Which was the real Bernard Madoff? Was he the powerful, charismatic Wall Street businessman? Or was he the self-conscious, detail-oriented recluse? And perhaps most important, were there any signs that Madoff was secretly operating a fraudulent investment scheme that ultimately cheated thousands of people out of billions of dollars?

Many people, like Madoff, have different sides to their personalities, appearing one way to some and quite differently to others. Determining who a person truly is falls to a branch of psychology that seeks to understand the characteristic ways people behave—personality psychology.

**Personality** is the pattern of enduring characteristics that produce consistency and individuality in a given person. Personality encompasses the behaviors that make each of us unique and that differentiate us from others. It is also personality that leads us to act consistently in different situations and over extended periods of time.

We will consider a number of approaches to personality and the individual differences that distinguish one person from another. We begin with psychodynamic theories of personality, which emphasize the importance of the unconscious. Next, we consider approaches that concentrate on identifying the most fundamental personality traits; theories that view personality as a set of learned behaviors; biological and evolutionary perspectives on personality; and approaches, known as humanistic theories, that highlight the uniquely human aspects of personality. We then focus on how personality is measured and how personality tests can be used. Finally, we will end our discussion by looking more closely at one central individual difference: intelligence.
The college student was intent on making a good first impression on an attractive woman he had spotted across a crowded room at a party. As he walked toward her, he mulled over a line he had heard in an old movie the night before: “I don’t believe we’ve been properly introduced yet.” To his horror, what came out was a bit different. After threading his way through the crowded room, he finally reached the woman and blurted out, “I don’t believe we’ve been properly seduced yet.”

Although this student’s error may seem to be merely an embarrassing slip of the tongue, according to some personality theorists such a mistake is not an error at all. Instead, psychodynamic personality theorists might argue that the error illustrates one way in which behavior is triggered by inner forces that are beyond our awareness. These hidden drives, shaped by childhood experiences, play an important role in energizing and directing everyday behavior.

Psychodynamic approaches to personality are based on the idea that personality is motivated by inner forces and conflicts about which people have little awareness and over which they have no control. The most important pioneer of the psychodynamic approach was Sigmund Freud. A number of Freud’s followers, including Carl Jung, Karen Horney, and Alfred Adler, refined Freud’s theory and developed their own psychodynamic approaches.

**LO 29.1 Freud’s Psychoanalytic Theory: Mapping the Unconscious Mind**

Sigmund Freud, an Austrian physician, developed psychoanalytic theory in the early 1900s. According to Freud’s theory, conscious experience is only a small part of our psychological makeup and experience. He argued that much
of our behavior is motivated by the **unconscious**, a part of the personality that contains the memories, knowledge, beliefs, feelings, urges, drives, and instincts of which the individual is not aware.

Like the unseen mass of a floating iceberg, the contents of the unconscious far surpass in quantity the information in our conscious awareness. Freud maintained that to understand personality, it is necessary to expose what is in the unconscious. But because the unconscious disguises the meaning of the material it holds, the content of the unconscious cannot be observed directly. It is therefore necessary to interpret clues to the unconscious—slips of the tongue, fantasies, and dreams—to understand the unconscious processes that direct behavior. A slip of the tongue such as the one quoted earlier (sometimes termed a *Freudian slip*) may be interpreted as revealing the speaker’s unconscious sexual desires.

To Freud, much of our personality is determined by our unconscious. Some of the unconscious is made up of the *preconscious*, which contains material that is not threatening and is easily brought to mind, such as the knowledge that $2 + 2 = 4$. But deeper in the unconscious are instinctual drives—the wishes, desires, demands, and needs that are hidden from conscious awareness because of the conflicts and pain they would cause if they were part of our everyday lives. The unconscious provides a “safe haven” for our recollections of threatening events.

### Structuring Personality: Id, Ego, and Superego

To describe the structure of personality, Freud developed a comprehensive theory that held that personality consists of three separate but interacting components: the *id*, the *ego*, and the *superego*. Freud suggested that the three structures can be diagrammed to show how they relate to the conscious and the unconscious (see Figure 1).

Although the three components of personality described by Freud may appear to be actual physical structures in the nervous system, they are not. Instead, they represent abstract conceptions of a general *model* of personality that describes the interaction of forces that motivate behavior.

If personality consisted only of primitive, instinctual cravings and longings, it would have just one component: the *id*. The *id* is the raw, unorganized, inborn part of personality. From the time of birth, the id attempts to reduce tension created by primitive drives related to hunger, sex, aggression, and irrational impulses. Those drives are fueled by “psychic energy,” which we can think of as a limitless energy source constantly putting pressure on the various parts of the personality.

The id operates according to the *pleasure principle*, in which the goal is the immediate reduction of tension and the maximization of satisfaction. However, in most cases reality prevents the fulfillment of the demands of the pleasure principle: we cannot always eat when we are hungry, and we can discharge our sexual drives only when the time and place are appropriate. To account for this fact of life, Freud suggested a second component of personality, which he called the ego.

The *ego*, which begins to develop soon after birth, strives to balance the desires of the id and the realities of the objective, unconscious, preconscious, and conscious aspects of personality.

---

**Unconscious**  
A part of the personality that contains the memories, knowledge, beliefs, feelings, urges, drives, and instincts of which the individual is not aware.  

**Id**  
The raw, unorganized, inborn part of personality whose sole purpose is to reduce tension created by primitive drives related to hunger, sex, aggression, and irrational impulses.  

**Ego**  
The part of the personality that provides a buffer between the id and the outside world.

**Superego**  
The part of personality that contains the moral and ethical standards that society deems desirable.

---

**Figure 1**  
In Freud’s model of personality, there are three major components: the id, the ego, and the superego. As the iceberg analogy shows, only a small portion of personality is conscious. Why do you think that only the ego and superego have conscious components?
outside world. In contrast to the pleasure-seeking id, the ego operates according to the reality principle, in which instinctual energy is restrained to maintain the individual’s safety and to help integrate the person into society. In a sense, then, the ego is the “executive” of personality: it makes decisions, controls actions, and allows thinking and problem solving of a higher order than the id’s capabilities permit.

The superego, the final personality structure to develop in childhood, represents the rights and wrongs of society as taught and modeled by a person’s parents, teachers, and other significant individuals. The superego includes the conscience, which prevents us from behaving in a morally improper way by making us feel guilty if we do wrong. The superego helps us control impulses coming from the id, making our behavior less selfish and more virtuous.

Both the superego and the id are unrealistic in that they do not consider the practical realities imposed by society. The superego, if left to operate without restraint, would create perfectionists unable to make the compromises that life requires. An unrestrained id would create a primitive, pleasure-seeking, thoughtless individual seeking to fulfill every desire without delay. As a result, the ego must mediate between the demands of the superego and the demands of the id.

Freud also provided us with a view of how personality develops through a series of five psychosexual stages, during which children encounter conflicts between the demands of society and their own sexual urges (in which sexuality is more about experiencing pleasure and less about lust). According to Freud, failure to resolve the conflicts at a particular stage can result in fixations, conflicts or concerns that persist beyond the developmental period in which they first occur. Such conflicts may be due to having needs ignored or (conversely) being overindulged during the earlier period.

The sequence Freud proposed is noteworthy because it explains how experiences and difficulties during a particular childhood stage may predict specific characteristics in the adult personality. This theory is also unique in associating each stage with a major biological function, which Freud assumed to be the focus of pleasure in a given period. (see Figure 2 for a summary of the stages).

In the first psychosexual stage of development, called the oral stage, the baby’s mouth is the focal point of pleasure. During the first 12 to 18 months of life, children suck, eat, mouth, and bite anything that they can put into their mouths. To Freud, this behavior suggested that the mouth is the primary site of a kind of sexual pleasure, and that weaning (withdrawing the breast or bottle) represents the main conflict during the oral stage. If infants are either overindulged (perhaps by being fed every time they cry) or frustrated in their search for oral gratification, they may become fixated at this stage. For example, fixation might occur if an infant’s oral needs were constantly gratified immediately at the first sign of hunger, rather than if the infant learned that feeding takes place on a schedule because eating whenever an infant wants to eat is not always realistic. Fixation at the oral stage might produce an adult who was unusually interested in oral activities—eating, talking, smoking—or who showed symbolic sorts of oral interests such as being “bitingly” sarcastic or very gullible (“swallowing” anything).
From around age 12 to 18 months until 3 years of age—a period when the emphasis in Western cultures is on toilet training—a child enters the anal stage. At this point, the major source of pleasure changes from the mouth to the anal region, and children obtain considerable pleasure from both retention and expulsion of feces. If toilet training is particularly demanding, fixation might occur. Fixation during the anal stage might result in unusual rigidity, orderliness, punctuality—or extreme disorderliness or sloppiness—in adulthood.

At about age 3, the phallic stage begins. At this point, there is another major shift in the child’s primary source of pleasure. Now interest focuses on the genitals and the pleasures derived from fondling them. During this stage, the child must also negotiate one of the most important hurdles of personality development: the Oedipal conflict. According to Freudian theory, as children focus attention on their genitals, the differences between male and female anatomy become more apparent. Furthermore, according to Freud, at this time the male unconsciously begins to develop a sexual interest in his mother, starts to see his father as a rival, and harbors a wish to kill his father—as Oedipus did in the ancient Greek tragedy. But because he views his father as too powerful, he develops a fear that his father may retaliate drastically by removing the source of the threat: the son’s penis. The fear of losing one’s penis leads to castration anxiety, which ultimately becomes so powerful that the child represses his desires for his mother and identifies with his father. Identification is the process of wanting to be like another person as much as possible, imitating that person’s behavior and adopting similar beliefs and values. By identifying with his father, a son seeks to obtain a woman like his unattainable mother.

For girls, the process is different. Freud reasoned that girls begin to experience sexual arousal toward their fathers and begin to experience penis envy. They wish they had the anatomical part that, at least to Freud, seemed most clearly “missing.”

### ANAL STAGE
According to Freud, a stage from age 12 to 18 months to 3 years of age, in which a child’s pleasure is centered on the anus.

### PHALIC STAGE
According to Freud, a period beginning around age 3 during which a child’s pleasure focuses on the genitals.

### OEDIPAL CONFLICT
A child’s sexual interest in his or her opposite-sex parent, typically resolved through identification with the same-sex parent.

### IDENTIFICATION
The process of wanting to be like another person as much as possible, imitating that person’s behavior and adopting similar beliefs and values.

From around age 12 to 18 months until 3 years of age—a period when the emphasis in Western cultures is on toilet training—a child enters the anal stage. At this point, the major source of pleasure changes from the mouth to the anal region, and children obtain considerable pleasure from both retention and expulsion of feces. If toilet training is particularly demanding, fixation might occur. Fixation during the anal stage might result in unusual rigidity, orderliness, punctuality—or extreme disorderliness or sloppiness—in adulthood.

At about age 3, the phallic stage begins. At this point, there is another major shift in the child’s primary source of pleasure. Now interest focuses on the genitals and the pleasures derived from fondling them. During this stage, the child must also negotiate one of the most important hurdles of personality development: the Oedipal conflict. According to Freudian theory, as children focus attention on their genitals, the differences between male and female anatomy become more apparent. Furthermore, according to Freud, at this time the male unconsciously begins to develop a sexual interest in his mother, starts to see his father as a rival, and harbors a wish to kill his father—as Oedipus did in the ancient Greek tragedy. But because he views his father as too powerful, he develops a fear that his father may retaliate drastically by removing the source of the threat: the son’s penis. The fear of losing one’s penis leads to castration anxiety, which ultimately becomes so powerful that the child represses his desires for his mother and identifies with his father. Identification is the process of wanting to be like another person as much as possible, imitating that person’s behavior and adopting similar beliefs and values. By identifying with his father, a son seeks to obtain a woman like his unattainable mother.

For girls, the process is different. Freud reasoned that girls begin to experience sexual arousal toward their fathers and begin to experience penis envy. They wish they had the anatomical part that, at least to Freud, seemed most clearly “missing.”

### ANAL STAGE
According to Freud, a stage from age 12 to 18 months to 3 years of age, in which a child’s pleasure is centered on the anus.

### PHALIC STAGE
According to Freud, a period beginning around age 3 during which a child’s pleasure focuses on the genitals.

### OEDIPAL CONFLICT
A child’s sexual interest in his or her opposite-sex parent, typically resolved through identification with the same-sex parent.

### IDENTIFICATION
The process of wanting to be like another person as much as possible, imitating that person’s behavior and adopting similar beliefs and values.
in girls. Blaming their mothers for their lack of a penis, girls come to believe that their mothers are responsible for their “castration.” (This aspect of Freud’s theory later provoked accusations that he considered women to be inferior to men.) Like males, though, they find that they can resolve such unacceptable feelings by identifying with the same-sex parent, behaving like her and adopting her attitudes and values. In this way, a girl’s identification with her mother is completed.

