

# AP<sup>®</sup> PSYCHOLOGY

## 2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 1

Ellie, a new student at Skinner High School, is determined to make friends. When she attends the first psychology club meeting she finds herself in the room with twenty strangers who seem to know each other well. She plans to attend a few more meetings before deciding whether she will join.

- A. Demonstrate how each of the following could HELP play a role in Ellie's quest for friendship. You may use a different example for each concept. Definitions will not score.

#### HELP

- The mere exposure effect
- Mnemonic device
- Schachter two-factor theory
- Locus of control

- B. Demonstrate how each of the following could HINDER Ellie's quest for friendship. You may use a different example for each concept. Definitions will not score.

#### HINDER

- In-group bias
- Regression
- Operant conditioning
- Circadian rhythm

### Scoring Criteria

#### General Considerations

1. Answers must be presented in sentences, and sentences must be cogent enough for the student's meaning to come through. Spelling and grammatical mistakes do not reduce a student's score, but spelling must be close enough so that the reader is convinced of the word.
2. Within a point, a student will not be penalized for misinformation unless it *directly contradicts* correct information that would otherwise have scored a point.
3. A student can only score points if information is presented in the *context* of the question. For example, it must be clear to the reader that the student is discussing how the mere exposure effect helps friendships to score Point 1. The best way for a student to establish context is to explicitly state it (e.g., "An example of how operant conditioning can hinder friendships is ..."). In the absence of such language, the reader may infer context if the paragraph structure or order of the answer makes the context clear. A student may establish the notion of helping or hindering through inference as well.
4. Additional guidelines:
  - a. *Help friendship* can be inferred from phrases like "continue to go to meetings," "join the club," "attracted to the group," or "have a positive attitude." Similar (but opposite) statements can be used to establish *hinder friendship*.
  - b. *Helping* and *hindering friendship* do not necessarily have to be established for each of the eight points as long as it is clear that the student's answer relates to the topic of *helping* and *hindering friendship*.
  - c. The concepts can be applied to Ellie or the members of the club.
5. A student will not be penalized for defining a term. However, definitions are not sufficient. The student must include an example that indicates how the concept helps or hinders friendship (which can be inferred as indicated above).

**AP® PSYCHOLOGY**  
**2007 SCORING GUIDELINES**

**Question 1 (continued)**

***Points 1–4 must deal with HELPING friendships develop***

**POINT 1: Mere Exposure Effect**

To score this point, the student must establish exposure over time and an outcome of increased liking or comfort. Words like “becoming” and “recognize” imply exposure over time.

Examples:

- “The longer Ellie hangs with the club, the more they will like her.”
- “Additional exposure of club members to Ellie in classes leads to more liking.”

Do Not Score:

- “Other kids will like Ellie because she is at the meeting” because it reflects proximity, not exposure over time.
- “If Ellie goes to more meetings, the other kids will know her better” because knowing is not liking.

**POINT 2: Mnemonic Device**

To score this point, the student must explain that a mnemonic technique could help Ellie learn names, locate meetings, etc.

Examples:

- “Ellie can use a mnemonic device to help remember names.”
- “Ellie develops rhyming words to help remember club members’ names.”
- “A club member smitten with Ellie’s perfume decides to remember her with the phrase ‘Ellie is smelly.’”

Do Not Score:

- “Ellie can use the method of loci” is not sufficient by itself because it does not establish the relationship to names or some other factor that facilitates friendship.
- “Ellie wears a hat so someone else remembers her” does not score because it is not a strategy initiated by the person encoding the information.

# AP<sup>®</sup> PSYCHOLOGY

## 2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 1 (continued)

#### **POINT 3: Schachter Two-Factor Theory**

To score this point, the student must establish the two factors of physiology and a linked cognitive appraisal or cognitive label.

- Physiology can be established with a word like “nervous” or “aroused” (unless the usage of the word makes it obvious that the student doesn’t understand that it is a physiological factor).
- Accept behavioral or physical changes as evidence of physiological arousal.

Examples:

- “Ellie’s heart rate increases when she enters the room and she labels it as excitement about being with the new group.”
- “Group members could be excited by the appearance of a new member and they interpret the arousal positively.”

Do Not Score:

- “Ellie saw a boy at the meeting, became nervous, and labeled him as cute” because Ellie needs to appraise her own arousal and not a stimulus.

