# CHAPTER ONE: WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?

Learning Objectives

LO 1.1: Explain what psychology is and describe the positive psychology movement.

LO 1.2: Discuss the roots and early scientific foundations of psychology.

LO 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the approaches to psychology.

LO 1.4: Evaluate the areas of specialization and careers in psychology.

LO 1.5: Describe the connections between the mind and the body.

1. **Chapter Overview**
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11. Chapter Overview

***Experiencing Psychology: “The Mystery That Is You”***

* King discusses how people view others and how everyone, including you, can be an everyday hero.
* Psychology is considered a science, but it is different from the other sciences with which students are familiar. Psychology, as a science, focuses on the many facets that make people who they are.

1. Defining Psychology
   1. Psychology is defined as the scientific study of behavior and mental processes.
   2. As a “science” psychology uses the scientific method to observe human behavior

and draw conclusions based on those observations.

* 1. *Behavior* is everything that a person does that can be directly observed.
  2. *Mental processes* are the internal thoughts, feelings, and motives that cannot be

directly observed.

* 1. The Psychological Frame of Mind
     1. Psychology does not accept assumptions at face value and uses a structured empirical method to study human behavior.
     2. At the core of this scientific approach are four attitudes: critical thinking, skepticism, objectivity, and curiosity.
     3. Critical thinking is the process of reflecting deeply and actively, asking questions, and evaluating the evidence.
     4. Psychologists are skeptical: they question “what people know” and apply it to everyday life to challenge assumptions.
     5. Pursuit of precise information is an additional characteristics of psychologists. They aim to have the best understanding of a topic or issue as possible.
     6. Pseudoscience is information that is presented as if it were scientific but is not actually supported by sound scientific research.
     7. Psychologists are objective and use empirical methods to evaluate, events, data, and individuals as they are, not as we would like them to be.
     8. Curiosity—asking questions and wondering about things—makes psychologists scientists.
  2. Psychology as the Science of All Human Behavior
     1. Freud pioneered the original perceptions of what people knew about psychology, and since then these perceptions have been mainstreamed into TV and the media.
     2. Psychology seeks to understand the truths of human life and all its dimensions, including people’s best and worst experiences.
     3. Some psychologists argue that their field has focused too much on the negative aspects of humanity and has neglected qualities that reflect the best of human life.
     4. The branch of Positive Psychology was a push by scholars for more emphasis on the positive and good aspects of human behavior. They wanted to focus more on what humans value, the traits associated with the optimal capacities for love and work, and positive group and civic values.

Psychology in Historical Perspectives

1. For thousands of years, people have been trying to answer the basic questions of human behavior, such as: (a) How do our senses perceive the world? (b) How do we learn? (c) What is memory? (d) Why does one person grow and flourish, whereas another person struggles in life? (e) Do dreams matter? and (f) Can people learn to be happier and more optimistic? Early philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, debated the nature of thought and behavior, including the possible link between the mind and the body. Later, Descartes and others argued that the mind and body were completely separate entities and focused their studies on the mind. Psychology has its roots not only in philosophy but also in biology and physiology. Wilhelm Wundt, a German philosopher-physician, founded the academic discipline of psychology.
2. *Structuralism* was first studied by Wundt and his collaborators. They focused on the basic elements or structures of mental processes. *Introspection* was the method used to study these mental structures and relies entirely on the person’s conscious reflection. Individuals were asked to think about what was occurring mentally as events were taking place. These studies focused mainly on sensation and perception because they were the aspects that could be broken down into component parts.
3. *Functionalism* is concerned with the functions and purposes of the mind in individuals’ adaptation to the environment. Structuralists were looking inside the mind while functionalists were focused on how humans interacted with the outside world. A core question in functionalism is “why is human thought adaptive?”
4. Functionalism meshed well with another intellectual development, Charles Darwin’s principle of *natural selection*, which considers how organisms adapt to their environment, survive, and produce offspring. Genes associated with survival are most likely passed down from one generation to the next. And, species change through random genetic mutation, which explains why members of a species are different from other members.

