Personality 12th edition Burger Test Bank

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Name:_____ Class:_____ Date:_____

Chapter 01 - What Is Personality?

1. Is behavior shaped by the situation or by the type of person we are?
   a. Behavior is determined solely by situational factors.
   b. Both the situation and the person contribute to behavior.
   c. Behavior is determined entirely by personality traits.
   d. Behavior is random and cannot be predicted.

ANSWER: b

2. During a natural disaster, residents show similar initial reactions of panic and fear, but later display different coping strategies. This example best illustrates which principle?
   a. Situations have no impact on individual behavior patterns.
   b. Personality traits remain completely unchanged across situations.
   c. Initial situational demands can override individual differences temporarily.
   d. Individual differences are more important than environmental factors.

ANSWER: c

3. According to its definition, personality consists of which two main components?
   a. Genetic factors and environmental influences
   b. Conscious thoughts and unconscious processes
   c. Consistent behavior patterns and intrapersonal processes
   d. Social interactions and individual achievements

ANSWER: c

4. What distinguishes personality psychology from other areas of psychology?
   a. It focuses on how people typically respond to environmental demands.
   b. It examines what makes individuals different from one another.
   c. It studies only abnormal behavior patterns in individuals.
   d. It investigates group dynamics and social interactions.

ANSWER: b

5. A researcher studies why some students make friends easily while others remain lonely throughout college. This research question best represents which field of psychology?
   a. Social psychology focusing on group behavior patterns
   b. Personality psychology examining individual differences
   c. Developmental psychology studying age-related changes
   d. Cognitive psychology investigating memory processes

ANSWER: b

6. Which approach to personality focuses on unconscious processes as the primary source of individual differences?
   a. Trait approach
   b. Psychoanalytic approach
   c. Biological approach

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d. Cognitive approach

ANSWER: b

7. The biological approach to personality primarily emphasizes which factors?
   a. Learning experiences and environmental conditioning
   b. Inherited predispositions and physiological processes
   c. Personal responsibility and self-acceptance feelings
   d. Information processing and cognitive patterns

ANSWER: b

8. A psychologist explains aggressive behavior by examining how individuals interpret environmental cues and process threatening information. This explanation best represents which approach?
   a. Humanistic approach emphasizing self-acceptance
   b. Behavioral approach focusing on learned responses
   c. Cognitive approach examining information processing
   d. Trait approach measuring individual characteristics

ANSWER: c

9. A therapist helps clients overcome depression by focusing on developing better self-esteem and having a batter sense of self-worth. This therapeutic approach most closely aligns with which personality perspective?
   a. Psychoanalytic approach addressing unconscious conflicts
   b. Humanistic approach promoting self-worth development
   c. Behavioral approach modifying learned responses
   d. Biological approach targeting genetic predispositions

ANSWER: b

10. How does the trait approach differ from other personality approaches?
   a. It focuses on unconscious motivations driving behavior.
   b. It measures where individuals fall on personality characteristic continuums.
   c. It emphasizes learning experiences and environmental factors.
   d. It examines physiological processes and genetic inheritance.

ANSWER: b

11. What is the primary distinction that cross-cultural personality researchers make between different cultures?
   a. Developed versus developing economic systems
   b. Individualistic versus collectivist cultural orientations
   c. Eastern versus Western geographical locations
   d. Religious versus secular belief systems

ANSWER: b

12. Why might Western concepts of self-esteem not apply universally across all cultures?

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a. Self-esteem is based on assumptions about personal goals and uniqueness.
b. Other cultures do not value positive feelings about oneself.
c. Self-esteem is only relevant in wealthy societies.
d. Different cultures use different measurement techniques.

ANSWER: a

13. A student from a collectivist culture feels uncomfortable when singled out for individual academic achievement in a Western classroom. This reaction most likely reflects which cultural difference?
a. Different educational standards between cultures
b. Preference for group accomplishment over personal recognition
c. Language barriers affecting communication
d. Unfamiliarity with competitive academic environments

ANSWER: b

14. What limitation should researchers consider when applying personality theories developed in individualistic cultures to other populations?
a. The theories may not account for different cultural values and assumptions.
b. Other cultures lack the complexity needed for personality research.
c. Translation difficulties make cross-cultural research impossible.
d. Personality concepts are identical across all human societies.

ANSWER: a

15. What are the four essential components for a complete understanding of personality according to this textbook?
a. Biology, psychology, sociology, and anthropology
b. Theory, application, assessment, and research
c. Observation, hypothesis, experimentation, and conclusion
d. Individual, social, cultural, and environmental factors

ANSWER: b

16. How do the four components of personality study work together to advance the field?
a. Each component operates independently without interaction.
b. Theory generates research which informs applications and assessment methods.
c. Assessment is the only component that produces reliable knowledge.
d. Applications are more important than theoretical understanding.

ANSWER: b

17. A psychologist develops a new questionnaire to measure social anxiety based on cognitive theory, then tests its effectiveness in therapy settings. This example best demonstrates which aspect of personality study?
a. The integration of assessment and application components
b. The superiority of assessment over other components
c. The independence of theory from practical work

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d. The limitation of research to laboratory settings

ANSWER: a

18. What does the axiom, "There are few differences between people, but what differences there are, really matter," suggest about personality psychology's perspective?

a. Individual differences are minimal and unimportant for understanding behavior.
b. Small individual differences can have significant impacts on behavior.
c. Situational factors are more important than personal characteristics.
d. People are essentially identical in their behavioral responses.

ANSWER: b

19. A researcher studies how childhood experiences with uncontrollable events lead to adult depression by examining learned helplessness patterns. This research approach most closely aligns with which perspective?

a. Psychoanalytic approach focusing on unconscious conflicts
b. Behavioral/social learning approach examining conditioning effects
c. Humanistic approach emphasizing self-acceptance
d. Biological approach investigating genetic predispositions

ANSWER: b

20. Which approach explains consistent behavior patterns through conditioning and expectations?

a. Humanistic approach
b. Trait approach
c. Behavioral/social learning approach
d. Cognitive approach

ANSWER: c

21. Which countries are typically classified as individualistic cultures?

a. Most Asian and African countries
b. Central and South American nations
c. Northern European countries and North America
d. All developing economic systems

ANSWER: c

22. A student who is typically shy becomes very outgoing at a party but returns to quiet behavior in class the next day. This example best illustrates which concept?

a. Personality traits are completely unstable across situations.
b. Situations can influence behavior while personality remains consistent.
c. Individual differences have no impact on behavioral responses.
d. Social environments eliminate all personality characteristics.

ANSWER: b

23. What does the consistency aspect of personality mean in practical terms?

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a. People never change their behavior across different situations.
b. Behavioral patterns can be identified over time and across situations.
c. Individual differences disappear when people face similar challenges.
d. Personality traits are identical for all members of a culture.

ANSWER: b

24. Why might different personality approaches provide incompatible explanations for the same behavior?
a. Each approach examines completely different aspects of human nature.
b. Some approaches are based on incorrect scientific principles.
c. Different approaches use incompatible research methods.
d. Personality theories cannot be scientifically tested.

ANSWER: a

25. How do collectivist cultures typically define success differently from individualistic cultures?
a. Success is measured only by financial achievement.
b. Success involves cooperation and group accomplishments.
c. Success requires competition with other individuals.
d. Success is based on personal recognition and uniqueness.

ANSWER: b

26. A therapist uses cognitive theory to develop a treatment program for anxiety, creates a questionnaire to measure progress, and conducts a study to test effectiveness. This example demonstrates which principle?
a. Research is the only important component of personality study.
b. The four components of personality study operate in concert with each other.
c. Theory and application should remain completely separate.
d. Assessment tools are unnecessary for effective therapy.

ANSWER: b

27. How do personality psychologists differ from social psychologists in their research focus?
a. Personality psychologists ignore situational influences on behavior.
b. Social psychologists focus on individual differences between people.
c. Personality psychologists examine why individuals differ in similar situations.
d. Social psychologists only study abnormal behavior patterns.