#### **POINT 4: Locus of Control**

To score this point, the student must explain the effect of having (or not having) personal control over situations.

- To score the point, the student *must* correctly refer to either internal or external locus of control.
- Having an internal locus of control can make a person more likable.

Example:

- “Because Ellie has an internal locus of control, she can make friends by approaching people and making the first move.”

Do Not Score:

- “Ellie can control herself” does not score because it demonstrates self-control rather than control over situations.
- “Ellie is motivated to go to the meetings” does not score because it refers to motivation alone rather than locus of control.

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## 2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 1 (continued)

#### ***Points 5–8 must deal with HINDERING friendships***

##### **POINT 5: In-Group Bias**

To score this point, the student must establish a cohesive us-versus-other “in-groupiness” and either bias or a resulting impediment to friendship.

- The real or perceived bias must be on the part of a group, not an individual.
- Do not allow answers where the explanation indicates the student is confusing in-group bias with conformity or groupthink.
- Do not allow answers where the example portrays Ellie’s bias toward the group (Ellie alone is not a group).

Examples:

- “The group could see Ellie as an outsider and not make her feel welcome.”
- “Ellie has also joined the drama club and those students look down on the psychology club.”

Do Not Score:

- “The club has an idea they all agree with and if Ellie doesn’t agree it could stop her from making friends” because the student is describing conformity rather than bias.

##### **POINT 6: Regression**

To score this point, the student must establish a less mature pattern of behavior, a behavior that characterizes childhood development, or an infantile behavior.

- Ignore the mistake if the student inadvertently writes the word “repression” instead of the word “regression” but still correctly describes an instance of regression.
- Do not accept an explanation of statistical regression (e.g., regression toward the mean).

Examples:

- “The stress of a new school makes Ellie anxious. She begins to suck her thumb (or cry or throw a tantrum) and this turns off the members of the club.”
- “One of the members of the club throws a tantrum.”

Do Not Score:

- “Ellie wants to go back to last year at her old school where she was more comfortable” because regression refers to a childhood stage, not a recent event.
- “The group regressed and their immature behavior drove Ellie away” because defense mechanisms apply to individuals, not groups.
- “If Ellie regresses it will be hard to make friends” because it merely parrots language from the question.
- “Ellie is shy in new situations and has trouble making friends” because shyness is being referred to as a personality trait rather than as a regressive behavior.

# AP<sup>®</sup> PSYCHOLOGY

## 2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 1 (continued)

#### **POINT 7: Operant Conditioning**

To score this point, the student must provide a *behavior with a linked consequence* or *extinction* (lack of a consequence).

- The student does not have to identify the specific principle by name.
- Mislabeling of negative reinforcement, punishment, and other operant terms can be ignored if a behavior and a consequence have been established. A student may also add incorrect classical conditioning terms if there is a behavior and a consequence (however, see the do not score example below).
- Conditioning may have occurred prior to Ellie's arrival at these meetings ("Ellie had gone to meetings at her old school and was ignored" does score).

Examples:

- "Ellie attends the meeting and the club members make fun of her." (Behavior is attending meeting, getting made fun of is consequence.)
- "Ellie is ignored and she stops coming." (Behavior is attending meeting, ignoring is extinction.)
- "The group is obnoxious and Ellie leaves." (Behavior is obnoxiousness, leaving is consequence.)
- "A different club is more positively reinforcing for Ellie." (Behavior is attending a different meeting, positive reinforcement is consequence.)
- "Ellie finds the club so painful that she begins going home after school instead." (Behavior is attending meeting, pain is consequence.)

Do Not Score:

- "Ellie is conditioned to associate an unfortunate event with clubs" because it is exclusively an example of classical conditioning.

#### **POINT 8: Circadian Rhythm**

To score this point, the student must describe a disruption of Ellie's biological rhythm or a mismatch between Ellie's biological rhythm and the biological rhythms of other members of the club.

- Reference to sleep, energy, time zones, jet lag, etc., imply biological function. The term "circadian rhythm" alone does not.

Examples:

- "Ellie's overall energy level is low in the afternoon when the meetings occur."
- "Ellie wakes up hyper each day and turns off members of the club at their morning meetings."
- "Ellie's old school is in a different time zone and she is still suffering jet lag."

