



Caterham School
Psychology
Summer Introduction Booklet
2022

Welcome to Caterham School Psychology Department!

We provide a vibrant and stimulating environment for pupils to develop interest in the relationship between brain and behaviour, and explore the various methodologies for studying such relationship. The psychology department follows the [AQA specification](#), which covers topics such as human memory, abnormality, social influence, forensic psychology and schizophrenia. Critically, research methods and data handling techniques used by psychologists are also a core focus.

To succeed in Psychology, you will need to be able to:

- Read different research studies and theories
- Reflect on your past experiences and share your thoughts and opinions in a whole class setting
- Evaluate how well various theory and models explain behaviour
- Interpret findings of research both in terms numerical and written data
- Carry out simple numerical analysis of presented material
- Research psychological phenomena for yourself using a variety of methods
- Be prepared to experience psychological phenomena through practical demonstrations
- Be an active participant in the classroom

We are all amateur psychologists, every time we try to work out why someone acted the way they did or try to predict how someone might behave or react. Psychology tries to find answers to some of these questions by investigating them in a scientific manner. If you would like a fuller understanding of both yourself and others, Psychology is the subject for you!

Studying Psychology strongly develops theory to practice thinking, ability to diagnose real-world behavioural issues and design evidence based interventions. Pupils studying A Level Psychology will be equipped with a stronger awareness of how to describe, predict and evaluate human behaviour, and apply such psychological knowledge in ways that enhance human life.

Unlike many of your other subjects, Psychology may be completely new to you and you may have a number of misconceptions about it. This booklet aims to give you an introduction that will let you see the kind of topics that psychologists study and some of the techniques they use. This will hopefully give you a more accurate picture of what you will spend the next two years of this course studying.

We expect that the activities in this booklet will take approximately five hours in total to complete.

Please ensure your responses are your own. The Psychology department take plagiarism very seriously.

Please submit your work (via email to siobhan.henry@caterhamschool.co.uk or paper copy) by Friday 9th September.

AQA Specification

Below is an overview of the AQA A Level Psychology specification, though we recommend you look at this in more detail on the AQA website:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/as-and-a-level/psychology7181-7182>

Paper 1: Introductory topics in psychology
What's assessed <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Social Influence (<i>e.g., Explanations for conformity and obedience</i>) [24 marks]2) Memory (<i>e.g., Theories of forgetting; Eyewitness testimony accuracy</i>) [24 marks]3) Attachment (<i>e.g., Animal studies of attachment</i>) [24 marks]4) Psychopathology (<i>e.g., Biological approach to explaining and treating OCD</i>) [24 marks]
Assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 2 hours• 96 marks in total• 33.3% of A-level• Combination of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing

Paper 2: Psychology in context
What's assessed <ol style="list-style-type: none">5) Approaches in Psychology (<i>e.g., Social Learning Theory</i>) [24 marks]6) Biopsychology (<i>e.g., Localisation of function; Split brain research</i>) [24 marks]7) Research Methods (<i>e.g., Experimental method; Inferential Testing</i>) [48 marks]
Assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 2 hours• 96 marks in total• 33.3% of A-level• Combination of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing

Paper 3: Issues and options in psychology
What's assessed <ol style="list-style-type: none">8) Issues and Debates in Psychology (<i>e.g., Nature-Nurture debate</i>) [24 marks]9) Option 1) Schizophrenia (<i>e.g., Dopamine hypothesis; Typical & atypical antipsychotics</i>) [24 marks]10) Option 2) Cognition and Development (<i>e.g., Explanations for autism</i>) [24 marks]11) Option 3) Forensic Psychology (<i>e.g., Offender profiling; Cognitive distortions</i>) [24 marks]
Assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 2 hours• 96 marks in total• 33.3% of A-level• Combination of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing

At least 10% of the overall assessment of Psychology will contain mathematical skills.

At least 35% of the overall assessment will assess skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research methods.

Memory

Mini experiment – Be the psychologist!

In this experiment you can test as many or as few people as you like. As the researcher, you should read out one line of the triangle below at a time (starting at the top) to your participant. When you have finished reading out the line, your participant should recite back to you as many of the numbers they can remember. Record how many numbers they recall correctly on each line.

6
27 35
10 28 22
38 46 10 11
52 8 19 81 17
55 38 29 13 8 71
75 17 20 61 82 5 12
61 38 17 40 49 84 57 8
71 22 31 89 47 5 1 16 94
18 95 48 30 89 67 18 11 15 17
76 83 40 28 25 12 15 53 95 49 20
16 9 11 17 49 50 28 69 24 53 78 10
77 53 49 76 19 94 87 64 23 19 15 51 2
78 56 34 19 27 20 80 42 38 64 29 10 79 31

Now think about and explain:

- 1) What was the maximum your participants could recall from any line? (If you used more than one participant, take the average).
- 2) What do your results suggest about memory?

