A glowing red brain is shown inside a lightbulb, symbolizing ideas and psychology. The brain is rendered in a vibrant red color with a glowing effect, and the lightbulb is depicted with a blue glow. The background is a dark blue gradient.

# PSYCH'D

Issue 001

OCTOBER  
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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first edition of Psych'd. The magazine aims to provide key information, suggestions for teaching, updates and news as well as interesting features relating to our WJEC and Eduqas Psychology qualifications. We hope you really enjoy reading it and find the magazine interesting and useful.

It is hard to believe that we have already had a year of the new specifications. I have been overwhelmed by the fantastic support you have all offered to each other via networking from our CPD events and the fantastic interactions on our Facebook page. It is a pleasure to work with a group of teachers who are passionate about their subject and motivated to pass their knowledge and expertise onto AS and A Level students.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this first edition. I hope you all find the variety of articles stimulating and inspiring for your classroom. We would be very grateful for any further contributions that share good practice or classroom experiences for up and coming editions. If you would like to write an article, or share a few brief top tips, please get in touch.

Best wishes

Rachel

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# Calling all teachers of Psychology... Psych'd needs you!

**WJEC Eduqas would like to hear from you!**

Psych'd is our first subject specific online magazine created for teachers of Psychology using contributions from teachers across England and Wales. We need contributions from teachers just like you to include in future issued of Psych'd.

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You don't have to have any previous writing experience (although if you do that's perfectly fine as well) just send any ideas or even finished articles to [Rachel.Dodge@wjec.co.uk](mailto:Rachel.Dodge@wjec.co.uk).

However if you don't want to write an article, or share some tips don't despair! We are always looking for feedback on the website and you could be a part of making Psych'd the best magazine it can be. Email any thoughts on previous issues or ideas for future issues to [Rachel.Dodge@wjec.co.uk](mailto:Rachel.Dodge@wjec.co.uk).

# The psychology of happiness

- *Natalie Austin,  
Teacher of Psychology and Head  
of PSHE, Tettenhall College*

Our school recently decided to institute an annual "happiness week". This is a week early in January when Christmas is over, the days are short and the weather typically British. It is aimed at injecting a much needed dose of joy into the otherwise lethargic students. Teachers are encouraged to plan lessons around the theme of happiness, and there are assemblies and special events based on this topic. Even the staff in the dining room and kitchens were encouraged to get involved with happiness themed dinners.

For me, the timing was perfect. I just happened to be starting Positive Psychology with my Year 12s that week. It was a joyous moment of serendipity that meant that I did not have to spend hours shoehorning the topic of happiness into a lesson on schizophrenia or criminal behaviour. However, I made the mistake of sharing this particular information within earshot of the headmaster, who quickly collared me and suggested that I give an assembly on the psychology of happiness. I also teach KS3 RS, so he also suggested making a link to religion. The following is adapted from the assembly I gave.

Are you happy? As long as man has existed, the pursuit of happiness has been of primary concern. How can we be happy? How can we improve the total sum of happiness for all people?

## What makes a happy life?

It may be a simple question, but it is one that has vexed philosophers and religious teachers for centuries. Religions promote devotion to God or Gods as a route to fulfilment and contentment. Some religions such as Buddhism state that true happiness can only be achieved if we let go of our earthly concerns and material possessions. One thing that nearly all religions have in common is that a good life will involve committing to something greater than yourself. Whether this is a higher power, a God, a great universal spirit or alternately working towards the good of all mankind, devotion to something beyond yourself is seen as the one true path to happiness.

In my heart I am a scientist, but I love the study of religions. Religious or not, there are messages in all religions that we can take on board and apply to our own lives.

What I find fascinating is how the same ideas crop up all over the place in all parts of the world, in different guises in different religions, spoken by different prophets, or commanded by different gods. One example is the "golden rule": do as to others as you would have them do to you. This simple rule of thumb for life turns up in every single religion. Likewise, the idea of happiness coming from committing to a purpose higher than yourself seems to be almost universal. As a psychologist, any universal behaviour or idea intrigues me. For an idea to form spontaneously in religions as disparate as the rule-following Orthodox Judaism in the West to the mystical, transcendental Buddhism in the East cries out for an explanation.



So what can psychology add to this discussion of happiness and the good life? Back in 1998, a psychologist called Martin Seligman had become disillusioned with psychology. He had felt that psychology had moved away from a tool that could be used to enhance human potential and increase happiness, to a single-minded focus on reducing suffering. In his words, psychology was now the science of making miserable people less miserable. Psychology was great at treating the mentally ill; identifying and diagnosing illnesses and prescribing treatments was, he argued, one of the great medical achievements of the 20th century. But Seligman argued that psychology could be so much more than that. Psychology could improve the lives of everyone, even those who are not sick or suffering.

He founded what is now called Positive Psychology, the science of happiness. His aims were to discover the ways in which humans could flourish, how we could increase the net sum of happiness and how to improve the wellbeing of all, not just the mentally ill. Importantly, unlike religious leaders and philosophers, this would be done through the use of rigorous investigation and scientific methods not, as he stated "wishful thinking, self-deception or hand waving".

