

# Core Studies Transition Tasks

OCR A level Psychology

# Component 2

This paper is split up into 3 sections:

## Section A: Core studies

*The study of classic and contemporary research papers from 5 key areas of psychology*

## Section B: Areas, perspectives and debates

*Using the knowledge of the research papers to consider some key debates in psychology, such as nature vs nurture*

## Section C: Application

*Using all of the psychological knowledge gained to apply to a real life situation*

# Transition tasks

These transition tasks are going to be based on the 5 key areas that you will study in section A and B of the exam:

*Social psychology, Cognitive psychology, Biological psychology, Developmental psychology and Individual differences.*

Follow the instructions for each task and self assess afterwards (if necessary).

# Task 1: Social psychology

**Social psychology** is the [scientific](#) study of how people's [thoughts](#), [feelings](#), and [behaviours](#) are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others.<sup>[1]</sup> In this definition, *scientific* refers to the [empirical](#) investigation using the [scientific method](#). The terms *thoughts*, *feelings*, and *behaviours* refer to [psychological](#) variables that can be measured in humans. The statement that others' presence may be *imagined* or *implied* suggests that humans are malleable to social influences even when alone, such as when watching videos, sitting on the toilet, or quietly appreciating art. In such situations, people can be influenced to follow internalized [cultural norms](#). Social psychologists typically explain [human behaviour](#) as a result of the interaction of [mental states](#) and social [situations](#).

Social psychologists examine factors that cause behaviours to unfold in a given way in the presence of others. They study conditions under which certain behaviour, actions, and feelings occur. Social psychology is concerned with the way these feelings, thoughts, beliefs, intentions, and goals are cognitively constructed and how these mental representations, in turn, influence our interactions with others.

1. Summarise, in your own words, what social psychology is. Try to use no more than 15 words!
2. What is meant by the term 'empirical investigation'? You may need to google this!
3. Sajida finds that she always wears lots more makeup when out with friends. How would social psychology explain this?

## *Self Assess*

2. Empirical investigation means researching by observing and making conclusions from these observations. Scientific methods, such as the one you will have use in your GCSE science lessons are empirical as all of your conclusions are based off evidence- such as the results of your experiments.

3. Sajida is being influenced by the people around her (her friends). Perhaps they wear lots of makeup, so she feels she needs to as well.

# The Stanford Prison Experiment

Watch the documentary about the Stanford Prison Experiment on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4txhN13y6A>

1. Take notes about the methods used. Think about: How many people took part? Who took part? Where were they taken? Why did the experiment take place?
2. Why could this experiment be considered 'unethical'?
3. What was found?
4. Why did Zimbardo conclude that the guards behaved in the way they did?

**Challenge:** Take down any other notes you think are relevant for interesting. Pay special attention to the way the participants speak about taking part in the experiment.

# Why did the guards behave in the way they did?

The Stanford Prison Experiment is a very famous study in psychology. Zimbardo, the experimenter, concluded that participants behaved in the way they did because of the 'depersonalisation' of everyone involved. All were given uniforms in which they could conform to their social roles, the guards were given sunglasses to hide their faces and the prisoners given simply numbers instead of names. The social situation was said to change the behaviour of the participants.

**Want to know more?** Research the case of Abu Ghraib Prison, and link this to the Zimbardo's study. Be mindful, some of the images you may find upsetting.

# Task 2: Cognitive Psychology

Cognitive psychology is the scientific study of the mind as an information processor. Cognitive psychologists try to build up cognitive models of the information processing that goes on inside people's minds, including perception, attention, language, memory, thinking, and consciousness.

- 1. Summarise cognitive psychology in 10 words or less.**
- 2. Memory is a key component in cognitive psychology. How do you think we can measure how good someone's memory is?**
- 3. Watch the video on the cognitive approach. Make some notes:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FctU-QV8ZVo>



# Task 3: Developmental psychology

Developmental psychology is a scientific approach which aims to explain growth, change and consistency through the lifespan.

