



Huxlow & Rushten Academy
SIXTH FORM
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Psychology A Level

This Transition work is designed to help you to bridge the gap between your GCSE studies and A Level. In September, your subject teacher will ask you for your Transition work and it will be assessed. Teachers will be able to diagnose your strengths and weaknesses and begin to support and challenge you in a more targeted way. You must bring all the work with you to your first Year 12 Psychology lesson in September.

Transition Task



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Year 12 Psychology – Transition Work

Task 1 – Wilhelm Wundt – ‘The First Psychologist’

Who was Wilhelm Wundt?

Psychology (for those of you who don't know what it is) is the study of the human mind and human behaviour. It has existed as a subject that people study and do experiments in for the past 150 years or so. In order to understand how Psychology developed as a subject, it is important to know how it developed in the first place. Wilhelm Wundt was the first person to be called a psychologist. He opened a psychology laboratory in Leipzig, Germany in 1879. He wanted to explore the human 'mind'...

How did Wundt do his work?

Wundt's method of studying the human mind was **introspection**.

Introspection means "looking into". It is the examination of a person's thoughts. His research participants would be presented with a problem to solve or something to memorise. They would be asked to report back their inner experiences. Wundt said that Introspection should be obtained during task performance rather than after to avoid memory problems.

Try solving this task below – **Write down all your conscious thoughts while you are trying to solve the problem on the next page. Do not censor (leave out) any thoughts.**

A man has to get a fox, a chicken, and a sack of corn across a river.

He has a rowboat, and it can only carry him and one other thing.

If the fox and the chicken are left together, the fox will eat the chicken.

If the chicken and the corn are left together, the chicken will eat the corn.



How does the man do it?

(The solution to this problem can be found at the end of this pack of work)

Use this space to write down your thoughts whilst you are completing the Fox, Chicken and Corn task – Remember to write down EVERY thought you have about this task, and to give your answer at the end!

Task 2 – The emergence of Psychology as a Science

You should now know that Psychology developed as a subject because of the work of Wundt and his ideas on Introspection. However, since the 1870s, Psychology has developed far more as a subject. Throughout the 1900s, different psychological approaches emerged at different times. These Approaches all had different ideas about why human behaviour happened, and this topic of Approaches appears on Paper 2 of your Exam in Year 13, so it is important to know them all

Using the information below, create a timeline to show how Psychology emerged as a scientific subject from 1900-2000

1900 – Sigmund Freud establishes the **Psychodynamic Approach**. Freud argued that all behaviour was a result of the **unconscious mind**, and he developed his own treatment for depression, known as **psychoanalysis**.

1913 – John Watson and **BF Skinner** established the **Behaviourist Approach**. They criticised Wundt and Freud by saying that their work wasn't 'scientific' enough, and that true psychology needed to be studied in laboratories. They believed that all behaviour is **learnt**, for example someone will do something again and again **if they are given a reward**, like money. **This is known in Psychology as 'Reinforcement'**

1950 – Abraham Maslow and **Carl Rogers** established the **Humanistic Approach**. This went against the Behaviourist Approach by saying that all humans have **free will** to do what they want, and they do not learn through reward or punishment.

1960 – The Cognitive Approach is established. These psychologists argue that the mind absorbs information like a **computer**, and we process and store information about subjects in packages called **Schema**, which help us to understand the world.

1980 – The Biological Approach started to dominate Psychology as a subject, mainly because brain scanning technology such as **MRI scans** could allow us to study the brain in more detail than ever before, so Psychologists were no longer just predicting or guessing how the mind worked

2000 – Cognitive Neuroscience is now the dominant approach in Psychology. This is a blend of the **Cognitive and Biological theories**, and Psychologists are now interested in studying how the brain works by scanning it when people are asked to do certain tasks

Please use this space to draw your timeline to show how Psychology developed over time

Task 3 – Psychology in Action – Zimbardo’s Stanford Prison Experiment

As you study Psychology A Level, you will become familiar with a number of real studies that took place, and the findings of them. One of the most famous Psychology experiments ever was carried out by Philip Zimbardo in the 1970s (This is not a study we look at any more, but we used to in the past).

Zimbardo (1973) conducted an extremely controversial study on conformity to social roles, called the Stanford Prison Experiment.

