

2005 AP[®] PSYCHOLOGY FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

2. Psychologists conduct research to investigate controversial issues. Consider the following:
- The value of diagnostic labeling
 - Children's acquisition of language
 - Explanations of hypnosis
- A. Describe the opposing points of view on each of the psychological issues listed above. Your description must provide one argument on each side of the controversy.
- B. For each issue, choose one point of view to support. Using evidence from psychological research, justify why you think this point of view is correct.

END OF EXAM

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Question 2

Psychologists conduct research to investigate controversial issues. Consider the following:

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General Issues

1. Lists of subpoints throughout these scoring guidelines are *not* exhaustive. They represent typical responses of students, but there may be other ways to earn a point.
2. Students may structure their answers in more than one way. Some speak to both part A and part B for each issue in a single paragraph. Others deal with part A for each issue in the first half of their answer and then do part B for each issue. In any case, it is important that they establish context:
 - In part A, it *must* be clear that the student is describing opposing or alternate points of view regarding the issue in question.
 - In part B, the student *must* indicate he or she is supporting a point of view, typically by using phrases such as "I think..." or "The majority of evidence seems to support..."
3. For part B, the student must indicate support for some point of view, whether that point of view is one of the two described for part A or a "blend" between the two positions.
4. To establish "evidence" for part B:
 - The student should use empirical rather than anecdotal (i.e., related to personal experience) data. The evidence may be in the form of broad, generally accepted conclusions based on research (e.g., "labeling may lead to discrimination") rather than specific research studies.
 - The student must go beyond stating support for a position. For example, "I believe language is acquired by observational learning" states the position but does not offer evidence. By itself, it does not earn a point.
 - The student's statement of evidence is often, but not always, signaled with the word "because."
 - The student may specifically refer to evidence already presented in part A to support the part B conclusion without actually repeating the evidence.
5. A student will not be penalized for misinformation unless it directly contradicts correct information that would otherwise have earned a point. In that case, the point is not awarded.
6. Answers must be presented in sentences, and sentences must be cogent enough for the student's meaning to come through. Spelling and grammatical mistakes do not reduce a student's score, but spelling must be close enough so that the reader is convinced of the word.

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Question 2 (continued)

The Value of Diagnostic Labeling

POINT 1: Advantages of diagnostic labeling can be established by briefly explaining any of the following. Labels can:

- a. Help professionals communicate clearly and efficiently with one another.
- b. Improve the reliability/consistency or validity/accuracy of diagnosis or categorization.
- c. Help determine an appropriate course of treatment.
- d. Help predict the course of a disorder.
- e. Increase insight to help cope with a disorder.
- f. Meet general scientific purposes or stimulate appropriate research on the nature of disorders.
- g. Allow for more objective discussion of disorders.
- h. Facilitate appropriate billing or record keeping.

Do not score: Do not award this point for advantages that are overly vague (e.g., "labels are good").

POINT 2: Disadvantages of diagnostic labeling can be established by briefly explaining any of the following. Labels can:

- a. Stigmatize or dehumanize those with disorders, or lead to prejudice, discrimination, or stereotyping.
- b. Lead to self-fulfilling prophecy.
- c. Overemphasize a disease model.
- d. Be of questionable reliability/consistency or validity/accuracy (e.g., overlapping or wrong diagnoses).
- e. Fail to adequately account for cultural issues.
- f. Lead a person to not take responsibility for getting better.
- g. Be considered inappropriate from certain theoretical perspectives (e.g., humanism or Szasz's work).
- h. Persist longer than the condition they identify.
- i. Create a false dichotomy between "normal" and "abnormal."

Do not score: Do not award this point for disadvantages that are overly vague (e.g., "labels are bad" or "labels are unfair").

POINT 3: Point of view supported by evidence.