Developmental psychology looks at how thinking, feeling, and behaviour change throughout a person's life. A significant proportion of theories within this discipline focus upon development during childhood, as this is the period during an individual's lifespan when the most change occurs.

1. Summarise developmental psychology in 10 words or less
2. Watch the video on Piaget's theory of cognitive development.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhcgYgx7aAA> Create a table to show what children are able to do at each age, according to their theory.

# Self Assess

## Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

Stage	Age range	What happens at this stage?
Sensorimotor	0-2 years old	Coordination of senses with motor responses, sensory curiosity about the world. Language used for demands and cataloguing. Object permanence is developed.
Preoperational	2-7 years old	Symbolic thinking, use of proper syntax and grammar to express concepts. Imagination and intuition are strong, but complex abstract thoughts are still difficult. Conservation is developed.
Concrete Operational	7-11 years old	Concepts attached to concrete situations. Time, space, and quantity are understood and can be applied, but not as independent concepts.
Formal Operational	11 years old and older	Theoretical, hypothetical, and counterfactual thinking. Abstract logic and reasoning. Strategy and planning become possible. Concepts learned in one context can be applied to another.

**Think further:**  
Suggest how cognitive development is affected by brain development.

# Task 4: Biological Psychology

The biological approach believes us to be as a consequence of our genetics and physiology. It is the only approach in psychology that examines thoughts, feelings, and behaviours from a biological and thus physical point of view.

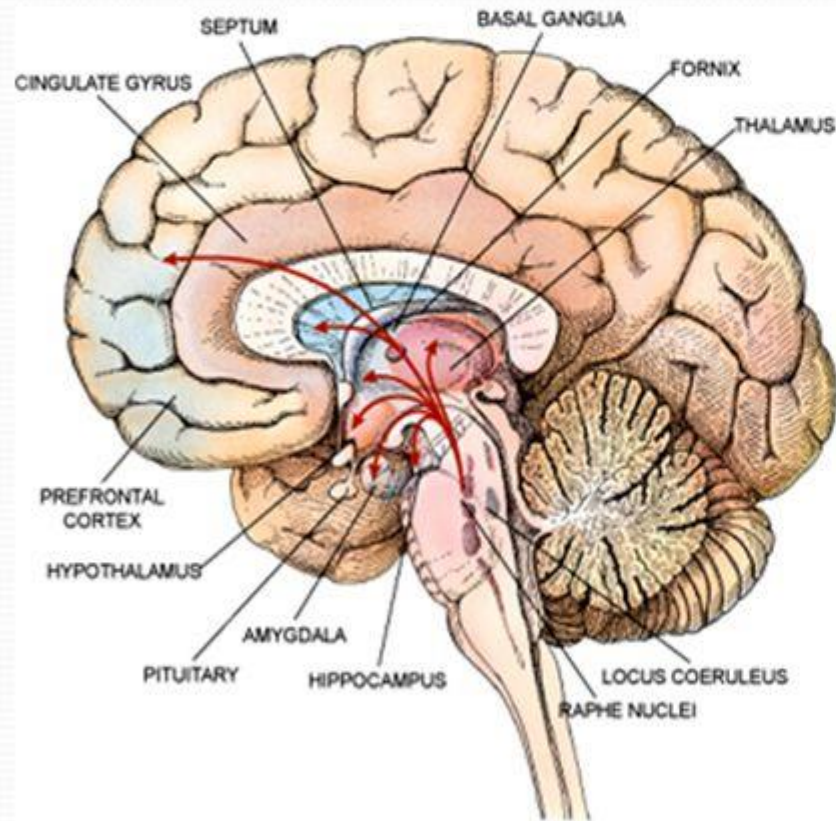
Therefore, all that is psychological is first physiological. All thoughts, feeling & behaviour ultimately have a biological cause.

