

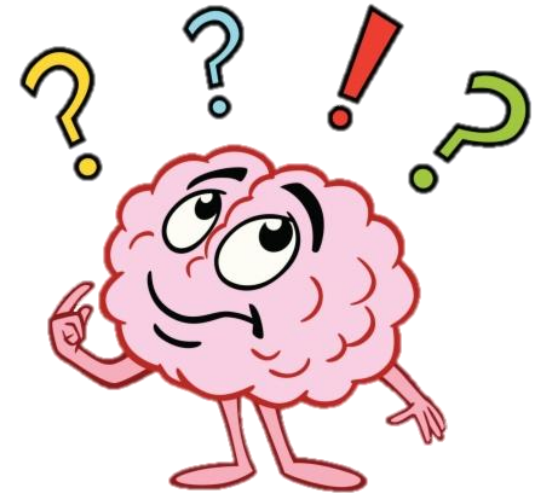
Monday, 29 June 2026

Title: An introduction to Psychology

**Do Now:**

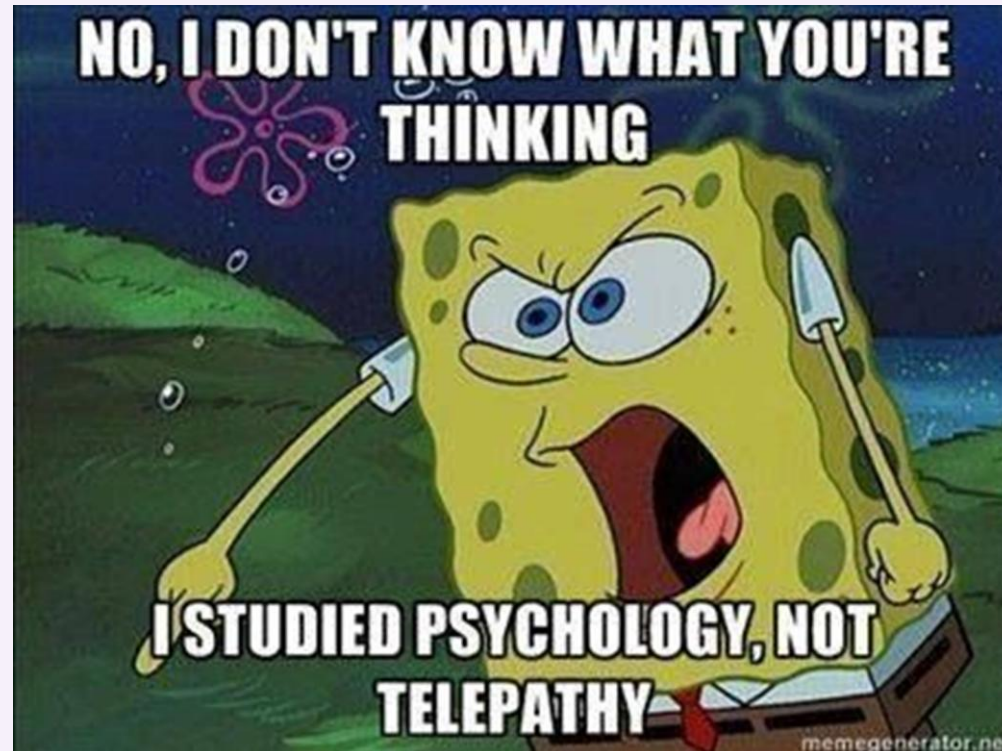
Write the following questions down before attempting to answer them. Leave enough space between each question to add additional answers when we feedback.