- a. Advantages of diagnostic labeling can be supported by discussion of *general* research conclusions related to the following topics. Specific research does *not* need to be cited.
 - Increased reliability or validity of diagnosis because of effective labels.
 - Efficacy of outcomes-based treatment or placement strategies.
- b. Disadvantages of diagnostic labeling can be supported by:
 - Mention of Rosenhan's research on being sane in insane places. ("Rosenhan's research" is sufficient.)
 - Mention of Rosenthal's research on self-fulfilling prophecy. ("Rosenthal's research" is sufficient.)
 - Discussion of *general* research conclusions related to prejudice, discrimination, or stereotypes created by diagnostic labels.
- c. A blended point of view can be supported by appropriate use of evidence from one or both of subpoints (a) and (b) above.

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Question 2 (continued)

Children's Acquisition of Language

The most common controversy described will relate to the nature–nurture debate.

POINT 4: Language development is influenced by nurture. The word “nurture,” by itself, is *not* sufficient to earn this point without a brief description of what this means or naming a psychologist who supported this position. A student may earn the point by:

- a. Appropriately noting the importance of learning, behaviorism, associations, conditioning, reinforcement, imitation, modeling, experience, or environment in the acquisition of language.
- b. Identifying this position as the one Skinner advocated.
- c. Emphasizing the importance of *experience* within the cognitive neuroscience explanation of language acquisition.

POINT 5: Language development is influenced by nature. The word “nature,” by itself, is *not* sufficient to earn point 5 without a brief description of what this means or naming a psychologist who supported this position. A student may earn the point by:

- a. Appropriately noting the importance of biology, predisposition (accept predestination), innate factors, the language acquisition device (LAD), critical (or sensitive) periods, nativism, maturation, or genetics in the acquisition of language.
- b. Identifying this position as the one Chomsky, Lenneberg, or Pinker advocated.
- c. Emphasizing the importance of *neurological* or *biological predisposition* within the cognitive neuroscience explanation of language acquisition.

Do not score: Do *not* award credit if a student says that a child is born with a *particular language*. It is acceptable to say that a child is “born with language” or has “innate language ability.”

POINT 6: Point of view supported by evidence.

- a. The nurture point of view can be supported by:
 - Appropriate conclusions based on a *specific mechanism* from learning theory, such as reinforcement, imitation, or modeling. For example, a point would be awarded for a statement like, “I agree with this point of view because children will use words they are reinforced for.”
 - An explanation of the impact of culture or environment on language acquisition. For example, a point would be awarded for a statement like, “Children in France learn to speak French.”
 - Other appropriately developed examples from the research literature that support the influence of environment, such as Genie’s difficulty acquiring language after a childhood of isolation and abuse.
- b. The nature point of view can be supported by:
 - Appropriate conclusions based on a specific nature-oriented mechanism, such as a language acquisition device (LAD) or critical (or sensitive) period.
 - Appropriate conclusions regarding overgeneralization or overregularization.
 - Other appropriately developed examples from the research literature that support the influence of biology, such as Genie’s acquisition of some language despite a horrible environment, or the universal sequence of language development across cultures.
- c. A blended point of view can be supported by appropriate use of evidence from one or both of subpoints (a) and (b) above.

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Question 2 (continued)

Do not score (points 4, 5, and 6):

1. Points are not awarded for information related to Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis because it is not relevant to language acquisition.
2. A point is not awarded if its context depends solely on an interpretation of the misspelling "nuture," because the reader cannot determine if the student meant "nature" or "nurture."

NOTE: A discussion of other controversial language acquisition issues could replace the nature–nurture controversy and receive credit for these points. An example is the debate about whether or not critical periods exist for language development. Another is to contrast the cognitive neuroscience approach with either the nature position or the nurture position. A student would earn these points by following the same general pattern as used above: providing a clear explanation of the two sides (points 4 and 5) and supporting one of the points of view with reference to specific research or more general conclusions supported by research (point 6).

Explanations of Hypnosis

POINT 7: Hypnosis is a divided state of consciousness. This point is awarded if the student presents the point of view that hypnosis is a form of *divided, dissociated, neodissociated, or altered* consciousness (accept *hidden observer*).

