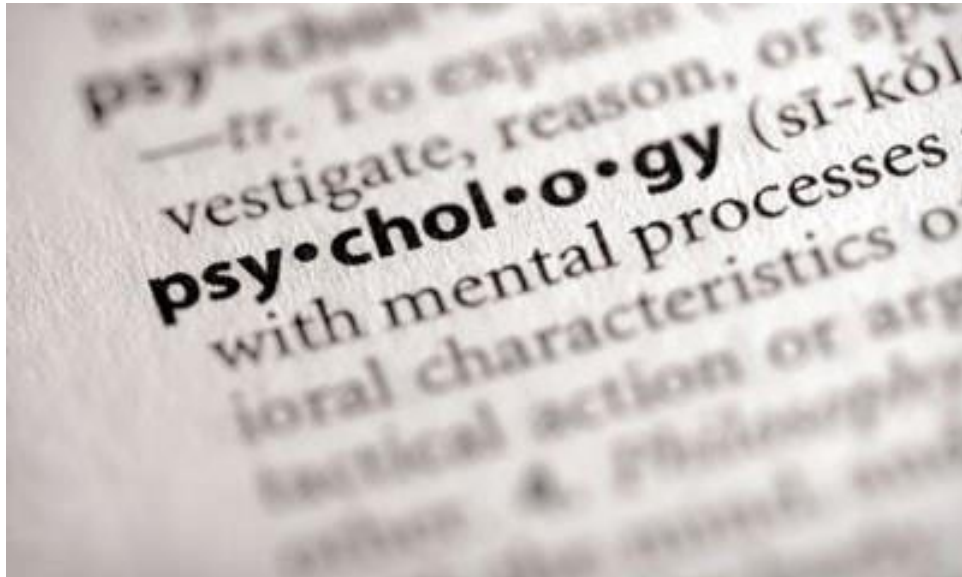




# **Psychology A-level ‘Bridging’ Booklet**



## **Summer 2016**

## What is Psychology?

*Psychology* is the scientific study of people, the mind and behaviour.

It is scientific to the extent that it follows the 'scientific method' – a way of finding out about the world in a controlled, testable and reliable way.



Task 1) Write the steps in the scientific method below:

In reality, people argue over whether Psychology is a science or not. Some areas of psychology definitely ARE scientific, because they use technical equipment, they control variables, and they follow the scientific method to collect data in the form of numbers. Other areas of psychology definitely are NOT scientific, because they don't do any of these things.

Have a look at the two pieces of research on the next page, and decide for yourself if they are scientific or not.

**Thigpen, C.H. & Cleckley, H. (1954) A case of multiple personality. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 49, 135-51**



Eve White



Eve Black

Corbett Thigpen and Hervey Cleckley were psychiatrists who were trying to treat the severe and blinding headaches of a 25-year-old woman they called 'Eve White' (not her real name).

Eve was quiet, shy and seemed quite depressed. She also reported memory loss after her headaches.

During one therapy session, Eve put her hands to her head in great pain, and then suddenly started smiling brightly and flirting with the psychiatrists! When asked what had happened, she told the psychiatrists that her name was 'Eve Black', and that the reason why Eve White had memory loss was that she (Eve Black) was taking over the body she shared with Eve White and going out partying.

Thigpen and Cleckley diagnosed Eve with multiple personality disorder, wrote a paper describing her treatment, and were involved in making a film of her life (read more here: <http://holah.co.uk/study/thigpen/> )

 Task 2)

*Is this research scientific?*

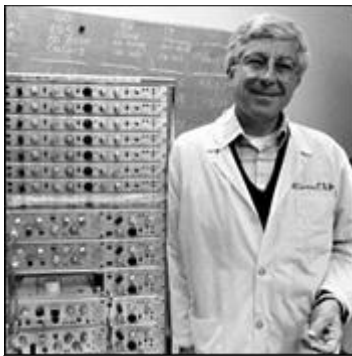
*Give 3 reasons why:*

1)

2)

3)

**Dement, W. & Kleitman, N. (1957) The relation of eye movements during sleep to dream activity: An objective method for the study of dreaming.**



Dr William Dement in his sleep laboratory

Sometimes when people are asleep, you can see their eyes moving quickly under their eyelids. This is known as REM sleep (rapid eye movement). William Dement and his colleague Nathaniel Kleitman wanted to find out if REM sleep is the part of sleep in which we dream, and whether the eye movements are anything to do with what we are dreaming about.

