

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/01

Core Studies 1

General comments

The June 2006 Core studies 1 paper has remained as consistent as previous papers. Whilst a small number of questions caused problems for some candidates, many questions were answered perfectly by the majority of candidates.

A number of issues that appear every examination session are still present, the main one being the imbalance between **Section A** and **Section B**. Candidates treat **Section B** questions like **Section A** questions. This means that short answers are written for **Section A** (worth 2 or 4 marks) and also for **Section B** without any additional detail, despite **Section B** questions being worth 10 marks. Some candidates spend so much time on **Section A** that they 'run out of time' for **Section B**. **Section B** is worth 40% of the available marks and should be given more time and attention.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates answered part (a), about the two types of memory in the Loftus and Palmer study, correctly. The two types are original memory, the memory at the actual time of the event, and a 'reconstructive' memory which can be modified by leading questions and other information, which results in an 'after the fact' memory. These are not short term and long term memory.

Part (b) asked candidates to outline how the findings of this study could be useful to police when they interview people. The most frequently stated correct answer was that the police should not influence witnesses by asking leading questions.

Question 2

The study by Deregowski is a review of a number of studies of picture perception in different cultures, and part (a) asked candidates to identify one cultural difference in perceptual skills. Most candidates correctly stated that people in some cultures could not perceive 3 dimensions in 2 dimensional pictures. The crucial word here is pictures, because candidates appear to be unaware that everyone in the world sees and perceives depth in three dimensions, and that is an inherited attribute. However, the perception of dimensions in pictures is different and it is the perception of pictures that is learned not the perception of depth itself. For part (b) most candidates could provide a problem with interpreting results of cross-cultural studies.

Question 3

In the Baron-Cohen, Leslie and Frith on autism the main similarity, part (a), in the findings between the three groups of children were that they all correctly answered the naming question, the memory question and the reality question. One finding that was different, part (b), between the three groups of children was that the autistic children answered the belief question incorrectly, whereas the Down Syndrome and 'normal' children gave the correct answer.

Question 4

This question asked for a description of one finding from the Samuel and Bryant study. Most candidates were able to provide a correct answer, and most chose one of three main possibilities: that the older child the more correct answers (or fewer errors); that conservation of mass and number are easier than volume which is most difficult; that the one question task is easier than standard Piaget two-judgements format. Part (b) asked candidates to suggest how one finding can be useful to teachers in a classroom. Most logically this would relate to what was written in question part (a). For example, those writing about findings related to the type of question would state that teachers should be mindful of how children are asked questions, because if a question is asked twice it may confuse a child.

Question 5

Hodges and Tizard performed two studies in one. The first was to look at differences between ex-institutional children (restored and adopted combined) and those 'comparisons' who had not been in an institution. The second was to look only at ex-institutional children, looking at differences between those who were restored to their biological parents and those who were adopted by new parents. These two sets of studies do have different findings and many candidates do get them confused. A list of all the differences between the groups of children appears in the study itself.

Question 6

All studies in psychology raise ethical issues. Outline **two** ethical issues. This question can appear for any of the twenty core studies, and this time it was asked in relation to the Sperry study. Very few candidates were able to provide correct answers, most guessing at information which was not true. For example, it was suggested that the participants did not give consent, that they were deceived, and other similar answers. The question merely asks for ethical issues and this includes adhering to an issue. For example, participants would have given consent to the commissurotomy; they were not deceived. They were not named so confidentiality was maintained. They would have been given the right to withdraw. So, even though guidelines may not be broken, there are lots of appropriate answers that can be given.

Question 7

Part (a) asked for two similarities from the study by Raine, Buchsbaum and LaCasse on brain scans. There are three possible answers on which candidates could focus: the first set of similarities could relate to **Participants**: same sex, same age, 6 matched for schizophrenia, etc. A second, the **Procedure**: all were given a continuous performance task, injection, etc. Thirdly (and this is the focus chosen by most candidates) **Results**: similarities in: temporal, cingulate, caudate, globus pallidus, midbrain and cerebellum regions of the brain. Those candidates choosing to identify similarities in results often did not identify the correct brain regions as listed above. Part (b) asked the general question of why control groups are used in experimental research. Most correct answers simply stated that it is done to manipulate the independent variable, control irrelevant variables and observe the dependent variable, meaning that cause and effect more likely.

