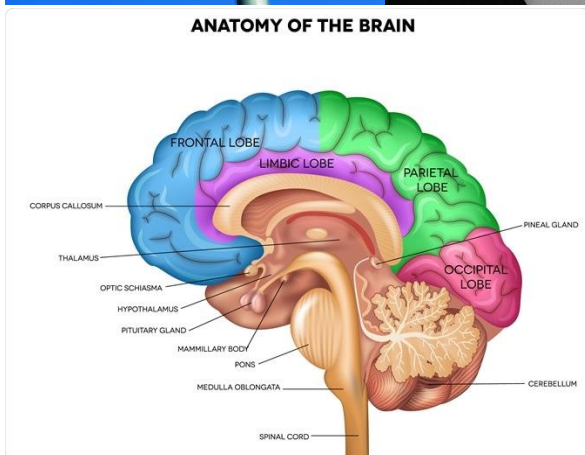
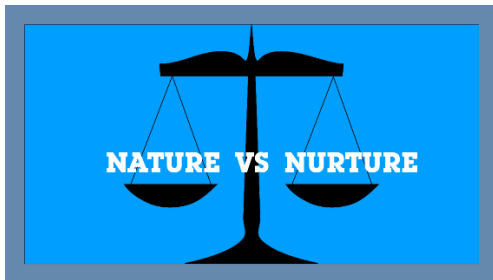


Psychology Bridging Booklet



How the Course is Assessed – AQA A-level Psychology

- There is **no coursework** in A-level Psychology.
- Students sit **formal exams at the end of Year 12** (as per the school's internal schedule) to assess progress.
- In **Year 13**, students are assessed through **mock exams and lesson-based assessments**, in preparation for **three final exam papers**.
- AQA Psychology is a **linear course**, meaning all exams are taken at the end of Year 13.

Skills Development

- **Year 12** focuses on building **core skills**: knowledge/ understanding, application and evaluation of psychological concepts.
- **Year 13** allows students to **apply and enhance** these skills across more complex topics and exam-style questions.

The Nature of Psychology

- Psychology is a **scientific discipline** that uses a range of **research methods** to study human behaviour and mental processes.
- Success in Psychology involves learning and using **key terms, theories, and concepts** accurately and confidently in discussions and written responses.

Year 12

| | |
|--|---|
| Paper One: Social influence Memory Attachment Clinical Psychology and Mental Health | Paper Two: Approaches in Psychology Research Methods |
|--|---|

Year 13

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Paper Two | Paper Three | Paper Three: |
| Biopsychology Research Methods | Issues and Debates in Psychology Schizophrenia | Gender Forensic Psychology |

Each paper is worth 33.3% of your A-level (2 hours each)

Psychology is...

- The scientific study of the mind and behaviour.
- It explores how we think, feel, and act both as individuals and in groups.
- Looks at how biological, psychological, and social factors influence human behavior.
- A social science that uses research methods to investigate and understand behavior.
- A critical subject that questions why people behave the way they do and how to improve mental health and well-being.

Is psychology for me?

Yes, if you're interested in questions like these...

- Why do people behave differently in different situations?
- How do our childhood experiences shape our adult personality?
- What causes mental health disorders and how can they be treated?
- How do social influences affect our behavior and attitudes?
- Why do we remember some things and forget others?

Psychology is NOT...

- An easy subject
- Just common sense
- Wishy-washy and unscientific
- Sociology

What kind of Psychologist will you be?

1. The defining characteristic of human behaviour is:

- A) Their learned behaviours
- B) Their thought processes
- C) Their unconscious motives
- D) Their genetic makeup
- E) Their personal growth

2. We have the freedom to choose our own behavior:

- A) Yes, based on rewards and punishments
- B) Yes, based on our thoughts and decisions
- C) No, our unconscious mind controls us
- D) No, our genes determine our behavior
- E) Yes, we strive for self-actualisation

3. What are your views on mental health?

- A) Mental health issues are learned behaviors
- B) Mental health issues are due to faulty thinking
- C) Mental health issues stem from unresolved conflicts
- D) Mental health issues are due to biological factors
- E) Mental health issues are due to lack of self-fulfillment

4. When it comes to learning:

- A) Learning is a result of conditioning
- B) Learning is a result of information processing
- C) Learning is influenced by unconscious desires
- D) Learning is influenced by genetic predispositions
- E) Learning is a process of personal growth

5. When it comes to personality:

- A) Personality is shaped by environmental factors
- B) Personality is shaped by cognitive processes
- C) Personality is shaped by childhood experiences
- D) Personality is shaped by genetic factors
- E) Personality is shaped by self-concept

6. When it comes to motivation:

- A) Motivation is driven by external rewards
- B) Motivation is driven by internal thoughts
- C) Motivation is driven by unconscious desires

- D) Motivation is driven by biological needs
- E) Motivation is driven by the need for self-actualisation

What kind of Psychologist will you be?