Do Not Score:

- "Ellie stays up late studying and is grumpy at the meeting" because her grumpiness results from sleep deprivation and not a disruption of her circadian rhythm.

As a new student, Ellie has a difficult task in making new friends, yet she is determined. She plans to attend psychology club ~~meetings~~ meetings and then decide whether or not she wishes to join. There are many factors about this situation that will help and many that will hinder Ellie's quest for friendship.

Among those factors that will help are the mere exposure effect, mnemonic devices, Schachter two-factor theory, and the locus of control. The mere exposure effect says that being around people makes one inclined to like them, so the more Ellie is around the club, the more likely they are to like her. The Schachter two-factor theory says that the situation plays a role in the emotion felt by the stimulus. ~~So~~ If the club has a good time, Ellie will be seen as part of that situation that evoked a favorable emotion, and therefore be liked.

Because she would be learning many new names, a mnemonic device may be helpful to remember who she has met. For instance the mnemonic <sup>acrostic</sup> PEN, could help her remember that she met Peter, Ed, and Neal. Finally, having an internal locus of control could help her gain friends. This means that she believes gaining friends is in her control, and therefore is attainable. If she has an external locus of control, she might think it is everyone else's job to make friends with her, which is less likely.

Those are some of the things that could help Ellie's quest for friendship.

There are also many things about this scenario that could hinder her chances of making friends. While the 20 strangers constitute an in-group, Ellie is not yet a part of it, and therefore may feel the effects of an in-group bias, where the members of the in-group feel superior to others such as Ellie.

Uncomfortable with the social pressures of the situation, Ellie may also become anxious and exhibits signs of regression. For example, she may regress to Freud's oral fixation stage and suck her thumb, which the others would look down on. Operant conditioning may also hinder her search for friends. If she tries to introduce herself to someone, and they punish this attempt by ignoring or mocking her, Ellie may expect this harsh treatment when approaching people, and therefore not want to introduce herself. She could be conditioned away from socializing.

Finally, if she is ~~thrown~~<sup>interrupted</sup> off in her circadian rhythm or sleep timer, she may be fatigued or disgruntled at the meetings. Not getting as much sleep when she needs to could cause her to drift off and obtain microsleep later, instead of ~~re~~ attacking the goals at hand. These are some of the factors that could hinder her search for friends.

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1A 3 of 3

Making friends is not an easy task. There are many psychological factors that come into play in a new, social situation. Some of these help and some of these hinder Ellie's quest for friendship. Understanding these factors in her situation could also help Ellie as she tries to make new friends at Skinner High School.



There are several things that could influence Ellie's quest for friendship. The use of a mnemonic device could aid in her memory of the names of her new group members, making it easier for her to interact with them. But, it will be difficult for her to insert herself into the group because of in-group bias. Feelings that result from in-group bias could be feelings of group superiority and ~~to~~ a lack of acceptance of outsiders. Groups experiencing in-group bias will be less likely to accept a new, non-group stranger. Something else that could hamper her acceptance would be her resorting to regression to relieve the stress of being in a new and uncomfortable situation. The child-like behaviors of ~~of~~ regression, such as throwing a temper tantrum, would only further alienate her from the group. Operant condition could also have a negative effect. If Ellie is too zealous in trying to seek friendship, she may inadvertently push people away. Her efforts at friendship will not be rewarded. Because of this extinction will occur, because the behavior is not reinforced. Ellie will stop trying to make friends, which will almost assure that she will not. As evidenced, the principles of psychology play a very important role in human interaction, either negative or positive.

Ellie finds herself in a not uncommon but none-the-less daunting situation. Without knowing a single person in the Psych Club, she indeed has a ~~daunting~~ difficult task ahead of her.

Though to Ellie the search for friends might feel hopeless and fruitless, that is not necessarily the case. There are several factors which can either benefit or hinder Ellie's social involvement and acceptance at Skinner.

