

MCAT Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior

Practice Test 2

MCAT Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior • Form 2

Directions. This is an original independent practice form designed to mirror the current MCAT section structure. Select the best answer for each question. Do not use the answer fields or explanations until you have completed the form. **Timing.** 95 minutes. The practice form uses the AAMC section timing; it is not an official AAMC form and does not produce an official scaled score. **Blueprint note.** Approximate disciplines: introductory psychology 65%, introductory sociology 30%, introductory biology 5%; Foundational Concepts 6-10; Skills 1-4.

Passage 1: Group processes

In a follow-up study of norms, investigators compared two conditions that differed in the clarity of group expectations. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: Behavior became more similar when expectations were clear and approval and disapproval were consistently communicated. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that norms operate through shared expectations and social consequences. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

1. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of norms from a competing mechanism?
 - A. Norms affect only isolated individuals.
 - B. Groups cannot enforce expectations through approval or sanctions.
 - C. Private disagreement automatically ends a group norm.
 - D. Members change behavior after learning the group's approval and disapproval patterns.
2. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
 - A. Groups cannot enforce expectations through approval or sanctions.
 - B. Private disagreement automatically ends a group norm.
 - C. Behavior becomes more similar across members when norms are clear and consistently enforced.
 - D. Norms affect only isolated individuals.
3. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of the clarity of group expectations on norms?
 - A. Members change behavior after learning the group's approval and disapproval patterns.
 - B. Compare groups with the same task but different clarity of expectations.
 - C. Norms affect only isolated individuals.
 - D. Groups cannot enforce expectations through approval or sanctions.
4. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
 - A. Behavior becomes more similar across members when norms are clear and consistently enforced.

- B. Compare groups with the same task but different clarity of expectations.
 - C. Norms affect only isolated individuals.
 - D. Groups cannot enforce expectations through approval or sanctions.
5. Which observation would be most inconsistent with the proposed explanation of norms?
- A. Behavior becomes more similar across members when norms are clear and consistently enforced.
 - B. A norm can persist even when individual members privately disagree.
 - C. Norms affect only isolated individuals.
 - D. Members change behavior after learning the group's approval and disapproval patterns.

Passage 2: Attitudes and behavior

In a follow-up study of cognitive dissonance, investigators compared two conditions that differed in inconsistency between belief and action. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: Attitude change was greatest when participants freely chose the difficult action and received little external justification. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that insufficient external justification can make internal attitude adjustment more likely. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

6. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of cognitive dissonance from a competing mechanism?
- A. Inconsistency always strengthens the original attitude.
 - B. People never change attitudes after acting.
 - C. External rewards have identical psychological effects at every size.
 - D. Attitude change is greatest when external justification is modest.
7. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
- A. People never change attitudes after acting.
 - B. External rewards have identical psychological effects at every size.
 - C. A person may report a more favorable attitude after freely choosing a difficult action.
 - D. Inconsistency always strengthens the original attitude.
8. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of inconsistency between belief and action on cognitive dissonance?
- A. Inconsistency always strengthens the original attitude.
 - B. People never change attitudes after acting.
 - C. Attitude change is greatest when external justification is modest.
 - D. Compare with a person who was strongly rewarded or forced to perform the same action.

9. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. Inconsistency always strengthens the original attitude.
 - B. Compare with a person who was strongly rewarded or forced to perform the same action.
 - C. People never change attitudes after acting.
 - D. A person may report a more favorable attitude after freely choosing a difficult action.
10. Which observation would be most inconsistent with the proposed explanation of cognitive dissonance?
- A. A person may report a more favorable attitude after freely choosing a difficult action.
 - B. The size and meaning of the incentive affect whether attitude change is expected.
 - C. Inconsistency always strengthens the original attitude.
 - D. Attitude change is greatest when external justification is modest.

