

AP Psychology Vocabulary

Empiricism - The view that knowledge originates in experience and that science should, therefore, rely on observation and experimentation.

Structuralism - An early school of psychology that used introspection to explore the structural elements of the human mind. Interested in what the mind is made up of.

Functionalism - A school of psychology that focused on how our mental and behavioral processes function—how they enable us to adapt, survive, and flourish.

Experimental Psychology - The study of behavior and thinking using the experimental method.

Psychoanalysis - Freud's theory of personality and therapeutic technique that attributes thoughts and actions to unconscious motives and conflicts.
Keywords: unconscious, childhood, dream analysis, hypnosis, free association.

Behaviorism - A branch of psychology that focuses on the study of observable behavior. Key words: Reinforcements, punishments, environment, consequences, and modeling. Key people: Watson, Pavlov, Bandura, Skinner

Humanistic Psychology - Historically significant perspective that emphasized the growth potential of healthy people and the individual's potential for personal growth. Key words: born good, full potential, unconditional positive regard, needs met.

Cognitive Neuroscience - The interdisciplinary study of the brain activity linked with cognition (including perception, thinking, memory, and language).

Psychology - The science of behavior and mental processes.

Nature-Nurture Issue - The longstanding controversy over the relative contributions that genes and experience make to the development of psychological traits and behaviors. Today's science sees traits and behaviors arising from the interaction of nature and nurture.

Natural Selection - The principle that, among the range of inherited trait variations, those contributing to reproduction and survival will most likely be passed on to succeeding generations.

Levels of Analysis - The differing complementary views, from biological to psychological to social-cultural, for analyzing any given phenomenon.

Biopsychosocial Approach - An integrated approach that incorporates biological, psychological, and social-cultural levels of analysis.

Biological Psychology - A branch of psychology concerned with the links between biology and behavior. Key words: Brain, neurotransmitters, neurons, genetics, and nature.

Evolutionary Psychology - The study of the roots of behavior and mental processes using the principles of natural selection. Key words: survival, reproduction, natural selection, and adaptation.

Psychodynamic Psychology - Modern version of psychoanalytic - A branch of psychology that studies how unconscious drives and conflicts influence behavior, and uses that information to treat people with psychological disorders. Keywords: unconscious, childhood, dream analysis, hypnosis, free association.

Behavioral Psychology - The scientific study of observable behavior, and its explanation by principles of learning. Key words: Reinforcements, punishments, environment, consequences, and modeling. Key people: Watson, Pavlov, Bandura, Skinner

Cognitive Psychology - The scientific study of all the mental activities associated with thinking, knowing, remembering, judging and perceiving.

Social-Cultural Psychology - The study of how situations and cultures affect our behavior and thinking. Key words: culture, societies, gender, ethnicity, race, norms, media

Psychometrics - The scientific study of the measurement of human abilities, attitudes, and traits.

Basic Research - Pure science that aims to increase the scientific knowledge base.

Developmental Psychology - A branch of psychology that studies physical, cognitive, and social change throughout the life span.

Educational Psychology - The study of how psychological processes affect and can enhance teaching and learning.

Personality Psychology - The study of an individual's characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting.

Social Psychology - The scientific study of how we think about, influence, and relate to one another.

Applied Research - Scientific study that aims to solve practical problems.

Industrial-Organizational (I/O) Psychology - The application of psychological concepts and methods to optimizing human behavior in workplaces.

Human Factors Psychology - A branch of psychology that explores how people and machines interact and how machines and physical environments can be made safe and easy to use.

Counseling Psychology - A branch of psychology that assists people with problems in living (often related to school, work, or marriage) and in achieving greater well-being.

Clinical Psychology - A branch of psychology that studies, assesses, and treats people with psychological disorders.

Psychiatry - A branch of medicine dealing with psychological disorders; practiced by physicians who often provide medical (for example, drug) treatments as well as psychological therapy.

Hindsight Bias - The tendency to believe, after learning an outcome, that one would have foreseen it

Double Blind Procedure - An experimental procedure in which both the research participants and the research staff are ignorant about whether the research participants have received the treatment or a placebo. Commonly used in drug-evaluation studies

Independent Variable - The experimental factor that is manipulated--the variable whose effect is being studied

Dependent Variables - The outcome factor -- the variable that may change in response to manipulations of the independent variable

Mode - The most frequently occurring score(s) in a distribution

Mean - The arithmetic average of a distribution, obtained by adding the scores and then dividing by the number of scores

Median - The middle score in a distribution--half the scores are above it and half are below it

Standard Deviations - A computed measure of how much scores vary around the mean score

Random Assignment - Assigning participants to experimental and control conditions by chance, thus minimizing preexisting differences between those assigned to the different groups

Random Sampling - A sample that fairly represents a population because each member has an equal chance of inclusion

Scatter plot - A graphed cluster of dots, each of which represents the values of two variables. The slope of the points suggests the direction of the relationship between the two variables. The amount of scatter suggests the strength of the correlation

Illusory Correlation - The perception of a relationship where none exists

Case Study - An observation technique in which one person is studied in depth in the hope of revealing universal principles

Survey - A technique for ascertaining the self-reported attitudes or behaviors of people, usually by questioning a representative, random sample of them

Naturalistic Observation - Observing and recording behavior in naturally occurring situations without trying to manipulate and control the situation

Correlation - A measure of the extent to which two factors vary together, and thus of how well either factor predicts the other. The correlation coefficient is the mathematical expression of the relationship, ranging from -1 to +1

Experiment - A research method in which an investigator manipulates one or more factors (independent variables) to observe the effects on some behavior or mental process (the dependent variable). By random assignment of participants, the experimenter aims to control other relevant variable

Replication - Repeating the essence of a research study, usually with different participants in different situations, to see whether the basic finding extends to other participants and circumstances

Statistical Significance - A statistical statement of how likely it is that an obtained result occurred by chance

Operational Definition - A statement of the procedures used to define research variables. Ex human intelligence -- what an intelligence test measures.

Critical Thinking - thinking that does not blindly accept arguments and conclusions. Rather, it examines assumptions, discerns hidden values, evaluates evidence, and assesses conclusions.

Theory - an explanation using an integrated set of principles that organizes and predicts observations

Hypothesis - a testable prediction, often implied by a theory

Population - all the cases in a group, from which samples may be drawn for a study

Sample - items selected at random from a population and used to test hypotheses about the population

Correlation Coefficient - a statistical index of the relationship between two things (from -1 to +1)

Placebo - experimental results caused by expectations alone; any effect on behavior caused by the administration of an inert substance or condition, which the recipient assumes is an active agent.

Placebo Effect - any effect that seems to be a consequence of administering a placebo

Experimental Group - in an experiment, the group that is exposed to the treatment, that is, to one version of the independent variable.

Control Group - in an experiment, the group that is not exposed to the treatment; contrasts with the experimental group and serves as a comparison for evaluating the effect of the treatment.

Confounding Variable - a factor other than the independent variable that might produce an effect in an experiment.

Range - the difference between the highest and lowest scores in a distribution

Normal Curve - a symmetrical, bell-shaped curve that describes the distribution of many types of data; most scores fall near the mean (68% fall within one standard deviation of it) and fewer near the extremes

Inferential Statistics - numerical methods used to determine whether research data support a hypothesis or whether results were due to chance

Culture - the enduring behaviors, ideas, attitudes, and traditions shared by a large group of people and transmitted from one generation to the next

Informed Consent - an ethical principle requiring that research participants be told enough to enable them to choose whether they wish to participate

Debriefing - the post-experimental explanation of a study, including its purpose and any deceptions, to its participants

Biological Psychology - A branch of psychology concerned with the links between biology and behavior.

Neuron - A nerve cell; the basic building block of the nervous system.

Sensory Neurons - Neurons that carry incoming information from the sensory receptors to the brain and spinal cord.

Motor Neurons - Neurons that carry outgoing info from the brains and spinal cord to the muscles and glands.

Interneurons - Neurons within the brain and spinal cord that communicate internally and intervene between the sensory inputs and motor outputs.

Dendrite - The busy, branching extensions of a neuron that receive messages and conduct impulses toward the cell body.

Axon - The extension of a neuron, ending in branching terminal fibers, through which messages pass to other neurons or to muscles or glands.

Myelin Sheath - A layer of fatty tissue segmentally encasing the fibers of many neurons; enables vastly greater transmission speed of neural impulses as the impulse hops from one node to the next.

Action Potential - A neural impulse; a brief electrical charge that travels down an axon.

Threshold - The level of stimulation required to trigger a neural impulse.

Synapse - The junction between the axon tip of the sending neuron and the dendrite or cell body of the receiving neuron. the tiny gap at this junction is called the synaptic gap/cleft.

Neurotransmitters - Chemical messengers that cross the synaptic gaps between neurons.

Reuptake - A neurotransmitter's reabsorption by the sending neuron.