At this point, the Oedipal conflict is said to be resolved, and Freudian theory assumes that both males and females move on to the next stage of development. If difficulties arise during this period, however, all sorts of problems are thought to occur, including improper sex-role behavior and the failure to develop a conscience.

After the resolution of the Oedipal conflict, typically around age 5 or 6, children move into the latency period, which lasts until puberty. During this period, sexual interests become dormant, even in the unconscious. Then, during adolescence, sexual feelings reemerge, which marks the start of the final period, the genital stage, which extends until death. The focus during the genital stage is on mature, adult sexuality, which Freud defined as sexual intercourse.

Defense Mechanisms

Freud’s efforts to describe and theorize about the underlying dynamics of personality and its development were motivated by very practical problems that his patients faced in dealing with anxiety, an intense, negative emotional experience. According to Freud, anxiety is a danger signal to the ego. Although anxiety can arise from realistic fears—such as seeing a poisonous snake about to strike—it can also occur in the form of neurotic anxiety, in which irrational impulses emanating from the id threaten to burst through and become uncontrollable.

Because anxiety is obviously unpleasant, Freud believed that people develop a range of defense mechanisms to deal with it. Defense mechanisms are unconscious strategies that people use to reduce anxiety by concealing its source from themselves and others.

The primary defense mechanism is repression, in which unacceptable or unpleasant id impulses are pushed back into the unconscious. Repression is the most direct method of dealing with anxiety; instead of handling an anxiety-producing impulse on a conscious level, we simply ignore it. For example, a college student who feels hatred for her mother may repress those personally and socially unacceptable feelings. The feelings remain lodged within the unconscious, because acknowledging them would provoke anxiety. Similarly, memories of childhood abuse may be repressed.

Freud, and later his daughter Anna Freud (who became a well-known psychoanalyst), formulated an extensive list of potential defense mechanisms. The major defense mechanisms are summarized in Figure 3 (Cramer, 2007; Gödde, 2010; Yu, 2011).

All of us employ defense mechanisms to some degree, according to Freudian theory, and they can serve a useful purpose by protecting us from unpleasant
information. Yet some people fall prey to them to such an extent that they must constantly direct a large amount of psychic energy toward hiding and rechanneling unacceptable impulses. When this occurs, everyday living becomes difficult. In such cases, the result is a mental disorder produced by anxiety—what Freud called “neurosis” (psychologists rarely use this term today, although it endures in everyday conversation).

**Evaluating Freud’s Legacy**

Freud’s theory has had a significant impact on the field of psychology—and even more broadly on Western philosophy and literature. Many people have accepted the ideas of the unconscious, defense mechanisms, and childhood roots of adult psychological difficulties.

However, many contemporary personality psychologists have leveled significant criticisms against psychoanalytic theory. Among the most important is the lack of compelling scientific data to support it. Although individual case studies seem supportive, we lack conclusive evidence that shows the personality is structured and operates along the lines Freud laid out. The lack of evidence is due, in part, to the fact that Freud’s conception of personality is built on unobservable abstract concepts. Moreover, it is not clear that the stages of personality that Freud laid out provide an accurate description of personality development. We also know now that important changes in personality can occur in adolescence and adulthood—something that Freud did not believe happened. Instead, he argued that personality largely is set by adolescence.

**Figure 3**  According to Freud, people are able to use a wide range of defense mechanisms to cope with anxieties.

**STUDY ALERT**

Use Figure 3 to remember the most common defense mechanisms (unconscious strategies used to reduce anxiety by concealing its source from ourselves and others).
The vague nature of Freud’s theory also makes it difficult to predict how certain developmental difficulties will be displayed in an adult. For instance, if a person is fixated at the anal stage, according to Freud, he or she may be unusually messy—or unusually neat. Freud’s theory offers no way to predict how the difficulty will be exhibited. Furthermore, Freud can be faulted for seeming to view women as inferior to men, because he argued that women have weaker superegos than men do and in some ways unconsciously yearn to be men (the concept of penis envy).

Finally, Freud made his observations and derived his theory from a limited population. His theory was based almost entirely on upper-class Austrian women living in the strict, puritanical era of the early 1900s who had come to him seeking treatment for psychological and physical problems. How far one can generalize beyond this population is a matter of considerable debate.

Still, Freud generated an important method of treating psychological disturbances, called psychoanalysis. As we will see when we discuss treatment approaches to psychological disorders, psychoanalysis remains in use today (Messer & McWilliams, 2003; Heller, 2005; Riolo, 2007; Gilman, 2010).

Moreover, Freud’s emphasis on the unconscious has been partially supported by current research on dreams and implicit memory. As we first noted when we discussed dreaming, advances in neuroscience are consistent with some of Freud’s arguments. Furthermore, cognitive and social psychologists have found evidence that unconscious processes help us think about and evaluate our world, set goals, and choose a course of action (Derryberry, 2006; Litowitz, 2007).

LO 29.2 The Neo-Freudian Psychoanalysts: Building on Freud

Freud laid the foundation for important work done by a series of successors who were trained in traditional Freudian theory but later rejected some of its major points. These theorists are known as neo-Freudian psychoanalysts. The neo-Freudians placed greater emphasis than Freud on the functions of the ego, suggesting that it has more control than the id over day-to-day activities. They focused more on the social environment and minimized the importance of sex as a driving force in people’s lives. They also paid greater attention to the effects of society and culture on personality development.

Jung’s Collective Unconscious

One of the most influential neo-Freudians, Carl Jung (pronounced “yoong”), rejected Freud’s view of the primary importance of unconscious sexual urges. Instead, he looked at the primitive urges of the unconscious more positively, arguing that they represented a more general, and positive, life force that encompasses an inborn drive motivating creativity and more positive resolution of conflict (Cassells, 2007; Stein & Jones, 2010; Finn, 2011).

Jung suggested that we have a universal collective unconscious, a common set of ideas, feelings, images, and symbols that we inherit from our relatives, the whole human race, and even nonhuman animal ancestors from the distant past. This collective unconscious is shared by everyone and is displayed in behavior that is common across diverse cultures—such as love of mother, belief in a supreme being, and even behavior as specific as fear of snakes (Oehman & Mineka, 2003; Drob, 2005; Hauke, 2006).
Jung went on to propose that the collective unconscious contains **archetypes**, universal symbolic representations of a particular person, object, or experience. For instance, a mother archetype, which contains reflections of our ancestors’ relationships with mother figures, is suggested by the prevalence of mothers in art, religion, literature, and mythology. (Think of the Virgin Mary, Earth Mother, wicked stepmothers in fairy tales, Mother’s Day, and so forth!) (Jung, 1961; Bair, 2003; Smetana, 2007).

To Jung, archetypes play an important role in determining our day-to-day reactions, attitudes, and values. For example, Jung might explain the popularity of the *Star Wars* movies as being due to their use of broad archetypes of good (Luke Skywalker) and evil (Darth Vader).

Although no reliable research evidence confirms the existence of the collective unconscious—and even Jung acknowledged that such evidence would be difficult to produce—Jung’s theory has had significant influence in areas beyond psychology. For example, personality types derived from Jung’s personality approach form the basis for the Myers-Briggs personality test, which is widely used in business and industry (Gladwell, 2004; Bayne, 2005; Furnham & Crump, 2005).

**Horney’s Neo-Freudian Perspective**

Karen Horney (pronounced “HORN-eye”) was one of the earliest psychologists to champion women’s issues and is sometimes called the first feminist psychologist. Horney suggested that personality develops in the context of social relationships and depends particularly on the relationship between parents and child and how well the child’s needs are met. She rejected Freud’s suggestion that women have penis envy, asserting that what women envy most in men is not their anatomy but the independence, success, and freedom that women often are denied (Horney, 1937; Smith, 2007; Paul, 2010).

Horney was also one of the first to stress the importance of cultural factors in the determination of personality. For example, she suggested that society’s rigid gender roles for women lead them to experience ambivalence about success, fearing that they will lose their friends. Her conceptualizations, developed in the 1930s and 1940s, laid the groundwork for many of the central ideas of feminism that emerged decades later (Eckardt, 2005; Jones, 2006).

In the *Harry Potter* books and movies, Voldemort may represent the archetype of evil. Which character represents the archetype of evil in the *Star Wars* movies?
Adler and the Other Neo-Freudians

Alfred Adler, another important neo-Freudian psychoanalyst, also considered Freudian theory’s emphasis on sexual needs misplaced. Instead, Adler proposed that the primary human motivation is a striving for superiority, not in terms of superiority over others but in a quest for self-improvement and perfection.

Adler used the term inferiority complex to describe situations in which adults have not been able to overcome the feelings of inferiority they developed as children, when they were small and limited in their knowledge about the world. Early social relationships with parents have an important effect on children’s ability to outgrow feelings of personal inferiority and instead to orient themselves toward attaining more socially useful goals, such as improving society.

Other neo-Freudians include Erik Erikson, whose theory of psychosocial development we discussed in earlier modules, and Freud’s daughter, Anna Freud. Like Adler and Horney, they focused less than Freud on inborn sexual and aggressive drives and more on the social and cultural factors behind personality.

Inferiority complex According to Adler, a problem affecting adults who have not been able to overcome the feelings of inferiority that they developed as children, when they were small and limited in their knowledge about the world.

Karen Horney was one of the earliest proponents of women’s issues.

RECAP

Explain Freud’s psychoanalytic theory.

- Personality is the pattern of enduring characteristics that produce consistency and individuality in a given person. (p. 349)
- According to psychodynamic explanations of personality, much behavior is caused by parts of personality that are found in the unconscious and of which we are unaware. (p. 350)
- Freud’s psychoanalytic theory, one of the psychodynamic approaches, suggests that personality is composed of the id, the ego, and the superego. The id is the unorganized, inborn part of personality whose purpose is to immediately reduce tensions relating to hunger, sex, aggression, and other primitive impulses. The ego restrains instinctual energy to maintain the safety of the individual and to help the person be a member of society. The superego represents the rights and wrongs of society and includes the conscience. (p. 350)
- Freud’s psychoanalytic theory suggests that personality develops through a series of psychosexual stages (oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital), each of which is associated with a primary biological function. (p. 352)
- Defense mechanisms, according to Freudian theory, are unconscious strategies with which people reduce anxieties relating to impulses from the id. (p. 354)
- Freud’s psychoanalytic theory has provoked a number of criticisms, including a lack of supportive scientific data, the theory’s inadequacy in making predictions, and its reliance on a highly restricted population. On the other hand, recent neuroscience research has offered some support for the concept of the unconscious. (p. 355)

Discuss Neo-Freudian psychoanalysts.

- Neo-Freudian psychoanalytic theorists built on Freud’s work, although they placed greater emphasis on the role of the ego and paid more attention to the role of social factors in determining behavior. (p. 356)
EVALUATE

1. ______ approaches state that behavior is motivated primarily by unconscious forces.

2. Match each section of the personality (according to Freud) with its description:
   1. Ego
   a. Determines right from wrong on the basis of cultural standards.
   2. Id
   b. Operates according to the “reality principle”; energy is redirected to integrate the person into society.
   3. Superego
   c. Seeks to reduce tension brought on by primitive drives.

3. Which of the following represents the proper order of personality development, according to Freud?
   a. Oral, phallic, latency, anal, genital
   b. Anal, oral, phallic, genital, latency
   c. Oral, anal, phallic, latency, genital
   d. Latency, phallic, anal, genital, oral

4. ______ ______ is the term Freud used to describe unconscious strategies used to reduce anxiety.

RETHINK

Can you think of ways in which Freud’s theories of unconscious motivations are commonly used in popular culture? How accurately do you think such popular uses of Freudian theories reflect Freud’s ideas?

Answers to Evaluate Questions: 1. psychodynamic; 2. 1-b, 2-c, 3-a; 4. defense mechanism

KEY TERMS

Personality p. 349
Psychodynamic approaches to personality p. 350
Psychoanalytic theory p. 350
Unconscious p. 351
Id p. 351
Ego p. 351
Superego p. 352
Psychosexual stages p. 352
Fixations p. 352
Oral stage p. 352
Anal stage p. 353
Phallic stage p. 353
Oedipal conflict p. 353
Identification p. 353
Latency period p. 354
Genital stage p. 354
Defense mechanisms p. 354
Repression p. 354
Neo-Freudian psychoanalysts p. 356
Collective unconscious p. 356
Archetypes p. 357
Inferiority complex p. 358
“Tell me about Nelson,” said Johnetta.
“Oh, he’s just terrific. He’s the friendliest guy I know—goes out of his way to be nice to everyone. He hardly ever gets mad. He’s just so even-tempered, no matter what’s happening. And he’s really smart, too. About the only thing I don’t like is that he’s always in such a hurry to get things done. He seems to have boundless energy, much more than I have.”

