Changing Minds

Trace psychology's origins and compare its explanations.

SS24.P.1 "Trace the development of psychology as a scientific discipline, including its evolution from other fields of study.* 1a Investigate and describe the history of psychology from its beginning to the modern era..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the two fields that helped psychology develop, circle four approaches that followed, and number the different perspectives used to explain the student's tension. Your marks should show how psychology changed and how its perspectives can work together.

From One Question to Many

1 Long before psychology had laboratories, philosophers debated how people learn and perceive the world. Physiologists studied nerves and senses through experiments. In 1879, Wilhelm Wundt opened a laboratory in Leipzig, Germany, devoted to studying mental processes with controlled methods. His students used introspection, reporting their conscious experiences under set conditions. Edward Titchener later promoted structuralism, which tried to identify basic parts of consciousness. William James developed functionalism, asking how mental processes help people adapt to their surroundings.

2 Other approaches shifted what counted as evidence. In the early 1900s, John B. Watson argued that psychology should study observable behavior rather than private thoughts. B. F. Skinner later examined how consequences shape actions. Sigmund Freud, whose work began earlier, emphasized unconscious conflicts, though many of his claims resist scientific testing. Midcentury humanistic psychologists, including Carl Rogers, focused on choice and personal growth. Cognitive psychologists then investigated memory and reasoning, often using experiments to test how people process information.

3 Today, psychologists may combine perspectives instead of choosing only one. Imagine a student who feels tense before a debate. A biological researcher might examine the body's stress response, while a cognitive researcher studies the student's predictions about speaking. A behavioral researcher might ask whether past applause or criticism changed the student's habits. A sociocultural researcher might examine classroom expectations about public speaking. These explanations address different parts of the same experience; researchers test claims with methods suited to each question.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Wundt's laboratory build on the work of philosophers and physiologists?

2. How did structuralism's question differ from functionalism's question?

3. How did Watson's view of what psychology should study differ from Freud's focus?

4. How might two perspectives explain the debate student's tension differently?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A student keeps checking a phone during homework. In three or four sentences, use two perspectives from the passage to explain this behavior, and describe one way to test each explanation.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the two fields that helped psychology develop, circle four approaches that followed, and number the different perspectives used to explain the student's tension. Your marks should show how psychology changed and how its perspectives can work together. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Wundt's laboratory build on the work of philosophers and physiologists?	**It brought questions about mental processes into a laboratory and studied them with controlled methods, as physiologists studied nerves and senses through experiments.**
2	How did structuralism's question differ from functionalism's question?	**Structuralism asked what basic parts make up consciousness. Functionalism asked how mental processes help people adapt.**
3	How did Watson's view of what psychology should study differ from Freud's focus?	**Watson favored observable behavior over private thoughts. Freud focused on unconscious conflicts.**
4	How might two perspectives explain the debate student's tension differently?	**A biological researcher might study the body's stress response, while a cognitive researcher might study the student's predictions about speaking.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A cognitive psychologist might think the student expects an important message. They could ask the student to rate that expectation before a study session and count the phone checks. A behavioral psychologist might predict that rewarding messages increase checking. They could compare how often the student checks after receiving entertaining messages and after receiving neutral ones.

Accept other passage-based comparisons and plausible tests. For Part 3, each perspective must offer a distinct explanation and a way to gather evidence about it.