Behaviourist (Skinner)

Behaviourists believe that all behaviours are learned through interaction with the environment. They focus on observable behaviours and the ways they're influenced by stimuli. B.F. Skinner, a leading behaviourist, developed the theory of operant conditioning, which explains how behaviours are acquired and maintained through reinforcement and punishment.

Cognitive (Piaget)

Cognitive psychologists study mental processes such as perception, memory, and problem-solving. They believe that our thoughts influence our behaviours. Jean Piaget, a pioneer in cognitive psychology, developed a theory of cognitive development that describes how children's thinking evolves in stages as they grow.

Psychodynamic (Freud)

Psychodynamic psychologists focus on the influence of the unconscious mind and early childhood experiences on behaviour. Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, proposed that unconscious conflicts and desires shape our behaviours and personality. He introduced concepts such as the id, ego, and superego, and the stages of psychosexual development.

Biological (Darwin)

Biological psychologists examine the physiological bases of behaviour in humans and animals. They study the brain, nervous system, genetics, and hormones to understand how they influence behaviour. Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection has had a profound impact on biological psychology, emphasising the role of inherited traits and adaptive behaviours.

Humanistic (Maslow)

Humanistic psychologists emphasise the importance of free will, self-actualisation, and human potential. They believe that people are inherently good and have an innate drive to achieve their fullest potential. Abraham Maslow, a key figure in humanistic psychology, developed the hierarchy of needs, which outlines the stages of growth from basic physiological needs to self-actualisation.

Task 1 – Approaches in Psychology

Purpose: To introduce you to the major psychological approaches and help you begin comparing them.

Instructions:

Complete the following three-part task. You should present your work as a handwritten mind map, written notes, or a creative poster.

Part 1: Research & Summarise

For each of the following approaches, write a 3–4 sentence summary including key concepts and one named researcher:

- Behaviourist Approach
 - Classical conditioning (Pavlov)
 - Operant conditioning (Skinner)
- Social Learning Theory
 - Imitation, vicarious reinforcement (Bandura)
- Cognitive Approach
 - Internal mental processes, schema, the use of models, cognitive neuroscience
- Biological Approach
 - Genetic basis of behaviour: genotype, phenotype and evolution. Influence of biological structures and neurochemistry on behaviour. Cognitive neuroscience
- Psychodynamic Approach
 - Unconscious mind, Id/Ego/Superego, defence mechanisms, psychosexual stages (Freud)
- Humanistic Approach
 - Free will, self-actualisation, Maslow's hierarchy, congruence

Part 2: Compare & Contrast

Create a comparison table with the following columns:

- Approach
- Free Will vs Determinism
- Nature vs Nurture
- Scientific?
- Key Strength
- Key Limitation

Fill in the table using your research. This will help you understand how the approaches differ in their assumptions and methods.

Part 3: Reflect

Answer this question in a short paragraph:

“Which approach do you find most convincing and why?”
Use examples from your research to support your view.

Task 2 – Social Influence

1) Watch video clip

<https://youtu.be/3SbEEkPPgxs?feature=shared>

- **Define all key words from the video clip.**

2) **Research ‘Minority Influence’ and produce a fact sheet outlining the key characteristics for a successful minority group and provide real life examples.**

3) Social Influence Research Task

You will research two classic studies in social psychology and explore how they help us understand human behaviour in group settings.

Part 1: Research the Studies

Choose two of the following studies to research in detail:

1. Milgram’s Obedience Study (1963)
2. Asch’s Conformity Study (1951)
3. Moscovici’s Minority Influence Study (1969)

For each study, find out:

- The aim of the study
- The method (what did participants do?)
- The findings (what happened?)
- The conclusions (what did it show?)
- Any ethical issues raised

Part 2: Apply to Real Life

Choose a real-world example (e.g., peer pressure in school, obedience in the military, group behaviour in protests) and explain how one of the studies helps us understand it.

Part 3: Reflect

Write a short paragraph answering:

- Which study did you find most surprising or thought-provoking, and why?
- Do you think people today would behave differently in the same situation?

Task 3: Research Methods

Purpose:

To introduce you to how psychologists investigate human behaviour using research methods. This will give you a head start for A-level Psychology in Year 12.

Task 4: What Is Psychological Research?

Task: Watch the following video and answer the questions below.

Video: CrashCourse Psychology - Psychological Research: Crash Course Psychology #2

Link: <https://youtu.be/hFV71QPvX2I?feature=shared>

Questions:

1. What is the difference between a theory and a hypothesis?
2. What is the placebo effect?
3. Why are ethics important in psychological research?
4. What is one thing you found interesting or surprising in the video?

Part 2: Design Your Own Study

Imagine you are a psychologist. Choose one of the following questions to investigate:

- Does listening to music help people concentrate?
- Do video games affect mood?
- Does eating breakfast improve memory?

Now answer the following:

1. What is the aim of your study?
2. Write a simple hypothesis (a testable prediction).
3. What is your independent variable (IV) – what will you change?
4. What is your dependent variable (DV) – what will you measure?
5. How would you collect your data? (e.g. questionnaire, experiment, observation)
6. What is one ethical issue you might need to consider?