1. What is Psychology?
2. What might we study in Psychology?
3. Why is studying Psychology useful?

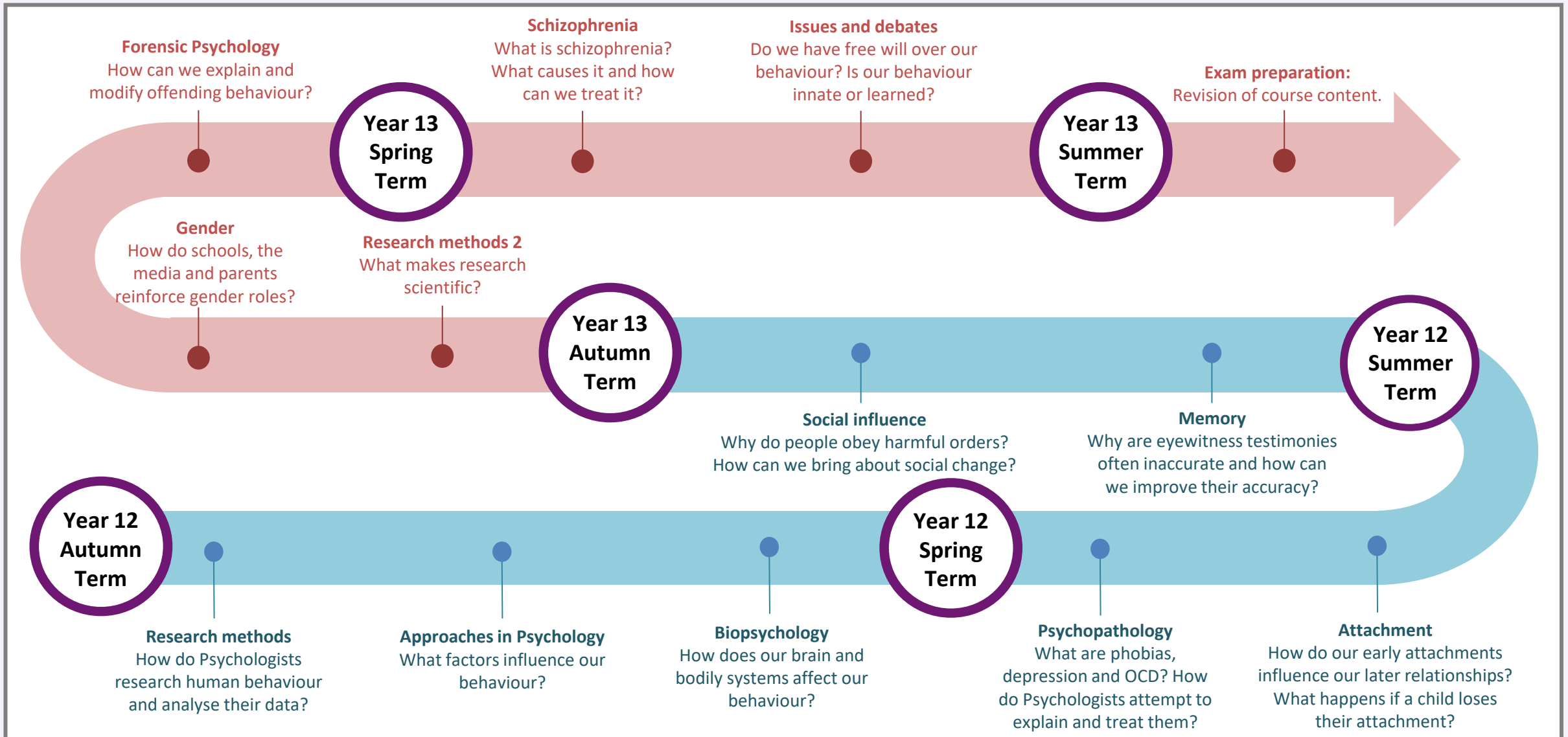


# What is Psychology?

The scientific study of the mental processes and behaviour.



# What will we study in Psychology?



# Brain gym!

- Stand behind your chair on one leg
- Clap 5 times
- Pat your head and rub your stomach at the same time
- Do a 360 degree turn
- Stretch your arms above your head
- Say “Psychology is the best”
- Make an animal noise



# **Title:** Obedience

## **Think-pair-share:**

1. What is obedience?
2. Can you think of why/when obedience might be good?
3. Can you think of why/when obedience might be bad?

"When you think of the long and gloomy history of man, you will find more hideous crimes have been committed in the name of **obedience** than have ever been committed in the name of rebellion."





# Milgram's (1963) original obedience research

## Aim:

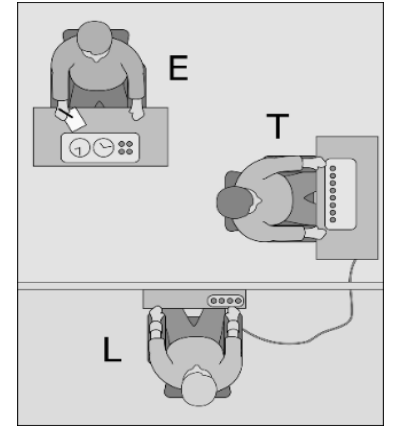
To investigate whether people will obey an order from an authority figure to inflict pain on another person.

## Procedure:

40 American men aged 20-50 volunteered to take part in a paid laboratory study falsely advertised to be investigating 'punishment on learning' at Yale University. Participants were met by an experimenter dressed in a lab coat who entered them into a fake draw with a confederate (fake participant who worked with the researcher) to decide who would become the teacher (which was always assigned to the naive participant) and who would become the learner (which was always assigned to the confederate).

The teacher was instructed to administer an electric shock to the learner, who was sat in another room, each time they gave a wrong response in a word-pair test. The shock generator had switches, each clearly marked with a voltage that ranged from 15 to 450 volts. The teacher (participant) was told to increase the shock level by one switch (15v) each time. Unbeknown to the participant, no shocks were actually administered.

During the test, pre-recorded tape recordings played the learner shouting and crying in pain. If the naive participant expressed an unwillingness to continue, the experimenter gave a series of standardised prods such as 'you have no choice, you must go on'.



## Findings:

- 100% of participants obeyed the experimenter's instructions up until 300 volts. 65% of participants obeyed to the maximum 450 volts.
- Most participants found the experience stressful and showed signs of distress (e.g. digging their nails into their flesh and sweating).

## Conclusions:

Most people will obey orders from an authority figure, even if those orders go against their conscience.

## Task:

1. Read through the description of Milgram's study. Using the highlighted text to guide you, note down any strengths and limitations of the research as you can think of.
2. Discuss your notes with the person next to you. Add any differences to your notes.

# Milgram's (1963) original obedience research

## Aim:

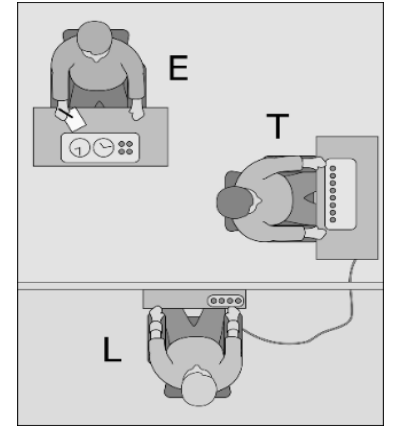
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## Conclusions:

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## Methodological critiques

**Population validity:** Is the sample of participants representative of the population? Can we generalise the findings to the wider population?

**Demand characteristics:** When participants guess the aims of the research and change their behaviour to suit the aims.

