

Essay Questions

1) Shane is eager to buy an Electro-Neural Stimulator so that he can get both halves of his brain working at peak efficiency by exam time. Based on what you have read about similar products, how should you respond to his plans?

Answer:

A good answer will include the following key points.

- Its marketing uses a veneer of psychological and scientific-sounding terminology.
- It promises a quick fix.
- It is important to look for the empirical evidence for such a device before wasting your money on it.

Diff: Moderate

Type: ES

Page Reference: Psychology, Pseudoscience, and Popular Opinion, 4

Topic: Psychology, Pseudoscience, and Popular Opinion

Skill: Applied

Objective: 1.2 Articulate what's wrong with psychologists' nonscientific competitors, such as astrologers and psychics.

Hint 1: Psychology, Pseudoscience, and Popular Opinion

2) In recent decades, the public's appetite for pseudoscience has grown. Describe two examples of this "pop psychology" and then analyze the differences between psychology and pseudoscience.

Answer:

A good answer will include the following key points. Specific examples may vary.

- Example 1: Many self-help books are available in bookstores that purport to help you find personal growth and success in life.
- Example 2: Playing on the modern consumer's love of technology, a variety of electrical gizmos have been marketed with the promise that they will get both halves of your brain working at their peak.
- Psychobabble is pseudoscience and quackery covered by a veneer of psychological and scientific-sounding language.
- Scientific psychology is based on empirical evidence.

Diff: Moderate

Type: ES

Page Reference: Psychology, Pseudoscience, and Popular Opinion, 4

Topic: Psychology, Pseudoscience, and Popular Opinion

Skill: Conceptual

Objective: 1.1: Compare “psychobabble” and serious psychology.

Hint 1: Psychology, Pseudoscience, and Popular Opinion

3) One common form of oversimplification is argument by anecdote. Explain this type of critical thinking error. Create your own example of an argument by anecdote.

Answer:

A good answer will include the following key points.

- Argument by anecdote involves generalizing from a personal experience or a few examples.
- An example should be given that shows how a person might generalize from a personal experience to all people.

Diff: Difficult

Type: ES

Page Reference: Thinking Critically and Creatively about Psychology, 7

Topic: Thinking Critically and Creatively about Psychology

Skill: Conceptual

Objective: 1.5 List eight guidelines for evaluating psychological claims.

Hint 1: Thinking Critically and Creatively about Psychology

4) Many people don't realize that just as the body needs exercise to stay in shape, clear thinking requires effort and practice. Name and give an example of each of the eight guidelines to critical thinking.

Answer:

A good answer will include the following key points.

- Ask questions and be willing to wonder.
- Define your terms.
- Examine the evidence.
- Analyze assumptions and biases.
- Avoid emotional reasoning.
- Don't oversimplify.
- Consider other interpretations.
- Tolerate uncertainty.
- Examples may vary.

Diff: Difficult

Type: ES

Page Reference: Thinking Critically and Creatively about Psychology, 7

Topic: Thinking Critically and Creatively about Psychology

Skill: Conceptual

Objective: 1.5 List eight guidelines for evaluating psychological claims.

Hint 1: Thinking Critically and Creatively about Psychology

5) Describe the three schools of psychological thought that became popular when psychology emerged as a discipline, including the major theorists associated with each school as well as the goal of each of these perspectives.

Answer:

A good answer will include the following key points.

- Structuralism was the analysis of sensations, images, and feelings into basic elements based on Wundt's method of introspection.
- Wilhelm Wundt and E. B. Titchener were leaders in the structuralist school of psychology.
- Structuralism died out in the early years of psychology.
- Functionalism, founded by William James, emphasized the purpose of behaviour, as opposed to its analysis and description.
- Functionalism also died out as a separate school of psychology, but its emphasis on the causes and consequences of behaviour continued to influence the development of psychology as a science.
- Psychoanalysis was both a theory of personality and a method of psychotherapy that stressed the role of the unconscious mind and its hidden conflicts and wishes in influencing our behaviour.
- Psychoanalysis was founded by Sigmund Freud.
- Psychoanalysis is not accepted by most empirically oriented psychologists, but remains an active, though highly controversial, school of psychology today.

Diff: Difficult

Type: ES

Page Reference: The Birth of Modern Psychology, 15

Topic: Psychology's Past: From the Armchair to the Laboratory

Skill: Factual

Objective: 1.7 Describe how and when psychology became a formal discipline.

Hint 1: The Birth of Modern Psychology

6) The text states that, "We are like fish that are unaware they live in water, so obvious is water in their lives. Sociocultural psychologists study the water—the social and cultural environments that people 'swim' in every day." Describe two examples from your personal experience that illustrate how cultural rules influence the way we perceive the world and relate to others.

Answer:

A good answer will include the following key points.

- Example 1: People growing up in Western cultures typically place a much stronger value on individuality than do people from many Asian cultures.
- Example 2: People growing up in the northern United States are much less likely to use the terms "sir" and "ma'am" than are people growing up in the southern United States.
- Many other examples are possible.

Diff: Easy

Type: ES

Page Reference: The Major Psychological Perspectives, 19

Topic: Psychology's Present: Behaviour, Body, Mind, and Culture

Skill: Conceptual

Objective: 1.9 List the five major perspectives in psychology.

Hint 1: The Major Psychological Perspectives

7) To most people, the word psychologist conjures up an image of a therapist listening intently to a client. But not all psychologists do clinical work. Describe the different professional activities of psychologists with doctorates. Include examples of work in each of the three general categories.

Answer:

A good answer will include the following key points.

- Psychologists teach and do research in colleges and universities.
- Psychologists provide mental health services (e.g., clinical and counselling psychologists).
- Psychologists conduct research and apply the findings of psychology in nonacademic settings such as business, sports, government, law, and the military.
- Examples will vary.

Diff: Difficult

Type: ES

Page Reference: What Psychologists Do, 23

Topic: What Psychologists Do

Skill: Conceptual

Objective: 1.13 List the three major areas of psychologists' professional activities.

Hint 1: What Psychologists Do