So what does research suggest is the sources of happiness? It is often thought that money equals happiness. How many times have we all thought "I would be so much happier if I had a little more money"? Research into the effects of money on happiness have found surprising results.

A study by Diener et al in 1985 gave happiness questionnaires to a sample of members of the Forbes Rich List (a list of the wealthiest people in the USA) and normal non-rich individuals. They found that the

members of the Rich List were actually 37% less happy than the average American. Another study by Argyle in 1986 found that people who win the lottery only report brief increases in happiness. Money, it seems, is not the route to happiness.

One possible explanation supported by further research is that humans always settle back to an equilibrium. We become used to wealth and luxury. If you win £10 million on the lottery, you will be deliriously happy for a while. But then you will get used to your new wealth, and then what? You will go back to being as happy or as miserable as before, except this time you will be miserable in a nicer house. Look at Donald Trump; one of the richest men in America, yet he always seems far from happy.



It's not all bad though. Money can cause happiness, but not necessarily in the way you might predict. Elizabeth Dunn from The University of British Columbia gave participants \$20 and then randomly assigned them to one of two groups. One group was instructed to spend the money on themselves (perhaps treating themselves to a self-indulgent present), whilst the second group was asked to spend their unexpected windfall on someone else (perhaps by purchasing a present for a friend or family member). Participants who spent the money on their friends and family felt significantly happier than those who treated themselves to luxury gifts.

Similarly, William Harbaugh, from the University of Oregon found that when people donated to charity, the reward centres in the brain lit up. These are the same areas that are activated when we eat tasty food!

This is just the tip of an ever growing iceberg of evidence suggesting that giving to others is much more rewarding than giving to ourselves. This and similar evidence was used as the basis for a theory of happiness put forward by Seligman.

Seligman argued that as humans, we all want to live a "pleasant life". The pleasant life is, as it states, pleasant. We are happy day to day, we have nice things, we engage in nice activities and we are generally happy. While there is absolutely nothing wrong with this type of life, Seligman argues that a truly happy life comes from going a little deeper.

The next type of life, and one that is better than the pleasant life is the "Good life" or the "engaged life". This involves looking at ourselves, and identifying our strengths and positive attributes, and enhancing these skills. It may be a practical skill such as a sport or art, a mental skill such as mathematics, creative writing or intellectual pursuits, or even social skills such as empathy or kindness. By identifying and working with our "signature strengths" we can be happy and engaged with life. The epitome of the engaged life is what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi called "flow"; being engaged in a task to the extent that time seems to stop for you. Think of the painter or writer who can paint or write for hours without pause.

The best life Seligman argues however is the "meaningful life". This is a life in which we use our strengths and talents for a purpose greater than ourselves. In this life, we should work towards improving the happiness and wellbeing of other people rather than ourselves. This could be producing art or literature that others enjoy. It could be showing kindness and compassion to others in need to ease their pain and suffering. You could work for charity or simply be a great parent to your children. As the previous research shows, true happiness comes from being selfless rather than selfish. Through living a meaningful life, we will become happy and fulfilled as a by-product.

So back to our original question; what makes a happy life? Religions argue that it is a dedication to something greater than yourself, whether this is a higher power or a drive to help those less fortunate than yourself.

Religion may have been on to something.

The highest form of living according to positive psychology is that of a meaningful life. The meaningful life is one that works towards the good of others; to utilise your own unique skills and attributes to improve the wellbeing of those around you, and society as a whole. Regardless of whether you have a faith in God or not, helping others improves not only the wellbeing of those you have helped, but your own wellbeing too.

The simple take away message from this is as follows; if you want to live a good life, and be happier than you are, work towards improving the happiness of others. In this, for once, faith and science are in agreement.

And that makes me very happy indeed.

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## Understanding Psychological Approaches in Bowlby and Alfred Adler

By Peter Manning, Head of Psychology at King Henry VIII School, Coventry.

May 2016

### The Crossing of Approach Boundaries by Psychologists

When we divide Psychology up into various approaches, each with their own assumptions and methods, we are simplifying complex phenomena. We study the explanation produced by that approach. Yet it is almost always the case that no approach fully explains any behaviour or issue we care to study. There is always light to be shed from another direction. Sometimes the approaches complement one another, at other times they are in conflict. I want to look here at two connected examples from the psychologists Bowlby and Adler. Both of them cross approach boundaries in their thinking and provide examples of conflict and complementarity between approaches.

### Bowlby and the Psychodynamic Approach

When studying the Maternal Deprivation Hypothesis Bowlby formulated in the early 1950s we see delinquency explained in terms of children and adolescents having an under-developed superego. Their social conscience is not mature due to an inability to internalise the voice of the mother during early childhood. His earlier forty-four juvenile thieves study (1944) had clearly prompted Bowlby, trained in the psychodynamic tradition, to develop an explanation for problems in attachment from within the conceptual architecture of the psychodynamic approach. However, with the work of Harlow (1958) on Rhesus Monkeys, we find that cupboard love theories which rely on food to drive the attachment process lack experimental support. While the work of Harlow is often taken to

critique the behavioural attachment theory of Dollard and Miller (1950) it also undermines the psychodynamic explanation of attachment. Freud had argued that attachment relied on feeding to promote a drive toward pleasure in the infant by the most primitive and instinctive part of the personality, the id. The approach Bowlby had worked within during his early career thus came to lack experimental support.