Contemporary Approaches to Psychology

1. The **biological approach** emphasizes the study of the body, especially the brain and nervous system. *Neuroscience* is the scientific study of the structure, function, development, genetics, and biochemistry of the nervous system. It emphasizes that the brain and nervous system are central to understanding behavior, thought, and emotion and has spread to many other research areas including *developmental neuroscience, social neuroscience* and *behavioral neuroscience* as examples.
2. The **behavioral approach** emphasizes the scientific study of observable behavioral responses and their environmental determinants. John B. Watson and B. F. Skinner were the first *behaviorists.* Behaviorism dominated psychological research during the first half of the twentieth century.
3. The **psychodynamic approach** emphasizes unconscious thought, the conflict between biological instincts and society’s demands, and early family experiences. Sigmund Freud was the founder of the psychodynamic approach. He believed that a person’s early interactions with the parents were the major factor that shaped an individual’s personality.
4. The **humanistic approach** emphasizes a person’s positive qualities, the capacity for positive growth, and the freedom to choose any destiny. Humanistic psychologists stress that people have the ability to control their lives and avoid being manipulated by the environment.
5. The **cognitive approach** emphasizes the mental processes involved in knowing: how we direct our attention, how we perceive, how we remember, and how we think and solve problems. Often scientists who adopt this approach focus on *information processing*, the way the human mind interprets information, stores it, and applies it to decision making.
6. The **evolutionary approach** uses evolutionary ideas such as adaptation, reproduction, and “survival of the fittest” as the basis for explaining specific human behaviors. Evolutionary psychologists believe that their approach provides an umbrella that unifies the diverse fields of psychology.
7. The **sociocultural approach** emphasizes the ways in which the social and cultural environments influence behavior. With the rise of cultural diversity in the United States, research on the influence of culture on behavior has led to important findings in the role that culture plays in our sense of self.

What Psychologists Do

Careers

* + 1. There are a variety of career options for scholars in psychology. Some seek employment in universities, where they teach and conduct research. Others may work in business and industry, while still others may work in private practice.
    2. Individuals who are primarily engaged in helping others are called practitioners of psychology, providing therapy that is considered evidence-based practice, which is supported by empirical research.
    3. A clinical psychology typically has a doctoral degree in psychology while a psychiatrist has a medical degree and specializes in abnormal psychology and psychotherapy.

Areas of Specialization

* + 1. Physiological Psychology and Behavioral Neuroscience: Physiological psychology focuses on the physical processes that underlie mental processes. Behavioral neuroscience focuses also on biological processes, specifically how the brain affects behavior.
    2. Sensation and Perception: Sensation and perception researchers focus on both the physical systems and the psychological processes that allow individuals to experience the world.
    3. Learning: Learning is the complex process by which behavior changes in response to changing circumstances.
    4. Cognitive Psychology: Cognitive psychology is a broad field that includes examples such as attention, consciousness, information processing, and memory. Researchers in this area are often called experimental psychologists.
    5. Developmental Psychology: Developmental psychology studies how individuals change, both as a result of biology and environment from birth through death. Developmental psychologists’ inquiries range across the biological, cognitive, and social domains of life.
    6. Motivation and Emotion: Motivation focuses on how individuals attain goals and how rewards affect the experience of motivation. Emotion centers on the physiological and brain processes that underlie emotional experiences, the emotional expression of health, and the possibility that emotions are universal.
    7. Psychology of Women and Gender: Psychology of women and gender studies psychological, social, and cultural influences on women’s development and behavior while also addressing interests in the broader topic of gender and the ways our biological sex influences our ideas of ourselves as men and women.
    8. Personality Psychology: Personality psychology focuses on the relatively enduring characteristics of individuals (traits, goals, motives, genetics, personality development, well-being, etc.).
    9. Social Psychology: Social psychology deals with people’s social interactions, relationships, social perceptions, social cognitions and attitudes. Researchers are interested in how groups or individuals influence the behavior of others.
    10. Industrial and Organizational (I/O) Psychology: Industrial/organizational psychology focuses on the workplace, both the workers themselves and the organization that employs them. The main areas of industrial psychology focus on personnel matters and human resource management, while the main area of organizational psychology focuses on the social influence in the organization.
    11. Clinical and Counseling Psychology: Clinical and counseling psychologists diagnose and treat people with psychological problems. Clinical psychologists are interested in psychotherapy, which is the scientific study of psychological disorders, the treatment of these disorders, and the development of diagnostic categories of mental health.
    12. Health Psychology: Health psychology emphasizes psychological factors, lifestyle, and the nature of the health care delivery system.
    13. Community Psychology: Community psychology focuses on accessible care for people with psychological problems. Community psychologists may work in community-based mental health centers and provide outreach programs to people in need.
    14. School and Educational Psychology: School and educational psychology centrally concerns children’s learning and adjustment in school.
    15. Environmental Psychology: Environmental psychology is the study of the interactions between people and the physical environment.
    16. Forensic Psychology: Forensic psychology applies psychological concepts to the legal system. Forensic psychologists are often hired by legal teams to provide input about aspects of trials such as jury selection and to testify as expects in such trials.
    17. Sport Psychology: Sport psychology applies psychology’s principles to improving sport performance and enjoying participation.
    18. Cross-Cultural Psychology: Cross-cultural psychology focuses on a culture’s role in understanding behavior, thought, and emotion.