Passage 3: Development

In a follow-up study of cognitive change, investigators compared two conditions that differed in the child's ability to use abstract rules. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: The child generalized the same reasoning operation across tasks with different surface content. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that developmental interpretations must distinguish the underlying reasoning ability from task familiarity. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

11. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of cognitive change from a competing mechanism?
- A. The child succeeds across several tasks requiring the same reasoning operation.
 - B. Development stops after infancy.
 - C. Every child reaches developmental milestones at exactly the same age.
 - D. Task demands never affect observed performance.
12. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
- A. Task demands never affect observed performance.
 - B. A child who can reason systematically about hypothetical situations shows more advanced abstract thinking.
 - C. Development stops after infancy.
 - D. Every child reaches developmental milestones at exactly the same age.
13. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of the child's ability to use abstract rules on cognitive change?
- A. The child succeeds across several tasks requiring the same reasoning operation.
 - B. Use tasks matched for vocabulary and working-memory demands.

- C. Development stops after infancy.
 - D. Every child reaches developmental milestones at exactly the same age.
14. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. Every child reaches developmental milestones at exactly the same age.
 - B. A child who can reason systematically about hypothetical situations shows more advanced abstract thinking.
 - C. Development stops after infancy.
 - D. Use tasks matched for vocabulary and working-memory demands.
15. Which observation would be most inconsistent with the proposed explanation of cognitive change?
- A. A child who can reason systematically about hypothetical situations shows more advanced abstract thinking.
 - B. Performance reflects both cognitive stage and the demands of the task.
 - C. Development stops after infancy.
 - D. The child succeeds across several tasks requiring the same reasoning operation.

Passage 4: Research methods

In a follow-up study of causal inference, investigators compared two conditions that differed in the proportion of participants assigned by lottery. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: Baseline characteristics were more similar across treatment groups before the intervention. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that chance assignment reduces systematic baseline differences between conditions. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

16. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of causal inference from a competing mechanism?
- A. Random assignment makes a comparison group unnecessary.
 - B. Baseline characteristics are more similar across lottery-assigned treatment groups before treatment.
 - C. Random assignment guarantees that a sample represents the target population.
 - D. Random assignment removes every source of measurement error.
17. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
- A. Random assignment removes every source of measurement error.
 - B. Random assignment makes a comparison group unnecessary.
 - C. As the lottery-assigned share increases, treatment groups become more comparable at baseline on average.
 - D. Random assignment guarantees that a sample represents the target population.

18. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of the proportion of participants assigned by lottery on causal inference?
- A. Compare lottery-assigned and investigator-assigned groups while keeping recruitment, treatment, and measurement procedures constant.
 - B. Random assignment guarantees that a sample represents the target population.
 - C. Random assignment removes every source of measurement error.
 - D. Baseline characteristics are more similar across lottery-assigned treatment groups before treatment.
19. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. Random assignment removes every source of measurement error.
 - B. As the lottery-assigned share increases, treatment groups become more comparable at baseline on average.
 - C. Compare lottery-assigned and investigator-assigned groups while keeping recruitment, treatment, and measurement procedures constant.
 - D. Random assignment guarantees that a sample represents the target population.
20. Which observation would be most inconsistent with the proposed explanation of causal inference?
- A. Random assignment guarantees that a sample represents the target population.
 - B. Baseline characteristics are more similar across lottery-assigned treatment groups before treatment.
 - C. As the lottery-assigned share increases, treatment groups become more comparable at baseline on average.
 - D. Random assignment supports causal inference but does not guarantee a representative sample.

Passage 5: Social stratification

In a follow-up study of resource access, investigators compared two conditions that differed in access to health-supporting resources. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: Outcome differences narrowed after transportation and clinic-access barriers were reduced. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that social position shapes exposure, opportunity, and ability to use resources. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

21. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of resource access from a competing mechanism?
- A. Structural conditions cannot affect individual behavior or health.
 - B. Outcome differences shrink after access barriers are reduced.
 - C. Health differences among groups are always random.
 - D. Access to resources has no relation to health outcomes.
22. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?

