

# A Level Psychology



## Transition Pack 2026

**Psychology**: *The scientific study of the human mind and behaviour*

You are required to complete **ALL** of the activities in this transition pack for submission in the first week of the new academic year. It will develop your thinking skills and vastly expand your knowledge of human behaviour.

*Dear Psychology Student*

*Psychology is an exciting, diverse and challenging course and we hope you are looking forward to finding out more! There are 5 tasks in this pack for you to complete, which will benefit you when you start the course. You also have a maths skills quiz to complete. If you have any questions, please feel free to email us: at [newtonj1@guiseleyschool.org.uk](mailto:newtonj1@guiseleyschool.org.uk) or [haiderz1@guiseleyschool.org.uk](mailto:haiderz1@guiseleyschool.org.uk)*

***Deadline - All work should be completed in your booklet where possible or on lined paper/Word document and should be brought with you to your first lesson of Psychology in the new school year. Do not rush it. We would advise that you complete various parts of the transition pack at different points in the summer holiday, rather than leaving it all until the final week of your break.***

### **Task 1 “What is Psychology and why do you want to study it?”**

To give you an introduction to what psychology as a subject is, please visit this website:  
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/whatispsychology.html>

Read the information on the page and then answer the questions below.

1. Give three reasons why you have chosen to take Psychology.

2. What do you think Psychology is?

3. What do you think the study of Psychology will involve?

## Task 2: Maths assessment

The Psychology course will involve some elements of Maths (e.g when analysing the results of studies). Complete these Maths questions to give you an idea of what can be required *(You may use a calculator)*

1. The following data is from an experiment on reaction times, and represents the number of times a button was pressed within half a second of being shown an object on the screen:

5, 3, 6, 7, 7, 4, 8, 5, 4, 4, 5, 3, 4, 8, 17

Calculate the:

- a) Mean: (1 mark)
- b) Median: (1 mark)
- c) Mode: (1 mark)
- d) Range: (1 mark)

2. The following numbers are individual participant's scores on a memory test:

14, 8, 12, 10, 8, 8, 7, 6, 13, 11, 6, 6, 6, 14, 15, 13, 8, 14, 8, 11

Calculate the:

- a) Mean: (1 mark)
- b) Median: (1 mark)
- c) Mode: (1 mark)
- d) Range: (1 mark)

3. Simplify  $\frac{24}{30}$  \_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)

4. Simplify  $\frac{25}{30}$  \_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)

5. What's  $\frac{3}{4}$  of 72? \_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)

6. Express 0.02 as a fraction \_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)

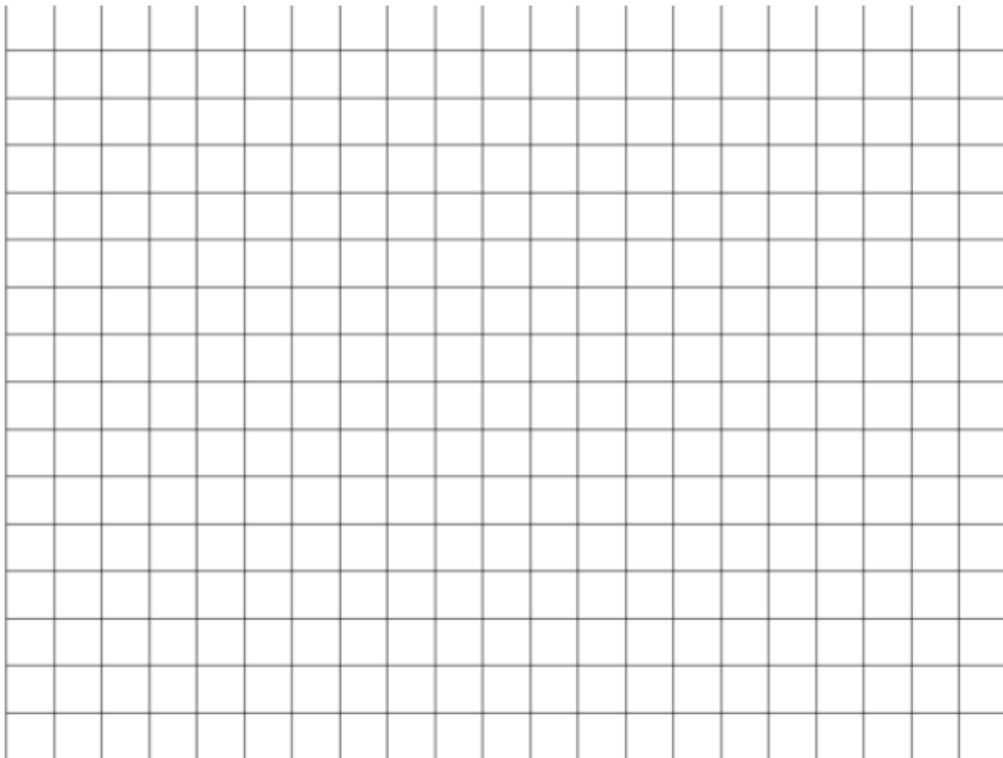
7. Write 40% as a fraction \_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)

