

AP PSYCHOLOGY FRQ PROMPTS AND SCORING RUBRICS

The enclosed document includes an essay prompt for each unit in AP Psychology and a corresponding scoring rubric. The purpose of this activity is to increase the students' awareness of how AP exam readers grade from a rubric. Emphasis is placed on the definition of terms and the application of those terms.

Units include:

- Introduction to Psychology
- Biological Bases of Behavior
- Sensation and Perception
- States of Consciousness
- Learning

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

Describe the different perspectives from which psychologists examine behavior and mental processes, and explain their complementarity. Your answer should include:

- Neuroscience
- Evolutionary
- Behavior Genetics
- Psychodynamic
- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Social-cultural

Rubrics

Note: The application portion on the rubrics may include a variety of answers. This is simply an example of possible answers. The perspectives have more than one complement.

Term	Definition	Application
Neuroscience	The study of how the neurological system affects such things as emotions, memories, and sensory experiences.	It is complementary to evolutionary because the structures and functions of the brain that promote survival are the most likely to develop.
Evolutionary	The study of the natural selection of some traits that promotes genetic survival.	It is complementary to the behavioral perspective because some behaviors may enhance the chance to survival.
Behavior Genetics	The study of how much our psychological traits are attributed to our genetic make-up or as a result of environmental influences.	It is complementary to the cognitive process because our thinking, language, and intelligence may be the result of our ability to adapt to our environment.
Psychodynamic	The study of how unconscious drives and conflicts may influence our lives	It is complementary to the behavioral perspective in the investigation of how much of our behavior is below our awareness level.
Behavioral	The study of how we learn from the environment around us.	It is complementary to the social-cultural perspectives in the investigation of how differing situations can influence our behavior.
Cognitive	The study of how we encode, process, and store information.	It is complementary to the neuroscience perspective because our cognitive ability is dependent on our brain function.
Sociocultural	The study of how behavior and thinking can vary across socio-cultural situations.	It is complementary to the behavior genetics perspective because pro-social behaviors may influence the genetics of one culture as opposed to another.

UNIT 3: BIOLOGICAL BASES OF BEHAVIOR

Identify the four lobes of the cerebral cortex, and describe the sensory and motor functions of the cortex. Your answer should include the description and function of the following:

- Frontal lobe
- Parietal lobe
- Occipital lobe
- Temporal lobe

Rubrics

Lobes	Description	Function
Frontal	Located behind the forehead and is known especially for the arch-shaped region at the back of the frontal lobe known as the motor cortex.	The frontal lobe is responsible for higher order thinking and the motor cortex controls voluntary movements.
Parietal	Located on the top of the head and is known especially for the sensory cortex which is parallel to the motor cortex and located at the front of the parietal lobe.	The sensory cortex in the parietal lobe is responsible for registering and processing body sensations.
Occipital	Located at the back of the head and includes the visual cortex.	The visual cortex receives and begins processing visual information.
Temporal	Located roughly above the ears and includes the auditory areas.	The auditory areas receives and begins the processing of auditory information.

UNIT 4: SENSATION AND PERCEPTION

Discuss the different levels of visual information processing and the value of parallel processing. Your answer should include:

- Feature detection
- Color constancy
- Parallel processing

Rubrics

Term	Definition	Application
Feature detection	Neurons that receive information to specific features such as edges, angles, movements, etc.	Feature detection neurons pass the information on to more complex neuron systems which integrate the information into a visual whole.
Color Constancy	Perceiving familiar objects as having consistent color even in situations where the wavelengths reflected by the object are altered.	The experience of color not only depends on the wavelength information but the surrounding context. It demonstrates that our experience of color comes not just from the object but from everything around it as well.
Parallel processing	The processing of several pieces of information by integrating the work of different perceptual systems, which work in parallel.	The brain divides a visual scene into subdimensions but works on each aspect simultaneously to produce an integrated perception.

UNIT 5: STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Describe the physiological and psychological effects of depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens and drug dependence.

