

PSYCHOLOGY

WACE Revision: Practice Essays

ATAR Units 3/4

ONE:

Sarah is a sixteen year old who usually has very active social life, and has just recently moved schools. She decides to take a new drug at a party after watching a big group of popular girls try it. The drug causes her heart rate to increase and adrenaline to be released. It also destroys serotonergic neurons in the long term despite causing an excess of serotonin in the short term.

In your response you need to:

- Identify which part of the nervous system the drug is having an effect on.
- With reference other drugs with similar physiological effects, explain the short and long term effects if Sarah continues to use this drug.
- With reference to group influences on behaviour, explain why she possibly took this drug.

TWO:

Cara is a year 12 student sitting her WACE exam for Psychology. It is the last of her five exams, and she is stuck on a question where she has to draw a diagram of the Working Memory model. She is running out of time, and in a panic, draws a diagram that she used in her Biology exam the day before.

In your response need to:

- Explain how the information would have been processed when she originally learnt it, using the two models of memory from Units 3 & 4.
- Explain using decay theory, and interference theory, why Cara may have forgotten the information.
- Evaluate which theory of forgetting is most likely in this instance.
- Use research to support your ideas.

THREE:

24 marks

When Caitlin plays her music too loud she gets grounded, so she remembers to keep her music down low.

Explain, **using empirical evidence** how **operant conditioning** and the **multi-store model of memory** can assist Caitlin to keep her music down.

In your response need to:

- Define Operant Conditioning
- State process of Operant conditioning and how it can assist Caitlin to keep her music down
- Define Memory
- Use Atkinson & Shiffrons model to explain the process of each store of memory and how it can assist Caitlin to keep her music down
- Use research & evidence to support your ideas.

FOUR:

28 Marks

Max was 10 years old when his family left Albany and moved to Perth. He found leaving his friends and school very difficult. After 4 years, they returned to Albany and his teacher told him he had developed into a fine young adolescent with a strong personality and a clear love and devotion for his family and friends.

- Explain using **empirical evidence** the changes that Max would have undergone in his cognitive, moral and identity development.
- Max's development could have been learned from his parents through observational learning. Explain the theory of observational learning.

FIVE:

21 Marks

Georgia has an issue with snakes. She wasn't born afraid of them, but has at some point acquired the fear. Living on a farm, Georgia has found that this fear can be bothersome, as snakes are part of farm life. She seeks different ways to try to overcome her fear.

Discuss three different theories of how Georgia may have acquired this fear as well as two different ways in which this fear could be overcome.

Your answer should include:

- define and discuss three learning theories
- define and discuss two different behavior modification models
- support your discussion with empirical research.

SIX:

28 Marks

James and Jenna are 3-year-old twins. They have just started kindergarten and could not be more different. James was so excited to begin playing with the other kids, but Jenna wouldn't leave her mum's side. She attached herself onto her mum and would not let her leave.

Your answer should include:

- Use the attachment theory to explain the twins' behaviour.
- Name and describe different parenting styles that could be used for the twins' behaviour.
- Explain using empirical evidence the gender differences in communication that their parents will need to be aware of as the twins get older.

SEVEN:

24 Marks

Jonathon was born in France to his American father and French mother, his first words were in French. When he was 18 months old, they moved to the Bronx in New York. He forgot most of his French and spoke in a way typical of the people from the area. His mother did not want him to completely lose his French and decided to continue routine activities at home in French. As Jonathon aged she often conducted conversations in French with him, educating him on words he may be missing. At 22, Jonathon is now bilingual, speaking both French and “Bronx-style” English.

Discuss the different theories of language development that can explain Jonathon’s language development and how his communication styles can be impacted by different aspects of his life.

Your answer should include:

- define and discuss language development theories.
- define communication styles.
- discuss how socio-economic status and gender affect communication styles.
- support your discussions with empirical research.

EIGHT:

28 Marks

Study the advertisements on the following pages. Compare the two advertising campaigns and explain, using your knowledge of persuasive communication, how these advertisements were designed to encourage people towards a particular viewpoint.

Your response should include:

- Source of the Message
- Nature of the communication
- Characteristics of the Audience
- Use empirical evidence to support your response.

The advertisement features the Australian Government crest at the top. Below it, a map of Australia is crossed out with a red circle and slash. The text reads: **NO WAY** and **YOU WILL NOT MAKE AUSTRALIA HOME**. The background shows a boat on a stormy sea. At the bottom, a white box contains the following text: **The Australian Government has introduced the toughest border protection measures ever.** Below this, a list of bullet points:

- If you get on a boat without a visa, you will not end up in Australia.
- Any vessel seeking to illegally enter Australia will be intercepted and safely removed beyond Australian waters.
- The rules apply to everyone: families, children, unaccompanied children, educated and skilled.
- No matter who you are or where you are from, you will not make Australia home.

 At the very bottom, it says: **THINK AGAIN BEFORE YOU WASTE YOUR MONEY. PEOPLE SMUGGLERS ARE LYING.** The website www.australia.gov.au/ovisa is listed at the bottom.

