CLEP Psychology
Practice Test

Time—90 Minutes

For each question below, choose the best answer from the choices given.

1. Psychologists who are interested in behavioral similarities and differences between species are
   (A) biological psychologists
   (B) experimental psychologists
   (C) comparative psychologists
   (D) animal psychologists
   (E) physiological psychologists

2. Employee morale and staff cooperation would be the concern of a(n)
   (A) clinical psychologist
   (B) forensic psychologist
   (C) social psychologist
   (D) industrial and organizational psychologist
   (E) business psychologist

3. To determine if people are coming to a full stop at an intersection with a new stop sign, the best research method would be a(n)
   (A) naturalistic observation
   (B) experiment
   (C) case study
   (D) correlation
   (E) survey

4. If a researcher wished to determine whether heat causes an increase in aggression, the best approach would be to
   (A) observe people in a public park on hot and cold days
   (B) compare and cross-reference weather reports with crime statistics
   (C) recruit participants, put half in a cold room and half in a hot room, and observe their behavior
   (D) compare crime rates in countries that are warm and cool
   (E) ask people if they feel irritable and prone to aggression in the hot weather

5. In an experiment, subjects given various amounts of alcohol drive a course marked by orange pylons. The independent variable in this experiment is the
   (A) various amounts of alcohol
   (B) subjects’ driving ability before alcohol consumption
   (C) subjects’ driving ability after alcohol consumption
   (D) the number of orange pylons hit
   (E) speed through the obstacle course

6. Scientists use replication in order to
   (A) increase validity
   (B) increase research grants
   (C) show cause and effect
   (D) become more confident about their conclusions across a variety of situations
   (E) satisfy ethics requirements
CLEP PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE TEST

7. The psychological perspective that includes the assumption that people are often unaware of the real motives behind their behavior is
   (A) psychoanalysis
   (B) trait theory
   (C) behaviorism
   (D) cognitive psychology
   (E) humanistic psychology

8. The theorist who claimed that he could make any dozen healthy babies into anything he wished through conditioning was
   (A) Wilhelm Wundt
   (B) Sigmund Freud
   (C) Carl Rogers
   (D) B. F. Skinner
   (E) John Watson

9. The primary job of most brain cells is
   (A) transmitting messages
   (B) picking up sensations from the environment
   (C) thinking and reasoning
   (D) providing the brain with nutrients
   (E) maintaining homeostasis

10. The neuron’s “senders” are the
    (A) myelin sheaths
    (B) dendrites
    (C) axon terminal buttons
    (D) pons
    (E) receptor sites

11. Activity within a cell is _____; activity between cells is ________.
    (A) positive, negative
    (B) electrical, chemical
    (C) chemical, electrical
    (D) electrical, electrical
    (E) chemical, chemical

12. The spinal cord is part of the
    (A) peripheral nervous system
    (B) cerebellum
    (C) central nervous system
    (D) reticular activating system
    (E) parasympathetic system

13. The brain’s relay station, which receives incoming sensory messages and passes them on to the cerebral cortex, is the
    (A) corpus callosum
    (B) hypothalamus
    (C) limbic system
    (D) thalamus
    (E) basal ganglia

14. The part of the brain chiefly responsible for emotion is the
    (A) limbic system
    (B) reticular activating system
    (C) thalamus
    (D) corpus callosum
    (E) hippocampus

15. The sympathetic division of the autonomic nervous system is MOST likely to be activated when you are
    (A) sleeping
    (B) frightened
    (C) studying
    (D) talking to a good friend
    (E) dreaming

16. The association area of the cortex, which seems to play a role in planning and problem solving, is located in the
    (A) amygdala
    (B) frontal lobes
    (C) temporal lobes
    (D) occipital lobes
    (E) parietal lobes
17. Sarah and James both have brown eyes, but their daughter has blue eyes. What is the MOST likely explanation for this?
   (A) The child is adopted.
   (B) James is not the child’s father.
   (C) Eye color is not determined by the dominant-recessive principle.
   (D) The child’s eye color will change when she is older.
   (E) Both James and Sarah carry a recessive gene for blue eyes.