POINT 8: Hypnosis is a social phenomenon. This point is awarded if the student presents the point of view that hypnosis is primarily a response to *social factors, role playing, sociocognition*, or other environmental factors created by the hypnotist.

POINT 9: Point of view supported by evidence.

- a. The dissociated consciousness point of view can be supported by:
 - Mention of Hilgard or his work on divided consciousness or the hidden observer.
 - Discussion of the ability of the brain to engage in unconscious processing.
 - Discussion of how part of the brain can operate as an interpreter or reporter of events.
- b. The social phenomenon point of view can be supported by:
 - Mention of Spanos, Kirsh, Orne, Barber, or their work.
 - Discussion of the difficulty finding behavioral, physiological, or neural markers for hypnosis.
 - Discussion of how hypnotic phenomena can be duplicated using placebos or imagination.
 - Discussion of how hypnotic phenomena can be explained by relating them to obedience to the hypnotist or conformity with other participants in a group hypnosis situation.
 - Discussion of how fantasy-prone individuals may be more prone to social influence.
 - Discussion of tests showing that people rendered blind or deaf by hypnosis can still see or hear even though their actions and beliefs suggest they cannot.
 - Discussion of evidence that hypnotic effects become more dramatic when the hypnotized individual is highly motivated or trusts the hypnotist.
- c. A blended point of view can be supported by appropriate use of evidence from one or both of subpoints (a) and (b) above.

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Question 2 (continued)

Do not score (points 7, 8, and 9).

1. Do *not* accept imprecise, vague words like "trance," "levels of consciousness," or "sleep" as adequate descriptors for hypnosis as a divided state of consciousness.
2. Do *not* accept hypnotic phenomena (e.g., posthypnotic suggestions, age regression) or uses (e.g., recovery of memory, therapy) as evidence for either point of view because they are not relevant to explaining hypnosis.

AP® PSYCHOLOGY
2005 SCORING COMMENTARY

Question 2

Overview

This question was designed to move the cognitive challenge beyond application to evaluation/judgment and require students to develop their ideas in greater depth. The question presented three controversies in psychology: the nature of language acquisition, hypnosis, and diagnostic labeling. Students had to identify the two sides of each controversy and then select a side to advocate based on the quality of evidence. Initially, development of the scoring guidelines emphasized research citation, but the scoring guidelines team broadened the guidelines to provide points for use of general principles. In addition, the general format allowed for students to defend a point of view that synthesized the two positions where appropriate, instead of advocating solely for one as stipulated in the question. The three controversies were selected from diverse areas in psychology, addressed both depth and breadth in psychology, and allowed students to demonstrate more sophisticated ability in weighing the nature of psychological evidence.

Sample: 2A

Score: 8

Point 1 was earned. In the first paragraph, the student argues that by having a label, a psychiatrist or psychologist can determine the appropriate course of treatment. The essay earned point 2 because the student states that "a false or inaccurate diagnosis" can be harmful. Point 3 earned credit because the student notes that diagnostic labeling helps doctors and patients understand the disorder more effectively. Point 4 was earned because the essay states that "a psychologist who took a 'learning' approach would say that the learning of language could be based on rewards and punishments." Point 5 earned credit because the essay includes a discussion of the "'critical period'" of language acquisition. Point 6 earned a point. The student describes research that suggests that brain connections are not made if a child is not exposed to language early enough in development. Point 7 was earned because the student describes the theory of altered states of consciousness. The essay earned point 8 because the student describes the theories of role playing and social pressure as the reasons for the "hypnotic trance." Point 9 did not earn credit because no evidence is provided to support either side of the argument.

