

Name

Y11 Psychology taster lesson

The 6 main approaches in psychology

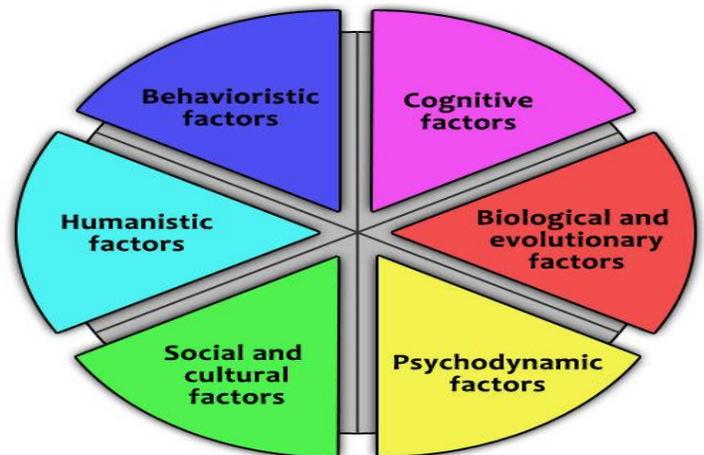
A level psychology requires that you learn six 'ways' of explaining human behaviour. This means that each approach has *certain assumptions* about human behaviour and focusses on *different aspects* of the human experience to explain *why we do what we do*.

It's a bit like having 6 different political parties all trying to explain a political event, such as Brexit, from the stance of their political views.



Each one emphasises something different in it's explanation of behaviour.

1. The biological approach
2. The behaviourist approach
3. The social learning theory
4. The cognitive approach
5. The psychodynamic approach
6. The humanistic approach



A brief overview

- The biological approach focusses on genetics, hormones and neural features to explain behaviour
- The behavioural approach looks at how all behaviour is learned through associations which have been formed since birth.
- The cognitive approach explains behaviour through higher mental processes such as memory, thinking and perception
- The psychodynamic suggests much behaviour is the result of unconscious forces in the mind driving our conscious behaviour.
- The humanistic approach looks at the development of self esteem, personal growth and fulfilling potential
- The social approach focusses on how our behaviour is heavily influenced by other people.

Some research on the approaches. Copy down the table from the PP.

For each approach, do some research on the key concept and make some notes. Each section should be about 100 words long.



Social psychology (the social approach)

Within social psychology, one area we look at is ‘obedience’. This is defined as ‘a form of social influence where an individual acts in response to a direct order from another individual, who is usually an authority figure’.

A famous study on this was carried out by Milgram (1963). Some notes on this...

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Questions on the study.

- 1. How many participants took part in the study?
- 2. Mr Wallace was a confederate of the experiment. What does that mean?
- 3. Were the participants always assigned the role of teacher, or learner?
- 4. What happened every time the learner made a mistake?
- 5. How was the teacher ‘tricked’ into thinking the shocks were real?
- 6. At what ‘voltage point’ did the learner bang on the wall and ask to leave?
- 7. Until when did the experiment continue?
- 8. What were the findings of the study?

Theories to explain obedience. Using the link from the PP, make notes on the following explanations of obedience.

- Agentic state

- Proximity

- Location

- Uniform

- Legitimate authority

Ethics in psychological research.

Ethics refers to the correct rules of conduct necessary when carrying out research. We have a moral responsibility to protect research participants from harm. In Britain, ethical guidelines for research are published by the [British Psychological Society](#). The purpose of these codes of conduct is to protect research participants, the reputation of psychology, and psychologists themselves.

One such guideline is: **Protection of participants.**

Researchers must ensure that those taking part in research will not be caused distress. They must be protected from physical and mental harm. This means you must not embarrass, frighten, offend or harm participants.

And, **The right to withdraw**

Participants should be able to leave a study at any time if they feel uncomfortable. They should also be allowed to withdraw their data. They should be told at the start of the study that they have the right to withdraw. They should not have pressure placed upon them to continue if they do not want to

Consider the Milgram study....

1. In what way/ways did he not observe the ethical guideline of protecting participants(in this case the 'teacher') from harm?
2. Did the participants have 'the right to withdraw'? Explain your answer.