Rubrics

Term	Definition	Physiological Effects	Psychological Effects
Depressants	Drugs that calm neural activity and slow body functions.	Slows the sympathetic nervous system activity including slurred speech, and performance deterioration.	Slows the brain activity that controls judgment and inhibitions. Alcohol makes us more aggressive or helpful or self-disclosing if the tendencies are already present. Disrupts memory processing.
Stimulants	Drugs that excite neural activity and arouse body functions.	Speeds up the body functions such as heart rate and breathing.	Energy and self-confidence rise, which accounts for why people use it as a mood enhancer or to improve athletic performance. However when the drug stimulation ends, fatigue, headaches, irritability, and depression may occur.
Hallucinogens	Drugs that distort perceptions and evoke sensory images in the absence of sensory input.	Amplifies the body's sensitivity to colors, sounds, tastes, and smells.	As the hallucinogenic experience peaks, people frequently feel separated from their bodies and experience dreamlike scenes as though they were real – so real that users may become panic-stricken or harm themselves.
Drug dependence	Continued use of a psychoactive drugs which produces neuroadaptation	In the drug's absence the user may feel physical pain and intense cravings.	When the drugs become an important part of the user's life as a way of relieving negative emotions or as other coping mechanisms.

UNIT 6: LEARNING

Explain the importance of Pavlov's work, and describe how it might apply to an understanding of human health and well-being. Your answer should include:

- The concept of associative learning
- The importance of classical conditioning in adaptation
- The importance of classical conditioning in objective study of behavior

Rubrics

Term	Description	Application
Associative learning	Learning that happens when certain events occur together.	Staying away from settings or things associated with a certain unwanted behaviors may increase a person's well-being.
Adaptation	Learning based on prior experiences.	Associative learning can assist an individual in adaptation to their environment as well as identifying elements of behavior to master their environment.
Objective study of behavior	Scientific model which included no subjective judgments for explaining behavior	Classical conditioning terminology provided the elementary building blocks in understanding more complex behaviors.

UNIT 7: THINKING, LANGUAGE AND MEMORY

Discuss how we use trial and error, algorithms, heuristics, and insight to solve problems and how confirmation bias and fixation can interfere with effective problem solving.

Rubrics

Term	Definition	Application
Trial and error	Willingness to try a variety of possibilities in problem solving until success is achieved.	The trial and error method may be used to solve a problem when no clear-cut solution is favored or several possibilities are tried until the very best solution is chosen.
Algorithms	A step by step procedure use to solve problems.	Although all the steps may be labor intensive, this problem solving method guarantees a solution.
Heuristics	Simple strategy used to solve problems	Heuristics are more error-prone than algorithms, but can be used with trail & error to hit upon the answer.
Insight	Sudden flashes of inspiration.	Sometimes the problem-solving strategy is not obvious to us, but the suddenly all the pieces come together and a solution develops.
Confirmation Bias	The search for information to confirms our individual ideas.	The reluctance to seek and consider information that might disprove one's beliefs could interfere with effective problem solving
Fixation	The inability to see a problem from a fresh perspective.	The reluctance to see a problem from a different perspective will also interfere with effective problem solving.

UNIT 8A: MOTIVATION AND EMOTION

Discuss the importance of various motives for working, and identify the aims of industrial-organization psychology. Your answer should include: pay, relationships, or identity.

Rubrics

Term	Definition	Application
Pay	Financial compensation for work done.	Many individuals are simply motivated because they need an income to support themselves. In general, the amount of pay increases as the amount of responsibility increases.
Relationships		
Identity	One's sense of self solidified by testing and integrating various roles.	People's quality of life increases when they are purposefully engaged in a meaningful activity. The sense of self-esteem, competence, well-being, and sense of identity increase with job satisfaction.
Industrial-organizational Psychology	The application of psychology's principles to the workplace.	This branch of psychology applies psychology's methods and principles to selecting and evaluating workers, considers how work environments and management types influence worker motivation, satisfaction, and productivity.

UNIT 8B: STRESS AND HEALTH

Describe how stress increases the risk of disease by inhibiting the activities of the body's immune system. Your answer should include: B and T lymphocytes, macrophage, epinephrine and norepinephrine, and the fight-or-flight response.