**Replicability:** would it be easy to carry out the research again in the exact same way?

**Ecological validity:** is the research conducted in a natural, everyday setting for participants?

## Ethical critiques

**Deception:** Researchers should not lie to participants.

**Protection of participants from harm:** Researchers should not mentally or physically harm participants.

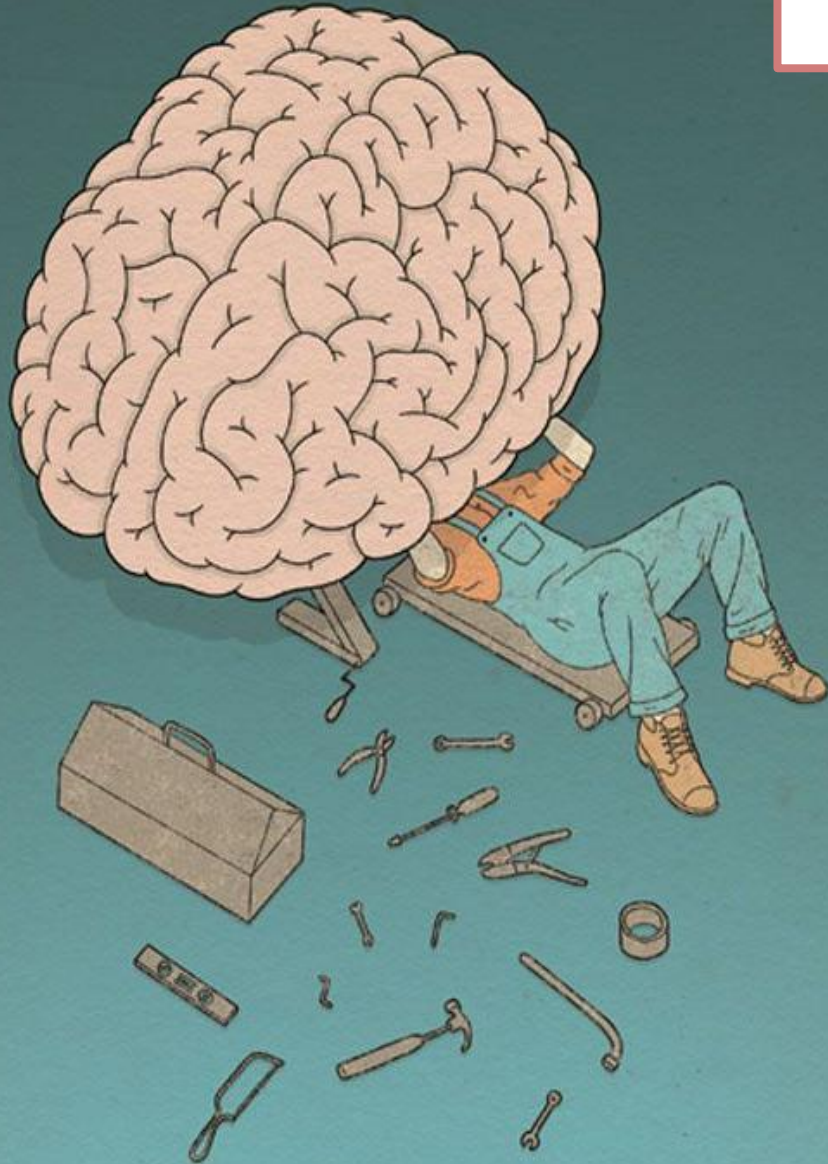
**Right to withdraw:** Researchers should always allow participants to withdraw from the study at any point.

# What equipment will you need?

- 1 x small folder (class folder)
- 3 x large folders (for each paper)
- File dividers
  
- A notepad
- Black pens
- Pencil
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Green pen
- Highlighters
- Calculator



# Psychology Bridging Menu




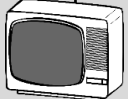



You are about to start an exciting journey into the world of Psychology where you will learn about the scientific study of the mind and behaviour!

Remember:

- Choose what modules you do and when, but work through them consistently. Different tasks will take you varying amounts of time, but on average you should aim to do one or two per week.
- All green tasks are core modules, they are compulsory and must be completed.
- The red hot chili indicates that the task is more challenging than the others. 🌶️
- Numbers e.g. (1) correspond to how you should evidence the module which can be found in the slides following the menu.

# Psychology Bridging Menu

(Green modules are core (compulsory) modules , 🌶️ indicates the most challenging modules)