ANSWER: c

28. A researcher investigates why some people experience frequent episodes of depression while others rarely feel sad. This research question best exemplifies which aspect of personality psychology?
a. Focus on situational factors that cause universal responses
b. Emphasis on individual differences in emotional patterns
c. Study of normal developmental processes in all people
d. Investigation of social influences on group behavior

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ANSWER: b

29. A researcher explains depression as anger turned inward due to unconscious processes. This explanation represents which theoretical perspective?

a. Cognitive approach examining thought patterns
b. Psychoanalytic approach focusing on unconscious dynamics
c. Biological approach investigating genetic factors
d. Humanistic approach emphasizing self-worth

ANSWER: b

30. A therapist working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds adapts treatment methods to match each client's cultural values. This practice reflects which important principle?

a. All therapeutic approaches work equally well across cultures.
b. Cultural background does not influence therapy effectiveness.
c. Therapy is more effective when tailored to cultural norms.
d. Individual differences are more important than cultural factors.

ANSWER: c

31. What role does research play in the comprehensive study of personality?

a. Research replaces the need for theoretical frameworks.
b. Research tests principles and explores concepts from theories.
c. Research is less important than practical applications.
d. Research only confirms what theories already predict.

ANSWER: b

32. According to the text, what has the debate among psychologists shifted to regarding person versus situation influences?

a. Whether situations or personality traits are more important.
b. How situations affect behavior and how behavior reflects the individual.
c. Whether personality psychology should exist as a separate field.
d. How to eliminate situational influences from personality research.

ANSWER: b

33. What distinguishes intrapersonal processes from interpersonal processes in personality psychology?

a. Intrapersonal processes occur between different people.
b. Intrapersonal processes include emotional and cognitive activities within individuals.
c. Interpersonal processes are more important for understanding personality.
d. Intrapersonal processes only involve conscious thoughts.

ANSWER: b

34. A psychologist studies aggression by examining how children learn violent behavior from watching aggressive models on television. This research approach best represents which perspective?

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a. Trait approach measuring aggressive tendencies
b. Behavioral/social learning approach studying observational learning
c. Biological approach investigating genetic predispositions
d. Psychoanalytic approach exploring unconscious impulses

ANSWER: b

35. Why is it significant that the United States was found to be the most individualistic of 41 nations examined?
a. It proves that individualistic cultures are superior to collectivist ones.
b. It suggests that most personality research may reflect extreme individualistic assumptions.
c. It means that American personality theories apply to all other cultures.
d. It indicates that collectivist cultures should adopt individualistic values.

ANSWER: b

36. A manager notices that one employee consistently helps colleagues during busy periods while another employee in the same situation focuses only on individual tasks. This observation best illustrates which principle?
a. Situational factors completely determine workplace behavior
b. Individual differences emerge even in similar work environments
c. Personality traits are irrelevant in professional settings
d. All employees respond identically to workplace demands

ANSWER: b

37. A psychologist observes that a client consistently avoids social situations, processes information pessimistically, and experiences frequent anxiety. These observations best represent which aspect of personality?
a. Situational responses that vary with environmental demands
b. Consistent behavior patterns and intrapersonal processes
c. Temporary reactions to specific stressful events
d. Cultural influences on individual behavior choices

ANSWER: b

38. What does the blind men and elephant analogy suggest about the six approaches to personality?
a. Only one approach can be correct about human personality.
b. Each approach may capture an important but incomplete aspect of personality.
c. All approaches are equally wrong about human nature.
d. The approaches should be combined into a single theory.

ANSWER: b

39. A researcher finds that a personality test developed in an individualistic culture shows different results when administered to people from collectivist cultures. This finding most likely reflects which issue?
a. Translation errors in the test materials.
b. Cultural differences in underlying personality concepts.
c. Inadequate sample sizes in the research study.

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d. Technical problems with the assessment instrument.

ANSWER: b

40. Why does personality psychology require all four components (theory, application, assessment, and research) rather than focusing on just one?

a. Each component addresses different questions about human personality.

b. Academic requirements mandate coverage of all four areas.

c. Historical tradition established this organizational structure.

d. Other psychology fields use the same four-component approach.

ANSWER: a

41. How do personality psychologists view the relationship between consistency and change in behavior?

a. Behavior must be completely consistent to reflect personality.

b. Consistency exists alongside the possibility of behavioral change.

c. Personality prevents any meaningful behavioral change.

d. Behavioral change eliminates personality consistency.

ANSWER: b

42. Why might personality psychologists disagree about the definition of their field?

a. The field lacks sufficient research to establish clear definitions.

b. Different theoretical approaches emphasize different aspects of human nature.

c. Personality psychology is too new to have established definitions.

d. Cultural differences prevent universal agreement on personality concepts.

ANSWER: b

43. A therapist helps a client with depression by focusing on developing better self-worth and addressing unmet basic needs. This therapeutic approach most closely reflects which personality perspective?

a. Cognitive approach targeting negative thought patterns.

b. Humanistic approach emphasizing self-acceptance and growth.

c. Biological approach addressing genetic vulnerabilities.

d. Trait approach measuring depressive characteristics.

ANSWER: b

44. What does it mean that people and their personalities exist within a cultural context?

a. Culture determines personality completely without individual variation.

b. Cultural assumptions influence how personality concepts are understood.

c. Personality exists independently of any cultural influences.

d. Cultural factors only affect personality in developing countries.

ANSWER: b

45. A graduate student develops a new theory about social anxiety, creates a therapy technique based on the theory, designs a questionnaire to measure anxiety levels, and tests the therapy's effectiveness. This example best demonstrates

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which concept?

a. The independence of the four personality study components
b. The integrated nature of theory, application, assessment, and research
c. The superiority of research over other personality study methods
d. The limitation of theory to academic rather than practical settings

ANSWER: b

46. Two friends attend the same stressful job interview. One remains calm and confident while the other becomes extremely anxious and performs poorly. This scenario best illustrates which principle?

a. Situational factors are the primary determinants of behavior.
b. Individual differences influence responses to similar situations.
c. Personality traits are irrelevant in high-stress situations.
d. Environmental factors eliminate individual personality differences.

ANSWER: b

47. What does the phrase "It was just like her to do that" suggest about personality?

a. People's behavior is completely unpredictable.
b. Behavioral consistency allows us to recognize characteristic patterns.
c. Individual differences are minimal between people.
d. Situations determine all aspects of human behavior.

ANSWER: b

48. A researcher explains that aggressive children often become aggressive adults because they consistently interpret neutral situations as threatening. This explanation combines elements from which approaches?

a. Trait approach measuring consistency and cognitive approach examining interpretation
b. Biological approach studying genetics and humanistic approach promoting growth
c. Psychoanalytic approach exploring unconscious drives and behavioral approach examining learning
d. Humanistic approach emphasizing potential and biological approach investigating physiology

ANSWER: a

49. A counselor working with international students notices that clients from collectivist cultures seem uncomfortable with therapy goals focused on individual self-improvement. This observation most likely reflects which cultural difference?

a. Different levels of education between cultural groups
b. Varying emphasis on group harmony versus individual achievement
c. Language barriers affecting therapeutic communication
d. Economic differences between individualistic and collectivist societies

ANSWER: b

50. What is the primary purpose of including assessment methods in personality psychology?

a. To replace theoretical understanding with empirical measurement
b. To measure personality constructs of interest to researchers

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c. To prove that one personality theory is superior to others

d. To eliminate the need for practical applications

ANSWER: b

51. What does the Paradise fire example demonstrate about the relationship between situations and individual differences?

a. Extreme situations eliminate all individual personality differences.

b. Individual differences emerge as situational demands decrease.

c. Personality traits become stronger during crisis situations.

d. Situational factors have no impact on individual behavior.