18. The minimum amount of stimulus energy required to stimulate a receptor is the
   (A) just noticeable difference (j.n.d.)
   (B) wavelength
   (C) absolute threshold
   (D) pattern theory
   (E) stimulus-receptor prompt

19. Which of the following is TRUE about perceiving objects?
   (A) Sensory adaptation allows us to focus on one stimuli among many.
   (B) Our eyes must continuously quiver in order to counteract the effects of sensory adaptation.
   (C) Weber’s law is another term for the absolute threshold.
   (D) Perception occurs independently of expectations.
   (E) Perception is the same as sensation.

20. Cones, unlike rods, will respond to
   (A) movement but not color
   (B) color but not movement
   (C) movement but not brightness
   (D) brightness but not movement
   (E) both movement and color

21. The LEAST efficient of the human senses is
   (A) taste
   (B) touch
   (C) hearing
   (D) vision
   (E) smell

22. Movements of the head are detected by
   (A) rods and cones
   (B) the semicircular canals
   (C) free nerve endings
   (D) Krause end bulbs
   (E) the ear bones in the middle ear

23. Todd is shown a card with the stimuli AAABBBCCC and is asked to report what he sees. Todd states that there are three groups of different letters. This illustrates the rule of perceptual organization known as
   (A) similarity
   (B) gestalt
   (C) closure
   (D) continuation
   (E) proximity

24. Binocular vision provides clues regarding
   (A) depth and distance
   (B) brightness and hue
   (C) timber and pitch
   (D) color and size
   (E) complexity and shape

25. You have met and seen Juan Perez only in your psychology class. You are MOST likely to recognize Juan if you see him
   (A) as a patrolman directing traffic
   (B) studying in the library
   (C) swimming at the beach
   (D) close up
   (E) eating at an expensive restaurant

3
26. Each one of the sleep stages can be objectively identified as different from the other stages by means of
   (A) specific body positions
   (B) the amount of eye movement
   (C) heart and breathing rates
   (D) EEG recordings
   (E) blood pressure

27. Our most vivid dreams occur during
   (A) stage 1 sleep
   (B) stage 2 sleep
   (C) stage 3 sleep
   (D) stage 4 sleep
   (E) None of the above

28. Which of the following does NOT occur during REM sleep?
   (A) Sleepwalking
   (B) Heightened physiological arousal
   (C) Sexual arousal – erections in males, lubrication in females
   (D) Irregular heartbeat
   (E) All of the above

29. Delirium tremens are associated with
   (A) addiction to any drug
   (B) Parkinson’s disease
   (C) withdrawal from alcohol
   (D) anxiety disorders
   (E) withdrawal from stimulants

30. Which of the following drugs is a stimulant?
   (A) Alcohol
   (B) Heroin
   (C) Barbiturates
   (D) LSD
   (E) Cocaine

31. Which of the following is TRUE about hypnosis?
   (A) Under hypnosis, people can be forced to do things that violate their morals.
   (B) Everyone can be hypnotized.
   (C) Psychologists generally agree that hypnosis is indeed a divided state of consciousness.
   (D) Hypnosis has enabled some people to go through surgical procedures without anesthetic.
   (E) Recovered memories retrieved under hypnosis are usually reliable.

32. “Learning is any relatively permanent change in behavior” is an incomplete definition of learning because it does not include the role of
   (A) growth
   (B) conditioning
   (C) cognition
   (D) experience
   (E) reinforcement

33. Pavlov caused dogs to salivate to a neutral stimulus through a process known as
   (A) classical conditioning
   (B) operant conditioning
   (C) insight conditioning
   (D) successive approximations
   (E) cognitive learning

34. In classical conditioning, the unconditioned response occurs when the
   (A) reward is available
   (B) unconditioned stimulus is presented
   (C) conditioned stimulus is presented
   (D) conditioned response is blocked
   (E) unconditioned stimulus is removed
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35. Presenting the conditioned stimulus (CS) repeatedly without an accompanying unconditioned stimulus (UCS) generally results in
   (A) punishment
   (B) generalization
   (C) discrimination
   (D) the conditioned response
   (E) extinction

