

## **MODULE 1 HISTORY AND APPROACHES**

### **PRESCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY**

- Confucius stressed the power of ideas and of an educated mind.
- In Ancient Greece, the philosopher-teacher Socrates and his student Plato concluded that mind is separable from body and continues after the body dies, and that knowledge is innate (born within us).
- Aristotle derived principles from careful observations and knowledge is not preexisting (grows through experience).
- Rene Descartes derived thought from “spirits” in the brain that was then able to talk to the muscles to produce body movement. The “spirits” also reclaimed memories from past experiences.
- John Locke argued that the mind at birth is a tabula rasa “blank slate” that writes in experiences. Formed the idea of EMPIRICISM, the idea that what we know comes from experience and that observation and experimentation enable scientific knowledge.

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE IS BORN**

- December 1879, German Professor Wilhelm Wundt created the first experimental psychology lab at the University of Leipzig. Seeking reflexes, or “atoms of the mind” Wundt wanted to understand mental processes.
- G. Stanley Hall created the first US experimental psychology lab at Johns Hopkins University.
- Early schools of thought: **structuralism, functionalism, behaviorism, Gestalt Psychology, and psychoanalysis.**

### **THINKING ABOUT THE MIND'S STRUCTURE**

- Edward Titchener joined Cornell University and introduced STRUCTURALISM, used introspection (looking inward) to reveal the structure of the human mind. Immediate sensations without cognitive thought. Not used today.

### **THINKING ABOUT THE MIND'S FUNCTION**

- William James wondered why the brain functions the way it does pertaining to certain features. This is known as FUNCTIONALISM, consciousness encouraged explorations of down-to-earth emotions, memories, willpower, habits, and moment to moment. First lecturer and writer of Psychology. Wrote *Principles of Psychology*.

- Mary Whiton Calkins, studied under William James at Harvard University but was refused to accept due to inequality. In 1905, Calkins became a distinguished memory researcher and became the first APA female president.
- Margaret Floy Washburn accepted the first female Ph. D degree from Harvard. Titchener did not allow Washburn to join the EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGISTS, who explore behavior and thinking with experiments.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE DEVELOPS**

- Up until the 1920's - *Psychology* was defined as "the science of mental life."
- John B. Watson and B.F. Skinner dismissed introspection and redefined psychology as "the scientific study of observable behavior." Psychologists can NOT observe sensations, thinking, or emotions but we can observe BEHAVIOR through a process called conditioning. BEHAVIORISTS became the second major force in psychology.
- *Freudian psychology* emphasized the ways our unconscious thought processes and our emotional responses to childhood experiences affect our behaviors. Modern day version is *psychodynamic approach*.
- Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow found that the HUMANISTIC APPROACH drew attention to ways that current environmental influences can nurture or limit our growth potential and the importance of having our needs for love and acceptance satisfied.
- Cognitive Psychology explores the ways we perceive, process, and remember information. COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE is a study that tries to understand the brain activity underlying mental activity.
- PSYCHOLOGY is the science of behavior (anything an organism does) and mental processes (internal, subjective experiences we infer from behavior).

**BE ABLE TO ANSWER:** What event defined the founding of modern scientific psychology?

**PRACTICE FRQ:** The definition of psychology changed as the field evolved during the early years. Why did John B. Watson object to the definition preferred by Wundt, Titchener, and James? What group of psychologists did Watson's ideas influence? How did Watson redefine psychology?