The Science of Psychology and Health and Wellness

How the Mind Impacts the Body: The way you think and feel impacts the state of your body’s health, for example, by exercising, eating right, etc.

How the Body Impacts the Mind: The way you treat your body affects your thinking. If you get a good night’s sleep and eat well, your mind will be clearer and you will be able to focus more on the task at hand.

Chapter Features

* *Critical Controversy:* Are U.S. Young Adults in the Midst of a Narcissism Epidemic
* *Psychological Inquiry:* Explore Evolution from Giraffes to Human Beings
* *Psychological Inquiry:* Questions That Psychology Specialists Ask
* *Intersection:* Social Psychology and Cross-Cultural Psychology: How Does Culture Influence the Meaning of Success?

Connections

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Assignable Through Connect** | **Assignable Within the Chapter** | **Instructor Resources** |
| **Defining Psychology**  LO 1.1: Explain what psychology is and describe the positive psychology movement. | Reading Quiz  Positive Psychology (Learning Exercise)  LearnSmart Module | Critical Controversy: Are Young Americans in the Middle of a Narcissism Epidemic?  Apply Your Knowledge: #1 | Lecture/Discussion Suggestions:   * Experiencing Psychology * Defining Psychology * Psychology Versus Common Sense * Positive Psychology * Truly altruistic * Are You Altruistic? * Forgiveness * Are You a Critical Thinker   PowerPoints  Critical Thinking Questions: #1, #3  Polling Questions: #1.1 & #1.3  Handouts: 1.1, 1.2 |
| **Psychology in Historical Perspective**  LO 1.2: Describe the roots and early scientific foundations of psychology. | Reading Quiz  Structuralism and Functionalism (Learning Exercise)  LearnSmart Module | Psychological Inquiry: Explore Evolution from Giraffes to Human Beings  Apply Your Knowledge: #4, #5 | Lecture/Discussion Suggestions:   * Structuralism * Functionalism * Natural Selection * Fortune Cookie Psychology Style   PowerPoints  Critical Thinking Question: #2  Handout: 1.3 |
| **Contemporary Approaches to Psychology**  LO 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the seven approaches to psychology. | Reading Quiz  NewsFlash: Celebrating the Killing of Bin Laden and Evolutionary Psychology  NewsFlash: September 11 Revealed Psychology's Limits | Apply Your Knowledge: #2 | Lecture/Discussion Suggestion:   * How Would They See It?   PowerPoints  Critical Thinking Question: #2 |
| **What Psychologists Do**  LO 1.4: Identify areas of specialization and careers in psychology. | Reading Quiz  Areas of Specialization (Learning Exercise)  LearnSmart Module | Psychological Inquiry: Questions That Psychology Specialists Ask  Apply Your Knowledge: #3 | Lecture/Discussion Suggestions:   * What Jobs Are Out There? * Virtual Exploration of Psychology Careers   PowerPoints  Critical Thinking Question: #3  Polling Question: #1.2  Handout: 1.4 |
| **The Science of Psychology and Health and Wellness**  LO 1.5: Describe the connections between the mind and the body. | Reading Quiz  LearnSmart Module |  | Lecture/Discussion Suggestion:   * Is It Good for You?   PowerPoints |

Teaching the Chapter

LO 1.1: Define psychology and describe the positive psychology movement.

Lecture Outline

Experience Psychology: The Mystery That Is You

What makes a person a hero?

* + Celebrity status; helping others in extraordinary circumstances
  + Being kind and generous to others in need

Psychology as a science

* + Psychologists use science to study the many aspects of human behavior

1. Defining Psychology
   1. Science
   2. Behavior
   3. Mental Processes
   4. The Psychology Frame of Mind
      1. Critical thinking, skepticism, objectivity, and curiosity
      2. Empirical method
      3. Pseudoscience
   5. Psychology as the Science of All Human Behavior
      1. Positive psychology movement
      2. Forgiveness and religion commitment
   6. Critical Controversy: Are U.S. Young Adults in the Midst of a Narcissism Epidemic
      1. Are young adults more likely to think of themselves as special and extraordinary compared to their counterparts of previous generations?
      2. Research indicates that the newer generations are more prone to be narcissistic. However, other psychologists disagree and that positivity of one’s self has remained stable over time.
      3. The discrepancy of this research suggests the important role that science plays in the discipline of psychology

**Suggested Activities**

**Experiencing Psychology**: Have students write down three “famous” people they consider heroes and then three everyday people they consider heroes. Break the students up into groups and have them discuss with classmates the people on each of their lists and why they are considered heroes. Next, have the class as a whole discuss their lists. You may want to write some of these on the board. There will probably be some overlap in the “famous” people category. This exercise will reinforce that anyone in his lifetime can be influential or a hero.

