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**Lesson One**

**Approaches in Psychology**

**Origins of Psychology**

**Wundt and introspection:** Wilhelm Wundt opened the world’s first psychology laboratory in 1879. He and his assistants used ‘introspection’ to try to investigate the nature of awareness and consciousness. This involved recording conscious thoughts by noting them down, then attempting to break these thoughts down into structures. Although quite basis by modern psychological standards, Wundt did us the scientific methods in his work- he gave participants the same procedure, same instructions, and tried to minimise the impact of extraneous variables. This helped move psychology away from philosophy (for example the works of Descartes and Locke) and towards the scientific method.

**Emergence of psychology as a science:** Early behaviourists such as John B. Watson began to criticise the method of introspection for being subjective, and varying too much from person to person. He suggested that it was impossible to test people’s inward, private thoughts, and that psychology should focus on studying observable behaviour. Other behaviourists such as Skinner therefore used scientific, highly controlled techniques such as lab experiments, which was the dominant paradigm (accepted way of thinking) in psychology of much of the middle of the 20th century. Psychologists today still use aspect of the scientific method, and will use lab experiments for studying some aspects of behaviour. The cognitive approach became popular in the 1960s, and emphasised the legitimacy of attempting to uncover though processes, which can be indirectly tested in experiments. The biological approach emerged in the 1980s, which can be studied through methods such as brain-scanning techniques and looking at the effect of drugs on behaviour. Some key dates in the development of psychology as a science are:

* 17th-19th centuries: psychology is seen as part of philosophy
* 1879: Wundt opens the first lab dedicated to psychological enquiry
* Early 1900s: Sigmund Freud proposes psychodynamic/psychoanalytic theory, emphasising the role of the unconscious mind
* Early 1900s: Watson and Skinner establish the behaviourist approach, emphasising the role of learning
* 1950s: Rogers and Maslow devise the humanistic approach, emphasising the ‘whole person; and their subjective experience, including the role of free will
* 1960s: the cognitive approach emerges, emphasising the role of thought processes
* 1960s: Bandura proposes social learning theory, emphasising the role of observation and imitation
* 1980s: the biological approach becomes popular, emphasising the role of the brain and physical processes
* End of the 20th century: cognitive neuroscience emerges, combining elements of the cognitive and biological approaches, emphasising the role of biological structures in determining thought processes

Approaches

The idea of an ‘approach’ is that psychologists tend to have a general view of what causes behaviour. Some of them think that the way we behave is largely inherited, others believe it is largely learned through your life experience.  
For example – think about football.   
What is it that makes someone interested in football or good at it? Did they inherit some kind of football gene from their parents or did they learn to love it perhaps because their family enjoyed kicking a ball around?  
Psychologists call this **nature** (what you are born with) or **nurture** (your life experiences).

**Behaviourist approach**

Asthenamesuggests **behaviourism** examines behaviour. It focuses on how we learn behaviour,as well as how we measure it. Behaviourism do not address **internal** factors, such as thoughts. To some,this is strange.How can psychologists ignore thoughts ? There is a logical answer . As scientists,behaviourists seek measurable events for observations. However no one can directly observe another’s thoughts. So the study of thoughts requires speculations. This was not scientific enough for early behaviorists. That’s why they turned their attentions to observable behaviours.

**How does it work ?** The central concept of this approach is the influence of experience on our behaviour, and how we *learn* behaviours. Basically we are born as ‘blank slates’ and what we become is shaped by experience (sometimes termed ‘the environment’).  
There are two major types of behavioural conditioning.Basically we either learn through association (**classical conditioning**) This involves provoking a natural responseto a **stimulis.** A famous example of this is the experiment with **Pavlov’s dogs.** They learned the same respondent behaviour for receiving food and hearing a bell**.** or **reinforcement** (**operant conditioning**) Many traditional experiments involved **skinner boxes**. This was a form of animal experimentation . The boxes presented animals with shocks or rewards based on different behaviours.If you have cats you will know that they come running as soon as they hear a cupboard door being opened. They have learned to *associate* that noise with food.   
You probably also know the usefulness of treats with animals – a small reward *reinforces* a behaviour and makes it more likely to happen in the future.These are examples of classical and operant conditioning.   
Whatever characteristics we might be born with, these take second place to the crucial roles of our experience and the environment.   
Because this approach is most closely associated with scientific psychology, it’s no surprise that **behaviourists** are cheerleaders for the **experimental method** in psychology because it involves precise and objective measurement of behaviour in controlled conditions.   
The approach also uses research with animals, because it sees no significant qualitative differences between human and animal behaviour. PS: There is also **social learning theory**, an extension of the behaviourist approach that incorporates indirect learning.

