



Psychology

GCSE

Psychology

Unit B542

Exemplar Candidate Work
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SECTION A: DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Q1. Name Piaget's four stages of cognitive development.

[4 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER

- 1 Sensorimotor.....
- 2 Pre-operational.....
- 3 Concrete operational.....
- 4 Formal operational.....

Mark/band - 4 out of 4 marks.

COMMENTARY

General performance on the question

Most candidates named all four stages accurately. However, what was intended to be an easier question did catch a number of them out. A common error was to identify the 'concrete stage' and 'formal stage' without reference to 'operational'. Candidates also struggled to name the sensorimotor stage and there were some interesting variations of its name e.g. sensory mentor stage.

Q2.

[3 marks]

Different Abilities

- Abdul is able to see things from Pippa's point of view but Pippa only sees things from her own point of view.
- Eleanor knows to still chase after her pet cat even when he disappears into the kitchen.
- Kelsey sees that even though her glass is shorter than her sister's, they both have the same amount of juice.

SAMPLE ANSWER**(a) name the child who shows object permanence.**

Eleanor [1]

(b) name the child who shows egocentrism.

Pippa [1]

(c) name the child who shows conservation.

Kelsey [1]

Mark/band - 3 out of 3 marks.**COMMENTARY****General performance on the question.**

The majority of candidates were able to successfully match the children to the relevant feature of cognitive development. Candidates were most likely to get part (b) wrong, identifying Abdul as being egocentric rather than Pippa.

Q3. [4 marks]

Piaget's theory of cognitive development includes the following features:

- Invariant stages
- Universal stages
- Cognitive development is a natural process

Choose two of these features and outline one criticism of each.

SAMPLE ANSWER

1 **Feature:** Universal stages

Criticism: Piaget claims that his theory is universal for all children around the world. However it is actually not, as many children don't go through all of these stages.

2 **Feature:** Invariant stages

Criticism: This means that the stages must go in order, however some children don't even go through all the stages. Also 20-60% of adults don't even reach the formal operational stage.

Mark/band - 2 out of 4 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for the first criticism for the idea that not all children (around the world) follow Piaget's stages. One mark for the example in the second criticism as it does challenge the idea of invariant stages.

What the candidate did well

The candidate did attempt to offer two criticisms and there was some questioning of Piaget's theory as part of this.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate did not need to say what Piaget had claimed as this was given in the stem in the question. Instead, they should have gone straight to the criticism. The candidate also needed to make the two criticisms more distinct as there was some repetition in the second one which could not be credited again even though it was not, strictly speaking, wrong. A reasonable effort to address the question but the response needed more careful planning.

SAMPLE ANSWER

Feature: Invariant stages

Criticism: This suggests that the stages are fixed however critics say that children can move through the stages both progressing and regressing at different times depending on their upbringing. For example, children who are 'hot housed' are likely to move through the stages faster.

Feature: Universal stages

Criticism: This suggests that the stages and ages are the same everywhere in the world but critics say that children in different places move through them at a different rate. For example, children in aboriginal countries reach the concrete operational stage faster than those in the UK.

Mark/band – 4 out of 4 marks.

COMMENTARY

Two marks for both criticisms. The first criticism questions the idea of fixed stages and this is supported by an appropriate example. The second criticism makes a similar point but is phrased in a way that makes it distinct enough. This is also supported by an appropriate example.

What the candidate did well

The candidate makes two distinct points and offers an appropriate level of detail for the marks on offer. The candidate clearly offers two statements per point which makes this easy to assess. Therefore, a well-structured response which meets the demands of this particular style of questioning.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate did not need to waste time outlining Piaget's features and instead should have gone straight to the criticism in each case.

General performance on the question

Most candidates earned two marks here - either for a well-elaborated criticism of one of their chosen features, or for two brief criticisms of each of their chosen features. The main issue here was that candidates' criticisms did not always follow on logically from the identified feature, thus limiting them to one mark per criticism. Furthermore, there was a particular issue distinguishing between invariant and universal stages when it came to evaluation of them.

Q4. Describe one study that used an experiment to investigate cognitive development.

[4 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

Piaget's study into the conservation of number. Piaget asked his own or his friends children that were in the pre-operational or concrete operational stage to describe which line of coins had more coins. This was a repeated measures design so Piaget first had the coins spaced out equally then when the child answered he would space one line out more.

Mark/band – 2 out of 4 marks.

COMMENTARY

Commentary on answer including reference to mark scheme – why they achieved this mark

Following the 'rule of thumb' – one mark for the sample and one mark for changing the appearance of the rows.