His aim was to examine whether people would conform to the social roles of a prison guard or prisoner, when placed in a mock prison environment. Furthermore, he also wanted to examine whether the behaviour displayed in prisons was due to internal dispositional factors, the people themselves, or external situational factors, the environment and conditions of the prison.

Zimbardo’s sample consisted of 21 male university students who volunteered in response to a newspaper advert. The participants were selected on the basis of their physical and mental stability and were each paid \$15 a day to take part. The participants were randomly assigned to one of two social roles, prisoners or guards.

Zimbardo wanted to make the experience as realistic as possible, turning the basement of Stanford University into a mock prison. Furthermore, the ‘prisoners’ were arrested by real local police and fingerprinted, stripped and given a numbered gown to wear, with chains placed around their ankles. The guards were given uniforms, dark reflective sunglasses, handcuffs and a truncheon. The guards were instructed to run the prison without using physical violence. The experiment was set to run for two weeks.

Zimbardo found that both the prisoners and guards quickly **identified** with their social roles. Within days the prisoners rebelled, but this was quickly crushed by the guards, who then grew increasingly abusive towards the prisoners. The guards **dehumanised** the prisoners, waking them during the

night and forcing them to clean toilets with their bare hands; the prisoners became increasingly submissive, identifying further with their subordinate role.

Five of the prisoners were released from the experiment early, because of their adverse reactions to the physical and mental torment, for example, crying and extreme anxiety. Although the experiment was set to run for two weeks, it was stopped after just six days, when fellow postgraduate student Christina Maslach convinced Zimbardo that conditions in his experiment were inhumane. [Maslach later became Zimbardo's wife].

Zimbardo concluded that people quickly conform to social roles, even when the role goes against their moral principles. Furthermore, he concluded that situational factors were largely responsible for the behaviour found, as none of the participants had ever demonstrated these behaviours previously.

Follow up questions on Zimbardo

1. What was the AIM of Zimbardo's Research? (What did he want to find out)
2. What PROCEDURE did he use in his study? (How did he recruit people, where did he do it, etc)
3. What were the FINDINGS of the study? (What did he see happen to the participants)

4. What **CONCLUSIONS** did he make after his study? (How did he explain the behaviours that were shown in the study)

Evaluating Zimbardo's Study

In Psychology A Level, you are asked to **evaluate** studies and theories. This means that you need to identify strengths and weaknesses of how the research was done, whether or not it can be repeated again and if participants were treated fairly or not. Here are some evaluation points for Zimbardo's study

A recent replication of the Stanford Prison Experiment, carried out by **Reicher and Haslam (2006)**, contradicts the findings of Zimbardo.

Reicher and Haslam replicated Zimbardo's research by randomly assigning 15 men to the role of prisoner or guard. In this replication, the participants did not conform to their social roles automatically. For example, the guards did not identify with their status and refused to impose their authority; the prisoners identified as a group to challenge the guard's authority, which resulted in a shift of power and a collapse of the prison system. These results clearly contradict the findings of Zimbardo and suggest that conformity to social roles may not be automatic, as Zimbardo originally implied.

Furthermore, **individual differences** and personality also determine the extent to which a person conforms to social roles. In Zimbardo's original experiment the behaviour of the guards varied dramatically, from extremely sadistic behaviour to a few good guards who helped the prisoners. This suggests that situational factors are not the only cause of conformity to social roles and dispositional factors also play a role.

Zimbardo's experiment has been heavily criticised for breaking many ethical guidelines, in particular, **protection from harm**. Five of the

prisoners left the experiment early because of their adverse reactions to the physical and mental torment. Furthermore, some of the guards reported feelings of anxiety and guilt, as a result of their actions during the Stanford Prison Experiment. Although Zimbardo followed the ethical guidelines of Stanford University and debriefed his participants afterwards, he acknowledged that the study should have been stopped earlier.

Use the information in the Evaluation Section to answer the following question:

Outline and Explain 3 criticisms of Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment
(6 Marks)

Task 4: Research Methods Questions

Another part of your Psychology exam involves answering questions on how Psychologists actually do their work, known as **Research Methods**. Within this topic, there are some maths elements that you will need to be able to calculate (You are allowed to take a calculator into the exam!). **Use your mathematical skills to answer the questions below**

A psychologist wanted to find out whether males or females have better mathematical skills. 20 students, 10 boys and 10 girls, from a Sixth Form college were selected to take part in the study.