36. When a child learns not to use swear words in front of his parents, but does so in front of friends, the child is exhibiting the principle of
   (A) stimulus discrimination
   (B) classical conditioning
   (C) stimulus generalization
   (D) selective extinction
   (E) response generalization

37. It is often suggested that classically conditioned responses are _____, whereas operantly conditioned responses are _____.
   (A) voluntary, involuntary
   (B) aversive, appetitive
   (C) aversive, reflexive
   (D) reflexes, voluntary
   (E) appetitive, aversive

38. A psychology student is training a rat to climb a ladder. She first rewards the rat for any movement it makes toward the ladder, and then only when the rat actually makes contact with the ladder. Eventually, the rat must successfully climb the ladder in order to obtain the reward. This student has used the behavioral technique of
   (A) shaping
   (B) stimulus discrimination
   (C) negative reinforcement
   (D) positive reinforcement
   (E) modeling

39. In general, learning takes place more rapidly with
   (A) continuous reinforcement
   (B) partial reinforcement
   (C) random reinforcement
   (D) no reinforcement
   (E) intermittent reinforcement

40. Systematically applying principles of operant conditioning to influence and change behavior is referred to as
   (A) observational learning
   (B) mind control
   (C) classical conditioning
   (D) psychotherapy
   (E) behavior modification

41. Jenna is very frustrated because her cat keeps jumping up on the counter, even though she had spent a lot of time trying to train him not to do so. Which concept of learning should Jenna MOST be aware of?
   (A) Negative reinforcement
   (B) Positive reinforcement
   (C) Instinctual drift
   (D) Preparedness
   (E) Latent learning

42. A parent who deliberately ignores a child’s temper tantrum is attempting to discourage tantrums by
   (A) negative reinforcement
   (B) extinction
   (C) positive reinforcement
   (D) operant avoidance
   (E) learned helplessness
43. Being aware of the sound presently being made in this room is an example of
   (A) recall
   (B) sensory memory
   (C) retroactive interference
   (D) flashbulb memory
   (E) short-term memory

44. Ishmael wishes to remember the phone number of an attractive woman he just met. The MOST likely strategy he will use is
   (A) mnemonics
   (B) semantics
   (C) relearning
   (D) rehearsal
   (E) recall

45. A “fill in the blank” type of examination would usually measure
   (A) explicit memory
   (B) recognition
   (C) relearning
   (D) recall
   (E) chunking

46. If you memorize the letters FBIKEGUCLA as FBI-KEG-UCLA, you have used a technique known as
   (A) chunking
   (B) recognition
   (C) relearning
   (D) encoding visual characteristic
   (E) RNA

47. The basic sounds of a language are called
   (A) morphemes
   (B) semantics
   (C) syntax
   (D) vocabulary
   (E) phonemes

48. The speech sounds made by infants
   (A) are specific to the language of their culture
   (B) represent sounds from two or three different languages
   (C) include speech sounds used in virtually all languages
   (D) are unrelated to eventual language development
   (E) are different from those used in any language

49. In the Stanford-Binet test, IQ is defined as
   (A) ability to learn and adapt
   (B) MA/CA x 100
   (C) CA/MA x 100
   (D) the sum of the verbal and non-verbal scales
   (E) the person’s mental age

50. Studies of identical twins do not provide conclusive evidence of the effect of genetics on intelligence, because
   (A) identical twins reared apart are usually selectively placed in environments that are as similar as possible
   (B) the studies are too few in number to be conclusive
   (C) identical twins reared together do not share exactly the same environment
   (D) the twins who are subjects in such studies typically have not been separated soon enough to rule out environmental effects
   (E) identical twins share only about 75 percent of the same genes

51. If a test measures what it is intended to measure, it has
   (A) objectivity
   (B) reliability
   (C) replicability
   (D) validity
   (E) standardization
52. An emotion is comprised of all of the following EXCEPT
   (A) changes in physiology
   (B) cognitive awareness
   (C) possible changes in feeling
   (D) goal-directed behavior
   (E) All of the choices are part of an emotion

53. When people of varying cultures were asked to match facial expressions with specific emotions
   (A) there was little agreement, even among people from the same culture
   (B) there was agreement within a specific culture, but not across cultures
   (C) people from underdeveloped societies had responses not seen in industrial societies
   (D) there was remarkable agreement among members of all cultures
   (E) all cultures had exactly the same expressions