What the candidate did well

The candidate chose a relevant study that they began to describe reasonably well.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate should have included some findings – a key element when describing any study. This had the potential to be a good answer but was only a partial response to the question.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

Piaget's study into conservation of number. He laid out 2 sets of rows of counters in front of the child. The experimenter then counted the rows with the child and agreed they were equal. The experimenter then stretched out one of the rows without adding or removing any counters and asked the child again if they were equal. The children in the pre-operational stage said that the transformed rows had more counters, showing they could not conserve, whereas the children in the concrete operational stage were not deceived by the counters appearance and stated that the two rows were still equal.

Mark/band – 4 out of 4 marks.

COMMENTARY

Following the 'rule of thumb' – one mark for the sample, one mark changing the appearance of the rows, one mark for asking the question again and one mark for findings (and a conclusion as well as the case of this candidate). Importantly, the candidate retains all four marks because it is a coherent, accurate and detailed description.

What the candidate did well

The candidate identified the key features of their chosen experiment and presented these in a logical order.

How the answer could be improved

This was an almost perfect response, therefore no improvements are required!

General performance on the question

Candidates who chose to describe the core study in this topic - Piaget's conservation of number experiment - scored best on average. However, there were some decent descriptions of alternative experiments, most notably the 'three mountains' experiment. The best responses clearly identified the sample, covered the procedure accurately, and described the findings in specific detail. Weaker responses made lots of assumptions about the reader's knowledge, offering very vague descriptions. Having said this, nearly all candidates did address the question set.

SECTION B: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Q5. Complete the table below by giving an example of facial expressions or body language which may communicate each message. This first one is done for you as an illustration. [4 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER

Example of Non-Verbal Communication	Message
<i>Waving a hand</i>	<i>'Hello – nice to see you.'</i>
Hand over open mouth	'I am shocked that you said that.'
Looking at the floor with shoulders hunched	'I am feeling guilty.'
Clenching fists	'I do feel angry about what you just said.'
Folding/crossing your arms	'Please leave me alone.'

COMMENTARY

General performance on the question

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of candidates found this question straightforward and were awarded all four marks. A common error was to describe the emotion displayed in a face (e.g. stern face, sad face) rather than how it is displayed. Just a few candidates missed the point of the question and gave some examples not related to non-verbal communication e.g. blushing.

Q6. Explain how evolutionary theory relates reproduction to non-verbal communication. [2 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER

Evolutionary theory says that we have passed on a genre from way back to the caveman days. It says that non-verbal communication was needed for survival.

Mark/band - 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for the reference to genes that, although clumsy, does link evolutionary theory to innate behaviours.

What the candidate did well

The candidate recognised the genetic link to evolutionary theory.

How the answer could be improved

Although some relevance, the response was poorly focused on the question. The candidate needed to focus on reproduction rather than survival and, ideally, been clearer on the genetic component of non-verbal behaviour.

SAMPLE ANSWER

Evolutionary theory states that we use non-verbal communication to help us reproduce. This is by actions such as fluttering eyelashes or touching ourselves (flirting) to look attractive to the other sex as well as show the opposite sex that you are attracted to them. Obviously, this could lead to reproduction.

Mark/band – 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for the function of non-verbal behaviour according to evolutionary theory i.e. to appear attractive.

What the candidate did well

The candidate did offer the level of detail required for a two mark response.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate demonstrated understanding of evolutionary theory but only partially addressed the question. The candidate needed to outline the origins on non-verbal behaviour according to evolutionary theory rather than giving examples. The opening line was also unnecessary given the content of the question.

General performance on the question

Nearly all candidates demonstrated some knowledge of evolutionary theory, but some did not focus on the demands of the question e.g. focusing on survival rather than reproduction. Where candidates scored one mark it was usually for recognising that NVC played a part in appearing attractive or signalling attraction rather than for recognising it is an innate process. Some candidates made the mistake of being too colloquial in their response - for example, referring to flirtatious behaviour rather than mating behaviour.

Q7. [3 marks]

When Non-Verbal Communication Turns Bad

Vicky has been learning offensive gestures from her older brother Danny. Vicky notices that Danny's friends laugh and say he is cool when he uses these gestures. This is why Vicky wants to copy Danny. However, their mother caught Vicky using a rude hand sign that she had seen Danny use. Vicky was put on the 'naughty step' and she has not used the sign since.

Using the source:

(a) identify one way in which Danny is reinforced for using offensive gestures .

his friends laugh [1]

(b) give the behaviour that Vicky imitated.

using a rude hand sign [1]

(c) state how Vicky was punished.

she was put on the 'naughty step' [1]

Mark/band – 3 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

General performance on the question

Candidates demonstrated excellent understanding of the concepts of social learning with nearly every candidate correctly answering all three parts of this question.

Q8. Yuki et al (2007) carried out a study into non-verbal communication. Describe how the findings of this study showed cross-cultural differences in behaviour. [3 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

Yuki et al used American and Japanese students and asked them to rate emoticons and photos from 1 (very sad) to 9 (very happy). The Japanese tended to focus on the eyes to determine emoticons, while the Americans looked towards the mouth.