Ellie undoubtedly feels awkward and out of place among her new peers. However, certain ~~the~~ psychological theories and factors exist which may help facilitate social growth. Firstly, the mere exposure effect offers possible help to Ellie. By just being present at the meeting, she is exposing herself to these new people. In turn they are now exposed to her. Simply by spending a little time with the, Ellie is chipping away at the awkwardness & bonds of familiarity can begin to develop. Another way to become friendly with a group is to learn each others names. This helps personalize the interaction. A ~~the~~ mnemonic device can be very helpful in remembering the names of new ~~group~~ peers. Another

#2

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1C 2 of 3

psychology concept which can help to aid Ellie in her quest for friendship & the house of control. Ellie must realize that she is in control of her social situation. She must take the initiative to get involved and meet new people. By putting the burden on herself, rather than "them", Ellie will gain confidence ~~at~~ from the belief that she is in control of her life at Skinner High. All of these tools can help Ellie succeed in finding friends and meeting new people.

Indeed, Ellie has every opportunity to succeed ~~as~~ in making friends at Skinner High. However, unfortunately there are several factors which can undoubtedly hinder Ellie's efforts to make new friends. The In-group bias will play a major role. Often times the people in a group will quickly & collectively define & identify a non-member of the group. This can often lead to the rejection ~~of~~ that non-member. ~~IF~~ IF Ellie is decided "unworthy" by the group, she stands little chance of making friends.

Ellie herself might be responsible for her hindrance as well. Regression could play a significant role as well. In a social situation, an uncomfortable or new person might shut down

and regress within themselves. If this happens, none ~~of~~ of their positive qualities can shine through and are therefore a less attractive friend. Likewise, operant condition effects Ellie. Perhaps in her life, she has been conditioned to remain in her comfort zone and not to challenge herself socially. This could prove to be tragic to her goal of making new friends. If Ellie does not take the initiative to force herself to meet new people it will not happen.

Although Ellie's situation at Skinner High seems intimidating and difficult, there is no reason why she cannot succeed. There are many psychological concepts which may either aide or hinder her quest to find new friends. Ultimately, it will be up to Ellie.

# AP<sup>®</sup> PSYCHOLOGY

## 2007 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 1

#### Overview

This question was designed to test students' ability to apply basic concepts from across the various domains of knowledge covered in an introductory textbook; however, the greatest emphasis was on social psychology. The question used a scenario (joining a psychology club at school) as the context for the application.

#### Sample: 1A

**Score: 7**

##### *Helping Friendships*

The student earned Point 1 by providing an example that includes exposure over time and an increase in liking: "the more Ellie is around the club, the more likely they are to like her." The student indicates that a mnemonic device can be used to remember names and earned Point 2. The student does not clearly link physiological response and cognition and did not earn Point 3. The student correctly identifies internal locus of control ("she believes gaining friends is in her control") and stipulates how this can aid in developing friendships, so Point 4 was awarded.

##### *Hindering Friendships*

The student correctly identifies in-group bias as a potential problem for Ellie as she tries to make friends and this earned Point 5 ("members of the in-group feel superior to others"). The student provides an accurate example of regression ("suck her thumb") and earned Point 6. The student correctly identifies punishment as operant conditioning that hinders friendships, so Point 7 was awarded. Disruption of circadian rhythms and sleep are presented as potential hindrances, and this response earned Point 8.

#### Sample: 1B

**Score: 4**

##### *Helping Friendships*

This essay does not include an attempt at Point 1. The student provides an example of how mnemonic devices can be helpful in remembering names, earning Point 2. The essay does not include attempts for Points 3 and 4.

##### *Hindering Friendships*

The student suggests that in-group bias may lead to "a lack of acceptance of outsiders," and this earned Point 5. A "temper tantrum" is identified as regression, which earned Point 6. Overzealous attempts at friendship are linked to a specific consequence (extinction), so this response earned Point 7. The student does not attempt to link circadian rhythms to hindering Ellie's attempt to make friends, thus the student did not earn Point 8.

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**2007 SCORING COMMENTARY**

**Question 1 (continued)**

**Sample: 1C**

**Score: 2**

*Helping Friendships*

Point 1 was not earned because the essay does not contain evidence of repeated exposure leading to increased liking. Point 2 was earned because the student states that a mnemonic device can be useful for remembering names. The essay does not address Point 3. Although the student attempts Point 4, the response does not clearly identify internal locus of control, so the point was not awarded.

*Hindering Friendships*

Point 5 was earned because the student correctly describes in-group bias (the “group will . . . identify [Ellie as] a non-member”) and the impediment to the friendship. The student does not provide an example of regression, so Point 6 was not earned. The student does not clearly identify both a behavior and a consequence that would earn Point 7. The essay does not include an attempt for Point 8.