**Defining** **Psychology:** Have students write down their definitions of psychology. Then go around the room and have students tell you their definitions. Write the main aspects or words of their definitions on the board. You may want to make two columns, one for the science-based definitions and one for the media-based definitions. The students will see how the media has probably influenced what they think psychology is. You can explain that what the media portrays is not necessarily wrong when it comes to psychology, but that there is so much more involved in the scientific aspect of psychology. Psychology itself is based on facts and statistics.

**Psychology Versus Common Sense:** Use *Activity Handout 1.1: Common Sense or Fact* as a way to get students to realize that what they think they already know about common everyday occurrences may not be true. This activity involves students reading through a list of common occurrences or common information and stating whether the information is true or false.

**Positive Psychology:** Break students into groups and have them discuss and write down what they consider positive in their lives. Next, have the students state whether these positive aspects could be studied in an experiment and if so, how.

**Truly Altruistic:** Write a variety of behaviors on the board and have students discuss in groups whether the behaviors are altruistic or not.

**Are You Altruistic?:** Use *Activity Handout 1.2: Are You Altruistic?* to have students determine whether or not some of their behaviors are really altruistic in nature. Students should see how difficult it is to be truly altruistic and not gain anything personally from helping another person.

**Forgiveness:** Have students go online to find information about the Amish murders that took place in Lancaster, Pennsylvania; especially the Amish community’s forgiveness of the murderer. Have them discuss whether they could do the same if they were involved in the situation. Have them think of a situation that involved them in which they were able to forgive someone. This activity will show them another aspect of positive psychology.

**Are You a Critical Thinker?:** Pass around various hoax emails that state if they forward the email to 10 people they will have good luck. (You can give a variety of emails that all state about the same thing.) Then ask the students the following questions:

1. Have you ever received an email like the one I handed out? If so, did you follow the directions and forward it on to others?
2. Why do you believe people are gullible and forward the emails?
3. Have you ever bought a product because of the statistics associated with the product, for example, some toothpastes state that four out of five dentists choose the toothpaste?
4. Do you question everything or take things at face value?

**LO 1.2:** **Discuss the roots and early scientific foundations of psychology.**

**Lecture Outlines**

Psychology in Historical Perspectives

* 1. Early Philosophers
     1. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and others all debated on the nature of thought and behavior, including the link between the mind and the body.
     2. Psychology not only had its roots in philosophy, but also in biology and physiology.
  2. Early Foundations
     1. Structuralism

1. Wundt.
2. Titchener founded the term “structuralism.”
3. The method used to study the structures of the mind was called “introspection,” where individuals were told to explain what was going on within their minds when various activities were occurring around them.
4. Introspection was the method used to study these mental structures and relies entirely on the person’s conscious reflection.
5. These studies focused mainly on sensation and perception.
   * 1. Functionalism
6. James developed “functionalism.”
7. Structuralists were looking inside the mind while functionalists were focused on how humans interacted with the outside world.
8. James believed the mind was fluid-like and was ever changing based on environmental changes.
   * 1. Darwin’s Natural Selection
9. Darwin took on a functionalist’s view with his work On the Origin of Species. He believed in “natural selection,” where each individual is either equipped or not for survival and those individuals with the best characteristics for survival would survive and carry on their species.
   1. Psychological Inquiry: Explore Evolution from Giraffes to Human Beings

**Suggested Activities**

**Structuralism:** Pick a few students to come to the front of the classroom and pretend that they are students in your (Wundt’s) laboratory. Ask a student to explain to you what a banana is. The student will probably say that it is yellow and long and a fruit. When they say this, say “No, I don’t want you to tell me what it is by definition, but tell me what it's like!” The student will probably again attempt to do this, but will keep giving you definition types of characteristics. Say to the student, “A banana is hard on the outside, with a rough outer edge that can peel away. The outer part is bright. On the inside you will find something soft. It is duller to look at. It is sweet.” Do this again with the rest of the students you chose. This activity will give students the experience of the idea of structuralism.

**Functionalism:** Give students a list of various terms, such as eyeball, legs, yawning, etc. Ask them to write down the function of each. You don’t want the definition of what each is, but instead the function. With this activity the students will gain knowledge on what functionalists study.

