Internal Assessment Resource

Psychology Level 2

This resource supports assessment against Achievement Standard 91844

Standard title: Examine different psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour

Credits: 6

Resource title: What do they think about?

**Resource reference:** Psychology 2.1A Version 1

This resource:

* Clarifies the requirements of the standard
* Supports good assessment practice
* Should be subjected to the school’s usual assessment quality assurance process
* Should be modified to make the context relevant to students in their school environment and ensure that submitted evidence is authentic

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| Date version published by Ministry of Education | January 2017To support internal assessment from 2017 |
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| Authenticity of evidence | Teachers must manage authenticity for any assessment from a public source, because students may have access to the assessment schedule or student exemplar material.Using this assessment resource without modification may mean that students’ work is not authentic. Teachers may need to change figures, measurements or data sources or set a different context or topic to be investigated or a different text to read or perform. |

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Teacher guidelines

The following guidelines are supplied to enable teachers to carry out valid and consistent assessment using this internal assessment resource.

Teachers need to be very familiar with the outcome being assessed by the achievement standard. The achievement criteria and the explanatory notes contain information, definitions, and requirements that are crucial when interpreting the standard and assessing students against it.

**Context/setting**

This activity requires students to comprehensively examine theories from at least three different psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour.

Students will be creating a script for an imagined talk show with psychologists from three different approaches debating their explanation for the behaviour. This can take the shape of expert witnesses taking part in a court case or a live TV debate between their chosen psychologists. The script should demonstrate an understanding of the main explanations of the behaviour, and should aim to illustrate the differences in perspective between the different approaches.

A chair of the debate or judge character may be used to sum up arguments and make justified judgement on the overall best explanation. The script can be presented in written format for assessment or may be acted and recorded for assessment. You may want to provide an example as a guide.

**Conditions**

The students could work in groups but will be assessed individually.

As a guide, assessment against this standard should reflect approximately 60 hours of teaching, learning and assessment, in and out of the classroom.

Conditions of Assessment related to this achievement standard can be found at <http://ncea.tki.org.nz/Resources-for-Internally-Assessed-Achievement-Standards>

**Resource requirements**

Access to the Internet and or relevant sources of information. Students may require cameras for filming or voice recording equipment.

**Additional information**

Examples of ideas for behavioural contexts could be:

* Why do we sleep? Why do we dream?
* A criminal case and why the person committed the crime.
* The causes of well-known celebrities’ addictive behaviours.

For a contemporary example, teachers could look at Nora Volkow’s work on addiction. This is a good example of resource material such as TED talks and YouTube which may be appropriate to support student work.

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Student instructions

**Introduction**

This assessment activity requires you to choose a behaviour and create a script for an imaginary panel to examine three different psychological approaches used to explain the behaviour you have chosen.

You are going to be assessed on how comprehensively you examine different psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour by evaluating each approach and justifying the approach that has the best explanation of the behaviour you have chosen.

**Task**

***Part 1***

1. Choose a behaviour.

Examples of behaviour include addiction, aggression, the bystander effect, pro social behaviour.

1. Choose at least three approaches that are used to explain this behaviour.

Examples of psychological approaches include:

* behavioural
* biological
* cognitive
* sociocultural
* humanistic
* psychodynamic
* evolutionary.

***Part 2***

Create a script for an imaginary talk show featuring three (past or present) psychologists who are debating from each of the three different approaches you have chosen. The script will show their explanations for the behaviour.

Your script will show your understanding of the following questions for each approach:

* who is your psychologist?
* what are the key concepts of her/his approach?
* how is their approach used to explain this behaviour?
* what supporting evidence do they use to justify that their approach best explains this behaviour? Include descriptions of psychological theories or studies from published works.

***Part 3***

Draw a conclusion which justifies which of the three approaches has the best explanation for the behaviour.

**Present your information**

Present your information, for example by using written paragraphs, transcripts, video or audio recording.

**Assessment schedule: Psychology 91844 - What do they think about?**

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| **Evidence/Judgements for Achievement** | **Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Merit** | **Evidence/Judgements for Achievement with Excellence** |
| The student examines different psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour by:* providing an explanation from at least three psychological approaches
* explaining the differences between the three psychological approaches in explaining the behaviour.

