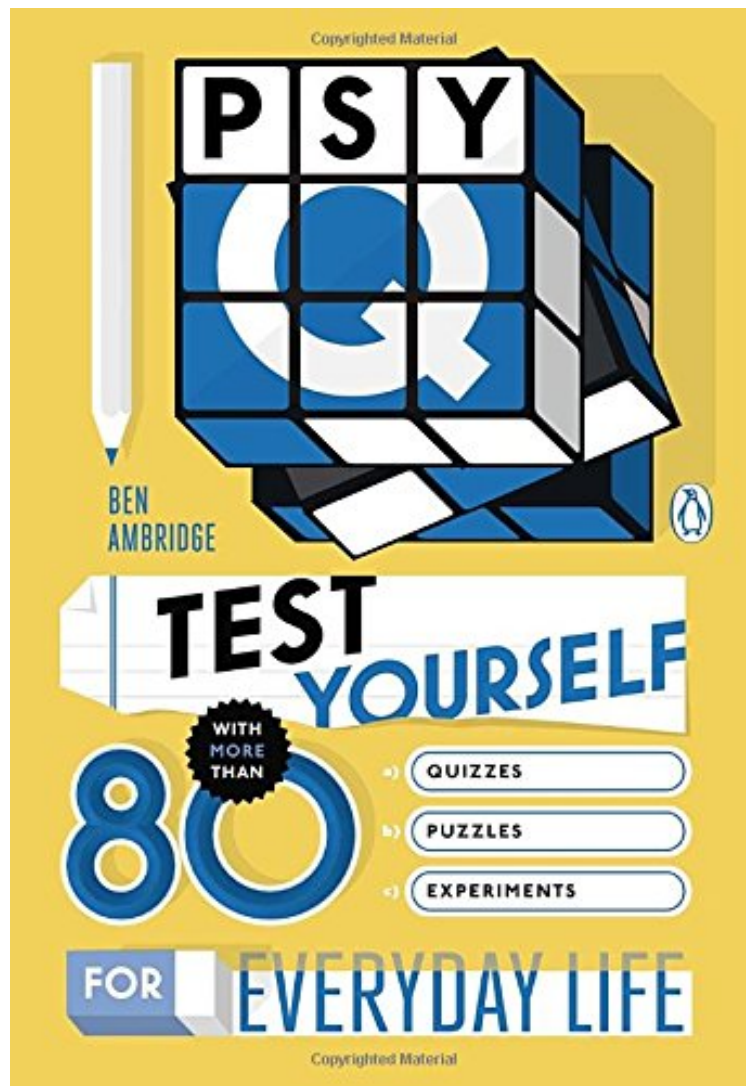


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Psy-Q: Test Yourself with More Than 80 Quizzes, Puzzles and Experiments for Everyday Life

Ben Ambridge

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Ben Ambridge : Psy-Q: Test Yourself with More Than 80 Quizzes, Puzzles and Experiments for Everyday Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Psy-Q: Test Yourself with More Than 80 Quizzes, Puzzles and Experiments for Everyday Life:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fun, but cornyBy emily!This book is chock full of neat quizzes and

some psych history to boot. Sometimes the author is a little corny, but the book is a lot of fun overall. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Not for the Discerning Science FanBy CustomerFun for those who believe in mythological popular psychology. I made the mistake of ordering this, in conjunction with a book about psychology myths. As I was made aware of such myths, this book became a bit nonsensical. If you are an aspiring scientist, I would advise against this as it contains little to no empirical evidence regarding the methodology of the "tests". 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Deborah B.Lots of fun for the brain!

Psychology 101 as you wish it were taught: a collection of entertaining experiments, quizzes, jokes, and interactive exercises Psychology is the study of mind and behavior: how and why people do absolutely everything that people do, from the most life-changing event such as choosing a partner, to the most humdrum, such as having an extra donut. Ben Ambridge takes these findings and invites the reader to test their knowledge of themselves, their friends, and their families through quizzes, jokes, and games. You'll measure your personality, intelligence, moral values, skill at drawing, capacity for logical reasoning, and more—all of it adding up to a greater knowledge of yourself, a higher "Psy-Q". Lighthearted, fun, and accessible, this is the perfect introduction to psychology that can be fully enjoyed and appreciated by readers of all ages. Take Dr. Ben's quizzes to learn: - If listening to Mozart makes you smarter - Whether or not your boss is a psychopath - How good you are at waiting for a reward (and why it matters) - Why we find symmetrical faces more attractive - What your taste in art says about you