Mark/band – 2 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for linking the relevant facial feature with the correct culture. One mark (just) for knowing how interpretation of emotions was measured which is implied by the opening statement.

What the candidate did well

The candidate demonstrated key knowledge of the study.

How the answer could be improved

Although the candidate demonstrated some knowledge of the Yuki et al study, what was needed was a clearer focus on the findings and they should also have considered including a conclusion.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

The findings showed that American people focus on the mouth when expressing emotions. However Japanese people focus on the eyes when expressing emotions. This shows that different cultures display non-verbal communication differently.

Mark/band – 1 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

The one mark was awarded for linking the relevant facial feature with the correct culture.

What the candidate did well

The candidate demonstrated key knowledge of the study.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate demonstrated basic knowledge of the Yuki et al study, however there was a lack of clarity and some misunderstanding evident. The candidate needed to refer to how cultures interpret rather than display emotions in the conclusion, given the nature of the study.

General performance on the question

Nearly all candidates understood the question well enough to focus on findings rather than procedure. The weakest responses were very generic and did not refer to the relevant cultures. Most candidates made the link between Japanese people and eyes, and American people and mouths. Indeed, many candidates were able to earn a second mark by elaborating on this either in terms of what was measured in the Yuki et al study or what was generally concluded. The best responses, scoring three marks, tended to explain the findings in terms of socialisation.

Q9. Outline one example of social skills training.

[3 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

Teaching kids it is not ok to use bad hand gestures like sticking up 2 fingers. You can punish people if they do bad by putting them on naughty step etc.

Mark/band - 0 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

The candidate does not adequately identify a field in which social skills training may be applied.

What the candidate did well

The candidate understood that social skills training is a formal technique as opposed to an everyday occurrence.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate's knowledge of social skills training was not well informed. They needed to be explicit about how it would be used in the education of children.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

Social skills training in prisons helps criminals learn to interpret and react to non-verbal and verbal communication, through demonstrations, encouraging practice, giving feedback and teaching. This enables criminals to re-enter society and understand and react to behaviours in a positive way.

Mark/band – 2 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for field of application or intended outcome of social skills training (but not a mark for both). One mark for outlining some of the specific techniques used.

What the candidate did well

The candidate understood where social skills training would be used, and how and why.

How the answer could be improved

Although the candidate demonstrated sound knowledge and understanding of social skills training, this needed to be contextualised more. The candidate needed to outline the specific techniques in relation to rehabilitating offenders e.g. what kind of behaviours would be demonstrated?

General performance on the question

This question caused problems for a number of candidates, with a significant minority omitting the question. Answers scoring zero marks tended to make reference to people socialising (e.g. at parties) rather than recognising that social skills training (SST) is a technical procedure. The majority of candidates scored just one mark - either for outlining where SST may be used or why it may be used. Only a minority of candidates went on to outline how it might be used by focusing on techniques such as modelling, role playing and reinforcement. There were some very detailed responses to the question, identifying the various stages of SST, although some candidates had to be limited to two marks because they did not contextualise their responses i.e. they did not refer to the learning of non-verbal communication and/or their chosen area of application.

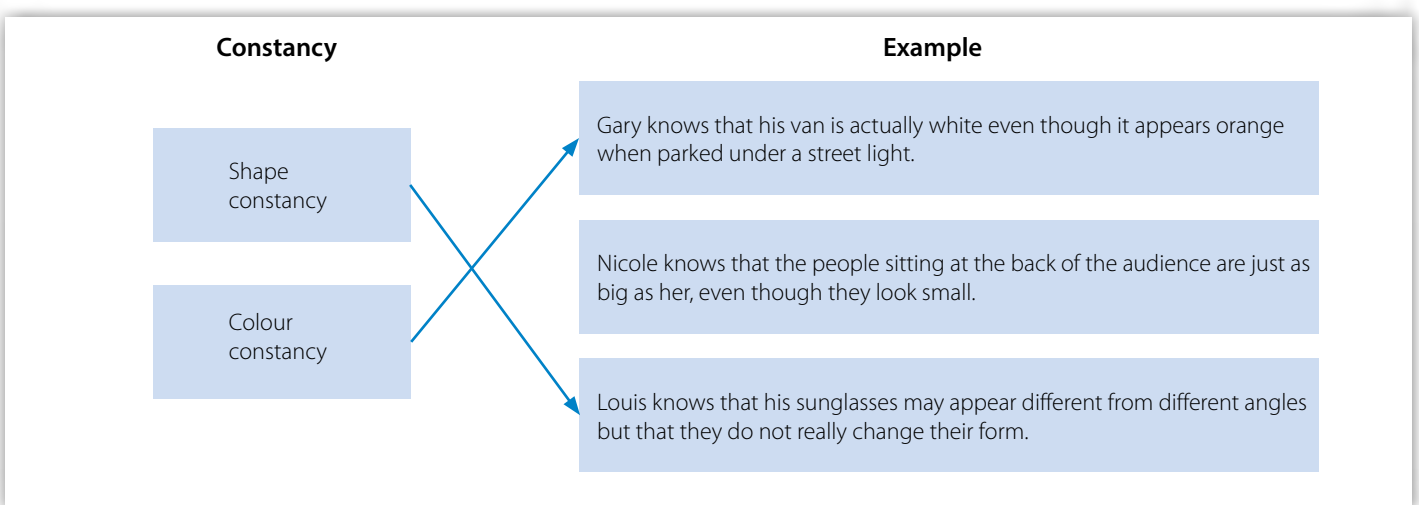
SECTION C: COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