Now research and answer the following...

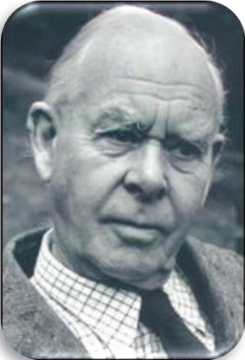


- 1) What is memory? Are there different types? If so, explain them...
- 2) What is the average capacity and duration of memory in humans?
- 3) What did George Miller do in 1956? What did he discover about memory? How does this link to the results from your experiment above?

Attachment

Briefly research the following influential developmental psychologists:

- John Bowlby
- Harry Harlow
- Mary Ainsworth

Write short biographies about each including their work and main theory/theories.

<p>John Bowlby</p> 	
<p>Harry Harlow</p> 	
<p>Mary Ainsworth</p> 	

Attachment continued...

Watch the following short documentary about Genie, a child who suffered severe deprivation in her early life, which had profound effects on her development.

[Genie documentary](#)

As you are watching, think about and answer the following questions:

- 1) Genie was found at the age of 13 and taken away from her abusive parents. In what ways was she different from the average 13 year old? In what ways was she the same?
- 2) Why might psychologists be particularly interested in case studies like Genie's?
- 3) Are there any ethical issues or moral concerns that need to be taken into account when studying vulnerable children like Genie. If so, what are they?
- 4) Genie's case shows that there is a critical period for language development (i.e. if you don't learn a language before a certain age you never will). Do you think any other abilities may have a critical period as well? Why might this be?

Social influence

Watch the following video – [The Stanford Prison Experiment](#)

Consider the following questions:

- Why didn't the 'good' guards in the Stanford Prison Experiment object to other guards' abusive behaviour?
- Were the 'prisoners' simply 'weak' people?
- Why didn't they object to being abused?



Write your thoughts below.

"The line between good and evil is permeable and almost anyone can be induced to cross it when pressured by situational forces."

- Philip Zimbardo (Lead investigator in the Stanford Prison Experiment)

Is an individual born evil or can anyone commit evil acts in the right situation? Explain your reasoning.

Psychopathology

What is normal? How would *you* define normality and abnormality? Provide a brief definition of your own below:

Create a brief fact file on each of the following disorders:

- OCD
- Phobias
- Depression

You should include behaviours shown by individuals with each disorder, their thinking patterns and emotions commonly felt.

OCD	Phobias	Depression

Is psychology a science?

Consider whether psychology should be considered a science along with the hard sciences (biology, chemistry and physics). Identify evidence for and against, then take a stance – what do you think?

Tip: you are first going to need to do some research identifying what psychology is and how we define 'science' before you make a judgment.

For	Against

Weigh up the arguments for and against. What is your conclusion?

Approaches in psychology

It is generally accepted that psychology as a distinct branch of study came to be in the 1880s when the first experimental lab was established. That said, the philosophical roots of psychology stretch back much earlier than this.

Create a timeline of psychology including at least five key people and the change they brought about in psychology. Be as creative as you like using the space below or any other media (PowerPoint, [canva](#), etc.)

Bonus

The word 'psychology' comes from the Greek word 'psyche' meaning 'mind' and the Greek word 'logos' meaning 'study of'. Do you think 'study of the mind' is an accurate way to describe psychology as a discipline?

Your choice – research task

Using sources from the media, TV, radio, newspapers, internet & magazines, find a recent research study that has been conducted in the field of psychology.

You can use the following resources or any other (reputable) sources:

<https://digest.bps.org.uk/>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb>

<https://time.com/tag/psychology/>

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/mind-and-brain/>

<https://caterham.fireflycloud.net/the-library/online-resources-1> (click on Review magazines and enter the school's details which can be found on the Firefly page then navigate to the psychology review magazine)

Write a short review of the research (approximately 300 words) describing:

- a) How the research was conducted (provide a brief description of how the investigation was carried out)
- b) The results of the research (summarise the main findings)
- c) Your opinion on the usefulness of the research.
- d) Any flaws you can spot in the method used in the research.

Research Methods

Research methods is an essential component of the Psychology A Level. At least 25–30% of the overall assessment will assess skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research methods. A lot of it you will have already covered in GCSE Mathematics and Science. In September, you will be completing a baseline assessment so we can get a sense of your mathematical and scientific literacy. Please complete the questions below – these should give you a sense of the types of questions you can expect in the A Level course, and in the September baseline assessment.

DOES PERSONALITY INFLUENCE DEGREE CHOICE?

A psychologist was interested in carrying out an experiment to see whether students completing a Psychology degree were more or less extrovert than students completing an English degree. She used an opportunity sample of 22 third year students from the university where she lectured and asked them to complete a personality questionnaire, where the higher the score the more extrovert an individual is deemed to be.