The advertisement features a man in a plaid shirt looking thoughtfully to the side. The text reads: **! AM NOT WHO YOU THINK ! AM**. Below this, a list of statements:

- I AM NOT A TERRORIST.**
- I AM AN I.T. DEVELOPER.**
- I AM NOT A DRAIN ON THE ECONOMY.**
- I AM A TRAINED, QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL.**
- I AM NOT A QUEUE JUMPER.**
- I AM A LOVING & PROTECTIVE FATHER.**
- I AM NOT A THREAT.**
- I AM FLEEING THREAT.**
- I AM NOT A STRANGER.**
- I AM A BROTHER. A FATHER. A SON.**
- I AM NOT ILLEGAL.**
- I AM A SEEKER OF FREEDOM, A RIGHT GRANTED TO ME BY AUSTRALIA & THE UNITED NATIONS.**

 At the bottom, it says: **I am a Freedom Seeker. Hope Seeker. Security Seeker. Life Seeker.** The ASRC logo (Asylum Seeker Resource Centre) and website www.asrc.org.au are at the bottom right.

NINE:

26 Marks

Psychologists have researched and theorised about the influence that biological factors and the environment have on the development of intelligence and language.

Describe what twin and adoption studies reveal about the nature and nurture debate in relation to the development of intelligence (as measured by IQ). In your response you should

- describe examples of biological and environmental factors that can influence the development of intelligence
- describe how twin and adoption studies are carried out
- describe results that have been found
- describe conclusions that have been drawn from the results.

Discuss the conclusions that have been made about whether language is innate or learned with reference to **two** theories. In your response you should name the theorists and their theories. Describe each theory and the evidence that is used to support it.

TEN:

24 Marks

Rob & Tyra are two students who are in charge of designing the year 12 year book. Rob keeps on trying to take charge; he bombards the rest of the committee with his ideas and interrupts other people. Tyra feels like she has a good idea, and when Rob appears to be disinterested, she loses her temper at him. As a result, a fight breaks out between the two students.

In your response, you need to:

- Define conflict
- Explain how different communication styles between genders may contribute to the conflict.
- Explain and evaluate the most effective technique that could be used to reach a solution
- Explain how Tyra could have used audience characteristics to persuade Rob, if she had not lost her temper.
- Use examples from empirical evidence to support your response.

(no marking key for this just practice)

ELEVEN:

28 Marks

Marcus and Mary are 15-year-old twins. They are both kind and considerate, achieve very high academic results, and are talented musicians. Their father works as a music teacher and is a very extroverted person. Their mother is introverted and is a medical doctor who finds her work helping sick people very rewarding. Marcus is very confident and outgoing, plays the drums, and plans to start a band, like his older brother who is a professional musician and travels the world. Mary is quiet and shy, plays the violin and is a member of the school orchestra. She is not sure whether she would like to pursue a career as a musician, or study medicine.

Explain the similarities and differences in Marcus and Mary's characteristics and behaviours with reference to:

- heredity
- Erikson's stage theory of identity
- Bandura's Social Learning Theory.

Refer to examples of psychological evidence to support your points.

TWELVE:

29 Marks

A “sensitive period” is a period of development where a child is sensitive to a particular stimulus or type of situation. Identify the most sensitive or critical period of development for the four (4) following developmental theories:

- Morality
- Attachment
- Cognition
- Identity

Explain why this period is critical in development. Use empirical evidence to support your response.

THIRTEEN:

28 Marks

Five-year-old Joshua is at home with his mother Mary. Mary and Joshua are watching television. When a zebra is shown on the screen, Joshua screams “Look Mummy, it’s a doggy!” Mary replies “that big stripy animal is a zebra, Joshua”.

At lunchtime, Mary places a large serving of spaghetti in a small plastic bowl for Joshua. Then, remembering that Joshua likes to be treated like a ‘big boy’, transfers the spaghetti to an adult-sized bowl. Joshua watches her do this and cries because he thinks he is getting less spaghetti. After lunch, Mary and Joshua go shopping for a gift for his grandmother’s birthday. Joshua suggests that they should buy his grandmother a remote control car.

Explain Joshua’s behaviour by referring to Piaget’s theory of cognitive development.

In your answer, you should:

- identify the stage of cognitive development that Joshua is currently in and outline the key features of this stage
- discuss **two** characteristics of children’s thinking in this stage of development that are shown in this scenario
- discuss **two** cognitive processes that are involved in children developing an understanding of their world that are shown in this scenario.

FOURTEEN:

29 Marks

Nicholas is a 17 year old boy. He has very few friends, and his peers would describe him as aloof, moody and grumpy. He felt pressured into doing six, mostly science, ATAR subjects by his parents who want him to be a doctor. He alternates between feeling overwhelmed by the work load and not caring at all. He is a lazy student; he frequently submits his assignments late and forgets to study for tests. He really wants to be a journalist, and would have liked to fewer ATAR subjects with more humanities and less science.

