

A Level Psychology

Approaches – Summer Work 2025

Tasks

- ✓ Work through each approach – and carefully tick off each point as you complete it.
- ✓ Ensure you tackle ALL tasks and ALL questions to give yourself the best chance of success on this component.
- ✓ We will go straight into revision / practice questions for Approaches in September!

Resources

Boost – Book 2 – pages 8-30

Videos

Use the videos (from Bear it In Mind) – especially for the trickier material like Freud!!


Playlist: https://tinyurl.com/4c5925nk	
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Origins (Boost Book 2, pp. 8-9)

- ☐ Stick in/complete your A3 sheets and timelines
- ☐ Make sure you have the following:
 - Wundt and Introspection
 - Aims and introspective method
 - Standardised procedures
 - Structuralism
 - Evaluation of Wundt (+ and -)
 - Emergence of Psychology as a science:
 - A timeline of how Psychology emerged as a science during the 20th C to now
 - Evaluation of whether psychology is a science (Boost textbook 2, page 9): + and -, including the Evaluation eXtra
- ☐ Complete the Check It exam questions below into your Approaches books. For the essays you can write essay plans for A01 and A03 indicating what you would write/how you would structure.

Check it

1. Explain what Wundt meant by 'introspection'.
[3 marks]
2. Briefly explain Wundt's role in the emergence of psychology as a science.
[4 marks]
3. Discuss Wundt's contribution to psychology.
[8 marks]
4. Outline **and** evaluate the emergence of psychology as a science.
[8 marks]

Behavioural Approach

- ☐ Write down/create flash cards of the listed key terms definitions
- ☐ Add these terms: positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, punishment, environmental determinism, free will, token economy system
- ☐ Read and make notes on the following:
 - Classical conditioning – and Pavlov’s research
 - Operant conditioning – and Skinner’s research (Apply It Concepts box)
- ☐ Complete these A03 notes – use PRC to help you structure your evaluation points clearly – make sure they are in a format you can easily learn:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>Well controlled research and scientific credibility</i>	<i>Counterpoint on oversimplified explanation of learning</i>
<i>Real world applications</i>	
	<i>Environmental determinism</i>
<i>Is the use of animals in behavioural research justified?</i>	

- ☐ Complete the Check It Questions - and mark them using the SatchelOne scheme

1. Briefly outline what the behaviourist approach means by ‘classical conditioning’. *[2 marks]*
2. Outline **two** types of reinforcement as suggested by the behaviourist approach. *[4 marks]*

- ☐ Complete the Apply It Questions (you might want to do these in rough)

Social Learning Theory

- ☐ Write down/create flash cards of the listed key terms definitions
- ☐ Add these terms: demand characteristics, reciprocal determinism
- ☐ Read and make notes on the following:
 - Assumptions
 - Vicarious reinforcement
 - The role of mediational processes (ARRM)
 - Identification
 - Bandura's research (Apply It Concepts)
- ☐ Complete these A03 notes – use PRC to help you structure your evaluation points clearly – make sure they are in a format you can easily learn:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>Recognition of cognitive factors in learning</i>	<i>Counter: largely ignores biological factors</i>
	<i>Contrived (forced) lab studies</i>
<i>Real world applications</i>	
<i>Reciprocal determinism gives us free will (compared to behaviourism)</i>	

- ☐ Complete the Check It Questions - and mark them using the SatchelOne scheme

Check it

1. Outline what social learning theorists mean by 'identification'. [2 marks]
2. Explain **one** strength of social learning theory. [3 marks]

- ☐ Complete the Apply It Questions (you might want to do these in rough)

Cognitive Approach (Boost, Book 2, pp. 14-15)

- ☐ Write down/create flash cards of the listed key terms definitions
- ☐ Add these terms: soft determinism, hard determinism, machine reductionism
- ☐ Read and make notes on the following:
 - Assumptions (study of internal mental processes)
 - The role of schema
 - The use of theoretical and computer models
 - The emergence of cognitive neuroscience
 - Brain imaging and the neurological basis of memory
 - Brain imaging and neurological basis of OCD
 - Brain 'fingerprinting'
- ☐ Complete these A03 notes – use PRC to help you structure your evaluation points clearly – make sure they are in a format you can easily learn:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>Objective, scientific methods</i>	<i>Issues with external validity (artificial stimuli, too abstract/theoretical)</i>
<i>Real world applications</i>	
	<i>Machine reductionism</i>

- ☐ Complete the Check It Questions - and mark them using the SatchelOne scheme

1. Outline the emergence of cognitive neuroscience. [4 marks]
2. Briefly explain how theoretical **and** computer models are used in cognitive psychology to make inferences about mental processes. [4 marks]