Term	Description	Application
Stress	The process by which we perceive and physiologically respond to certain events, called stressors, that we appraise as threatening or challenging.	The nervous and endocrine systems are activated during the stress response, which has an influence on the immune system.
B and T lymphocytes	White blood cells that defend the body by isolating and destroying foreign substances.	B lymphocytes are formed in the bone marrow and fights bacterial infections. T lymphocytes are formed in the thymus and attacks cancer cells, viruses, and foreign substances. However, if these lymphocytes react too strongly they may attack the body's own tissues causing such things as arthritis or an allergic reaction. Or it could under-react and a dormant virus could erupt or cancer cells could multiply.
Macrophage	Process by which invading cells are identified, pursued, and ingested.	The B and T lymphocytes use the process of macrophage to destroy invading cells.
Epinephrine and Norepinephrine	When the brain perceives a stressor, it triggers an outpouring of epinephrine and norepinephrine which enter the bloodstream from adrenal glands	The greater the stress response, the more hormones are released into the bloodstream. The stress hormones in turn suppress the disease-fighting lymphocytes.
Fight or flight	Adaptive response in which the sympathetic nervous system increases heart rate and respiration, diverts blood from digestion and skeletal muscles, and releases stored sugar and fat in preparation for the organism to stand its ground and fight or flee a threatening situation.	Stress leads to an aroused, fight-or-flight response and diverts energy to mobilize the body for action. Therefore energy needed by the immune system is now diverted making us more vulnerable to foreign invaders.

UNIT 9: DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Describe the early development of a self-concept and discuss possible effects of different parenting styles on children. Your answer should include:

- Self-concept
- Authoritarian parenting style
- Permissive parenting style
- Authoritative parenting style

Rubrics

Term	Definition	Application
Self-concept	The sense of one's own identity and personal worth.	A child's major social achievement is a positive sense of self.
Authoritarian Parenting	Parenting style that imposes rules and expects unquestioning obedience.	Children with authoritarian parents tend to be more rigid in self-acceptance and the acceptance of others.
Permissive Parenting	Parenting style in which the parents submit to their children's desires, make few demands, and use little punishment.	Children with permissive parents tend to be more immature with little impulse control.
Authoritative Parenting	Parenting style that is both demanding and yet responsive. The parents set and enforce rules but encourage open discussion and allow exceptions when making the rules.	Children with the highest self-esteem, self-reliance, and social competence tend to have authoritative parents.

UNIT 10: PERSONALITY

Describe the social-cognitive perspective, and discuss the important consequences of personal control (internal/external locus of control), self-control, learned helplessness, and optimism.

Term	Description	Application
Social-cognitive Perspective	Views behavior as influenced by the interaction between person (and their thinking) and their social context.	We learn behaviors through conditioning, by observing, and modeling behaviors. However how we <i>think about</i> and <i>interpret</i> those situations also influences our behavior.
Personal Control	Whether we learn to see ourselves as controlling, or as controlled by, our environment.	Individuals with and external locus of control perceive that chance or outside forces determine their fate. Individuals with and internal locus of control believe that they control their own destiny. Internals achieve more in school, act more independently, enjoy better health, and feel less depressed than do “externals” In the social-cognitive perspective it is preferable to have a greater internal locus of control.
Self-Control	The ability to control impulses and delay gratification.	From the social-cognitive perspective, self-control is a predictor of good adjustment, better grades, and social success.
Learned Helplessness	The hopelessness and passive resignation a person learns when unable to avoid repeated aversive events.	From the social-cognitive perspective people repeatedly faced with traumatic events come to feel helpless, hopeless, and depressed, and perceive control as external.
Optimism	Viewing events in a positive way.	Optimists are able to put a positive spin on events in the face of adversity. According to the social-cognitive perspective success requires enough optimism to provide hope and enough pessimism to prevent complacency. Excessive optimism can blind us to real risks.

UNIT 12: ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

Describe the various symptoms and subtypes of schizophrenia, and discuss research on its causes. Your answer should include: paranoid, disorganized, catatonic, undifferentiated, and residual schizophrenia.