Endorphins - "Morphine Within" - natural, opiate-like neurotransmitters linked to pain control and to pleasure.

Nervous System - The body's speedy, electrochemical communication network, consisting of all the nerve cells of the peripheral and central nervous systems.

Central Nervous System (CNS) - The brain and spinal cord.

Peripheral Nervous System (PNS) - The sensory and motor neurons that connect the CNS to the rest of the body.

Nerves - Bundled axons that form neural "cables" connecting the CNS with muscles, glands and sense organs.

Somatic Nervous System - The division of the peripheral nervous system that controls the body's skeletal muscles.

Autonomic Nervous System - The part of the peripheral nervous system that controls the glands and the muscles of the internal organs; divided into sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.

Sympathetic Nervous System - The division of the autonomic nervous system that arouses the body, mobilizing its energy in stressful situations.

Parasympathetic Nervous System - The division of the autonomic nervous system that calms the body, conserving its energy.

Reflex - A simple, automatic response to a sensory stimulus.

Endocrine System - The body's "slow" chemical communication system; a set of glands that secrete hormones into the bloodstream.

Hormones - Chemical messengers that are manufactured by the endocrine glands, travel through the blood stream and affect other tissues.

Adrenal Glands - A pair of endocrine glands that sit just above the kidneys and secrete hormones that help arouse the body in times of stress.

Pituitary Gland - The endocrine system's most influential gland. under the influence of the hypothalamus, this gland regulates growth and controls other endocrine glands.

Lesion - Tissue destruction

EEG (Electroencephalogram) - An amplified recording of the waves of electrical activity that sweep across the brain's surface. the waves are measured by electrodes placed on the scalp.

CT (Computed Tomography) Scan - A series of x-ray photos taken from different angles and combined by a computer into a composite representation of a slice through the body.

PET (Position Emission Tomography) Scan - A visual display of brain activity that detects where a radioactive form of glucose goes while the brain performs a given task.

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) - A technique that uses magnetic fields and radio waves to produce computer-generated images of soft tissue; show brain anatomy.

fMRI (Functional MRI) - A technique for revealing blood flow and, therefore, brain activity by comparing successive MRI scans; show brain function.

Brainstem - The oldest part and central core of the brain, beginning where the spinal cord swells as it enters the skull; responsible for automatic survival functions.

Medulla - The base of the brainstem; controls heartbeat and breathing.

Reticular Formation - A nerve network in the brainstem that plays an important role in controlling arousal.

Thalamus - The brain's sensory switchboard, located on top of the brainstem; it directs messages to the sensory receiving areas in the cortex and transmits replies to the cerebellum and medulla.

Cerebellum - The "little brain" at the rear of the brainstem; functions include processing sensory input and coordinating movement output and balance.

Limbic System - Doughnut-shaped neural system (including hippocampus, amygdala and hypothalamus) located below the cerebral hemispheres; associated with emotions and drives.

Amygdala - Two lima bean-sized neural clusters in the limbic system; linked to emotion.

Hypothalamus - A neural structure; it directs several maintenance activities (eating, drinking, body temp), helps govern the endocrine system via the pituitary gland and is linked to emotion and reward.

Cerebral Cortex - The intricate fabric of interconnected neural cells covering the cerebral hemispheres; the body's ultimate control and information processing center.

Glial Cells (Glia) - Cells in the nervous system that support, nourish and protect neurons.

Frontal Lobes - Portion of the cerebral cortex lying just behind the forehead; involved in speaking and muscle movements and in making plans and judgments.

Parietal Lobes - Portion of the cerebral cortex lying at the top of the head and toward the rear; receives sensory input for touch and body position.

Occipital Lobes - Portion of the cerebral cortex lying at the back of the head; includes areas that receive info from the visual fields.

Temporal Lobes - Portion of the cerebral cortex lying roughly above the ears; includes the auditory areas, each receiving info primarily from the opposite ear.

Motor Cortex - An area at the rear of the frontal lobes that controls voluntary movements.

Sensory Cortex - Area at the front of the parietal lobes that registers and processes body touch and movement sensations.

Association Areas - Areas of the cerebral cortex that are not involved in primary motor or sensory functions; rather, they are involved in higher mental function such as learning, remembering, thinking and speaking.

Aphasia - Impairment of language, usually caused by left hemisphere damage either to Broca's area (impairing speaking) or to Wernicke's area (impairing understanding).

Broca's Area - Controls language expression - an area usually in the left frontal lobe, that directs the muscle movements involving speech.

Wernicke's Area - Controls language reception - a brain area involved in language comprehension and expression; usually in the left temporal lobe.

Plasticity - The brain's ability to change; especially during childhood, by reorganizing after damage or by building new pathways based on experience.

Neurogenesis - The formation of new neurons.

Corpus Callosum - The large band of neural fibers connecting the two brain hemispheres and carrying messages between them.

Split Brain - A condition resulting from surgery that isolated the brain's two hemispheres by cutting the fibers connecting them.

Consciousness - Our awareness of ourselves and our environment.

Cognitive Neuroscience - The interdisciplinary study of the brain activity linked with cognition.

Dual Processing - The principle that information is often simultaneously processed on separate conscious and unconscious tracks.

Behavior Genetics - The study of the relative power and limits of genetic and environmental influences on behavior.

Environment - Every non-genetic influence, from prenatal nutrition to the people and things around us.

Chromosomes - Threadlike structures made of DNA molecules that contain the genes.

DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid) - A complex molecule containing the genetic information that makes up the chromosomes.

Genes - The biochemical units of heredity that makes up the chromosomes; segments of DNA capable of synthesizing a protein.

Genome - The complete instructions for making an organism, consisting of all the genetic material in organism's chromosomes.

Identical Twins - Twins who develop from a single fertilized egg that splits in two.

Fraternal Twins - Twins who develop from separate fertilized eggs.

Heritability - The proportion of variation among individuals that we can attribute to genes.

Interaction - The interplay that occurs when the effect of one factor depends on another factor.

Molecular Genetics - The subfield of biology that studies the molecular structure and function of genes.

Evolutionary Psychology - The study of the evolution of behavior and the mind, using principles of natural selection.

Natural Selection - the principle that, among the range of inherited trait variations, those that lead to increased reproduction and survival will most likely be passed on to succeeding generations.

Mutation - A random error in gene replication that leads to a change.

Phrenology - A popular, but ill-fated theory that claimed bumps on the skull could reveal our mental abilities and our character traits.

Multiple Sclerosis - Results from myelin sheath degeneration; communication to muscles slows, with eventual loss of muscle control.

ACh (Acetylcholine) - Neurotransmitter that enables muscle action, learning and memory.

Dopamine - Neurotransmitter that influences movement, learning, attention and emotion; excess is linked to schizophrenia; lack leads to Parkinson's.

Serotonin - Neurotransmitter that affects mood, hunger, sleep and arousal; undersupply is linked to depression.

Norepinephrine - Neurotransmitter that helps control alertness and arousal; undersupply can depress mood.

GABA (Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid) - A major inhibitory neurotransmitter; undersupply is linked to seizures, tremors and insomnia.

Glutamate - A major excitatory neurotransmitter involved in memory; oversupply can produce migraines or seizures.

Agonist - A molecule that mimics the effects of a neurotransmitter.

Antagonist - A molecule that blocks a neurotransmitter's functioning.

Hippocampus - A limbic system component that processes memory.

Cerebrum - The two large hemispheres that contribute to 85% of the brain's weight.

Developmental Psychology - A branch of psychology that studies physical, cognitive, and social change throughout the life span

Zygote - The fertilized egg; it enters a 2-week period of rapid cell division and develops into an embryo

Embryo - The developing human organism from 2 weeks after fertilization through the second month

Fetus - The developing human organism from 9 weeks after conception to birth

Teratogens - Agents, such as chemicals and viruses, that can reach the embryo or fetus during prenatal development and cause harm

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) - Physical and cognitive abnormalities in children caused by a pregnant woman's heavy drinking. In severe cases, symptoms include noticeable facial misproportions

Habituation - Decreasing responsiveness with repeated stimulation. As infants gain familiarity with repeated exposure to a visual stimulus, their interest wanes and they look away sooner

Maturation - Biological growth processes that enable orderly changes in behavior, relatively uninfluenced by experience

Cognition - All the mental activities associated with thinking, knowing, remembering, and communicating

Schema - A concept or framework that organizes and interprets information

Assimilation - Interpreting our new experiences in terms of our existing schemas

Sensorimotor Stage - In Piaget's theory, the stage (from birth to about 2 years of age) during which infants know the world mostly in terms of their sensory impressions and motor activities

Object Permanence - The awareness that things continue to exist even when not perceived

Preoperational Stage - In Piaget's theory, the stage (from 2 to about 6 or 7 years of age) during which a child learns to use language but does not yet comprehend the mental operations of concrete logic