“He sounds great to me, especially in comparison to Rico,” replied Johnetta. “He is so self-centered and arrogant that it drives me crazy. I sometimes wonder why I ever started going out with him.”


The preceding exchange is made up of a series of trait characterizations of the speakers’ friends. In fact, much of our own understanding of others’ behavior is based on the premise that people possess certain traits that are consistent across different situations. For example, we generally assume that if someone is outgoing and sociable in one situation, he or she is outgoing and sociable in other situations (Gilbert et al., 1992; Gilbert, Miller, & Ross, 1998; Mischel, 2004).

Dissatisfaction with the emphasis in psychoanalytic theory on unconscious—and difficult to demonstrate—processes in explaining a person’s behavior led to
the development of alternative approaches to personality, including a number of trait-based approaches. Other theories reflect established psychological perspectives, such as learning theory, biological and evolutionary approaches, and the humanistic approach.

**LO 30.1 Trait Approaches: Placing Labels on Personality**

If someone asked you to characterize another person—like Johnetta and her friend—you would probably come up with a list of that individual’s personal qualities, as you see them. But how would you know which of those qualities are most important to an understanding of that person’s behavior?

Personality psychologists have asked similar questions. To answer them, they have developed a model of personality known as trait theory. **Trait theory** seeks to explain, in a straightforward way, the consistencies in individuals’ behavior. **Traits** are consistent personality characteristics and behaviors displayed in different situations.

Trait theorists do not assume that some people have a trait and others do not; rather, they propose that all people possess certain traits, but the degree to which a particular trait applies to a specific person varies and can be quantified. For instance, you may be relatively friendly, whereas I may be relatively unfriendly. But we both have a “friendliness” trait, although your degree of “friendliness” is higher than mine. The major challenge for trait theorists taking this approach has been to identify the specific primary traits necessary to describe personality. As we shall see, different theorists have come up with surprisingly different sets of traits.

**Eysenck’s Approach: The Factors of Personality**

Attempts to identify primary personality traits have centered on a statistical technique known as factor analysis. **Factor analysis** is a statistical method of identifying associations among a large number of variables to reveal more general patterns. For example, a personality researcher might administer a questionnaire to many participants that asks them to describe themselves by referring to an extensive list of traits. By statistically combining responses and computing which traits are associated with one another in the same person, a researcher can identify the most fundamental patterns or combinations of traits—called **factors**—that underlie participants’ responses.

Using factor analysis, personality psychologist Raymond Cattell (1965) suggested that 16 pairs of **source traits** represent the basic dimensions of personality. Using those source traits, he developed the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, or 16 PF, a measure that provides scores for each of the source traits (Cattell, Cattell, & Cattell, 1993, 2000).

Another trait theorist, psychologist Hans Eysenck (1995), used factor analysis to identify patterns of traits and found that personality could best be described in terms of just three major dimensions: extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. The extraversion dimension relates to the degree of sociability, whereas the neurotic dimension encompasses emotional stability. Finally, psychoticism refers to the degree to which reality is distorted. By evaluating people along these three dimensions, Eysenck was able to predict behavior accurately in a variety of situations. Figure 1 on page 362 lists specific traits associated with each of the dimensions.
The Big Five Personality Traits

For the last two decades, the most influential trait approach contends that five traits or factors—called the “Big Five”—lie at the core of personality. Using modern factor analytic statistical techniques, a host of researchers have identified a similar set of five factors that underlie personality. The five factors, described in Figure 2, are openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (emotional stability).

The “Big Five” emerge consistently with different kinds of measures, in different populations of individuals, and across different cultures. In short, a growing consensus exists that the “Big Five” represent the best description of personality traits we have today. Still, the debate over the specific number and kinds of traits—and even the usefulness of trait approaches in general—remains a lively one (Joshanloo & Afshari, 2011).

Evaluating Trait Approaches to Personality

Trait approaches have several virtues. They provide a clear, straightforward explanation of people’s behavioral consistencies. Furthermore, traits allow us...
to readily compare one person with another. Because of these advantages, trait approaches to personality have had an important influence on the development of several useful personality measures (Funder, 1991; Wiggins, 2003; Larsen & Buss, 2006).

However, trait approaches also have some drawbacks. For example, we have seen that various trait theories describing personality come to very different conclusions about which traits are the most fundamental and descriptive. Moreover, even if we are able to identify a set of primary traits, we are left with little more than a label or description of personality—rather than an explanation of behavior. If we say that someone who donates money to charity has the trait of generosity, we still do not know why that person became generous in the first place or the reasons for displaying generosity in a specific situation. In the view of some critics, then, traits do not provide explanations for behavior; they merely describe it.

LO 30.2 Learning Approaches: We Are What We’ve Learned

The psychodynamic and trait approaches we’ve discussed concentrate on the “inner” person—the fury of an unobservable but powerful id or a hypothetical but critical set of traits. In contrast, learning approaches to personality focus on the “outer” person. To a strict learning theorist, personality is simply the sum of learned responses to the external environment. Internal events such as thoughts, feelings, and motivations are ignored. Although the existence of personality is not denied, learning theorists say that it is best understood by looking at features of a person’s environment.

Skinner’s Behaviorist Approach

According to the most influential learning theorist, B. F. Skinner (who carried out pioneering work on operant conditioning), personality is a collection of learned behavior patterns (Skinner, 1975). Similarities in responses across different situations are caused by similar patterns of reinforcement that have been received in such situations in the past. If I am sociable both at parties and at meetings, it is because I have been reinforced for displaying social behaviors—not because I am fulfilling an unconscious wish based on experiences during my childhood or because I have an internal trait of sociability.

Strict learning theorists such as Skinner are less interested in the consistencies in behavior across situations than in ways of modifying behavior. Their view is that humans are infinitely changeable through the process of learning new behavior patterns. If we are able to readily compare one person with another. Because of these advantages, trait approaches to personality have had an important influence on the development of several useful personality measures (Funder, 1991; Wiggins, 2003; Larsen & Buss, 2006).

However, trait approaches also have some drawbacks. For example, we have seen that various trait theories describing personality come to very different conclusions about which traits are the most fundamental and descriptive. Moreover, even if we are able to identify a set of primary traits, we are left with little more than a label or description of personality—rather than an explanation of behavior. If we say that someone who donates money to charity has the trait of generosity, we still do not know why that person became generous in the first place or the reasons for displaying generosity in a specific situation. In the view of some critics, then, traits do not provide explanations for behavior; they merely describe it.

LO 30.2 Learning Approaches: We Are What We’ve Learned

The psychodynamic and trait approaches we’ve discussed concentrate on the “inner” person—the fury of an unobservable but powerful id or a hypothetical but critical set of traits. In contrast, learning approaches to personality focus on the “outer” person. To a strict learning theorist, personality is simply the sum of learned responses to the external environment. Internal events such as thoughts, feelings, and motivations are ignored. Although the existence of personality is not denied, learning theorists say that it is best understood by looking at features of a person’s environment.

Skinner’s Behaviorist Approach

According to the most influential learning theorist, B. F. Skinner (who carried out pioneering work on operant conditioning), personality is a collection of learned behavior patterns (Skinner, 1975). Similarities in responses across different situations are caused by similar patterns of reinforcement that have been received in such situations in the past. If I am sociable both at parties and at meetings, it is because I have been reinforced for displaying social behaviors—not because I am fulfilling an unconscious wish based on experiences during my childhood or because I have an internal trait of sociability.

Strict learning theorists such as Skinner are less interested in the consistencies in behavior across situations than in ways of modifying behavior. Their view is that humans are infinitely changeable through the process of learning new behavior patterns. If we are able to readily compare one person with another. Because of these advantages, trait approaches to personality have had an important influence on the development of several useful personality measures (Funder, 1991; Wiggins, 2003; Larsen & Buss, 2006).

However, trait approaches also have some drawbacks. For example, we have seen that various trait theories describing personality come to very different conclusions about which traits are the most fundamental and descriptive. Moreover, even if we are able to identify a set of primary traits, we are left with little more than a label or description of personality—rather than an explanation of behavior. If we say that someone who donates money to charity has the trait of generosity, we still do not know why that person became generous in the first place or the reasons for displaying generosity in a specific situation. In the view of some critics, then, traits do not provide explanations for behavior; they merely describe it.

LO 30.2 Learning Approaches: We Are What We’ve Learned

The psychodynamic and trait approaches we’ve discussed concentrate on the “inner” person—the fury of an unobservable but powerful id or a hypothetical but critical set of traits. In contrast, learning approaches to personality focus on the “outer” person. To a strict learning theorist, personality is simply the sum of learned responses to the external environment. Internal events such as thoughts, feelings, and motivations are ignored. Although the existence of personality is not denied, learning theorists say that it is best understood by looking at features of a person’s environment.

Skinner’s Behaviorist Approach

According to the most influential learning theorist, B. F. Skinner (who carried out pioneering work on operant conditioning), personality is a collection of learned behavior patterns (Skinner, 1975). Similarities in responses across different situations are caused by similar patterns of reinforcement that have been received in such situations in the past. If I am sociable both at parties and at meetings, it is because I have been reinforced for displaying social behaviors—not because I am fulfilling an unconscious wish based on experiences during my childhood or because I have an internal trait of sociability.

Strict learning theorists such as Skinner are less interested in the consistencies in behavior across situations than in ways of modifying behavior. Their view is that humans are infinitely changeable through the process of learning new behavior patterns. If we are able to readily compare one person with another. Because of these advantages, trait approaches to personality have had an important influence on the development of several useful personality measures (Funder, 1991; Wiggins, 2003; Larsen & Buss, 2006).

However, trait approaches also have some drawbacks. For example, we have seen that various trait theories describing personality come to very different conclusions about which traits are the most fundamental and descriptive. Moreover, even if we are able to identify a set of primary traits, we are left with little more than a label or description of personality—rather than an explanation of behavior. If we say that someone who donates money to charity has the trait of generosity, we still do not know why that person became generous in the first place or the reasons for displaying generosity in a specific situation. In the view of some critics, then, traits do not provide explanations for behavior; they merely describe it.

LO 30.2 Learning Approaches: We Are What We’ve Learned

The psychodynamic and trait approaches we’ve discussed concentrate on the “inner” person—the fury of an unobservable but powerful id or a hypothetical but critical set of traits. In contrast, learning approaches to personality focus on the “outer” person. To a strict learning theorist, personality is simply the sum of learned responses to the external environment. Internal events such as thoughts, feelings, and motivations are ignored. Although the existence of personality is not denied, learning theorists say that it is best understood by looking at features of a person’s environment.

Skinner’s Behaviorist Approach

According to the most influential learning theorist, B. F. Skinner (who carried out pioneering work on operant conditioning), personality is a collection of learned behavior patterns (Skinner, 1975). Similarities in responses across different situations are caused by similar patterns of reinforcement that have been received in such situations in the past. If I am sociable both at parties and at meetings, it is because I have been reinforced for displaying social behaviors—not because I am fulfilling an unconscious wish based on experiences during my childhood or because I have an internal trait of sociability.

Strict learning theorists such as Skinner are less interested in the consistencies in behavior across situations than in ways of modifying behavior. Their view is that humans are infinitely changeable through the process of learning new behavior patterns. If we are able to readily compare one person with another. Because of these advantages, trait approaches to personality have had an important influence on the development of several useful personality measures (Funder, 1991; Wiggins, 2003; Larsen & Buss, 2006).

However, trait approaches also have some drawbacks. For example, we have seen that various trait theories describing personality come to very different conclusions about which traits are the most fundamental and descriptive. Moreover, even if we are able to identify a set of primary traits, we are left with little more than a label or description of personality—rather than an explanation of behavior. If we say that someone who donates money to charity has the trait of generosity, we still do not know why that person became generous in the first place or the reasons for displaying generosity in a specific situation. In the view of some critics, then, traits do not provide explanations for behavior; they merely describe it.
to control and modify the patterns of reinforcers in a situation, behavior that other theorists would view as stable and unyielding can be changed and ultimately improved. Learning theorists are optimistic in their attitudes about the potential for resolving personal and societal problems through treatment strategies based on learning theory.

