Why Mina Paused

Compare explanations of one classroom behavior

P.1.7 "Analyze human behavior (biological, evolutionary, behavioral, cognitive, humanistic, psychodynamic, sociocultural, biopsychosocial) from contemporary perspectives in psychology."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Mina's actions and circle each psychological perspective named in the passage. Number two different possible causes of her silence so you can compare the explanations.

The Hand That Stayed Down

1 During a chemistry lesson, Mina gives an incorrect answer, and several classmates laugh. The next week, she knows how to solve a problem but keeps her hand down. A behavioral psychologist might focus on what followed her earlier answer: laughter was an unpleasant consequence that may make speaking up less likely. A cognitive psychologist might focus instead on Mina's interpretation, such as the thought, "If I speak, everyone will think I am foolish." Both explanations address the same silence, but they point to different evidence. One would track what happens after Mina speaks; the other would ask what she expects will happen.

2 Other perspectives add questions rather than replacing those explanations. A biological perspective might examine whether Mina's stress response, including a racing heart, makes speaking feel harder in the moment. A sociocultural perspective would ask how the class treats mistakes: Is laughter common, and do students from some groups face extra pressure to appear correct? A humanistic psychologist might ask whether Mina feels respected and free to take risks as she works toward her goals. None of these perspectives proves why Mina is silent. A racing heart could accompany fear, but it does not reveal what Mina thinks or what her classmates value.

3 Suppose the teacher changes the discussion rules so students first share ideas in pairs and classmates respond to errors with questions instead of laughter. Mina gradually raises her hand again. A biopsychosocial analysis would consider her possible stress response, her thoughts about making mistakes, and the class environment together. Her change in behavior is consistent with several explanations; it does not show that any single factor caused her silence. To learn more, a psychologist could compare observations of class reactions with Mina's own report of her expectations and physical feelings. Different kinds of evidence help test different explanations.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How would a behavioral psychologist and a cognitive psychologist explain Mina keeping her hand down differently?

2. Why would a racing heart alone not settle whether a biological or cognitive explanation best fits Mina's silence?

3. How does the teacher's change address a sociocultural factor? Why is Mina's later participation not proof that this factor was the only cause?

4. What two kinds of evidence could a psychologist gather to test different explanations of Mina's silence? State what each would help reveal.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

After moving, Jordan stops attending a weekend robotics club but still builds robots at home. In three or four sentences, explain Jordan's choice using two different perspectives from the passage and name one piece of evidence you would seek for each explanation.

Why Mina Paused

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Mina's actions and circle each psychological perspective named in the passage. Number two different possible causes of her silence so you can compare the explanations. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How would a behavioral psychologist and a cognitive psychologist explain Mina keeping her hand down differently?	**A behavioral psychologist would focus on laughter as an unpleasant consequence of speaking. A cognitive psychologist would focus on Mina's expectation that classmates will think she is foolish.**
2	Why would a racing heart alone not settle whether a biological or cognitive explanation best fits Mina's silence?	**A racing heart could show a physical stress response, but it would not reveal what Mina thinks will happen if she speaks.**
3	How does the teacher's change address a sociocultural factor? Why is Mina's later participation not proof that this factor was the only cause?	**The new rules change how classmates respond to mistakes. Mina may also have changed her expectations or experienced less physical stress, so her participation does not establish a single cause.**
4	What two kinds of evidence could a psychologist gather to test different explanations of Mina's silence? State what each would help reveal.	**Observing classmates' reactions would reveal what happens when Mina speaks and how the class treats mistakes. Asking Mina about her expectations would reveal thoughts that observation alone cannot show.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A cognitive perspective might suggest Jordan expects club members to reject a new student's ideas. I would ask Jordan what thoughts come up before club meetings. A sociocultural perspective might suggest established members leave newcomers out of group work. I would observe who gets invited to work on projects during meetings.

Accept other passage-supported interpretations when students distinguish possible explanations from proven causes. For Your Turn, each of the two perspectives needs a relevant, distinct piece of evidence.