

**AS91845 Examine how a psychological debate has changed over time
3 Credits**

Achieved	Merit	Excellence
Examine involves explaining the key arguments that relate to the chosen psychological debate. The explanation shows an awareness of how the different positions in the debate have changed over time.	Examine, in depth, involves giving a detailed explanation of the key arguments that relate to the chosen psychological debate and how they have changed. The explanation includes descriptions of, or references to, psychological theories or studies from published works.	Comprehensively examine involves evaluating the key arguments that relate to the chosen psychological debate. The evaluation shows the interaction of the arguments and how the thinking has changed over time.

**Please note the colour coding on the marking schedule aligns with the highlights on this internal. Some areas identified as Achieved may also count for the Merit if the answer examines them in depth.*

Instructions

This internal assessment is split into seven activities.

Activity 1 - Requires you to explain the different debates. This does not need to be linked to a specific behaviour.

Activity 2 - Explain how the experiment demonstrates reductionism.

Activity 3 - Explore aggression through the lens of the nature vs. nurture debate. Identify if the theory/research demonstrates an explanation/evidence for the nature or nurture debate.

Activity 4 - Choose 5-7 pieces of theory and research from Activity 3 and place them on the timeline. Please also identify whether the piece represents the nature or nurture debate through colour coding or a label.

Activity 5 - Explain the nature vs. nurture debate of aggression and demonstrate how it has changed over time. Please note this could count as achieved or merit depending on the level of concise detail.

Activity 6 - Evaluate the key arguments of the nature vs. nurture debate.

Activity 7 - Explain the interaction of the two debates when applying it to aggression and demonstrate how the thinking has changed over time.

Activity 1

Explain both positions in these debates

Freewill vs Determinism

Nature vs Nurture

Activity 2

For their Level 3 Psychology research experiment, a group of students measured the excitement level at Rainbows End. They decided to measure participants' heart rate as they entered the gate to the theme park. The student's teacher said, 'Using heart rate as a measure of excitement is an example of biological reductionism.'

Explain why measuring heart rate in this experiment could be an example of biological reductionism.

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Activity 3

Exploring aggression in the nature vs. nurture debate. Read through the summaries and circle to show if the theory/research sits on the nature or nurture debate when explaining aggression. Explain your reason in the row below.

Nature/Nurture	<p>Freud's 1917: Frustration Aggression Theory</p> <p>Freud developed the Psychodynamic explanation for aggression. He said that we have an unconscious drive that causes aggressive behaviour. It is caused by an internal force, our natural instinct Freud called 'Thanatos'. It is this that drives us towards self-destruction. Over time, this instinct builds up, creating pressure that we cannot control and makes us do something aggressive.</p> <p>Everyone has this instinct towards self-destruction, and we protect ourselves by using ego defence mechanisms. These redirect our aggression outwardly, so we harm others, not ourselves or direct our energy elsewhere. Two defence Mechanisms Freud identified were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Displacement- you take out your anger & frustration on a person or object, not the actual target of your anger.2. Sublimation – Channeling our aggression into other acceptable behaviour, such as going for a run, joining a boxing class, etc.
Explain the reason for the theory/research's position on the nature vs. nurture debate	
Nature/Nurture	<p>Dunedin Study - MAOA Gene linking to aggression</p> <p>1037 children born in the Queen Mary Maternity Hospital, Dunedin, New Zealand, from April 1972 to March 1973 have been a part of a massive life study. For the past 45 years these participants have had their lives studied and observed very thoroughly so we can learn more about behaviours, life paths, genetics, mental processes and much more..</p> <p>This study assessed anti-social behaviour at age 26 and found that 12% of men with a low MAOA gene who had experienced maltreatment were responsible for 44% of violent convictions of participants in the study</p>
Explain the reason for the theory/research's position on the nature vs. nurture debate	

Explain the reason for the theory/research's position on the nature vs. nurture debate

Nature/Nurture	Christiansen (1977) - Genetic link to aggression		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studied 3586 sets of Danish twins and identified the concordance rate of criminal behaviour • Findings (concordance rate) 		
		Monozygotic twins (identical)	Dizygotic twins (non identical)
	Male	35%	13%
Female	21%	8%	
<p>The findings are interesting as they indicate a degree of inheritance; however, there are some key points to consider. Firstly, the concordance rates are low, even for monozygotic twins, which indicates that the environment still plays a large part in criminal behaviour. Secondly, the difference between male and female twin pairs raises an interesting question about the role of gender in criminal behaviour</p>			

Explain the reason for the theory/research's position on the nature vs. nurture debate