ANSWER: b

52. A researcher studies why some college students develop eating disorders while others maintain healthy relationships with food despite similar social pressures. This research focus best exemplifies which aspect of personality psychology?

a. Investigation of universal human responses to social pressure

b. Examination of individual differences in vulnerability and coping

c. Study of normal developmental processes in young adults

d. Analysis of social factors that affect all college students

ANSWER: b

53. Which approach to personality emphasizes personal responsibility and feelings of self-acceptance?

a. Psychoanalytic approach

b. Biological approach

c. Humanistic approach

d. Cognitive approach

ANSWER: c

54. Why might behavior suggesting excessive dependency be viewed differently across cultures?

a. Some cultures have different definitions of mental health and adjustment.

b. Dependency behaviors are universally considered problematic.

c. Cultural differences in dependency are based on economic factors.

d. Individual personality traits override cultural influences on behavior.

ANSWER: a

55. A personality researcher develops a theory about perfectionism, creates a therapy program for perfectionistic clients, designs a scale to measure perfectionist tendencies, and conducts studies on treatment outcomes. This work demonstrates which principle?

a. Theory development is more important than practical applications.

b. The four components of personality study complement each other.

c. Assessment tools should be developed independently of theoretical frameworks.

d. Research findings are unrelated to therapeutic applications.

ANSWER: b

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56. During a team-building exercise, most participants initially follow the group leader's instructions, but as the activity progresses, some individuals begin taking initiative while others remain passive followers. This scenario best demonstrates which concept?

a. Situational factors permanently override individual personality traits.
b. Individual differences become apparent as situational structure decreases.
c. Personality traits are irrelevant in structured group activities.
d. Group dynamics eliminate all individual behavioral differences.

ANSWER: b

57. Why do personality psychologists emphasize that consistent behavior patterns originate within the individual?

a. To deny that external factors influence personality development
b. To distinguish personality from purely situational responses
c. To prove that genetics determine all behavioral patterns
d. To eliminate environmental factors from personality research

ANSWER: b

58. A psychologist explains that a person's tendency toward depression stems from genetic vulnerability that becomes activated during stressful life events. This explanation best represents which approach?

a. Psychoanalytic approach focusing on unconscious conflicts
b. Biological approach emphasizing inherited predispositions
c. Cognitive approach examining thought patterns
d. Behavioral approach studying learned responses

ANSWER: b

59. According to the text, which type of culture emphasizes cooperation over competition?

a. Individualistic cultures.
b. Collectivist cultures.
c. Western cultures.
d. Developed cultures.

ANSWER: b

60. How does research contribute to the cyclical nature of personality psychology advancement?

a. Research findings lead to new questions and additional studies.
b. Research provides final answers that end further investigation.
c. Research only confirms existing theoretical predictions.
d. Research operates independently of theoretical frameworks.

ANSWER: a

61. How can psychologists be divided based on their focus regarding person versus situation influences?

a. Some focus on typical responses to environmental demands, while others study individual differences.
b. Some study only personality traits, while others examine only situations.

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c. Some work with normal populations, while others study abnormal behavior.

d. Some use quantitative methods, while others prefer qualitative approaches.

ANSWER: a

62. A therapist notices that a client consistently experiences anxiety in social situations, processes criticism negatively, and uses avoidance as a coping strategy. These observations best represent which components of personality?

a. Situational responses and environmental adaptations.

b. Consistent behavioral patterns and intrapersonal processes.

c. Cultural influences and social learning effects.

d. Temporary reactions and state-dependent behaviors.

ANSWER: b

63. How do the six approaches to personality complement each other despite sometimes providing incompatible explanations?

a. They all study exactly the same aspects of human behavior.

b. Each approach may be correct about different aspects of personality.

c. They use identical research methods and assessment techniques.

d. They all lead to the same practical applications.

ANSWER: b

64. A researcher studying achievement motivation finds that students from individualistic cultures focus on personal grades while students from collectivist cultures prioritize group project success. This finding best illustrates which principle?

a. Achievement motivation is identical across all cultures.

b. Cultural values influence how psychological concepts are expressed.

c. Individual differences override cultural influences on behavior.

d. Educational systems determine achievement motivation patterns.

ANSWER: b

65. According to the textbook, what topics are covered in the application sections of each personality approach?

a. Only psychotherapy and clinical treatment methods

b. Psychotherapy, education, religion, and workplace performance

c. Research methods and statistical analysis techniques

d. Historical development and biographical information

ANSWER: b

66. Why do personality psychologists find individual differences more interesting than general response patterns?

a. Individual differences are easier to measure than general patterns.

b. General patterns have already been thoroughly researched.

c. Individual differences reveal what makes each person unique.

d. General patterns are less scientifically rigorous to study.

ANSWER: c

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67. According to the textbook definition, what role do external sources play in personality?
    a. External sources have no influence on personality development.
    b. External sources influence personality but don't solely determine behavior.
    c. External sources are more important than internal factors.
    d. External sources only affect personality during childhood.

ANSWER: b

68. A researcher studies depression by examining how people with negative thinking patterns interpret events pessimistically and recall unhappy experiences more easily. This research approach best represents which perspective?
    a. Humanistic
    b. Cognitive
    c. Psychoanalytic
    d. Behavioral

ANSWER: b

69. What does it mean that most personality research findings may have cultural limitations?
    a. The research is methodologically flawed and should be discarded.
    b. The findings may not apply to people from different cultural backgrounds.
    c. Cultural research is impossible to conduct scientifically.
    d. Personality concepts are meaningless across different cultures.

ANSWER: b

70. A psychology department offers courses in personality theory, clinical applications, psychological testing, and research methods. This curriculum structure best reflects which principle?
    a. Theory is the most important component of personality study.
    b. Comprehensive personality understanding requires multiple components.
    c. Research methods should be taught separately from other topics.
    d. Applications are more practical than theoretical knowledge.

ANSWER: b

71. A teacher observes that during a fire drill, all students initially follow evacuation procedures, but once outside, some students help organize others while some become anxious and others remain calm. This observation best demonstrates which concept?
    a. Emergency situations eliminate individual personality differences.
    b. Individual differences emerge when situational demands become less structured.
    c. Personality traits are irrelevant during crisis situations.
    d. Situational factors completely override individual characteristics.

ANSWER: b

72. Why might personality psychologists be engaged in ongoing discussions about their field's definition and scope?
    a. The field lacks sufficient empirical research to establish clear boundaries.

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b. Different theoretical perspectives emphasize different aspects of human behavior.
c. Personality psychology is too new to have developed standard definitions.
d. Professional organizations have not established official guidelines.

ANSWER: b

73. A mental health professional notices that a client's behavior appears overly dependent according to Western standards, but learns that this reflects appropriate family loyalty in the client's culture. This situation best illustrates which principle?
a. Cultural factors are irrelevant to psychological assessment.
b. Behavioral norms vary significantly across different cultures.
c. Western psychological standards apply universally.
d. Individual personality overrides cultural influences.

ANSWER: b

74. What does it mean that personality psychologists acknowledge both consistency and change in behavior?
a. Behavior patterns are completely random and unpredictable.
b. People show consistent patterns while retaining capacity for change.
c. Consistency and change are mutually exclusive concepts.
d. Only situational factors can produce behavioral change.

ANSWER: b

75. A counselor observes that a client consistently responds to stress with withdrawal, processes feedback negatively, and experiences persistent feelings of inadequacy. These observations best represent which aspects of personality?
a. Temporary situational reactions and environmental responses.
b. Consistent behavioral patterns and intrapersonal processes.
c. Cultural influences and social learning effects.
d. Biological predispositions and genetic factors.

ANSWER: b

76. A researcher explains that aggressive behavior results from genetic predisposition, learned responses to rewards, and negative interpretation of social cues. This multi-faceted explanation demonstrates which principle?
a. Only one personality approach can correctly explain behavior.
b. Multiple approaches may contribute to understanding the same behavior.
c. Different approaches always provide contradictory explanations.
d. Biological factors are more important than psychological ones.