### Bowlby's Re-invention of an already existing Evolutionary Theory

Bowlby went on to develop an evolutionary theory of attachment from the late 1950s onwards being inspired, he claims, by the work of Harlow and Konrad Lorenz. In his 1935 study on geese Lorenz had argued that imprinting drives attachment. Lorenz is often seen as the foundation stone upon which an evolutionary theory of attachment developed. However, the first PhD Harlow supervised was on dominance and its motivations in the mating behaviour of rhesus monkeys by Abraham Maslow (1934). The PhD essentially contrasted explanations offered by Freud (sex and its drive for pleasure) and Alfred Adler (superiority and the seeking of well-being) within an ethological and hence evolutionary context. The outcome of Maslow's PhD research supported Adler who was also a mentor to Maslow until Adler died in 1937 (Wilson, 1972). The failure of pleasure to be the prime motivator toward mating behaviour and the explanatory power of the social-survival focus of Adler's theory, already served to signal an alternative to Psychodynamic and Behavioural explanations of attachment well before the later work of Harlow in the 1950s. Indeed, this later work can be seen to be consolidating the evidential basis of what had already been pointed towards in the work of Adler and Maslow.

The concept of homeostasis which would be used by Maslow in his own theoretical developments is present in Adler's early work on compensation theory (1907) and is restated within an evolutionary

context by Adler in 1935. Adler states that:

*"All life functions are properly developed for the victorious overcoming of contact with the outside world. Our physical and psychological functions are evaluated as appropriate, healthy, and normal only when they are fit for the overcoming of normal, external and oppositional factors" (p. 8).*

Indeed, one of his most telling definitions of Psychology is that it is the study of the attitude of the person (organism) to its environment. Human life has been moulded through evolutionary processes toward the possession of two innate powers. We strive to overcome difficulties and challenges while at the same time enhance successful outcomes through social interest and cooperation with others.

### Adler's Evolutionary Theory of Attachment

Alfred Adler had published his first attempt at understanding attachment in children in his 1908 essay *The Child's Need for Affection* and continued to engage with the importance of early relationships to later life over the course of his career. While his early work focused on the idea of attachment being driven by an underlying biological drive he came to reject this idea, and also never accepted Freud's sexually focused explanations. Instead of an underlying drive Adler came to argue that humans have evolved for social cooperation to promote survival and well-being. In 1927 Adler argues that:

*"The high degree of cooperation and social culture which man needs for his very existence demands spontaneous social effort, and the dominant purpose of education is to evoke it. Social interest is not inborn [as a full-fledged entity], but it is an innate potentiality which has to be consciously developed. We are unable to trust any so-called social instinct, for its expression depends upon the child's conception or vision of the environment...social interest is innate, just as striving for overcoming is innate, with the important difference,*

however, that social interest must be developed, and that it can be developed only when the child is already in the midst of life." [translation in Ansbacher (1956) p. 134]

Bowlby champions the role of the mother in laying down the relational model of the child. In 1931 Adler can be found saying that:

*"The most important task of the mother is to give her child its first experience of a trustworthy 'other person'. Later she must broaden and deepen this feeling of trust until it includes the whole of the child's environment" (p. 7).*

With statements such as this we find the concepts of monotropy (single attachment) and multiple attachment plus the idea of a developing relational schema. In 1927 Adler states that:

*"We should not be surprised to learn that people do not change their attitude towards life after their infancy, though their expressions of that attitude in later life are quite different from those of their earliest days" (p. 75).*

This echoes the continuity hypothesis of Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980) as it is through infancy that an internal working model toward relationships is developed. For Adler it is during the first 5 years that a self-creating attitude towards, and ways of relating to the world, is consolidated within the individual. Especially important is the way the child responds emotionally to its experience of life in the first few days after birth. When Bowlby calls this time a critical period he follows Adler yet again. Whether Bowlby knew of Adler or not is hard to say but Bowlby never acknowledged Adler's earlier work. When comparisons are made between the mature theory of Adler and the theory Bowlby put forward 30 years later we find constant similarities between the two. What Adler articulates in non-technical language in an often non-systematic way through his lecture notes and popular writings we find Bowlby expresses in new technical terms organised within a systematic structure as is shown in an article by Weber (2003).

### The Multi-Dimensional Approach of Alfred Adler

Sometimes it is supposed that the claim that early experiences are key for future development is a Psychodynamic claim. In the discussion above we have seen that this is not so because an evolutionary perspective can also support such an idea. While Adler was President of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society that met at Freud's home until tensions between their competing perspectives exploded in 1911, he rejected the psychodynamic approach (Handbauer, 1998). Instead Adler consolidated his own ideas around the social constructive philosophy of the German philosopher Vaihinger (1911) and aspects of the evolutionary holism of the South African philosopher, soldier and politician, Jan Smuts (1926). For Adler, we are born to be nurtured toward cooperation within the social life world, develop relational styles, and make cognitive judgements toward enhancing how we as an individual have come to understand well-being. The idea of 'constructed meanings' deployed within psychology is usually attributed to the work of George Kelly in 1955. Adler however was utilising such a concept in his psychology from at least 1911 onwards. These aspects taken together cite Adler's theoretical perspective of Individual Psychology within both evolutionary and cognitive psychology.