They studied 9 normal people, 7 men and two women, by asking them to spend the night in their sleep laboratory wired up to a machine called an EEG (electroencephalograph). To do this, they glued electrodes next to people's eyes and on their scalps.

The people they studied (we call people who are studied in research 'participants') were asked not to drink any caffeine or alcohol on the day of the study, and all of them went to sleep in a quiet, dark room.

At various times during the night, the participants were woken up by a loud doorbell, and asked to say if they had been dreaming, and if so, what they had been dreaming about. They spoke into a speaker so that they wouldn't be influenced by having to speak to the experimenter face-to-face.

The results showed that, when people dreamed, this was usually when they were in the REM phase of sleep. Read more here: <http://holah.co.uk/summary/dement/>

Task 3)

*Is this research scientific?*

*Give 3 reasons why:*

1)

2)

3)

One of the reasons that some people disagree that Psychology is a science is because psychologists don't all share the same way of going about their research. Unlike physicists and chemists, different psychologists research very different topics using very different approaches. There are five main approaches in psychology: Cognitive, Social, Developmental, Biological and Individual Differences.

## The Cognitive Area

- The cognitive approach sees behaviour as being heavily influenced by cognitive process such as perception, language, attention, thinking, problem solving and memory.
- This approach often views the human mind as working like a computer – it inputs, processes and responds to information and **behaviour** is influenced by the way information is received and processed.

### Savage-Rumbaugh, S., MacDonald, K., Sevcik, R. A., Hopkins, W. D. and Rubert, E. (1986) Spontaneous symbol acquisition and communication use by pygmy chimpanzees (*Pan paniscus*)



Sue Savage-Rumbaugh and her participant-Kanzi the bonobo chimpanzee.

Research this study. It is an example of a study from the cognitive approach, because it is investigating language.

Use these videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMbWDRzqNhc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRM7vTrIis>

And this website:

<http://holah.co.uk/study/savagerumbaugh/>

*Task 4): Give 3 findings of this study (a finding is something they have found out about how the participants behave – i.e. a finding is a result that the study has discovered):*

1)

2)

3)

## The Social Area

- One assumption of the social approach is that other people **and** the surrounding environment are major influences on an individual's behaviour, thought processes and emotions. For example, we imitate others, or we conform to what others think or do in an attempt to fit in.

At A-Level, when we are summarising a study, we do so using the AMPPFC format (Aims, Method, Participants, Procedure, Findings, Conclusion).



Task 5) Try using the AMPPFC format to research and summarise this study. It is an example of a study from the social approach because it is investigating social relationships.

Use this website:

<http://www.prisonexp.org/>

Note: you will find links to videos of young men under severe stress. These will contain swearing and scenes that some people find disturbing. Do not click the video links if you are likely to be offended or upset.

Task 5)

*Aim:*

*Method:*

*Participants:*

*Procedure:*

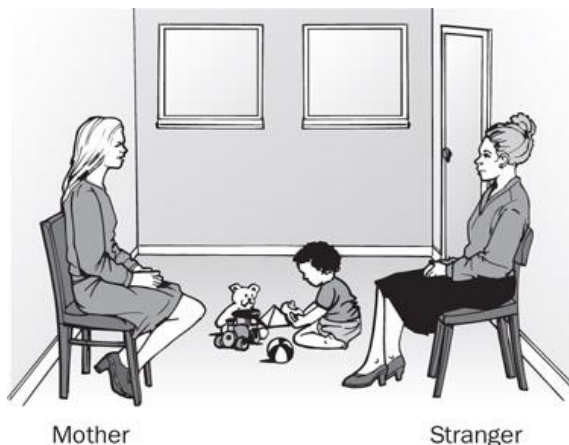
*Findings:*

*Conclusion:*

## The Developmental Area

- The developmental approach in psychology assumes that people's behaviour changes in a number of clearly identifiable ways as they grow older and mature.

