**The Learning Approach: Behaviourism and Social learning theory**

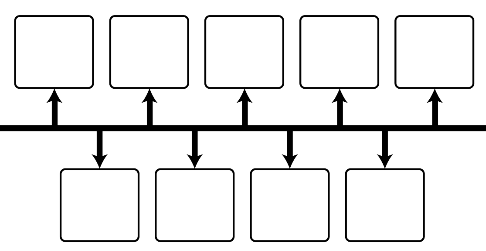
Throughout the history of Psychology, there have been different approaches to explaining why humans and animals do what they do. As your work on the nature-nurture debate has shown, some believe that behaviour is caused by biological functions (biochemical, genetics evolution etc.) whilst others think that external factors influence our behaviour (parents, peers, reinforcement etc.). Over the last 150 years or so, different approaches to explaining psychology have come to prominence; sometimes these approaches completely contradict other approaches. It is no surprise that given the complexity of humans (and animals), psychology is a complex discipline.

**Brief timeline to psychology**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Early philosophical ideas: | 17th, 18th and 19th centuries | Descartes suggests that the mind and body are separate, making the mind a subject for study  Locke suggests that we learn through experiencing the world through our senses. |
| Evolution | 1859 | Publication of Charles Darwin’s “*On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life”* Drawing on earlier and contemporary thinking stating that animals (and humans) with stronger, more adaptive genes tend to survive, reproduce and pass those genes on. Highly controversial at the time. |
| First scientific laboratory dedicated to studying psychology | 1879 | Wilhelm Wundt opens the first psychology laboratory in Leipzig, Germany. He trained participants to report minute changes in sensations, such as to state when the tempo of a metronome got faster. This process he called ‘introspection’ |
| The Psychodynamic Approach | 1899 | Freud publishes ‘the interpretation of dreams’ and sparks interest in the unconscious mind. Many of our actions are caused by memories and thoughts deep in our unconscious mind, too painful to deal with consciously. This leads to psychoanalysis; a talking cure for neurotic people. |
| The Behaviourist Approach | 1913 | Watson believes that all behaviour is learned, Skinner believes that we perform an act to gain reward (positive reinforcement) or to avoid an unpleasant consequence (negative reinforcement). Behaviourists believe that animals and humans learn in similar ways. They reject the notion of free will. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The Humanistic Approach | 1950s | In rejecting both psychodynamic and behaviourist approaches, the humanistic approach focuses on the potential of each individual. They emphasise the importance of self-determination and free will |
| The Cognitive approach | 1960s | Psychologists begin studying the processes of the mind (memory, perception, language etc.) in a scientific way. They claim that behaviour occurs after thought, so the processes involved with how we think must be explored. |
| Social Learning Theory | 1960s | Bandura recognised that traditional behaviourism cannot explain human learning, not only can we learn by watching other people, we also have to think about the appropriate actions for any given situation, for this we need memory and other cognitive functions. |
| The Biological Approach | 1980s | The date is misleading, as the Central Nervous System has been known to govern behaviour for 1000s of years. Plato, in 1700BC argued that the brain was responsible for mental processes, but throughout the 1980s and 1990s, neuronal activity, biochemistry and genetics became the focal point for investigation |
| Cognitive Neuroscience | 2000s | With new technology, such as the fMRI scanners, scientists are being able to look at the specific locations of the brain and their exact function. It is the study of the brain to study how we think. It is considered by many that this is the future of psychology. |

**TASK 1**: Take an A4 piece of paper, and complete an actual timeline given the information above. Add dates, names and brief information and keep it at the front of your folder



**TASK 2**: watch this clip and take brief notes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_Blw4pgYak>

(or search n you tube, kazza explains classical conditioning)

Afterwards, fill in the gaps below

**Assumptions**

* Human behaviour is **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**through experience (known as empiricism).
* Humans are born **‘tabula rasa’ (as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)** so behaviour and characteristics are not something we are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with they are etched onto us by experience.
* The behaviourists were interested in a **scientific method** that measured only \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ behaviour rather than relying on subjective introspection.
* Behaviourists also assume that humans are like any other organism in how they develop therefore **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can be studied** to draw conclusions about humans.

Behaviour is moulded in three ways- Classical conditioning (learning by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ conditioning (learning by association)

**Learning theory**

**Classical conditioning**

1. This works on the basis of Stimulus Response

2. What do the following initials stand for and give a brief explanation of each (it’s at the end of the clip)

**UCS-**

**UCR-**

**CR-**

**CS-**

**NS-**

3. Watch the clip and add in either pictures or description for why a dog may become scared of the vets.

**UCS---------------------------------------- UCR**

**NS------------------------------------------no response**

**UCS+NS------------------------------------UCR**

**UNTIL it happens enough times that…..**

**CS-------------------------------------------CR**

**4. Now write a full description below (in sentences) using all of the key terms not just initials to explain why a baby attaches to its mother using classical conditioning (it’s all in the clip).**

**Operant conditioning**

**TASK 3:**

1. **Go online and find out what is meant by positive reinforcement. Write it below.**
2. **Give two real life examples of positive reinforcement**
3. **Go online and find out what is meant by negative reinforcement. Write it below**
4. **Give two real life examples of negative reinforcement**
5. **Go online and find out the difference between positive and negative punishment**
6. **Give one example of each below**

**Social learning theory**

**Go online and fill in the key terms table below, make sure they relate to SLT. Use this link to help you** [**https://www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html**](https://www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Key term** | **Definition** | **Example** |
| **Role model** |  |  |
| **Imitation** |  |  |
| **Vicarious reinforcement** |  |  |
| **Identification** |  |  |
| **Direct reinforcement** |  |  |

**Mediational processes in social learning theory**

Remember!-According to Bandura, Behaviourism does not take account of the **cognitive** aspects of learning, even though humans are likely to have much more complex cognitive processes than animals, and behaviourism places too much emphasis on humans being controlled by external forces.

**Fill in the mediational processes below.**

** A**

**R R**

**R**

**M**

**Learning Theory**

**Operant Conditioning**

**Social Learning Theory**

**Behaviourism**

**Classical Conditioning**