Yet Adler also had a focus on well-being and a holistic emphasis when the rest of the psychological world was focused on pathology and the experimental reductionism inherent in the scientific method. Maslow followed Adler's lead in championing a holistic approach in psychology (1970). Adler can also therefore be seen as the first positive psychologist as has been argued by Manning (2015, 2016a and b) and Watts (2015). In 1918 he gave a speech to the Zurich Association of Physicians (2015, ¶ 3) calling on psychology and the medical world to not just be absorbed by pathology but to focus on mental well-being. To

promote such a focus he wrote in 1931 a book for the general reader titled *What Life Could Mean to You*. Such a humanistic focus found further development in the work of: Carl Rogers who Adler had supervised during 1927 and 1928 at the Child Guidance clinic in New York; Abraham Maslow and his hierarchy of needs theory which developed upon important aspects of Adler's theory; and, Marie Jahoda and her definition of abnormality in relation to a positive ideal. Key aspects of the way Adler approached psychotherapy have also been echoed by the cognitive approach. In the Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy of Albert Ellis (2011) we find the same focus on self-esteem and unconditional positive regard. In both Ellis, and the Cognitive Behavioural Therapy of Aaron Beck (1979), we find in similar ways to Adler the challenging of negative beliefs and a client led search for alternative and more helpful understandings of their life situation.

### Don't let Approaches Box You In

We have seen with Bowlby that his work spans two clear periods in which he moved from a psychodynamic to an evolutionary approach. But Bowlby's theory is not itself fully contained within an evolutionary perspective as its talk of relational, cognitive schemas illustrates. With Adler we have a theorist who developed a multi-dimensional approach to Psychology which incorporates evolutionary, cognitive, social constructive elements and helped inspire the development of the humanistic and positive psychology approaches. Learning to think like a psychologist begins with being able to work out how an approach might answer a question. But at some point we need joined up thinking to integrate our various understandings if we are to be true to reality. That is the perpetual challenge of psychology.

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# AS/A Level Psychology

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### Course Aims:

This full day course is designed for practitioners teaching the reformed Eduqas AS/A Level Psychology specification.

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**We look forward to seeing you at one of our events soon.**

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**Wednesday 19 October 2016,**  
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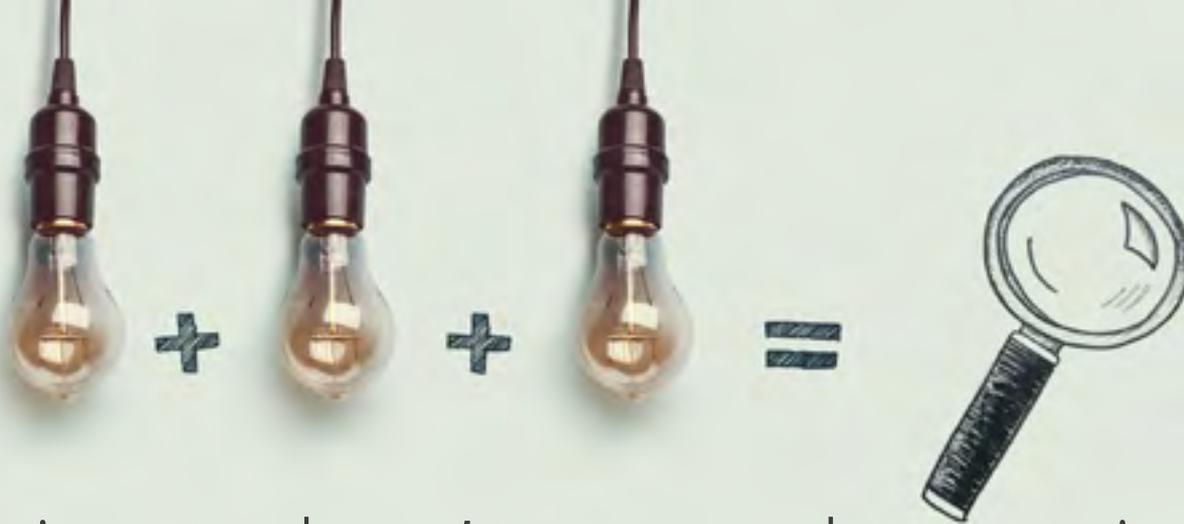
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# “I just don't see the point”

By Helen Kitching, CPsychol, AFBPsS, MSc, PGCE, QTLS

One of the worst things I can hear as a psychology teacher is “I don't understand why we have to do research methods? I just don't see how it links to the approaches”. Research methods is our ‘bread and butter’ as psychologists. It underpins everything we do. From speaking to colleagues in higher education, I know that this is not just an issue linked to the pre-tertiary sector. That, despite learning about research, students still don't always make the link between that and research methods. With the new Eduqas A level, I have been working to integrate research into component one to encourage the students to view research methods as both important and meaningful and not just another ‘thing to learn’.