- A. Reducing access barriers can improve outcomes without changing individual motivation.
 - B. Health differences among groups are always random.
 - C. Access to resources has no relation to health outcomes.
 - D. Structural conditions cannot affect individual behavior or health.
23. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of access to health-supporting resources on resource access?
- A. Access to resources has no relation to health outcomes.
 - B. Outcome differences shrink after access barriers are reduced.
 - C. Compare otherwise similar neighborhoods with different transportation or clinic access.
 - D. Health differences among groups are always random.
24. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. Health differences among groups are always random.
 - B. Access to resources has no relation to health outcomes.
 - C. Reducing access barriers can improve outcomes without changing individual motivation.
 - D. Compare otherwise similar neighborhoods with different transportation or clinic access.

Passage 6: Social identity

In a follow-up study of group membership, investigators compared two conditions that differed in the salience of a group category. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: The same feedback produced a larger response when the relevant group category was made salient. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that identity links individual self-understanding to social groups and expectations. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

25. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of group membership from a competing mechanism?
- A. Stereotypes can affect only physical traits and not performance or judgment.
 - B. The same feedback produces different effects after category cues change.
 - C. Identity is unrelated to social context.
 - D. Groups never influence self-concept.
26. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
- A. Stereotypes can affect only physical traits and not performance or judgment.
 - B. Identity-relevant feedback has a larger effect when the category is salient.
 - C. Identity is unrelated to social context.
 - D. Groups never influence self-concept.

27. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of the salience of a group category on group membership?
- A. Groups never influence self-concept.
 - B. The same feedback produces different effects after category cues change.
 - C. Compare feedback with the same content but different category cues.
 - D. Identity is unrelated to social context.
28. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. Identity is unrelated to social context.
 - B. Compare feedback with the same content but different category cues.
 - C. Groups never influence self-concept.
 - D. Identity-relevant feedback has a larger effect when the category is salient.

Passage 7: Stress physiology

In a follow-up study of stress response, investigators compared two conditions that differed in perceived threat. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: Heart rate and stress-hormone concentration rose during the acute threat but returned toward baseline after the task ended. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that the stress response prepares the organism for action but has costs when prolonged. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

29. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of stress response from a competing mechanism?
- A. Physiological measures rise even when movement is matched.
 - B. Stress responses require no physiological change.
 - C. The sympathetic system only reduces arousal.
 - D. All stress is beneficial regardless of duration or intensity.
30. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
- A. Heart rate and circulating stress hormones rise during an acute threat.
 - B. Stress responses require no physiological change.
 - C. The sympathetic system only reduces arousal.
 - D. All stress is beneficial regardless of duration or intensity.
31. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of perceived threat on stress response?
- A. Compare with a neutral task matched for movement and duration.
 - B. Stress responses require no physiological change.
 - C. The sympathetic system only reduces arousal.
 - D. Physiological measures rise even when movement is matched.

32. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. Heart rate and circulating stress hormones rise during an acute threat.
 - B. Stress responses require no physiological change.
 - C. Compare with a neutral task matched for movement and duration.
 - D. The sympathetic system only reduces arousal.

Passage 8: Memory

In a follow-up study of encoding, investigators compared two conditions that differed in meaningful organization of information. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: Participants who organized the list recalled more items than participants given the same study time without organization instructions. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that elaboration and organization create more routes for later retrieval. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

33. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of encoding from a competing mechanism?
- A. Retrieval is unrelated to the way information was encoded.
 - B. Performance improves when the test provides matching organizational cues.
 - C. Memory is a perfect recording of every experience.
 - D. Organizing information always prevents later recall.
34. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
- A. Memory is a perfect recording of every experience.
 - B. Organizing information always prevents later recall.
 - C. Retrieval is unrelated to the way information was encoded.
 - D. Participants who group related items recall more than participants who study the same items randomly.
35. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of meaningful organization of information on encoding?
- A. Performance improves when the test provides matching organizational cues.
 - B. Keep study time and list length constant while changing organization instructions.
 - C. Memory is a perfect recording of every experience.
 - D. Organizing information always prevents later recall.
36. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. Participants who group related items recall more than participants who study the same items randomly.

