

# LEARNING GUIDE



**GEN 113**  
**Introduction to Psychology**

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# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction to Psychology

### Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Define psychology and distinguish psychology from pseudoscience and “psychobabble.”
2. Summarize the relationship between the discipline of psychology and public opinion.
3. Explain eight guidelines for critical thinking.
4. Summarize the early history and development of psychology and the role of empirical evidence.
5. Describe the aims and methods of structuralism and functionalism.
6. Describe the basic ideas of psychoanalysis.
7. Describe the major principles of the biological, learning, cognitive, psychodynamic, and sociocultural perspectives in psychology.
8. Discuss humanistic psychology and feminist psychology.
9. Distinguish between applied and basic psychology.
10. Distinguish among a clinical psychologist, a psychotherapist, a psychoanalyst, a psychiatrist, and other practicing mental health professionals.

Psychology is the discipline concerned with behavior and mental processes and how they are affected by an organism's external and internal environment. Psychology's methods and reliance on empirical evidence distinguish it from pseudoscience and "psychobabble." Psychologists have many pseudoscientific competitors, such as astrologers and psychics. However, when put to the test, the claims and predictions of these competitors turn out to be meaningless or just plain wrong. Psychobabble is appealing because it confirms beliefs and prejudices; in contrast, psychology often challenges them, although it also seeks to extend understanding of familiar facts.

One benefit of studying psychology is the development of critical thinking skills and attitudes. Critical thinking helps people evaluate competing findings on psychological issues that are personally and socially important. The critical thinker asks questions, defines terms clearly, examines the evidence, analyzes assumptions and biases, avoids emotional reasoning, avoids oversimplification, considers alternative interpretations, and tolerates uncertainty. Critical thinking is an evolving process rather than a once-and-for-all accomplishment.

The official founder of scientific psychology was Wilhelm Wundt, who formally established the first psychological laboratory in 1879, in Leipzig, Germany. His work led to structuralism, the first of many approaches to the field. Structuralism emphasized the analysis of immediate experience into basic elements. It was soon abandoned, in part because of its reliance on introspection. Psychology as a method of psychotherapy has roots in Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, which emphasizes unconscious causes of mental and emotional problems. Five points of view predominate today in psychology. They are:

- The biological perspective emphasizes bodily events associated with actions, thoughts, and feelings, and genetic contributions to behavior.
- The learning perspective emphasizes how the environment and a person's history affect behavior.
- The cognitive perspective emphasizes mental processes in perception, problem solving, belief formation, and other human activities.
- The sociocultural perspective explores how social contexts and cultural rules affect an individual's beliefs and behavior.
- The psychodynamic perspective, which originated with Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, emphasizes unconscious motives, conflicts, and desires. It differs greatly from the other approaches in its methods and standards of evidence.

**OVERVIEW**

Humanist psychology is a psychological approach that emphasizes personal growth and the achievement of human potential, rather than the scientific understanding and assessment of behavior. This approach rejected behaviorism and psychoanalysis, emphasized creativity and achieving potential.

Feminist psychology is the psychological approach analyzing the influence of social inequities on gender relations and on the behavior of the two sexes. This approach recognized years of male bias in data collection and psychotherapy and questions the use of research in justifying women's lower status or elevating women's status (female bias).

Academic/Research psychologists research in areas of basic or applied psychology. The examples include experimental psychologists, educational psychologists, developmental psychologists, industrial/organizational psychologists, psychometric psychologists.

Psychological practitioners are counseling psychologists who help people deal with problems associated with everyday life. School psychologists work with parents, teachers, and students to enhance student performance. Clinical psychologists diagnose, treat, and study mental or emotional problems.

1. **(Read pages 5-7 Psychology, Pseudoscience, and Popular Opinion):**

The ultimate difference between psychobabble and scientific psychology is that psychobabble confirms our existing beliefs and prejudices, whereas psychology often \_\_\_\_\_ them.

2. **(Read pages 7-15 thinking critically and Creatively About Psychology):**

Emotion has a place in critical thinking. Passionate commitment to a view motivates people to think boldly, to defend unpopular ideas, and to seek evidence for \_\_\_\_\_.

3. **(Read page 9 Thinking critically and creatively about Psychology):**

"I've always thought that memory was like a video camera, accurately recording each moment of my life. But maybe I think this because it is so reassuring." According to the textbook, this example illustrates \_\_\_\_\_ critical thinking guidelines.