I started with the Behaviourist approach (one of my favourites) and inspired by an idea from a colleague from the HE sector, I decided to turn the Pavlov experiment into a class experiment.

This re-creation gives the opportunity to get the students involved directly in the design, ethics and implementation. How it works:

## Experimental Hypothesis

Participants in the ‘Dog’ group will salivate significantly more to an unusual sound than the control group.

## Null Hypothesis

There will be no difference in the levels of salivation between ‘dogs’ and control group to an unusual sound.

## Methodology

### Participants

A level psychology class. ½ the class will be the ‘dogs’, the other half will be the control group/experimenters.

### Ethics

This is a key part of the learning stage. Students are involved at all stages – is anyone allergic to lollies, is everyone happy to take part, which roles to take, which sound to use, possible adverse outcomes – hearing the noise (or possibly something similar) outside of the experiment and starting to salivate. Get students to brainstorm issues.

### Materials

Sour lollies. One for each of the ‘dogs’ (and one for the experimenters for afterwards as a ‘well done’)

Smart phone with Instant button Sound effects app (it's free and we used ‘I am Batman’, please be aware that some of the sounds are rather rude)

Response sheet for each participant with a 5-point scale of salivation for each trial and testing of the conditioned stimulus

## Procedure

Lollies = unconditioned stimulus

Unusual noise = neutral stimulus

Salivation = unconditioned response

Play the unusual noise (teacher) – the experimenter, in each pair, records whether it makes both themselves OR the dogs salivate using the same scale.

The experimenters hold out the lollies and the 'dogs' lick them (one each). The experimenters ask the 'dogs' if they are salivating and record their response. The experimenters also record whether or not they are salivating. Ideally do this on a scale of 1 – 5. 1 = not at all, 5 = extremely salivating.

Now pair the noise with the 'licking'. Repeat the pairing eight times in total (you can decide as a class how many pairing you use – you could use the name number as Watson and Rayner used to link it to the core study).

Then play the noise alone. The experimenters record whether they or their 'dog' is salivating.

You can also play the sound again at the end of the lesson to see whether the effect has lasted.

Controls – same UCS, same noise, same time, same number of trials, standardised instructions.

## Results

Students can work out the mean, median and mode scores and the range. They could also perform a Mann Whitney U test. They then decide whether to accept or reject their hypothesis and write a paragraph concluding their findings.

## Evaluation

Students can discuss the reliability and validity of the experiment, sampling method, controls etc., would it have worked in a field environment? What different issues might there have been?

## Homework

Get the students individually to write exam-style questions and mark scheme based on the experiment. (You could give them sample past papers from the legacy WJEC research methods papers as a guide). They can then swap question and answer them. Then give them back to the person who wrote the questions, who will then mark them. Obviously, this does require some checking and some students may require more support but it does involve students in the whole process.

This research not only supports the students in learning research methods actively, it also support learning of the Little Albert experiment (it is distinct enough to not cause confusion with the study, but will help them understand the process of classical conditioning. It also supports learning of the assumption "humans and animals learning in similar ways".

**Time:** the planning and actual experiment can be done in a double period. Analysis and evaluation in another. You will need to have looked at past papers and how questions are worded beforehand. Ideally, get students learning the key terminology and ideas using flipped learning so that they can implement it when looking at their own research.



## SPECTRUM DISORDERS

*Ian Stuart-Hamilton –  
Professor of Developmental Psychology at University of  
South Wales*

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a term that began to be used from the 1980s as an umbrella description for what at the time were seen as a set of five different conditions with some symptoms in common:

- **Autism**, first identified by Kanner (1943), is a severe intellectual disability that manifests itself in late infancy. Symptoms include: very impoverished language skills; a profound desire to be left alone; an obsessive liking for sameness in surroundings and daily routine.
- **Asperger's syndrome**, first identified by Asperger (1944) has symptoms that are milder than Autism, but qualitatively similar. Language is, however, present, but often characterised by an over-literal interpretation (e.g. 'Mrs Evans is a cow' might be taken to literally mean Mrs Evans is a member of the bovine species).
- **Rett's syndrome** and **Childhood Disintegrative Disorder** are both very rare; they produce Autism-like symptoms at 18-24 months following a relatively normal early development.
- In **Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified (PDDNOS)**, the patient has symptoms of some of the other four conditions, but not sufficient of any single one for a firmer diagnosis to be made. Up until the late 1970s, these five conditions were seen as separate entities (and Asperger's was rarely used as a diagnostic tool). A seminal paper by Wing and Gould (1979) argued that all these

conditions were more similar than dissimilar, and it was better to think of people with these conditions as being on the same **autistic spectrum**. The concept grew in popularity and in the DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) the five conditions mentioned above were relabelled as being the same condition of ASD, differing only in severity of symptoms:

- Level 1 – requiring support
- Level 2 – requiring substantial support
- Level 3 – requiring very substantial support

These are considered separately for two domains of behaviour: **social communication** and **restrictive, repetitive behaviours**.

