Psychologists at Work

Explore how psychology careers address different problems.

SS24.P.3 "Describe various careers pursued by psychologists, including medical and mental health care fields, the business world, education, law and criminal justice, and research.*"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each psychology career in the passage. Circle one action that shows what a person in each career does.

Who Helps a City Sleep?

1 When a city launches a teen sleep initiative, it needs more than one kind of psychologist. A health psychologist might study how caffeine, stress, and bedtime habits affect sleep, then design a program to support healthier routines. In a medical center, a clinical psychologist may assess a teenager's anxiety and provide psychotherapy if anxiety is keeping that teenager awake. In most U.S. states, psychologists do not prescribe sleep medicine; that task generally belongs to a medical prescriber. In this initiative, the health psychologist studies patterns across a group, while the clinical psychologist provides care to an individual.

2 At the same time, a school psychologist could meet with students, families, and teachers to identify school barriers to rest, such as a schedule that leaves little time for sleep. That psychologist might use interviews and school records to recommend changes that support learning. Outside school, an industrial-organizational psychologist could help a local employer rethink late shifts for student workers. This business specialist might survey workers, compare shift patterns, and advise managers on schedules that support both performance and well-being. The school psychologist works within education; the industrial-organizational psychologist studies people at work.

3 Other careers use psychological evidence in research and law. A research psychologist at a university could test whether a later school start time increases sleep by gathering data before and after a change and checking for other possible explanations. In a court case involving a teenager's ability to participate in a trial, a forensic psychologist could conduct an evaluation and explain findings to the judge. Forensic work connects psychology to law, but an evaluation is not a verdict. These careers use different methods and serve different clients, yet each applies knowledge of behavior to a specific problem.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How would the health psychologist and the clinical psychologist address teen sleep differently?

2. How could the school psychologist and the industrial-organizational psychologist each change a schedule to support sleep?

3. What would the research psychologist do to investigate a later school start time?

4. What could the forensic psychologist do in the court case, and what decision would remain outside that role?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a community problem other than teen sleep. In three or four sentences, choose two psychology careers from different fields in the passage, explain what each would do about your problem, and show how their roles differ.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each psychology career in the passage. Circle one action that shows what a person in each career does. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How would the health psychologist and the clinical psychologist address teen sleep differently?	**The health psychologist would study habits and design a program for a group. The clinical psychologist would assess and treat an individual teenager whose anxiety affects sleep.**
2	How could the school psychologist and the industrial-organizational psychologist each change a schedule to support sleep?	**The school psychologist could recommend changes to a school schedule that limits rest. The industrial-organizational psychologist could advise an employer about late shifts for student workers.**
3	What would the research psychologist do to investigate a later school start time?	**Gather sleep data before and after the change and check for other possible explanations for any difference.**
4	What could the forensic psychologist do in the court case, and what decision would remain outside that role?	**The forensic psychologist could evaluate the teenager's ability to participate in a trial and explain the findings to a judge. The psychologist would not decide the verdict.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After a flood, many residents report lasting fear, and the town wants to respond. A clinical psychologist could assess residents who seek help and provide psychotherapy for anxiety. A research psychologist could study whether a new support program reduces reported anxiety, using data collected before and after the program while checking other possible causes; unlike the clinician, this psychologist evaluates a program rather than treating individual residents.

Accept other accurate distinctions supported by the passage. For Part 3, look for an original problem, two careers from different fields, plausible actions for each, and a clear difference between their roles.