- B. Keep study time and list length constant while changing organization instructions.
- C. Memory is a perfect recording of every experience.
- D. Organizing information always prevents later recall.

Passage 9: Learning

In a follow-up study of reinforcement, investigators compared two conditions that differed in the consequence following a behavior. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: The target response became more frequent only when the reinforcing consequence followed that response. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that operant learning changes behavior according to its consequences. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

37. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of reinforcement from a competing mechanism?
- A. Reinforcement always decreases the behavior it follows.
 - B. Consequences cannot affect the probability of a future behavior.
 - C. Classical and operant conditioning use identical learning procedures.
 - D. Behavior changes only when the consequence follows the target response.
38. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
- A. The behavior increases when the reinforcing consequence is reliably delivered.
 - B. Reinforcement always decreases the behavior it follows.
 - C. Consequences cannot affect the probability of a future behavior.
 - D. Classical and operant conditioning use identical learning procedures.
39. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of the consequence following a behavior on reinforcement?
- A. Reinforcement always decreases the behavior it follows.
 - B. Consequences cannot affect the probability of a future behavior.
 - C. Behavior changes only when the consequence follows the target response.
 - D. Compare with a group receiving the same exposure but no contingent consequence.
40. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. Reinforcement always decreases the behavior it follows.
 - B. Compare with a group receiving the same exposure but no contingent consequence.
 - C. The behavior increases when the reinforcing consequence is reliably delivered.
 - D. Consequences cannot affect the probability of a future behavior.

Passage 10: Sensation and perception

In a follow-up study of sensory processing, investigators compared two conditions that differed in stimulus intensity. They preregistered the expected direction and repeated the measurement with an independent batch of samples. The follow-up was designed to separate the proposed mechanism from a tempting alternative explanation. Data summary: Detection improved as intensity increased, even though the instructions and environment were unchanged. The researchers also monitored the comparison variable described in the protocol. The result supports the interpretation that sensation begins with detection, while perception includes interpretation shaped by context. A replication supports the mechanism only within the tested range and does not remove the need to identify possible confounders.

41. Which new result would most clearly distinguish the proposed explanation of sensory processing from a competing mechanism?
- A. Every stimulus is detected with certainty once it is present.
 - B. Expectations cannot influence interpretation of ambiguous input.
 - C. Detection improves as intensity rises while instructions remain constant.
 - D. Perception is independent of neural processing.
42. The investigators repeat the study after the focal variable changes in the direction described by the passage. Which immediate outcome should be measured first?
- A. Expectations cannot influence interpretation of ambiguous input.
 - B. A stimulus near threshold is detected less consistently than a clearly stronger stimulus.
 - C. Perception is independent of neural processing.
 - D. Every stimulus is detected with certainty once it is present.
43. Which protocol would best isolate the effect of stimulus intensity on sensory processing?
- A. Detection improves as intensity rises while instructions remain constant.
 - B. Use the same participant and environment while varying only intensity.
 - C. Perception is independent of neural processing.
 - D. Every stimulus is detected with certainty once it is present.
44. Which prediction follows when the focal variable moves in the same direction described in the passage and the mechanism operates within the tested range?
- A. A stimulus near threshold is detected less consistently than a clearly stronger stimulus.
 - B. Every stimulus is detected with certainty once it is present.
 - C. Perception is independent of neural processing.
 - D. Use the same participant and environment while varying only intensity.
45. The minimum intensity of a stimulus that can be detected reliably is the:
- A. Role conflict
 - B. Absolute threshold
 - C. Difference threshold
 - D. Group norm