54. The regulation of temperature in humans and other mammals provides a good example of the general physiological process of
   (A) arousal
   (B) habituation
   (C) homeostasis
   (D) object incentive
   (E) metabolism

55. The sex hormone in females is _____ and the sex hormone in males is _____.
   (A) estrogen, androgen
   (B) endorphins, androgens
   (C) estrogen, endorphins
   (D) androgen, estrogen
   (E) androgen, glycogen

56. The correct order of Masters’ and Johnson’s stages of sexual response is
   (A) arousal, plateau, resolution, orgasm
   (B) excitement, plateau, resolution, orgasm
   (C) excitement, resolution, orgasm, plateau
   (D) arousal, resolution, plateau, orgasm
   (E) excitement, plateau, orgasm, resolution

57. Good advice to parents who want to encourage high achievement in their children is to
   (A) reward good performance, admonish bad performance
   (B) let children learn on their own the value of achievement
   (C) let children learn their lessons “the hard way”
   (D) don’t let children know about your personal hardships or dissatisfaction with life
   (E) don’t hold high achieving people up as models

58. The correct order of Maslow’s needs hierarchy is
   (A) physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, esteem, self-actualization
   (B) safety, physiological needs, love and belonging, esteem, self-actualization
   (C) physiological needs, safety, esteem, love and belonging, self-actualization
   (D) physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, esteem, self-actualization
   (E) physiological needs, love and belonging, safety, esteem, self-actualization

59. At conception, the original fertilized cell consists of forty-six
   (A) chromosomes
   (B) genes
   (C) molecules of DNA
   (D) gametes
   (E) nuclei
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60. A harmful substance that can cross the placenta and harm the fetus is called a(an)
   (A) contaminant
   (B) teratogen
   (C) carcinogen
   (D) enzyme
   (E) pathogen

61. Jean Piaget was a Swiss psychologist who was interested PRIMARILY in children’s
   (A) physical development
   (B) sexual development
   (C) cognitive development
   (D) emotional development
   (E) moral development

62. Joe is four years old. He watches as you pour out the same amount of juice into two identical
   glasses, one for him and one for his friend. He correctly tells you that there is the same amount
   of juice in each glass. However, if you pour the contents of one of the glasses into a taller,
   thinner glass, he says he wants that one “because there’s more juice in it.” Joe has not yet mastered
   the principle of
   (A) egocentrism
   (B) object permanence
   (C) conservation
   (D) correspondence
   (E) concreteness

63. Secondary sex characteristics are those that
   (A) appear near the end of puberty
   (B) make pregnancy possible in pubescent girls
   (C) tend to occur only in females
   (D) are generally not noticeable
   (E) are not directly related to reproductive organs

64. It is likely that the cause of anorexia is
   (A) social messages toward thinness
   (B) hormone or other biological imbalances
   (C) a desire to control one’s body
   (D) low self-esteem
   (E) All of the choices are correct

65. According to Erik Erikson, adolescents are primarily dealing with concerns related to
   (A) generativity versus self-absorption
   (B) identity versus confusion
   (C) trust versus mistrust
   (D) ego integrity vs despair
   (E) intimacy versus isolation

66. Severe intellectual and emotional impairment in older people is MOST likely to be caused by
   (A) Alzheimer’s disease
   (B) diabetes
   (C) Parkinson’s disease
   (D) atherosclerosis
   (E) Huntington’s disease

67. Psychodynamic theory was originally developed by
   (A) Carl Rogers
   (B) Carl Jung
   (C) Alfred Adler
   (D) Erich Fromm
   (E) Sigmund Freud

68. Freud compared the unconscious mind to an iceberg because it is
   (A) cold and calculating
   (B) unpredictable
   (C) very old
   (D) mostly hidden from view
   (E) very large
CLEP PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE TEST

69. Which of the following statements BEST describes the structure of personality as Sigmund Freud saw it?
   (A) The ego originates from the superego.
   (B) The id mediates between the superego and the ego.
   (C) The superego is the most powerful unit in the personality.
   (D) The ego mediates between the id and the superego.
   (E) The id originates from the superego.