Conservation - The principle (which Piaget believed to be a part of concrete operational reasoning) that properties such as mass, volume, and number remain the same despite changes in the forms of objects

Egocentrism - In Piaget's theory, the preoperational child's difficulty taking another's point of view

Theory of Mind - People's idea about their own and others' mental states - about their feelings, perceptions, and thoughts, and the behaviors these might predict

Concrete Operational Stage - In Piaget's theory, the stage of cognitive development (from about 6 or 7 to 11 years of age) during which children gain the mental operations that enable them to think logically about concrete events

Formal Operational Stage - In Piaget's theory, the stage of cognitive development (normally beginning about age 12) during which people begin to think logically about abstract concepts

autism - A disorder that appears in childhood and is marked by deficient communication, social interaction, and understanding of others' states of mind

stranger anxiety - The fear of strangers that infants commonly display, beginning by about 8 months of age

Attachment - An emotional tie with another person; shown in young children by their seeking closeness to the caregiver and showing distress on separation

Critical Period - An optimal period shortly after birth when an organism's exposure to certain stimuli or experiences produces proper development

Imprinting - The process by which certain animals form attachments during a critical period very early in life

Temperament - A person's characteristic emotional reactivity and intensity

Basic Trust - According to Erik Erikson, a sense that the world is predictable and trustworthy; said to be formed during infancy by appropriate experiences with responsive caregivers

Self-Concept - Our understanding and evaluation of who we are

Gender - In psychology, the biologically and socially influenced characteristics by which people define male and female

Aggression - Physical or verbal behavior intended to hurt someone

X chromosome - The sex chromosome found in both men and women. females have two x chromosomes; males have one. An x chromosome from each parent produces a female child

Y chromosome - The sex chromosome found only in males. When paired with an x chromosome from the mother, it produces a male child

Testosterone - The most important of the male sex hormones. Both males and females have it, but the additional testosterone in males stimulates the growth of the male sex organs in the fetus and the development of the male sex characteristics during puberty

Role - A set of expectations (norms) about a social position, defining how those in the position ought to behave

Gender Role - A set of expected behaviors for males or for females

Gender Identity - Our sense of being male or female

Gender Typing - The acquisition of a traditional masculine or feminine role

Social Learning Theory - The theory that we learn social behavior by observing and imitating and by being rewarded or punished

Adolescence - The transition period from childhood to adulthood, extending from puberty to independence

Puberty - The period of sexual maturation, during which a person becomes capable of reproducing

Primary Sex Characteristics - The body structures (ovaries, testes, and external genitalia) that make sexual reproduction possible

Secondary Characteristics - Nonreproductive sexual characteristics, such as female breasts and hips, male voice quality, and body hair

Menarche - The first menstrual period

identity - Our sense of self; according to Erikson, the adolescent's task is to solidify a sense of self by testing and integrating various roles

Social Identity - The "we" aspect of our self-concept; the part of our answer to "Who am I?" that comes from our group memberships

Intimacy - In Erikson's theory, the ability to form close, loving relationships; a primary developmental task in late adolescence and early adulthood

Emerging Adulthood - For some people in modern cultures, a period from the late teens to mid-twenties, bridging the gap between adolescent dependence and full independence and responsible adulthood

Menopause - The time of natural cessation of menstruation; also refers to the biological changes a woman experiences as her ability to reproduce declines

Cross-Sectional Study - A study in which people of different ages are compared with one another

Longitudinal Study - Research in which the same people are restudied and retested over a long period

crystallized intelligence

Crystallized Intelligence - Our accumulated knowledge and verbal skills; tends to increase with age

Fluid Intelligence - Our ability to reason speedily and abstractly; tends to decrease during late adulthood

Social Clock - The culturally preferred timing of social events such as marriage, parenthood, and retirement

Sensation - The process by which our sensory receptors and nervous system receive and represent stimulus energies from our environment.

Perception - The process of organizing and interpreting sensory information, enabling us to recognize meaningful objects and events.

Bottom-Up Processing - Analysis that begins with the sensory receptors and works up to the brain's integration of sensory information.

Top-Down Processing - Information processing guided by higher-level mental processes, as when we construct perceptions drawing on our experience and expectations.

Selective Attention - The focusing of conscious awareness on a particular stimulus.

Inattentional Blindness - Failing to see visible objects when our attention is directed elsewhere.

Change Blindness - Failing to notice changes in the environment.

Psychophysics - The study of relationships between the physical characteristics of stimuli, such as their intensity, and our psychological experience of them.

Absolute Threshold - The minimum stimulation needed to detect a particular stimulus 50 percent of the time.

Signal Detection Theory - A theory predicting how and when we detect the presence of a faint stimulus (signal) amid background stimulation (noise). Assumes there is no single absolute threshold and that detection depends partly on a person's experience, expectations, motivation, and alertness.

Subliminal - Below one's absolute threshold for conscious awareness.

Priming - The activation, often unconsciously, of certain associations, thus predisposing one's perception, memory, or response.

Difference Threshold - The minimum difference between two stimuli required for detection 50 percent of the time. Also called the just noticeable difference (jnd).

Weber's Law - The principle that, to be perceived as different, two stimuli must differ by a constant percentage (rather than a constant amount).

Sensory Adaptation - Diminished sensitivity as a consequence of constant stimulation.

Transduction - Conversion of one form of energy into another. In sensation, the transforming of stimulus energies, such as sights, sounds, and smells, into neural impulses our brains can interpret.

Wavelength - The distance from the peak of one light or sound wave to the peak of the next. Electromagnetic versions of this vary from the short blips of cosmic rays to the long pulses of radio transmission.

Hue - The dimension of color that is determined by the wavelength of light; what we know as the color names blue, green, and so forth.

Intensity - The amount of energy in a light or sound wave, which we perceive as brightness or loudness, as determined by the wave's amplitude.

Pupil - The adjustable opening in the center of the eye through which light enters.

Iris - A ring of muscle tissue that forms the colored portion of the eye around the pupil and controls the size of the pupil opening.

Lens - The transparent structure behind the pupil that changes shape to help focus images on the retina.

Retina - The light-sensitive inner surface of the eye, containing the receptor rods and cones plus layers of neurons that begin the processing of visual information.

Accommodation (Sensation) - The process by which the eye's lens changes shape to focus near or far objects on the retina.

Rods - Retinal receptors that detect black, white, and gray; necessary for peripheral and twilight vision, when cones don't respond.

Cones - Retinal receptor cells that are concentrated near the center of the retina and that function in daylight or in well-lit conditions. These detect fine detail and give rise to color sensations.

Optic Nerve - The nerve that carries neural impulses from the eye to the brain.

Blind Spot - The point at which the optic nerve leaves the eye and no receptor cells are located there.

Fovea - The central focal point in the retina, around which the eye's cones cluster.

Feature Detectors - Nerve cells in the brain that respond to specific features of the stimulus, such as shape, angle, or movement.

Parallel Processing - The processing of many aspects of a problem simultaneously; the brain's natural mode of information processing for many functions, including vision. Contrasts with the step-by-step (serial) processing of most computers and of conscious problem solving.

Young-Helmholtz/Trichromatic Theory - The theory that the retina contains three different color receptors— one most sensitive to red, one to green, one to blue— which, when stimulated in combination, can produce the perception of any color.

Opponent-Process Theory - The theory that opposing retinal processes (red-green, yellow-blue, white-black) enable color vision. For example, some cells are stimulated by green and inhibited by red; others are stimulated by red and inhibited by green.

Audition - The sense or act of hearing.

Frequency - The number of complete wavelengths that pass a point in a given time (for example, per second).

Pitch - A tone's experienced highness or lowness; depends on frequency.

Middle Ear - The chamber between the eardrum and cochlea containing three tiny bones (hammer, anvil, and stirrup) that concentrate the vibrations of the eardrum on the cochlea's oval window.

Cochlea - A coiled, bony, fluid-filled tube in the inner ear through which sound waves trigger nerve impulses.

Inner Ear - The innermost part of the ear, containing the cochlea, semicircular canals, and vestibular sacs.

Place Theory - In hearing, the theory that links the pitch we hear with the place where the cochlea's membrane is stimulated.

Frequency Theory - In hearing, the theory that the rate of nerve impulses traveling up the auditory nerve matches the frequency of a tone, thus enabling us to sense its pitch.

Conduction Hearing Loss - Hearing loss caused by damage to the mechanical system that conducts sound waves to the cochlea.

Sensorineural/Nerve Hearing Loss - Hearing loss caused by damage to the cochlea's receptor cells or to the auditory nerves; also called nerve deafness.

Cochlear Implant - A device for converting sounds into electrical signals and stimulating the auditory nerve through electrodes threaded into the cochlea.

Kinesthesia - The system for sensing the position and movement of individual body parts.

Vestibular Sense - The sense of body movement and position, including the sense of balance.