Social Cognitive Approaches to Personality

Not all learning theories of personality take such a strict view in rejecting the importance of what is “inside” a person by focusing solely on the “outside.” Unlike other learning approaches to personality, **social cognitive approaches to personality** emphasize the influence of cognition—thoughts, feelings, expectations, and values—as well as observation of others’ behavior, on personality. According to Albert Bandura, one of the main proponents of this point of view, people can foresee the possible outcomes of certain behaviors in a specific setting without actually having to carry them out. This understanding comes primarily through *observational learning*—viewing the actions of others and observing the consequences (Bandura, 1986, 1999).

For instance, children who view a model behaving in, say, an aggressive manner tend to copy the behavior if the consequences of the model’s behavior are seen as positive. If, in contrast, the model’s aggressive behavior has resulted in no consequences or negative consequences, children are considerably less likely to act aggressively. According to social cognitive approaches, then, personality develops through repeated observation of the behavior of others.

**Self-Efficacy.** Psychologist Albert Bandura (1986, 1999), places particular emphasis on the role played by **self-efficacy**, belief in one’s personal capabilities. Self-efficacy underlies people’s faith in their ability to carry out a specific behavior or produce a desired outcome. People with high self-efficacy have higher aspirations and greater persistence in working to attain goals and ultimately achieve greater success than do those with lower self-efficacy (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Glickler, 2006; Betz, 2007; Reuter et al., 2010).

How do we develop self-efficacy? One way is by paying close attention to our prior successes and failures. If we try snowboarding and experience little success, we’ll be less likely to try it again. However, if our initial efforts appear promising, we’ll be more likely to attempt it again. Direct reinforcement and encouragement from others also play a role in developing self-efficacy (Devonport & Lane, 2006; Buchanan & Selmon, 2008; Murray & Tenenbaum, 2010).

Compared with other learning theories of personality, social cognitive approaches are distinctive in their emphasis on the reciprocity between individuals and their environment. Not only is the environment assumed to affect personality, but people’s behavior and personalities are also assumed to “feed back” and modify the environment (Bandura, 1999, 2000).

**Is Personality Consistent?**

Another social cognitive theorist, Walter Mischel, takes a different approach to personality from that of Albert
Bandura. He rejects the view that personality consists of broad traits that lead to substantial consistencies in behavior across different situations. Instead, he sees personality as considerably more variable from one situation to another (Mischel, 2009).

In this view, particular situations give rise to particular kinds of behavior. Some situations are especially influential (think of a movie theater, where everyone displays pretty much the same behavior by sitting quietly and watching the film). Other situations permit considerable variability in behavior (think of a party, for example, where some people may be dancing, others are eating and drinking, and some people may be seated quietly, listening to music).

**From the perspective of . . .**

**A Health Care Provider** How might a patient’s self-efficacy influence her willingness to engage in health-enhancing behaviors or her ability to follow a prescribed treatment regimen?

From this perspective, personality cannot be considered without taking the particular context of the situation into account—a view known as *situationism*. In his *cognitive-affective processing system (CAPS)* theory, Mischel argues that people’s thoughts and emotions about themselves and the world determine how they view, and then react, in particular situations. Personality is thus seen as a reflection of how people’s prior experiences in different situations affect their behavior (Shoda & Mischel, 2006; Mischel & Shoda, 2008).

**Self-Esteem.** Our behavior also reflects the view we have of ourselves and the way we value the various parts of our personalities. **Self-esteem** is the component of personality that encompasses our positive and negative self-evaluations. Unlike self-efficacy, which focuses on our views of whether we are able to carry out a task, self-esteem relates to how we feel about ourselves.

Although people have a general level of self-esteem, it is not unidimensional. We may see ourselves positively in one domain but negatively in others. For example, a good student may have high self-esteem in academic domains but lower self-esteem in sports (Swann, Salmela-Aro & Nurmi, 2007; Gentile et al., 2009; vanDellen et al., 2011).

**Evaluating Learning Approaches to Personality**

Because they ignore the internal processes that are uniquely human, traditional learning theorists such as Skinner have been accused of oversimplifying personality to such an extent that the concept becomes meaningless. The critics think that reducing behavior to a series of stimuli and responses, and excluding thoughts and feelings from the realm of personality, leaves behaviorists practicing an unrealistic and inadequate form of science.

Nonetheless, learning approaches have had a major impact on the study of personality. For one thing, they have helped make personality psychology an objective, scientific venture by focusing on observable behaviors and their environment. In addition, they have produced important, successful means of treating a variety of psychological disorders. The degree of success of these treatments is a testimony to the merits of learning theory approaches to personality.
Approaching the question of what determines personality from a different direction, biological and evolutionary approaches to personality suggest that important components of personality are inherited. Building on the work of behavioral geneticists, researchers using biological and evolutionary approaches argue that personality is determined at least in part by our genes, in much the same way that our height is largely a result of genetic contributions from our ancestors (see Figure 3). The evolutionary perspective assumes that personality traits that led to survival and reproductive success of our ancestors are more likely to be preserved and passed on to subsequent generations (Buss, 2001, 2009).

It is increasingly clear that the roots of adult personality emerge in the earliest periods of life. Infants are born with a specific temperament, an innate disposition. Temperament encompasses several dimensions, including general activity level and mood. For instance, some individuals are quite active, whereas others are relatively calm. Similarly, some are relatively easygoing, but others are irritable, easily upset, and difficult to soothe. Temperament is quite consistent, with significant stability from infancy well into adolescence (Wachs et al., 2004; Kagan et al., 2007; Evans & Rothbart, 2007, 2009).

**Figure 3** The inherited roots of personality. The percentages indicate the degree to which 11 personality characteristics reflect the influence of heredity. (Source: Tellegen et al., 1988.)
Although an increasing number of personality theorists are taking biological and evolutionary factors into account, no comprehensive, unified theory that considers biological and evolutionary factors is widely accepted. Still, it is clear that certain personality traits have substantial genetic components, and that heredity and environment interact to determine personality (Bouchard, 2004; South & Krueger, 2008; O’Donnell, 2010). Biological and evolutionary approaches to personality seek to explain the consistencies in personality that are found in some families.

**LO 30.4 Humanistic Approaches: The Uniqueness of You**

In all the approaches to personality that we have discussed, where is the explanation for the saintliness of a Mother Teresa, the creativity of a Michelangelo, and the brilliance and perseverance of an Einstein? An understanding of such unique individuals—as well as more ordinary sorts of people who have some of the same attributes—comes from humanistic theory. **Humanistic approaches to personality** emphasize people’s inherent goodness and their tendency to move toward higher levels of functioning. It is this conscious, self-motivated ability to change and improve, along with people’s unique creative impulses, that humanistic theorists argue make up the core of personality.

**Rogers and the Need for Self-Actualization**

The major proponent of the humanistic point of view is Carl Rogers (1971). Along with other humanistic theorists, such as Abraham Maslow, Rogers maintains that all people have a fundamental need for **self-actualization**, a state of self-fulfillment in which people realize their highest potential, each in a unique way. He further suggests that people develop a need for positive regard that reflects the desire to be loved and respected. Because others provide this positive regard, we grow dependent on them. We begin to see and judge ourselves through the eyes of other people, relying on their values and being preoccupied with what they think of us.

According to Rogers, one outgrowth of placing importance on the opinions of others is that a conflict may grow between people’s experiences and their **self-concepts**, the set of beliefs they hold about what they are like as individuals. If the discrepancies are minor, so are the consequences. But if the discrepancies are great, they will lead to psychological disturbances in daily functioning, such as the experience of frequent anxiety. (Also see the Try It! on page 368.)
How well do you know yourself? To get an idea of how well your real self-concept and ideal self-concept match up, try the following exercise. First, quickly place a check mark next to each item that describes you. (Use the first column for your check marks.) Be honest!

1. Absentminded
2. Anxious
3. Artistic
4. Attractive
5. Capable
6. Charming
7. Clear-thinking
8. Clever
9. Confused
10. Courageous
11. Dissatisfied
12. Dreamy
13. Emotional
14. Energetic
15. Enterprising
16. Excitable
17. Forceful
18. Forgetful
19. Gentle
20. Good-looking
21. Handsome
22. Hardheaded
23. Hasty
24. Headstrong
25. Hurried
26. Imaginative
27. Impatient
28. Impulsive
29. Industrious
30. Ingenious
31. Initiating
32. Insightful

(continued)
Next, go back through the list and place a check beside each item, this time in the second column, that describes your ideal self—the kind of person you would like to be. Once again, work through the list quickly.

Now make three lists. In the first, list the terms that are characteristic of your real, but not your ideal, self. In the second, list characteristics of your ideal, but not your real, self. Finally, make a list of the characteristics that apply both to your ideal self and your real self.

The first list will tell you things about yourself that are inconsistent with what you would like to be like. The second list gives you a sense of the way you would like to be. Finally, the third list shows you the traits on which you already match your ideal.

How well do your ideal and real self-concepts match up?


Rogers suggests that one way of overcoming the discrepancy between experience and self-concept is through the receipt of unconditional positive regard from another person—a friend, a spouse, or a therapist. **Unconditional positive regard** refers to an attitude of acceptance and respect on the part of an observer, no matter what a person says or does. This acceptance, says Rogers, gives people the opportunity to evolve and grow both cognitively and emotionally and to develop more realistic self-concepts. You may have experienced the power of unconditional positive regard when you confided in someone, revealing embarrassing secrets because you knew the listener would still love and respect you, even after hearing the worst about you (Snyder, 2002; Marshall, 2007; Truscott, 2010).

In contrast, **conditional positive regard** depends on your behavior. In such cases, others withdraw their love and acceptance if you do something of which they don’t approve. The result is a discrepancy between your true self and what others wish you would be, which leads to anxiety and frustration.

Unconditional positive regard

An attitude of acceptance and respect on the part of an observer, no matter what a person says or does.
Evaluating Humanistic Approaches

Although humanistic theories suggest the value of providing unconditional positive regard toward people, unconditional positive regard toward humanistic theories has been less forthcoming. The criticisms have centered on the difficulty of verifying the basic assumptions of the approach, as well as on the question of whether unconditional positive regard does, in fact, lead to greater personality adjustment.

Humanistic approaches have also been criticized for making the assumption that people are basically “good”—a notion that is unverifiable—and, equally important, for using nonscientific values to build supposedly scientific theories. Still, humanistic theories have been important in highlighting the uniqueness of human beings and guiding the development of a significant form of therapy designed to alleviate psychological difficulties (Cain, 2002; Bauman & Kopp, 2006; Elkins, 2009).

LO 30.5 Comparing Approaches to Personality

In light of the multiple approaches we have discussed, you may be wondering which of the theories provides the most accurate description of personality. That is a question that cannot be answered precisely. Each theory is built on different assumptions and focuses on somewhat different aspects of personality (see Figure 4). Furthermore, there is no clear way to scientifically test the various approaches and their assumptions against one another. Given the complexity of every individual, it seems reasonable that personality can be viewed from a number of perspectives simultaneously (Pervin, 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Approach and Major Theorists</th>
<th>Conscious versus Unconscious Determinants of Personality</th>
<th>Nature (Hereditary Factors) versus Nurture (Environmental Factors)</th>
<th>Free Will versus Determinism</th>
<th>Stability versus Modifiability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic (Freud, Jung, Homey, Adler)</td>
<td>Emphasizes the unconscious</td>
<td>Stresses innate, inherited structure of personality while emphasizing importance of childhood experience</td>
<td>Stresses determinism, the view that behavior is directed and caused by factors outside one’s control</td>
<td>Emphasizes the stability of characteristics throughout a person’s life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait (Allport, Cattell, Eysenck)</td>
<td>Disregards both conscious and unconscious</td>
<td>Approaches vary</td>
<td>Stresses determinism, the view that behavior is directed and caused by factors outside one’s control</td>
<td>Emphasizes the stability of characteristics throughout a person’s life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning (Skinner, Bandura)</td>
<td>Disregards both conscious and unconscious</td>
<td>Focuses on the environment</td>
<td>Stresses determinism, the view that behavior is directed and caused by factors outside one’s control</td>
<td>Stresses that personality remains flexible and resilient throughout one’s life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological and evolutionary (Tellegen)</td>
<td>Disregards both conscious and unconscious</td>
<td>Stresses the innate, inherited determinants of personality</td>
<td>Stresses determinism, the view that behavior is directed and caused by factors outside one’s control</td>
<td>Emphasizes the stability of characteristics throughout a person’s life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanistic (Rogers, Maslow)</td>
<td>Stresses the conscious more than unconscious</td>
<td>Stresses the interaction between both nature and nurture</td>
<td>Stresses the freedom of individuals to make their own choices</td>
<td>Stresses that personality remains flexible and resilient throughout one’s life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 The multiple perspectives of personality.
RECAP

Explain trait approaches to personality.
- Trait approaches have been used to identify relatively enduring dimensions along which people differ from one another—dimensions known as traits. (p. 361)

Explain learning approaches to personality.
- Learning approaches to personality concentrate on observable behavior. To a strict learning theorist, personality is the sum of learned responses to the external environment. (p. 363)
- Social cognitive approaches concentrate on the role of cognitions in determining personality. Those approaches pay particular attention to self-efficacy and self-esteem in determining behavior. (p. 364)

Explain biological and evolutionary approaches to personality.
- Biological and evolutionary approaches to personality focus on the way in which personality characteristics are inherited. (p. 366)

Explain humanistic approaches to personality.
- Humanistic approaches emphasize the inherent goodness of people. They consider the core of personality in terms of a person’s ability to change and improve. (p. 367)

Compare and contrast approaches to personality.
- The major personality approaches differ substantially from one another; the differences may reflect both their focus on different aspects of personality and the overall complexity of personality. (p. 370)

EVALUATE

1. A person who enjoys activities such as parties and hang gliding might be described by Eysenck as high on what trait?
2. Proponents of which approach to personality would be most likely to agree with the statement “Personality can be thought of as learned responses to a person’s upbringing and environment”?
   a. Humanistic
   b. Biological and evolutionary
   c. Learning
   d. Trait
3. A person who would make the statement “I know I can’t do it” would be rated by Bandura as low on _______ ________.
4. Which approach to personality emphasizes the innate goodness of people and their desire to grow?
   a. Humanistic
   b. Psychodynamic
   c. Learning
   d. Biological and evolutionary
RETHINK

If personality traits are merely descriptive and not explanatory, of what use are they? Can assigning a trait to a person be harmful—or helpful? Why or why not?