Term	Definition	Application
Schizophrenia	Split from reality in which the person displays disorganized thinking, disturbed perception, and inappropriate emotions and actions.	Actions profoundly disrupt social relationships and during the most severe periods, people with schizophrenia live in a private inner world, preoccupied with illogical ideas and unreal images.
Paranoid schizophrenia	Preoccupation with delusion or hallucination, often with themes of persecution or grandiosity.	Person holds on to the false belief that they will be persecuted like Christ or Martin Luther King or they have the false belief that they are extremely important and powerful.
Disorganized schizophrenia	Disorganized speech or behavior, or flat or inappropriate emotion.	Often a person cannot filter out competing sensory stimuli and jump from one idea to another resulting in "word salad." Or their emotions fluctuate between extremes.
Catatonic schizophrenia	Immobility (or excessive, purposeless movement), extreme negativism, and/or parrot-like repeating of another's speech or movements.	The person may perform senseless, compulsive acts, such as continually rocking or subbing an arm. Those who exhibit catatonia may remain motionless for hours on end and then become agitated.
Undifferentiated schizophrenia	Many and varied symptoms	Person can exhibit symptoms from all the different subtypes.
Residual schizophrenia	Withdrawal, after hallucinations and delusions have disappeared.	

Causes	Physiological	Psychological
	<p><u>Dopamine</u> over-activity due to an excess of receptors</p> <p><u>Thalamus</u> is smaller-than-normal</p> <p><u>Flu</u> - mother suffers from the flu during the middle of the child's fetal development.</p> <p><u>Genetics</u> or inheriting a predisposition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mother whose schizophrenia was severe and long-lasting ➤ Separation from parents ➤ Short attention span and poor muscle coordination ➤ Disruptive or withdrawn behavior ➤ Emotional unpredictability ➤ Poor peer relations and solo play

UNIT 13: TREATMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS

Identify the basic characteristics of humanistic therapy, behavior therapy, and cognitive therapy.

Term	Description	Application
Humanistic Therapy	The aim is to boost self-fulfillment by helping people grow in self-awareness and self-acceptance	The most widely used is client-centered therapy which focuses on a person's conscious self-perception and uses the technique of active listening.
Behavior Therapy	Uses learning principles to eliminate the unwanted behavior.	<p><u>Counterconditioning</u> pairs the trigger stimulus with a new response that is incompatible with fear.</p> <p><u>Systematic desensitization</u> associates a pleasant relaxed state with gradually increasing anxiety-triggering stimuli.</p> <p><u>Exposure therapies</u> treat anxieties by exposing people to the things they fear.</p> <p><u>Aversive conditioning</u> associates an unpleasant state with an unwanted behavior.</p> <p><u>Token economy</u> rewards desired behavior</p>
Cognitive Therapy	Teaching people new, more constructive ways of thinking.	<p>Faulty cognitive processes could include:</p> <p>Overgeneralization Diminishing the positive Emphasizing the negative All-or-nothing thinking</p>

UNIT 14: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Describe Milgram's controversial experiments on obedience, and discuss their implications for understanding our susceptibility to social influence.

- The participants were told that the study concerned the effect of punishment on learning.
- Participants drew slips from a hat to see who would be the "teacher" and who would be the "student."
- The "learner" was strapped into a chair "wired" to an electric shock machine.
- The "teacher" sat in front of the machine with switches labeled with voltages.
- The "teacher" was given the task to teach and then test the learner on a list of word pairs.
- The "teacher" punished the "learner" for wrong answer by delivering brief electric shock.
- After each "learner's" error, the "teacher" moved up to the next higher voltage.
- After the eighth switch is activated the "learner" shouts that the shocks are painful.
- The experimenter prods the "teacher" to go on saying it is essential to continue, and the experiment requires that the "teacher" must continue.
- Milgram's findings were that 63% complied fully – right up to the last switch.

Obedience was highest when:

- ✓ The person giving the orders was close at hand and was perceived to be a legitimate authority figure.
- ✓ The authority figure was supported by a prestigious institution.
- ✓ The victim was depersonalized, or at a distance.
- ✓ There were no role models for defiance.