ANSWER: b

77. Which regions are typically associated with collectivist cultures?
a. Northern Europe and North America
b. Asia, Africa, Central America, and South America
c. Only developed Western nations
d. Exclusively English-speaking countries

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ANSWER: b

78. A graduate program requires students to study personality theories, complete clinical internships, learn psychological testing, and conduct research projects. This curriculum design best reflects which principle?

a. Research training is the most important component of personality education.
b. Complete personality understanding requires integration of all four components.
c. Theoretical knowledge should be separated from practical training.
d. Assessment skills are more valuable than research abilities.

ANSWER: b

79. During a workplace crisis, employees initially follow emergency protocols uniformly, but afterward some offer emotional support to colleagues while others focus on damage assessment and others withdraw. This scenario best illustrates which concept?

a. Crisis situations permanently alter personality characteristics.
b. Individual differences become evident as situational constraints decrease.
c. Emergency protocols eliminate all individual behavioral variations.
d. Workplace environments suppress natural personality expression.

ANSWER: b

80. What makes the study of individual differences particularly valuable for understanding human behavior?

a. Individual differences are easier to measure than general patterns.
b. Small differences between people can have significant behavioral impacts.
c. Individual differences are more scientifically rigorous to study.
d. General patterns have already been completely understood.

ANSWER: b

81. A therapist explains that a client's depression stems from poor self-image developed in an unsupportive childhood environment where basic needs were not met. This explanation best represents which approach?

a. Psychoanalytic approach focusing on unconscious conflicts
b. Humanistic approach emphasizing self-worth and supportive environments
c. Cognitive approach examining negative thought patterns
d. Biological approach investigating genetic vulnerabilities

ANSWER: b

82. Why might research findings about dream content be more culturally universal than findings about self-esteem?

a. Dreams are biological phenomena while self-esteem involves cultural values.
b. Dream research uses better methodology than self-esteem studies.
c. Self-esteem is more important than dreams for personality psychology.
d. Cultural differences only affect conscious psychological processes.

ANSWER: a

83. What is the relationship between personality theories and research findings?

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a. Theories are developed independently of research findings.
b. Theories generate research questions, and research informs theory development.
c. Research findings always confirm theoretical predictions.
d. Theories are more important than empirical research.

ANSWER: b

84. What does the text suggest about the relative importance of person versus situation factors in determining behavior?
a. Situational factors are always more important than personality traits.
b. Both person and situation factors contribute to behavior.
c. Personality traits completely override situational influences.
d. The importance varies randomly between person and situation.

ANSWER: b

85. A researcher investigates why some individuals consistently seek out social interactions while others prefer solitude across various life contexts. This research focus best exemplifies which characteristic of personality psychology?
a. Study of universal human social needs
b. Investigation of individual differences in social behavior
c. Analysis of situational factors affecting social choices
d. Examination of cultural influences on social preferences

ANSWER: b

86. What does the elephant analogy suggest about the potential accuracy of different personality approaches?
a. Only one approach can provide accurate information about personality.
b. Each approach may be accurate but incomplete in its perspective.
c. All approaches are equally incorrect about human nature.
d. The approaches should never be combined or integrated.

ANSWER: b

87. A researcher develops a personality assessment based on Western individualistic values and finds it produces different results when used with people from collectivist cultures. This outcome most likely reflects which issue?
a. Technical problems with the assessment instrument
b. Cultural differences in underlying personality concepts and values
c. Inadequate translation of the assessment materials
d. Insufficient sample sizes in the cross-cultural study

ANSWER: b

88. A clinical psychologist uses attachment theory to understand a client's relationship problems, develops a therapy approach based on the theory, creates a questionnaire to measure attachment styles, and studies treatment outcomes. This example best demonstrates which principle?
a. Theory is the only necessary component for understanding personality.
b. The interplay of the four components of personality.
c. Assessment tools should be developed independently of theoretical frameworks.

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d. Research is less important than clinical applications.

ANSWER: b

89. Why does personality psychology emphasize consistency while acknowledging that people can change?

a. Consistency and change are contradictory concepts that cannot coexist.

b. Consistency provides stability while change allows for growth and adaptation.

c. Change is only possible during childhood development.

d. Consistency is more important than the capacity for change.

ANSWER: b

90. A researcher studies how elementary school bullies often become adults who engage in domestic violence, focusing on the stability of aggressive traits over time. This research approach best represents which perspective?

a. Psychoanalytic approach examining unconscious aggressive drives

b. Trait approach measuring consistency of individual characteristics

c. Behavioral approach studying learned aggressive responses

d. Cognitive approach investigating aggressive thought patterns

ANSWER: b

91. How do individualistic and collectivist cultures differ in their approach to personal recognition?

a. Both cultures value personal recognition equally.

b. Individualistic cultures encourage personal recognition, while collectivist cultures may discourage it.

c. Collectivist cultures place more emphasis on individual achievement.

d. Personal recognition is irrelevant in both types of cultures.

ANSWER: b

92. Why does the textbook organize each personality approach section to include all four components rather than covering them separately?

a. It makes the textbook easier to write and organize.

b. It demonstrates how the components work together within each approach.

c. It follows traditional academic publishing requirements.

d. It reduces the total length of the textbook.

ANSWER: b

93. A manager notices that during routine meetings, employees behave similarly, but during brainstorming sessions, some become highly creative while others remain quiet and analytical. This observation best illustrates which principle?

a. Personality traits are irrelevant in professional settings.

b. Individual differences emerge more clearly in less structured situations.

c. Situational factors completely determine workplace behavior.

d. Creative abilities are unrelated to personality characteristics.

ANSWER: b

94. A therapist observes that a client consistently experiences anxiety in new situations, processes ambiguous information

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as threatening, and uses avoidance to cope with uncertainty. These observations best represent which components of personality?

a. Situational responses and environmental adaptations
b. Consistent behavioral patterns and intrapersonal processes
c. Cultural influences and social learning effects
d. Temporary reactions and state-dependent behaviors

ANSWER: b

95. Why might personality psychologists align themselves with one particular approach rather than trying to combine all six?

a. Academic departments require specialization in single approaches.
b. Some approaches provide incompatible explanations for the same phenomena.
c. Combining approaches is methodologically impossible.
d. Single approaches are easier to research than multiple approaches.

ANSWER: b

96. A researcher finds that marriage patterns show similar results across different cultural groups, while self-esteem concepts vary significantly between cultures. This finding best illustrates which principle?

a. All personality concepts are culturally universal.
b. Some personality phenomena may be universal, while others are culture-specific.
c. Cultural differences are irrelevant to personality research.
d. Western personality theories apply to all cultures equally.

ANSWER: b

97. According to the textbook, what happens to research findings in personality psychology?

a. They provide final answers that end further investigation.
b. They typically lead to new questions and more research.
c. They only confirm existing theoretical predictions.
d. They replace the need for theoretical frameworks.

ANSWER: b

98. What does the current consensus suggest about the person-situation debate in psychology?

a. The debate has been resolved in favor of situational factors.
b. The focus has shifted to understanding how both factors work together.
c. Personality factors have been proven more important than situations.
d. The debate continues with no resolution in sight.

ANSWER: b

99. Why does the textbook acknowledge that personality psychologists do not agree on a single definition of personality?

a. The field is too new to have established clear definitions.
b. Different theoretical perspectives emphasize different aspects of human behavior.
c. Personality concepts cannot be scientifically defined.

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d. Cultural differences prevent universal agreement on definitions.

ANSWER: b

100. The generally agreed-upon answer today is that both the situation and the person contribute to behavior.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

101. Personality is defined as consistent behavior patterns and intrapersonal processes originating within the individual.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

102. The psychoanalytic approach focuses on unconscious processes as the primary source of individual differences in behavior.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

103. Individualistic cultures place great emphasis on individual needs and accomplishments.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

104. The four components necessary for a complete understanding of personality are theory, application, assessment, and research.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

105. Personality psychologists are primarily interested in how people typically respond to environmental demands.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: False

106. Intrapersonal processes include all the emotional, motivational, and cognitive processes that go on inside of us.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

107. The biological approach points to inherited predispositions and physiological processes to explain individual differences.