**The biological approach assumes behaviour to be due to the brain, hormones and other aspects of the body.**

Tasks on next slides →



# Inner Brain Structures



- Thalamus – processes information from the cortex and plays an important role in consciousness
- Hypothalamus – Links the nervous system to the endocrine system, which makes it a major control center for emotions
- Hippocampus – Responsible for memory formation and storage
- Pituitary Gland – Controls hormone secretion

**Use this slide, the next one and your own research to create your own resource to show the key areas of the brain.**

# The Brain

## Frontal Lobe

### High-Level Learning

Helps weigh risks and rewards.

Regulates emotions and thoughts.

With good connection to other areas of the brain.

## Parietal Lobe

### Connection

Communicates with other lobes.

Multitasks and is responsible for sensory integration.

Activated each time a thought changes.

## Optical Lobe

### Optical Processing

Tells you what you see.

## Temporal Lobe

### Auditory Processing

Tells you what you hear.

### Memory

Some auditory memory.

### Balance

Helps you keep your balance.

## Brain Stem

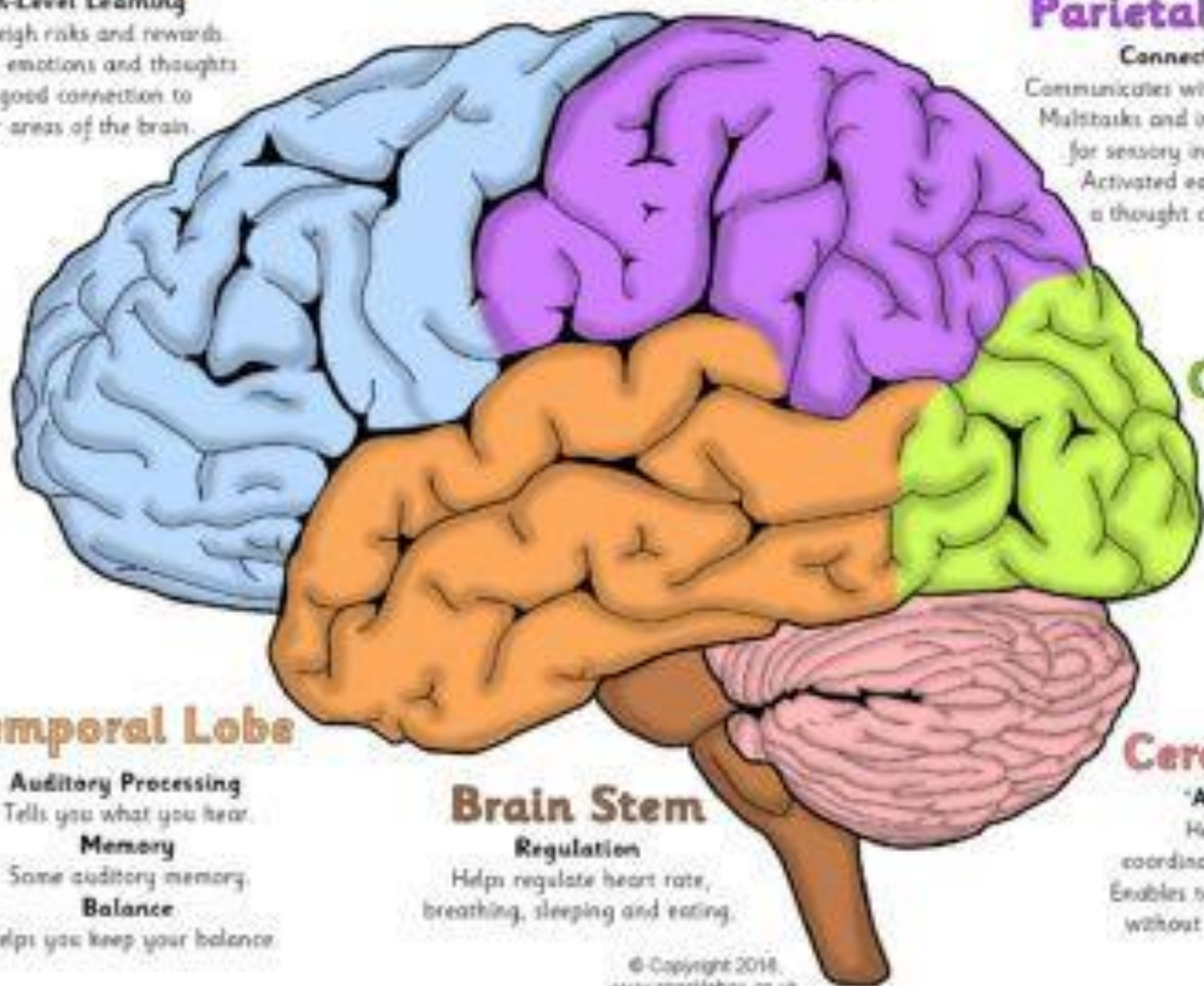
### Regulation

Helps regulate heart rate, breathing, sleeping and eating.

## Cerebellum

### 'Auto Pilot'

Helps control coordination and balance. Enables talking, walking etc without thinking about it.





*How do we know what each area of the brain does?*



Find out who Phineas Gage was, and what he showed about the brain. There are lots of videos on this on Youtube!

**Watch the video and consider the following**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vwigmktix2Y>

1. What is meant by the term amnesia?
2. Suggest which area of the brain Clive has damaged

**Challenge:** Suggest why Clive cannot remember what happened 1 minute ago, but can still play the piano and remember his wife?

## Watch the video and consider the following

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vwigmktix2Y>

1. What is meant by the term amnesia? Amnesia is the inability to remember information. This is usually do to brain damage.
2. Suggest which area of the brain Clive has damaged. The Hippocampus