4. **(Read page 10 Thinking critically and creatively about Psychology):**

Randy meets a Californian who grows all her own vegetables and refuses to touch any nonorganic food and he concludes that Californians are overzealous about nutrition. This type of error illustrates the critical thinking guideline\_\_\_\_\_.

5. **(Read page 15 Psychology's Past: From the Armchair to the Laboratory):**

Great thinkers throughout history have wanted to add to human knowledge and to increase happiness. Like today's psychologists, they wanted to describe behavior. Contemporary psychologists, however, approach these issues in a different way by relying heavily upon \_\_\_\_\_.

6. **(Read page 17 Psychology's Past: From the Armchair to the Laboratory):**

As one of Wilhelm Wundt's trained introspectors, Hackett just participated in a 1½-second experiment. According to our text, reporting his inner experiences of the experiment would take Hackett about\_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

**READINGS****7. ((Read page 17 Psychology's Past: From the Armchair to the Laboratory):**

A person is asked to break down all the different components of taste when biting into an orange. This type of research would be typical in \_\_\_\_\_ schools of psychology.

**8. (Read pages 19-24 Psychology's Present):**

The learning perspective is concerned with how the environment and experience affect a person's actions. Within this perspective, behaviorists focus on the environmental\_\_\_\_\_ and punishers that maintain or discourage specific behaviors.

**9. (Read page 20 Psychology's Present):**

Professor King approaches questions about human behavior from a perspective, which emphasizes the rewards, and punishments that maintain certain specific behaviors. He does not invoke the mind to explain behavior but sticks to what he can observe and measure directly. It is most likely that he accepts the \_\_\_\_\_ psychological approach.

**10. (Read pages 26-27 What do Psychologists Do?):**

Dr. Braun has been treating a child with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. She decides to write a prescription for Ritalin. Given this information, it is most likely that Dr. Braun is a \_\_\_\_\_.

Applied psychology (pg 25)  
Basic psychology (pg 25)  
Behaviorists (pg 20)  
Biological perspective (pg 20)  
Clinical psychologist (pg 25)  
Cognitive perspective (pg 20)  
Counseling psychologist (pg 26)  
Critical thinking (pg 7)  
Cultural psychologists (pg 21)  
Developmental psychologist (pg 25)  
Educational psychologist (pg 25)  
Empirical (pg 4)  
Evolutionary psychology (pg 20)  
Experimental psychologist (pg 25)  
Feminist psychology (pg 23)  
Functionalism (pg 17)  
Humanist psychology (pg 21)  
Industrial/organizational psychologist (pg 25)  
Learning perspective (pg 20)  
Phrenology (pg 16)  
Psychiatrist (pg 26)  
Psychoanalysis (pg 19)  
Psychoanalyst (pg 26)

**KEY TERMS**

Psychodynamic perspective (pg 21)

Psychological practice (pg 24)

Psychology (pg 4)

Psychometric psychologist (pg 25)

Psychotherapist (pg 26)

School psychologist (pg 26)

Social psychologists (pg 21)

Social-cognitive learning theorists (pg 20)

Sociocultural perspective (pg 21)

Structuralism (pg 17)

Match the Key Term to its Definition.

Key Terms	Key Definitions - Jumbled	Ans
1. Applied psychology	a) The study of psychological issues in order to seek knowledge for its own sake rather than for its practical application	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Basic psychology	b) The study of psychological issues that have direct practical significance; also, the application of psychological findings	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Behaviorists	c) Person who generally help people deal with problems of everyday life, such as test anxiety, family conflicts, or low job motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Biological perspective	d) A psychological approach that emphasizes mental processes in perception, memory, language, problem solving, and other areas of behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Clinical psychologist	e) A psychological approach that emphasizes bodily events and changes associated with actions, feelings, and thoughts	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Cognitive perspective	f) Person who diagnose, treat, and study mental or emotional problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Counseling psychologist	g) Focus on the environmental rewards and punishers that maintain or discourage specific behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/>

**MATCHING EXERCISE - II**

Match the Key Term to its Definition.

Key Terms	Key Definitions - Jumbled	Ans
1. Feminist psychology	a) A medical doctor who has done a three-year residency in psychiatry to learn how to diagnose and treat mental disorders under the supervision of more experienced physicians	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Functionalism	b) A psychological approach that analyzes the influence of social inequities on gender relations and on the behavior of the two sexes	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Humanist psychology	c) The theory that different brain areas account for specific character and personality traits, which can be "read" from bumps on the skull	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Industrial/organizational psychologist	d) An early psychological approach that emphasized the function or purpose of behavior and consciousness	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Learning perspective	e) A psychological approach that emphasizes how the environment and experience affect a person's or animal's actions	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Phrenology	f) A psychological approach that emphasizes free will, personal growth, resilience, and the achievement of human potential	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Psychiatrist	g) Concerned with group decision making, employee morale, work motivation, productivity, job stress, personnel selection, marketing strategies, equipment design, and many other issues	<input type="checkbox"/>

Match the Key Term to its Definition.