The psychologist gave a mathematical test to the students. The maximum score that a student could take on the test was 20. The results of the study are mentioned in the Table below.

| The scores boys and girls got on the test | |
|--|---|
| Boys | 12, 13, 12, 20, 10, 20, 17, 19, 10, 12 |
| Girls | 15, 16, 8, 11, 11, 10, 5, 12, 8, 7 |

1. Find the mode for males and females. (2 marks)

2. Calculate the median score for males and females. Show your workings. (3 marks)

3. Calculate the mean score for males and females. Show your workings.
(3 marks)

4. Calculate the percentage of boys who scored <15 ? Show your workings.
(4 marks)

5. Calculate the fraction of girls who scored 8? Write the fraction in lowest terms. Show your workings. (4 marks)

6. Calculate the ratio of boys : girls who scored 15 or more? Write the ratio in lowest terms.
Show your workings. (4 marks)

Task 5: Other Famous Psychologists

Here is a table with the names of 4 famous Psychologists that you will be researching (as well as others) in Year 12. Complete some independent research on these people and their famous studies. Use the internet to do this. You should enter the prompts below into google to help you complete the task:

‘BF Skinner Operant Conditioning’

‘Mary Ainsworth Strange Situation Study’

‘Bandura Bobo Doll Study’

‘Loftus and Palmer EWT study’

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| B.F. Skinner | Mary Ainsworth |
| Albert Bandura | Elizabeth Loftus |

5 Top things you need to know before picking A Level Psychology

- 1. Psychology is quite heavy on Biology/Science Skills** – This is something that students often are not aware of, but one of the Paper 2 topics (Biopsychology) studies the brain in depth, and considers things like neurotransmitters, hormones, structures in the brain and the nervous system. If this is something you have not a lot of knowledge on, the key is to research key terms BEFORE doing this topic. Students who engage in this topic early, and don't ignore it, often succeed more than those who don't!
- 2. It is okay to feel overwhelmed when you first start learning Psychology** – This will be a new topic for pretty much everyone, as it is not often offered at GCSE. Remember – You will be taught ALL of the key topics/key words/studies/theories by your teachers. You will also be taught how to answer the key questions for the 3 exams. However, it is important to actively start revising at the end of every lesson. Making flashcards/mind maps/answering exam questions as you work your way through the course means you won't have to do it all at the end of Year 13!
- 3. Writing skills matter as much as knowledge** – Students often think that just learning the studies and theories is enough. This is not true. Essay questions need structure, key words, arguments, evaluations, and correct grammar where possible. Using frameworks like PEEL are good as a starting point, and this is something you should be familiar with from GCSE
- 4. Psychology isn't just about people, it is about Data too!** – Research Methods takes up a large amount of your exam, and part of this involves looking at data, making maths calculations, and interpreting statistics. It is important to understand what the numbers tell you, rather than working out formulas. Students who struggle with the data work, often lose out easy marks in exams!

5. Learning Psychology isn't just about grades! – Psychology will provide you with real world skills and knowledge about the world. This subject asks you to argue your point well using evidence, analyse different viewpoints and theories, and understand why and how people behave like they do. All of these skills are valued by people who offer jobs, and just 'learning' the studies off by heart is massively missing the point! Of course, aim for good marks, but don't treat Psychology as a 'box ticking' exercise and something you 'have to do' to get to the next stage in your life!

If you have any other questions then please feel free to email me!

Best Wishes, and hopefully see you in September!

Mr Tully

Oh, and if you were wondering, the solution to the Fox, Chicken and Corn problem is:

Step 1 - The man and the chicken cross the river, (the fox and corn are safe together on the other side as foxes don't eat corn), he leaves the chicken on the other side and goes back across.

Step 2 - The man then takes the fox across the river, and since he can't leave the fox and chicken together, he brings the chicken back.

Step 3 - Again, since the chicken and corn can't be left together, he leaves the chicken and he takes the corn across and leaves it with the fox.

Step 4 - He then returns to pick up the chicken and heads across the river one last time.