KEY TERMS

Trait theory p. 361
Traits p. 361
Social cognitive approaches to personality p. 364
Self-efficacy p. 364
Self-esteem p. 365

Biological and evolutionary approaches to personality p. 366
Temperament p. 366
Humanistic approaches to personality p. 367
Self-actualization p. 367
Unconditional positive regard p. 369
You have a need for other people to like and admire you.
You have a tendency to be critical of yourself.
You have a great deal of unused potential that you have not turned to your advantage.
Although you have some personality weaknesses, you generally are able to compensate for them.
Although you appear to be disciplined and self-controlled to others, you tend to be anxious and insecure inside.
At times you have serious doubts about whether you have made the right decision or done the right thing.
You do not accept others’ statements without satisfactory proof.
You have found it unwise to be too frank in revealing yourself to others.

If you think these statements provide a surprisingly accurate account of your personality, you are not alone: most people think that these descriptions are tailored just to them. In fact, the statements were designed intentionally to be so vague that they apply to just about anyone (Forer, 1949; Russo, 1981).

The ease with which we can agree with such imprecise statements underscores the difficulty in coming up with accurate and meaningful assessments of people’s personalities. Psychologists interested in assessing personality must be able to define the most meaningful ways of discriminating between one person’s personality and another’s. To do this, they use psychological tests, standard measures devised to assess behavior objectively. With the results of such tests, psychologists can help people better understand themselves and make decisions about their lives. Psychological tests are also employed by researchers interested in the causes and consequences of personality (Hambleton, 2006; Baker & Mason, 2010).
Like the assessments that seek to measure intelligence, all psychological tests must have reliability and validity. **Reliability** refers to the measurement consistency of a test. If a test is reliable, it yields the same result each time it is administered to a specific person or group. In contrast, unreliable tests give different results each time they are administered.

For meaningful conclusions to be drawn, tests also must be valid. Tests have **validity** when they actually measure what they are designed to measure. If a test is constructed to measure sociability, for instance, we need to know that it actually measures sociability, and not some other trait.

Finally, psychological tests are based on norms, standards of test performance that permit the comparison of one person’s score on a test with the scores of others who have taken the same test. For example, a norm permits test-takers who have received a certain score on a test to know that they have scored in the top 10 percent of all those who have taken the test.

Norms are established by administering a specific test to a large number of people and determining the typical scores. It is then possible to compare a single person’s score with the scores of the group, providing a comparative measure of test performance against the performance of others who have taken the test.

The establishment of appropriate norms is not a simple endeavor. For instance, the specific group that is employed to determine norms for a test has a profound effect on the way an individual’s performance is evaluated.

**LO 31.1 Self-Report Measures of Personality**

Just as physicians draw only a small sample of your blood to test it, psychologists can utilize **self-report measures** that ask people about a small sample of their behavior; these are then used to infer the presence of particular personality characteristics. For example, a researcher who was interested in assessing a person’s orientation to life might administer the questionnaire shown in the Try It! feature. Although the questionnaire consists of only a few questions, the answers can be used to generalize about personality characteristics.

One of the best examples of a self-report measure, and one of the most frequently used personality tests, is the **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2)**. Although the original purpose of this measure was to identify people with specific sorts of psychological difficulties, it has been found to predict a variety of other behaviors. For instance, MMPI scores have been shown to be good predictors of whether college students will marry within 10 years and will get an advanced degree. Police departments use the test to measure whether police officers are likely to use their weapons (Butcher, 2005; Sellbom, Fischler, & Ben-Porath, 2007; Williams & Butcher, 2011).

The test consists of a series of 567 items to which a person responds “true,” “false,” or “cannot say.” The questions cover a variety of issues, ranging from mood (“I feel useless at times”) to opinions (“People should try to understand...”)
their dreams”) to physical and psychological health (“I am bothered by an upset stomach several times a week” and “I have strange and peculiar thoughts”).

There are no right or wrong answers. Instead, interpretation of the results rests on the pattern of responses. The test yields scores on 10 separate scales, plus 3 scales meant to measure the validity of the respondent’s answers. For example, there is a “lie scale” that indicates when people are falsifying their responses in order to present themselves more favorably (through items such as “I can’t remember ever having a bad night’s sleep”) (Butcher, 2005; Stein & Graham, 2005; Bacchiochi, 2006).

How did the authors of the MMPI determine what specific patterns of responses indicate? The procedure they used is typical of personality test construction—a process known as test standardization. To create the test, the test authors asked groups of psychiatric patients with a specific diagnosis, such as depression or schizophrenia, to complete a large number of items. They then determined which items best differentiated members of those groups from a comparison group of normal participants and included those specific items in the final version of the test. By systematically carrying out this procedure on groups with different diagnoses, the test authors were able to devise a number of subscales that identified different forms of abnormal behavior (see Figure 1).

Test standardization A technique used to validate questions in personality tests by studying the responses of people with known diagnoses.

### The Life Orientation Test

Use the following scale to answer the following items:

0 = Strongly disagree; 1 = Disagree; 2 = Neutral; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly agree

1. In uncertain times, I usually expect the best. 

2. It’s easy for me to relax.

3. If something can go wrong for me, it will.

4. I’m always optimistic about my future.

5. I enjoy my friends a lot.

6. It’s important for me to keep busy.

7. I hardly ever expect things to go my way.

8. I don’t get upset too easily.

9. I rarely count on good things happening to me.

10. Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.

**Scoring**

First, reverse your answers to questions 3, 7, and 9. Do this by changing a 0 to a 4, a 1 to a 3, a 3 to a 1, and a 4 to a 0 (answers of 2 stay as 2). Then sum the reversed scores, and add them to the scores you gave to questions 1, 4, and 10. (Ignore questions 2, 5, 6, and 8, which are filler items.)

The total score you get is a measure of a particular orientation to life: your degree of optimism. The higher your scores, the more positive and hopeful you generally are about life. For comparison purposes, the average score for college students is 14.3 (Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994). People with a higher degree of optimism generally deal with stress better than do those with lower scores.
When the MMPI is used for the purpose for which it was devised—identification of personality disorders—it does a good job. However, like other personality tests, it presents an opportunity for abuse. For instance, employers who use it as a screening tool for job applicants may interpret the results improperly, relying too heavily on the results of individual scales instead of taking into account the overall patterns of results, which require skilled interpretation. Although the MMPI remains the most widely used personality test and has been translated into more than 100 different languages, it must be used with caution (Forbey & Ben-Porath, 2007; Ben-Porath & Archer, 2008; Rosenfeld et al., 2010).

LO 31.2 Projective Methods

If you were shown the shape presented in Figure 2 and asked what it represented to you, you might not think that your impressions would mean very much. But to a psychodynamic theoretician, your responses to such an ambiguous figure would provide valuable clues to the state of your unconscious, and ultimately to your general personality characteristics.

The shape in the figure is representative of inkblots used in projective personality tests, in which a person is shown an ambiguous stimulus and asked to describe it or tell a story about it. The responses are considered to be “projections” of the individual’s personality.

The best-known projective test is the Rorschach test. Devised by Swiss psychiatrist Hermann Rorschach (1924), the test involves showing a series of symmetrical stimuli, similar to the one in Figure 2, to people who are then asked what the figures represent to them. Their responses are recorded, and people are
classified by their personality type through a complex set of clinical judgments on the part of the examiner. For instance, respondents who see a bear in one inkblot are thought to have a strong degree of emotional control, according to the scoring guidelines developed by Rorschach (Weiner, 2004b; Sultan, 2010; Pineda et al., 2011).

The **Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)** is another well-known projective test. The TAT consists of a series of pictures about which a person is asked to write a story. The stories are then used to draw inferences about the writer’s personality characteristics (Weiner, 2004a; Langan-Fox & Grant, 2006).

Tests with stimuli as ambiguous as those used in the Rorschach and TAT require particular skill and care in their interpretation—too much, in many critics’ estimation. The Rorschach in particular has been criticized for requiring too much inference on the part of the examiner, and attempts to standardize scoring have frequently failed. Furthermore, many critics complain that the Rorschach does not provide much valid information about underlying personality traits. Despite such problems, both the Rorschach and the TAT are widely used, especially in clinical settings, and their proponents suggest that their reliability and validity are great enough to provide useful inferences about personality (Wood et al., 2003; Garb et al., 2005; Society for Personality Assessment, 2005).

---

**Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)**

A test consisting of a series of pictures about which a person is asked to write a story.

**STUDY ALERT**

In projective tests such as the Rorschach, researchers present an ambiguous stimulus and ask a person to describe or tell a story about it, and use the responses to make inferences about personality.
If you were a psychologist subscribing to a learning approach to personality, you would be likely to object to the indirect nature of projective tests. Instead, you would be more apt to use behavioral assessment—direct measures of an individual’s behavior designed to describe characteristics indicative of personality. As with observational research, behavioral assessment may be carried out naturalistically by observing people in their own settings: in the workplace, at home, or in school. In other cases, behavioral assessment occurs in the laboratory, under controlled conditions in which a psychologist sets up a situation and observes an individual’s behavior (Ramsay, Reynolds, & Kamphaus, 2002; Gladwell, 2004; Miller & Leffard, 2007).

Regardless of the setting in which behavior is observed, an effort is made to ensure that behavioral assessment is carried out objectively, quantifying behavior as much as possible. For example, an observer may record the number of social contacts a person initiates, the number of questions asked, or the number of aggressive acts. Another method is to measure the duration of events: the duration of a temper tantrum in a child, the length of a conversation, the amount of time spent working, or the time spent in cooperative behavior.

Behavioral assessment is particularly appropriate for observing—and eventually remedying—specific behavioral difficulties, such as shyness in children. It provides a means of assessing the specific nature and incidence of a problem and subsequently allows psychologists to determine whether intervention techniques have been successful.

Many companies ranging from General Motors to Microsoft employ personality tests to help determine who gets hired. Before relying too heavily on the results of such personality testing in the role of potential employee, employer, or consumer of testing services, you should keep several points in mind:

- Understand what the test claims to measure. Standard personality measures are accompanied by information that discusses how the test was
developed, to whom it is most applicable, and how the results should be interpreted. Read any explanations of the test; they will help you understand the results.

- Do not base a decision only on the results of any one test. Test results should be interpreted in the context of other information, such as academic records, social interests, and home and community activities.
- Remember that test results are not always accurate. The results may be in error; the test may be unreliable or invalid. For example, you may have had a “bad day” when you took the test, or the person scoring and interpreting the test may have made a mistake. You should not place too much significance on the results of a single administration of any test.

In sum, it is important to keep in mind the complexity of human behavior—particularly your own. No single test can provide an understanding of the intricacies of someone’s personality without considering a good deal more information than can be provided in a single testing session (Gladwell, 2004; Paul, 2004; Hogan, Davies, & Hogan, 2007).