46. A behavior becomes more frequent because a consequence is presented after it. This is:
- A. Positive reinforcement
 - B. Negative punishment
 - C. Classical extinction
 - D. Social stratification
47. Remembering a phone number by grouping digits is an example of:
- A. Groupthink
 - B. Habituation only
 - C. Chunking
 - D. Projection
48. The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis is most directly associated with:
- A. Visual accommodation only
 - B. Language syntax only
 - C. Social stratification only
 - D. The endocrine stress response
49. Favoring one's own group over an outside group is called:
- A. Operant extinction
 - B. Signal detection
 - C. In-group bias
 - D. The fundamental attribution error
50. A sociologist studying unequal access to income, housing, and education is examining:
- A. Absolute threshold
 - B. Social stratification
 - C. Classical conditioning
 - D. Working memory
51. Random assignment primarily improves a study's:
- A. Internal validity for causal comparison
 - B. Representativeness of the sample
 - C. Measurement reliability automatically
 - D. Population size
52. Reasoning about hypothetical situations is most characteristic of Piaget's:

- A. Sensorimotor stage only
 - B. Preoperational egocentrism only
 - C. Attachment classification
 - D. Formal operational stage
53. Taking credit for success but blaming circumstances for failure illustrates:
- A. Classical conditioning
 - B. Social facilitation
 - C. Self-serving bias
 - D. Group polarization
54. A group suppresses dissent to preserve apparent unanimity. This is:
- A. Groupthink
 - B. Social loafing
 - C. Signal detection
 - D. Negative reinforcement
55. A measure can be reliable without being valid when it:
- A. Uses a random sample
 - B. Contains no observable variables
 - C. Produces consistent scores but misses the intended construct
 - D. Measures the intended construct perfectly every time
56. A person changes a belief after freely performing an action that conflicts with it. This may reflect:
- A. Cognitive dissonance
 - B. The absolute threshold
 - C. Social loafing
 - D. Sensory adaptation
57. A sample drawn from volunteers at one clinic is most likely limited in:
- A. The existence of a dependent variable
 - B. The possibility of measurement
 - C. Generalizability
 - D. Random assignment by definition
58. A person who learns a behavior by watching a model demonstrates:
- A. Classical extinction only

- B. Social stratification
- C. A placebo effect by definition
- D. Observational learning

59. A social determinant of health is best illustrated by:

- A. Transportation access affecting whether people can reach preventive care
- B. A chromosome changing codon sequence
- C. A reflex arc alone
- D. A lens changing focal length

Answer Key and Explanations

1. **Answer: D.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: norms operate through shared expectations and social consequences.
2. **Answer: C.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: norms operate through shared expectations and social consequences.
3. **Answer: B.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring norms.
4. **Answer: A.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because norms operate through shared expectations and social consequences.
5. **Answer: C.** The observation is inconsistent because it conflicts with the mechanism used to explain norms: norms operate through shared expectations and social consequences.
6. **Answer: D.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: insufficient external justification can make internal attitude adjustment more likely.
7. **Answer: C.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: insufficient external justification can make internal attitude adjustment more likely.
8. **Answer: D.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring cognitive dissonance.
9. **Answer: D.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because insufficient external justification can make internal attitude adjustment more likely.
10. **Answer: C.** The observation is inconsistent because it conflicts with the mechanism used to explain cognitive dissonance: insufficient external justification can make internal attitude adjustment more likely.
11. **Answer: A.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: developmental interpretations must distinguish the underlying reasoning ability from task familiarity.
12. **Answer: B.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: developmental interpretations must distinguish the underlying reasoning ability from task familiarity.
13. **Answer: B.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring cognitive change.
14. **Answer: B.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because developmental interpretations must distinguish the underlying reasoning ability from task familiarity.
15. **Answer: C.** The observation is inconsistent because it conflicts with the mechanism used to explain cognitive change: developmental interpretations must distinguish the underlying reasoning ability from task familiarity.