PERCEPTION

Q10. There are a number of constancies in perception. Look at the following diagram. Draw a line to match each constancy with the correct example.

[2 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER



COMMENTARY

General performance on the question

Nearly all candidates earned both marks here demonstrating good understanding of the perceptual constancies. When errors were made, shape constancy was mismatched much more than colour constancy.

Q11. Explain two depths cues that can be seen in this picture.

[4 marks]



SAMPLE ANSWER

1 Linear perspective can be seen. This is where two parallel lines appear to be converging and this is seen on the carpet/walkway.

2 Relative size. The guests appear much bigger than the bride and groom, which suggests that the guests are closer to us.

Mark/band – 3 out of 4 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for the first part of the response for identifying a relevant depth cue. Two marks for the second part – one for identifying a relevant depth cue and this time an additional mark as the cue has been applied to the picture appropriately including stating what is perceived as nearer/further.

What the candidate did well

The candidate had good knowledge of depth cues and an awareness of how to apply this knowledge to a novel stimulus. The candidate identified relevant cues which they attempted to apply to the picture.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate needed to be more explicit about how or where linear perspective could be seen in the picture.

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

1 Superimposition - objects closer to us will over lap those further away

2 Relative size - those further away will seem smaller though they are the same size

Mark/band – 2 out of 4 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for each of the depth cues that the candidate identified.

What the candidate did well

The candidate identified relevant depth cues apparent in the picture. They also clearly understood what the cues were even if this did not receive credit.

How the answer could be improved

Although the candidate had good knowledge of depth cues they failed to explicitly relate this to the source. The candidate needed to relate the depth cues to the picture rather than defining them.

General performance on the question

Most candidates were able to identify two depth cues, helped by the fact that all were present in the source. Those candidates that earned further marks made clear reference to the picture, using terms that related to distance and depth. Common errors included applying a different depth cue to the one identified (height in plane and relative size were commonly confused in this sense) or not using a comparative (e.g. saying that the bride and groom were further away but not who or what they were further away than).

Q12. Haber & Levin (2001) carried out a study into depth perception. Outline one limitation of Haber & Levin's sample of participants.

[2 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

Haber & Levin used 9 male participants with good eye sight. Because they were all male the study has gender bias as not all males act the same way as females. It cannot be generalised.

Mark/band – 2 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for gender bias and one mark for not being able to generalise from the sample.

What the candidate did well

The candidate clearly understood one key limitation of the sample in terms of its impact on findings. The candidate offered a number of distinct statements within the same point to allow themselves to earn more than one mark.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate did not need to start with a description of the sample as no marks were being awarded for this.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

The sample was all male and Haber and Levin may have got different results from women.

Mark/band – 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark (just) for essentially recognising that the findings from the study could not be generalised to females.

What the candidate did well

The candidate understood that the limitation had to pertain to the sample in terms of its impact on findings.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate's opening statement should have been evaluative rather than descriptive e.g. 'the sample was only males' rather than 'the sample was all male'.

General performance on the question

This question was answered well with most candidates earning both marks on offer. Typically, good responses identified a bias present in the sample and then made reference to the issue of representativeness and/or generalisability.

Q13. Outline what is meant by *bottom-up* processing in perception.

[2 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

Perception is based on what we see directly with our eyes and our prior knowledge then helps us make sense of what we see.

Mark/band – 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

In the spirit of positive marking, one mark was awarded for the idea that perception is direct according to the principles of bottom-up processing.

What the candidate did well

The candidate recalled at least one feature of bottom-up processing.

How the answer could be improved

A muddled response which showed that the candidate knew something about top-down and bottom-up processing but was unable to distinguish between them. The candidate needed to outline another accurate feature of bottom-up processing rather than making the mistake of referring to the role of prior knowledge.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

Bottom-up-processing is when perception is dominated by what actually enters the eyes.

Mark/band – 0 out of 2 marks

COMMENTARY

No marks were awarded, as the answer does not go far enough in addressing the requirements of the question.

What the candidate did well

The candidate knew something about one feature of bottom-up processing, however this was not enough to achieve any marks.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate needed to explain that perception is dominated by what enters the eyes in comparison to what is already stored in the brain. However, they did not expand the point that far.