Gate-Control Theory - The theory that the spinal cord contains a neurological "gate" that blocks pain signals or allows them to pass on to the brain. The "gate" is opened by the activity of pain signals traveling up small nerve fibers and is closed by activity in larger fibers or by information coming from the brain.

Sensory Interaction - The principle that one sense may influence another, as when the smell of food influences its taste.

Gestalt - An organized whole. These type of psychologists emphasized our tendency to integrate pieces of information into meaningful wholes.

Figure-Ground - The organization of the visual field into objects (the figures) that stand out from their surroundings (the ground).

Grouping - The perceptual tendency to organize stimuli into coherent groups.

Depth Perception - The ability to see objects in three dimensions although the images that strike the retina are two-dimensional; allows us to judge distance.

Visual Cliff - A laboratory device for testing depth perception in infants and young animals.

Binocular Cues - Depth cues, such as retinal disparity, that depend on the use of two eyes.

Retinal Disparity - A binocular cue for perceiving depth. By comparing images from the retinas in the two eyes, the brain computes distance—the greater the disparity (difference) between the two images, the closer the object.

Monocular Cues - Depth cues, such as interposition and linear perspective, available to either eye alone.

Phi Phenomenon - An illusion of movement created when two or more adjacent lights blink on and off in quick succession.

Perceptual Constancy - Perceiving objects as unchanging (having consistent shapes, size, lightness, and color) even as illumination and retinal images change.

Color Constancy - Perceiving familiar objects as having consistent color, even if changing illumination alters the wavelengths reflected by the object.

Perceptual Adaptation - In vision, the ability to adjust to an artificially displaced or even inverted visual field.

Perceptual Set - A mental predisposition to perceive one thing and not another.

Extrasensory Perception (ESP) - The controversial claim that perception can occur apart from sensory input; includes telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition.

Parapsychology - The study of paranormal phenomena, including ESP and psychokinesis.

Consciousness - Our awareness of ourselves and our environment.

Circadian Rhythm - Regular bodily rhythms (for example, of temperature and wakefulness) that occur on a 24-hour cycle.

REM Sleep - The sleep stage in which the brain and eyes are active, the muscles are relaxed and vivid dreaming occurs. Also known as paradoxical sleep.

Alpha Waves - The relatively slow brain waves of a relaxed, awake state.

Sleep - Natural, periodic loss of consciousness, on which the body and mind depend for healthy functioning

Hallucinations - False sensory experiences that occur without any sensory stimulus

Delta Waves - The large, slow brain waves associated with deep sleep.

NREM sleep - The stage of sleep associated with muscular relaxation. It encompasses all stages of sleep except REM sleep

Insomnia - A person regularly has difficulty in falling or staying asleep

Narcolepsy - A sleep disorder in which the victim suffers sudden, uncontrollable sleep attacks. often characterized by entry directly into REM sleep

Sleep Apnea - A sleep disorder in which the person ceases breathing while asleep, and repeats this cycle throughout the night

Night Terrors - A person experiences episodes of high arousal with apparent terror. Usually occur during stage four

Dreams - Sequences of images, emotions, and thoughts the most vivid of which occur during REM sleep

Manifest Content - According to Freud, the story line of a dream

Latent Content - According to Freud, the underlying meaning of a dream

REM Rebound - The tendency for REM sleep to increase following REM sleep deprivation

Hypnosis - A social interaction in which one person suggests to another that certain perceptions, feelings, thoughts, or behaviors will spontaneously occur.

Posthypnotic suggestion - A suggestion, made during a hypnosis session, that is to be carried out when the subject is no longer hypnotized

Dissociation - A split between different levels of consciousness, allowing a person to divide attention between two or more thoughts or behaviors

Psychoactive Drug - A chemical substance that alters perceptions and moods. They work by affecting or mimicking the activity of neurotransmitters

Tolerance - The diminishing of a psychoactive drug's effect that occurs with repeated use, requiring progressively larger doses to produce the same effect

Withdrawal - The discomfort and distress that follow discontinued use of an addictive drugs

Physical Dependence - A physiological need for a drug that is indicated by the presence of unpleasant withdrawal symptoms when the drug is not taken

Psychological Dependence - A psychological need to use a drug

Addiction - Compulsive craving for a drug despite adverse consequences and withdrawal symptoms

Depressants - Psychoactive drugs such as alcohol, opiates, and barbiturates, that reduce neural activity and slow body functions

Barbiturates - Depressants, sometimes used to induce sleep or reduce anxiety

Opiates - Depressants derived from the opium poppy such as opium, morphine, and heroin; they reduce neural activity and temporarily lessen pain and anxiety

Stimulants - Psychoactive drugs such as caffeine, nicotine, amphetamines, and cocaine that excite neural activity and speed up body functions.

Amphetamines - A type of stimulant and as such, speed up body functions and neural activity

Methamphetamine - A powerfully addictive stimulant that speeds up body functions and is associated with energy and mood changes

Ecstasy (MDMA) - Produces short-term euphoria by increasing serotonin levels in the brain. Repeated use may permanently damage serotonin neurons, suppress immunity, and impair memory and other cognitive functions

Hallucinogens - Psychedelic drugs, such as LSD and marijuana, that distort perceptions and evoke sensory images in the absence of sensory input.

LSD - A powerful hallucinogenic capable of producing vivid false perceptions and disorganization of thought processes. it produces its unpredictable effects partially because it blocks the action of a subtype of the neurotransmitter serotonin

Near-Death Experience - An altered state of consciousness that has been reported by some people who have had a close brush with death

THC - The major active ingredient in marijuana; classified as a mild hallucinogen

Learning - A relatively permanent change in an organism's behavior due to experience.

Habituation - An organism's decreasing response to a stimulus with repeated exposure to it.

Associative Learning - Learning that certain events occur together. The events may be two stimuli (as in classical conditioning) or a response and its consequences (as in operant conditioning).

Classical Conditioning - A type of learning in which one learns to link two or more stimuli and anticipate events.

Behaviorism - The view that psychology (1) should be an objective science that (2) studies behavior without reference to mental processes. Most research psychologists today agree with (1) but not with (2).

Unconditioned Response (UR) - In classical conditioning, the unlearned, naturally occurring response to the unconditioned stimulus (US), such as salivation when food is in the mouth.

Unconditioned Stimulus (US) - In classical conditioning, a stimulus that unconditionally—naturally and automatically—triggers a response.

Conditioned Response (CR) - In classical conditioning, the learned response to a previously neutral (but now conditioned) stimulus (CS).

Conditioned Stimulus (CS) - In classical conditioning, an originally irrelevant stimulus that, after association with an unconditioned stimulus (US), comes to trigger a conditioned response.

Acquisition - In classical conditioning, the initial stage, when one links a neutral stimulus and an unconditioned stimulus so that the neutral stimulus begins triggering the conditioned response. In operant conditioning, the strengthening of a reinforced response.

Higher-Order Coconditioning - A procedure in which the conditioned stimulus in one conditioning experience is paired with a new neutral stimulus, creating a second (often weaker) conditioned stimulus. For example, an animal that has learned that a tone predicts food might then learn that a light predicts the tone and begin responding to the light alone. (Also called second-order conditioning.)

Extinction - The diminishing of a conditioned response; occurs in classical conditioning when an unconditioned stimulus (US) does not follow a conditioned stimulus (CS); occurs in operant conditioning when a response is no longer reinforced.

Spontaneous Recovery - The reappearance, after a pause, of an extinguished conditioned response.

Generalization - The tendency, once a response has been conditioned, for stimuli similar to the conditioned stimulus to elicit similar responses.

Discrimination - (1) In classical conditioning, the learned ability to distinguish between a conditioned stimulus and stimuli that do not signal an unconditioned stimulus. (2) unjustifiable negative behavior toward a group and its members.

Learned Helplessness - The hopelessness and passive resignation an animal or human learns when unable to avoid repeated aversive events.

Respondent Behavior - Behavior that occurs as an automatic response to some stimulus.

Operant Conditioning - A type of learning in which behavior is strengthened if followed by a reinforcer or diminished if followed by a punisher.

Operant Behavior - Behavior that operates on the environment, producing consequences.

Law of Effect - Thorndike's principle that behaviors followed by favorable consequences become more likely, and that behaviors followed by unfavorable consequences become less likely.

Operant Chamber/Skinner Box - In operant conditioning research, a chamber containing a bar or key that an animal can manipulate to obtain a food or water reinforcer; attached devices record the animal's rate of bar pressing or key pecking.

Shaping - An operant conditioning procedure in which reinforcers guide behavior toward closer and closer approximations of the desired behavior.

Discriminative Stimulus - In operant conditioning, a stimulus that elicits a response after association with reinforcement (in contrast to related stimuli not associated with reinforcement).

Reinforcer - In operant conditioning, any event that strengthens the behavior it follows.

Positive Reinforcement - Increasing behaviors by presenting positive stimuli, such as food. Any stimulus that, when presented after a response, strengthens the response.

