What Shapes Personality?

Weigh cultural, family, and genetic influences

P.5.6 "Evaluate the influences of variables, such as culture (belonging to an individualist or collectivist culture), family, and genetics, on personality development and identify the psychologists associated with each."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence about each influence on personality, and number those sentences 1 for culture, 2 for family, and 3 for genetics. Circle the psychologist names linked to each influence.

Elena's Choice

1. At a new school, Elena has to choose between joining the robotics team and helping with a community festival. She likes solving problems, but she also values the people counting on her. Psychologists Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama studied how culture can shape the way people understand themselves. In many individualist settings, personal goals and independence receive more emphasis. In many collectivist settings, group duties and close relationships receive more emphasis. These patterns may influence whether Elena describes herself as ambitious or dependable. They do not tell us what Elena will choose: people within the same culture differ.

2. At home, Elena's father listens to her reasons for wanting to join robotics. He also expects her to keep a promise to help at the festival. Psychologist Diana Baumrind identified parenting styles, including authoritative parenting, which combines warmth with clear limits. This style can give young people practice explaining choices and taking responsibility. Family influence extends beyond any single conversation: relatives can model patience, reward cooperation, or encourage risk taking. Still, Elena might respond differently from a sibling raised in the same home. Parenting can shape personality without fully predicting a person's traits.

3. Genes may also matter. Psychologist Thomas Bouchard studied twins raised apart; similarities between them provided evidence that inherited differences contribute to personality traits. A tendency toward curiosity might make robotics especially appealing to Elena, but no single gene decides her interests or character. Twin studies cannot show that upbringing has no effect. Elena's curiosity could lead her to seek new activities, while her family and cultural expectations shape which opportunities she notices and how she handles commitments. Evaluating her choice means considering genetics, family, and culture together rather than treating one influence as a complete explanation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How might individualist and collectivist settings lead Elena to describe herself differently? Which psychologists studied this cultural influence?

2. How might the parenting style shown in Elena's home affect her personality? Which psychologist identified that style?

3. What did Bouchard's twin research suggest about personality? Why would it be wrong to say genes decide Elena's interests?

4. Elena is curious but also keeps her festival promise. How could two different influences in the passage help explain these traits? Name the psychologists linked to both influences.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a student facing a choice unlike Elena's. In four sentences, explain how two different influences from culture, family, or genetics might shape one personality trait, name the psychologist or psychologists linked to each influence, and explain why neither influence determines the student's choice.

What Shapes Personality?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence about each influence on personality, and number those sentences 1 for culture, 2 for family, and 3 for genetics. Circle the psychologist names linked to each influence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How might individualist and collectivist settings lead Elena to describe herself differently? Which psychologists studied this cultural influence?	**An individualist setting might lead Elena to emphasize ambition or personal goals; a collectivist setting might lead her to emphasize dependability or group duties. Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama studied this influence.**
2	How might the parenting style shown in Elena's home affect her personality? Which psychologist identified that style?	**Her father's warmth and clear limits may help Elena practice explaining choices and taking responsibility. Diana Baumrind identified this authoritative parenting style.**
3	What did Bouchard's twin research suggest about personality? Why would it be wrong to say genes decide Elena's interests?	**Similarities between twins raised apart suggest inherited differences contribute to personality. Genes do not decide her interests on their own; upbringing and other experiences also matter.**
4	Elena is curious but also keeps her festival promise. How could two different influences in the passage help explain these traits? Name the psychologists linked to both influences.	**Inherited differences might contribute to Elena's curiosity, an influence supported by Thomas Bouchard's research. Her father's parenting might help her take responsibility for her promise, an influence linked to Diana Baumrind.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

When Amir decides whether to perform a solo at a school concert, his independence may reflect family conversations that let him make choices. Diana Baumrind's work on authoritative parenting suggests how warmth and clear limits may help him develop that independence. An individualist setting that emphasizes personal goals might also strengthen his independence, a cultural influence studied by Hazel Markus and Shinobu Kitayama. Neither influence determines whether Amir performs, because people respond differently to family and cultural expectations.

Accept plausible explanations grounded in the passage, not claims that any influence guarantees a trait or choice. For Question 4, students may use other pairs of influences if they explain both and name the associated psychologists correctly.