**Questions :**

A Give full answers to the following questions.

1 What are the basic principles of behaviourism ?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

2 What are the two main forms of the behavioural conditioning ?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

B Say whether the following statements are true or false.

1………Behaviourists examine the effects of thoughts on behaviour.

2 ……….Behaviourists try to avoid speculation.

3 ……….Pavlov’s dogs were a famous example of classical conditioning.

C Using the table below match the words or phrases (1-7) with their corresponding definitions (A-G).

1. internal
2. behaviourism
3. pavlov’s dogs
4. observable
5. operant conditioning
6. classical conditioning
7. animal experimentation behaviour

A the process of testing ideas on subjects likemice or monkeys

B happening or existing inside of the mind or body

C a form of learning based on the outcome someone’s actions

D a school of psychology that focuses on behavioural conditioning

E the subjects of a famous experiment involving conditioning

F a form of learning that involves learning that involves linking responses to stimuli

G the actions that people can study

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**Lesson Two Approaches (cont)**

**Psychodynamic approach**This is the approach that originated with Sigmund Freud, possibly the most well-known psychologist ever. He believed that the causes of behaviour lie within the **unconscious** mind, the part of the mind that is normally closed off to us but is extremely active. The iceberg metaphor has been used to represent this ‘invisible’ unconscious mind that has powerful effects (think Titanic).  
There is constant dynamic conflict between parts of the unconscious and the conscious mind. We can get a brief glimpse of this conflict when we dream, which is why Freud advocated the use of dream interpretation to help us understand what’s in the unconscious and why it affects us.   
The approach also emphasises the importance of childhood experiences, which have a major impact on our personality development and our behaviour as adults.

Based on this perspective,the human mind,or **psyche** has three parts. The **id** is the fully unconscious part of the mind.Its primary purpose is to seek pleasure.The **superego** controls a person’s conscience. This drives people to attempt the right decisions. The superego is also mostly unconscious. The **ego** moderates the superego and id.It based on reality and is mostly conscious.

Thre is usually **dissonance** between these devisions. Too much dissonance can lead to **maladaptation**,such as defense mechanisms. Freud’s goal was to resolve these conflicts. He used **psychoanalysis** to bring unconscious thoughts to conscious level.   
**Questions :**

**A** Answer the following questionsaccording to the text

1 What are the roles of the id,the ego, and the superego ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

2 What is the role of the unconscious mind in psychodynamic psychology ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

**B** Using the table below match the words or phrases (1-5) with their corresponding definitions (A-E).

1. id
2. ego
3. superego
4. conflict
5. maladaptation

A a behaviour that harms an individual

B part of the psyche that is based on fulfilling pleasures

C part of the psyche that that controls te conscience

D part of the psyche that is based on reality

E an argument or prolonged disagreement

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C Read the sentence pairs. Choose witch word or phrase best fits each blank.

1defense mechanism/psyche

A The human mind, or………………..,has three divisions.

B A……………………protects a person from disturbing thoughts.

2 psychodynamic psychology/ psychoanalysis

A …………………………is a kind of therapy that resolves conflicts in mind.

B Sigmund Freud was the first to propose the idea of……………….

3 conscience/dissonance

A …………………..between the parts of psyche leads to emotional problems.

B ……………………… make peaple feel bad when they hurt others.

**Lesson Three Approaches (cont)**

**Humanistic approach**The **humanistic approach** is firmly based on the concept of the self. This concerns issues to do with your self-concept (how you see yourself), and your **self-esteem** (how you feel about yourself).   
The humanistic approach believe that people are naturally goodand have **free will.** They argue that individuals can consciously decide to **actualize** their **potential**. According to the humanistic approach, a person chooses his or her responses to perceptions.

