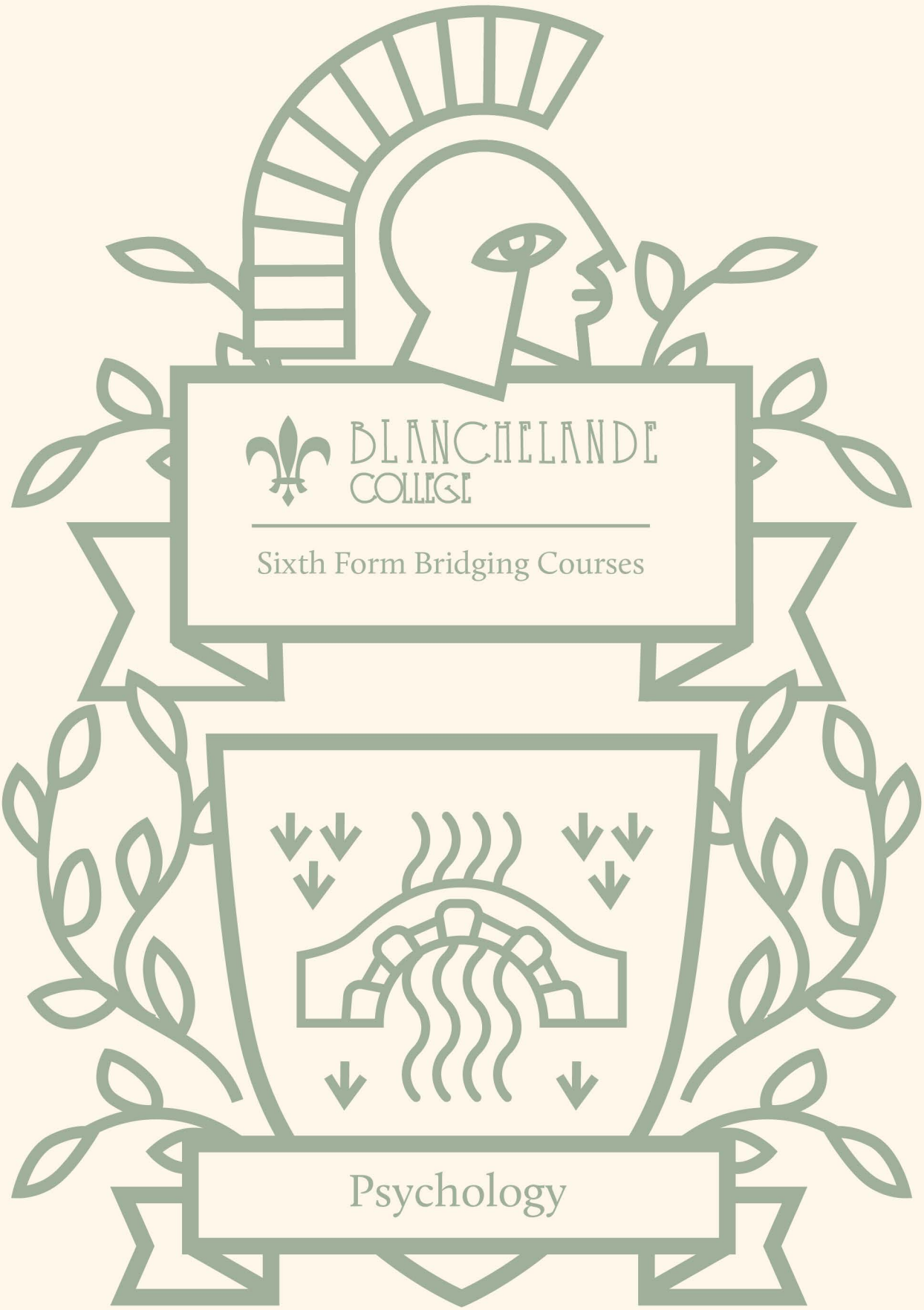
BLANCHELANDE
COLLEGE
Sixth Form Bridging Courses
Psychology

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A-Level Bridging Work
Psychology
For Summer 2020

Welcome to the Psychology department! Some of you may have studied Psychology before, but others of you may have not – and that's fine!

As a part of your A-Level, you will be learning all about a number of interesting topics, including: the reasons why people obey and go along with the majority, how our early childhood may influence our future relationships, how we go about diagnosing and treating certain mental illnesses, how our memory works and the different ways psychologists go about interpreting the mind. And that's all in Year 1!