70. According to Freudian theory, the *Oedipus complex* is resolved through the process of
   (A) regression
   (B) identification
   (C) modeling
   (D) repression
   (E) sublimation

71. In breaking away from Freud, Alfred Adler proposed that people
   (A) inherit the learned behaviors of their ancestors.
   (B) suffer from fixations in the early psychosexual stages
   (C) attempt to overcome feelings of inferiority.
   (D) suffer from strong biological urges
   (E) have an ancestral memory called the collective unconscious

72. Jim is able to accept his friend despite the fact that he doesn’t approve of some of the things his friend does. Carl Rogers would say that, in accepting his friend regardless of his flaws, without closed-minded judgment, Jim is displaying
   (A) conditions of worth
   (B) self-actualization
   (C) an incongruence
   (D) social approval
   (E) unconditional positive regard

73. Social learning theory emphasizes the phenomenon of
   (A) observational learning
   (B) positive reinforcement
   (C) self-actualization
   (D) introversion-extroversion
   (E) personality types

74. If you would enjoy roaming around the world but would also enjoy the rewards of settling down, you are experiencing a(n)
   (A) bi-dimensional conflict
   (B) approach-approach conflict
   (C) avoidance-avoidance conflict
   (D) approach-avoidance conflict
   (E) double approach-avoidance conflict

75. A characteristic typically possessed by stress-resistant individuals is a(n)
   (A) Type A personality
   (B) pessimistic explanatory style
   (C) sense of personal control
   (D) tendency to attribute successes to good fortune
   (E) active pituitary gland

76. What is the role of genes in the development of most mental disorders?
   (A) Genetic factors can predispose us to develop mental disorders.
   (B) Genetic factors cause mental disorders.
   (C) There is no way to determine whether various mental disorders have any genetic bases.
   (D) Genetic factors typically only cause disorders if they are found on “both sides” of the family.
   (E) The environment is a more important factor than genes in predicting whether or not a mental disorder will develop.
77. Schizophrenics have been found to have an excess of the neurotransmitter
(A) dopamine
(B) thorazine
(C) noradrenaline
(D) endorphins
(E) serotonin

78. A person who is overly energetic and hyperactive, makes grandiose plans, and experiences feelings of omnipotence is
(A) schizoid
(B) hysterical
(C) manic
(D) obsessive
(E) anal-retentive

79. People diagnosed as having a(n) ______ disorder outnumber all other groups of mentally ill individuals.
(A) conversion
(B) psychotic
(C) affective
(D) anxiety
(E) personality

80. A seemingly charming, candid, generous person who lies freely, forms no close ties, and is selfish and remorseless, is probably a(n)
(A) antisocial personality
(B) histrionic personality disorder
(C) narcissistic personality
(D) schizoid personality
(E) autistic personality

81. Dissociative identity disorder is synonymous with
(A) multiple personality disorder
(B) schizophrenia
(C) hysteria
(D) pathological impulse control
(E) sexual dysfunction

82. The psychodynamic approach to the treatment of psychological disorders is based on the assumption that maladaptive behavior
(A) is learned, and therapy should teach the client more adaptive behavior
(B) is caused by imbalances in biochemical functioning of the brain
(C) occurs when the client no longer feels that life is meaningful
(D) is the result of problems in living
(E) is related to unresolved childhood conflicts

83. Compared with traditional Freudians, modern psychodynamic therapists tend to give greater emphasis to the
(A) patient’s social and cultural environment
(B) patient’s early childhood experiences
(C) patient’s unconscious conflicts
(D) use of applied behavior analysis
(E) role of self-actualization

84. The ability to understand accurately the feelings of a client is called
(A) sympathy
(B) reflection
(C) unconditional positive regard
(D) empathy
(E) congruence

85. Aversive conditioning is a form of
(A) behavior therapy
(B) cognitive therapy
(C) desensitization
(D) dissonance
(E) learning by observation

