

MARKSCHEME

November 2003

PSYCHOLOGY

Higher Level and Standard Level

Paper 1

SECTION A

Biological Perspective

1. Explain why a reductionist approach adopted by many biological psychologists is controversial. *[8 marks]*

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section A in marking this question.

Responses should be explicit in what is meant by “reductionist”. Occam’s razor or Morgan’s Law of Parsimony would be relevant here. As long as the sense conveyed is one of addressing smaller aspects of a psychological issue related to biological processes, it should be accepted. While many responses may focus on genetic aspects of behaviour it is reasonable for examiners to accept matters such as physiological processes that are correlated with behavioural outcomes. For example these may include cell activity or the release of excitatory or inhibitory chemicals in the brain. The material described so far is descriptive and if responses only offer such work the maximum awarded should be *[4 marks]*. *[0 marks]* should be given for work that is not explicitly linked to biological psychology.

Better responses may explain that many biological psychologists regard their work from a positivistic perspective associated with measurement, replicable experiments, science and predictability. These factors are more amenable to investigation using a reductionist approach rather than the holistic methods associated with other types of psychology. The downside of biological reductionism according to Tavris and Wade is in drawing premature conclusions, making unwarranted assumptions about cause and effect and exaggerating the power of genes. Lack of ecological validity may also be a critical issue.

Cognitive Perspective

2. (a) **With reference to *one* research study, describe the main features of *one* method of investigation used by cognitive psychologists.** [4 marks]

There are many methods used by the cognitive perspective; the most likely ones to be chosen are those listed in the examples on page 17 of the psychology guide. These include experiments, interviews, observations *etc.*. The response must describe the main features of the chosen method and illustrate this with reference to a research study from the cognitive perspective.

[0 marks] If the response does not achieve the standard described for **[1 mark]**, a mark of 0 should be recorded.

[1 mark] An appropriate method is identified. Description of the main features of the method is limited, often inaccurate and of marginal relevance to the question.

[2 marks] Description of the main features of an appropriate method is accurate but is not related to an appropriate example of a research study.

[3 marks] Description of the main features of an appropriate method is accurate and implicitly related to an appropriate example of a research study.

[4 marks] Description of the main features of an appropriate method is detailed, accurate and explicitly related to an appropriate example of a research study.

- (b) **Outline *one* strength and *one* limitation of this method.** [4 marks]

The strength and limitation chosen must relate to the method given in part (a). For example, one possible strength of an experiment is that it has a high degree of control of extraneous variables; while a weakness is that it is often very artificial and lacks ecological validity.

Award a maximum of **[2 marks]** for an outline of one strength and a maximum of **[2 marks]** for an outline of one limitation.

[0 marks] If the response does not achieve the standard described for **[1 mark]**, a mark of 0 should be recorded.

[1 mark] A relevant strength/limitation is outlined but the outline lacks clarity.

[2 marks] A relevant strength/limitation is outlined clearly.

Learning Perspective

3. Identify and evaluate *one* contribution of the learning perspective to the scientific study of behaviour. **[8 marks]**

Many responses are likely to consider the experimental testing of hypotheses, in this question, although other relevant contributions such as the use of both qualitative and quantitative research may be offered.

Award **[2 marks]** for accurate identification of a relevant contribution. Award **[1 mark]** for an identification of a relevant contribution that lacks precision or clarity.

The awarding of the other **[6 marks]** available for this question depends on the quality of the evaluation.

- [0 marks]** If the response does not achieve the standard described in the mark band for **[1 to 2 marks]**, a mark of 0 should be recorded.
- [1 to 2 marks]** The evaluation offered is limited, often inaccurate and of marginal relevance to the question.
- [3 to 4 marks]** The evaluation offered is accurate and relevant, but without support from examples of research studies from the learning perspective.
- [5 to 6 marks]** The evaluation offered is accurate, relevant and supported by examples of research studies from the learning perspective.

Humanistic Perspective

4. (a) Outline *one* key concept associated with the humanistic perspective. [4 marks]

Among others that may reasonably be offered and credited, key concepts associated with the humanistic perspective included in the psychology guide are:

- self-actualization;
- peak experiences;
- conditions for growth;
- organismic valuing process.

[0 marks] If the response does not achieve the standard described for **[1 mark]**, a mark of 0 should be recorded.

[1 mark] An appropriate key concept is identified. Outline of the key concept is limited, often inaccurate and of marginal relevance to the question.

[2 marks] Outline of the appropriate key concept is limited, but accurate and relevant.

[3 marks] Outline of the appropriate key concept is accurate and relevant.

[4 marks] Outline of the appropriate key concept is logically structured, accurate and relevant.