Nicholas lives at home with his family, however he wants to move out as soon as he can afford it as he frequently fights with his younger brother, and feels that his parents have too high expectations of him.

His brother, Edward, however, is very outgoing and a good team player. He plays state level Rugby, but also manages to maintain good grades. He is a very confident person most of the time, and manages to keep calm even under high pressure during. The one exception is when he has to do speeches at assemblies, as a part of his role of Head Boy.

In your extended response, you should:

- Define 'personality'.
- Compare and contrast Nicholas and Edward's personalities using the Big 5.
- Explain Nicholas's personality using Roger's theory.
- Explain Edward's behaviour using an appropriate Humanistic theory.
- Evaluate each of the theories covered in your response.

(no marking key for this just practice)

FIFTEEN:

21 Marks

A school principal, who has growing concerns for student well-being, asks you to present staff with a report, identifying why student morale is low. Your presentation outlines group mentality and the influence it can have on behaviours.

Explain, using empirical evidence how conformity and group polarisation can influence behaviour.

Explain, using empirical evidence, how the attribution theory can impact a person's explanation of an individual's behaviour.

SIXTEEN:

28 Marks

US soldiers committed a series of human rights violations against detainees in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Most of the prisoners were civilians, many of whom had been picked up in random military sweeps and at highway checkpoints. Some of the abuses included breaking chemical lights and pouring the phosphoric liquid on detainees; pouring cold water on naked detainees; beating detainees with a broom handle and a chair; threatening detainees with rape; and using military working dogs to frighten and intimidate detainees with threats of attack. One of the military defense attorneys said that his client's defense will be that he was carrying out the orders of his superiors and, in particular, the directions of military intelligence.

Explain why the soldiers committed these abuses. In your answer you should:

- Explain conformity and the factors that increase it
- Explain obedience to authority and the factors that increase it –
- Refer to psychological evidence

SEVENTEEN:

28 Marks

Seth and his friends are keen soccer players. Seth spends most of his free time playing soccer at the park, practising tricks in his backyard or watching soccer on television. When Seth practises tricks in his yard, he performs very well. However, when he tries to show his friends the tricks he has been practising, he usually makes mistakes.

The boys gather at the park every Sunday afternoon for a game of soccer. The tallest boy in the group, Kit, chooses the two teams and always gets to be the captain of his team. Seth does not think it is fair that Kit always gets to choose the teams and be the team captain, but he does not say anything as all the other boys seem to accept this.

Normally the boys cooperate in following all the rules and keeping score without needing an umpire. However, one day, an argument arises over which team will kick-off first and the boys cannot come to an agreement.

Explain the influence of groups on behaviour and how conflicts can be resolved by applying your knowledge to the scenario above and referring to psychological evidence and understandings. In your answer, you should discuss:

- the impact of the presence of others on individual behaviour
- the influence of conformity on group behaviour
- **two** conflict-resolution techniques the group members could use to resolve the conflict they experience
- **two** types of solutions that could resolve the conflict in this group.

EIGHTEEN

32 Marks

Tim has nominated himself to become a school leader. Teachers begin to observe his behaviour to see if he would be suitable for the role. They make some interesting observations. They notice that, on some occasions, Tim conforms to the behaviour of those around him while, at other times, he does not conform. They also notice that Tim is not always obedient.

Discuss six factors that determine whether Tim will conform and obey at school.

Support your response with reference to studies by Asch, Milgram and Zimbardo.

Your response should include:

- Definitions of conformity and obedience (2 marks)
- Outline of studies by Asch, Milgram and Zimbardo [method, results and conclusions] (12 marks)
- Descriptions of three factors which determine whether Tim will conform (9 marks)
- Descriptions of three factors which determine whether Tim will obey. (9 marks)

(no marking key for this just practice)

NINETEEN:

“Sense of community is a concept that has considerable currency within a vast range of disciplines and practices. It serves as a criterion for the assessment of social capital; the generation of social policies; the development of social and geographical communities; and the evaluation of community capacity building. Community psychologists consider it central to their value-based praxis in promoting social justice and social change. However, it is also employed as a common lay term to refer to feelings of belonging, identity and support. It occurs in public domain discourse such as reporting community response to disaster, promoting the value of a rural lifestyle, and advertising urban residential developments. For psychologists, and other professionals and policy makers, there is the real need to consider the processes that are inherent in living in a community, in providing services and interventions, in understanding processes of inclusion and exclusion, with resultant positive or negative impacts on mental and physical health.” – Pretty, Bishop, Fisher and Sonn, 2006

Discuss the factors that contribute to a psychological sense of community and the growth and stress that can occur within the community from traumatic events. Specifically address these factors in relation to two of the events or items listed in the statement above.

In your response you should:

- Define Psychological Sense of Community
- Identify and describe the relevant theoretical model
- Include examples of psychological evidence related to this model
- Apply your knowledge of the model by referring to two examples from the statement.
- Outline the growth that can occur within a community due to a traumatic event
- Outline the implications of stress that can occur within a community due to a traumatic event

(no marking key for this just practice)