**RECAP**

**Discuss self-report measures of personality.**

- Psychological tests such as the MMPI are standard assessment tools that measure behavior objectively. They must be reliable (measuring what they are trying to measure consistently) and valid (measuring what they are supposed to measure). (p. 374)
- Self-report measures ask people about a sample range of their behaviors. These reports are used to infer the presence of particular personality characteristics. (p. 375)

**Define projective methods.**

- Projective personality tests (such as the Rorschach and the Thematic Apperception Test) present an ambiguous stimulus; the test administrator infers information about the test-taker from his or her responses. (p. 376)

**Explain behavioral assessment.**

- Behavioral assessment is based on the principles of learning theory. It employs direct measurement of an individual’s behavior to determine characteristics related to personality. (p. 378)

**EVALUATE**

1. _______ is the consistency of a personality test; _______ is the ability of a test to actually measure what it is designed to measure.

2. _______ are standards used to compare scores of different people taking the same test.
3. Tests such as the MMPI-2, in which a small sample of behavior is assessed to determine larger patterns, are examples of
   a. Cross-sectional tests
   b. Projective tests
   c. Achievement tests
   d. Self-report tests

4. A person shown a picture and asked to make up a story about it would be taking a ________ personality test.

RETHINK

Should personality tests be used for personnel decisions? Should they be used for other social purposes, such as identifying individuals at risk for certain types of personality disorders?

Answers to Evaluate Questions
1. reliability, validity
2. norms
3. d: self-report tests
4. projective

KEY TERMS

Psychological tests p. 373
Self-report measures p. 374
Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2) p. 374
Test standardization p. 375

Projective personality tests p. 376
Rorschach test p. 376
Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) p. 377
Behavioral assessment p. 378
Intelligence can take on many different meanings. If, for instance, you lived in a remote part of the Australian outback, the way you would differentiate between more intelligent and less intelligent people might have to do with successfully mastering hunting skills, whereas to someone living in the heart of urban Miami, intelligence might be exemplified by being “street wise” or by achieving success in business.

Each of these conceptions of intelligence is reasonable. Each represents an instance in which more intelligent people are better able to use the resources of their environment than are less intelligent people, a distinction that is presumably basic to any definition of intelligence. Yet it is also clear that these conceptions represent very different views of intelligence.

To psychologists, intelligence is the capacity to understand the world, think rationally, and use resources effectively when faced with challenges. This definition does not lay to rest a key question asked by psychologists: Is intelligence a unitary attribute, or are there different kinds of intelligence? We turn now to various theories of intelligence that address the issue.

LO 32.1 Theories of Intelligence: Are There Different Kinds of Intelligence?

Perhaps you see yourself as a good writer but as someone who lacks ability in math. Or maybe you view yourself as a “science” person who easily masters physics but has few strengths in interpreting literature. Perhaps you view yourself as generally fairly smart, with intelligence that permits you to excel across domains.

The different ways in which people view their own talents mirrors a question that psychologists have grappled with: Is intelligence a single, general ability, or is it multifaceted and related to specific abilities? Early psychologists interested in intelligence assumed that there was a single, general factor for mental ability, which they called $g$, or the g-factor. This general intelligence factor was thought
to underlie performance in every aspect of intelligence, and it was the g-factor that was presumably being measured on tests of intelligence (Spearman, 1927; Colom, Jung, & Haier, 2006; Haier et al., 2009; Castejon, Perez, & Gilar, 2010).

More recent theories see intelligence in a different light. Rather than viewing intelligence as a unitary entity, they consider it to be a multidimensional concept that includes different types of intelligence (Tenopyr, 2002; Stankov, 2003; Sternberg & Pretz, 2005).

**Fluid and Crystallized Intelligence**

Some psychologists suggest that there are two different kinds of intelligence: fluid intelligence and crystallized intelligence. **Fluid intelligence** reflects information-processing capabilities, reasoning, and memory. If we were asked to solve an analogy, group a series of letters according to some criterion, or remember a set of numbers, we would be using fluid intelligence. We use fluid intelligence when we’re trying to rapidly solve a puzzle (Kane & Engle, 2002; Saggino Perfetti, & Spitoni, 2006; Di Fabio & Palazzeschi, 2009).

In contrast, **crystallized intelligence** is the accumulation of information, skills, and strategies that people have learned through experience and that they can apply in problem-solving situations. It reflects our ability to call up information from long-term memory. We would be likely to rely on crystallized intelligence, for instance, if we were asked to participate in a discussion about the solution to the causes of poverty, a task that allows us to draw on our own past experiences and knowledge of the world. In contrast to fluid intelligence, which reflects a more general kind of intelligence, crystallized intelligence is more a reflection of the culture in which a person is raised (Aartsen, Martin, & Zimprich, 2002; Buehner, Krumm, & Ziegler, 2006; Tranter & Koutstaal, 2008).

**Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences: The Many Ways of Showing Intelligence**

Psychologist Howard Gardner has taken an approach very different from traditional thinking about intelligence. Gardner argues that rather than asking “How smart are you?” we should be asking a different question: “How are you smart?” In answering the latter question, Gardner has developed a **theory of multiple intelligences** that has become quite influential (Gardner, 2000).

Gardner argues that we have at a minimum eight different forms of intelligence, each relatively independent of the others: musical, bodily kinaesthetic, logical-mathematical, linguistic, spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. (Figure 1 describes the eight types of intelligence, with some of Gardner’s examples of people who excel in each type.) In Gardner’s view, each of the multiple intelligences is linked to an independent system in the brain.

Although Gardner illustrates his conception of the specific types of intelligence with descriptions of well-known people, each person has the same eight kinds of intelligence—in different degrees. Moreover, although the eight basic types of intelligence are presented individually, Gardner
Musical Intelligence (skills in tasks involving music). Case example:

When he was 3, Yehudi Menuhin was smuggled into San Francisco Orchestra concerts by his parents. By the time he was 10 years old, Menuhin was an international performer.

Spatial Intelligence (skills involving spatial configurations, such as those used by artists and architects). Case example:

Natives of the Truk Islands navigate at sea without instruments. During the actual trip, the navigator must envision mentally a reference island as it passes under a particular star and from that he computes the number of segments completed, the proportion of the trip remaining, and any corrections in heading.

Bodily Kinesthetic Intelligence (skills in using the whole body or various portions of it in the solution of problems or in the construction of products or displays, exemplified by dancers, athletes, actors, and surgeons). Case example:

Fifteen-year old Babe Ruth played third base. During one game, his team's pitcher was doing very poorly and Babe loudly criticized him from third base. Brother Matthias, the coach, called out, "Ruth, if you know so much about it, you pitch!" Ruth said later that at the very moment he took the pitcher's mound, he knew he was supposed to be a pitcher.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence (skills in problem solving and scientific thinking). Case example:

Barbara McClintock, who won the Nobel Prize in medicine, describes one of her breakthroughs, which came after thinking about a problem for half an hour... "Suddenly I jumped and ran back to the (corn) field. At the top of the field (the others were still at the bottom) I shouted, 'Eureka, I have it!'"

Intrapersonal Intelligence (knowledge of the internal aspects of oneself; access to one's own feelings and emotions). Case example:

In her essay "A Sketch of the Past," Virginia Woolf displays deep insight into her own inner life through these lines, describing her reaction to several specific memories from her childhood that still, in adulthood, shock her: "Though I still have the peculiarity that I receive these sudden shocks, they are now always welcome; after the first surprise, I always feel instantly that they are particularly valuable. And so I go on to suppose that the shock-receiving capacity is what makes me a writer."

Interpersonal Intelligence (skills in interacting with others, such as sensitivity to the moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions of others). Case example:

When Anne Sullivan began instructing the deaf and blind Helen Keller, her task was one that had eluded others for years. Yet, just two weeks after beginning her work with Keller, Sullivan achieved great success.

Naturalist Intelligence (ability to identify and classify patterns in nature). Case example:

During prehistoric times, hunter/gatherers would rely on naturalist intelligence to identify what flora and fauna were edible. People who are adept at distinguishing nuances between large numbers of similar objects may be expressing naturalist intelligence abilities.

---

Figure 1 According to Howard Gardner, there are eight major kinds of intelligences, corresponding to abilities in different domains. In what area does your greatest intelligence reside, and why do you think you have particular strengths in that area? (Source: From Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century. Copyright © 2000 Howard Gardner. Reprinted by permission of Basic Books, a member of the Perseus Books Group.)

suggests that these separate intelligences do not operate in isolation. Normally, any activity encompasses several kinds of intelligence working together. In a busy pharmacy, a pharmacy technician will often rely on both fluid and crystallized intelligence. Which do you think will be most important in your chosen career?
The concept of multiple intelligences has led to the development of intelligence tests that include questions in which more than one answer can be correct; these provide an opportunity for test-takers to demonstrate creative thinking. In addition, many educators, embracing the concept of multiple intelligences, have designed classroom curricula that are meant to draw on different aspects of intelligence (Armstrong, 2000, 2003; Kelly & Tangney, 2006; Douglas, Burton, & Reese-Durham, 2008; Tirri & Nokelainen, 2008).

Is Information Processing Intelligence?

One of the newer contributions to understanding intelligence comes from the work of cognitive psychologists who take an information-processing approach. They assert that the way people store material in memory and use that material to solve intellectual tasks provides the most accurate measure of intelligence. Consequently, rather than focusing on the structure of intelligence or its underlying content or dimensions, information-processing approaches examine the processes involved in producing intelligent behavior (Hunt, 2005; Neubauer & Fink, 2005; Pressley & Harris, 2006).

For example, research shows that people with high scores on tests of intelligence spend more time on the initial encoding stages of problems, identifying the parts of a problem and retrieving relevant information from long-term memory, than do people with lower scores. This initial emphasis on recalling relevant information pays off in the end; those who use this approach are more successful in finding solutions than are those who spend relatively less time on the initial stages (Sternberg, 1990; Deary & Der, 2005; Hunt, 2005).

Other information-processing approaches examine the sheer speed of processing. For example, research shows that the speed with which people are able to retrieve information from memory is related to verbal intelligence. In general, people with high scores on measures of intelligence react more quickly on a variety of information-processing tasks, ranging from reactions to flashing lights to distinguishing between letters. The speed of information processing, then, may underlie differences in intelligence (Gontkovsky & Beatty, 2006; Helmbold, Troche, & Rammsayer, 2007; Sheppard & Vernon, 2008).

LO 32.2 Practical Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence: Toward a More Intelligent View of Intelligence

Consider the following situation:

An employee who reports to one of your subordinates has asked to talk with you about waste, poor management practices, and possible violations of both company policy and the law on the part of your subordinate. You have been in your present position only a year, but in that time you have had no indications of trouble about the subordinate in question. Neither you nor your company has an

STUDY ALERT

Remember that Gardner’s theory suggests that each individual has every kind of intelligence, but in different degrees.
“open door” policy, so it is expected that employees should take their concerns to their immediate supervisors before bringing a matter to the attention of anyone else. The employee who wishes to meet with you has not discussed this matter with her supervisors because of its delicate nature. (Sternberg, 1998, p. 17)

Your response to the preceding situation has a lot to do with your future success in a business career, according to psychologist Robert Sternberg. The question is one of a series designed to help give an indication of your intelligence. However, it is not traditional intelligence that the question is designed to tap, but rather intelligence of a specific kind: practical intelligence. Practical intelligence is intelligence related to overall success in living (Sternberg, 2000, 2002b; Sternberg & Hedlund, 2002; Wagner, 2002; Muammar, 2007; Lievens & Chan, 2010).

Noting that traditional tests were designed to relate to academic success, Sternberg points to evidence showing that most traditional measures of intelligence do not relate especially well to career success (McClelland, 1993). Specifically, although successful business executives usually score at least moderately well on intelligence tests, the rate at which they advance and their ultimate business achievements are only minimally associated with traditional measures of their intelligence.

Sternberg argues that career success requires a very different type of intelligence from that required for academic success. Whereas academic success is based on knowledge of a specific information base obtained from reading and listening, practical intelligence is learned mainly through observation of others’ behavior. People who are high in practical intelligence are able to learn general norms and principles and apply them appropriately. Consequently, practical intelligence tests, like the one shown in Figure 2 on page 386, measure the ability to employ broad principles in solving everyday problems (Stemler & Sternberg, 2006; Stemler et al., 2009).

Some psychologists broaden the concept of intelligence even further beyond the intellectual realm to include emotions. Emotional intelligence is the set of skills that underlie the accurate assessment, evaluation, expression, and regulation of emotions (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Humphrey, Curran, & Morris, 2007; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008).

Emotional intelligence underlies the ability to get along well with others. It provides us with an understanding of what other people are feeling and experiencing and permits us to respond appropriately to others’ needs. Emotional intelligence is the basis of empathy for others, self-awareness, and social skills.