(b) Explain *one* assumption on which the concept outlined in part (a) is based. [4 marks]

Among others that may reasonably be offered and credited, assumptions upon which key concepts in the humanistic perspective are based include:

- focus on conscious awareness;
- free will in humans;
- intrinsic goodness;
- uniqueness of the individual;
- innate drive of humans to achieve their maximum potential.

The assumption chosen must be related to the key concept outlined in part (a).

[0 marks] If the response does not achieve the standard described for **[1 mark]**, a mark of 0 should be recorded.

[1 mark] An assumption is identified which relates to the key concept outlined in part (a). Explanation of the assumption is limited, often inaccurate and of marginal relevance to the question.

[2 marks] An assumption related to the key concept in part (a) is described in a limited but accurate way. The link between the assumption and the key concept is not made explicit.

[3 marks] An assumption related to the key concept in part (a) is described accurately. There is a partly successful attempt to link the assumption and the key concept.

[4 marks] An assumption related to the key concept in part (a) is described accurately and in detail. The link between the assumption and the key concept is made explicit.

SECTION B

- 5. “Behavioural change can be regarded as arising from an interaction between innate disposition and environmental factors.”**

Describe and evaluate theories or studies within the biological perspective related to this statement.

[20 marks]

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section B in marking this question.

A wide range of material is available for use in answering this question so expect psychological research into many different topics to be offered, from investigations into imprinting, to studies of intelligence. Crucially, responses are not expected simply to consider the ‘nature-nurture’ debate, as the statement focuses on the interaction of innate and environmental factors in the explanation of behaviours. Examples of studies such as that of Schachter and Singer into emotion, in which both biological arousal and environmental factors are said to contribute to the experience of emotion, will be appropriate, as will Ekman’s neurocultural theory of emotional expression which suggests both a universal neurophysiology in the facial muscles associated with certain emotions and culture-specific variations in the expression of emotion contribute to our understanding of emotion.

Both accurate description of appropriate theories or studies, and explicit evaluation of this material, are required in essays attracting marks in the higher bands. Mid band responses will be characterized by an over reliance on description for which a maximum of **[10 marks]** is available, with largely unsupported evaluation, although essay structure is apparent. The weakest responses are likely to provide superficial descriptions of relevant psychological research which is unsubstantiated and only implicitly related to the question.

- 6. To what extent is determinism integral to the cognitive perspective? Illustrate your answer using relevant theories and studies.**

[20 marks]

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section B in marking this question.

‘Unpacking’ the term ‘determinism’ and then relating it to the cognitive perspective is the key to a successful response to this question. The aim of the essay should be to produce an informed conclusion about the role of determinism in the explanations of human behaviour offered by this perspective. Relevant will be discussion of the debate concerning the ‘soft determinism’ of the cognitive approach, in which problem solving and attentional mechanisms may be regarded as ‘choosers’ of thought and behaviour. More astute responses may additionally consider implications concerning responsibility when discussing determinism.

Award marks in the top bands where the response is a well-constructed argument informed by empirical evidence and psychological theory, culminating in a clearly stated conclusion. A maximum of **[10 marks]** is available for responses merely describing relevant material. Mid band responses will probably offer relevant material only implicitly related to the question. Answers omitting the required theories and studies will not attract marks.

7. **Consider ways in which the learning perspective has produced recommendations for change in lifestyles.** [20 marks]

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section B in marking this question.

This is a question requiring understanding of the practical implications resulting from theory and research within the learning perspective. Candidates are asked to discuss ways in which the learning perspective has contributed to areas such as education, work, or therapy, using as much empirical evidence and sound argument as possible. Relevant material could include some of the following: programmed learning and classroom management; systematic desensitization for phobic behaviours; token economy systems for disruptive students; training of guide dogs; understanding of the possible origins and maintenance of depressive behaviours; Skinner's ideas on 'social engineering', etc..

Responses meriting marks in the top bands will offer a fully supported argument also taking into account criticisms of the use of such techniques. Mid band responses are likely to be characterized by description of relevant material lacking in explicit focus on 'recommendations for change in lifestyle'. Anecdotal responses should not be awarded marks.

8. **Examine theoretical explanations of behavioural change from a humanistic perspective.** [20 marks]

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section B in marking this question.

To answer this question effectively, candidates are required to offer more than one humanistic explanation of behavioural change, and to analyse each, making clear the assumptions and interrelationships between the two. Many essays will offer the theories of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow but the explanations of other major theorists e.g. Rollo May are acceptable, providing they are justified as representative of the perspective. Evaluation of such explanations may arise from comparison with the views of other perspectives on behavioural change, on the universality of their acceptance, and of ethical, gender and methodological considerations.

Responses attracting marks in the higher bands are likely to offer a well structured essay culminating in an explicit conclusion, with arguments well supported by psychological research/theory. Mid band responses are likely to offer description of relevant theory with minimal discussion.