8. What is 7.994 to 2 significant figures? \_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)

9. The table below shows the results of an obedience study. What percentage of the participants who obeyed were boys? \_\_\_\_\_ (1 mark)

	Boys	Girls
Obeyed	36	24
Disobeyed	52	64

10. Draw a bar chart showing the percentage obedience for boys and girls from the table above. Use the graph paper below. You get marks for a title, labelling the axes and accurate plotting. (4 marks)



### Task 3 – Approaches in Psychology

There are some core approaches to Psychology that you need to know for your A level – they are different ways of explaining human behaviours. Some of these are listed below: your job is to do some research on them using the internet ([www.simplypsychology.org](http://www.simplypsychology.org) is a good place to start) and use this research to complete the pages that follow on the different approaches listed below:

The Psychodynamic Approach

The Behaviourist Approach

The Social Learning Theory Approach

#### Psychodynamic Approach

The Psychodynamic approach is most associated with Sigmund Freud (though several post-Freudians were influenced by and expanded upon many of Freud’s ideas). Freud emphasized the idea of the unconscious mind on behaviour, alongside development of his person-centered therapy psychoanalysis. He argued that physical problems could be explained in terms of conflict with the mind.

**Part 1: The structure of personality:** Summarise each key term in a sentence.

ID:

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EGO:

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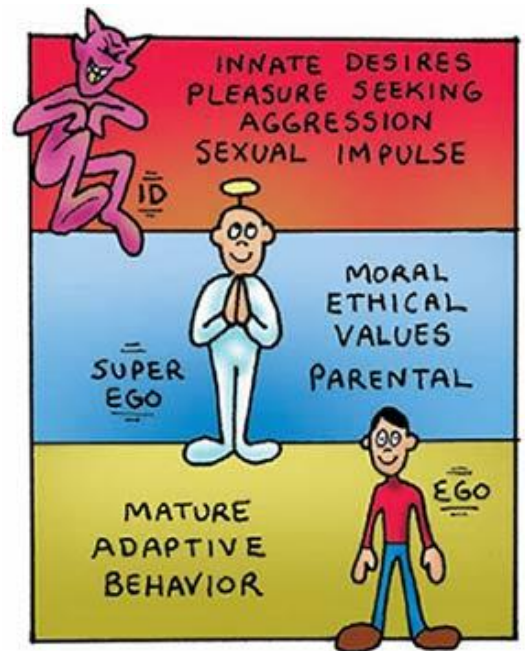
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SUPEREGO:

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Apply it:

You need to get your psychology homework done tonight but your friends have just invited you to a party. What would ID, EGO and SUPEREGO suggest you do in the following situation:

ID:

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EGO:

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SUPEREGO:

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**Part 2: Defence Mechanisms:** How we balance the conflict between the id and superego.

