***CHAPTER ONE***

***Introduction to Psychology and Its Research Methods***

**1.1. Introducing Psychology**

**Lecture/Discussion**

***The Goals of Psychology: Describing, Explaining, Predicting, and Changing***

Before introducing these important steps in the approach of psychology, begin with the question:

“*If you wanted to understand someone or something, where do you begin?”*

Have your students identify the four Goals of Psychology based on the scenario below.

*Scenario:*

As you walk through the park, you observe two people having (what you consider) a heated conversation on a park bench. Later, after you’ve returned home, your roommate asked you what you saw on your walk. As you think back to the two people on the bench, you may be mentally following the four-step process psychologists employ without even realizing it!

**1) You Describe:** Well, while walking in the park I saw two people engage in a heated argument

**2) You Explain:** Well, I assume it was an argument—they were both raising their voices and trying to talk over each other

**3) You Predict:** I don’t think they resolved the argument—I’m betting they walked away angry

**4) You Change:** Well, perhaps I did not have all the information exactly right... Maybe they weren’t arguing, and if they were, maybe they resolved their differences...

After these observations (or any of your own making, but please follow the four-step process). Ask students to volunteer suggestions to contribute to your “Change” step.

**In-Class Activity**

***Practicing the Describe, Explain, Predict, and Change Paradigm***

*Time & Tools: (a) This activity should take anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes, depending on your class size. (b) Students will need pencil/pen and one half-sheet of notebook paper.*

Ask students to break into student-pairs. If there is an odd student out, have the last student join up with a student-pair of their choice.

Tell students to each come up with a scenario/situation involving at least two people. Ask students to write down the scenario/situation on their half-sheet of paper. It may be helpful to have students provide names for the individuals in their scenario/situation. Caution students not to use events in their scenario that they have personally experienced, as this might disrupt their next step in the activity. Once students have listed a scenario (for example, a man named Tom was late for his train, and the conductor—Ann—would not let him get on the train), each must give their scenario/situation to their partner, write on the other side of their partner’s paper the four steps: Describe, Explain, Predict, Change, and under each provide a brief summary of their situation.

Once students have completed their four-step processes, ask them to share their discoveries with their partners.

The goal of this activity should be realized during these student conversations: partners may provide very different summaries from what the scenario/situation creators had originally intended. This creates an opportunity to smoothly transition into why psychology is a science: we may never have all the information but by following standard steps, we attempt to explore human behavior and mental processes in a uniform way.

**In-Class Activity**

***Comparing and Contrasting the Seven Approaches***

*Time & Tools: (a) Students should use a sheet of notebook paper, pen/pencil, and text for this in-class activity, (b) This activity should take 10-15 minutes to complete.*

The purpose of this in-class activity is to allow students to compare and contrast the seven approaches in psychology.

* For the first part of the activity, ask students to select two approaches and compare them. Here students will need to write down on their paper the similarities between their selected theories.
* For the second part of the activity, students pair up and compare their partner’s selected approaches. Here students will need to write down on their paper the differences between their partner’s approaches and theirs.
* After all student work has finished, ask students to tell the class some of their compare/contrast results. This activity has a tendency to validate what other students have already written and provide novel connections/differences for the seven approaches in psychology.

This activity begins the student’s journey into critical thinking in your class!

**Independent Student Development**

***Comparing and Contrasting the Origins of Psychology***

In a one-page essay, ask students to compare and contrast two approaches (and the people behind them, if mentioned in the chapter) that have contributed to (a) the history of psychology and (b) what psychologists do today. For example, students may choose to compare and contrast behaviorism (using the contributions of James Watson or B. F. Skinner for support) and humanism (using the contributions of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers for support).

Be sure to caution students in your instructions that they must compare (observe similarities) and contrast (observe differences) between the two approaches; merely summarizing the contributions of both approaches to psychology does not meet the critical-thinking demands of this independent student development activity.