86. Imagining fearful situations while remaining relaxed involves a technique called
(A) systematic desensitization
(B) extinction
(C) catastrophizing
(D) flooding
(E) aversive conditioning.
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87. Self-help groups are effective for all of the following reasons EXCEPT
   (A) the bonds with others
   (B) the insight offered by a trained therapist
   (C) the availability of models with whom to identify
   (D) the feeling that one is not alone in his or her problem
   (E) the reassurance that most stress reactions are normal

88. Since the introduction of drug treatment approximately twenty-five years ago, the percentage of the population in the United States that is hospitalized for mental disorders has
   (A) increased substantially
   (B) increased slightly
   (C) remained constant
   (D) decreased
   (E) fluctuated vastly

89. Electroconvulsive shock
   (A) is most often used to treat severely depressed patients
   (B) is largely ineffective
   (C) has no known undesirable side effects
   (D) is most often used to treat schizophrenic patients
   (E) has no therapeutic value for treating mental illness

90. Cognitive dissonance is BEST described as
   (A) feelings of discomfort generated by inconsistency between a person’s beliefs and actions
   (B) negative feelings generated when someone unduly threatens one’s freedoms
   (C) a denial of a discrepancy between beliefs and actions
   (D) negative feelings generated when exposed to arguments against one’s attitudes
   (E) a state of heightened self-awareness that motivates one to perform an objective self appraisal

91. If the source of information is judged to be of low credibility, most people will
   (A) be persuaded anyway
   (B) experience cognitive dissonance
   (C) disregard the information
   (D) ask for proof to support the source’s position
   (E) feel altruistic toward the speaker

92. When a person’s behavior is assigned to an external cause, the type of attribution made is _____; when a person’s behavior is assigned to an internal cause, the type of attribution made is _____.
   (A) stable, unstable
   (B) dispositional, situational
   (C) global, specific
   (D) situational, dispositional
   (E) specific, external

93. A mother who is certain her children cannot make decisions encourages dependent behavior that confirms her opinion of them, exemplifying
   (A) self-perception theory
   (B) the theory of social comparison.
   (C) expedient conformity.
   (D) a self-fulfilling prophecy.
   (E) cognitive dissonance

94. Research suggests that a tendency to conform is greater for _____ than for Americans.
   (A) Austrians
   (B) French
   (C) Canadians
   (D) Japanese
   (E) Mexicans
95. Among Stanley Milgram’s subjects who were pressured to give “electrical shocks” to a “learner” (actually an actor)
   (A) almost none would shock the subject at all
   (B) about 30 percent delivered some level of electrical shock
   (C) about 30 percent delivered an apparently painful shock
   (D) nearly two thirds delivered an apparently painful shock
   (E) nearly 90 percent delivered an apparently painful shock

96. In which case would social loafing MOST likely occur?
   (A) Two friends decide to share the driving on a road trip.
   (B) Five students are assigned to do a group project.
   (C) Students decide to study together for the law school entrance exam.
   (D) Several skydiving instructors share joint responsibility for safety checks.
   (E) All of the choices are equally likely to create social loafing.

97. Which of the following is TRUE about the relationship between frustration and aggression?
   (A) Frustration always causes aggression.
   (B) Biological factors are more important than social factors in aggressive behavior.
   (C) Whether or not frustration will result in aggression depends on cognitive appraisal.
   (D) Frustration is likely to cause aggression in children but depression in adults.
   (E) Aggression is always a sign that frustration and depression are present in an individual.

98. The results of IQ testing suggest that
   (A) the average IQ is well above 100
   (B) IQ cannot be tested reliably
   (C) IQ scores approximate a normal distribution
   (D) IQ is an excellent predictor of emotional adjustment
   (E) IQ tests are a direct measure of intelligence

99. A normal curve of distribution is a set of scores with
   (A) a high standard deviation
   (B) most scores near one end of the range
   (C) approximately equal numbers of scores from one end of the range to the other
   (D) most scores in the middle of the range
   (E) most scores at the high and low ends of the range

100. For a representative sample of identical twins, the correlation coefficient between their IQs was found to be .80. Hence, we can say that
    (A) 80 percent of IQ is inherited
    (B) 80 percent of IQ is due to environmental effects
    (C) IQ and inherited genes are strongly related
    (D) identical twins usually have identical IQs
    (E) IQ is barely related to heredity