Question 8

For part (a), the study by Milgram on obedience, the dependent variable was the level of shock intensity, i.e. the voltage. Most candidates gave this correct answer.

Part (b), the extent to which the results supported Milgram's hypothesis, was answered incorrectly by most candidates, which was very surprising. Milgram expected that the 'Germans would be different', and that 1960's United States participants would give very low shock levels. He discovered that the 1960's American participants also obeyed authority, most giving the highest shocks possible. Therefore his hypothesis that the Germans are different was not supported.

Question 9

In the study by Haney, Banks and Zimbardo the guards and prisoners were given a uniform. Candidates were able to correctly identify two features of the guard uniform: plain khaki shirt and trooper's whistle, wooden baton, reflecting sunglasses, etc. Most candidates were able to correctly identify two features of the prisoner uniform: muslin smock, identification number on front and back, no underclothes, light chain and lock on one ankle, rubber sandals, nylon stocking cap. Seemingly some candidates had not read the study and instead wrote about what prisoners and guards wear in their own country. Although this was interesting, it did not score any marks.

Question 10

This was another question asking about variables. This is because independent and dependent variables are fundamental in psychology and they are evident in most of the core studies. In the study by Piliavin, Rodin and Piliavin (subway Samaritans) there were three dependent measures that were observed. One was the frequency of helping; a second was the speed of responding; and thirdly was the race of helper.

Part (b) asked for a description of the results of one dependent measure. Most candidates provided a correct answer here, and gave details. For example, most commonly was the frequency of helping: cane condition created spontaneous help on 62/65 trials; the drunk 19/38 trials. In relation to race of helper, there was evidence of same race helping.

Question 11

The study by Tajfel on intergroup discrimination raises questions about prejudice and discrimination. Whereas prejudice is cognitive, discrimination is an actual act, verbal or action which is explicit. Whilst many candidates were aware of this and scored full marks, many were not, assuming that prejudice and discrimination were the same thing. For part (b) the participants in the study showed discrimination by allocating points to the out-group; by showing out-group discrimination (worth 1 mark). Precisely, for 2 marks, that the maximum difference option was chosen.

Question 12

The study by Gould involved the army alpha test. This test was made up of different types of question, including: analogies (Washington is to Adams....); filling in the next number in sequence; multi-choice (e.g. Crisco). Many candidates gave these types along with examples, but many failed to answer the question, simply stating that the questions had cultural bias in them.

Question 13

Part (a) asked for two features of the sample in the Hraba and Grant study. Some candidates referred to the dolls that were used, but they are part of the procedure not the sample of participants. Correct answers mentioned that the children were 4-8 years of age, that they were from five public schools, they were all from Lincoln, Nebraska, that there were 160 of them, as well as other features. Any two would score 2 marks. Part (b) simply asked for two of the questions (from the list of eight) that were used. Most candidates were able to provide two correct questions.

Question 14

In the study by Rosenhan staff interpreted the behaviour of the pseudo-patients by assuming that they were mentally ill. Everything done by the pseudo-patients, the note-taking, the queuing for lunch, the ignoring of questions were all interpreted as part of the illness. However, as was asked in part (b), not all people present assumed this, because many of the real patients assumed they were normal, believing they were journalists or checking on the hospital. Many candidates were entirely successful, scoring maximum marks, but many candidates showed they did not fully understand the study.

Question 15

A different emphasis for this question, which, in part (a) asked about Jane, who appears towards the end of the study. Jane's personality had parts of both Eve's, but also had new aspects. In part (b) a description of the test given to Jane was required, and a large number of candidates were unable to do this. Jane was only given one test, the EEG (electroencephalogram) and the findings were that Eve White along with Jane showed 11 cps (cycles per second) whereas Eve Black showed 12.5 cps.