- ☐ Complete the Apply It Questions (you might want to do these in rough)

Biological Approach

- ☐ Write down/create flash cards of the listed key terms definitions
- ☐ Add these terms: serotonin, dopamine, twin studies, concordance rate, mono/dizygotic, natural selection, falsifiability
- ☐ Read and make notes on the following:
 - Assumptions (study of internal mental processes)
 - The neurochemical basis of behaviour
 - The genetic basis of behaviour
 - Genotype and phenotype
 - Evolution and behaviour
- ☐ Complete these A03 notes – use PRC to help you structure your evaluation points clearly – make sure they are in a format you can easily learn:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>Real world application</i>	<i>Drugs like antidepressants don't work for everyone (Cipriani et al., 2018, evidence)</i>
<i>Scientific methods (e.g. scanning)</i>	
	<i>Biological determinism</i>
<i>Fossil evidence versus non-falsifiability of evolutionary theory</i>	

- ☐ Complete the Check It Questions - and mark them using the SatchelOne scheme

Check it

1. Explain what is meant by 'evolution' in psychology. [3 marks]
2. Using an example, explain the difference between 'genotype' and 'phenotype'. [4 marks]

- ☐ Complete the Apply It Questions (you might want to do these in rough)

Psychodynamic Approach

- ☐ Write down/create flash cards of the listed key terms definitions
- ☐ Add these terms: repression, pleasure principle, reality principle, morality principle, fixation
- ☐ Read and make notes on the following:
 - The role of the unconscious
 - The structure of personality
 - Psychosexual stages (copy the stages table at bottom of page 18, reduce the description / consequences to aid revision)
 - Defence mechanisms
- ☐ Complete these A03 notes – use PRC to help you structure your evaluation points clearly – make sure they are in a format you can easily learn:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>Real world application</i>	<i>May not apply to e.g. schizophrenia</i>
<i>Explanatory power of the model</i>	
	<i>Untestable concepts</i>
	<i>Psychic determinism → Freud doesn't allow for free will in behaviour</i>

- ☐ Complete the Check It Questions - and mark them using the SatchelOne scheme

Check it

- Using an example, explain the 'role of the unconscious'. [3 marks]
- Identify **one** Freudian defence mechanism **and** explain how it would affect behaviour. [3 marks]

- ☐ Complete the Apply It Questions (you might want to do these in rough)

Humanistic Psychology

- ☐ Write down/create flash cards of the listed key terms definitions
- ☐ Add these terms: ideal self, client-centred therapy, unconditional positive regard, individualistic versus collectivist tendencies/cultures (read the 'study tip')
- ☐ Read and make notes on the following:
 - The summary of how/why humanistic psychology emerged (under 'Specification says')
 - Free will
 - Maslow's hierarchy of needs
 - Self-actualisation
 - Self, congruence and conditions of worth
- ☐ Complete these A03 notes – use PRC to help you structure your evaluation points clearly – make sure they are in a format you can easily learn:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<i>Not reductionist – supports holism</i>	<i>Reductionism → more scientific?</i>
<i>Positive, optimistic approach</i>	
	<i>Cultural bias</i>
<i>Limited application versus revolutionised counselling and workplace motivation</i>	

- ☐ Complete the Check It Questions - and mark them using the SatchelOne scheme

1. Explain what humanistic psychologists mean by 'conditions of worth'. [3 marks]
2. Outline **and** briefly evaluate the influence of humanistic psychology on counselling. [5 marks]

- ☐ Complete the Apply It Questions (you might want to do these in rough)

Comparison of Approaches

- ☐ Define the following key terms/phrases: psychological development, nature versus nurture, reductionism versus holism, determinism, idiographic and nomothetic approaches
- ☐ Create a comparison tables / summaries for each of the 5 themes in your book. Here's a partially started version for 'views on development':

	View on development	Contra-argument or further detail
Psychodynamic	Most coherent theory Psychosexual stages determined by age	Freud assumed very little further development after genital stage (teenage years)
Cognitive	Stage theories → childhood cognitive development	Children develop increasingly complex schemas as they age
Biological		
Humanistic		
Behaviourist		
Social Learning		

- ☐ Complete the Apply It Venn diagram exercise– this will help you compare + contrast the approaches
- ☐ Complete the Check It Questions - and mark them using the SatchelOne scheme

Check it

1. Outline **one** way in which the behaviourist approach and social learning theory approach overlap. [2 marks]
2. Explain **two** differences between the cognitive approach and humanistic psychology. [6 marks]

- ☐ Complete the other Apply It Questions (you might want to do these in rough)