**Natural Selection:** Use *Activity Handout 1.3: To Be Extinct or Not* as a way for students to learn about natural selection. Have students go online and find three animals that are in danger of becoming extinct. Then have them write a paper on why they think the animals are close to becoming extinct. Have them explain what characteristics the animals do not possess for survival.

**Fortune Cookie—Psychology Style:** Give each student a fortune cookie. Ask them to open, read the fortune, and determine whether or not they agree with the statement. Follow this discussion by asking how the fathers of psychology would have interpreted their fortune. End the discussion with the difficulties of defining what psychology is and how culture and society influences our interpretation of psychological constructs. Base your final conclusions on the definitions identified in the text.

**LO 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the seven approaches to psychology.**

**Lecture Outlines**

Contemporary Approaches to Psychology

* 1. Biological Approach
     1. This approach focuses on the body, especially the brain and the nervous system.
     2. Neuroscience deals with many areas of the nervous system, such as structure, function, development, genetics, and biochemistry.
     3. Neuroscientists believe there is a physiological basis for our thoughts and emotions.
     4. Neuroscience has spread to many other research areas including: behavioral neuroscience, developmental neuroscience, and social neuroscience.
  2. Behavioral Approach
     1. Behavioral approach studies observable behavior.
     2. It focuses on the interactions between behavior and environment to see how an individual responds to factors in the environment.
     3. Watson and Skinner were the first true behaviorists. They believed that if you couldn’t see something, then it just didn’t exist.
  3. Psychodynamic Approach
     1. Psychodynamic approach focuses on unconscious thought, the conflict between biological instincts and society’s demands, and early family experiences.
     2. Sigmund Freud is known as the founding father of the psychodynamic approach.
     3. Freud believed that there are unlearned biological instincts (especially of a sexual and/or aggressive nature) that can occur early in life and these instincts influence how a person thinks, feels, and behaves.
  4. Humanistic Approach
     1. This approach emphasizes a person’s positive qualities, the capacity for personal growth, and the freedom to choose any destiny.
     2. Scholars in this area believe that a person has the right and freedom to make any decision they want and that they are in total control of their life and future.
  5. Cognitive Approach
     1. This approach focuses on the many facets of the mind, such as remembering, making decisions, planning, goal setting, and creativity.
  6. Evolutionary Approach
     1. David Buss focuses on how evolution shapes our decision making, level of aggressiveness, fears, and mating patterns.
     2. People adapt to society’s changes the same way animals and early humans did thousands of years ago.
  7. Sociocultural Approach
     1. This approach emphasizes how behavior is influenced both socially and culturally.
     2. Before understanding a behavior, you must first know the culture in which the behavior took place.
     3. This approach does not only emphasize the differences across countries, but also the differences between people of the same country.
     4. Research on the influence of culture has led to important findings about psychological processes.

**Suggested Activities**

**How Would They See It?:** Break the students up into groups and have them think of a problematic behavior, such as alcoholism, drug abuse, etc. Tell the students to discuss as a group and write down what scholars in the various approaches would have to say about the problematic behavior. How would the scholars study that behavior?

**LO 1.4:** **Evaluate areas of specialization and careers in psychology.**

**Lecture Outlines**

1. What Psychologists Do
   1. Careers in Psychology
      1. Scholars of psychology can work at universities focusing on the research aspect of the field.
      2. Individuals helping others are often called practitioners using evidence-based practice techniques.
      3. Differences between clinical psychologists and psychiatrists
      4. Still other scholars may work at companies, dealing with the business and industry aspect of psychology.
   2. Areas of Specialization
      1. Physiological Psychology and Behavioral Neuroscience
      2. Sensation and Perception
      3. Learning
      4. Cognitive Psychology
      5. Developmental Psychology
      6. Motivation and Emotion
      7. Psychology of Women and Gender
      8. Personality Psychology
      9. Social Psychology
      10. Industrial and Organizational (I/O) Psychology
      11. Clinical and Counseling Psychology
      12. Psychopathology
      13. Health Psychology
      14. Community Psychology
      15. School and Educational Psychology
      16. Environmental Psychology
      17. Forensic Psychology
      18. Sport Psychology
      19. Cross-Cultural Psychology
   3. Psychological Inquiry: Questions That Psychology Specialists Ask
   4. Intersection: Social Psychology and Cross-Cultural Psychology: How Does Culture Influence the Meaning of Success
      1. Types of and definitions of individualistic and collectivist cultures
      2. Cultural differences were proposed in the responses to success and the different ways various cultures appraise their successes and failures.