Question 16

This question focused on case studies and the chosen studies could include Gardner and Gardner and Thigpen and Cleckley. Most candidates chose the Freud study. Part **(a)** asked for a description of the main findings of the study, and most candidates were able to provide good, accurate detail, most scoring good marks. Part **(b)** asked about the procedure of the case study, and again, most candidates were able to provide a reasonably wide-ranging list of appropriate features. Part **(c)** asked about the strengths and weaknesses of case studies and most candidates were able to provide two some appropriate information, although many seemingly had not thought about this aspect at all. Part **(d)** was not very well done, as candidates, particularly those choosing Freud, were unable to think beyond the boundaries of the study. Any other method could be used and candidates are required to suggest how it would affect the results, even if it would mean that there are no results at all.

Question 17

This question looked at controls that are used in experimental research and the chosen studies could include Bandura, Ross and Ross, Schachter and Singer and Dement and Kleitman. Part **(a)** asked for a description of the procedure of the chosen study and most candidates were able to provide appropriate, accurate detail, most scoring good marks. Part **(b)** asked candidates about the controls used in their chosen study and again, most candidates were able to provide a reasonably wide-ranging list of appropriate features. Those focusing on one or two but providing much more detail were given equivalent credit. Part **(c)** asked about the advantages and problems of applying controls in psychological studies and, as with **Question 16**, many candidates were prepared and provided a competent answer, although there were those who had not thought about any strengths or weaknesses. For part **(d)** most candidates made reasonable suggestions for alternative ways in which data could be gathered. On the one hand the more able candidates often provided more detailed explanations of how their suggestions would work, and on the other, there were those who could not develop their suggestion beyond a few sentences or so. Not all candidates went on to consider the effect their suggestion would have on the results, as the question asked.

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Paper 9698/02
The Core Studies 2

General comments

This year's paper produced a very pleasing performance by most candidates demonstrating good understanding and knowledge of the Core Studies as well as methodological issues. Very few candidates made rubric errors. The paper requires candidates to apply psychological issues to the core studies and most candidates are able to do this although some obviously know some studies better than others. The essay questions were answered well in the main with most candidates referring to all four of the studies listed. It was pleasing to see candidates attempting all three questions although **Question 6** was the most popular. Parts **(b)** and **(c)** of the essays provided good differentiation in the marks as better candidates were able to discuss a range of problems or strengths and weaknesses and were also able to sustain an argument using a variety of points in part **(c)**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1(a)

Most of the candidates suggested that the study by Loftus and Palmer was low in ecological validity due to the use of film clips. Better answers suggested the differences between witnessing a real accident and watching one in a film clip these included; the lack of sensory stimuli such as sounds and smells, the lack of emotional involvement, etc.

Question 1(b)

Again candidates were able to suggest a limitation of studies that are low in ecological validity mainly with reference to the ability to generalise to everyday life events.

Question 2(a)

Many candidates recognised that the IQ test in the Baron-Cohen, Leslie and Frith study was a control for intelligence between the three groups of children to show that autism was not related to intellectual ability. Weaker answers confused the intelligence test with the Sally Anne test itself.

Question 2(b)

Good answers referred to the advantages of intelligence tests for making comparisons between people. Better answers went beyond the specific study by Baron-Cohen, Leslie and Frith.

Question 3

This question was answered well with candidates referring to ethical issues including protection from harm in a number of ways related to project Washoe. Better answers gave details from the study to support ethical issues raised.

Question 4(a)

Candidates found this question straight forward and identified two features of the sample including age, gender, background etc.

Question 4(b)

This was a more challenging question but most candidates could provide arguments for or against the findings from Tajfel's study being useful, including, the ecological validity of the study, demographic characteristics, issues relating to the sample etc.

Question 5(a)

Some candidates were unaware of the meaning of 'physiological' measures and suggested the reporting of dreams as opposed to the measurement of rapid eye movements or brain activity through the use of the EEG.

Question 5(b)

Many candidates answered this question well correctly giving an advantage of studying physiological processes over psychological ones mainly referring to the objectivity of scientific measurement. Weaker answers failed to make a comparison, which was requested in the question. This suggests more careful reading of the question requests is required.

Section B

Question 6

This was the most popular essay question. In part (a) candidates mostly related the findings of the studies to development but weaker answers just listed findings from the study without explaining what they show about development. Part (b) was straightforward and good answers linked problems such as demand characteristics and ethics to the study of development. Weaker answers merely stated problems without linking them to studying development or using a study to illustrate. Part (c) differentiated well with some candidates giving excellent discussions about the factors that have the greatest influence on development. Better answers give a balanced view with supporting evidence both from the core studies and wider.