16. **Answer: B.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: chance assignment reduces systematic baseline differences between conditions.
17. **Answer: C.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: chance assignment reduces systematic baseline differences between conditions.
18. **Answer: A.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring causal inference.
19. **Answer: B.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because chance assignment reduces systematic baseline differences between conditions.
20. **Answer: A.** The observation is inconsistent because it conflicts with the mechanism used to explain causal inference: chance assignment reduces systematic baseline differences between conditions.
21. **Answer: B.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: social position shapes exposure, opportunity, and ability to use resources.
22. **Answer: A.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: social position shapes exposure, opportunity, and ability to use resources.
23. **Answer: C.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring resource access.
24. **Answer: C.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because social position shapes exposure, opportunity, and ability to use resources.
25. **Answer: B.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: identity links individual self-understanding to social groups and expectations.
26. **Answer: B.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: identity links individual self-understanding to social groups and expectations.
27. **Answer: C.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring group membership.
28. **Answer: D.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because identity links individual self-understanding to social groups and expectations.
29. **Answer: A.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: the stress response prepares the organism for action but has costs when prolonged.
30. **Answer: A.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: the stress response prepares the organism for action but has costs when prolonged.

- 31. Answer: A.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring stress response.
- 32. Answer: A.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because the stress response prepares the organism for action but has costs when prolonged.
- 33. Answer: B.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: elaboration and organization create more routes for later retrieval.
- 34. Answer: D.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: elaboration and organization create more routes for later retrieval.
- 35. Answer: B.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring encoding.
- 36. Answer: A.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because elaboration and organization create more routes for later retrieval.
- 37. Answer: D.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: operant learning changes behavior according to its consequences.
- 38. Answer: A.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: operant learning changes behavior according to its consequences.
- 39. Answer: D.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring reinforcement.
- 40. Answer: C.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because operant learning changes behavior according to its consequences.
- 41. Answer: C.** The distinguishing result should change in the direction predicted by the mechanism while addressing the alternative: sensation begins with detection, while perception includes interpretation shaped by context.
- 42. Answer: B.** The immediate outcome should match the stated prediction and mechanism: sensation begins with detection, while perception includes interpretation shaped by context.
- 43. Answer: B.** A valid protocol holds the relevant competing variables steady while measuring sensory processing.
- 44. Answer: A.** The prediction is limited to the tested range and follows because sensation begins with detection, while perception includes interpretation shaped by context.
- 45. Answer: B.** The absolute threshold is the minimum stimulus intensity detected at a specified level of reliability.
- 46. Answer: A.** Positive reinforcement increases behavior through presentation of a reinforcing consequence.

- 47. Answer: C.** Chunking organizes individual units into meaningful groups that working memory can handle more efficiently.
- 48. Answer: D.** The HPA axis coordinates endocrine responses to prolonged or perceived stress.
- 49. Answer: C.** In-group bias is preferential evaluation or treatment of members of one's own group.
- 50. Answer: B.** Social stratification refers to durable, structured inequality among groups.
- 51. Answer: A.** Chance assignment balances preexisting participant differences on average, supporting causal inference.
- 52. Answer: D.** Formal operational reasoning includes systematic thought about abstract and hypothetical situations.
- 53. Answer: C.** Self-serving bias attributes positive outcomes to the self and negative outcomes to external factors.
- 54. Answer: A.** Groupthink involves pressure toward consensus that can reduce critical evaluation of alternatives.
- 55. Answer: C.** Reliability concerns consistency; validity concerns whether the interpretation is supported.
- 56. Answer: A.** Cognitive dissonance is discomfort from inconsistency among beliefs, actions, or self-image.
- 57. Answer: C.** A narrow volunteer sample may not represent the broader target population.
- 58. Answer: D.** Observational learning occurs through watching and encoding another person's behavior and consequences.
- 59. Answer: A.** Social determinants include conditions and resources that shape exposure and access to care.