Negative Reinforcement - Increasing behaviors by stopping or reducing negative stimuli, such as shock. Any stimulus that, when removed after a response, strengthens the response.

Primary Reinforcer - An innately reinforcing stimulus, such as one that satisfies a biological need.

Conditioned Reinforcer - A stimulus that gains its reinforcing power through its association with a primary reinforcer; also known as a secondary reinforcer.

Continuous Reinforcement - Reinforcing the desired response every time it occurs.

Partial (Intermittent) Reinforcement - Reinforcing a response only part of the time; results in slower acquisition of a response but much greater resistance to extinction than does continuous reinforcement.

Fixed-Ratio Schedule - In operant conditioning, a reinforcement schedule that reinforces a response only after a specified number of responses.

Variable-Ratio Schedule - In operant conditioning, a reinforcement schedule that reinforces a response after an unpredictable number of responses.

Fixed-Interval Schedule - In operant conditioning, a reinforcement schedule that reinforces a response only after a specified time has elapsed.

Variable-Interval Schedule - In operant conditioning, a reinforcement schedule that reinforces a response at unpredictable time intervals.

Punishment - An event that decreases the behavior that it follows.

Cognitive Map - A mental representation of the layout of one's environment.

Latent Learning - Learning that occurs but is not apparent until there is an incentive to demonstrate it.

Insight - A sudden and often novel realization of the solution to a problem; it contrasts with strategy-based solutions.

Intrinsic Motivation - A desire to perform a behavior effectively for its own sake.

Extrinsic Motivation - A desire to perform a behavior to receive promised rewards or avoid threatened punishment.

Biofeedback - A system for electronically recording, amplifying, and feeding back information regarding a subtle physiological state, such as blood pressure or muscle tension.

Observational Learning - Learning by observing others. Also called social learning.

Modeling - The process of observing and imitating a specific behavior.

Mirror Neurons - Frontal lobe neurons that fire when performing certain actions or when observing another doing so. The brain's mirroring of another's action may enable imitation and empathy.

Prosocial Behavior - Positive, constructive, helpful behavior. The opposite of Antisocial Behavior.

Antisocial Behavior - Negative, degrading, harmful behavior. The opposite of Prosocial Behavior

Memory - The persistence of learning over time through the storage and retrieval of information.

Encoding - The processing of information into the memory system—for example, by extracting meaning.

Storage - The retention of encoded information over time.

Retrieval - The process of getting information out of memory storage.

Sensory Memory - The immediate, very brief recording of sensory information in the memory system.

Short-Term Memory - Activated memory that holds a few items briefly, such as the seven digits of a phone number while dialing, before the information is stored or forgotten.

Long-Term Memory - The relatively permanent and limitless storehouse of the memory system. Includes knowledge, skills, and experiences.

Working Memory - A newer understanding of short-term memory that focuses on conscious, active processing of incoming auditory and visual-spatial information, and of information retrieved from long-term memory.

Parallel Processing - The processing of many aspects of a problem simultaneously; the brain's natural mode of information processing for many functions, including vision. Contrasts with the step-by-step (serial) processing of most computers and of conscious problem solving.

Automatic Processing - Unconscious encoding of incidental information, such as space, time, and frequency, and of well-learned information, such as word meanings.

Effortful Processing - Encoding that requires attention and conscious effort.

Rehearsal - The conscious repetition of information, either to maintain it in consciousness or to encode it for storage.

Spacing Effect - The tendency for distributed study or practice to yield better long-term retention than is achieved through massed study or practice.

Serial Position Effect (Primacy-Recency) - Our tendency to recall best the last and first items in a list.

Visual Encoding - The encoding of picture images.

Acoustic Encoding - The encoding of sound, especially the sound of words.

Semantic Encoding - The encoding of meaning, including the meaning of words.

Imagery - Mental pictures; a powerful aid to effortful processing, especially when combined with semantic encoding.

Mnemonics - Memory aids, especially those techniques that use vivid imagery and organizational devices.

Chunking - Organizing items into familiar, manageable units; often occurs automatically.

Iconic Memory - A momentary sensory memory of visual stimuli; a photographic or picture-image memory lasting no more than a few tenths of a second.

Echoic Memory - A momentary sensory memory of auditory stimuli; if attention is elsewhere, sounds and words can still be recalled within 3 or 4 seconds.

Long-Term Potentiation (LTP) - An increase in a synapse's firing potential after brief, rapid stimulation. Believed to be a neural basis for learning and memory.

Flashbulb Memory - A clear memory of an emotionally significant moment or event.

Amnesia - The loss of memory.

Implicit Memory - Retention independent of conscious recollection. Because of experience, you recall it without much effort. (Also called nondeclarative or procedural memory.)

Explicit Memory - Memory of facts and experiences that one can consciously know and "declare." (Also called declarative memory.)

Hippocampus - A neural center that is located in the limbic system; helps process explicit memories for storage.

Recall - A measure of memory in which the person must retrieve information learned earlier, as on a fill-in-the-blank test.

Recognition - A measure of memory in which the person need only identify items previously learned, as on a multiple-choice test.

Relearning - A measure of memory that assesses the amount of time saved when learning material for a second time.

Priming - The activation, often unconsciously, of certain associations, thus predisposing one's perception, memory, or response.

Déjà Vu - That eerie sense that "I've experienced this before." Cues from the current situation may subconsciously trigger retrieval of an earlier experience.

Mood-Congruent Memory - The tendency to recall experiences that are consistent with one's current good or bad mood.

Proactive Interference - The disruptive effect of prior learning on the recall of new information.

Retroactive Interference - The disruptive effect of new learning on the recall of old information.

Repression - In psychoanalytic theory, the basic defense mechanism that banishes anxiety-arousing thoughts, feelings, and memories from consciousness.

Misinformation Effect - Incorporating misleading information into one's memory of an event.

Source Amnesia - Attributing to the wrong source an event we have experienced, heard about, read about, or imagined. (Also called source misattribution.) Source amnesia, along with the misinformation effect, is at the heart of many false memories.

Engram - The physical site of memory

Lashley - Took rats ran them from through a maze and cut out parts of their brain looking for an engram

Episodic Memories - Memories of one's past, personal experiences

Semantic Memory - General information about the world even if you haven't experienced it

"Tip of the Tongue" Phenomenon - Memories that you know, but cant seem to recall properly

Motivated Forgetting - The tendency to repress memories in order to avoid dealing with it

Cognition - All the mental activities associated with thinking, knowing, remembering, and communicating.

Concept - A mental grouping of similar objects, events, ideas, or people.

Prototype - A mental image or best example of a category.

Algorithm - A methodical, logical rule or procedure that guarantees solving a particular problem. Contrasts with the usually speedier-but also more error-prone-use of heuristics.

Heuristic - A simple thinking strategy that often allows us to make judgments and solve problems efficiently; usually speedier but also more error-prone than algorithms.

Insight - A sudden and often novel realization of the solution to a problem; it contrasts with strategy-based solutions.

Creativity - The ability to produce novel and valuable ideas.

Confirmation Bias - A tendency to search for information that supports our preconceptions and to ignore or distort contradictory evidence.

Fixation - (1) The inability to see a problem from a new perspective, by employing a different mental set. (2) according to Freud, a lingering focus of pleasure-seeking energies at an earlier psychosexual stage, in which conflicts were unresolved.

Mental Set - A tendency to approach a problem in one particular way, often a way that has been successful in the past.

Functional Fixedness - The tendency to think of things only in terms of their usual functions; an impediment to problem solving.

Representativeness Heuristic - Judging the likelihood of things in terms of how well they seem to represent, or match, particular prototypes; may lead us to ignore other relevant information

Availability heuristic - Estimating the likelihood of events based on their availability in memory; if instances come readily to mind (perhaps because of their vividness), we presume such events are common.

Overconfidence - The tendency to be more confident than correct-to overestimate the accuracy of our beliefs and judgments.

Belief Perseverance - Clinging to one's initial conceptions after the basis on which they were formed has been discredited.

Intuition - An effortless, immediate, automatic feeling or thought, as contrasted with explicit, conscious reasoning.

Framing - The way an issue is posed; how an issue is framed can significantly affect decisions and judgments.

Language - Our spoken, written, or signed words and the ways we combine them to communicate meaning.

Phoneme - In language, the smallest distinctive sound unit.

Morpheme - In a language, the smallest unit that carries meaning; may be a word or a part of a word (such as a prefix).

Grammar - In a language, a system of rules that enables us to communicate with and understand others.

Semantics - The set of rules by which we derive meaning from morphemes, words, and sentences in a given language; also, the study of meaning.

Syntax - The rules for combining words into grammatically sensible sentences in a given language.

Babbling Stage - Beginning at about 4 months, the stage of speech development in which the infant spontaneously utters various sounds at first unrelated to the household language.