<b>Read</b> 	<b>Watch</b> 	<b>Listen</b> 	<b>Visit</b> (virtually or physically at later date) 	<b>Do</b> 
<a href="#">The man who mistook his wife for a hat – Oliver Sacks (1)</a> 🌶️ A collection of studies detailing the most bizarre neurological disorders resulting from damage to the brain.	<b>A beautiful mind (Movie) (1)</b> A brilliant mathematician becomes entangled in a conspiracy – a winner of 4 Oscars.	<a href="#">Harlow's Monkeys (1)</a> Claudia Hammond revisits Harry Harlow's surrogate mothers experiment with monkeys, that revolutionised parenting.	<a href="#">The Virtual Koshland Science Museum (4)</a> Explore the interactive brain to learn about its structures and functions.	<a href="#">Starting with psychology</a> The greatest puzzle we face is ourselves. Psychologists put forward a range of explanations about why people feel, think and behave the way they do. It is not easy to pin down all the many influences but this free course makes a start. (5)
<a href="#">Opening Skinner's Box: Great Psychological Experiments of the Twentieth Century (1)</a> Slater takes us from deep empathy with Stanley Milgram's obedience subjects to a disturbing re-creation of an experiment questioning the validity of psychiatric diagnosis.	<b>The Stanford Prison Experiment (Movie) (1)</b> The controversial psychology experiment in which college students pretend to be prisoners and guards, but the proceedings soon get out of hand.	<a href="#">Joseph Wolpe and Systematic Desensitization (1)</a> Joseph Wolpe's treatment for phobias can be seen as the foundation for today's cognitive behaviour therapy used to treat many mental health conditions.	<b>The open university (5)</b> – complete one of the following free online Psychology courses: <a href="#">Forensic Psychology</a>  <a href="#">An introduction to cognitive psychology</a>	<b>Are criminals born or made? (7)</b> Research and produce an essay on the above question.
<a href="#">The Lucifer Effect: How Good People Turn Evil (1)</a> Psychologist Philip Zimbardo challenges our conceptions of who we think we are and what we believe we will never do.	<b>TED Talks (1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">9 myths about psychology, debunked</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">How reliable is your memory?</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Psychology of evil</a></li> </ul>	<a href="#">The Bobo Doll (1)</a> Bandura's ground-breaking Bobo Doll experiment exposed the dangers of imitation.	<a href="#">Young people and their mental health</a>  <a href="#">Understanding Anxiety, Depression and CBT</a>  <a href="#">Attachment</a>	<b>Research one of the Psychological approaches listed below and produce a presentation which covers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The main assumptions of the approach</li> <li>- The key concepts of the approach</li> <li>- The research methods used by the approach</li> <li>- The contributions of the approach</li> <li>- The strength and limitations of the approach</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Elephants on Acid (1)</a> The craziest psychological experiments.	<a href="#">Crash Course Psychology (2)</a> A playlist of informative videos.	<a href="#">Case Study: HM - The Man Who Couldn't Remember (1)</a> Having lost his own memory, HM revealed how new memories are formed.	<a href="#">Obedience and ethics</a> 🌶️	Psychological approaches: The Psychodynamic approach The behaviourist approach The humanistic approach The cognitive approach Social learning theory The biological approach
<a href="#">The Little Book of Psychology: An Introduction to the Key Psychologists and Theories You Need to Know (1)</a> An introduction to the key thinkers, themes and theories in Psychology.	<a href="#">Three identical strangers (3)</a> Identical triplets separated at birth reunite and unearth an unimaginable secret that has radical repercussions.	<a href="#">The Boy Raised as a Girl (1)</a> For decades the John/Joan case 'proved' that nurture dictates gender identity. In fact, the case was not a success and hid a personal tragedy.	<b>Bethlehem Museum of the Mind (6)</b> (Virtual work available) Explore the history of mental healthcare and create your own art work inspired by past patients of Bethlehem Hospital – the UK's oldest residential psychiatric hospital. 🌶️	(8)
<a href="#">The Psychology Book (1)</a> The Psychology Book is your visual guide to the complex and fascinating world of human behaviour.	<a href="#">The Brain with David Eagleman - What Is Reality (1)</a> Dr David Eagleman explores how the brain, locked in silence and darkness, conjures up the world we all take for granted.	<a href="#">Case Study: The Man with a Hole in His Head (1)</a> Phineas Gage survived a bizarre accident that changed him - and the study of neuroscience.	<b>Freud Museum London (1)</b> The home of Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis.	

# (1) - Book/Journal/Podcast/Film/Visit Review

Review by: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

Review of (please circle)

Book    Journal    Podcast    Film    Documentary

Would you/would you not recommend it? Why?

Rating:



What was it about?

What did you find particularly interesting/inspiring/shocking? Has this changed your opinion?

How does it link to this subject and why is it important?

What would you like to learn more about?

# (2) Crash Course Psychology

Select **at least** three of the videos in the playlist that most interest you (you are always encouraged to watch more!)

Produce a creative and informative poster on **each** of the videos you selected. This must include:

1. An overview of the topic i.e. what you learned.
2. Key terminology for the topic
3. Pictures should be used to make your poster engaging and easy to understand.

## RESEARCH METHODS & DATA COLLECTION

Psychologists use a range of research methods to conduct their research, but they are often asked to specify methodologies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	BRIEF OVERVIEW	WHAT RESEARCH METHODS DO THEY FAVOUR?
<b>POSITIVISM</b>	This methodology adopts a scientific approach to research in order to identify trends and patterns in human behaviour. Positivists aim to prove or disprove a hypothesis by generating quantitative data from laboratory and field research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surveys and questionnaires</li> <li>Structured interviews</li> </ul>
<b>INTERPRETIVISM</b>	Interpretivists seek to explore how individuals feel and act by trying to empathise with them. This is done by either using self-reports by generating in-depth qualitative data from high in-depth, unstructured interviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unstructured interviews</li> <li>Content analysis</li> </ul>
<b>EMPIRICISM</b>	Empiricists, this approach is grounded in learning theory, which seeks to control 'environmental contingencies' to which living organisms respond. This methodology stresses the need for a support (reinforcement) between researcher and respondent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sturdy qualitative and quantitative questionnaires</li> </ul>

### QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires are designed for self-completion and can be administered in different ways, such as face-to-face or by email or post.

**Strengths**

- Can be used on large numbers of people
- Can be used in a wide range of situations
- Can be used to collect data on a wide range of topics

**Weaknesses**

- Can be unreliable, which lowers the validity of the responses
- Response rates may be low unless respondents have an incentive to participate

### INTERVIEWS

Interviews are generally administered face-to-face.