Across the two years, we will also be studying the research methods which underpin everything psychologists do. Therefore, your bridge work for Psychology will focus on getting a head start in research methods. Not only is it the bread and butter of Psychology, but it also makes up a quarter of your A-Level, so the better you are at it, the higher grade you will get at the end of the two years. The tasks below are introductory: just give them your best go, and bring your work along with you to your first Psychology lesson in September.

This document contains all the instructions you will need in order to complete your work, and I'd recommend using websites such as www.simplypsychology.org or www.tutor2u.net to guide you in your research tasks. Nonetheless, if you have any questions or want some further learning opportunities, please contact me (Miss Page through pagem@blanchelande.sch.gg)

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Task One: What is Psychology?

"Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour."

This really means we are trying to understand what it is that causes us to behave the ways we do; why are some people depressed? Why are some people introverted and some extroverted? How does our memory work? Why do some people become killers? How can we diagnose and treat mental disorders?

Psychology can often be a sensitive subject, but the focus is always on: why are humans the way they are? Watch this short video to start you off.

As the video stated, there are two main branches of psychology: experimental and applied. However, there are also many different approaches within psychology, including: behaviourism, social learning biological, cognitive, humanistic and psychodynamic.

Your first task is to research the six different approaches and provide a brief overview of what the main assumptions of each approach are, and what key figures are associated with it. I have done the first one for you. Don't worry too much right now about understanding every key term - those I've put in bold - what is important to focus on right now, is simply being exposed to them. [Interesting side note: there is a psychological phenomenon called the 'mere-exposure effect' which suggests that the more familiar we are with something, the more positive our reaction will be to it!]

Approach	Overview
Behaviourism	This approach is concerned with the study of observable and measurable behaviour. Early behaviourist, such as **John Watson** rejected **introspection** (the examination of one's own mental processes) on the basis that it involved too many concepts that were vague and difficult to measure. They wanted to bring more control and objectivity into their research and thought that the use of **lab experiments** would do just that. Following Darwin, behaviourists suggested that the basic principles that govern learning are the same in all species. This meant that in behaviourist research, animals could replace humans as test subjects. According to behaviourists, we learn through the processes of **classical conditioning** and **operant conditioning.**
Social Learning Theory	
Biological	

Cognitive	
Humanistic	
Psychodynamic	

Task Two: What is the 'Experimental Method'?

Psychology is about more than just 'thinking about' why we behave the ways we do. Psychologists conduct **RESEARCH** to back up our claims and find **EVIDENCE** to support them. The steps involved in conducting research in the psychological community are as follows:

1) **Ask a question**
   - What do you want to know about the world? Why do you want to know this? How can science help you answer your question?
2) **Do your research**
   - See if anyone has asked your question before. Research similar questions. Ask others for advice.
3) **Form a hypothesis**
   - What do you think is the answer to your question? Why do you think this is the answer? Can your prediction bet tested?
4) **Test your hypothesis**
   - Design an experiment. Perform your experiment carefully. Record your data
5) **Analyse your data**
   - Make a chart or graph to display your data. Compare your data to others. See if your data fits your hypothesis.
6) **Draw conclusions**
   - What did you learn from the experiment? Was your hypothesis correct? What questions do you have now?

To put this into context, below are two famous psychological research studies for you to read, once you have done that, you must answer a series of questions.

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Psychological research study 1
Piliavin, Rodin & Piliavin 1969

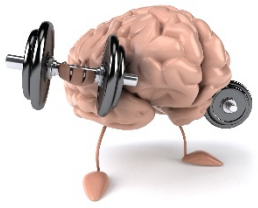
Aim
To investigate if people will help out someone who is suffering on a train, depending on their race, age, how many people are around and if the suffering person is drunk/old.
Method
A field experiment (the research takes place in a natural environment)
Sample
Around 4500 passengers on the New York subway.
Procedure
Experimenters got an actor to fake collapsing on the New York subway, and the number of people who helped and the time taken to help were recorded by secret covert (undercover) observers. The race of the participants was also recorded. The independent variable (what they changed) was

1. the race of the actor
2. the gender of the actor
3. the outfit the actor wore (well-dressed or homeless)
4. whether the actor pretended to be drunk or ill

Findings
79% of victims (who were actors) received help from participants, but this number fell to 50% for the "drunk" victim. There was a race effect: black people were more likely to help black victims and white people were more likely to help white victims. The more people that were present in the train, the more likely it was that the passenger would receive help. Female actors were more likely to be helped but male participants were more likely to help actors compared to females on the subway.
Conclusions
Ill people are more likely to receive help than drunk ones, women are unlikely to intervene and help out men, there is a race effect in helping behaviour, and the more people are present the more likely people are to help. This study showed an example of helping behaviour in a real setting.