Abilities in emotional intelligence may help explain why people with only modest scores on traditional intelligence tests can be quite successful, despite their lack of traditional intelligence. High emotional intelligence may enable an individual to tune into others’ feelings, permitting a high degree of responsiveness to others.

Whereas academic success is based on knowledge of a specific information base obtained from reading and listening, practical intelligence is learned mainly through observation of others’ behavior.

As a paralegal, how might high practical intelligence help you in your career? Would high practical intelligence help or hurt you if you suspected unethical work being done at your firm?
The notion of emotional intelligence reminds us that there are many ways to demonstrate intelligent behavior—just as there are multiple views of the nature of intelligence (Fox & Spector, 2000; Barrett & Salovey, 2002). Figure 3 presents a summary of the different approaches used by psychologists.

**Figure 2** Most standard tests of intelligence primarily measure analytical skills; more comprehensive tests measure creative and practical abilities as well. (Source: Sternberg, 2000, p. 389.)

**Figure 3** Just as there are many views of the nature of intelligence, there are also numerous ways to demonstrate intelligent behavior. This summary provides an overview of the various approaches used by psychologists.

---

**STUDY ALERT**

Traditional intelligence relates to academic performance; practical intelligence relates to success in life; and emotional intelligence relates to emotional skills.
LO 32.3 Assessing Intelligence

Given the variety of approaches to the components of intelligence, it is not surprising that measuring intelligence has proved challenging. Psychologists who study intelligence have focused much of their attention on the development of intelligence tests and have relied on such tests to quantify a person’s level of intelligence. These tests have proved to be of great benefit in identifying students in need of special attention in school, diagnosing cognitive difficulties, and helping people make optimal educational and vocational choices. At the same time, their use has proved controversial, raising important social and educational issues.

Binet and the Development of IQ Tests

The first real intelligence tests were developed by the French psychologist Alfred Binet (1857–1911). His tests followed from a simple premise: if performance on certain tasks or test items improved with chronological, or physical, age, performance could be used to distinguish more intelligent people from less intelligent ones within a particular age group. On the basis of this principle, Binet devised the first formal intelligence test, which was designed to identify the “dullest” students in the Paris school system in order to provide them with remedial aid.

Binet began by presenting tasks to same-age students who had been labeled “bright” or “dull” by their teachers. If a task could be completed by the bright students but not by the dull ones, he retained that task as a proper test item; otherwise it was discarded. In the end he came up with a test that distinguished between the bright and dull groups, and—with further work—one that distinguished among children in different age groups (Binet & Simon, 1916; Sternberg & Jarvin, 2003).

On the basis of the Binet test, children were assigned a score relating to their mental age, the age for which a given level of performance is average or typical. For example, if the average 8-year-old answered, say, 45 items correctly on a test, anyone who answered 45 items correctly would be assigned a mental age of 8 years. Consequently, whether the person taking the test was 20 years old or 5 years old, he or she would have the same mental age of 8 years (Cornell, 2006).

Assigning a mental age to students provided an indication of their general level of performance. However, it did not allow for adequate comparisons among people of different chronological ages. By using mental age alone, for instance, we might assume that a 20-year-old responding at an 18-year-old’s level would be as bright as a 5-year-old answering at a 3-year-old’s level, when actually the 5-year-old would be displaying a much greater relative degree of slowness.

A solution to the problem came in the form of the intelligence quotient, or IQ, a score that takes into account an individual’s mental and chronological ages. Historically, the first IQ scores employed the following formula, in which MA stands for mental age and CA for chronological age:

$$\text{IQ score} = \frac{\text{MA}}{\text{CA}} \times 100$$
Using this formula, we can return to the earlier example of a 20-year-old performing at a mental age of 18 and calculate an IQ score of \((\frac{18}{20}) \times 100 = 90\). In contrast, the 5-year-old performing at a mental age of 3 comes out with a considerably lower IQ score: \((\frac{3}{5}) \times 100 = 60\).

As a bit of trial and error with the formula will show you, anyone who has a mental age equal to his or her chronological age will have an IQ equal to 100. Moreover, people with a mental age that is greater than their chronological age will have IQs that exceed 100.

Although the basic principles behind the calculation of an IQ score still hold, today IQ scores are figured in a different manner and are known as \textit{deviation IQ scores}. First, the average test score for everyone of the same age who takes the test is determined, and that average score is assigned an IQ of 100. Then, with the aid of statistical techniques that calculate the differences (or “deviations”) between each score and the average, IQ scores are assigned.

As you can see in Figure 4, when IQ scores from large numbers of people are plotted on a graph, they form a \textit{bell-shaped distribution} (called “bell-shaped” because it looks like a bell when plotted). Approximately two-thirds of all individuals fall within 15 IQ points of the average score of 100. As scores increase or fall beyond that range, the percentage of people in a category falls considerably.

**Contemporary IQ Tests: Gauging Intelligence**

Remnants of Binet’s original intelligence test are still with us, although the test has been revised in significant ways. Now in its fifth edition and called the \textit{Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale}, the test consists of a series of items that vary in nature according to the age of the person being tested (Roid, Nellis, & McClellan, 2003). For example, young children are asked to copy figures or
answer questions about everyday activities. Older people are asked to solve analogies, explain proverbs, and describe similarities that underlie sets of words.

The IQ test most frequently used in the United States was devised by psychologist David Wechsler and is known as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale–IV, or, more commonly, the WAIS-IV. There is also a children’s version, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children–IV, or WISC-IV. Both the WAIS-IV and the WISC-IV have two major parts: a verbal scale and a performance (or nonverbal) scale. As you can see from the sample questions in Figure 5, the verbal and performance scales include questions of very different types. Verbal tasks consist of more traditional kinds of problems, including vocabulary definition and comprehension of various concepts. In contrast, the performance (nonverbal) part involves the timed assembly of small objects and the arrangement of pictures in a logical order.

Because the Stanford-Binet, WAIS-IV, and WISC-IV all require individualized, one-on-one administration, it is relatively difficult and time-consuming to administer and score them on a large-scale basis. Consequently, there are now a number of IQ tests that allow group administration. Rather than having one examiner ask one person at a time to respond to individual items, group IQ tests are strictly paper-and-pencil tests. The primary advantage of group tests is their ease of administration (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997).

Adaptive Testing: Computer-Administered Tests

Ensuring that tests are reliable, valid, and based on appropriate norms has become more critical with computer-administered testing. In computerized versions of tests, not only are test questions viewed and answered on a computer, but the test itself is individualized.

With adaptive testing, every test-taker does not receive identical sets of test questions. Instead, the computer first presents a randomly selected question of moderate difficulty. If the test-taker answers it correctly, the computer then presents a randomly chosen item of slightly greater difficulty. If the test-taker answers it incorrectly, the computer presents a slightly easier item. Each question becomes slightly harder or easier than the question preceding it, depending on whether the previous response is correct. Ultimately, the greater the number of difficult questions answered correctly, the higher the score (Chang & Ansley, 2003; Marszalek, 2007; Belov & Armstrong, 2009; Deng, Ansley, & Chang, 2010).

Because computerized adaptive testing pinpoints a test-taker’s level of proficiency fairly quickly, the total time spent taking the exam is shorter than it is with a traditional exam. Test-takers are not forced to spend a great deal of time answering questions that are either much easier or much harder than they can handle.

Critics of adaptive testing suggest that it may discriminate against test-takers who have less access to computers and thus may have less practice with them or may be more intimidated by the testing medium. In other cases, high-ability test-takers who make an early mistake and find the items getting easier may begin to feel such anxiety that their performance suffers, leading to a downward spiral in their performance. Still, most research suggests that adaptive testing provides scores equivalent to those of traditional paper-and-pencil measures for most types of testing (Passos, Berger, & Tan, 2007; Rulison & Loken, 2009).
Chapter 9  PERSONALITY AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Variations in Intellectual Ability

More than 7 million people in the United States, including around 11 per 1,000 children, have been identified as far enough below average in intelligence that they can be regarded as having a serious deficit. Individuals with low IQs (people with intellectual disabilities) as well as those with unusually high IQs (the intellectually gifted) require special attention if they are to reach their full potential.

Intellectual Disabilities (Mental Retardation)

Although sometimes thought of as a rare phenomenon, intellectual disability occurs in 1 to 3 percent of the population. There is wide variation among those with intellectual disabilities, in large part because of the inclusiveness...
of the definition. **Intellectual disability**—or, as it is also known, **mental retardation**—is characterized by significant limitations in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior involving conceptual, social, and practical skills. (Although experts are increasingly using the term “intellectual disability” instead of “mental retardation,” the terms are used interchangeably, and we’ll use both.)

Although below-average intellectual functioning can be measured in a relatively straightforward manner—using standard IQ tests—it is more difficult to determine how to gauge limitations in adaptive behavior. Ultimately, this imprecision leads to a lack of uniformity in how experts apply the label **intellectual disability**. Furthermore, it has resulted in significant variation in the abilities of people who are categorized as intellectually disabled, ranging from those who can be taught to work and function with little special attention to those who virtually cannot be trained and must receive institutional treatment throughout their lives (Detterman, Gabriel, & Ruthsatz, 2000; Greenspan, 2006).
Most people with intellectual disabilities have relatively minor deficits and are classified as having mild retardation. These individuals, who have IQ scores ranging from 55 to 69, constitute some 90 percent of all people with intellectual disabilities. Although their development is typically slower than that of their peers, they can function quite independently by adulthood and are able to hold jobs and have families of their own (Bates et al., 2001; Smith, 2006).

At greater levels of retardation—moderate retardation (IQs of 40 to 54), severe retardation (IQs of 25 to 39), and profound retardation (IQs below 25)—the difficulties are more pronounced. For people with moderate retardation, deficits are obvious early, with language and motor skills lagging behind those of peers. Although these individuals can hold simple jobs, they need to have a moderate degree of supervision throughout their lives. Individuals with severe and profound intellectual disabilities are generally unable to function independently and typically require care for their entire lives (Garwick, 2007).

**Identifying the Roots of Intellectual Disabilities**

What are the causes of intellectual disabilities? In nearly one-third of the cases there is an identifiable biological origin. The most common biological cause is fetal alcohol syndrome, caused by a mother’s use of alcohol while pregnant. Increasing evidence shows that even small amounts of alcohol intake can produce intellectual deficits. One in every 750 infants is born with fetal alcohol syndrome in the United States (West & Blake, 2005; Manning & Hoyme, 2007; Murthy et al., 2009).

Down syndrome, the type of intellectual disability experienced by actor Chris Burke, represents another major biological cause of intellectual disabilities. Down syndrome results from the presence of an extra chromosome. In other cases of intellectual disabilities, an abnormality occurs in the structure of a chromosome. Birth complications, such as a temporary lack of oxygen, may also cause retardation. In some cases, intellectual disabilities occur after birth, following a head injury, a stroke, or infections such as meningitis (Plomin, & Kovas, 2005; Bittles, Bower, & Hussain, 2007; Rezazadeh & Shaw, 2010).

However, the majority of cases of intellectual disabilities are classified as familial retardation, in which no apparent biological defect exists but there is...
a history of retardation in the family. Whether the family background of retardation is caused by environmental factors—such as extreme continuous poverty leading to malnutrition—or by some underlying genetic factor is usually impossible to determine (Zigler et al., 2002).

**The Intellectually Gifted**

Another group of people—the intellectually gifted—differ from those with average intelligence as much as do individuals with intellectual disabilities, although in a different manner. Accounting for 2 to 4 percent of the population, the **intellectually gifted** have IQ scores greater than 130.

Although the stereotype associated with the gifted suggests that they are awkward, shy social misfits who are unable to get along well with peers, most research indicates that just the opposite is true. The intellectually gifted are most often outgoing, well-adjusted, healthy, popular people who are able to do most things better than the average person can (Lubinski et al., 2006; Guldemond et al., 2007; Mueller, 2009).

For example, in a famous study by psychologist Lewis Terman that started in the early 1920s, 1,500 children who had IQ scores above 140 were followed for the rest of their lives. From the start, the members of this group were more physically, academically, and socially capable than their nongifted peers. In addition to doing better in school, they also showed better social adjustment than average. All these advantages paid off in terms of career success: as a group, the gifted received more awards and distinctions, earned higher incomes, and made more contributions in art and literature than typical individuals. Perhaps most important, they reported greater satisfaction in life than the nongifted (Hegarty, 2007; Kern & Friedman, 2010).

Of course, not every member of the group Terman studied was successful. Furthermore, high intelligence is not a homogeneous quality; a person with a high overall IQ is not necessarily gifted in every academic subject, but may excel in just one or two. A high IQ is not a universal guarantee of success (Shurkin, 1992; Winner, 2003; Clemons, 2006).