**Suggested Activities**

**What Jobs Are There Out There?:** Use *Activity Handout 1.4: Jobs in Psychology* as a way for students to think about the various jobs there are within the areas of psychology. Break the students into groups and assign each group a couple of the areas, and then have them complete the activity. When they are finished, write the areas on the board as headings, and have the students come up to the board to write the various jobs they came up with under the appropriate heading.

**Virtual Exploration of Psychology Careers:**  In class or as an outside activity, have students go to: <http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/guides/careers.aspx>. Review the APA brochure for careers in Psychology and identify some of the subfields most interesting to you as well as the job outlook for such a subfield. Then, consider what you can do to help yourself be better prepared to go into such a subfield in the future (Getting ready to work in Psychology). Ask students to list some other job titles they think having a psychology degree in would be useful or required.

**LO 1.5:** **Describe the connections between the mind and the body.**

**Lecture Outlines**

1. The Science of Psychology and Health & Wellness
   1. How the Mind Impacts the Body
      1. Everything we do is important to our health and well-being.
      2. There is never time when we are doing something that is not affecting our

bodies; our bodies are always present.

* 1. How the Body Impacts the Mind
     1. Your body and its well-being affect your mind.
     2. There are times when your body is not in good healthy working order and this surely affects the way you think and feel.

**Suggested Activities**

**Is It Good For You?:** Have students think about an activity they may have participated in that was not necessarily good for them, such as drinking too much alcohol or staying up all night. Next have them think about how that activity impacted their functioning the next day. Was there a connection between the mind and the body?

1. **Critical Thinking Questions**
   * + 1. When you see an advertisement, whether it be in a newspaper, magazine, or on television, do you pay attention to the statistics that are given? For example, “Four out of five dentists have chosen *Brand X* toothpaste over other brands.” How do you interpret that type of statement? How or why do you think those dentists were chosen? The next time you hear such a statement on the news, what can you do differently that would make you a better critical thinker?
       2. What ways do any of the scientific foundations upon which psychology was based still make sense today? How might the contemporary approaches still use some of the concepts of these foundations?
       3. To what extent can psychologists really fully understand human behavior? We say that the basis of psychological research is to understand human behavior, but how is this possible considering that all human beings are separate individuals and no two people are alike?
2. **Polling Questions**

* **Polling 1.1: The Meaning of Being a Psychologist**

Now that you have a better understanding of what is psychology and some familiarity with what psychologists do, imagine that you have completed all of your graduate work in an area of psychology and you are about to celebrate your graduation. As you are sitting in your favorite restaurant, the server overhears you talking about your accomplishments. He walks over to you and says, “I bet you know what I am thinking, after all, you are a psychologist and can *read* people.” How do you react? Do you: 1) Agree with him just so you don’t have to explain yourself? 2) Sit up straight and begin explaining what psychology really is and that you feel insulted that he would assume such a myth? 3) Ask him why he thinks psychologists *read* minds. Or, 4) react a different way other than what is listed. Be ready to explain why you chose what you did!

* **Polling 1.2: Pathways to Success**

Oftentimes, college students are undecided about a major or field of study. Unfortunately, we know that it is harder and harder for college graduates to gain successful employment in any field. Let’s talk a little about creating a pathway for life that learning about psychology can help you with. How many of you have officially declared a major? How many of you are psychology majors? Who agrees that having a college major and a plan leads to a higher chance of graduating and getting a job? Who is not interested in getting a college degree and is in class just because?

* **Polling 1.3: Social Media and Psychology**

Inside your text, there is a controversy that discusses whether or not this generation of young adults is more narcissistic than previous generations. Here is your chance to justify what you put on Facebook, Twitter, or other social media sites. How many think that this generation of people is more self-centered and narcissistic than previous ones? How many think that social media is the ‘cause’ for people to think that they are special and that everyone should be aware of their personal accomplishments and life happenings?

1. **Apply Your Knowledge**

*(Also found at the end of the chapter.)*

1. Ask 10 friends and family members to tell you the first thing that comes to mind when they think of psychology or a psychologist. After hearing their answers, share with them the broad definition of psychology given in this chapter. How do they react?
2. Visit the website of a major book retailer (such as [Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com)) and enter “psychology” as a search term. Read the descriptions of the five to seven most popular psychology books listed. How well do the themes covered represent your perceptions of what psychology is? How well do they represent the approaches to psychology discussed in the text? Are any perspectives over- or underrepresented? If so, why do you think that is?
3. In the faculty directory for your school (or for another institution), look up the psychology faculty. Select several faculty members and see what the area of specialization is for each (be careful, it may not be the same as the classes they teach). How do you think their areas of academic training might affect the way they teach their classes?
4. Human beings originally evolved long ago in a very different environment than we occupy today. The survivors were those who were most able to endure extremely difficult circumstances: struggling to find food, avoiding predators, and creating social groups. What do you think were the most adaptive traits for these early folk? Are those traits still adaptive? To what specific environments are humans adapting even now?
5. Adopt Wilhelm Wundt’s approach to understanding the human mind and behavior. Invite three friends to listen to a piece of music and ask each to introspect on their experience. Examine what each says about various aspects of the music. What does this exercise tell you about the subjectivity of introspection? In what ways do you think the method is worthwhile, and in what ways is it limited?
6. **Suggested Readings and Media**