**Strengths**

- Can be used to explore a wide range of topics
- Can be used to explore a wide range of topics
- Can be used to explore a wide range of topics

**Weaknesses**

- Can be time-consuming
- Can be expensive
- Can be biased

### CONTENT ANALYSIS

When using the method, researchers count or measure the frequency of something to quantify an aspect of the media.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be used to analyse large amounts of data</li> <li>Can be used to analyse large amounts of data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be time-consuming</li> <li>Can be expensive</li> </ul>

### OBSERVATIONS

Observations can be different types depending on how much researchers want to influence the behaviour of the group being studied. Participants are observed, and the observer records the behaviour.

**Participant-Observed**

- The researcher joins a group being studied and the participants are aware that they are being observed.
- Example: A researcher joins a group of children in a play area to observe their interactions.

**Participant-Not-Observed**

- The researcher joins a group being studied but the participants are unaware that they are being observed.
- Example: A researcher joins a group of children in a play area to observe their interactions without them knowing.

### ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

This approach is used to study a particular way of life (e.g. subculture). It involves a combination of participant observations and unstructured interviews to gather an in-depth account of a social group.

**Strengths**

- Can provide a rich understanding of the group
- Can provide a rich understanding of the group

**Weaknesses**

- Very difficult to repeat the research, making it not particularly reliable
- Can be time-consuming

### ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Sociological research is governed by standards laid by the British Sociological Association in the UK to ensure that research is performed in an appropriate manner.

- Informed consent: In most research, participants should give their consent to take part in the study, but some cases (e.g. research on children) may require consent from the parents and/or the research ethics committee.
- Confidentiality and anonymity: Participants should not have to disclose their names or other identifying information that they could be identified by.

## ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

Abnormal psychology is the study of people who exhibit abnormal behaviour. When people's behaviour interferes with their own lives or is disruptive to others, it is considered abnormal behaviour. Abnormal psychology covers a broad range of mental and emotional disorders.

### FOUR WAYS TO DEFINE ABNORMALITY

1. **Statistical infrequency:** Deviation from the norm or average population. The trait, thought or behaviour is rare or statistically unusual.
  - Weakness:** This approach does not distinguish between desirable and undesirable behaviour. For example, intelligence is abnormal because it is rare.
2. **Deviation from social norms:** Goes against expected behaviour and codes of conduct within society.
  - Weakness:** Social norms change over time and vary from one society to another.
3. **Failure to function adequately:** Inability to cope with the demands of everyday life, such as maintaining social relationships or holding down a job.
  - Weakness:** It is very judgemental and sometimes people behave inadequately or uncharacteristically, such as after a loved one's death, but this does not make them abnormal.
4. **Deviation from ideal mental health:** A person does not meet all criteria considered necessary to be mentally healthy.
  - Weakness:** The approach is based on an ideal. It is practically impossible for someone to meet all the criteria.

### DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON ABNORMAL BEHAVIOUR

PERSPECTIVE	ASSUMPTIONS	TREATMENTS
<b>Behavioural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on observable behaviour</li> <li>Abnormal behaviour results from faulty or ineffective learning and conditioning</li> </ul>	Focuses on learning new, more appropriate responses to situations
<b>Biological</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on biological and physiological causes, such as genetic inheritance or chemical imbalance</li> <li>Considers abnormal behaviour a disease</li> </ul>	Drug therapy, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and psychosurgery are the preferred treatment methods
<b>Cognitive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on how faulty internal thought processes, perceptions and reasoning contribute to psychological disorders</li> </ul>	Treatments focus on helping individuals change their thought processes and values. Uses cognitive behavioural therapy, which is a combination of cognitive therapy and behavioural methods.
<b>Psychodynamic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Psychological disorders are the result of anxiety caused by unresolved emotional conflicts</li> </ul>	Focuses on identifying and resolving unconscious conflicts

### SCHIZOPHRENIA

Schizophrenia is a psychotic disorder characterised by severely impaired thinking, emotions and behaviours that result in a loss of contact with reality. The DSM's criteria for schizophrenia include:

- Delusions
- Hallucinations
- Disorganised speech and behaviour
- Negative symptoms including loss of motivation and pleasure
- Impaired functioning in major areas of life such as work, interpersonal relations or self care
- Signs persist for at least six months
- No other explanation such as mood disorders with psychotic features or side effects of medication

### DEPRESSION

Depression is a mood or emotional state characterised by persistent feelings of sadness and worthlessness as well as a decreased ability to take interest or pleasure in daily activities. The DSM's criteria for depression include:

- Depressed mood or irritable mood most of the day
- Persistent mood swings
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Diminished interest or pleasure in almost all activities
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Significant weight loss or weight gain
- Recurrent thoughts of death

### PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDER

A psychological disorder is a pattern of behavioural or psychological symptoms that interferes with multiple areas of a person's life and causes distress.

### DIAGNOSTIC

Published by the American Psychiatric Association, this manual classifies psychological disorders by their symptoms and lists diagnostic criteria for major categories of mental disorders. It is used to communicate information about individuals who exhibit abnormal behaviour and decide how to treat them.

### OBSSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)

OCD is an anxiety disorder characterised by unwanted, involuntary thoughts, feelings, or behaviours and a drive to perform repetitive tasks with the intention of reducing obsession-related anxiety. The DSM's criteria for OCD include:

- Obsessions or compulsions
- Recognition that obsessions or compulsions are excessive or unreasonable
- Distress and significant interference with normal life caused by time-consuming obsessions or compulsions
- Obsessions or compulsions unrelated to other existing disorders (e.g. if the person has an eating disorder, preoccupation extends beyond food)
- Not caused by side effects of medication or other substances

### PHOBIAS

A phobia is an irrational, intense fear of an object or situation that is disproportionate to the actual danger posed. The DSM's criteria for phobias include:

- Marked and persistent fear that is excessive and unreasonable
- Exposure to phobic stimulus provokes immediate anxiety response
- Recognition that fear is irrational
- Phobic situations avoided or endured with intense anxiety and stress
- Normal life disrupted by phobias
- Periods for at least six months in people under the age of 18 years
- Fear, anxiety or phobic avoidance is not better accounted for by another mental disorder

## BIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Biological psychology studies the physical basis for human behaviour, emotions and mental processes. It is often referred to as biopsychology or physiological psychology. Biological psychologists explain behaviour in relation to the functioning of the brain and nervous system.

### BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Human behaviour can be explained by various aspects of biology such as hormones, genetics, evolution and the nervous system. Human genes have evolved over millions of years to adapt behaviour to the environment. Therefore, most behaviour has a genetic basis. When abnormal behaviour is explained using biological causes, biological treatments such as medication can be used to treat it. Animals and humans have homologous structures. Therefore, experimental research conducted using animals can inform us about human behaviour.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

- Experiments
- Case Studies
- Genetic Studies
- Brain Scanning (e.g. fMRI, PET scans)
- Gene Studies

### STRESS

Stress is the response that occurs when we think we can't cope with the pressures in our environment. Events that trigger the stress response can be:

- Life changes (e.g. divorce, bereavement, moving house)
- Health issues (e.g. respiratory illness, injury)
- Work-related stress (e.g. high pressure job, lack of control)
- Environmental stressors (e.g. overcrowding, noise)

Stress can affect the way we think, feel and react and is a normal response to a perceived threat or challenge. It is a natural part of life. However, chronic stress can have negative effects on our health and well-being.

### HANS SELYE'S GENERAL ADAPTION SYNDROME

Selye's research into the effects of hormones in the 1930s, Hans Selye noticed that his rats became ill even when they were given hormone injections. He discovered that the illness was caused by the stress of daily activities, the physical fear of disease and the pain caused by the hormone injections. He called this physiological process the **general adaptation syndrome**.

**The Alarm Stage:** When our body first detects a stressor, it triggers a survival response that we can think of as our 'fight or flight' response. A number of physiological changes take place to help us deal with the stressor.

**The Resistance Stage:** When our body first detects a stressor, it triggers a survival response that we can think of as our 'fight or flight' response. A number of physiological changes take place to help us deal with the stressor.

**The Exhaustion Stage:** When the stressor continues for a long time, the body's energy stores are depleted and the individual becomes exhausted. Resistance to disease is lowered, and the individual becomes more susceptible to illness. Chronic stress can lead to physical and mental health problems. There are several theories of adaptation.

### THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

The nervous system carries information from the brain to the peripheral nervous system.

The peripheral nervous system is divided into two parts:

- **Central Nervous System (CNS):** Brain and Spinal Cord
- **Peripheral Nervous System (PNS):** Nerves

The somatic nervous system includes parts of the body we control voluntarily with our muscles. The autonomic nervous system includes parts of the body that operate without our conscious awareness, such as the heart. They system has two branches:

- The sympathetic branch, which gives us energy
- The parasympathetic branch, which calms us down

### STRENGTHS

It is a scientific approach which can provide evidence to support theories of human behaviour.

- Method and procedure that is replicable and understandable
- Exposure to phobic stimulus provokes immediate anxiety response
- Recognition that fear is irrational
- Phobic situations avoided or endured with intense anxiety and stress
- Normal life disrupted by phobias
- Periods for at least six months in people under the age of 18 years
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### WEAKNESSES

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- Method and procedure that is replicable and understandable
- Exposure to phobic stimulus provokes immediate anxiety response
- Recognition that fear is irrational
- Phobic situations avoided or endured with intense anxiety and stress
- Normal life disrupted by phobias
- Periods for at least six months in people under the age of 18 years
- Fear, anxiety or phobic avoidance is not better accounted for by another mental disorder

### (3) Three identical strangers documentary

Answer the following questions regarding the documentary:

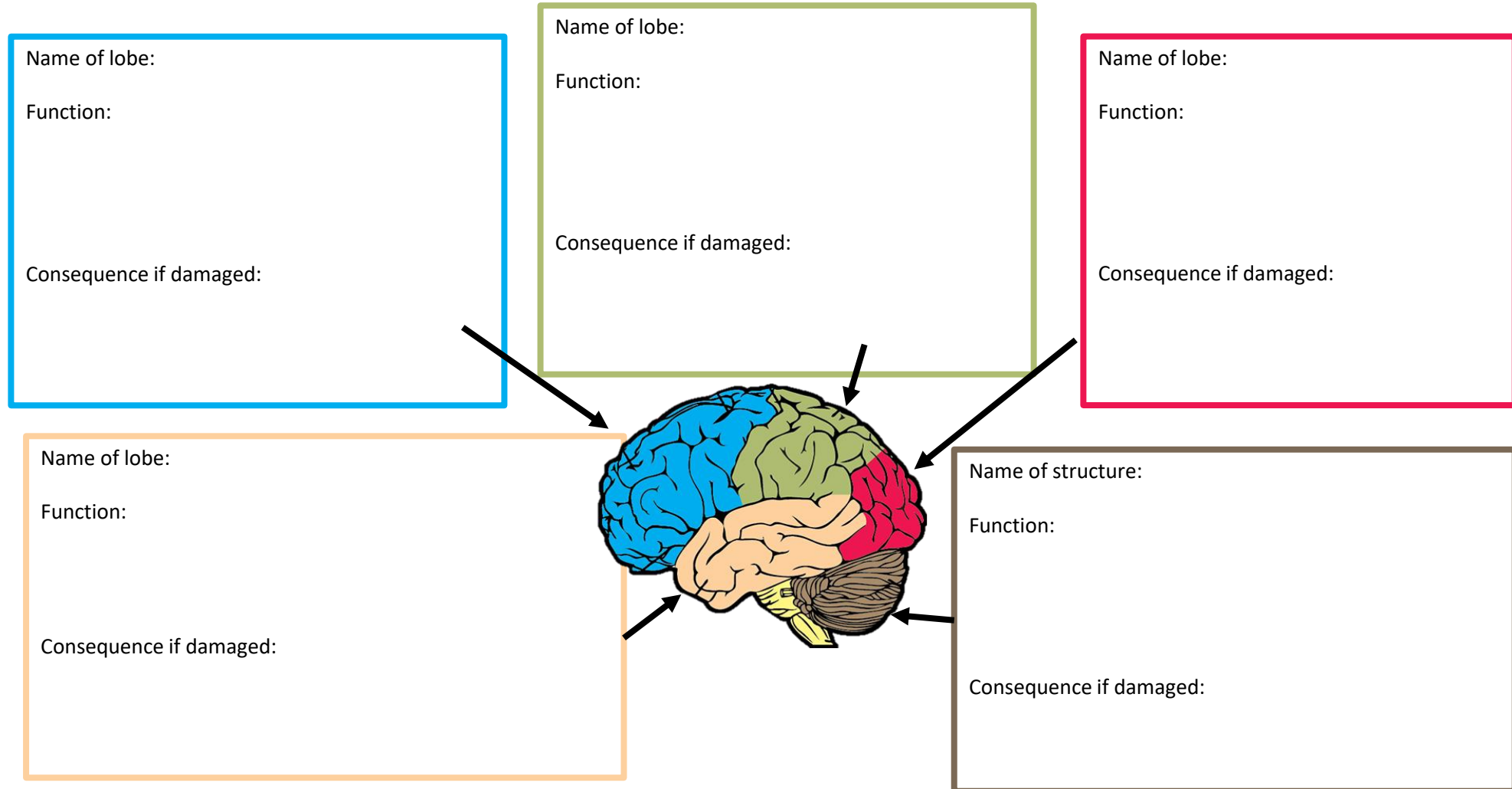
1. Describe what happened to the triplets and how their upbringing differed.
2. Define the nature vs nurture debate and explain how can it be applied to the story of the triplets.
3. Twins are often used in psychological research to determine whether we are born a particular way (due to our genes) or whether our behaviour is caused by our environmental experiences. Identify any of the triplets' behaviour that was due to their genetics (nature) and any of their behaviour that was due to their environments (nurture).

Nature	Nurture

4. All three were adopted through the Louise Wise Services Adoption Agency. Describe the circumstances of their adoption and what ethical implications there are from this.

## (4) The Virtual Koshland Science Museum

Use the interactive brain model on the Virtual Koshland science Museum's website to fill in the diagram below:



## (5) Starting with Psychology / The Open University

To evidence your completion of the course(s) you must:

- Write down notes
- Take a picture of your statement of participation certificate that you gain on completion.