One-Word Stage - The stage in speech development, from about age 1 to 2, during which a child speaks mostly in single words.

Two-Word Stage - Beginning about age 2, the stage in speech development during which a child speaks mostly two-word statements.

Telegraphic Speech - Early speech stage in which a child speaks like a telegram—"go car"—using mostly nouns and verbs.

Linguistic Determinism - Whorf's hypothesis that language determines the way we think.

Intelligence Test - A method for assessing an individual's mental aptitudes and comparing them with those of others, using numerical scores

Intelligence - Mental quality consisting of the ability to learn from experience, solve problems, and use knowledge to adapt to new situations

General Intelligence (g) - A general intelligence factor that, according to Spearman and others, underlies specific mental abilities and is therefore measured by every task on an intelligence test

Factor Analysis - A statistical procedure that identifies clusters of related items (called factors) on a test; used to identify different dimensions of performance that underlie a person's total score

Savant Syndrome - A condition in which a person otherwise limited in mental ability has an exceptional specific skill (i.e. drawing)

Emotional Intelligence - The ability to perceive, understand, manage and use emotions

Mental Age - A measure of intelligence test performance devised by Binet; the chronological age that most typically corresponds to a given level of performance

Stanford-Binet - The widely used American revision of Binet's original intelligence test

Intelligence Quotient (IQ) - Defined originally as the ratio of mental age (ma) to chronological age (ca) multiplied by 100 ($IQ = ma/ca * 100$); on contemporary intelligence tests, the average performance for a given age is assigned a score of 100

Achievement Tests - Tests designed to assess what a person has learned

Aptitude Tests - Tests designed to predict a person's future performance; aptitude is the capacity to learn

Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS) - The WAIS is the most widely used intelligence test; contains verbal and performance (nonverbal) subtests

Standardization - Defining meaningful scores by comparison with the performance of a pretested group

Normal Curve - The symmetrical, bell-shaped curve that describes the distribution of many physical and psychological attributes; most scores fall near the average, and fewer scores lie near the extremes

Reliability - The extent to which a test yields consistent results, as assessed by the consistency of scores on two halves of the test, or on retesting

Validity - The extent to which a test measures or predicts what it is supposed to

Content Validity - The extent to which a test samples the behavior that is of interest

Predictive Validity - Also called Criterion-Related Validity; the success with which a test predicts the behavior it is designed to predict; it is assessed by computing the correlation between test scores and the criterion behavior

Intellectual Disability - Formerly referred to as Mental Retardation; a condition of limited mental ability, indicated by an intelligence score of 70 or below and difficulty in adapting to the demands of life; varies from mild to profound

Down Syndrome - A condition of intellectual disability and associated physical disorders caused by an extra copy of chromosome 21

Stereotype Threat - A self-confirming concern that one will be evaluated based on a negative stereotype

Motivation - A need or desire that energizes and directs behavior.

Instinct - A complex behavior that is rigidly patterned throughout a species and is unlearned.

Drive-Reduction theory - The idea that a physiological need creates an aroused tension state that motivates an organism to satisfy the need.

Homeostasis - A tendency to maintain a balanced or constant internal state; the regulation of any aspect of body chemistry, such as blood glucose, around a particular level.

Incentive - A positive or negative environmental stimulus that motivates behavior.

Hierarchy of Needs - Maslow's pyramid of human needs, beginning at the base with physiological needs that must first be satisfied before higher-level safety needs and then psychological needs become active.

Glucose - The form of sugar that circulates in the blood and provides the major source of energy for body tissues. When its level is low, we feel hunger.

Set Point - A biologically fixed tendency that maintains an optimum weight. When the body falls below this weight, an increase in hunger and a lowered metabolic rate may act to restore the lost weight.

Basal Metabolic Rate - The body's resting rate of energy expenditure.

Anorexia Nervosa - An eating disorder in which a person (usually an adolescent female) diets and becomes significantly (15 percent or more) underweight, yet, still feeling fat, continues to starve.

Bulimia Nervosa - An eating disorder characterized by episodes of overeating, usually of high-calorie foods, followed by vomiting, laxative use, fasting, or excessive exercise.

Binge-Eating Disorder - Episodes of eating significant amounts of food, followed by distress, disgust, or guilt, but without the compensatory purging, fasting, or excessive exercise.

Sexual Response Cycle - The four stages of sexual responding described by Masters and Johnson—excitement, plateau, orgasm, and resolution.

Refractory Period - A resting period after orgasm, during which a man cannot achieve another orgasm.

Estrogen - Sex hormones, such as estradiol, secreted in greater amounts by females than by males and contributing to female sex characteristics. In nonhuman female mammals, these levels peak during ovulation, promoting sexual receptivity.

Testosterone - The most important of the male sex hormones. Both males and females have it, but the additional levels in males stimulates the growth of the male sex organs in the fetus and the development of the male sex characteristics during puberty.

Sexual Orientation - An enduring sexual attraction toward members of either one's own sex (homosexual) or the other sex (heterosexual).

Arousal - The right amount of stimulation produces this

Self-Transcendence Needs - One must find meaning and identity beyond the self

Self-Actualization Needs - Need to live up to our fullest and unique potential

Esteem Needs - Need for achievement, competence, self-esteem, and independence; need for recognition and respect from others

Belongingness and Love Needs - Need to love and be loved, to belong and be accepted; need to avoid loneliness and separation

Safety Needs - One must feel that the world is organized and predictable; need to feel secure

Physiological Needs - Need to satisfy hunger and thirst

Lateral Hypothalamus - Brings on hunger

Ventromedial Hypothalamus - Depresses hunger

Insulin - A hormone produced by the pancreas - it controls blood glucose

Leptin - secreted by fat cells - when it is abundant, it causes the brain to increase metabolism and decrease hunger.

Orexin - Hunger-triggering hormone secreted by hypothalamus

Ghrelin - A hunger-arousing hormone secreted by an empty stomach

Obestatin - Sends out a "full" signal that suppresses hunger - secreted by the stomach

PYY - The digestive tract sends "I'm not hungry" messages to the brain

Social Facilitation - The presence of others tends to amplify our natural behavior tendencies

Obese - BMI is greater than 30 according to the World Health Organization (WHO)

Heritability - The proportion of variation among individuals that we can attribute to genes.

Excitement Phase - The genital areas become engorged with blood

Plateau Phase - Phase in human sexual response in which sexual tension builds

Orgasm - Climax of sexual stimulation

Resolution Phase - Relaxing to an unaroused state after an orgasm

STDs - Diseases spread from one person to another during sexual contact

Fraternal Birth-Order Effect - Refers to an increase in the probability that a male will prefer a homosexual orientation with each older brother he has.

Chain Migration - Settling in a specific location because relatives or members of the same nationality previously moved there

Ostracism - exclusion from a social group

Emotion - A response of the whole organism, involving (1) physiological arousal, (2) expressive behaviors, and (3) conscious experience

James-Lange Theory of Emotion - The theory that our experience of emotion is our awareness of physiological responses to emotion-arousing stimuli

Cannon-Bard Theory of Emotion - The theory that an emotion-arousing stimulus simultaneously triggers (1) physiological responses and (2) the subjective experience of emotion

Singer-Schacter/Two-Factor Theory of Emotion - The theory that to experience emotion one must (1) be physically aroused and (2) cognitively label the arousal

Amygdala - Emotional control center in the brain's limbic system

Nucleus Accumbens - A neural pathway that increases dopamine levels that run from the frontal lobes to a nearby cluster of neurons. This region lights up when people experience natural or drug-induced pleasures

Spillover effect - Term given to the tendency for our arousal response to one event spilling over into our response to the next event

Valence - Intrinsic positive or attractiveness or aversiveness

Display Rules - Expressing more emotion to fellow group members than to outsiders

Facial Feedback - The effect of facial expressions on experienced emotions, as when a facial expression of anger or happiness intensifies feelings of anger or happiness

Behavior Feedback - As your force behaviors your mood with correspond with your actions

Catharsis - Emotional release, the idea that releasing aggressive energy relieves aggressive urges

"Feel Good, Do Good" Phenomenon - People's tendency to be helpful when already in a good mood

Well Being - Self-perceived happiness or satisfaction with life

Adaption-Level Phenomenon - Our tendency to form judgments relative to a neutral level defined by our prior experience

Relative Deprivation - The perception that we are worse off relative to those with whom we compare ourselves

Behavioral Medicine - An interdisciplinary field that integrates behaviors and medical knowledge and applies that knowledge to health and disease

Health Psychology - A subfield of psychology that provides psychology's contribution to behavioral medicine

Stress - The process by which we perceive and respond to certain events, called stressors, that we appraise as threatening or challenging

General Adaptation Syndrome - Selye's concept of body's adaptive response to stress in 3 phases: Alarm, Resistance, and Exhaustion