There were 11 English students and 11 Psychology students. Each student had a different score for extroversion. The median score for the English students was 15 and the median score for the Psychology students was 18.

Q1

- a) The independent variable is the variable that the researcher changes or manipulates. What is the independent variable in this study? Be specific. (1 mark)

- b) The dependent variable is the variable that the researcher measures. What is the dependent variable in this study? Be specific. (1 mark)

- c) How many **psychology** students had a score above the median? Show your working. (2 marks)

- d) Explain what the median scores suggest about the effect of personality on degree choice. (3 marks)

DOES THE AGE OF A PERSON INFLUENCE WHETHER THEY ARE HELPED OR NOT?

A psychology student wanted to see whether the age of a person would influence whether they were helped or not. He asked two men, one in his twenties and one in his sixties, to sit for 30 minutes outside a shopping centre with a sign asking for money on two different days. Both men were both given the same sign and wore the same clothes and were observed at the same time of day. The psychology student observed from a bench opposite and noted whether people gave money or not. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The number of passers-by who gave money and did not give money to man in his 20s and man in his 60s.

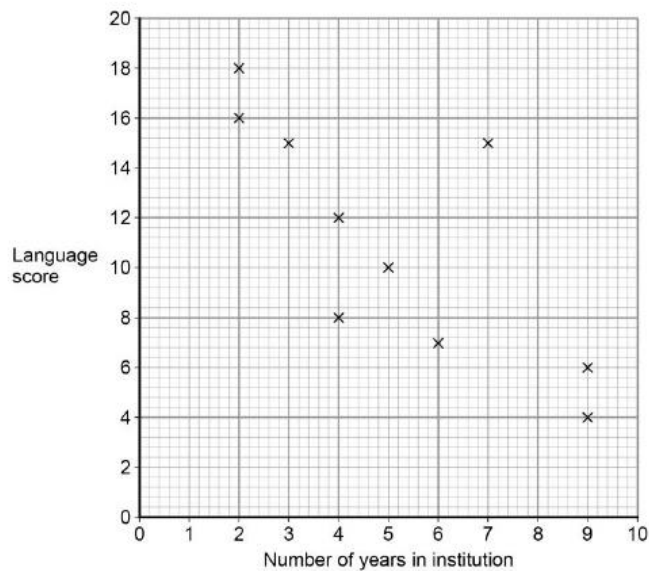
	MAN IN HIS 20S	MAN IN HIS 60S
NUMBER OF PASSERS-BY WHO GAVE MONEY	15	25
NUMBER OF PASSERS-BY WHO DID NOT GIVE MONEY	96	103

Q2

- The independent variable is the variable that the researcher changes or manipulates. What is the independent variable in this study? Be specific. (1 mark)
- In the condition where the man was in his 20s, what percentage of passers-by gave him money? Show your workings. (2 marks)
- Why was it important that the two men were given the same sign, wore the same clothes and were observed at the same time of day? (2 marks)

Q3 A psychologist thinks that there may be a link between language ability and institutionalisation (time spent in an institution e.g. an orphanage). She tests the language skills of 8-year-old institutionalised children. A high score on the test indicates good language ability and a low score on the test indicates poor language ability. She also records the number of years that each child has been institutionalised. The findings are shown in the figure below.

The relationship between time spent in institution and language score



- How many children took part in the study? (1 mark)
- What type of correlation is shown in the scattergram – positive or negative? (1 mark)
- Circle the outlier on the graph. (1 mark)
- What do the results of this study suggest about the relationship between institutionalisation and language ability? (1 mark)
- Calculate the range for the language scores. Show your workings. (2 marks)

Suggested reading

NON-FICTION

Eric Berne, Games People Play

Tanya Byron, The Skeleton Cupboard

David V. Canter, Forensic Psychology: A Very Short Introduction

Jane Healy, Why Children Don't think and What We Can Do About It

David Eagleman, Wednesday is Indigo Blue (and other titles)

Viktor E. Frankl, Man's Search For Meaning

Malcolm Gladwell, Blink (and other titles)

Ian Glynn, An Anatomy of Thought

Ben Goldacre, Bad Science

Stanley Milgrom, Obedience to Authority

Steve Peters, The Chimp Paradox

Bruce Perry, The Boy who was Raised as a Dog

Oliver Sacks, The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat

Simon Singh, Trick or Treatment

Lauren Slater, Opening Skinner's Box

Mathew Syed, Bounce

Richard Wiseman, Paranormality

Phil Zimbardo, The Lucifer Effect

FICTION

Irvine Welch, Trainspotting

Ken Kesey, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

Anthony Burgess, A Clockwork Orange

Lionel Shriver, We Need to Talk About Kevin

Sylvia Plath, The Bell Jar

Susanna Kaysen, Girl Interrupted