**Suggested Articles from *Annual Editions, Psychology, 2013/2014* Publications**

Article 2: The 10 Commandments of Helping Students Distinguish Science from Pseudoscience in Psychology, *APS Observer*, September 2005.

Article 3: Comprehensive Soldier Fitness and the Future of Psychology, *American Psychologist,* January 2011.

**Suggested Readings**

Benjamin, L. (1997). *A History of Psychology* (2nd ed.) Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Boring, E. G., (1950). *A History of Experimental Psychology* (2nd ed.) Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

James, W. (1890). *The Principles of Psychology*. (Vols. I, II) New York: Holt.

Kahneman, Daniel. (2011). *Thinking Fast, and Slow* (1st ed.).New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

McRaney, David. (2011). *You Are Not So Smart: Why You Have Too Many Friends on Facebook, Why Your Memory Is Mostly Fiction, and 46 Other Ways You're Deluding Yourself.* One World Publishing.

Puente, A. E., Mathews, J. R., & Brewer, C. L. (Eds.). (1992). *Teaching in Psychology in America: A History*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

**Suggested Media**

*The New Era of Positive Psychology* (Martin Seligman, Ted Talks) <http://www.ted.com/talks/martin_seligman_on_the_state_of_psychology.html> (2008)

*Past, Present and Promise.* Annenberg Learner Series Videos Discovering Psychology: Updated Edition. <http://www.learner.org/resources/series138.html> (2001)

<http://www.apa.org>

This is the official web site of the American Psychological Association. It has a vast amount of information for both teachers and students.

<http://www.teachpsych.org>

This is the website for Division 2 of the American Psychological Association, which is the division for teachers of psychology. There are many helpful suggestions for teachers; sample syllabi, activities, etc.

## <http://www.merlot.org/merlot/index.htm>

This is a useful website for resources in learning and online teaching that houses engaging experiences, peer-reviewed activities, and personal collections of psychological materials.

<http://careerplanning.about.com/od/occupations/p/psychologist.htm>

This site is dedicated to exploring science and health-related careers and offers current trends and information about qualifications and income that may be of interest to students.

<http://psichi.org>

Psi Chi is the largest undergraduate psychology student group in the U.S.; membership is based on meeting qualification standards; many grant programs and opportunities for student involvement exist through Psi Chi.

1. **Activity Handouts**

## Activity Handout 1.1

## Common Sense or Fact

Read the statement and determine if the statement is true or false. Write a letter “T” in the space provided if you believe the statement is true and a letter “F” in the space provided if you believe the statement is false.

1. \_\_ \_\_ People dream on average around five to six times a night.

2. \_\_ \_\_ Dogs dream.

3. \_\_\_\_ Psychiatrists attend medical school just like your family physician or a surgeon.

4. \_\_\_\_ Psychology stemmed from the area of biology.

5. \_\_\_\_ You are more likely to receive help if there are two people around than if there are 20 people around.

6. \_\_\_\_ You would value receiving $10 for helping a neighbor clean out their garage versus getting $10 for doing nothing.

7. \_\_\_\_ Adults’ interest in sex starts to decline when they are in their sixties.

8. \_\_\_\_ Psychology is all about making people feel better.

9. \_\_\_\_ Living together before marriage will result in a better marriage.

10. \_\_\_\_ Intelligence is inherited.

***Activity Handout 1.2***

## Are You Altruistic?

Think of a time when you helped someone. Explain in the space below what occurred in that situation.

Was your “good deed” (helping out the person) truly a good deed? Were you acting altruistically, meaning you got nothing in return for helping out?

Can you think of a situation in the media where someone helped someone out, and was it or was it not altruistic in nature?

## Activity Handout 1.3

## To Be Extinct or Not

Go online and find three animals that are in danger of becoming extinct. Print out the website and turn it in with the assignment. Answer the following questions regarding the endangered animals.

Endangered Animal #1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Endangered Animal #2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Endangered Animal #3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you believe the animals are close to becoming extinct? What characteristics do the animals *not* possess for survival?

What would be a possible way to keep these animals from becoming extinct or is extinction inevitable?