Telomeres - DNA pieces when too short, cannot divide and ultimately die

Type A - Hard-driving, impatient, verbally aggressive, and anger prone people

Type B - Easygoing, relaxed people

Lymphocytes - The two types of white blood cells that are part of the body's immune system

Opponent Process Theory of Emotion - Every emotion triggers an opposing emotion

Personality - An individual's characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting

Psychoanalytic Theory - Sigmund Freud's theory proposed that childhood sexuality and unconscious motivations influence personality

Humanistic Approach - Focused on our inner capacities for growth and self-fulfillment

Free Association - In psychoanalysis, a method of exploring the unconscious in which the person relaxes and says whatever comes to mind, no matter how trivial or embarrassing

Psychoanalysis - Freud's theory of personality that attributes thoughts and actions to unconscious motives and conflicts; the technique used in treating psychological disorders by seeking to expose and interpret unconscious tensions

Unconscious - According to Freud, a reservoir of mostly unacceptable thoughts, wishes, feelings, and memories. According to contemporary psychologists, information processing of which we are unaware

Preconscious - An area in which we can retrieve them into conscious awareness

Repress - Forcibly block from our consciousness

Manifest Content - The "remembered" content of dreams

Latent Content - The underlying or symbolic content of a dream, said to be expressed by the subconscious

Id - A reservoir of unconscious psychic energy that, according to Freud, strives to satisfy basic sexual and aggressive drives

Ego - The largely conscious, "executive" part of personality that, according to Freud, mediates among the demands of the id, superego, and reality

Superego - The part of personality that, according to Freud, represents internalized ideals and provides standard for judgments (the conscience) and for future aspirations

Psychosexual stages - The childhood stages of development (oral, anal, phallic, latency, genital) during which, according to Freud, the id's pleasure-seeking energies focus on distinct erogenous zones

Oedipus Complex - According to Freud, a boy's sexual desires toward his mother and feelings of jealousy and hatred for the rival father

Identification - The process by which, according to Freud, children incorporate their parents' values into their developing superegos

Fixation - According to Freud, a lingering focus of pleasure-seeking energies at an earlier psychosexual stage, in which conflicts were unresolved

Defense Mechanisms - In psychoanalytic theory, the ego's protective methods of reducing anxiety by unconsciously distorting reality

Repression - The basic defense mechanism that banishes anxiety-arousing thoughts, feelings, and memories from consciousness

Regression - Defense mechanism in which an individual faced with anxiety retreats to a more infantile psychosexual stage, where some psychic energy remains fixated

Reaction Formation - Defense mechanism by which the ego unconsciously switches unacceptable impulses into their opposites. Thus people, may express feelings that are the opposite of their anxiety-arousing unconscious feelings

Projection - Defense mechanism by which people disguise their own threatening impulses by attributing them to others

Rationalization - Defense mechanism that offers self-justifying explanations in place of the real, more threatening, unconscious reasons for one's actions

Displacement - Defense mechanism that shifts sexual or aggressive impulses toward a more acceptable or less threatening object or person, as when redirecting anger toward a safer outlet

Sublimation - Defense mechanism by which people re-channel their unacceptable impulses into socially approved activities

Denial - Defense mechanism by which people refuse to believe or even perceive painful realities

Collective Unconsciousness - Carl Jung's concept of a shared, inherited reservoir of memory traces from our species' history

Projective Test - A personality test that provides ambiguous stimuli designed to trigger projection of one's inner dynamics

Thematic Apperception Test - A projective test in which people express their inner feelings and interests through stories they make up about ambiguous scenes

Rorschach Inkblot test - The most widely used projective test, a set of 10 inkblots, seeks to identify people's inner feelings by analyzing their interpretations of the blots

False Consensus Effect - The tendency to overestimate the extent to which others share our beliefs and behaviors

Terror-Management Theory - A theory of death-related anxiety; explores people's responses to reminders of their impending death

Third-Force Perspective - Maslow & Rogers perspective that emphasized human potential

Self-Actualization - According to Maslow, one of the ultimate psychological needs that arises after basic physical and psychological needs are met and self-esteem is achieved; the motivation to fulfill one's potential

Self-Transcendence - Meaning, purpose, and communion beyond the self

Peak Experiences - Ones that surpass ordinary consciousness

Unconditional Positive Regard - An attitude of total acceptance toward another person

Self-Concept - All our thoughts and feelings about ourselves, in answer to the question, "Who am I?"

Trait - A characteristic pattern of behavior of a disposition to feel and act, as assessed by self-report inventories and peer reports

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator - A test according to Carl Jung's personality types in an attempt to figure out one's personality

Factor Analysis - A statistical procedure that identifies clusters of correlated test items that tap basic components of intelligence

Personality Inventory - A questionnaire on which people respond to items designed to gauge a wide range of feelings and behaviors; used to assess selected personality traits

Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - Developed to identify emotional disorders

Empirically Derived Test - Developed by testing a pool of items and then selecting those that discriminate between groups

Person-Situation Controversy - While personality traits may be enduring, the resulting behavior in different situations is different

Social-Cognitive Perspective - Views behavior as influenced by the interaction between people's traits and their social context

Reciprocal Determinism - The interacting influences of behavior, internal cognition, and environment

Personal Control - The extent to which people perceive control over their environment rather than feeling helpless

External Locus of Control - The perception that chance or outside forces beyond your personal control determine your fate

Internal Locus of Control - The perception that you control your own fate

Learned Helplessness - The hopelessness and passive resignation an animal or human learns when unable to avoid repeated aversive events

Tyranny of Choice - Brings information overload and a greater likelihood that we will feel regret over some of the unchosen options

Positive Psychology - The scientific study of optimal human functioning; aims to discover and promote strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive

Self - In contemporary psychology, assumed to be the center of personality, the organizer of our thoughts, feelings and actions

Spotlight effect - Overestimating others' noticing and evaluating our appearance, performance, and blunders

Self-Esteem - One's feelings of high or low self-worth

Self-Serving Bias - A readiness to perceive oneself favorably

Individualism - Giving priority to one's own goals over group goals and defining one's identity in terms of personal attributes rather than a group identifications

Collectivism - Giving priority to the goals of one's group and defining one's identity accordingly

Psychological Disorder - Deviant, distressful, and dysfunctional patterns of thought, feelings, or behaviors

Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) - A psychological disorder marked by the appearance by age 7 of one or more of these key symptoms: Extreme inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity

Medical Model - The concept that diseases, in this case psychological disorders, have physical causes that can be diagnosed, treated, and in most cases, cured, often through treatment in a hospital

DSM-IV-TR - The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Edition, updated as of 2000 "test revision", a widely used system for classifying psychological disorders. Newest edition DSM 5

Anxiety Disorders - Psychological disorders characterized by distressing, persistent anxiety or maladaptive behaviors that reduce anxiety

Generalized Anxiety Disorder - An anxiety disorder in which a person is continually tense, apprehensive, and in a state of autonomic nervous system arousal

Panic Disorder - An anxiety disorder marked by unpredictable minutes-long episodes of intense dread in which a person experiences terror and accompanying chest pain, choking, or other frightening sensations

Phobia - An anxiety disorder marked by a persistent, irrational fear and avoidance of a specific object, activity, or situation

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) - An anxiety disorder characterized by unwanted repetitive thoughts (obsessions) and/or actions (compulsions)

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) - An anxiety disorder characterized by haunting memories, nightmares, social withdrawal, jumpy anxiety, and/or insomnia that linger four weeks or more after a traumatic experience

Post-Traumatic Growth - Positive psychological chances as a result of struggling with extremely challenging circumstances and life crises

Somatoform Disorder - Psychological disorder in which the symptoms take a somatic (bodily) form without apparent physical cause

Conversion Disorder - A rare somatoform disorder in which a person experiences very specific genuine physical symptoms for which no physiological basis can be found

Hypochondriasis - A somatoform disorder in which a person interprets normal physical sensations as a symptom of a disease

Dissociative Disorders - Disorders in which conscious awareness becomes separated (dissociated) from previous memories, thoughts, and feelings

Dissociative Identity Disorders (DID) - A rare dissociative disorder in which a person exhibits two or more distinct and alternating personalities. Formerly called multiple personalities disorder

Mood Disorders - Psychological disorders characterized by emotional extremes

Major Depressive Disorder - A mood disorder in which a person experiences, in the absence of drugs or a medical condition, two or more weeks of significantly depressed moods, feelings of worthlessness, and diminished interest or pleasure in most activities

Mania - A mood disorder marked by a hyperactive, wildly optimistic state

Bipolar Disorder - A mood disorder in which the person alternates between the hopelessness and lethargy of depressing and the overexcited state of mania

Schizophrenia - A group of severe disorders characterized by a disorganized and delusional thinking, disturbed perceptions, and inappropriate emotions and actions

Delusions - False beliefs, often of persecution or grandeur, that may accompany psychotic disorders

Personality Disorders - Psychological disorders characterized by inflexible and enduring behavior patterns that impair social functioning

Antisocial Personality Disorder - A personality disorder in which the person (usually a man) exhibits a lack of conscience for wrongdoing, even toward friends and family members. May be aggressive and ruthless or a clever con artist

Eclectic Approach - An approach to psychotherapy that, depending on the client's problems, uses techniques from various forms of therapy.