Repression	Forcing a distressing memory out of the conscious mind
Denial	Refusing to acknowledge some aspect of reality
Displacement	Transferring feelings from the true sources of distressing emotion onto a substitute target

Apply it: Match each example below to a defence mechanism listed in the table above.

- a) Continuing to turn up to work even though you have been sacked
- b) An individual forgetting the trauma of their favourite pet dying
- c) Slamming the door after a row with your parents.

## Behaviourist Approach

The behaviourist approach emerged at the beginning of the 20th century and became the dominant approach in Psychology for half of that century. It is also credited as being the driving force in the development of psychology as a scientific discipline.

Classical conditioning – Summarise in a sentence what this is:

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Operant conditioning Explain the difference between positive and negative reinforcement.

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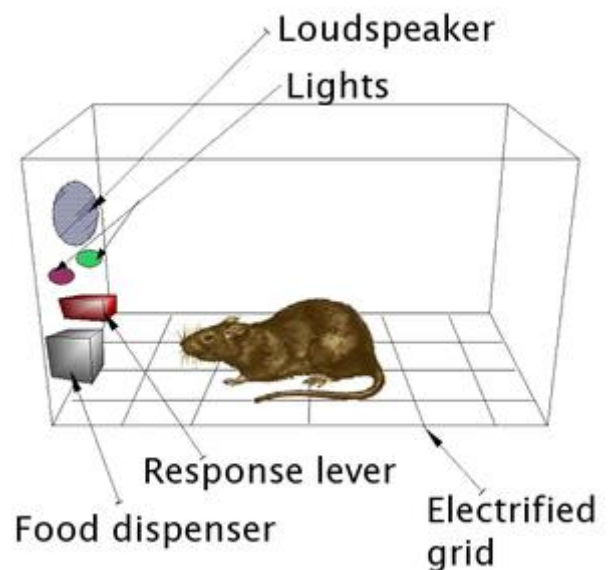
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The Skinner Box:

1. Skinner conducted experiments with rats and sometimes pigeons, in specifically designed cages called Skinner Boxes. Every time the rat activated a lever within the box it was rewarded with a food pellet. After many repetitions the animal would continue to perform the behaviour.

2. Skinner also showed how rats and pigeons could be conditioned to perform the same behaviour to avoid an unpleasant stimulus, for example an electric shock.



Apply it:

Which aspect of operant conditioning does paragraph 1 illustrate?

Which aspect of operant conditioning does paragraph 2 illustrate?

## Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura proposes the Social Learning Theory as a development of the behaviourist approach. He argues that classical and operant conditioning could not account for all human learning and that we can also learn from observing the consequences of the actions of other people

### Define the key terms

Vicarious Reinforcement	
Identification	
Imitation	
Model	

### Apply it:

Mrs Hill is a secondary school teacher. She notices that some of the students in her class constantly call out answers without raising their hands, which ruins the learning for other students. How might Mrs Hill use vicarious reinforcement to change the behaviour of these students?

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### **Task 4 – Researching Psychological Disorders**

Your final task is to explore some psychology in the real world by looking at one of the following disorders. Create a short fact file about your chosen disorder: What is the disorder? What are the psychological causes? How do psychologists treat this disorder? Choose two to complete, but if you like you can complete more! The disorders are:

Depression

Schizophrenia

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Agoraphobia

Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)

Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD)

Anorexia Nervosa

Obesity

### **Bonus (non-compulsory) activities**

Keep a psychology journal – Note observations about human behaviour, dreams or things you hear in the news.

Try simple cognitive psychology experiments online (Stroop test, memory games, optical illusions).

Watch courtroom dramas or crime documentaries with an eye on forensic psychology (e.g., Making a Murderer, Criminal Minds – with a critical lens).