Question 7

This question related to quantitative and qualitative data. Candidates answered part (a) well and were able to describe the data collected in each of the studies listed. Part (b) focused specifically on qualitative data and a few candidates confused this with quantitative data which affected the mark award for this question part, but there were also many good answers which discussed the problems of collecting qualitative data including subjective interpretation, time costs, etc. Good answers supported each problem with an example from one of the studies listed. Again part (c) differentiated well with some candidates taking this opportunity to give a balanced discussion of the usefulness of quantitative and qualitative data.

Question 8

This question was chosen least often in **Section B** but was answered well by those who attempted it. In part (a) candidates effectively suggested how the findings from each of these studies could be used as a form of social control, for example, restricting immigration in relation to Gould's study on IQ testing. Part (b) required candidates to think about the problems of studying different groups of people, this was answered well with problems such as ethnocentrism, cultural bias in methodology and sample issues being discussed and linked well to the studies listed. Part (c) provided an opportunity for candidates to discuss the issue of social control and the extent to which it is desirable. This was very well answered by more able candidates who gave a balanced view supported by details from the core studies and everyday life.

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Paper 9698/03
Specialist Choices

General comments

Most candidates provide good answers for the questions in **Section A**, however; most candidates do not do very well on the more challenging **Section B** 'essay' questions. The main reason why answers to **Section B** are poor is because candidates do not explicitly show their psychological knowledge. It is the tradition in psychology world-wide to describe the published work of others. This is commonly done by quoting the work of others; not word for word, but through quoting a name (and possibly date) and then describing the piece of research in a candidate's own words. For example a candidate may write "Watson (1920) studied little Albert when studying classical conditioning", and "Clarke (2003) in his book on anti-social behaviour stated that...". This approach shows that candidates have actually studied some psychology, and it shows that they can describe the research they have read and through his/her description, understanding is also shown. An inappropriate approach is to merely write an anecdotal, common-sense view of the world which is based on nothing more than personal opinion and experience. Answers of the latter type often show no understanding or knowledge of psychology; it is as if the examination is being taken by candidates who have not actually studied any psychology at all. Candidates who quote published research will be successful; candidates who adopt the latter approach will be unsuccessful.

A further problem with **Section B** essays is that candidates do not evaluate. Evaluation is to make positive and negative comment about a piece of evidence. For papers 1 and 2 on core studies, candidates can easily evaluate, say, the Milgram study. But this is not done for **Section B** part (b). Often candidates describe relevant evidence in part (a) and then describe the same information in part (b). This scores no marks. Candidates are strongly encouraged to evaluate.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates were able to provide a good explanation of the term motivation in education. Most candidates provided a learned textbook definition, and whilst this is good, these types of questions do state that the answer can be 'in your own words'. Part (b) required two types of motivation and the answers of most candidates revolved around intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Part (c), although clearly identifiable in the syllabus, caused problems for most candidates who appeared not to be familiar with the term attribution. Simply it is attributing a cause to any behaviour. For example, if a candidate fails an examination they are more likely to blame an external factor, such as the teacher. If a candidate passes an examination they are more likely to make an internal attribution, claiming it to their ability and hard work.

Question 2

The humanistic approach in education is, perhaps, less commonly known than the behaviourist or cognitivist, but it is no less a valid approach. The majority of candidates choosing this question answered it very well, showing good understanding of relevant terms and concepts underlying the approach. Part (b) was also answered well, with two applications being explained clearly. Most common were the open classroom idea and the emphasis on candidate centred teaching. Part (c) asked for a weakness and again, most candidates were able to do this, showing good understanding of the limitations of this approach.

Question 3

This question required candidates to describe in part **(a)** and then evaluate in part **(b)** learning and teaching styles. More answers than ever before made a distinction between the two and included details on teaching styles, whereas for previous appearances of this question candidates tended to focus on learning styles, at the expense of teaching styles. As with most **Section B** questions some candidates simply related what is done in his or her classroom, rather than quoting psychological theories and explanations of styles. The evaluation part for some candidates was informed and actually evaluated, whereas for many candidates, evaluation was just an opportunity to describe more information and this strategy scores very few marks.

Question 4

The place where learning takes place is crucial to successful education and there are a many factors that impinge on the teaching and learning process. Some candidates merely provide a list describing features of his/her environment, whereas better answers organised factors into categories such as building design, classroom layout and seating arrangements. Better answers also quoted psychological studies, such as that by Baum on the effect of windows and lighting. For part **(c)** a number of answers were anecdotal, again describing one specific classroom environment, whereas better answers made a suggestion and then quoted a piece of psychological evidence in support of it.

Question 5

The term 'crowd' is perhaps best defined as a group of people in physical proximity to a common situation or stimulus. Whilst many candidates were able to do this relatively successfully, they were less successful in answering part **(b)** which required candidates to describe two types of crowd. Brown (1965) provides a very useful list which is: the acquisitive crowd, the apathetic, the expressive or peaceful, the baiting, the aggressive and the escaping crowd. Part **(c)** required some psychological insight into how escaping crowds can be controlled, but in most cases, the insight was absent, instead there was often the view that the police would help, with no further elaboration.

Question 6

Territory is different from personal space in that territory often remains in a fixed place whereas personal space always moves with the person. Most candidates answering this question were able to make this important distinction. For part **(b)** candidates usefully referred to either primary territory, such as his/her house; secondary or semi-public territory such as the same desk at which they might sit in a psychology class; and public territory, such as a seat on a bus. For part **(c)** candidates gave the correct view that most people defend territory using a marker such as a bag or coat to indicate that they have claimed the territory.

Question 7

Many competent answers were written in response to this question. For part **(a)** descriptions of crowding in animal was prominent, particularly the Calhoun rat study. For humans the most often quoted were the studies done by Bickman and Dukes and Jorgenson on crowding and social behaviour. Evaluation was generally disappointing and followed the pattern outlined above, where the same information is provided in more detail. Part **(c)** saw some appropriate answers, such as to increase cognitive control (as suggested by Saegert) or to make use of a visual escape or distraction (e.g. Baum), but many answers progressed no further than the anecdotal.

Question 8

As was mentioned in the general comments above, candidates will score more marks if they demonstrate they have studied some psychological theories and evidence. This question provides a perfect illustration of this because here a significant number of candidates merely wrote all they knew all about noise, and not what psychologists know about noise. There is a crucial difference between these two approaches! Candidates could usefully have written about studies looking at noise on health, on performance and on social behaviour, as outlined in the syllabus. In response to part **(c)** the same applied because there are many studies which look at the positive aspects of noise: how it can help relax people in stressful medical situations, how it can be used as a component in consumer behaviour or how it can be used to improve educational performance, which is called the Mozart effect.

Question 9

Nearly all candidates were able to explain chronic pain, where a person is in pain for a period of time. In part (b) some answers were anecdotal, such as “ask the parents” or “observe the child”. Whilst some answers did score marks, as this is what can be done to measure pain in children, better answers demonstrated psychological knowledge. For example, observing pain (as suggested by Turk) can be done by a distorted posture, of facial expression or it can be verbal expression. Over time a UAB, which assesses pain behaviour can be used. Other strategies could be to use a PPQ (a paediatric pain questionnaire) or some rating scale such as the visual analogue scale. The most common suggestion of how to manage pain in children was to give them some medication or pain-killing drug.

Question 10

Overall, this question on substance abuse was very well answered. For part (a) most candidates were able to provide a competent explanation of the term, and in part (c) most candidates were able to make an appropriate distinction between physical and psychological dependence. What was a little less well done was part (b) where a number of candidates could not distinguish between preventing and quitting, and a number of candidates failed to provide more than an anecdotal sentence. Many maximum mark answers were also observed.

Question 11

This question on health promotion is a perfect illustration of the point made in the introductory comments that candidates should write about published psychological studies rather than their own anecdotal examples. There are two main strategies that are adopted when promoting health: the arousal of fear, involving attempts to scare people into action; and providing information because people can only improve their health if they know what to do and how to do it. Many studies illustrate both these strategies. Whilst a number of candidates adopted a successful approach, many did not and merely referred to what was happening in their country or even their school without any acknowledgement of a strategy or published study.

Question 12

This was another area with many anecdotal answers. Both teachers and candidates should read the published mark schemes. Reference to the mark scheme for this question will reveal extensive indicative content – the details of what good answers can include. Many answers here also revealed the strategy of outlining information in part (a) and then repeating it in more detail in question part (b). Again, this strategy does not answer the question which requires evaluation.

Question 13

Most candidates were able to provide a good definition of amnesia in response to part (a) and some added the more specific term that psychogenic amnesia is memory loss due to psychological factors. Part (b) saw most candidates provide correct answers including amnesia, psychogenic fugue or post-traumatic stress disorder. Part (c) revealed answers ranging from the entirely correct, such as systematic desensitisation to the inappropriate.

Question 14

Candidates performed very well in their answers to this question on degenerative abnormality. In part (a) they were able to explain the term degenerative abnormality clearly and correctly. In part (b) two types were also correctly identified, the highest marks being given to those providing a little more detail in their answer than those that were brief (as the mark scheme states). The most common types included in answers were Alzheimer's, Pick's and Korsakoff's disorders. Part (c) is often difficult as there is no specific treatment, but candidates can provide a useful list of ways in which the degeneration can be slowed.

Question 15

This question was on abnormal learning. In response to part **(a)** candidates wrote, often extensively, about ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), autism and dyslexia. Occasionally other types of abnormal learning were included such as dyscalculia. Often candidates focused on potential causes, rather than describing the main symptoms. Part **(b)** was generally poorly done for the reasons outlined in the introductory comments. Part **(c)**, which asked for a way in which any form of abnormal learning may be overcome, was answered well by most candidates. Some merely stated that ADHD could be overcome using drugs, whilst the more detailed answers came from candidates who suggested strategies for those suffering from dyslexia.

Question 16

Abnormal avoidance and/or need covers a wide range of abnormalities, and this is reflected in the wide variety of answers provided by candidates. Abnormal need allows candidates to focus on abnormalities such as kleptomania, pyromania and compulsive gambling, whilst the most common form of abnormal avoidance is a phobia, of which there are many types. Part **(a)** saw answers covering the whole mark range, whilst most answers in part **(b)** tended to be at the bottom end of the range. Part **(c)** focused on treatments, again the question helping candidates by allowing them to choose an abnormality of their choice.

Question 17

Part **(a)** caused no problems for candidates as the selection of people for work is exactly what it states. Part **(b)** did cause problems for some candidates. This question required a description of one personnel screening or psychometric test (as used in the selection of people for work). Many candidates chose an IQ test, which is rarely used in organisations for selecting personnel. Most organisations have tests which measure abilities much more precisely, such as cognitive ability, mechanical ability or job skills. Part **(c)** saw many candidates giving anecdotal answers rather than more specific techniques such as the multiple regression, multiple cut-off or multiple hurdle models.

Question 18

Most candidates provided successful answers to the question requiring an explanation of the term communication channel. Part **(b)** asked for two types of communication channel, and most responses focused on telephone or email, or meetings, which are entirely correct. Some candidates focused on communication networks, which are peripherally relevant. Part **(c)** was generally well answered with candidates providing a range of relevant answers.

Question 19

Candidates who know about theories of leadership and management often have problems with this question because there are too many to include. Candidates may wish to think about organising their list of theories into categories, or they may wish to consider including more modern approaches, rather than those which are some fifty or more years old. Part **(b)** often saw detailed answers being awarded high marks because many candidates were able to compare and contrast different theories. Part **(c)** allowed candidates to choose a leadership strategy for their own company, and a range of interesting answers were provided.

Question 20

The same comments made about the leadership question also apply to this question. Again, if candidates organise their answers and if they consider more modern strategies, (rather than Maslow for example) then marks can be gained more efficiently. Part **(b)** again saw both good and poor answers, these being dependent on whether candidates evaluated or not. Part **(c)** again gave candidates their own company and asked how they would motivate their employees. This is an interesting question because many candidates suggest money is a motivator, but do not appreciate that this reduces company profits.