General performance on the question

This was designed to be a challenging question and this was reflected in candidates' responses, with only a small number scoring both marks. Most candidates had some idea of what bottom-up processing was but were unable to adequately express this. Too many definitions applied equally to bottom-up processing and top-down processing (e.g. data first enters the eyes and is then sent to the brain) or focused on what bottom-up processing is not rather than what it actually is. Good responses made references to the process being data-driven and/or immediate and/or instinctive/natural.

Q14. Using the source:**[2 marks]****To See or Not to See**

The following conversation took place between a teacher and a pupil:

Mr Cole: "I saw you in town on Saturday afternoon, Natasha. I said hello. Did you not see me?"

Natasha: "Sorry sir, no. I saw loads of pupils in my year though."

Mr Cole: "That's because you are used to seeing them in town. I guess you only expect to see me in school!"

Natasha: "So are you saying that I noticed other pupils because I expected to see them?"

Mr Cole: "Yep. That's why our eyes seem to play tricks on us sometimes. Some psychologists say our brain is in control of what we see – not our eyes."

(a) Identify the sentence that relates to the role of experience in perception. [1 mark]

(b) Identify one sentence that relates to the concept of top-down-processing. [1 mark]

SAMPLE ANSWER

14 (a) 'That's because you are used to seeing them in town'

14(b) 'So are you saying that I noticed other pupils because I expected to see them?'

or

'Some psychologists say our brain is in control of what we see'

Mark/band – 2 out of 2 marks.

General performance on the question

Most candidates were able to identify correct sentences in both parts but there was a tendency for some to give more than one sentence and here the examiner could only assess the first sentence offered.

Q15. The source in Question 14 illustrates features of the constructivist theory. Evaluate the constructivist theory of perception.

[3 marks]**SAMPLE ANSWER 1**

The constructivist theory states that we will only see what we expect to see because of our past experiences, the way we perceive things (illusions) is our brains way of trying to make sense of the world around us. Criticisms include if perception is based heavily on individuals past experiences why does everyone perceive the world in the same way. If we need past experiences in order to be able to perceive the world around us this does not explain how a newborn baby is able to perceive the world/environment.

Mark/band – 3 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

Full marks awarded. One mark for challenging the need for past experiences and then two further marks for illustrating this through our common perception of the world and the perceptual abilities of newborns.

What the candidate did well

The candidate demonstrated sound understanding of the theory even if they showed this more than they needed to! They offered a detailed enough evaluation to access the marks and did this by considering more than one point.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate should not have wasted time describing the theory at the start. Only evaluation was creditworthy and so the candidate needed to focus on this straight-away.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

The limitations are the theory relies on past experiences yet how do we explain how babies can complete puzzles. Another limitation is the theory ignores individual differences and it can't explain that if it relies on past experiences then why do many people get fooled into illusions more than once. [3]

Mark/band - 2 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

Two marks awarded. One mark for challenging the need for past experiences and then one further mark for illustrating this through the repeat effect of illusions.

What the candidate did well

The candidate understood what they had to do for this question and eventually came up with a clear and valid evaluation point which included some level of justification.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate needed to better describe the perceptual abilities of newborns and how this challenges the constructivist theory. They also should have not included the point that the theory ignores individual differences – if anything, it is the opposite.

General performance on the question

There were some impressive responses to this question and, indeed, where candidates did score, the majority scored all three marks. Popular evaluation points focused around the constructivist theory's over-emphasis on the role of experience relating this to the perceptual abilities of new born babies, our common view of the world, and the fact humans fall for the same illusion again and again. As with previous series, some candidates did not follow the command and described rather than evaluated the theory resulting in zero marks.

SECTION D: BIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR

Q16. 'Crime is an act against law'.
Explain one problem of defining crime in this way.

[2 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

Most people break the law at some point in their lives, like smoking before the age of 18 for example. But this doesn't put a young smoker into the same category as a murderer. Maybe it should be "any act against the law that is done to purposely harm another being."

Mark/band 2 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

The candidate makes a valid point about consequences, supported by an example.

What the candidate did well

A good response demonstrating sound understanding by illustrating the point being made. Furthermore a good effort was made to access both marks available.

How the answer could be improved

Although both marks are earned, the candidate could have been more explicit about the link between the point made and the example given.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

Different countries have different definitions of the law - what may seem criminal in one country is not in another.

Mark/band – 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for the idea that definition is affected by culture.

What the candidate did well

The candidate focuses on the issue of defining crime specifically.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate knows something about the problems of defining crime but could not fully illustrate their point. They could have given an example in order to develop the response, because the two statements currently make the same point.