Nature/Nurture	Bandura et al., (1961) Transmission of aggression through imitation of aggressive models.	
	Hypothesis:	
	1.	Children exposed to an aggressive model would produce more imitative aggressive acts than both the other conditions (control and non-aggressive).
	2.	Children exposed to the non-aggressive model will show less aggression than those who saw no model.
Sample:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72 children (36 male, 36 female) • From Stanford University Nursery School, • The mean age of 4.4 years • Range from 3 years and 1 month to 5 years and 9 months 		
Procedure:		
AGGRESSIVE CONDITION		
Children were taken to a room with toys in it and watched the aggressive model play with toys, then started acting aggressively towards BoBo doll		
NON AGGRESSIVE CONDITION		

	<p>Children were taken to a room with toys and watched the non-aggressive model play with the toys but did not play with the BoBo doll.</p> <p>After ten minutes, the child (in both conditions) was taken by an experimenter to ROOM 2</p> <p>In aggressive and non-aggressive conditions children were taken to a room with attractive toys, e.g. fire engine, colourful spinning top and allowed to start playing. The child was then told they were the experimenter's best toys and were for the other children.</p> <p>Then, the observations of behaviour began in ROOM 3. This room contained aggressive and non-aggressive toys and a 3-foot BoBo doll. The Child was in the room for 20 minutes Their behaviour was rated by observing through a one-way mirror. The twenty minutes were divided up into 240 5-second intervals, and child's behaviour was recorded at each interval (time sampling).</p> <p>Findings: The children in the aggressive model condition made more aggressive responses than the children in the non-aggressive model condition</p>
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Explain the reason for the theory/research's position on the nature vs. nurture debate

Nature/Nurture	<p>Phineas Gage Case Study - Frontal lobe link to aggression</p> <p>Evidence that aggression is related to frontal lobe function has existed since the 1800s. In 1848, Phineas Gage had an accident while packing gunpowder into a blasting hole while working on a railroad in Vermont, USA. The tamping iron he was using was propelled through his skull when he accidentally ignited the powder, causing it to explode. The damage to Gage's frontal lobes did not kill him, but it changed his personality, making him more aggressive, obstinate, impatient and impulsive (Harlow, 1868).</p>
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Explain the reason for the theory/research's position on the nature vs. nurture debate

Nature/Nurture	<p>Barker et al., 1941: Evidence of frustration-aggression</p>
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	Barker et al. found children frustrated by being kept waiting a long time before they could play with toys were more aggressive and destructive (throwing and stamping on toys) than a second non-frustrated control group
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Explain the reason for the theory/research's position on the nature vs. nurture debate

Nature/Nurture	<p>Brunner (1993) Neurotransmitters linked to aggression</p> <p>Aim: to explain the behaviour of a large family in the Netherlands where the males are affected by a syndrome of borderline mental retardation and abnormal violent behaviour (i.e. impulsive aggression, arson, attempted rape, exhibitionism).</p> <p>Method: Clinical examination of male family members and comparison with normal family members</p> <p>BEHAVIOUR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated episodes of aggressive and sometimes violent behaviour (often out of proportion to provocation) • Sleep disturbances and night terrors • Inappropriate sexual behaviour toward sisters and female relatives • Arson <p>Findings:</p> <p>CLINICAL EXAMINATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All 9 affected males were mentally retarded (Average IQ 85). Only 1 completed primary education. <p>(All unaffected males attended school and were employed.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All females, including carriers, appear normal <p>DNA ANALYSIS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All affected males showed genetic mutations in the genes producing MONOAMINE OXIDASE (MAO) <p>EXPLANATION....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAO breaks down and removes 3 neurotransmitters, NORADRENALINE, DOPAMINE, SEROTONIN (controls arousal) (emotional arousal) (impulse control) • So, increased levels of MAO will lead to decreased levels of these neurotransmitters. <p>CONSEQUENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low levels of dopamine and noradrenalin have been known to cause spontaneous and irritable aggression in animals, so increased MAO lowers levels of neurotransmitters in affected males, leading to increased aggressive behaviour. Low levels of serotonin impact a person's impulse control, leading to an uninhibited response • Disturbed behaviour may be due to arousal-seeking behaviour
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Explain the reason for the theory/research's position on the nature vs. nurture debate.

Activity 4

Selecting 5-7 of the above studies and place them on this timeline. Please also identify whether the piece represents the nature or nurture debate through colour coding or a label.



Activity 5*

Using 5-7 theories/studies from the table and the timeline, explain how the nature vs. nurture debate of aggression has changed over time.

**Achieved may also count for the Merit in this answer if you examine the explanation and change over time in depth.*

Activity 6

Evaluate the key arguments of the nature vs. nurture debate of aggression.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Nature argument for aggression		
Nurture arguments for aggression		

Activity 7

Explain the interaction of the two debates when applying it to aggression and demonstrate how the thinking has changed over time.

