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AQA

AS and A-LEVEL

Psychology

New edition

BRILLIANT MODEL ANSWERS

Attachment

Fully revised and updated for the 2025 AQA Psychology A-level specification

- Provides the key knowledge and skills for exam success
- All types of questions covered
- Grade A model answers
- Written by examiners

Do brilliantly in your Psychology exam!

Nicholas Alexandros Savva

psychologyzone.co.uk

Proven exam success | Written by examiners | Concise, detailed and clearly written model answers

Brilliant Model Answers

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Please note: this book is not endorsed by or affiliated to the AQA exam board.

Important information

Do not skip this page!

The 'unpredictable' exam is more 'predictable' than you think

This guide is part of Psychologyzone's Brilliant Model Answers series covering A-level Psychology. Use it alongside the Psychologyzone series Brilliant Exam Notes to get the best out of your learning.

This guide covering the topic of Social Influences provides a full set of exam-style questions and model answers to help you do well in the exam. After all, your psychology exam is based on answering questions – what better than to have a book that already has the answers for you!

The exam board has deliberately developed the A-level Psychology specification so that the questions are to some extent 'unpredictable' in order to discourage students from attempting to rote-learn (memorise answers) using pre-prepared questions. This makes it difficult to predict what's going to be asked.

We have tried to make the unpredictable 'predictable'...

There are over 100 model answers in this book. We have covered most of the different types of question they can ask you for each topic on the specification. You can adapt the model answers provided to most types of questions set in the exam.

Some of your model answers seem very long. Why?

Some of the answers are much longer responses than you are expected to write in the exam to get top marks. **This is deliberate**. We have written them in this way to enable you to have a better understanding of the theories, concepts, studies and so on. If you do not write as much, don't panic; you don't need all of the content to achieve a good grade.

As you may be using this as a study book, we thought we'd write the model answers in a way that you can also revise from them, so we sometimes expand on explanations or give an example to help you understand a topic better.

Many of the model answers start by repeating the question; in the real exam you do not need to waste time doing this – just get stuck in!

Remember - in your exam, your answers will be marked according to how well you demonstrate the set assessment objectives (AOs); therefore, we have tried to provide model responses that show you how to demonstrate the required know-how for these AOs. Each example provides you with 'indicative content': in other words, the response gives you an idea of points you could make to achieve maximum marks; it doesn't mean these are points you must make. The purpose of these model answers is to inspire you and demonstrate the standard required to achieve top marks.

Exam skills

How will your answer be assessed?

Your teachers will have explained that your answers in the examination will be assessed on what examiners call **assessment objectives (AO).** If you can familiarise yourself with these AO, this will help you write more effective answers and achieve a higher grade in your exam. There are three assessment objectives called **AO1**, **AO2** and **AO3**.

By now, your teachers should have given you a lot of practice exam questions and techniques on how to answer them. The aim of this book is not to teach you these skills, but to show you how this is done – to model the answers for you.

Just to remind you, below are the AQA assessment objectives:

AO1 **Knowledge and understanding**

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures

What does this mean?

The ability to describe psychological theories, concepts, research studies (e.g. aim, procedures, findings and conclusions) and key terms. The exam questions can cover anything that is named on the specification.

Example

Explain the process of synaptic transmission. **[5 marks]**

Outline the role of the somatosensory centre in the brain. **[3 marks]**

AO2 **Application**

Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures:

- in a theoretical context
- in a practical context
- when handling qualitative data
- when handling quantitative data.

What does this mean?

Application questions require you to apply what you have learnt about in Psychology (theories, concepts and studies) to a scenario (situation) often referred to as 'stem' material. A scenario will be a text extract or quote given in the question. You are treated as a psychologist and you need to explain what is going on in the situation from what you have learnt.

Example

Chris suffered a stroke to the left hemisphere of his brain, damaging Broca's area and the motor cortex.

Using your knowledge of the functions of Broca's area and the motor cortex, describe the problems that Chris is likely to experience. **[4 marks]**

AO2 **Evaluation**

Analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to:

- make judgements and reach conclusions
- develop and refine practical design and procedures.

What does this mean?

Evaluation simply means assessing the '**value**' (hence '**evalu**ation' of a theory or study you have been describing. There are many ways you can evaluate theories or studies. For students, evaluation often takes the form of the strengths and weaknesses of the theory and/or study, but evaluation can also be in a form of 'commentary' (neither strength nor weakness but more in the form of an 'analysis' – which is still an evaluation).

Example

Outline one strength and one limitation of post-mortem examination. **[2 marks + 2 marks]**

The different types of exam questions

We have grouped the exam questions into four different types:

Identification questions	Multiple-choice questions, match key words with a definition, tick boxes or place information in some order or in a box.
Short-response questions	Questions worth up to 6 marks (e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 marks). These are often questions asking you to 'outline', 'explain', or 'evaluate' a theory or a study.
Application questions	These require you to apply the psychological knowledge you have learnt (theories, concepts and studies) to a real-life scenario given in the exam question.
Long-response question	These deal with long answers worth over 6 marks (8, 12 or 16 marks). The long-response answers found in this book will be mainly for 16-mark questions.

How the model answers are structured

We have tried to structure your learning by breaking down the model answers into four distinct categories

Key terms, concepts, and **theories** that are named on the AQA specification are covered by the identification and short-response questions (e.g. explain what is meant by the term…).