Free course

**Starting with psychology**



Free statement  
of participation  
on completion



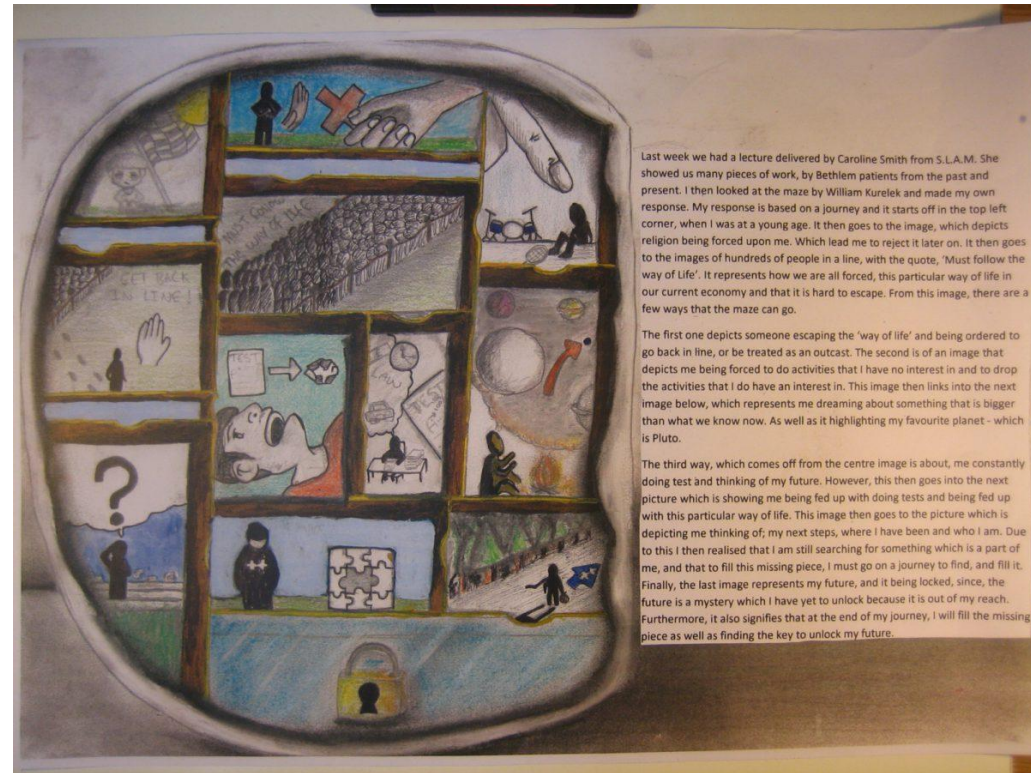
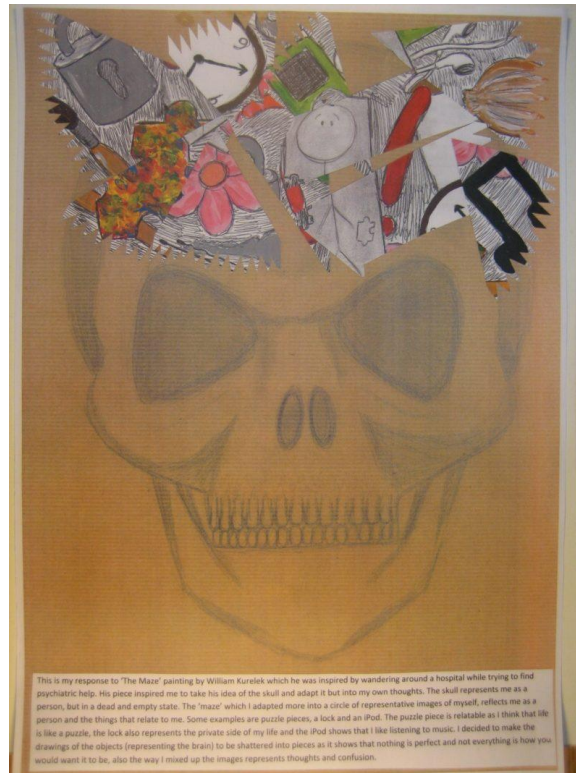
**Earn this free Open University digital badge if you complete this course!** The badge can be displayed, shared and downloaded as a marker of your achievement. The badge is awarded for completing the course and passing the quizzes.

## (6) Bethlehem Museum of the mind

It may be difficult to visit the Bethlehem Museum of the mind in person. However, you can look at some of the art work online. Follow the link below to read about William Kurelek's autobiographical painting 'The Maze' which was painted when he was 26 and a patient at Bethlem's sister hospital The Maudsley:

<https://museumofthemind.org.uk/learning/the-maze>

Once you had analysed the meaning behind the art, use it as inspiration to create your own piece of art representing your life. You must also write a summary of the meaning behind your art. Below are some examples of students' work inspired by The Maze. You can read about the meaning behind them by clicking the images.



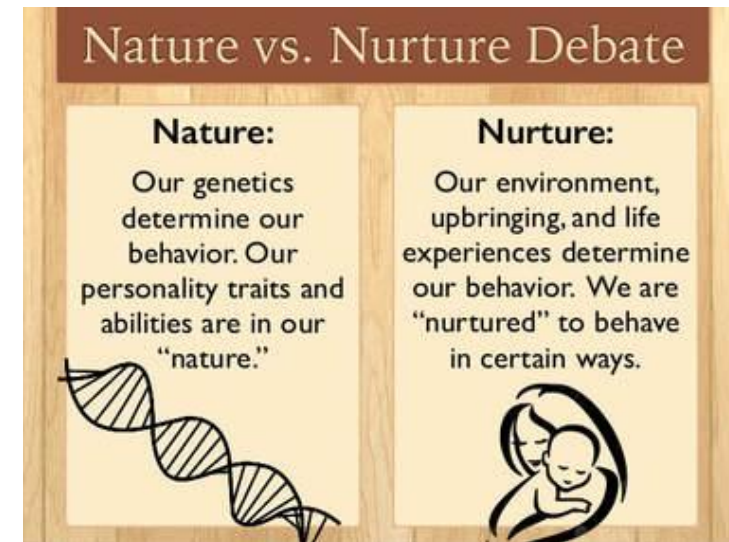
## (7) Are criminals born or made?

Research and produce an essay on the following question: 'Are criminals born or made?'

- You **must** weigh up the arguments from the nature perspective (that argues criminality is caused by genetics, brain abnormalities etc) as well as the nurture perspective (that argues criminality is caused by environmental experiences e.g. a history of abuse) and come to a conclusion.
- You **should** use examples of famous criminals (e.g. Ted Bundy) to support your discussion.
- You **could** use research evidence to support either side of the debate.

Some links to help your research on this topic:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2V0vOFexY4>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-31714853>
- <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/do-your-genes-make-you-a-criminal-1572714.html>
- <http://www.laurahamlett.com/blog/ted-bundy-nature-vs-nurture/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJ7Zl4j911Q>



## **(8) Presentation on a psychological approach**

An approach is a perspective (i.e., view) that involves certain assumptions (i.e., beliefs) about human behavior: how it should be explained, which aspects of behaviour are important to study, and what research methods are appropriate for undertaking this study.

1) Research one of the following approaches in Psychology:

- The Psychodynamic approach
- The behaviourist approach
- The humanistic approach
- The cognitive approach
- Social learning theory
- The biological approach

2) Create an information sheet/powerpoint presentation on your approach. You must have a separate slide dedicated to each of the following points:

- The main assumptions of the approach
- The key concepts of the approach
- The research methods used by the approach
- The contributions of the approach
- The strength and limitations of the approach