**Independent Student Development**

***Famous Person in Psychology History***

Chapter 1 identifies several individuals who contributed to psychology as we know it today. Please research one (1) individual famous in psychology history and gather basic facts to include but not limited to: Name, Date of Birth, What/How they contributed to psychology, education, significant accomplishments, and interesting facts. Write a one-page paper answering this critical-thinking assignment. Websites such as Wikipedia, about.com, etc., are not to be used. Other websites such as apa.org, .edu or .gov sites can be used as long as students cite the source. Please make sure you follow appropriate APA writing guidelines.

**Independent Student Development**

***How we face problems***

Psychology utilizes four attributes to support research: Describe, Explain, Predict and Change. As individuals we are faced with these four attributes on a daily basis. Please identify a time in your life that you had to make a difficult decision (limit to half a page). How did you come up with a solution? What type of support system did you have in place or utilize? Why do you think this was a difficult decision? How did this make you feel? What could you do in the future to ensure a favorable outcome during the decision-making process? Write a 1½-2 page paper answering this critical-thinking assignment. Please make sure you follow appropriate APA writing guidelines

**1.2 Science of Psychology**

**Lecture/Discussion**

***Spiritualism in the Early 20th Century***

Between the two World Wars, a wave of spiritualism hit many European countries and eventually spilled over into popular American culture. Mental “mediums” who claimed to be in contact with the dead attracted the attention of many curious urban populations. Often centered in large cities, like New York and San Francisco, those who claimed the ability of this mental connection to the dead often charged large sums of money to share the last imparted words of loved ones with either grieving families or a curious and oftentimes gullible public.

How could we *prove* these abilities?

**In-Class Activity**

***Psychic Ability***

In this activity you will want to utilize your acting skills from drama class to pull this experience off. Tell your students that you have psychic powers and that you would like to prove it to them. Ask a student to give you two blank sheets of notebook paper and then rip them into four strips (eight strips total). Ask your students to state a color out loud, and begin “writing” down their selection. When you begin writing down what student says, write down only one color on all eight slips of paper (typically red or blue is picked). As you write the color, fold it over so no one can see your secret. Once all the eight slips of paper are filled out with the one color, cup them in your hands and have a student pull out one slip. Place the other slips on your desk so no one can see them. Have the student show the class the slip of paper while your back is turned to them. Now this is where your acting ability will come into play. After a few seconds, turn around and pretend that you are “seeing” the color and state the color after a couple of long pauses.

Some of the students will be completely amazed by your “psychic abilities” and others will be curious of how you do it. Within matter of seconds, you will hear someone say that you wrote the same color on all eight slips of the paper. You can “deny” and ask for any other suggestions in how you could have this psychic ability. This will get your students to start analyzing and thinking about how you managed this achievement.

**1.3 Research Methods**

**Lecture/Discussion**

***Discussion on Research Methods in Psychology***

Open the discussion with a question: “What was the last big purchase that you made?”

Students’ answers will vary, but direct students back to the original question and then ask them how they made the decision about what they were buying:

1) Did they shop around?

2) Did they talk to other people who had bought something similar?

3) Did they go with a “trusted” brand?

These opening questions serve a purpose grounded in research: Once you have your research question (i.e., in the class example you are making a big purchase), you seek out more information (i.e., shopping around), you review previous research and engage in peer discussions (i.e., talking with others who have bought something similar), and use appropriate scientific methods, like correlations, experimental designs, case studies (i.e., using the trusted brands).

As students begin to make the initial connections between the type of question asked and the resulting research approach, it may be helpful to provide a brief discussion of the distinction between inferential and descriptive statistics. Students can then think back on the “big-purchase” paradigm and decide whether inferential, descriptive, or both could be used to set up a useful research method.

**In-Class Activity**

***Which Research Method Do I Use?***

*This activity should take anywhere from 20 to 30 minutes, depending on your class size; smaller classes should complete this activity within 20 minutes and larger classes may take closer to 30 minutes, (b) Students will need their textbooks, pen/pencil, and a half-sheet of notebook paper.*

This activity is best performed after you have given a lecture on the different types of research methods employed in psychological research. Refer students to the four major research methods of Chapter 1; this may serve as a guide to help them form answers. This activity gives students the opportunity to experience firsthand the beginnings of formulating a research design. In addition, students will be better prepared to distinguish among the research methods discussed in Chapter One.