General performance on the question

There was a reasonably even spread of the three scores on this question. Two mark answers tended to focus on the cultural or historical dimensions of definitions of crime, often earning the second mark for an appropriate example to illustrate the point. One mark answers often made the same point without an example, or made implicit points related to intention and damage. A common theme in responses scoring nothing was that candidates were focusing on problems of measuring crime rather than defining crime.

Q17. Briefly outline how a psychologist would decide whether someone had a criminal personality or not.

[2 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

They would look at the traits of a person. Eg are they impulsive? Are they overoptimistic? Do they lack in feelings of guilt? These kind of traits are what add up to the criminal personality.

Mark/band - 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark as three relevant traits are identified in the response.

What the candidate did well

The candidate showed good knowledge of the traits of a criminal personality.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate was too vague about how the traits would be investigated – ‘look at’ was not a good enough substitute for the observational method. Furthermore, the content was relevant to the question but the candidate did not fully address what was being asked for.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

The psychologist could use the Eyesnck Personality Inventory (EPI) a written test used to measure characteristics such as empathy.

Mark/band - 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for identifying a personality test/inventory as a means of measuring personality traits.

What the candidate did well

The candidate addressed the question asked by offering a way of deciding whether someone had a criminal personality or not.

How the answer could be improved

The content was relevant to the question but the candidate did not fully address the question. The candidate needed to be specific about what the test would be trying to measure in the case of a criminal personality.

General performance on the question

Many candidates showed good knowledge of the traits associated with the criminal personality and this was worthy of one mark. However, very few focused on the demands of the question and considered how these might be measured or investigated - or if they did, they were very vague, e.g. using phrases such as 'look to see if they are over-optimistic, impulsive and pleasure seeking'. Many candidates scored zero. Two common errors were to focus either on investigating brain dysfunction or on facial features associated with crime. It was therefore obvious that some candidates were unable to make the distinction between criminal behaviour and the criminal personality.

Q18. The Case of Andy

[2 marks]

Andy was recently convicted of robbery. He blamed his criminal behaviour on his upbringing because his father, Terry, was a well known thief. Andy claimed that he had been copying his father's behaviour. Terry had never been to prison for his crimes so Andy thought he would get away with it too. He also saw that his father made a lot of money selling stolen goods.

Using the source:

- (a) Name the person who is a role model for criminal behaviour. [1 mark]
- (b) Identify one way in which criminal behaviour was vicariously reinforced. [1 mark]

COMMENTARY

General performance on the question

Nearly every candidate was able to apply their knowledge of social learning theory to the source and got both parts right by identifying that Terry was the role model and the vicarious reinforcement was making money, never going to prison, or getting away with it.

Q19. Mednick et al (1984) did a study into criminal behaviour. From the list below, identify three limitations of the study. Show your answers by ticking the relevant boxes.

[3 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER

- The survey was only carried out in one country.
- The findings were gender biased.
- The findings relied on criminal records which may have been unreliable.
- The findings only focused on violent crimes.
- The study only investigated adoptive parents not biological parents.
- The participants could lie to the psychologists about the crimes they had committed.

✓
✓
✓

COMMENTARY

General performance on the question.

The majority of candidates scored full marks demonstrating sound knowledge of the limitations of Mednick et al's study. A large number of candidates also earned two out of the three, but there were no obvious patterns to what they were getting right or wrong.

Q20. Describe ways in which the biological theory explains criminal behaviour.

[6 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

The biological theory states that people are born a criminal and it is in their genes. They say that the "criminal gene" is inherited from our parents. Whether someone is a criminal or not relies only on nature and the environment does not play a part. People cannot help it, its just the way they were born. Criticisms of this theory include that it does not take into account the influence of the people and environment around us and how they may influence the decisions that people make.

Mark/band – 3 out of 6 marks.

COMMENTARY

General performance on the question

One mark (maximum) for referring to features of the theory i.e. genes and brain dysfunction. One mark for two facial features (although six were offered!). One mark for a role of the limbic system in determining criminal behaviour.

What the candidate did well

The candidate covered a range of ideas that make up the biological theory in their description.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate needed to be more specific about how dysfunction in the corpus callosum relates to criminal behaviour in order to secure a further mark. If the candidate had also been clearer on how a gene codes for criminal behaviour this may have secured another mark. The content was all relevant and, if described in the right way, had the chance of being a top band response.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

The biological theory believes that you are born a criminal and it is in your genes on whether you become a criminal. They believe that criminals have brain dysfunction. They also believe that some parts of the brain in a criminal are not working properly like the temporal lobe, the limbic system and the pre-frontal cortex. Therefore a person cannot help whether they become a criminal or not. The biological theory also believes that criminals have certain facial features. For example lots of hair, fleshy lips, crooked/upturned noses and prominent chins. The theory also believes that if you're a criminal then you're born with an extra chromosome or you have one missing.

Mark/band – 4 out of 6 marks.

