

General Psychology Brainstorming Questions

**Counseling Psychology:** – is a field having the same concern as clinical psychology but helps individuals with less severe problems than those treated by clinical psychologists. The best-known method used by them was introspection "looking inward into our consciousness" It is a procedure aimed at analyzing the mental experience into three basic mental elements: images, feelings, and sensations.

**Structuralism:** Analyzing mental structure alone was found to serve little purpose in helping humans deal with the environment. Hence, a new school of thought emerged to study this functional value of human mind–functionalism.

**Functionalism:** functionalism views psychology as a study of function of the mind. The founder of this school of thought is William James (1848–1910), who was the first American psychologist and the author of the first psychology textbook. Unlike Wundt and Titchener, James focused on how the mind allows people to function in the real world; how people work, play, and adapt to their surroundings. Functionalism, which was the study of the function rather than the structure of consciousness, was interested in how our minds adapt to our changing environment.

**Behaviorism:** Examining human mind in terms of its structural elements and functions were, however, found to be simplistic to understand the complex human being. It was believed that human mind is more than the sum of sensations as well as adaptive functions. Hence, a new school of thought was emerged to examine mind in a holistic manner–Gestalt Psychology.

**Gestalt psychology:** Gestalt psychology views psychology as a study of the whole mind. Max Wertheimer (1880–1943), Kurt Koffka (1886–1941), and Wolfgang Kohler (1887–1967) were three German psychologists who introducing Gestalt principles. The German word "gestalt" refers to form, whole, configuration or pattern. The behavioral perspective is sometimes called the "black box" approach in psychology because it treats the mind as less useful in understanding human behavior and focus on what goes in to and out of the box, but not on the processes that take place inside. This means, behaviorists are only interested in the effects of the environment (input) on behavior (output) but not in the process inside the box.

**Humanistic Perspective:** emphasizes that each individual has great freedom in directing his or her future, a large capacity for personal growth, a considerable amount of intrinsic worth, and enormous potential for selffulfillment.

**Cognitive approach:** examines how we process, store, and use information and how this information influences what we attend to, perceive, learn, remember, believe, and feel.

**Biological approach:** focuses on how our genes, hormones, and nervous system interact with our environments to influence learning, personality, memory, motivation, emotions, and coping techniques.

**Cross-cultural approach:** examines the influence of cultural and ethnic similarities and differences on the psychological and social functioning of a culture's members. As a fish cannot leave without water, human behavior cannot be understood without sociocultural context (the social and cultural environment) that people "Swim" in every day. With such newer orientation to the study of human subjective experiences that were previously under the field of philosophy alone, psychology then begun as an independent field of study and with Wundt as its founder or "father of modern psychology." Once psychology begun to use the scientific method, it then went through successive developments in which different schools of thought emerged at different times. These schools of thought can be categorized as old and modern as described below.

**Early schools of psychology: "schools of thought"**

**The Gestalt approach:** emphasized that perception is more than the sum of its parts and studied how sensations are assembled into

meaningful perceptual experiences. Educational Psychology – concerned with the application of psychological principles and theories in improving the educational process including curriculum, teaching, and administration of academic programs. The word "psychology" is derived from two Greek words 'psyche' and 'logos'. Psyche refers to mind, soul or spirit while logos means study, knowledge or discourse. Therefore, by combining the two Greek words the term "psychology" epistemologically refers to the study of the mind, soul, or spirit. Industrial psychology – applies psychological principles in industries and organizations to increase the productivity of that organization. Clinical Psychology: – is a field that applies psychological principles to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of psychological disorders. It began as a science of its own in 1879 in Leipzig, Germany, with the establishment of a psychology laboratory in the University of Leipzig by Wilhelm Wundt. Wundt developed the technique of objective introspection to scientifically examine mental experiences. But, an opposition to this assertion came from a physician in Vienna who realized that human functioning was basically explained by more powerful forces which were not accessible to our consciousness. Personality Psychology – it focuses on the relatively enduring traits and characteristics of individuals. Forensic psychology – applies psychological principles to improve the legal system (police, testimony, etc.). Examples of the mind in action include the perceptual experiences (sights, smells, tastes, sounds, and touches) we have while interacting with the world. For example, in studying the relationship between intelligence and academic performance in freshman courses, a psychologist needs to control the effect of socio-economic status of the family. It was believed that this subjective, private experience can't be observable, measurable, and hence can't be studied scientifically. Behaviorism: behaviorists view psychology as a study of observable and measurable behaviors. Behaviorists focus on environmental conditions (e.g. rewards, and punishments) that maintain or discourage specific behaviors. Developmental psychology – It studies the physical, cognitive and psychological changes across the life span. It attempts to examine the major developmental milestones that occur at different stages of development. It compares the nature of psychological processes in different cultures, with a special interest in whether or not psychological phenomena are universal or culture-specific. Health Psychology – applies psychological principles to the prevention and treatment of physical illness and diseases. Personality psychologists study topics such as selfconcept, aggression, moral development, etc.????????????????????????????????