Psychotherapy - Treatment involving psychological techniques; consists of interactions between a trained therapist and someone seeking to overcome psychological difficulties or achieve personal growth.

Psychoanalysis - Sigmund Freud's therapeutic technique. Freud believed the patient's free associations, resistances, dreams, and transferences--and the therapist's interpretations of them--released previously repressed feelings, allowing the patient to gain self-insight.

Resistance - In psychoanalysis, the blocking from consciousness of anxiety-laden material.

Interpretation - In psychoanalysis, the analyst's noting supposed dream meanings, resistances, and other significant behaviors and events in order to promote insight.

Transference - In psychoanalysis, the patient's transfer to the analyst of emotions linked with other relationships (such as love or hatred for a parent).

Psychodynamic Therapy - Therapy deriving from the psychoanalytic tradition that views individuals as responding to unconscious forces and childhood experiences, and that seeks to enhance self-insight.

Insight Therapies - A variety of therapies that aim to improve psychological functioning by increasing the client's awareness of underlying motives and defenses.

Client-centered Therapy - A humanistic therapy, developed by Carl Rogers, in which the therapist uses techniques such as active listening within a genuine, accepting, empathetic environment to facilitate clients' growth. (Also called person-centered therapy.)

Active Listening - Empathetic listening in which the listener echoes, restates, and clarifies. A feature of Roger's client-centered therapy.

Unconditional Positive Regard - A caring, accepting, nonjudgmental attitude, which Carl Rogers believe would help clients to develop self-awareness and self-acceptance.

Behavior Therapy - Therapy that applies learning principles to the elimination of unwanted behaviors.

Counterconditioning - A behavior therapy procedure that uses classical conditioning to evoke new responses to stimuli that are triggering unwanted behaviors; includes exposure therapies and aversive conditioning.

Exposure Therapies - Behavioral techniques, such as systemic desensitization, that treat anxieties by exposing people (in imagination or reality) to the things they fear and avoid.

Systemic Desensitization - A type of exposure therapy that associates a pleasant relaxed state with gradually increasing anxiety-triggering stimuli. Commonly used to treat phobias.

Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy - An anxiety treatment that progressively exposes people to simulations of their greatest fears, such as airplane flying, spiders, or public speaking.

Aversive Conditioning - A type of counterconditioning that associates an unpleasant state (such as nausea) with an unwanted behavior (such as drinking alcohol).

Token Economy - An operant conditioning procedure in which people earn a token of some sort for exhibiting a desired behavior and can later exchange the tokens for various privileges or treats.

Cognitive Therapy - Therapy that teaches people new, more adaptive ways of thinking and acting; based on the assumption that thoughts intervene between events and our emotional reactions.

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy - A popular integrative therapy that combines cognitive therapy (changing self-defeating thinking) with behavior therapy (changing behavior).

Family Therapy - Therapy that treats the family as a system. Views an individual's unwanted behaviors as influenced by, or directed at, other family members.

Regression toward the Mean - The tendency for extreme or unusual scores to fall back (regress) toward their average.

Meta-analysis - A procedure for statistically combining the results of many different research studies.

Evidence-Based Practice - Clinical decision-making that integrates the next available research with clinical expertise and patient characteristics and preferences.

Biomedical Therapy - Prescribed medications or medical procedures that act directly on the patient's nervous system.

Psychopharmacology - The study of the effects of drugs on mind and behavior.

Antipsychotic Drugs - Drugs used to treat Schizophrenia and other forms of severe thought disorder.

Antidepressant Drugs - Drugs used to treat Bipolar Disorder and other forms of depression

Social Psychology - The scientific study of how we think about, influence, and relate to one another

Attribution Theory - The theory that we explain someone's behavior by crediting either the situation or the person's disposition

Fundamental attribution error - The tendency for observance, when analyzing another's behavior, to overestimate the impact of personal disposition

Attitude - Feelings, often influenced by our beliefs, that predispose us to respond in a particular way to objects, people, and events

Central Route Persuasion - Attitude changes path in which interested people form on the arguments and respond with favorable thoughts

Peripheral Route Persuasion - Attitude change path in which people are influenced by incidental cues, such as a speaker's attractiveness

"Foot In The Door" Phenomenon - The tendency for people who have first agreed to a small request to comply later with a larger request

"Door In The Face" Phenomenon - The tendency for people to agree to a smaller request after initially denying a larger request

Roles - A set of expectations about a social position, defining how those in the position ought to behave

Cognitive Dissonance Theory - Theory that we act to reduce the discomfort we feel when two of our thoughts are inconsistent

Chameleon Effect - Unconsciously mimicking others expressions, postures, and voice tones to help us feel what they are feeling

Mood Linkage - Sharing ups and downs with the type of people around them

Conformity - Adjusting one's behavior or thinking to coincide with a group standard

Normative Social Influence - Influences resulting from a person's desire to gain approval or avoid disapproval

Information Social Influence - Influence resulting from one's willingness to accept others opinions about reality

Social Facilitation - Stronger response on simple or well-learned tasks in the presence of others

Social Loafing - The tendency for people in a group to exert less effort when pooling their effort toward attaining a common goal than when individually accountable

Deindividuation - The loss of self-awareness and self-restraint occurring in group situations that foster arousal and anonymity

Group Polarization - The enhancement of group's prevailing inclinations through discussions within the group

Groupthink - The mode of thinking that occurs when the desire for harmony in a decision-making group overrides realistic appraisal of alternatives

Culture - The enduring behavior, ideas, attitudes, values, and traditions shared by a group of people and transmitted from one generation to the next

Norm - An understood rule for accepted and ejected behaviors

Personal Space - The "buffer zone" we like to maintain around our bodies

Social Control - The power of the situation

Personal Control - The power of the individual

Minority Influence - The power of one or two individuals to many majorities

Prejudice - An unjustifiable attitude toward a group and its members

Stereotypes - A generalized belief about a group of people

Discrimination - Unjustifiable negative behavior toward a group and its members

Blame the Victim - Holding the victim of a crime, accident, or any type of maltreatment to be entirely or partially responsible for the transgressions committed against them

Social Identities - The tendency to associate ourselves with certain groups and contrast ourselves with others

Ingroup - "Us" people with whom we share a common identity

Outgroup - "Them" those perceived as different or apart from our ingroup

Scapegoat Theory - The theory that prejudice offers an outlet for anger by providing someone to blame

Outgroup Homogeneity - Overestimating the similarity of those within our groups

Other Race Effect - The tendency to recall faces of one's own race more accurately than faces of other races

Just World Phenomenon - The tendency for people to believe the world is just and that people therefore get what they deserve and deserve what they got

Hindsight Bias - The tendency to believe, after learning an outcome, that one would have foreseen it

Aggression - Any physical or verbal behavior intended to hurt or destroy

Frustration Aggression Principle - The principle that frustration; the blocking of an attempt to achieve some goal creates anger, which can generate aggression

Social Scripts - Mental tapes for how to act, provided by one's culture

Catharsis Hypothesis - Idea that we feel better if we "blow off steam"

Attraction - Proximity, physical attractiveness, and similarity

Mere Exposure Effect - The phenomenon that repeated exposure to novel stimuli increases liking of them

Theory of Attraction - That we will like those whose behavior is rewarding to us and that we will continue relationships that offer more rewards than costs

Passionate Love - An arousal state of intense positive absorption in another, usually present at the beginning of a love relationship

Compassionate Love - The deep affectionate attachment we feel for those with whom our lives are intertwined

Equity - A condition in which people receive from a relationship in proportion to what they give to it

Self Disclosure - Revealing intimate aspects of oneself to others

Altruism - Unselfish regard for the welfare of others

Diffusion of Responsibility - If more people share responsibility for helping, there is less likely chance for help

Bystander Effect - The tendency for any given bystander to be less likely to give aid if other bystanders are present

Social Exchange Theory - The theory that our social behavior is an exchange process, the aim of which is to maximize benefits and minimize costs

Reciprocity - An expectation that people will help, not hurt, those who have helped them

Social Responsibility Norm - An expectation that people will help those dependent upon them

Conflict - A perceived incompatibility of action, goals, or ideas

Social trap - A situation in which the conflicting parties, by each rationally pursuing their self-interest, become caught in mutually destructive behavior

Mirror Image Perception - Mutual views often held by conflicting people, as when each side sees itself as ethical and peaceful and views the other side as evil and aggressive

Self Fulfilling Goals - Shared goals that override difference among people and require their cooperation

GRIT (Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension-Reduction) - A strategy designed to decrease international tensions