COMMENTARY

This response covers enough distinct features to earn six separate marks: born a criminal; role of genes/brain dysfunction/facial features; outline of what is meant by brain dysfunction; examples of facial features; criminal behaviour as fixed; chromosomes as expansion of genetic argument. However, overall it was a middle band response because there was a lack of clear explanation and the quality of communication lacked sophistication.

What the candidate did well

A solid response to the question which demonstrated understanding of many of the key ideas behind the theory. The candidate attempts to describe the biological theory using a wide range of detail.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate needed to write with more coherency and fluency to enhance the content of the essay.

General performance on the question

There was a good spread of mark across the responses to this question. Most candidates demonstrated some understanding of the biological theory of crime with just a few assuming it explained crime through learning. Most candidates who earned marks focused on the genetic basis of criminal behaviour. Better answers expanded their response to consider brain dysfunction with some very good responses that clearly identified the function of different parts of the brain and then related this to behaviours and traits associated with crime. Many candidates made reference to facial features although this only attracted one of the marks on offer. Candidates need to be aware that examiners are looking for coherency in responses like this and so candidates who listed features of the theory without linking them were likely to be limited to the middle band and four marks.

SECTION E: INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

THE SELF

Q21. Identify whether the following statements are true or false.

[2 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER

(a) Self concept is the person we would like to be.

TRUE FALSE (1 mark)

(b) Self esteem is the distance between self concept and ideal self.

TRUE FALSE (1 mark)

(c) Ideal self is the person we think we are.

TRUE FALSE (1 mark)

COMMENTARY

General performance on the question

The vast majority of candidates responded correctly to the three statements showing good knowledge of these humanistic concepts.

Q22. Outline what is meant by the following terms:

(2 marks)

a) Free will

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

This is when we all have the ability to make our own decisions. For example we all decide if we self actualise.....

Mark/band – 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark awarded for the idea of making our own decisions.

What the candidate did well

The candidate demonstrates understanding of the key concept of free will and gave a definition of free will without using those words.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate needed to avoid giving an example and instead should have expanded by contrasting free will with determinism.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

The ability to do what we want, how we want and when we want without restrictions.

Mark/band – 0 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

No marks were awarded, as the answer is not specifically about free will.

What the candidate did well

The candidate has some idea of the concept.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate needed to distinguish free will from other types of freedom to demonstrate a secure understanding. The candidate's definition could have been mistaken for freedom of rights rather than free will.

General performance on the question

Most candidates were able to earn at least one of the two marks by making reference to the individual's ability to make choices about behaviour and thoughts. Those that elaborated on this and contrasted it with ideas associated with determinism often got a second mark. A common mistake was to define free will in terms of right to choose rather than ability to choose.

Q22. Outline what is meant by the following terms:

(2 marks)

b) Self actualisation

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

This is when we have closed the gap between self concept and ideal self. And have realised how we are.

Mark/band – 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for the notion of closing the gap between the two aspects of self.

What the candidate did well

The candidate has some understanding of self actualisation as a process. The candidate attempted to make two statements to access the two marks on offer.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate needed a second statement that had more psychological content – what was there was too bland and common sense, rather than psychological.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

Self actualisation is the point at which the gap between self concept and ideal self closes as we reach our ideal selves.
Reaching self actualisation is something we all try to do and it can be motivated by unconditional positive regard.

Mark/band – 1 out of 2 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for the notion of closing the gap between the two aspects of self.

What the candidate did well

The candidate attempted to make two statements to access the two marks on offer.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate has good understanding of self actualisation as a process but needed a better focus on the requirements of the question. The candidate also needed a second statement that focused on the outcome of self actualisation rather than what determines it.

General performance on the question

A number of candidates struggled to define self actualisation - some did not understand the concept at all, while others could not articulate what they knew. Those that scored on this question often wrote about the matching of self concept and ideal self. Those that scored both marks expanded to write about ideas such as innate drives or progressing through a hierarchy of needs.

Q23. Explain one way in which some psychologists criticise the humanistic theory of self. [3 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

One criticism is that the humanistic theory focuses too much on just the human, it does not take social/cultural influences into account, it therefore lacks 'science'. Does not recognise that the people around us help to shape who we are as a person.

Mark/band – 0 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

Applying the first answer only rule, the statement about focusing too much on just the 'human' (read 'individual') thus ignoring social/cultural influences is not a valid criticism of the humanistic theory.

What the candidate did well

The candidate understood the question was looking for criticisms of the humanistic theory.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate had a basic understanding of how humanistic theory could be criticised but there was poor focus on the demands of the question. The candidate needed to choose one criticism and attempt to explain it well. If they had done more with their second point about the theory 'lacking science' they may have potentially earned some marks.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

The theory contradicts itself. The theory states that we are all unique individuals, yet goes on to talk about how we all in the same way strive to self actualise. If we're all unique, then why is it that we all have the same goals?

Mark/band – 2 out of 3 marks.