Sample: 2B

Score: 6

Point 1 was awarded. In the first paragraph, the student describes how using a label leads to more effective diagnosis and treatment. Point 2 was earned because the essay states that overlapping disorders can be "difficult to label and treat." Also, some people believe that "labels dehumanize the clients." Point 3 earned credit because the essay states that "there are many success stories to be found in the annals of psychology." Point 4 was awarded because the student describes language as possibly being learned through "reinforcement and modeling." The essay earned point 5 because the student refers to "a language acquisition device," which seems to be hardwired, or inborn. Point 6 was awarded. The student does not explicitly refer to a critical period but does provide sufficient information to demonstrate an understanding of the concept when he or she notes that "Language learning is a complex process." Points 7 and 8 were not awarded because the student does not provide any evidence either in support of or against hypnosis as a psychological phenomenon. Point 9 was not earned because no evidence is provided to support a perspective that hypnosis is or is not a viable concept in psychology.

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Question 2 (continued)

Sample: 2C

Score: 2

Points 1 and 2 did not earn credit because there is no attempt to describe the advantages of diagnostic labeling. Point 3 was not awarded because there is no attempt to support a point of view with respect to the advantages and/or disadvantages of diagnostic labeling. Point 4 was awarded because the student says that children can "acquire language skills through example as well as experience." Point 5 was not awarded because there is no attempt to describe a child's predisposition to learn language, nor is there acknowledgment of biology or neurology. Point 6 did not earn credit because there is no attempt to provide evidence in favor of the nature or nurture view of language acquisition. Point 7 was not earned because there is no attempt to describe hypnosis as a divided state of consciousness. Point 8 was not earned because there is no attempt to describe hypnosis as a social phenomenon. Point 9 was earned because the student describes how a placebo effect/anticipation of results can affect the outcome of hypnosis.

Each of the following contributes to inaccurate perception, cognition, or conclusion.

The after image effect contributes to inaccurate perception. It is explained by the opponent process theory of colored vision. The theory propose that sensory neurons for color comes in pairs. When a person stares at the image of a blue and red British flag for a prolonged time and then immediately switches his view to a blank area, he will perceive a green and yellow British flag. This is because the red and blue neurons are overstimulated and becomes insensitive the red and blue light in the white light, leaving the yellow and green light to make a dominant impression on sensation.

The availability heuristic contributes also to inaccurate perception. Vivid events such as a plane crash leaves a dominant memory. Because the memory is easily retrieved, the person often perceives the event as occurring more frequently than it actually does.

Ethnocentrism contributes to inaccurate perception as well. People in a particular group tends to view their group as better and as more diverse while other groups are not as good and more uniform. For example, ~~students often perceive their~~ the Nazis perceived themselves as better than all the other races.

Groupthink contributes to inaccurate cognition. When differing view points are not encouraged, ~~and~~ each person in a group perceives the other group members to be in agreement in a decision and consequently suppresses his or her own different opinion. For example, at the beginning of the Kennedy presidency, the administration approved a CIA operation that later proved a failure and resulted in a large scandal. When reviewing how the administration could have unanimously approved such a flawed plan, everyone claimed they gave in ~~to~~ to the affirmative opinion of the other people.

Lack of object permanence contributes to inaccurate conclusion. When a small child sees ~~the~~ water being poured from a tall, thin glass to a short wide glass, a child without object permanence often conclude there is now less water than before.

Nonrandom assignment of research participant can lead to inaccurate conclusion. For example, if a researcher wants to see if ginkgo tea has a beneficial affect on memory

and performs an experiment in a school. He gives the ginkgo tea to an AP class and the regular water to a regular class. Later he finds the AP class did better on a memory test. But the conclusion the ginkgo helps memory is wrong because the AP class had inherently better memory to start with.

Optimistic explanatory style contribute to false conclusion. For example, an extremely optimistic student repeated attributes his poor performances in concerts to a lack of practice, even though he practices many hours a day. But the truth maybe the student simply lack musical talent (maybe even an ear defect). ~~But~~ A perpetually optimistic explanatory style would prevent the student from moving on to areas where he is more suited.