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Chapter 01 - What Is Personality?

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

108. Collectivist cultures are more interested in cooperation than competition.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

109. Research findings in personality psychology typically lead to new questions and more research.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

110. The Paradise fire example demonstrates that powerful situations can initially create similar responses but individual differences emerge as situational demands decrease.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

111. External sources have no influence on personality development according to the textbook definition.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: False

112. The humanistic approach identifies personal responsibility and feelings of self-acceptance as key causes of differences in personality.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

113. The United States was found to be the most individualistic of 41 nations examined in one study.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

114. Each section of the textbook is organized around theory, application, assessment, and research components.
a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

115. Personality consistency means that people never change their behavior across different situations.

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Chapter 01 - What Is Personality?

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: False

116. A person who consistently helps others in various situations demonstrates the behavioral consistency aspect of personality.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

117. The six approaches to personality always provide compatible explanations for the same behavior.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: False

118. Psychotherapy is more effective when it is tailored to the client's cultural norms and values.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

119. Personality psychology is described as a science in the textbook.

a. True
b. False

ANSWER: True

120. Explain how the Paradise fire example illustrates the interaction between person and situation factors in determining behavior.

ANSWER: The Paradise fire example demonstrates that powerful situations initially create similar responses across individuals (panic, fear, confusion), but as the immediate situational demands decrease, individual personality differences emerge in how people cope with the aftermath. Some residents grieved and consoled others, while others expressed outrage or kept to themselves. This shows that while situations can temporarily override individual differences, personality characteristics become apparent as situational constraints lessen.

121. Define personality according to the textbook and explain the two main components of this definition.

ANSWER: Personality is defined as consistent behavior patterns and intrapersonal processes originating within the individual. The first component, consistent behavior patterns, refers to individual differences that can be identified over time and across situations. The second component, intrapersonal processes, includes all the emotional, motivational, and cognitive processes that occur within individuals and affect how they act and feel. Both components originate within the individual, though external sources can influence personality development.

122. List and briefly describe the focus of each of the six approaches to personality discussed in the textbook.

ANSWER: The six approaches are: (1) Psychoanalytic approach—focuses on unconscious processes as sources of behavior differences; (2) Trait approach—studies individual differences by measuring where people fall on personality characteristic continuums; (3) Biological approach—emphasizes inherited predispositions and

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physiological processes; (4) Humanistic approach—identifies personal responsibility and self-acceptance as key factors; (5) Behavioral/social learning approach—explains behavior through conditioning and expectations; (6) Cognitive approach—examines differences in how people process information.

123. Explain the difference between individualistic and collectivist cultures and why this distinction is important for personality psychology.

ANSWER: Individualistic cultures emphasize individual needs, accomplishments, independence, and uniqueness, while collectivist cultures prioritize group belonging, cooperation, and collective success over personal recognition. This distinction is important because personality concepts developed in individualistic cultures may not apply universally. For example, Western concepts of self-esteem and achievement motivation are based on assumptions about personal goals and individual success that may not be relevant in collectivist cultures where group harmony and cooperation are valued more highly.

124. Describe how the four components of personality study (theory, application, assessment, and research) work together to advance understanding in the field.

ANSWER: The four components work synergistically to advance personality psychology. Theories provide comprehensive models of personality structure and operation, generating research questions and hypotheses. Research tests theoretical principles and explores concepts, with findings leading to new questions and additional studies. Assessment provides tools to measure personality constructs of interest to researchers and practitioners. Applications demonstrate how theories and research findings address practical concerns like psychotherapy, education, and workplace performance. Each component informs and enhances the others in a cyclical process of scientific advancement.

125. Using the axiom "There are few differences between people, but what differences there are, really matter," explain why personality psychology focuses on individual differences rather than general patterns of behavior.

ANSWER: This axiom captures the essence of personality psychology's perspective that while people may appear similar in many ways, the small individual differences that do exist can have significant impacts on behavior and life outcomes. Personality psychologists focus on these individual differences because they help explain why people respond differently to the same situations - why some make friends easily while others are lonely, why some are prone to depression, or why some succeed in business while others struggle. These differences, though they may seem minor, are what make each person unique and can predict important life outcomes.

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Instructor Manual

Burger, Personality, 12e ©2027, 9798214159294; Chapter 1: What Is Personality?

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Purpose and Perspective of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce students to the concepts of personality. The chapter begins by highlighting the Paradise fire tragedy in California, outlining different response types of the residents of the town. The chapter then poses the question: Is our behavior shaped by the situation we encounter or by the type of person we are? Then, the debate among the psychologists of how situations affect behavior, and how behavior reflects the individual, is unpacked. Following this, definitions of personality are presented, with the added notion that there is disagreement among psychologists as to how personality can be defined. The chapter notes the idea that several aspects of the definition need to be further elaborated.

In the next section, six approaches to personality are highlighted, including the psychoanalytic, trait, biological, humanistic, behavioral/social learning, and cognitive approaches. These approaches are unpacked with examples, looking at aggression and depression. Next, the chapter transitions to personality and culture, with psychologists recognizing that people and their personalities exist within a cultural context, identifying differences between individualistic and collectivist cultures.

Following this section, the chapter briefly outlines the structure of the rest of the textbook: the textbook is divided into sections, with each section presenting one of the different approaches to personality. Each section begins with a theory, followed by an application, assessments, and research of each approach.

The chapter ends with a description of the upcoming, brief biographies that will be presented throughout the rest of the text. These biographies will highlight individuals who played a central role in the history of personality psychology.

Chapter Objectives

The following objectives are addressed in this chapter:

1.1 Explain how the person and the situation influence behavior.
1.2 Describe the subject matter of personality psychology.
1.3 Identify the focus of each of the six approaches to personality.
1.4 Discuss the role culture plays in personality psychology.
1.5 State how theory, application, assessment, and research combine to form the study of personality.

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Key Term

Personality: Consistent behavior patterns and intrapersonal processes originating within the individual.

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What's New in This Chapter

The following elements are improvements in this chapter from the previous edition:

- New introduction example.
- New table summarizing different approaches.
- New subsection on how the field today reflects much greater gender, ethnic and cultural diversity than in the past.
- New references.

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Chapter Outline

The following outline organizes activities (including any existing discussion questions in PowerPoints or other supplements) and assessments by chapter (and therefore by topic), so that you can see how all the content relates to the topics covered in the text.

I. The Person and the Situation
   a. Is our behavior shaped by the situation we encounter or by the type of person we are?
   b. Dividing fields of study within psychology based on typical response patterns or individual differences in response patterns to situations.

II. Defining Personality
   a. There is importance in defining terms, but personality psychologists do not agree on a single definition of personality.
   b. There are several aspects of the provided definition that are expanded upon, such as individual differences, intrapersonal processes, and consistency.

III. Six Approaches to Personality
   a. This text examines six general approaches to explaining personality, which are introduced in this section: the psychoanalytic approach, the

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trait approach, the biological approach, the humanistic approach, the behavioral/social learning approach, and the cognitive approach.

b. Each approach correctly identifies and examines an important aspect of human personality, though sometimes these explanations are incompatible.

c. Two examples: Aggression and Depression

- Example 1: Aggression
  - (1) Each of the six approaches to personality provides at least one answer to the question of why some people are more prone to act aggressively than others.
    - (a) Psychoanalytic approach: we all possess an unconscious desire to self-destruct or aggression results when we are blocked from reaching our goals.
    - (b) Trait approach: measure the extent to which, and consistency of, individual differences in aggression over time.
    - (c) Biological approach: a genetic or hormonal predisposition to act aggressively, or approaching aggression from an evolutionary perspective.
    - (d) Humanistic approach: aggression comes from an environment in which basic needs are not adequately met.
    - (e) Behavioral/social learning approach: people learn to be aggressive in the same way they learn other behaviors, typically from watching models.
    - (f) Cognitive approach: focusing on how aggressive people process information.
  - (2) Only one approach might be correct, or all six may be partially correct and vary in their focus.
- Example 2: Depression
  - (1) Each of the six approaches to personality provides at least one answer to the question of why some people are more prone to depression than others.
    - (a) Psychoanalytic approach: depression is anger turned inward.
    - (b) Trait approach: current emotional levels predict future emotional levels.
    - (c) Biological approach: genetic susceptibility to depression.