COMMENTARY

One mark for questioning why humanistic theory generalises about the self. One mark is then back-credited where the candidate outlines the part of the theory that they want to challenge.

What the candidate did well

The candidate showed good insight into the limitations of the humanistic theory of self and tried hard to develop one point as required. The candidate made a good effort to develop their line of argument possibly assuming that accusing the theory of being contradictory would be a mark in itself.

How the answer could be improved.

The candidate perhaps needed to choose a different criticism where there was more potential to expand on the point to the extent that it could earn all three marks.

General performance on the question.

There were some very good responses to this challenging question. Those candidates that started with a broad criticism - such as stating that humanistic theory is unscientific often found it easier to develop the point by going into more specific detail. A number of candidates did not follow the demands of the question and offered a number of criticisms although the examiner would only assess the first one. Out of all questions, most candidates did not score on this question - the question was missed out more than most others. Others did not score because they described the theory rather than criticised it, or their criticisms were not valid. For example, a common error was to suggest that the theory ignored individual differences which is, of course, a gross misunderstanding of humanism.

Q24. Describe and evaluate Van Houtte and Jarvis' (1995) study into pet ownership.

[10 marks]

SAMPLE ANSWER 1

Aim was to show if people who owned pets were happier than those who did not. Was carried out on pupils of a school (with consent). Pupils were split into 2 groups; those who had a pet and those that didn't. Pupils then filled out a questionnaire which asked things such as the breed, how long they owned the pet, the age of the pet etc. The questionnaire answers then gave the researchers ideas on the individuals self concept and ideal self as well as self esteem. The findings showed that people who owned a pet were happier than those who did not. Criticisms include that participants could have lied when using a questionnaire leading to inaccurate results, participants do not always tell the full truth when answering questions about themselves. The theory doesn't take other factors of the participants life into account.

Mark/band – 3 out of 10 marks.

COMMENTARY

Two AO1 marks: one for knowing what method was used and one for knowing something about the variables being measured. One AO2 mark for identifying the lying may have been an issue in the Van Houtte and Jarvis study.

What the candidate did well

The candidate did attempt to describe procedure and findings as well as offer some evaluation.

How the answer could be improved

The candidate demonstrated a basic understanding of the study but showed little knowledge of the specific details. To access the next band up, the candidate needed to be more specific about the findings and perhaps should have known the conclusion to the study. The candidate also needed to include more valid evaluation points.

SAMPLE ANSWER 2

Van Houtte & Jarvis set out to see if pets can have a positive impact on self esteem and autonomy. Van Houtte & Jarvis both used a sample of adolescent kids aged from around 9-13.

To start off with they both made 2 major groups, a non-pet owners group and a pet owners group. The participants was then split into 3 more little sub groups. These extra groups were the participants parents marital status, whether they had any siblings and finally their socioeconomic status. The participants were then asked to rate their level of happiness on a well known scale. They were also asked questions that rated their autonomy levels like 'do you clean your room' etc.

Van Houtte & Jarvis found that pet owners do have a higher level of autonomy therefore having higher levels of self esteem. They proved their hypothesis...

However, this study does have a few limitations. For example the participants may have not been able to interpret their emotions properly because they are only kids and self esteem is very complex and hard to measure therefore results may be invalid. Another limitation is that the study was only conducted in one country so it has culture bias. Therefore results cannot be generalised.

Also the study was conducted 24 years ago and things may have changed dramatically since then.

Mark/band – 7 out of 10 marks.

COMMENTARY

Five AO1 marks for outlining the variables being measured, the factors participants were matched on, the use of questions and two sets of findings. Two AO2 marks for problems around interpretation and measurement of emotions, and around cultural bias.

What the candidate did well

The candidate demonstrated a broad understanding of the study and included some well-developed evaluation points. The candidate described a number of details of the study (although the sample did not get credit). There was some attempt to balance this with a range of evaluation points.

How the answer could be improved

The study was described very briefly which would have limited this candidate to the middle band even with more evaluation points in place so the candidate did need to describe in more depth. The answer would also have been better with more evaluation points.

General performance on the question

Most candidates made a good effort to attempt this essay question. The standard of responses obviously varied and tended to match the performance on the rest of the paper. The best responses were well planned, coherent and accurate. Candidates demonstrated impressive knowledge of both the procedure and findings of Van Houtte and Jarvis' study although it was easier to earn marks for the findings. Nearly all candidates offered some evaluation of the study showing this is now a well-established skill in this GCSE, but some only covered one or two of the most obvious limitations eg cultural bias, tendency to lie. Many responses contained a good range of relevant evaluation points but what differentiated them was the quality. Some candidates showed an obvious ability to take each of their evaluation points and develop them by explaining the limitations and then considering their impact on the study. Where candidates scored zero, it was often because they gave a very vague description about a study looking at the value of pets with none of the necessary detail.

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Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