Proactive interference contributes to inaccurate cognition. For example, in remembering a list of words, a person may need to remember car, truck, Toyota and so forth a list concerning automobiles. However, the person would have a difficult time in remembering a different list of automobiles at a later time because the previous memory interferes.

The Triarchic Theory of vision doesn't accurately explain the concepts of both color blindness and after-images (combination of colors red, green, + blue). Opponent Process Theory does allow for such concepts though due to the theory's acknowledgement of color pairs (red-green, blue-yellow, black-white). In case of after-images when a person ~~stares~~ stares at a red spot and looks away he or she will see an after-image of green due to ~~this~~ this theory. Area

Availability heuristics is a concept which allows people to make quick judgements based on information which often is not statistically accurate but accurate to their schema. For example a woman might be terrified of planes because of her knowledge of plane crashes based on disaster movies but drives everyday without fear of a car crash, despite the greater ~~likely~~ likelihood of a car crash.

Group think is characteristic of a group of people who come together to make an important decision that they end up all agreeing on despite opposing ideas. This is because the ideas were not ~~voiced~~ voiced because of ~~discouragement~~ discouragement of opposing ideas. An example might be that of Kennedy's advisors on the Bay of Pigs decision. Some advisors may have actually felt opposed to the action but agreed in order

to conform with the group's decision.

Piaget's ~~sensorimotor~~ sensorimotor stage of infancy - 2 years old says that ~~that~~ at this stage children haven't developed object permanence due to the lack of logic and the ~~the~~ presence of a visual cliff. A young child therefore incorrectly assumes that when ~~they~~ he can't see an object anymore it no longer exists.

When a ~~researcher~~ ^{researcher} fails to randomly assign test subjects the researcher is working under biased conditions which will not create reliable results. A researcher in order to make the experiment accurate + reliable must be blind to the assignment of his patients so he can not screw results to favor his purpose.

A person who is overly optimistic (positive in expectations of outcomes) will inaccurately be able to ~~the~~ judge the likeliness of situations' results with the reality principal. A person who is overly optimistic perhaps has an under-developed ego.

An availability heuristic can lead to an inaccurate perception, cognition or conclusion because a heuristic is a rule of thumb. Because it is a rule of thumb it is not always accurate. Using this can lead to a wrong assumption or conclusion about a problem. The afterimage effect is when a subject is shown a group of objects, pictures or words ~~words~~ for a matter of seconds and then asked to recall them later. For example, a group of students are flashed a series of words for a matter of seconds and then asked to recall them. The accuracy of such a test is not very high because students do not all have the same encoding capacity. Group think is when a group of people are asked their opinion on a particular topic. They are advised to give one side of a specific problem, even though everyone might have a different opinion. This is not accurate because many groups will vote to see which side they will support. It does not take into consideration the group as individual parts it only takes into account the group as a whole. Lack of object permanence in a child can lead to confusion. For example if you give a child a ball and the ball rolls under the couch out of sight. The child will become distressed because it thinks the ball has disappeared into thin air, it no longer exists to the child. Non random assignment of research participants leads ~~to~~ to too many confounding variables. A group of students are asked to participate in an experiment.

#1

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the examination.

1C

They are asked whether they like action movies or romance movies. The ones who responded to liking the action movies are put in that group and same for those who answered romantic movies as their favorite. This nonrandom ~~assignment~~ assignment will skew the results. The ~~the~~ experiment will not be valid because after each group watches their respective movies and asked if they enjoyed it they will have answered yes and your experiment will not be valid and also unable to be replicated. It is better to have a double or single blind experiment. There will be ~~no~~ less of a chance for confounding variables. Optimistic explanatory style can be misleading because if a teacher says 80% of my students pass this class what he really means is I have a 20% pass rate. This could be misleading since as you could be included in that 20%, that statement could persuade you to stay in that class when in fact you might be better off not taking it at all and eliminating the risk of failure. Proactive interference can screw up your results. Any interference could screw them up because most experiments do not warrant such a disturbance.