**For example (partial evidence):****Chair of debate:** I would like to welcome Mr Burrhus Frederic Skinner …**B.F Skinner:** I prefer just B.F. if you don’t mind!**Chair of debate:** Of course! My apologies, now where was I? Ah yes … welcome to B.F. to our discussion on the fateful addictions of Amy Winehouse. First of all, would you like to explain what caused addiction in this case from your perspective as a behaviourist?**B.F Skinner:** Her addiction was learned! All behaviour is learned! Amy Winehouse engaged in behaviours that were positively reinforcing and so she ended up doing them more. Simple as that! **Sigmund Freud:** I’d like to interrupt you there, you say nothing of the mind here! I believe that Amy’s unconscious mind controlled her behaviour. As she has gone through the stages of psychosexual development there must have been a problem in her childhood. Clearly she has experienced some trauma and this has led to her becoming an addict.**B.F Skinner:** Rubbish! Where’s your evidence?**Chair of debate:** Now, now Burrhus! Sigmund that’svery interesting … Mr Olds?**James Olds:** Addiction is a brain disease and can be completely explained by the way it affects the brain. I believe that addiction is due to the release of dopamine in the brain which is what all the drugs that Amy used would have done! *The examples above are indicative samples only* | The student examines, in depth, different psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour by:* an in-depth examination of a behaviour, providing a detailed explanation of the selected psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour
* including descriptions of theories or studies from published works.

**For example (partial evidence):****Chair of debate:** I would like to welcome Mr Burrhus Frederic Skinner …**B.F Skinner:** I prefer just B.F. if you don’t mind!**Chair of debate:** Of course! My apologies, now where was I? Ah yes … welcome to B.F. to our discussion on the fateful addictions of Amy Winehouse. First of all, would you like to explain what caused addiction in this case from your perspective as a behaviourist?**B.F Skinner:** Her addiction was learned! All behaviour is learned! From my research with rats and pigeons, I have discovered that it is simply rewarding a behaviour that causes it to become addictive. Amy Winehouse enjoyed the feeling of being drunk and so she did it again. She observed other people, people she looked up to and learnt from their reinforcements, that’s why she started initially. Once she tried drugs they positively reinforced her, as I explained in my theory of operant conditioning.**Sigmund Freud:** I’d like to interrupt you there, you say nothing of the mind here! You do not consider the childhood trauma of the individual or their psychosexual development! She was clearly having difficulties controlling her id and this may have come from a poorly developed super ego. Difficulties in early childhood, I suspect around weaning, has caused her to be orally fixated! **B.F Skinner:** Rubbish! Where’s your evidence?**Chair of debate:** Now, Now Burrhus! Sigmund that’svery interesting … Mr Olds?**James Olds:** Addiction is not a learnt behaviour, it is a brain disease and can be completely explained by the way it affects the physical nature of the brain. I believe that addiction is due to the release of dopamine in the brain which is what all the drugs that Amy used would have caused. Twin studies have found clear evidence that some people might be genetically predisposed to addiction. Kendler (1992) found a closer link to alcoholism in MZ than DZ twins. *The examples above are indicative samples only* | The student comprehensively examines different psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour by:* evaluating the selected psychological approaches used to explain a behaviour
* justifying which approach has the strongest explanation of the behaviour
* including descriptions of psychological theories or studies from published works.

**For example (partial evidence):****B.F Skinner:** Amy’s addiction was learned! All behaviour is learned! From my research with rats and pigeons, I have discovered that it is simply reinforcing consequences that cause a behaviour to become addictive. Amy Winehouse engaged in behaviours that were positively reinforcing and so she did them more. She observed other people, people she looked up to and learnt from their reinforcements, that’s why she started initially. This was clearly shown through Albert Bandura’s research with children and Bobo Dolls and the way they learnt to be aggressive simply by watching adults performing the behaviour and being rewarded for it. Once she tried drugs they positively reinforced her as in my theory of operant conditioning. **Sigmund Freud:** Your theory is too simplistic! People are more complicated than rats and pigeons! There must be more to explain behaviour than simple reinforcement. You do not consider the childhood trauma of the individual or their psychosexual development and unconscious mind. Difficulties in early childhood, I suspect around weaning, has caused her to be orally fixated! **B.F Skinner:** Rubbish! Where’s your evidence?**Sigmund Freud:** I have studied, in depth, people with similar problems …**B.F Skinner:** Not scientific at all! We can’t generalise from one or two unrepresentative cases! **Chair of debate:** Now, now Burrhus! Sigmund that’svery interesting … Mr Olds?**James Olds:** Well I do agree that early childhood trauma may increase the risk of addiction in later life but this is due to the way that it changes the structure of the brain. My own research into dopamine reward pathways, along with FMRI studies such as that by Nora Volkow (2003), illustrate the action of dopamine in the brain. The biological explanation is clearly the strongest! We encompass all the behavioural theories of reinforcement but actually go one step further. We explain what actually goes on physically in the brain when we experience a reward. We also haven’t limited our research to just rats and pigeons so we have much greater validity because our research findings actually relate to humans. **Chair of debate:** Thanks James that makes your approach very strong in explaining Amy’s addiction. Especially in the way that it can include the main behaviourist explanation of operant conditioning within the biological theory of the dopamine reward pathway. *The examples above are indicative samples only* |

Final grades will be decided using professional judgement based on a holistic examination of the evidence provided against the criteria in the Achievement Standard.