An important caveat is that, rather than the DSM, a lot of British clinicians use the World Health Organisation's **International Classification of Diseases**, currently in its 10<sup>th</sup> edition. This keeps the conditions of types of autistic disorder separate.

However, it was acknowledged that the level of disability could vary between individuals with the same condition. It is rumoured that the 11<sup>th</sup> edition (due 2018) will change to the single ASD classification, but this is as yet only a rumour. In research, the concept of ASD is widely used across the world, although some individuals still adhere to treating Autism, Asperger's etc. as separate entities, so this should be kept in mind whilst reading the literature.

Estimates of ASD's prevalence vary, depending upon how severe or lax the diagnostic threshold applied. However, a reasonable estimate is circa 1% (see Brugha, Cooper, McManus, Purdon, Smith et al., 2012). The majority of research has concentrated

on ASD in children and young adults, but ASD is a lifelong condition with a roughly similar proportion of people with the condition in all age groups (Brugha et al, *ibid*). Older adults with ASD are far more likely than the rest of the population to have depression and anxiety and have few close friends (Stuart-Hamilton & Morgan, 2011). People with ASD are also over-represented in the prison population (e.g. Anckarsäter, Nilsson, Saury, Råstam & Gillberg, 2008). Not because people with ASD are automatically less moral, but because social isolation, stress and poverty might lead them to criminal acts, or to be drawn into social groups containing a high proportion of petty criminals.

The search for the cause of ASD has generated a lot of research but few definite answers. Early attempts to 'cure' ASD were predicated on the idea that the person had suffered a profound psychological trauma in infancy, and therefore a psychoanalytic cure was the best response (see Frith, 2008). Increased knowledge of epidemiology disproved this, and it is now agreed that the roots of ASD are in genetic inheritance.



This means that a cure is at the current time impossible, and treatments aim to improve and control behaviours. As yet, nobody has found the genotypes that will account for a high proportion of people with ASD, although gene combinations that account for *some* have been identified.

What is certain is that the brains of people with ASD have significantly different structures from neurotypical people. This is too

detailed to describe here, but there is an excellent meta-analysis by Nickl-Jockschat, Habel, Michel, Manning, Laird et al (2012). Wing and Gould (1979) argued that ASD is characterised by a *triad of impairment*. Deficits in these areas of the brain could account for the triad. People with ASD might simply be neurologically less able to process certain types of information, leading to problems with understanding figures of speech, poor social skills and obsessional collecting habits.

However, it is also important to note that ASD is not automatically a bad thing for everyone who has it. People with very high functioning ASD are at an advantage in some professions. For example, ASD participants are significantly better at tests of visuo-spatial reasoning where the aim is to identify component parts of a complex diagram. This ability to see details within frameworks and to enjoy repetitive tasks that others find boring, means that people with high functioning ASD are often gifted at professions such as accountancy, engineering, computing and mathematics. Indeed, if there is someone with ASD in the family, there is a significant probability that close relatives will have careers in accountancy, engineering, etc. (Baron-Cohen, 1998). But that is also only true for a small proportion of the ASD population. Many have an IQ of 60 or less (i.e. they are profoundly disabled), and in spite of the occasional report of a *savant* (someone profoundly disabled save for a single isolated area of skill, such as drawing), for most, ASD is not a pleasant or rewarding experience. In severe cases, patients often have practically no language, find interacting with others so challenging that they will hide or cower in corners of rooms, and cannot engage in any kind of thought that requires them to take another's viewpoint.

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## Using technology to teach the Contemporary Debates

*Katherine Cox and Kate Collins, Stanwell School*



As a department we had been really looking forward to teaching the Contemporary Debates section of the AS specification. The decision was made to leave it until the end of the course and we were hoping that the engaging content would give students a boost as they approached the exams. Our school has invested in the suite of Google Apps for Education and we decided to use some of these as tools to teach the debates.

## Google Forms

### *What we did*

The 'mother as primary caregiver of an infant' debate had already raised interesting discussions when we had touched upon it as part of the Bowlby (1944) classic evidence. Before the series of lessons started, students were sent a link to an online survey created using Google Forms (although similar things can be produced on SurveyMonkey and other platforms). We had picked 4 areas of the debate to focus on and structure the lessons around (role of the mother, role of the father, impact of childcare and economic and social implications) and the questions concentrated on these 4 areas. Students were asked to rate their opinions on a likert scale and then explain their answer (*Figure 1*). Responses were collected anonymously.