---

**Exploring Diversity**

**The Relative Influence of Genetics and Environment: Nature, Nurture, and IQ**

In an attempt to produce a **culture-fair IQ test**, one that does not discriminate against the members of any minority group, psychologists have tried to devise test items that assess experiences common to all cultures or emphasize questions that do not require language usage. However, test makers have found this difficult to do, because past experiences, attitudes, and values almost always have an impact on respondents’ answers (Fagan & Holland, 2009).

For example, children raised in Western cultures group things on the basis of what they are (such as putting dog and fish into the category of animal). In contrast, members of the Kpelle tribe in Africa see intelligence demonstrated by grouping things according to what they do (grouping fish with swim). Similarly, children in the United States asked to memorize the position of objects on a chessboard perform better than do African children living in remote villages if household objects familiar to the U.S. children are used. But if rocks are used instead of household objects, the African children do better. In short, it is
difficult to produce a truly culture-fair test (Sandoval et al., 1998; Serpell, 2000; Valencia & Suzuki, 2003).

The efforts of psychologists to produce culture-fair measures of intelligence relate to a lingering controversy over differences in intelligence between members of minority and majority groups. In attempting to identify whether there are differences between such groups, psychologists have had to confront the broader issue of determining the relative contribution to intelligence of genetic factors (heredity) and experience (environment)—the nature-nurture issue that is one of the basic issues of psychology.

Richard Herrnstein, a psychologist, and Charles Murray, a sociologist, fanned the flames of the debate with the publication of their book *The Bell Curve* in the mid-1990s (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994). They argued that an analysis of IQ differences between whites and blacks demonstrated that although environmental factors played a role, there were also basic genetic differences between the two races. They based their argument on a number of findings. For instance, on average, whites score 15 points higher than do blacks on traditional IQ tests even when socioeconomic status (SES) is taken into account. According to Herrnstein and Murray, middle- and upper-SES blacks score lower than do middle- and upper-SES whites, just as lower-SES blacks score lower on average than do lower-SES whites. Intelligence differences between blacks and whites, they concluded, could not be attributed to environmental differences alone.

Moreover, intelligence in general shows a high degree of **heritability**, a measure of the degree to which a characteristic can be attributed to genetic, inherited factors (e.g., Petrill, 2005; Miller & Penke, 2007; Plomin, 2009). As can be seen in Figure 6, the closer the genetic link between two related people, the greater the correspondence of IQ scores. Using data such as these, Herrnstein and Murray argued that differences between races in IQ scores were largely caused by genetically based differences in intelligence.

However, many psychologists reacted strongly to the arguments laid out in *The Bell Curve*, refuting several of the book’s basic arguments. One criticism is that even when attempts are made to hold socioeconomic conditions constant, wide variations remain among individual households. Furthermore, no one can convincingly assert that the living conditions of blacks and whites are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Genetic Overlap</th>
<th>Rearing</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monozygotic (identical) twins</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dizygotic (fraternal) twins</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Apart</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-child</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-child</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Apart</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoptive parent-child</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated children</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouses</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Apart</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 6** The relationship between IQ and closeness of genetic relationship. In general, the more similar the genetic and environmental background of two people, the greater the correlation. Note, for example, that the correlation for spouses, who are genetically unrelated and have been reared apart, is relatively low, whereas the correlation for identical twins reared together is substantial. (Source: Adapted from Henderson, 1982.)
identical even when their socioeconomic status is similar. In addition, there is reason to believe that traditional IQ tests may discriminate against lower-SES urban blacks by asking for information pertaining to experiences they are unlikely to have had (American Psychological Association Task Force on Intelligence, 1996; Hall, 2002; Horn, 2002; Nisbett, 2007).

Moreover, blacks who are raised in economically enriched environments have similar IQ scores to whites in comparable environments. For example, a study by Sandra Scarr and Richard Weinberg (1976) examined black children who had been adopted at an early age by white middle-class families of above-average intelligence. The IQ scores of those children averaged 106—about 15 points above the average IQ scores of unadopted black children in the study. Other research shows that the racial gap in IQ narrows considerably after a college education, and cross-cultural data demonstrate that when racial gaps exist in other cultures, it is the economically disadvantaged groups that typically have lower scores. In short, the evidence that genetic factors play the major role in determining racial differences in IQ is not compelling (Winston, 2004; Sternberg, Grigorenko, & Kidd, 2005; Fagan & Holland, 2007; Nisbett, 2009).

Furthermore, drawing comparisons between different races on any dimension, including IQ scores, is an imprecise, potentially misleading, and often fruitless venture. By far, the greatest discrepancies in IQ scores occur when comparing individuals, not when comparing mean IQ scores of different groups. There are blacks who score high on IQ tests and whites who score low, just as there are whites who score high and blacks who score low. For the concept of intelligence to aid in the betterment of society, we must examine how individuals perform, not the groups to which they belong (Angoff, 1988; Fagan & Holland, 2002, 2007).

The more critical question to ask is not whether hereditary or environmental factors primarily underlie intelligence, but whether there is anything we can do to maximize the intellectual development of each individual. If we can find ways to do this, we will be able to make changes in the environment—which may take the form of enriched home and school environments—that can lead each person to reach his or her potential.

**RECAP**

**Summarize the theories of intelligence.**

- Because intelligence can take many forms, defining it is challenging. One commonly accepted view is that intelligence is the capacity to understand the world, think rationally, and use resources effectively when faced with challenges. (p. 381)
- The earliest psychologists assumed that there is a general factor for mental ability called g. However, later psychologists disputed the view that intelligence is unidimensional. (p. 381)
- Some researchers suggest that intelligence can be broken down into fluid intelligence and crystallized intelligence. Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences proposes that there are eight spheres of intelligence. (p. 382)
Information-processing approaches examine the processes underlying intelligent behavior rather than focusing on the structure of intelligence. (p. 384)

**Compare and contrast practical and emotional intelligences.**

- Practical intelligence is intelligence related to overall success in living; emotional intelligence is the set of skills that underlie the accurate assessment, evaluation, expression, and regulation of emotions. (p. 384)

**Explain approaches to assessing intelligence.**

- Intelligence tests have traditionally compared a person’s mental age and chronological age to yield an IQ, or intelligence quotient, score. (p. 387)
- Specific tests of intelligence include the Stanford-Binet test, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale–IV (WAIS-IV), and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children–IV (WISC-IV). (p. 388)

**Identify variations in intellectual ability.**

- The levels of intellectual disabilities include mild, moderate, severe, and profound retardation. (p. 390)
- About one-third of the cases of intellectual disabilities have a known biological cause; fetal alcohol syndrome is the most common. Most cases, however, are classified as familial retardation, for which there is no known biological cause. (p. 390)
- The intellectually gifted are people with IQ scores greater than 130. Intellectually gifted people tend to be healthier and more successful than are the nongifted. (p. 393)
- Traditional intelligence tests have frequently been criticized for being biased in favor of the white middle-class population. This controversy has led to attempts to devise culture-fair tests, IQ measures that avoid questions that depend on a particular cultural background. (p. 393)

---

**EVALUATE**

1. _______ is a measure of intelligence that takes into account a person’s chronological and mental ages.
2. _______ tests predict a person’s ability in a specific area; _______ tests determine the specific level of knowledge in an area.
3. _______ _______ _______ is the most common biological cause of intellectual disabilities.
4. People with high intelligence are generally shy and socially withdrawn. True or false?
5. A(n) _______ _______ test tries to use only questions appropriate to all the people taking the test.

---

**RETHINK**

What is the role of emotional intelligence in the classroom? How might emotional intelligence be tested? Should emotional intelligence be a factor in determining academic promotion to the next grade?
KEY TERMS

Intelligence p. 381
g or g-factor p. 381
Fluid intelligence p. 382
Crystallized intelligence p. 382
Theory of multiple intelligences p. 382
Practical intelligence p. 385
Emotional intelligence p. 385
Intelligence tests p. 387
Mental age p. 387
Intelligence quotient (IQ) p. 387
Intellectual disability (or mental retardation) p. 391
Fetal alcohol syndrome p. 392
Familial retardation p. 392
Intellectually gifted p. 393
Culture-fair IQ test p. 393
Heritability p. 394

Psychology on the Web

1. Sigmund Freud is one of the towering figures in psychology. His influence extends far beyond his psychoanalytic work. Find information about Freud on the Web. Pick one aspect of his work or influence (e.g., on therapy, medicine, literature, film, or culture and society) and summarize in writing what you have found, including your attitude toward your findings.

2. Find a website that links to personality tests and take one or two tests—remembering to take them with skepticism. For each test, summarize in writing the aspects of personality that were tested, the theoretical approach the test appeared to be based on, and your assessment of the trustworthiness of the results.
People often have difficulty believing that Mike and Marty Scanlon are brothers, let alone twins. The two men bear a resemblance, but the similarity ends there.

Marty Scanlon was always a quiet, well-behaved child. He excelled in all his academic subjects throughout his school years, although he was shy and had few friends. Marty would always be polite to people, but he generally preferred to keep to himself. After college, Marty became a successful network administrator for a large financial company and married his longtime girlfriend. A dedicated family man, Marty spends most of his free time doing home improvement projects and looking after his two children.

Mike Scanlon, on the other hand, could never be described as shy. He was the student that teachers dreaded having in their classroom: boisterous, unruly, and indifferent to authority. Mike had many brushes with the law throughout his high school years, for crimes ranging from vandalism to public drunkenness. Mike dropped out of high school to take a job as an oil-change technician at a local garage; he spends most of his free time and money at local bars—at least the ones that haven’t banned him for starting fights. Mike’s current legal trouble surrounds two of his ex-girlfriends, who are independently taking him to court for child support. Mike is unfazed, however; he laughs with his friends that they’ll never get a dime from him.

1. How would Freud explain the personality differences between Mike and Marty Scanlon?

2. How would you rate Mike and Marty Scanlon on the “Big Five” personality traits?

3. Given that Mike and Marty Scanlon are twins and share some of their genetic makeup, how would you explain the pronounced differences in their personalities? What role, if any, does temperament seem to be playing?

4. Which of the two brothers seems more likely to be achieving self-actualization, and why do you think so?

5. Do Mike and Marty Scanlon appear to have different levels of intelligence, or do they show intelligence in different ways? Why do you think so?
For Raymond Matlock, meeting the challenges of life, working hard, and having the right attitude have opened a number of doors that he hopes will someday lead to a role in local politics.

The loss of a leg to cancer just out of high school shattered Matlock’s dream of playing college basketball on scholarship. But he began to chart a different course for his life when he enrolled at Rockford Career College.

“My parents encouraged me to attend Rockford, and I couldn’t have made a better decision,” he says.

Matlock credits two of the many courses he took at Rockford as pivotal in guiding his current profession as the Deputy in Charge at the U.S. Bankruptcy Court.

“The information and skills I received from my psychology course and my Student Orientation for Success course are used in my job today,” he describes. “My SOS course prepared me to obtain and keep my current job, while my psychology course taught me various methods of dealing with problems and gave me the critical thinking skills I use every day at work.”

One of the ways in which Matlock incorporates his knowledge of psychology is in his dealings with the people he manages.

“I’ve learned that when your staff knows you have confidence in them, your confidence can inspire and motivate, and will give them a sense of dedication to the task,” Matlock explains. “Engaging staff is not just good for morale, either. You can get more complete information by talking with people with different perspectives and levels of experience.”

Preceding his 19 years at the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, the 1988 Rockford graduate spent four years as a legal assistant with a local law firm. And while he does look toward retirement from his current position in 10 years, he’s already thinking of new paths to travel.

“I’ve thought about politics at the grassroots, local level,” Matlock says. “I look around and see where a lot of things can change—we can have better roads, we can clean up abandoned buildings, we can make Rockford a better community.”
Psychodynamic Approaches to Personality

Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory: Mapping the Unconscious Mind

The Neo-Freudian Psychoanalysts: Building on Freud

Trait, Learning, Biological, Evolutionary, and Humanistic Approaches to Personality

Trait Approaches: Placing Labels on Personality

Learning Approaches: We Are What We’ve Learned

Biological and Evolutionary Approaches: Are We Born with Personality?

Humanistic Approaches: The Uniqueness of You

Comparing Approaches to Personality
Assessing Personality: Determining What Makes Us Distinctive

- Self-Report Measures of Personality
- Projective Methods
- Behavioral Assessment

Intelligence?

- Theories of Intelligence: Are There Different Kinds of Intelligence?
- Practical Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence: Toward a More Intelligent View of Intelligence

- Assessing Intelligence
- Variations in Intellectual Ability