less ~~bad~~ prevalent.

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Examiner Comments

This answer has a clear link to each of the three concepts, so earns full marks.

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Examiner Tip

Underlining important parts of the stem that you need to refer to in your answer can help to make sure your response does answer the question.

Paper summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Pay careful attention to the question in multi-part questions to avoid 'anticipating' what is being asked.
- Make notes or underline key ideas in questions to identify ideas that you will need to refer to in your answer.
- Use mnemonics or other memory devices to learn specific lists of depth cues and Gestalt laws.
- Practice scenario-based questions to ensure that you can choose the right concepts or theory to explain it.
- Learn important distinctions, such as between different experimental designs.

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