

## AP Psychology Practice Free Response Questions

**Directions:** With your team, please try to answer, as best you can each of the following questions. You should do this on a separate sheet of paper. Each of the three free response questions are taken from previous AP Psychology exams.

### Practice FRQ #1

Read the following abstract of a student research project on bystander intervention and then answer the questions that follow.

**The ten participants in the study were unaware of its purpose. The first five who signed up to be tested were assigned to the Alone condition and the next five were assigned to the With Others condition. The Alone condition was run in the morning and the With Others condition in the afternoon.**

**In the Alone condition, each of the five participants was asked to wait alone in a room. While the participant waited, a female voice in the next room screamed out, asking for help. In the With Others condition, each one of the five participants was asked to wait in a room with several confederates of the researcher. During this waiting period, a male voice in the next room screamed out, asking for help.**

In each condition, the percentage of participants who responded to the cry for help was recorded.

- A. Identify the independent and dependent variables of this study.
- B. Identify four flaws in the design of this study and the recommendations you would make to correct these flaws.
- C. Discuss an ethical issue raised by the design of the study.
- D. Use your knowledge of research in social psychology to describe the likely results of his study if correct methodology had been used.

### Practice FRQ #2

Professor Jackson believes that frustration increases the need for achievement in college students. She decides to test her hypothesis with an introductory psychology class of 100 students. The first 50 students who arrive to class one day are taken to a separate room and given a series of "easy" puzzles to solve. Professor Jackson then asks each student about his or her professional goals, and rates their responses on a seven-point scale for strength of achievement motivation.

Later, when the remaining 50 students in the class arrive, they're taken to another room and given a series of "difficult" puzzles by Professor Jackson's teaching assistant. The teaching assistant then asks each student about his or her professional goals, and rates their responses on a seven-point scale.

The group that received the "difficult" puzzles receives a higher average score on achievement motivation than the "easy" puzzles group, and Professor Jackson concludes that her hypothesis is supported.

Critique the professor's experimental design, making certain to:

- Identify the flaw in her sample and how you would correct that error
- Identify the flaw in her method of assigning participants to groups and how to correct that error
- Identify the independent variable
- Identify the dependent variable and how it may be problematic in Jackson's experimental set-up
- Identify at least one confounding variable and how you would control for that
- Identify at least one potential ethical issue in Jackson's experimental design and how you would correct that problem

### FRQ #3

The following is adapted from M.M. Duguid and J.A. Concalo, **Living Large: The Powerful Overestimate Their Own Height**.

In a study of power and self-image, participants were not told the true purpose of the study; instead, they believed they were participating in a business simulation. Researchers randomly assigned participants to a high-power ( $n = 44$ ) or low-power ( $n = 44$ ) condition. In the high-power condition, participants recalled a time when they had power over others, and in the low-power condition, they recalled a time when others had power over them. Participants were asked to adjust the height (in centimeters) of an electronic graphical image (an avatar) of themselves to reflect their personal appearance. Results indicated a statistically significant difference in participants' perception of their own height across the two conditions. Participants in the high-power condition created taller self-images (mean = 6.0) than participants in the low-power condition (mean = 4.0).

- Describe the levels of the independent variable.
- Describe how the researchers measured the dependent variable.
- Create a bar graph illustrating the results of the study. Correctly label each axis.
- Explain why the researchers can conclude that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables.
- Explain what statistical significance means in the context of the study.
- Explain why debriefing would be necessary in the study.