*Figure 1 - Screenshot from the questionnaire*

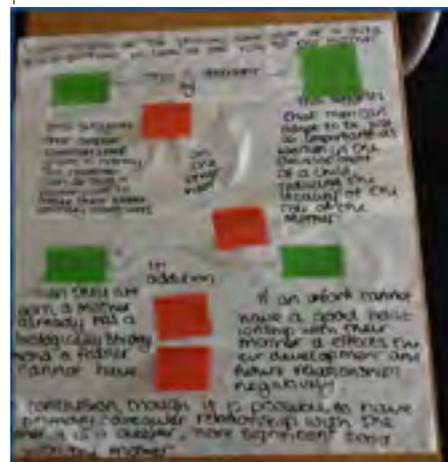
The responses were analysed and given to the students at the start of the topic. They were given copies of bar charts to interpret (produced by Google Forms) and as the results can be exported to Excel. Mean and standard deviations were also calculated to compare results (*Figure 2*). Qualitative data was also shared with the students to help them pick out the key lines of argument. For the main part of the lesson, students were provided with research studies and other evidence on cards and asked to organise these onto whiteboard paper under one of the headings given. They had to show how these could be explained and linked together in an essay (*Figure 3*).

Statement	Mean	SD
The mother should be the primary caregiver of an infant	2.88	1.04
The mother makes a better primary caregiver than the father	2.47	1.16
Childcare (e.g. nurseries, childminders) has negative effects on the development of an infant	2.06	0.81
Modern society makes it impossible for the mother to be the primary caregiver of an infant	2.32	1.04

*Figure 2 - Results from the questionnaire*

### *Evaluation*

The Google Form survey was very easy to produce and share with the students. Results were easily collated and analysed and gave us a useful opportunity to practice the exam skill of drawing conclusions from data. If there was more time then students could be asked to calculate means and standard deviations themselves, which would have been useful practice.



*Figure 3 - Example of the work produced by students in the lesson*

The main advantages from the students' point of view were that they were all given the chance to contribute and share opinions that they may have been reluctant to in a lesson. It also helped us to tailor the lessons towards their interests and ideas by gathering their thoughts before the topic started. For example lots of students mentioned breastfeeding as a reason why mothers should be the primary caregiver so we were able to ensure that there was relevant research evidence given to them in

the lessons. There is a danger of over-teaching content for the contemporary debates and this helped to focus the planning and discussions that took place.

The use of online surveys has great potential in encouraging students to participate and air their views. We have also used Google Forms to ask students to highlight areas for revision and the results were used to help plan revision lessons. This proved much more effective than asking student what they would like to revise (which usually leads to the response of "everything!")

## Google Classroom

### *What we did*

Another tool we used was Google Classroom. This is an online learning platform which incorporates a number of features. Students are invited to join the class and then are able to post comments and links onto a page for the rest of the group to see. Students all had access to a laptop and after an introduction lesson were assigned different sides of the debate. They were asked to research their side of the relevance of positive psychology debate and post articles and comments. Extracts from one of the discussions are shown in *Figure 4*.

### *Evaluation*

We were unsure how it would work but overall it was a great success. Students really engaged with the lesson and got involved in heated debates on the topic (perhaps a little too heated at times!). Even students who were often unwilling to contribute in class seemed to be more confident in this setting. However it did work more effectively with some classes than others. One group in particular needed more prompting to contribute and more support in finding relevant links and research. A major benefit was that all students had access to the discussion afterwards meaning that they could read articles in more depth and use the information to make notes and/or write the essay.

As with Google Forms, we feel that this platform has great potential. As well as using it in lessons we are hoping to use it more next year as a means of sharing resources, web links, flipped learning activities and also for submitting work.



*Figure 4 - An example of one of the discussions generated (students names and photos have been redacted)*

## Important Dates

### GCSE Psychology Legacy Centres in England and Wales

5 <sup>th</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 1 4431 examination
8 <sup>th</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 2 4432 examination
24 <sup>th</sup> August	Summer 2017 Series: Results Published

### GCE Psychology Legacy Centres in England and Wales

15 <sup>th</sup> May PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 1 PY1 1331 examination (Resit Only)
22 <sup>nd</sup> May PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 2 PY2 1332 examination (Resit Only)
7 <sup>th</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 3 PY3 1333 examination (Resit Only)
14 <sup>th</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 4 PY4 1334 examination (Resit Only)
17 <sup>th</sup> August	Summer 2017 Series: Results Published

### GCE Psychology Centres in Wales Only

15 <sup>th</sup> May PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 1 2290U10-1 examination (Wales Only)
22 <sup>nd</sup> May PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 2 2290U20-1 examination (Wales Only)
7 <sup>th</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 3 1290U30-1 examination (Wales Only)
14 <sup>th</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Unit 4 1290U40-1 examination (Wales Only)
17 <sup>th</sup> August	Summer 2017 Series: Results Published

### Eduqas AS Psychology Centres in England Only

15 <sup>th</sup> May PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Component 1 B290U10-1 examination (England Only)
22 <sup>nd</sup> May PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Component 2 B290U20-1 examination (England Only)
17 <sup>th</sup> August	Summer 2017 Series: Results Published

### Eduqas A Level Psychology Centres in England Only

7 <sup>th</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Component 1 A290U10-1 examination (England Only)
14 <sup>th</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Component 2 A290U20-1 examination (England Only)
22 <sup>nd</sup> June PM	Summer 2017 Series Psychology Component 2 A290U30-1 examination (England Only)
17 <sup>th</sup> August	Summer 2017 Series: Results Published

## New Specification Resources

Eduqas Resources England Only

The link above is to the Eduqas GCE Psychology all documents webpage where we have resources including the following:

- Specifications
- Specimen Assessment Materials
- Teachers Handbook
- Resources for Teachers
- Links to the websites which were shared on Facebook by teachers

## WJEC Psychology Wales Only

The link above is to the WJEC GCE Psychology 'all documents' webpage where we have resources including the following:

- Specifications
- Specimen Assessment Materials
- Teachers Handbook
- Resources for Teachers
- Links to the websites which were shared on Facebook by teachers

## WJEC and Eduqas Psychology Resources Webpage

The links above are to the new WJEC and the Eduqas GCE Psychology Digital Resources webpages where we have resources on the following:

- Understanding of the Assessment Objectives
- Implications in the Real World Scenarios
- Psychology Scenarios
- The Original Studies
- Psychology Journal Summaries

## Online Exam Review (OER)

The link above is to the Online Exam Review webpage for GCE Psychology. Here you will find a collection of interactive units that bring together a number of elements including general data, exam questions, their marking schemes and examiner comments, which will lead you through a review of exam questions.

Help guide for Online Exam Review

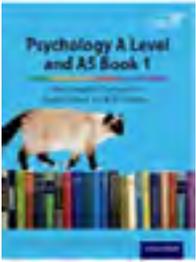
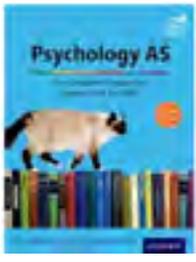
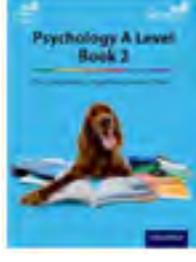
Please note if you are using Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox, download and save the example before following the Help guide as some of the features will be disabled by these internet programs.

WJEC Secure Website

We have a collection of anonymised exemplar answers available on the WJEC Secure website ([www.wjecservices.co.uk](http://www.wjecservices.co.uk)). These exemplars are based on the Specimen Assessment Materials (SAMs) and there are also exemplars of questions and answers which are not on the SAMs. The exemplars are located in the following area:

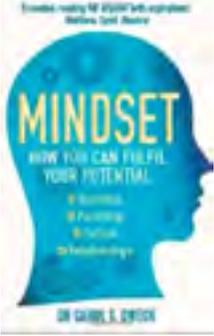
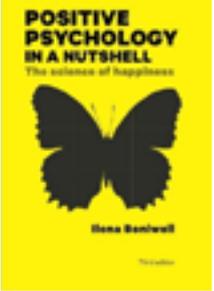
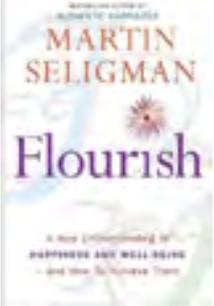
- Resources PDF Download
- GCE Psychology (New Spec) Exemplar Answers

## Recommended Text Books Endorsed By WJEC

	<p><a href="#">Eduqas Psychology A Level and AS Book 1</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">WJEC Psychology Year 1 and AS Book</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">WJEC and Eduqas Psychology Year 2 A Level</a></p>

## Not Endorsed by the WJEC / Eduqas

	<p><a href="#">Crown House WJEC Psychology: AS Level</a></p>
	<p><a href="#">Debates in Psychology (Routledge Modular Psychology)</a></p>

	<p><a href="#"><u>Mindset: How You Can Fulfil Your Potential</u></a></p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>Positive Psychology In A Nutshell: The Science Of Happiness</u></a></p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>Flourish: A New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being – and how to Achieve Them</u></a></p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>Theoretical Approaches in Psychology (Routledge Modular Psychology)</u></a></p>
	<p><a href="#"><u>The Research Methods Companion for A Level Psychology Second Edition (Complete Companion Psychology)</u></a></p>

# Sign Up

## Newsletter

### Centres in Wales Newsletter

For Centres in Wales the link should be:

[http://www.wjec.co.uk/about-us/contact-us/subscribe-form.html?language\\_id=1](http://www.wjec.co.uk/about-us/contact-us/subscribe-form.html?language_id=1)

### Centres in England Newsletter

For Centres in England the link should be:

<http://www.eduqas.co.uk/contact-us/subscribe-form.html>

## Join our Psychology Teacher Network on Facebook

This [teacher network](#) is an online hub for teachers delivering WJEC Psychology to share ideas, advice, resources and best practice. It will also facilitate collaborative working with psychology teachers across the country.

[Join Network](#)





## Acknowledgements:

*Brain inside lightbulb standing on blue background. | adventtr | Getty Images*

*Group of women attending a training, working together | Izabela Habur | Getty Images*

*Portrait of a beautiful woman with long hair and pink coat in the autumn day | neoblues | Getty Images*

*Hand of business man holding spread of cash | rzarek | Getty Images*

*Setting the page on fire with some hard work | PeopleImages.com | Getty Images*

*Business man during his speech at seminar | Joshua Hodge Photography | Getty Images*

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*Autism | Sharon Dominick | Getty Images*

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*Modern woman with a gadget | Gurzzza | Getty Images*

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