Patients seek humanistic therapy to help them overcome obstacles and **succeed** at something. According to humanistic psychology, the key to **self-actulization** is acceptance. Patients learn to embrace their **strengths**. They also learn to recognize their **limitations**. These might include a person’s genetics, education,and general cultural environment.The therapist supports the patient’s self acceptance with **unconditional positive regard.**

Humanistic psychology comes with inherent challenges. It is largely based on an individula’s unique perception of **reality**. That makes comparative,objective study very difficult.   
Humanistic psychologists believe the goal of psychology is not prediction or control but to understand the whole person.

**Questions :**

**A** Answer the following questionsaccording to the text

1 What is the goal of humanistic psychology ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

2 What are some criticisms of humanistic psychology ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

B Say whether the following statements are true or false.

1………According to humanistic psychologists,genetics is a major cause of behaviour.

2 ………. Humanistic psychologists encourage patients to ignore their limitations.

3 ………. Humanistic psychologists is especially challenging to study objectively.

C Using the table below match the words or phrases (1-4) with their corresponding definitions (A-D).

1. free will
2. potential
3. comprehensive
4. self-actualization

A a person’s ability to control his or her actions without influence

B the process of reaching a person’s highest level of development

C an ability that is possible but not yet developed

D complete or including many events

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C Read the sentence pairs. Choose witch word or phrase best fits each blank.

1actualize/succeed

A The man spent many years trying to………………..his dream.

B The business needs more money if it is going to………………

2 strength/reality

A Each person sees the world through a unique perception of ………………….

B The patient’s greatest……………… was her ability to solve problems.

3 unconditional positive regard/limitations

A Even though he has physical…………………..,the man wants to compete in the race.

B Some psychologists demonstrate ………………………to make their patients feel more accepted.

**Lesson Four Approaches (cont)**

**Cognitive approach**

The cognitive approach emerged in 1950’s as a **response** to behaviourism. According to cognitivists,behaviourists **failed to** account for the mind’s internal processes . Cognitivists believe that the way people **think** affects their actions.In general, conitivism takes a **reductionist** approach to psychology

This approach focuses on thinking – our feelings, beliefs, attitudes and expectations and the effects they have on our behaviour. It provides a **framework** to for understanding the role of thought. It employs the ‘computer metaphor’ to explain how our minds work; like computers we process information.  
The approach has been used to explain many things including mental disorders such as depression. According to the cognitive approach the depression lies in the way they are thinking rather than in reality.

Like behaviourist psychologists, cognitive psychologists use **lab experiments** as a key research method. But a big difference is that while behaviourists have no interest in what goes on inside the mind, cognitive psychologists are the opposite. The processes inside the mind are precisely what they are interested in and have an important link to the behaviours we observe.

Cognitive experiments tend to study individual mental processes. One popular subject for experimentation is **social interaction.** Another major area of cogntivism is animal psychology . Many cognitivist are interested in the mental processes of **primates.** One criticism of early cognitivist experimentation was its lack of naturalistic observation. Critics argued that this quality prevented sufficient scientific rigor.

Questions :

**A** Answer the following questionsaccording to the text

1 What is the first focus of cognitivism ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

2 How does cognitivism differ from behaviourism ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

B Say whether the following statements are true or false.

1………Cognitivist theories were the basic foundation of behaviourism.

2 ………. Cognitivists rarelu study thought processes in animals.

3 ……….Critics in cognitivism believe it should involve more naturalistic observation.

C Using the table below, match the words or phrases (1-7) with their corresponding definitions (A-G).

1. primate
2. framework
3. cognitivism
4. reductionist
5. scientific rigor
6. experimentation
7. social interaction

A the process in which people behave in response to each other

B related to understanding complex ideas through yndividual parts

C a type of mammal with hands and forward-facing eyes

D a school of psychology that focuses on the process of thinking

E a set of ideas that people use to think about specific subject

F the level of exactness required to perform valid scientific studies

G the process of testing ideas in a controlled environment

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C Read the sentence pairs. Choose witch word or phrase best fits each blank.

1thinks/fails

A Many psychologists are interested in the way a person…………….

B Behaviourism………………to explain how thought affects behaviour.

2 lack/response

A The scientific paper contained an alarming ……………of evidence.

B The new scientific theory is a……………… to many older theories.