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(d) Humanistic approach: depression is explained in terms of self-esteem.
(e) Behavioral/social learning approach: depression stems from lack of positive reinforcements, or exposure to aversive situations in which a person has limited control.
(f) Cognitive approach: some people are prone to episodes of depression because of how they process information.

(2) You do not need to align yourself with the same approach to personality when explaining different experiences.

IV. Personality and Culture
   a. Culture plays an important role in understanding personality.
   b. One of the most important distinctions cross-cultural personality researchers make is between individualistic cultures and collectivistic cultures.
   c. The same concepts can mean different things in different cultures.
   d. Culture needs to be considered when identifying and treating psychological disorders.

V. The Study of Personality: Theory, Application, Assessment, and Research
   a. This text is divided into sections, and each section presents one of the seven different approaches to personality (the psychoanalytic approach is divided into two sections).
   b. The four components necessary for a complete understanding of personality – theory, application, assessment, and research – are outlined in each of the seven approaches.

VI. The Changing Face of the Field
   a. This text also highlights prominent individuals who played a central role in the history of personality psychology.
   b. The limitations of these highlighted individuals are discussed as well as the future trajectory of personality psychology researchers.

VII. Summary
   a. Four review statements are presented that encompass each of the chapter objectives.
      1. Personality psychology is concerned with differences among people, and a definition of personality is presented.
      2. There are many theories of personality, which provide different explanations for individual differences in behavior. These theories are divided into six general categories: psychoanalytic, trait, biological, humanistic, behavioral/social learning, and cognitive approaches.

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3. The role of culture is an important consideration, and this text mostly reports findings from individualistic cultures. It is important to note that these results don't always generalize to other cultures.
4. This text will also examine how each of the six approaches is applied to practical concerns, including personality assessments and exploring relevant research.

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Additional Discussion Questions

The following are discussion questions that are not found in the text, PPTs, or courseware (if courseware exists) – they are for you to use as you wish. You can assign these questions several ways: in a discussion forum in your LMS; as whole-class discussions in person; or as a partner or group activity in class.

I. Discussion: [Defining Personality] Duration: 10–15 minutes.
   a. Before students have read the first chapter of the text, write the word personality on the board and ask them to define it. Write their answers on the board and ask them whether the definition captures their understanding of personality. Of course, you can ask difficult and challenging questions when the class falls silent. The point is to get students to think about what personality is and is not and perhaps what should be covered in a course on personality. The exercise can also demonstrate the difficulty psychologists face when trying to define even such "obvious" concepts as personality.
   b. Another variation of this exercise is to write the word personality on the board and then ask students to call out single words that are related to that term (like a word association task). Then, have students do a form of q-sort where later they can assign each of those words to one or more of the six major perspectives noted in the chapter section addressing the approaches.

II. Discussion: [Personal Versus Situational Causes of Behavior] Duration: 10–15 minutes
   a. Pick a behavior that has many obvious causes and write it on the board. I have had success with "Cheating among high school students." Ask students to think of some of the reasons why, for example, high school students cheat. As the students call out their answers, write the responses in one of two columns. One of these columns is for personal factors—for example, low self-esteem, poor at math, and lack of

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personal ethics—whereas the other column is for situational causes—for example, peer pressure, lack of surveillance, and everybody's doing it. After both columns contain several answers, ask students to guess what the two columns represent. This exercise quickly demonstrates the notion that behaviors are caused by both personal and situational causes. I also use this exercise to explain that this class is focused more on the personal side of the question.

III. Discussion: [The Case of the "Consistent" Trait] Duration: 15–20 minutes
   a. Provide a description of a fictional person, "Taylor," who is a brilliant student with a history of high achievement. However, Taylor consistently waits until 2:00AM the night before a major deadline to begin working. Despite the immense stress, physical exhaustion, and the fact that the final product is never as good as it could have been, Taylor repeats this cycle for every project, every semester. Using the six approaches, discuss how we could explain why Taylor – an otherwise rational, capable person – continues this self-defeating behavior.

IV. Group Discussion: [Cultural Competency in Treatment: Personality or Pathology?] Duration: 10-15 minutes
   a. Have students work in small groups to examine how cultural backgrounds influence the manifestation and treatment of psychological disorders. Give students a case study of a person exhibiting behaviors that could be interpreted differently depending on the cultural lens:
      i. A student from a collectivistic culture refuses to make a career decision without parental approval.
      ii. An individual from an individualistic culture is extremely self-reliant, to the point that they are socially-isolated.
   b. Instruct students to discuss whether these behaviors should be viewed as "personality traits," "cultural norms," or "symptoms of a disorder." The purpose of this assignment is to prompt students to think about the danger of applying Western personality standards and norms to non-Western individuals. You might emphasize that understanding a person's cultural context is not just an "extra" step, but foundational to accurately explain and treat distress.

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Additional Activities and Assignments

The following are activities and assignments developed by Cengage but not included in the text, PPTs, or courseware (if courseware exists) – they are for you to use if you wish.

1. **Engaging with research**: Familiarizing Students with Personality Journals
    a. Have students go to the library and familiarize themselves with the various journals that publish personality research. Students can be given different assignments, depending on their background. You may require them to simply identify some of the more popular topics in the journals. You also might require students to write a brief summary of one or more articles. After students have read Chapter 2, you might also ask them to identify the independent variables, dependent variables, and hypotheses in the studies reported. Some of the journals students might want to examine are:
        i. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (Personality Processes and Individual Differences section)
        ii. *Journal of Personality*
        iii. *Journal of Research in Personality*
        iv. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* (available on InfoTrac)
        v. *European Journal of Personality*
        vi. Depending on their particular interests, the students may also want to look at related journals, such as *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, Journal of Abnormal Psychology,* and *Developmental Psychology.*
2. **Understanding Personality:** Using the Six Approaches to Understanding Personality
    a. After students have read Chapter 1, have them identify a person they know or know of who suffers or has suffered from some kind of psychological disorder. Then have students speculate about how a psychologist from each of the six approaches might explain the person's disorder. Instruct students to write a paragraph for each approach. The purpose of the assignment is to get students thinking about and starting to use the different approaches. Thus, you might want to emphasize that there are no incorrect answers (at least at this point in the class).
3. **The "Cultural Mirror":** Using Media to Understand Individualistic and Collectivistic Personalities
    a. After students have read the sections on cultural influences and the difference between individualistic and collectivistic notions of self-concept, have them select a well-known fictional character from a

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movie or television show who belongs to a specific cultural tradition (e.g., Mulan, Miles Morales from *Spider-Verse*, or a character from a film like *The Farewell* or *Everything Everywhere All At Once*). Have students analyze the character's personality by identifying specific scenes where they demonstrate an independent self-construal (focusing on unique traits, personal goals, and autonomy) and scenes where they demonstrate an interdependent self-construal (focusing on social roles, family duty, and harmony). Instruct students to write a brief analysis comparing these two "versions" of the character. The purpose of this assignment is to get students thinking about the Person-Situation Debate through a cultural lens. You might want to ask students to consider if the character's personality is "inconsistent" or if they are simply displaying the social flexibility often valued in collectivistic societies. This helps students move beyond a strictly Western, trait-based definition of personality and see how context shapes who we are.