**Challenge:** Suggest why Clive cannot remember what happened 1 minute ago, but can still play the piano and remember his wife?



# Task 5: Individual Differences

Most of the areas we have focused on in psychology has focused on traits we have in common. Individual differences is what sets us apart, focusing on individual aspects such as personality.

One particular area of focus for this part of the course is looking at the condition of Autism.

**Write down everything you already know about Autism. Do you have any question about it?**

# What is autism?

Research Autism and write down some of the key symptoms associated with the condition. You should aim to produce about one page of A4 paper.

You may find the following websites useful:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/what-is/asd.aspx>

# Individual differences and Autism

Watch the BBC iplayer documentary about Autism. One thing you may notice is the large amount of difference between each individual with Autism.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b01gk4xc/louis-theroux-extreme-love-1-autism>

List the names of the individuals who appear in the documentary and list the behaviours they show. For example:

Freddie – *High stress in social situations, screaming, kicking*

This is an excellent documentary, but please be mindful that some scenes feature physical restraint so may be upsetting to some.

# If you want to watch some relevant programmes while you have some time....

## Netflix:

- Babies
- The mind explained
- Mind Hunter
- 100 humans
- Brainchild
- Magic for Humans

## Disney +

- Brain games

## Ted Talks

- Mental health

[https://www.ted.com/talks/johann\\_hari\\_this\\_could\\_be\\_why\\_you\\_re\\_depressed\\_or\\_anxious/up-next#t-5967](https://www.ted.com/talks/johann_hari_this_could_be_why_you_re_depressed_or_anxious/up-next#t-5967)

- Memory

[https://www.ted.com/talks/daniel\\_kahneman\\_the\\_riddle\\_of\\_experience\\_vs\\_memory/up-next](https://www.ted.com/talks/daniel_kahneman_the_riddle_of_experience_vs_memory/up-next)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/scott\\_fraser\\_why\\_eyewitnesses\\_get\\_it\\_wrong/up-next](https://www.ted.com/talks/scott_fraser_why_eyewitnesses_get_it_wrong/up-next)

- Approaches: Conditioning

[https://www.ted.com/talks/peggy\\_andover\\_the\\_difference\\_between\\_classical\\_and\\_operant\\_conditioning?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/peggy_andover_the_difference_between_classical_and_operant_conditioning?language=en)