Research questions asking you to outline a study, describe a theory or give an evaluation are covered by short-response questions (e.g. briefly outline one study that has…).

Application questions require you to apply your knowledge to a made-up scenario (situation) and are covered under application questions.

Essay questions 'Outline and evaluate', or 'Discuss'-type questions are covered under long-response questions. Some long-response questions also require the application of knowledge.

Specification: Attachment

AQA

Attachment

- Animal studies of attachment: Lorenz and Harlow.
- Explanations of attachment: learning theory and Bowlby's monotropic theory. The concepts of a critical period and an internal working model.
- Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation'. Types of attachment: secure, insecure-avoidant and insecure-resistant. Cultural variations in attachment, including van Ijzendoorn.
- Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation. Effects of institutionalisation, including the English and Romanian Adoptees project.
- The influence of early attachment on childhood and adult relationships, including the role of an internal working model.

Animal studies of attachment

Identification question

Q01 Researcher A found that young animals seemed to attach for comfort rather than for food.

Researcher B found that mobile new-born animals would follow the first large moving object that they saw.

a) Give the name of Researcher A and state the type of animal studied by this researcher.

b) Give the name of Researcher B and state the type of animal studied by this researcher.

[2 marks]

Short-response questions

Q02 Describe Harlow's animal studies of attachment. In your answer, include what the researcher did and what they found. **[6 marks]**

Harlow (1959) wanted to investigate whether feeding or comfort was important in the development of attachment. He created two wire mothers for infant monkeys. One 'mother' was covered in soft cloth, and the other was just bare wire (without the cloth). Eight infant rhesus monkeys were studied. For four of them, a milk dispensing bottle was placed on the cloth-covered mother, and for the other four, the bottle was placed on the wire mother. The researchers recorded the amount of time each monkey spent with the two different 'mothers'. They also observed the infant monkeys' responses when they were frightened. Harlow found that all eight monkeys spent most of their time with the cloth-covered mother, whether or not this 'mother' had the feeding bottle. The monkeys who fed from the wire mother only spent a short amount of time getting milk, then returned to the cloth mother. When they were frightened, all the monkeys clung to the cloth-covered mother. The findings suggest that infants do not develop an attachment to the parent who feeds them but to the parent offering them comfort.

Q03 Describe Lorenz's animal studies of attachment. In your answer, refer to what he did and what he found. **[6 marks]**

Lorenz (1935) wanted to investigate imprinting behaviour in new-born goslings. Lorenz randomly split 12 greylag goose eggs into two groups. One group of eggs was hatched with their natural mother goose. The other half was placed in an incubator. When the incubator eggs hatched, the first living moving thing they saw was Lorenz. He found that immediately after birth, the naturally hatched baby goslings followed their mother about, whilst the incubator-hatched goslings followed Lorenz around. Lorenz next marked the goslings to distinguish them from each other (natural and

incubator) and placed all the goslings under an upturned box. When released from the upturned box, the naturally hatched goslings went straight to their mother, whereas the incubator-hatched goslings went straight to Lorenz (showing no bond to their natural mother). Lorenz identified a critical period in which imprinting needs to take place, e.g. a few hours after hatching. If imprinting did not occur within that time, chicks did not attach themselves to the mother figure. Lorenz also found that imprinting influenced mate preferences later. Animals will choose to mate with the object upon which they were imprinted. This is called sexual imprinting.

Q04 Outline the procedure used in one study of animal attachment. **[4 marks]**

Harlow (1959) created two wire mothers. One of these was covered in soft cloth, and the other was a bare wire monkey (without the cloth). Eight infant rhesus monkeys were studied. For four of them, a milk dispensing bottle was placed on the cloth-covered mother, and for the other four, the bottle was placed on the wire mother. Measurements were made, recording the amount of time each monkey spent with the two different 'mothers'. Observations were also made of the infant monkeys' responses when they were frightened.

Q05 Outline what animal studies have shown about attachment. **[4 marks]**

Animal studies, like Harlow's (1959), showed that the formation of attachment depends more on providing emotional security (reciprocal responsiveness), than on providing food. Harlow's study also showed that motherless monkeys could have problems in later life, even if they did have contact comfort. Both wire and cloth-reared monkeys were socially abnormal, more aggressive, and less sociable (they froze or fled when approached by other monkeys). They also did not display normal mating behaviour and did not cradle their own infants (even killing their infant in some cases). This shows that these early attachment experiences had a long-term impact on the monkeys' behaviour, which was permanent and irreversible.

Long-response questions

Q06 Outline and evaluate two animal studies of attachment. **[16 marks]**

Harlow (1959) wanted to investigate whether feeding or comfort was important in the development of attachment. He created two wire mothers for infant monkeys. One 'mother' was covered in soft cloth, and the other was just bare wire (without the cloth). For four of them, a milk dispensing bottle was placed on the cloth-covered mother, and for the other four, the bottle was placed on the wire mother. The researchers recorded the amount of time each monkey spent with the two different 'mothers'. The researchers also observed the infant monkeys' responses when they were frightened. Harlow found that all eight monkeys spent most of their time with the cloth-covered mother, whether or not this 'mother' had the feeding bottle. The monkeys who fed from the bottle on the wire mother only spent a short amount of time getting milk then returned to the cloth mother. When they were frightened, all the monkeys clung to the cloth-covered mother. The findings suggest that infants do not develop an attachment to the parent who feeds them but to