**Ainsworth, M. D. (1964). Patterns of attachment behavior shown by the infant in interaction with his mother. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly of Behavior and Development*, 51-58.**



Task 6) Summarise what happens in Ainsworth's Strange Situation and what it can tell us. (It is an example of research from the developmental approach because it is investigating how children's attachment styles develop).

Use this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsewNrHUHU>

And this website:

<http://www.simplypsychology.org/mary-ainsworth.html>

Task 6)

Describe what happens in 'The Strange Situation':

What can it tell us?

## The Biological Area

- The biological approach assumes that the biochemistry and anatomy of the human brain influences how we behave and what we are able to do.



Task 7) Summarise the case of Phineas Gage, and describe why it belongs in the biological area of psychology.

Use this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXbAMHzYGJ0>

And this website:

<https://www.verywell.com/phineas-gage-2795244>

Task 7)

*Method:* **Case study**

*Participants:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Describe the details of Gage's case:*

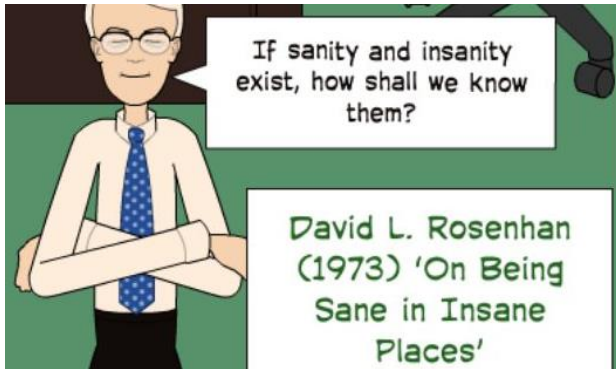
*What do the changes in his behaviour indicate about the functions of the frontal lobes of the brain?*



## The Individual Differences Area

- The individual differences approach assumes that individuals differ in their behaviour and personal qualities so not everyone can be considered 'the average person'.

### Rosenhan, D.L. (1973) On being sane in insane places.



Task 8). Use the AMPPFC format to summarise the study by Rosenhan. It is an individual differences study because it examines how society treats people who are not considered 'the average person'

Use this video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8OxdGV\\_7lo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8OxdGV_7lo)

And this website:

<http://holah.co.uk/summary/rosenhan/>

Task 8)

*Aim:*

*Method:*

*Participants:*

*Procedure:*

*Findings:*

*Conclusion:*

## Statistics

Those who defend the idea that Psychology is a science often point to the fact that the discipline – particularly the cognitive and biological approaches – frequently collects and analyses quantitative data\*.

\*This means 'data in the form of numbers, (not videos or words or pictures)'.

The psychology A-level course requires you to be confident with the manipulation of numbers, particularly the use of statistics and graphs.



Task 9a) Fill in the meaning of these descriptive statistics:

The mean:

The median:

The mode:

The range:

The standard deviation:

9b) Now look up the definition of the term 'inferential statistic':

9c) List as many examples of inferential statistics as you can discover:

## Sections of a Practical Report

So far, we have used the AMPPFC format to record studies. This is what is expected in AS and A-Level examinations, but professional psychologists write up their research for publication in the format of a report. The sections of a practical report are as follows:

- abstract
- introduction
- method
- results
- discussion
- references
- appendices

The journal article is then given a **reference**, for example:

**Milgram, S. (1963) Behavioral study of obedience. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67, (4), 371–378.**



Task 10) Find out what a researcher would put in each section of their practical report:

1. Abstract:
2. Introduction:
3. Method:
4. Results:
5. Discussion:
6. References:
7. Appendices: