

SACE Stage 1 Psychology Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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Questions

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- 1. What is the main focus of developmental psychology?**
 - A. Studying the effects of authority on behavior**
 - B. Examining changes in personality traits over a lifetime**
 - C. Understanding physical, cognitive, and social changes throughout life**
 - D. Analyzing the impact of genetics on behavior**
- 2. How does positive reinforcement work?**
 - A. By removing an unpleasant stimulus**
 - B. By adding a stimulus to increase a behavior**
 - C. By applying a punishment for undesirable behavior**
 - D. By ignoring a behavior completely**
- 3. What does psychodynamic theory emphasize in the context of personality?**
 - A. The role of learned behaviors and environmental factors**
 - B. The influence of conscious and unconscious forces, including childhood experiences**
 - C. Developmental stages and crises of life**
 - D. The impact of genetics on personality formation**
- 4. At what stage does a person face the challenge of 'Ego Integrity vs Despair'?**
 - A. Adolescence**
 - B. Early adulthood**
 - C. Middle adulthood**
 - D. Older adulthood**
- 5. What is the primary concept of conformity in social psychology?**
 - A. Changing behavior to fit societal expectations**
 - B. Adjusting thoughts to align with group beliefs**
 - C. Changing behavior or ideas to match a larger group's**
 - D. Seeking approval from peers**

- 6. What does classical conditioning involve?**
- A. A learning process through associations between stimuli**
 - B. A method of analyzing data without experiments**
 - C. A technique used solely for animal training**
 - D. A process that focuses on gene behavior**
- 7. Which type of attachment indicates a child who is consistently well-adjusted and feels secure?**
- A. Anxious-avoidant**
 - B. Secure**
 - C. Anxious-resistant**
 - D. Disorganized**
- 8. How is "authority" depicted in Milgram's study regarding behavior?**
- A. Participants questioned the authority figure**
 - B. Authority is acknowledged and not questioned by those under it**
 - C. Participants complied only when costs were explained**
 - D. Authority was irrelevant to participants' actions**
- 9. What impact does chronic stress have on physical health?**
- A. It has no significant impact**
 - B. It can lead to health problems, including cardiovascular diseases**
 - C. It only affects mental health**
 - D. It enhances immune function**
- 10. Which area of psychology focuses on the assessment and treatment of mental disorders?**
- A. Developmental psychology**
 - B. Clinical psychology**
 - C. Cognitive psychology**
 - D. Social psychology**

Answers

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1. C
2. B
3. B
4. D
5. C
6. A
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. B

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Explanations

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1. What is the main focus of developmental psychology?

- A. Studying the effects of authority on behavior
- B. Examining changes in personality traits over a lifetime
- C. Understanding physical, cognitive, and social changes throughout life**
- D. Analyzing the impact of genetics on behavior

Developmental psychology primarily concentrates on understanding the various changes that individuals experience throughout their life span. This field investigates the physical, cognitive, and social transformations that occur from infancy through old age. By exploring these changes, developmental psychologists aim to comprehend how people grow, learn, and adapt in different contexts and stages of life. For instance, they study how cognitive abilities such as problem-solving and reasoning evolve as children mature into adults. Additionally, they consider how social interactions and relationships, including those with family and peers, influence personal development over time. This comprehensive view of life changes highlights the complexity of human growth and the interplay between various factors, such as environment and age, in shaping an individual's experiences.

2. How does positive reinforcement work?

- A. By removing an unpleasant stimulus
- B. By adding a stimulus to increase a behavior**
- C. By applying a punishment for undesirable behavior
- D. By ignoring a behavior completely

Positive reinforcement works by adding a stimulus that increases the likelihood of a desired behavior being repeated in the future. This principle is based on the behaviorist theory, where rewards are used to strengthen the connection between behavior and positive outcomes. For example, if a student receives praise or a reward for completing their homework, they are more likely to continue this behavior because it is associated with a positive consequence. The key element here is the addition of a favorable stimulus following the behavior, which encourages its repetition. In contrast, other options focus on different mechanisms—removing an unpleasant stimulus pertains to negative reinforcement, applying punishment is related to decreasing undesirable behavior, and ignoring a behavior does not provide any reinforcement or consequence that would influence future actions. These distinctions are important in understanding how different behavioral techniques operate within the realm of psychology.

3. What does psychodynamic theory emphasize in the context of personality?

- A. The role of learned behaviors and environmental factors**
- B. The influence of conscious and unconscious forces, including childhood experiences**
- C. Developmental stages and crises of life**
- D. The impact of genetics on personality formation**

Psychodynamic theory emphasizes the influence of both conscious and unconscious forces on personality development. This approach, founded by Sigmund Freud, posits that our behaviors and thoughts are significantly shaped by unconscious motives and conflicts, particularly those stemming from childhood experiences. These early interactions and events can leave lasting impressions, leading to latent influences on behavior and personality that individuals may not be actively aware of. The theory highlights mechanisms such as repression, where unwanted thoughts are pushed into the unconscious. This generates internal conflicts that can shape one's personality traits and behaviors throughout life. By understanding these unconscious influences, psychodynamic therapy aims to bring awareness to these often hidden aspects of the self, allowing for personal growth and more adaptive behaviors. In contrast, other options focus on different aspects of psychology. Learned behaviors and environmental factors are emphasized in behaviorist approaches, while developmental stages and crises relate more closely to Erikson's psychosocial theory. Genetics plays a significant role in some contemporary theories of personality but is not a primary focus of psychodynamic theory, which centers more on psychological processes rather than biological factors.

4. At what stage does a person face the challenge of 'Ego Integrity vs Despair'?

- A. Adolescence**
- B. Early adulthood**
- C. Middle adulthood**
- D. Older adulthood**

The challenge of 'Ego Integrity vs Despair' occurs during older adulthood, which typically refers to the stage of life when individuals are reflecting on their lives and contemplating their accomplishments and experiences. According to Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory, this stage is characterized by the struggle to find a sense of fulfillment and acceptance regarding one's life journey. In this stage, individuals often evaluate whether they feel satisfied with the life they've led or if they have regrets and unfulfilled aspirations. If they feel a sense of pride and completeness, they achieve ego integrity, leading to wisdom and contentment. On the other hand, if they look back with feelings of regret and despair over missed opportunities, they may struggle with feelings of bitterness and disappointment. This concept is distinct from earlier stages of development, such as those seen in adolescence, early adulthood, or middle adulthood, which focus on issues like identity formation, intimacy, and generativity, respectively. The unique aspects of older adulthood involve a comprehensive review of one's life and preparing for the end, making the challenge of 'Ego Integrity vs Despair' specifically relevant to this life stage.

5. What is the primary concept of conformity in social psychology?

- A. Changing behavior to fit societal expectations**
- B. Adjusting thoughts to align with group beliefs**
- C. Changing behavior or ideas to match a larger group's**
- D. Seeking approval from peers**

The primary concept of conformity in social psychology is about changing behavior or ideas to match a larger group's norms or expectations. This process often occurs when individuals adjust their actions or beliefs in response to real or perceived group pressure, whether it be from peers, society, or key influences within a social context. Conformity can manifest in different ways, including public compliance, where a person outwardly agrees with the group regardless of personal beliefs, or private acceptance, where a person's beliefs genuinely align with those of the group. The emphasis is on the dynamics of group influence and the desire to fit in or align oneself with the collective viewpoint, which is a central theme in understanding social behavior. While changing behavior to fit societal expectations, adjusting thoughts to align with group beliefs, and seeking approval from peers are related concepts, they are more specific aspects or strategies that can occur within the broader spectrum of conformity. The key aspect of conformity is the alignment with a larger group's norms, indicating a wider recognition of how groups shape individual thoughts and actions.

6. What does classical conditioning involve?

- A. A learning process through associations between stimuli**
- B. A method of analyzing data without experiments**
- C. A technique used solely for animal training**
- D. A process that focuses on gene behavior**

Classical conditioning involves a learning process through associations between stimuli, which is a foundational concept in psychology developed by Ivan Pavlov. In this form of learning, a neutral stimulus becomes associated with an unconditioned stimulus to elicit a conditioned response. For instance, in Pavlov's famous experiment, the sound of a bell (the neutral stimulus) was paired with food (the unconditioned stimulus), leading dogs to salivate (the conditioned response) at the sound of the bell alone after repeated pairings. The essence of classical conditioning lies in this ability to link stimuli and form associations, highlighting how behavior can be influenced by learned experiences. This process applies widely across both human and animal learning, demonstrating that responses can be conditioned through repeated exposure to certain stimuli, making it a critical concept in understanding behavior and learning.

7. Which type of attachment indicates a child who is consistently well-adjusted and feels secure?

A. Anxious-avoidant

B. Secure

C. Anxious-resistant

D. Disorganized

A secure attachment type indicates that a child has developed a healthy relationship with their primary caregiver, allowing them to feel safe and confident in exploring their environment. Children with secure attachment demonstrate trust in their caregivers, utilize them as a secure base when they are exploring, and are generally more well-adjusted and resilient in dealing with stress or changes. Research shows that securely attached children are more likely to develop positive social skills, have healthier relationships with peers, and cope better with challenges as they grow. This type of attachment fosters emotional regulation and reduces anxiety, leading to overall psychological well-being. Other attachment styles, such as anxious-avoidant, anxious-resistant, and disorganized, indicate various levels of insecurity and maladjustment, often resulting from inconsistent or unresponsive caregiving. These attachment types can lead to difficulties in relationships and emotional development. In contrast, a secure attachment promotes a strong foundation for a child's emotional and social development, highlighting the importance of the caregiver's role in fostering a secure attachment.

8. How is "authority" depicted in Milgram's study regarding behavior?

A. Participants questioned the authority figure

B. Authority is acknowledged and not questioned by those under it

C. Participants complied only when costs were explained

D. Authority was irrelevant to participants' actions

In Milgram's study, authority is depicted as a powerful influence over individuals' behavior, leading them to obey commands even when those commands conflicted with their personal morals or ethical considerations. The study illustrated that participants were more likely to administer what they believed were painful electric shocks to another person when instructed to do so by an authoritative figure, exemplifying how the presence of an authority figure can result in unquestioning compliance. This behavior indicates that individuals often place their trust in the authority figure, allowing them to dictate their actions without critical evaluation. The high level of obedience observed in the study underscores the concept that people may prioritize fulfilling the expectations of authority over their own moral judgment. This dynamic reveals insights into human behavior, particularly in hierarchical structures, where authority can exert significant influence, leading individuals to follow directives that they might otherwise resist.

9. What impact does chronic stress have on physical health?

- A. It has no significant impact
- B. It can lead to health problems, including cardiovascular diseases**
- C. It only affects mental health
- D. It enhances immune function

Chronic stress is known to have a significant impact on physical health, particularly in how it can lead to a variety of health problems, including cardiovascular diseases. This occurs because prolonged exposure to stress hormones, such as cortisol, can lead to increased blood pressure, higher cholesterol levels, and inflammation. These physiological changes increase the risk for various conditions, including hypertension, heart disease, and stroke. Additionally, chronic stress can affect lifestyle choices, leading to unhealthy behaviors such as poor diet, physical inactivity, and smoking, which further contribute to the risk of developing serious health issues. Understanding this connection is crucial for recognizing the importance of stress management and its role in maintaining overall health.

10. Which area of psychology focuses on the assessment and treatment of mental disorders?

- A. Developmental psychology
- B. Clinical psychology**
- C. Cognitive psychology
- D. Social psychology

Clinical psychology is the area of psychology that specifically focuses on the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental disorders. This branch employs various therapeutic techniques and approaches to help individuals manage psychological distress, improve their mental health, and address issues that may arise from mental illnesses. In clinical psychology, practitioners often conduct assessments through interviews, observations, and standardized tests to understand a client's emotional and psychological state. They then develop treatment plans that may include psychotherapy, counseling, and other interventions tailored to the needs of the individual. The goal is to enhance mental well-being and facilitate recovery from mental health conditions. Other areas of psychology, while significantly important, do not primarily focus on mental disorders. Developmental psychology studies the changes in individuals over their lifespan, cognitive psychology examines the mental processes such as thinking, memory, and problem-solving, and social psychology investigates how individuals are influenced by social interactions and the presence of others. None of these areas deal primarily with the assessment and treatment of mental disorders as clinical psychology does.