PsychPrep

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Approaches at a Glance

A-level Psychology
AQA 7182 Paper 2 · Approaches in psychology

Sample factfile

IN A NUTSHELL **How have psychologists tried to explain behaviour? Approaches is Section A of Paper 2. Here are the origins of psychology and all six approaches on one page.**

1 Key terms

Introspection
examining your own thoughts

Vicarious reinforcement
seeing others rewarded

Phenotype
how genes are expressed

Congruence
self matches ideal self

2 Origins and learning

- Wundt: first laboratory, Leipzig, 1879; introspection; standardised procedures.
- Behaviourism: classical conditioning (Pavlov's dogs) and operant conditioning (Skinner's rats).
- SLT: modelling, identification, vicarious reinforcement, mediational processes; Bandura et al. (1961), 72 children.

3 Cognitive and biological

- Cognitive: inference, schema, theoretical and computer models; cognitive neuroscience (Tulving et al., 1994).
- Biological: genes, twin studies, genotype and phenotype (PKU), neurochemistry, evolution.

4 Psychodynamic and humanistic

- Freud: unconscious; id, ego, superego; repression, denial, displacement; five psychosexual stages.
- Maslow's hierarchy of needs; Rogers: congruence, conditions of worth, client-centred therapy.

5 Comparing

- Determinism: environmental (behaviourist), biological, psychic (Freud), soft (cognitive); humanism: free will.
- Scientific: behaviourist, cognitive, biological. Not scientific: psychodynamic, humanistic.

6 Exam tip

For a "compare" question, choose three issues such as free will, nature–nurture and reductionism, and say where both approaches stand on each.

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