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Additional Resources

External Videos or Playlist

- **Can I Change My Personality?** (2024). Swisslectures (6:33 minutes).
  - Prof. Dr. Hopwood discusses whether it is possible to fundamentally change your personality traits, the biggest myths about personality, how personality changes over the course of our lives, the Big Five (Five Factor) model (including gender differences), and how our personality traits affect our political attitudes.
- **Freud's Theory (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Social Science Explainer (3:14 minutes).
  - This video highlights Freud's framework for understanding human behavior, personality development, and mental processes.
- **How Culture Affects Your Personality** (2020). Practical Psychology (6:24 minutes).
  - This video explains and outlines how culture impacts approach and avoidance motivation, aspects of personality.
- **Humanistic Theory (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Social Science Explainer (2:46 minutes).
  - This video highlights the humanistic theory of personality, and introduces two main figures (Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow).

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- **Introduction to Personality Psychology** (2019). Society for Personality and Social Psychology (4:42 minutes).
  - Dr. Laura King defines personality psychology and identifies how it differs from social psychology.
- **Is Your Personality Pre-Determined? Biological Theory of Personality** (2020). Practical Psychology (8:02 minutes).
  - This video introduces biological and evolutionary theories of personality and compares these theories to the behaviorist and humanistic approaches.
- **Social Cognitive Theory (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Helpful Professor Explains! (3:01 minutes).
  - The social cognitive theory is introduced, with examples provided.
- **Social Learning Theory (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Social Science Explainer (3:02 minutes).
  - This video introduces social learning theory, unpacking central ideas and introducing important figures, like Albert Bandura.
- **Trait Theory of Personality (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Social Science Explainer (1:39 minutes).
  - This video introduces trait theory as a way of understanding people's behavior.
- **Who Are You, Really? The Puzzle of Personality** (2016). TED (15:16 minutes).
  - Psychologist Brian Little discusses moments that tranced our traits, including the influence of culture, and highlights how personality can be malleable.
- **Why We Love Personality Psychology** (2019). Society for Personality and Social Psychology (2:39 minutes).
  - A brief video highlighting why current personality researchers love about their field.

Internet Resources

- **Association for Research in Personality**
- **Great Ideas in Personality**
- **Human Personality: Understanding the "Big 5" Model**
- **Personality Project**
- **Personality Traits**
- **Project Personality**
- **Society for Personality Assessment**
- **The Influence of Culture and Society on Personality**
- **The Society for Personality and Social Psychology**
- **What are Personality Disorders?**

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Instructor Manual

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Purpose and Perspective of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce students to the concepts of personality. The chapter begins by highlighting the Paradise fire tragedy in California, outlining different response types of the residents of the town. The chapter then poses the question: Is our behavior shaped by the situation we encounter or by the type of person we are? Then, the debate among the psychologists of how situations affect behavior, and how behavior reflects the individual, is unpacked. Following this, definitions of personality are presented, with the added notion that there is disagreement among psychologists as to how personality can be defined. The chapter notes the idea that several aspects of the definition need to be further elaborated.

In the next section, six approaches to personality are highlighted, including the psychoanalytic, trait, biological, humanistic, behavioral/social learning, and cognitive approaches. These approaches are unpacked with examples, looking at aggression and depression. Next, the chapter transitions to personality and culture, with psychologists recognizing that people and their personalities exist within a cultural context, identifying differences between individualistic and collectivist cultures.

Following this section, the chapter briefly outlines the structure of the rest of the textbook: the textbook is divided into sections, with each section presenting one of the different approaches to personality. Each section begins with a theory, followed by an application, assessments, and research of each approach.

The chapter ends with a description of the upcoming, brief biographies that will be presented throughout the rest of the text. These biographies will highlight individuals who played a central role in the history of personality psychology.

Chapter Objectives

The following objectives are addressed in this chapter:

1.1 Explain how the person and the situation influence behavior.
1.2 Describe the subject matter of personality psychology.
1.3 Identify the focus of each of the six approaches to personality.
1.4 Discuss the role culture plays in personality psychology.
1.5 State how theory, application, assessment, and research combine to form the study of personality.

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Key Term

Personality: Consistent behavior patterns and intrapersonal processes originating within the individual.

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What's New in This Chapter

The following elements are improvements in this chapter from the previous edition:

- New introduction example.
- New table summarizing different approaches.
- New subsection on how the field today reflects much greater gender, ethnic and cultural diversity than in the past.
- New references.

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Chapter Outline

The following outline organizes activities (including any existing discussion questions in PowerPoints or other supplements) and assessments by chapter (and therefore by topic), so that you can see how all the content relates to the topics covered in the text.

I. The Person and the Situation
   a. Is our behavior shaped by the situation we encounter or by the type of person we are?
   b. Dividing fields of study within psychology based on typical response patterns or individual differences in response patterns to situations.

II. Defining Personality
   a. There is importance in defining terms, but personality psychologists do not agree on a single definition of personality.
   b. There are several aspects of the provided definition that are expanded upon, such as individual differences, intrapersonal processes, and consistency.

III. Six Approaches to Personality
   a. This text examines six general approaches to explaining personality, which are introduced in this section: the psychoanalytic approach, the

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trait approach, the biological approach, the humanistic approach, the behavioral/social learning approach, and the cognitive approach.

b. Each approach correctly identifies and examines an important aspect of human personality, though sometimes these explanations are incompatible.

c. Two examples: Aggression and Depression

- Example 1: Aggression
  - (1) Each of the six approaches to personality provides at least one answer to the question of why some people are more prone to act aggressively than others.
    - (a) Psychoanalytic approach: we all possess an unconscious desire to self-destruct or aggression results when we are blocked from reaching our goals.
    - (b) Trait approach: measure the extent to which, and consistency of, individual differences in aggression over time.
    - (c) Biological approach: a genetic or hormonal predisposition to act aggressively, or approaching aggression from an evolutionary perspective.
    - (d) Humanistic approach: aggression comes from an environment in which basic needs are not adequately met.
    - (e) Behavioral/social learning approach: people learn to be aggressive in the same way they learn other behaviors, typically from watching models.
    - (f) Cognitive approach: focusing on how aggressive people process information.
  - (2) Only one approach might be correct, or all six may be partially correct and vary in their focus.
- Example 2: Depression
  - (1) Each of the six approaches to personality provides at least one answer to the question of why some people are more prone to depression than others.
    - (a) Psychoanalytic approach: depression is anger turned inward.
    - (b) Trait approach: current emotional levels predict future emotional levels.
    - (c) Biological approach: genetic susceptibility to depression.

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(d) Humanistic approach: depression is explained in terms of self-esteem.
(e) Behavioral/social learning approach: depression stems from lack of positive reinforcements, or exposure to aversive situations in which a person has limited control.
(f) Cognitive approach: some people are prone to episodes of depression because of how they process information.

(2) You do not need to align yourself with the same approach to personality when explaining different experiences.

IV. Personality and Culture
   a. Culture plays an important role in understanding personality.
   b. One of the most important distinctions cross-cultural personality researchers make is between individualistic cultures and collectivistic cultures.
   c. The same concepts can mean different things in different cultures.
   d. Culture needs to be considered when identifying and treating psychological disorders.

V. The Study of Personality: Theory, Application, Assessment, and Research
   a. This text is divided into sections, and each section presents one of the seven different approaches to personality (the psychoanalytic approach is divided into two sections).
   b. The four components necessary for a complete understanding of personality – theory, application, assessment, and research – are outlined in each of the seven approaches.

VI. The Changing Face of the Field
   a. This text also highlights prominent individuals who played a central role in the history of personality psychology.
   b. The limitations of these highlighted individuals are discussed as well as the future trajectory of personality psychology researchers.

VII. Summary
   a. Four review statements are presented that encompass each of the chapter objectives.
      1. Personality psychology is concerned with differences among people, and a definition of personality is presented.
      2. There are many theories of personality, which provide different explanations for individual differences in behavior. These theories are divided into six general categories: psychoanalytic, trait, biological, humanistic, behavioral/social learning, and cognitive approaches.

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3. The role of culture is an important consideration, and this text mostly reports findings from individualistic cultures. It is important to note that these results don't always generalize to other cultures.
4. This text will also examine how each of the six approaches is applied to practical concerns, including personality assessments and exploring relevant research.