Key Terms	Key Definitions - Jumbled	Ans
1. Psychotherapist	a) A psychological approach that emphasizes social and cultural influences on behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. School psychologist	b) Theories that emphasize how behavior is learned and maintained through observation and imitation of others, positive consequences, and cognitive processes such as plans, expectations, and beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Social psychologists	c) Focus on social rules and roles, how groups affect attitudes and behavior, why people obey authority, and how each of us is affected by other people such as spouses, lovers, friends, bosses, parents, and strangers	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Social-cognitive learning theorists	d) Work with parents, teachers, and students to enhance students' performance and resolve emotional difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Sociocultural perspective	e) An early psychological approach that emphasized the analysis of immediate experience into basic elements	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Structuralism	f) A person who does any kind of psychotherapy	<input type="checkbox"/>

**SELF EXAM****Multiple Choice Questions:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the discipline concerned with understanding behavior and mental processes and how they are affected by an organism's physical state, mental state, and external environment.
  - a) Psychology
  - b) Anthropology
  - c) Sociology
  - d) Physiology
  
2. What percentage of Americans and Canadians believe in astrology?
  - a) 25-35 percent
  - b) 35-50 percent
  - c) 50-60 percent
  - d) 60-80 percent
  
3. Beliefs that are taken for granted are called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) Assumptions
  - b) Traits
  - c) Reinforcers
  - d) Archetypes
  
4. "I may never know for sure whether my memory of my first visit to the ocean is accurate." This example illustrates \_\_\_\_\_ critical thinking guideline.
  - a) Tolerate uncertainty
  - b) Analyze assumptions and biases
  - c) Define your terms
  - d) Ask questions and be willing to wonder
  
5. Phrenology is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a) A theory of mind based on anecdotes and individual case studies
  - b) The study of the mind of criminals
  - c) Based on the writings of John Locke
  - d) A pseudoscience relating bumps on the head to personality traits

6. Which school of thought in psychology used the method of introspection?
- a) Phrenology
  - b) Structuralism
  - c) Functionalism
  - d) Psychoanalysis
7. Behaviorism is a part of \_\_\_\_\_ modern psychological perspective.
- a) Cognitive
  - b) Learning
  - c) Sociocultural
  - d) Psychodynamic
8. Which modern psychological perspective looks at how people reason, solves problems, and understands language?
- a) Sociocultural
  - b) Learning
  - c) Cognitive
  - d) Psychodynamic
9. \_\_\_\_\_ is the aspect of psychology least recognized and understood by the public.
- a) Research psychology
  - b) Clinical psychology
  - c) Applied psychology
  - d) Educational psychology
10. The term \_\_\_\_\_ is unregulated and so the practitioner may have anything from no degree to an advanced professional degree.
- a) Experimental psychologist
  - b) Psychotherapist
  - c) Psychoanalyst
  - d) Clinical psychologist

## CHAPTER ONE

### Readings

1. Challenges
2. Creative new theories
3. Analyze assumptions and biases
4. Don't oversimplify
5. Empirical evidence
6. 20
7. Structuralism
8. Rewards
9. Learning
10. Psychiatrist

### Matching Exercise – I

1. b
2. a
3. g
4. e
5. f
6. d
7. c

**Matching Exercise – II**

1. b
2. d
3. f
4. g
5. e
6. c
7. a

**Matching Exercise – III**

1. f
2. d
3. c
4. b
5. a
6. e

**Self Exam**

1. **a) Psychology (pg 4, chapter 1)**
2. **b) 35-50 percent(pg 6, chapter 1)**
3. **a) Assumptions (pg 9, chapter 1)**
4. **a) Tolerate uncertainty (pgs 12- 15, chapter 1)**
5. **d) A pseudoscience relating bumps on the head to personality traits (pg 16, chapter1)**
6. **b) Structuralism (pg 17, chapter 1)**
7. **b) Learning (pg 20, chapter 1)**
8. **c) Cognitive (pg 20, chapter 1)**
9. **a) Research psychology (pg 25, chapter 1)**
10. **b) Psychotherapist (pg 26, chapter 1)**