Part 3: Real Research in Action

Task: Research one famous psychology study from the list below. Write a short summary (around 150 words) explaining:

- What was the aim of the study?
- What method did the psychologist use?
- What did they find?
- Was the study ethical?

Choose one:

- Milgram's Obedience Study
- The use of cognitive interview
- Explanations for obedience
- Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiment

Submission Instructions:

Bring your completed work to your first Psychology lesson in September.

You should handwrite this.

Be creative and curious — this is your chance to explore what psychology is all about!

Task 4 – Attachment

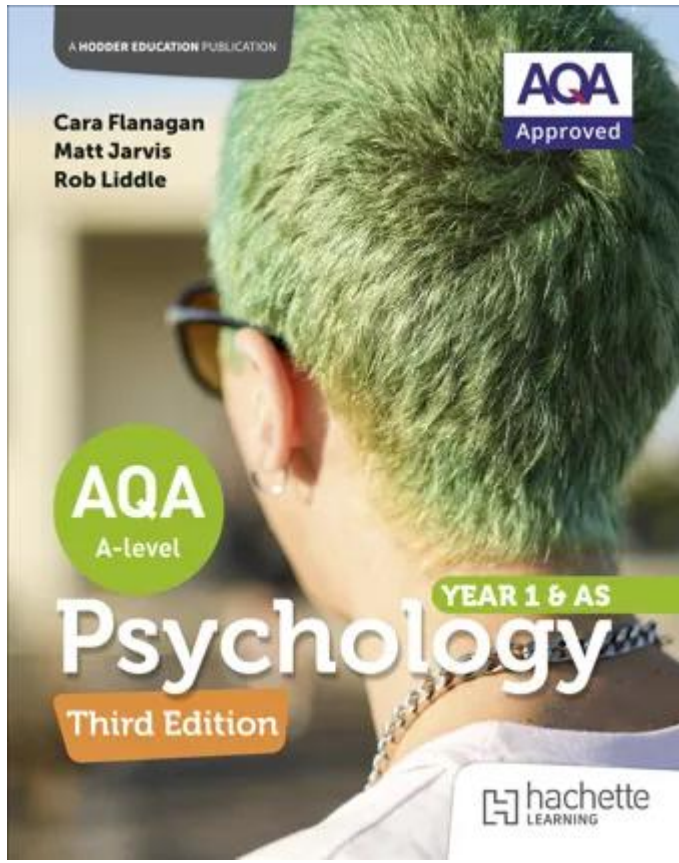
Read this article and answer the questions below

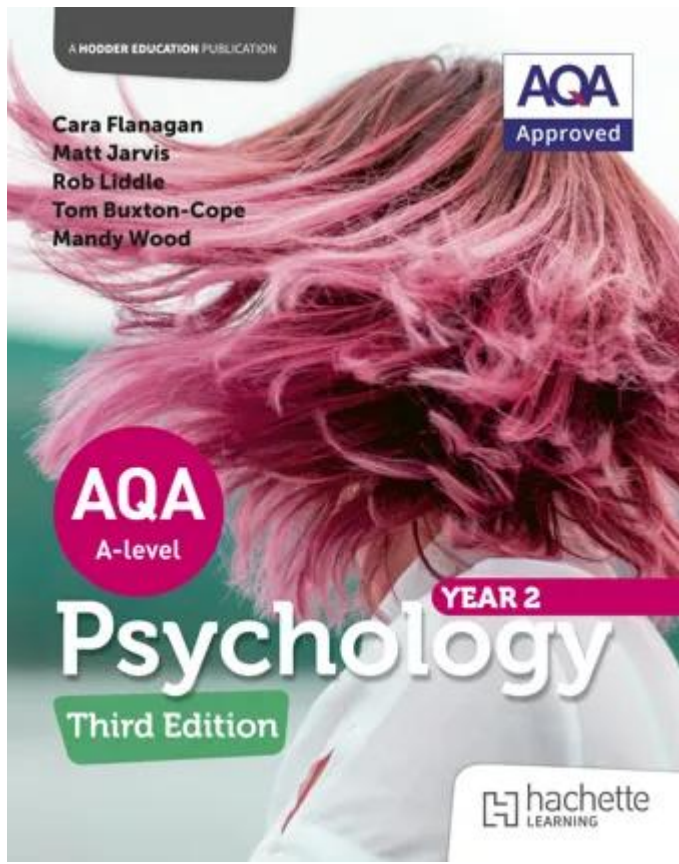
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/a-level-attachment.html>

1. What is meant by the term *attachment* in psychology?
2. According to Bowlby, why is attachment important for survival?
3. What did Harlow's monkey study reveal about the importance of comfort in attachment?
4. Describe one type of attachment identified by Ainsworth and what behaviour it involves.
5. What are some potential effects of disrupted attachment in early life?

Useful Resources & Further Reading

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





Well done! You're all set ready to embark on your Psychology A Level course. We look forward to seeing you in September!