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Additional Discussion Questions

The following are discussion questions that are not found in the text, PPTs, or courseware (if courseware exists) – they are for you to use as you wish. You can assign these questions several ways: in a discussion forum in your LMS; as whole-class discussions in person; or as a partner or group activity in class.

I. Discussion: [Defining Personality] Duration: 10–15 minutes.
   a. Before students have read the first chapter of the text, write the word personality on the board and ask them to define it. Write their answers on the board and ask them whether the definition captures their understanding of personality. Of course, you can ask difficult and challenging questions when the class falls silent. The point is to get students to think about what personality is and is not and perhaps what should be covered in a course on personality. The exercise can also demonstrate the difficulty psychologists face when trying to define even such "obvious" concepts as personality.
   b. Another variation of this exercise is to write the word personality on the board and then ask students to call out single words that are related to that term (like a word association task). Then, have students do a form of q-sort where later they can assign each of those words to one or more of the six major perspectives noted in the chapter section addressing the approaches.

II. Discussion: [Personal Versus Situational Causes of Behavior] Duration: 10–15 minutes
   a. Pick a behavior that has many obvious causes and write it on the board. I have had success with "Cheating among high school students." Ask students to think of some of the reasons why, for example, high school students cheat. As the students call out their answers, write the responses in one of two columns. One of these columns is for personal factors—for example, low self-esteem, poor at math, and lack of

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personal ethics—whereas the other column is for situational causes—for example, peer pressure, lack of surveillance, and everybody's doing it. After both columns contain several answers, ask students to guess what the two columns represent. This exercise quickly demonstrates the notion that behaviors are caused by both personal and situational causes. I also use this exercise to explain that this class is focused more on the personal side of the question.

III. Discussion: [The Case of the "Consistent" Trait] Duration: 15–20 minutes
   a. Provide a description of a fictional person, "Taylor," who is a brilliant student with a history of high achievement. However, Taylor consistently waits until 2:00AM the night before a major deadline to begin working. Despite the immense stress, physical exhaustion, and the fact that the final product is never as good as it could have been, Taylor repeats this cycle for every project, every semester. Using the six approaches, discuss how we could explain why Taylor – an otherwise rational, capable person – continues this self-defeating behavior.

IV. Group Discussion: [Cultural Competency in Treatment: Personality or Pathology?] Duration: 10-15 minutes
   a. Have students work in small groups to examine how cultural backgrounds influence the manifestation and treatment of psychological disorders. Give students a case study of a person exhibiting behaviors that could be interpreted differently depending on the cultural lens:
      i. A student from a collectivistic culture refuses to make a career decision without parental approval.
      ii. An individual from an individualistic culture is extremely self-reliant, to the point that they are socially-isolated.
   b. Instruct students to discuss whether these behaviors should be viewed as "personality traits," "cultural norms," or "symptoms of a disorder." The purpose of this assignment is to prompt students to think about the danger of applying Western personality standards and norms to non-Western individuals. You might emphasize that understanding a person's cultural context is not just an "extra" step, but foundational to accurately explain and treat distress.

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Additional Activities and Assignments

The following are activities and assignments developed by Cengage but not included in the text, PPTs, or courseware (if courseware exists) – they are for you to use if you wish.

1. **Engaging with research**: Familiarizing Students with Personality Journals
    a. Have students go to the library and familiarize themselves with the various journals that publish personality research. Students can be given different assignments, depending on their background. You may require them to simply identify some of the more popular topics in the journals. You also might require students to write a brief summary of one or more articles. After students have read Chapter 2, you might also ask them to identify the independent variables, dependent variables, and hypotheses in the studies reported. Some of the journals students might want to examine are:
        i. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (Personality Processes and Individual Differences section)
        ii. *Journal of Personality*
        iii. *Journal of Research in Personality*
        iv. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* (available on InfoTrac)
        v. *European Journal of Personality*
        vi. Depending on their particular interests, the students may also want to look at related journals, such as *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, Journal of Abnormal Psychology,* and *Developmental Psychology.*
2. **Understanding Personality:** Using the Six Approaches to Understanding Personality
    a. After students have read Chapter 1, have them identify a person they know or know of who suffers or has suffered from some kind of psychological disorder. Then have students speculate about how a psychologist from each of the six approaches might explain the person's disorder. Instruct students to write a paragraph for each approach. The purpose of the assignment is to get students thinking about and starting to use the different approaches. Thus, you might want to emphasize that there are no incorrect answers (at least at this point in the class).
3. **The "Cultural Mirror":** Using Media to Understand Individualistic and Collectivistic Personalities
    a. After students have read the sections on cultural influences and the difference between individualistic and collectivistic notions of self-concept, have them select a well-known fictional character from a

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movie or television show who belongs to a specific cultural tradition (e.g., Mulan, Miles Morales from *Spider-Verse*, or a character from a film like *The Farewell* or *Everything Everywhere All At Once*). Have students analyze the character's personality by identifying specific scenes where they demonstrate an independent self-construal (focusing on unique traits, personal goals, and autonomy) and scenes where they demonstrate an interdependent self-construal (focusing on social roles, family duty, and harmony). Instruct students to write a brief analysis comparing these two "versions" of the character. The purpose of this assignment is to get students thinking about the Person-Situation Debate through a cultural lens. You might want to ask students to consider if the character's personality is "inconsistent" or if they are simply displaying the social flexibility often valued in collectivistic societies. This helps students move beyond a strictly Western, trait-based definition of personality and see how context shapes who we are.

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Additional Resources

External Videos or Playlist

- **Can I Change My Personality?** (2024). Swisslectures (6:33 minutes).
  - Prof. Dr. Hopwood discusses whether it is possible to fundamentally change your personality traits, the biggest myths about personality, how personality changes over the course of our lives, the Big Five (Five Factor) model (including gender differences), and how our personality traits affect our political attitudes.
- **Freud's Theory (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Social Science Explainer (3:14 minutes).
  - This video highlights Freud's framework for understanding human behavior, personality development, and mental processes.
- **How Culture Affects Your Personality** (2020). Practical Psychology (6:24 minutes).
  - This video explains and outlines how culture impacts approach and avoidance motivation, aspects of personality.
- **Humanistic Theory (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Social Science Explainer (2:46 minutes).
  - This video highlights the humanistic theory of personality, and introduces two main figures (Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow).

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- **Introduction to Personality Psychology** (2019). Society for Personality and Social Psychology (4:42 minutes).
  - Dr. Laura King defines personality psychology and identifies how it differs from social psychology.
- **Is Your Personality Pre-Determined? Biological Theory of Personality** (2020). Practical Psychology (8:02 minutes).
  - This video introduces biological and evolutionary theories of personality and compares these theories to the behaviorist and humanistic approaches.
- **Social Cognitive Theory (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Helpful Professor Explains! (3:01 minutes).
  - The social cognitive theory is introduced, with examples provided.
- **Social Learning Theory (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Social Science Explainer (3:02 minutes).
  - This video introduces social learning theory, unpacking central ideas and introducing important figures, like Albert Bandura.
- **Trait Theory of Personality (Explained in 3 Minutes)** (2025). Social Science Explainer (1:39 minutes).
  - This video introduces trait theory as a way of understanding people's behavior.
- **Who Are You, Really? The Puzzle of Personality** (2016). TED (15:16 minutes).
  - Psychologist Brian Little discusses moments that tranced our traits, including the influence of culture, and highlights how personality can be malleable.
- **Why We Love Personality Psychology** (2019). Society for Personality and Social Psychology (2:39 minutes).
  - A brief video highlighting why current personality researchers love about their field.

Internet Resources

- **Association for Research in Personality**
- **Great Ideas in Personality**
- **Human Personality: Understanding the "Big 5" Model**
- **Personality Project**
- **Personality Traits**
- **Project Personality**
- **Society for Personality Assessment**
- **The Influence of Culture and Society on Personality**
- **The Society for Personality and Social Psychology**
- **What are Personality Disorders?**

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