*1)* Ask students to organize into groups of at least three but no more than four.

*2)* After students have organized into groups, present three to five research questions to the class. These can be written on the board or included in any PowerPoints you provide during lectures. Sample questions are provided below, but feel free to use your own research interests and create your own questions.

* How do older adults determine what “old age” is?
* Does my memory training improve memory scores?
* On an average weekday, how many people buckle their seatbelts before they leave the grocery store parking lot?
* If I drop a stack of papers down a busy stairwell, how many people will stop to help?
* What brain areas are active when someone tells a lie?

**Independent Student Development**

***Naturalistic Observation***

For this assignment, you will go out into a space where people congregate (farmers market, mall, playground, fair/carnival, etc.) and observe them for 30-45 minutes. I am hoping that as you start to observe these individuals in their natural setting, you can focus on their behavior. You may want to bring a notepad and take notes of the behavior while being very objective. This is naturalistic observation, so don’t try to interpret the behavior, only write down what you see.

Once you have completed the observation, attempt to form a theory regarding human behavior you observed. Write about it in detail, answering the following questions.

1. State the location, time, date of the observation
2. What behavior did you select to focus on?
3. Can you say anything about people in general based on what you saw?
4. Did you see similarities in people’s behaviors?
5. Did you notice any differences in behavior (age, gender, race, etc.)?
6. Did you notice any potential research questions or hypotheses that may be of interest for future study?
7. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this type of research method?

**Chapter 1**

**Multimedia Videos**

These videos come from different Internet sources and may no longer be available at the time of use.

Dr. Elligan Describes the Field of Psychology on Everyday Psychology (10:13)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmD5EhTfPss>

The Biopsychosocial Model (4:03)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yd8AxKWhM7c>

TEDx Talks: The danger of mixing up causality and correlation: Ionica Smeets (5:57)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8B271L3NtAw>

Walter Mischel on His Marshmallow Experiment: Discussion of the Marshmallow Experiment begins at 2:00. (9:23)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0b3SWsjWzdA>

TED Talks: Joachim de Posada: Don’t Eat the Marshmallow Yet (6:02)

<http://www.ted.com/talks/joachim_de_posada_says_don_t_eat_the_marshmallow_yet>

TED Talks: Derek Sivers: How to Start a Movement (3:10)

<http://www.ted.com/talks/derek_sivers_how_to_start_a_movement>

TED Talks: Derek Sivers: Weird or Just Different (2:42)

<http://www.ted.com/talks/derek_sivers_weird_or_just_different>

The Big Think: Laurie Santos (31:07)

<http://bigthink.com/videos/big-think-interview-with-laurie-santos-2>

Chapter 1 Matching

1. Structuralism
2. Cognitive Perspective
3. Sociocultural Perspective
4. Evolutionary Perspective
5. Functionalism
6. Biopsychosocial model
7. Humanist Perspective
8. Biopsychology
9. Psychoanalytic Theory
10. Behavior Perspective
11. \_\_\_\_\_Studies how mental processes help adaptions.
12. \_\_\_\_\_Emphasizes influence of the unconscious mind.
13. \_\_\_\_\_Focuses on mental processing of information.
14. \_\_\_\_\_Focuses on sensations, feeling, and perception.
15. \_\_\_\_\_Studies the biology of behavior.
16. \_\_\_\_\_Emphasizes inner, subjective self and positive nature.
17. \_\_\_\_\_Based on theory of evolution and natural selection.
18. \_\_\_\_\_Studies the influence of culture and ethnicity.
19. \_\_\_\_\_Focuses on objective or observable behaviors.
20. \_\_\_\_\_Biological, psychological, and social processes.

**Matching Exercise Answers**:

1. E
2. I
3. B
4. A
5. H
6. G
7. D
8. C
9. J
10. F