Questions

1. What do you think affected helping behaviour? (explain why)
2. What advantages and disadvantages of this experiment can you think of? (think about the setting, the type of people who were being studied, the possible ethical issues involved)
3. Why is it helpful/useful to know the conclusions this study found?



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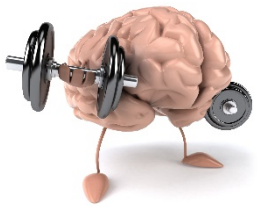
Psychological research study 2
Casey et al 2011

Aim
To test whether delaying rewards in childhood also leads to delaying rewards in adulthood
Method
A longitudinal natural experiment
Sample
135 individuals completing a task at age 4 and again in their thirties.
Procedure:
At age 4, a group of children were asked if they would have one cookie now or wait and get two cookies later. Their responses were recorded. They also conducted brain scans at the same time and found that one area of the brain (the inferior frontal gyrus) was associated with impulse control. In their thirties, they had to complete a questionnaire asking about their behaviour such as their gambling behaviour.
Findings
Participants who took the cookie 'now' (low impulse control) at age 4 also showed low impulse control in their thirties; this was related to low activity in the inferior frontal gyrus. Participants who waited for two cookies (high impulse control) at age 4 also showed high impulse control their thirties; this was related to high activity in the inferior frontal gyrus.
Conclusion
The ability to have impulse control and to resist temptation differs between individuals but is likely to be lifelong; it also seems to be a biological thing over which individuals have little say.

Questions



1. Do you agree with the findings that impulse control seems to be biological? (explain why)
2. Why might this be a questionable conclusion - think for example about rapists/serial killers
3. What are the potential strengths/limitations of this study – do you think it is a good piece of research? Why or why not?

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EXTENSION TASKS

Task three: Understanding the Experimental Method

The previous task introduced you to the empirical method, in other words, how psychologists go about conducting research. It does, however, get slightly more complicated than this. You may have noticed that the first research study was called a 'field experiment' whereas the second research study was called a 'natural experiment'. In total, there are four different types of experimental methods: laboratory, natural, field and quasi, but we will go into these categories in lessons, so don't worry about it too much for now. What I want you to focus on for now is the ethical issues that can arise in the design and conduct of psychological studies. The main ethical issues that should be taken into consideration are as follows:

Ethical Guideline	Definition
Informed Consent	
Debriefing	
Protection from Harm	
Right to Withdraw	
Confidentiality	
Deception	

Your task is to make sure you have a definition for each of these ethical issues (this website might be useful: https://www.simplypsychology.org/Ethics.html

Once you have done this, you must read up on the 'Standard Prison Experiment' (this website is particularly good: https://www.simplypsychology.org/zimbardo.html) and write a summary of what ethical guidelines you believe the research(ers) have broken.

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APPLY IT: The Stanford Prison Experiment and how it broke so many ethical guidelines….

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Task 4: Maths!

10% of your final grade will be down to your mathematic ability. Do NOT be alarmed by this, do not need to be a mathematical genius to be able to do this (I'm certainly not!), but there are certain skills and concepts that you need to keep practicing and/or get your head around. Have a go at the following questions, you may need to refresh yourself on certain terms (e.g. mean, median and mode) and you may use a calculator if you wish.

Percentages:

1) 10% of 450
2) 50% of 260
3) 5% of 86
4) 25% of 652
5) 11% of 70
6) 3% of 62

Fractions:

1) 1/2 of 46
2) 1/4 of 58
3) 3/4 of 64
4) 1/5 of 500
5) 1/8 of 730
6) 1/3 of 100

Measures of Central tendencies (averages):

1) What is the MEAN from this data set?
   8,7,6,5,2,2,3,4,6,8
2) What is the MEDIAN from this data set?
   1,1,3,9,4,4,5,6,6,8
3) What is the MODE from this data set?
   1,2,2,2,4,5,3,2,1,7
4) What is the RANGE of this data set?
   11,13,14,15,9,17,14,15,16
5) What is the MEDIAN from this data set?
   56,72,34,33,32,14,15,17,72,87
6) What is the MEAN from this data set?
   11,12,18,14,15,16,13,13,13,14

THAT IS IT! Well done for completing this work – you little legends! Remember to bring a copy of this with you to your first Psychology lesson with me, in which we will introduce ourselves to each other, go through this document and then various other admin things. I cannot wait to see you all!