***Activity Handout 1.4***

## Jobs in Psychology

Beside each area of psychology below, list two to three jobs that a person in that area could have.

Physiological Psychology and Behavioral Neuroscience**:**

Developmental Psychology:

Sensation and Perception:

Cognitive Psychology:

Learning:

Motivation and Emotion:

Personality Psychology:

Social Psychology:

Industrial and Organizational Psychology:

Clinical and Counseling Psychology:

Health Psychology:

Community Psychology:

School and Educational Psychology:

Environmental Psychology:

Psychology of Women and Gender:

Forensic Psychology:

Sport Psychology:

Cross-Cultural Psychology:

1. **Answer Key to Activity Handouts**

## Activity Handout 1.1 Answer Key

## Common Sense or Fact

Read the statement and determine if the statement is true or false. Write a letter “T” in the space provided if you believe the statement is true and a letter “F” in the space provided if you believe the statement is false.

1. \_\_**T**\_\_\_ People dream on average around five to six times a night.

2. \_\_**T**\_\_ Dogs dream.

3. \_\_**T**\_\_ Psychiatrists attend medical school just like your family physician or a surgeon.

4. \_\_**F**\_\_ Psychology stemmed from the area of biology.

5. \_\_**F**\_\_ You are more likely to receive help if there are two people around than if there are 20 people around.

6. \_\_**T**\_\_ You would value receiving $10 for helping a neighbor clean out their garage versus getting $10 for doing nothing.

7. \_\_**F**\_\_ Adults’ interest in sex starts to decline when they are in their sixties.

8. \_\_**F**\_\_ Psychology is all about making people feel better.

9. \_\_**F**\_\_ Living together before marriage will result in a better marriage.

10. \_\_**F**\_\_ Intelligence is inherited.

***Activity Handout 1.2 Answer Key***

## Are You Altruistic?

Think of a time when you helped someone. Explain in the space below what occurred in that situation.

Was your “good deed” (helping out the person) truly a good deed? Were you acting altruistically, meaning you got nothing in return for helping out?

**To be altruistic, students must provide an example where they could not have reasonably expected any personal benefit.**

Can you think of a situation in the media where someone helped someone out, and was it or was it not altruistic in nature?

**Again, to be altruistic, students must provide an example where the person could not have reasonably expected any personal benefit.**

## Activity Handout 1.3 Answer Key

## To Be Extinct or Not

Go online and find three animals that are in danger of becoming extinct. Print out the website and turn it in with the assignment. Answer the following questions regarding the endangered animals.

Endangered Animal #1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Endangered Animal #2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Endangered Animal #3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you believe the animals are close to becoming extinct? What characteristics do the animals *not* possess for survival?

**Students should cite examples of how the animal’s characteristics prevent it from attaining food and reproducing. Example from text: giraffes with short necks cannot reach food high in trees, therefore only giraffes with long necks survive.**

What would be a possible way to keep these animals from becoming extinct or is extinction inevitable?

**Any method that makes the animal’s unique characteristics more appropriate for their unique environment would work, though extinction is a natural part of the evolutionary process.**

***Activity Handout 1.4 Answer Key***

## Jobs in Psychology

Beside each area of psychology below, list two to three jobs that a person in that area could have.

Physiological Psychology and Behavioral Neuroscience**:**

**researcher, MRI technician, consultant to drug company**

Developmental Psychology:

**researcher, child care specialist, parent educator**

Sensation and Perception:

**researcher, technician, consultant to food companies**

Cognitive Psychology:

**researcher, grant and report writer, create learning materials**

Learning:

**education consultant, teacher, researcher**

Motivation and Emotion:

**researcher, teacher, motivational speaker**

Personality Psychology:

**researcher, management assessment, career counselor**

Social Psychology:

**researcher, management training, sensitivity training (e.g., sexual harassment awareness training)**

Industrial and Organizational Psychology:

**manager, business consultant, industrial consultant**

Clinical and Counseling Psychology:

**mental health aid, therapist, drug abuse counselor**

Health Psychology:

**health and wellness instructor, medical research assistant, social worker**

Community Psychology:

**social worker, counselor, health consultant to politicians**

School and Educational Psychology:

**career counselor, child assessment specialist, educational consultant**

Environmental Psychology:

**furniture designer, factory consultant, environmental activist**

Psychology of Women and Gender:

**teacher, activist, corporate advisor**

Forensic Psychology:

**trial consultant, paralegal, expert witness**

Sport Psychology:

**consultant, coach, athletics director**

Cross-Cultural Psychology:

**international business advisor, researcher, cultural awareness instructor**