"A cornucopia of brain-teasers and other (psycho)logical delights that will challenge, surprise, and amuse"--Guy Deutscher, author of *Through the Language Glass* "A clear and engaging explanation of many psychological phenomena you've vaguely heard of, and many more you'll be glad to learn about."--Steven Pinker, author of *How the Mind Works* and *The Stuff of Thought* About the Author Ben Ambridge is a senior lecturer in psychology at the University of Liverpool in the U.K. His article, "Why Can't We Talk to Animals?" was shortlisted for the 2012 Wellcome Trust Science Writing Prize, and was the most widely read article ever published on the Wellcome Trust Science Blog. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Acknowledgments I would like to thank Daniel Crewe, Nick Sheerin and Penny Daniel at Profile; Melanie Tortoroli at Penguin; and Sally Holloway at Felicity Bryan Associates for their extremely helpful guidance, comments and suggestions; Matthew Taylor for copyediting; and Nicky Barneby for design and typesetting. Preface: Psychology Is Everything You've heard of your IQ; your general intelligence. But what's your "Psy-Q"? How much do you know and understand about what makes you tick? And how good are you at predicting other people's behavior . . . or even your own? The aim of this book is to share the answers that psychology has come up with to explain how and why humans do all the things we do. But it is not some dry, dusty psychology textbook, filled—as most are—with details of long, boring experiments and byzantine theories. What you want to know is what psychology can tell you about yourself and your life. Well, I'm not going to tell you. Instead, I'm going to show you, via a series of interactive tests, quizzes, puzzles, games and illusions. Of course, we don't have everything figured out right now. But by the time you reach the end of this book, you will not only have the very best answers that science can offer but will also have gained a powerful insight into your own psychology. Notice that I used the word "science." As a psychology researcher, I'm first and foremost a scientist. Psychology derives its value from following the scientific method: we come up with theories and test them, using the most controlled experiments possible. Every study that we will meet over the course of this book is drawn from the peer-reviewed scientific literature. And while scientists rarely reach a consensus on anything, the explanations and conclusions I give are based on my reading of the best evidence that is currently available, with no wild conjecture, no pseudo-science and absolutely no pop-psychology pap. So, while you'll encounter both cutting-edge studies and plenty of classics, there are very few from the period before psychology established itself as an experimental science, somewhere in the 1950s. But Psy-Q doesn't just describe these studies; it is these studies. You'll measure your personality, intelligence, moral values, thinking style, impulsivity, skill at drawing, capacity for logical reasoning, musical taste, multitasking ability, susceptibility to illusions (both visual and mental) and preferences in a romantic partner. You'll learn how we as a species think, feel, see and respond to others. You'll be surprised, delighted, amazed, amused, frustrated, horrified and downright baffled. You'll turn psychologist and ask friends and family to complete the studies in order to compare your results. You'll run to your computer to complete online versions of the studies, many at the companion Web site (www.Psy-Qbook.com). And by the end of your journey, I hope you'll have begun to see that psychology is everything: there is literally no aspect of the human experience that cannot be investigated, in some way or other, using the methods of experimental psychology. As for the route that you take through the book, well, it's up to you. Although I've tried to put these studies in some kind of logical order, mixing up sections of different types to keep things lively, feel free to navigate your own path between cross-referenced studies or to float around at random as the mood takes you; it's your book, your brain and your voyage of discovery. So, anchors aweigh, let's set sail on your very own psych-odyssey. The Raw Shark Test Let's start with what is almost certainly the most famous psychological test ever: the Rorschach test. To complete the test, simply write what you see in the space below each image, then turn the page to find out what your answers say about you. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. ANSWERS 1. The first card is really

just a warm-up, and has fairly obvious responses that don't actually say anything much about you. Is it a bat, a butterfly or a moth? It doesn't matter. 2. Now we're getting into it. Most people will say that this looks like two humans, or animals such as bears or elephants. But do you think they're fighting, holding hands or simply saying hello? If you said the former, this may indicate that you have angry or aggressive tendencies. 3. This one definitely looks like two humans, right (perhaps with love hearts or butterflies in between them)? If you didn't spot them, or took a long time to do so, this suggests that you may struggle with social interactions. 4. This card is often referred to as the "father card," because whatever you say about it reflects your attitude toward your father. For example, if you saw a bear coming to devour you, you're probably a bit afraid of your father (or all men, or authority figures more generally). 5. This is another "easy" card, designed to give you a break, and to check that you're paying attention and not giving completely off-the-wall answers. If you didn't say something like moth, butterfly or bat (or the Donnie Darko rabbit), you've got issues. 6. Number six is a sex card. Oh, come on, use your imagination! If you said animal skin or rug, you might be trying to repress your sexuality. 7. The companion to number 4, this card is often called the "mother card." So what did you see? Two angels? Good. Two witches? Not so good. If you didn't see women at all, this may reflect some difficulty in getting close to the women in your life. 8. The last three cards are all full-color in the original version, so you can be forgiven for struggling a little. Most people see some kind of four-legged animal. If you didn't, it may reflect a difficulty in coping with complex situations or emotions in which—as in this card—there is a lot going on. 9. Most people struggle to come up with anything much here (perhaps a person?), though if you drew a complete blank, it may reflect difficulties in dealing with situations where you have to think for yourself. 10. Again, there's quite a lot going on here, and no single "typical" response. People sometimes see crabs, lobsters, spiders, snakes or insects. If you brought these parts together as one—for example, answering an underwater scene—this suggests excellent organizational skills. However, since test-takers know that this is the last card, psychologists are often on the lookout for conscious or unconscious attempts to send a "take-home" message about one's current situation or mental state.

The Rorschach test—of which you have just taken a version—was published by the Swiss psychologist Hermann Rorschach in 1921. Rorschach may have taken his inspiration from *Gobolinks*, a nineteenth-century book of children's poetry based around inkblot people, animals and monsters (Download *Gobolinks*, or *Shadow-Pictures for Young and Old*). The theory behind the test is that, by asking patients to describe pictures rather than talk about themselves directly, we can tap into subconscious thoughts and emotions that the patients may be unaware of, or even deliberately trying to hide (something we'll learn more about later in the section *The Interpretation of Dreams*).

Now, if you thought that the "answers" above were a little flippant, you're right. Although these interpretations are based loosely on the conventional wisdom regarding this test, psychologists are divided as to whether or not the conventional wisdom is right, or whether or not the test tells us anything of value at all. So I figured I could say pretty much whatever I liked. I call the version with my interpretation scheme the *Raw Shark Test*. This is not to say that today's clinical psychologists have abandoned the Rorschach test. Many still swear by it, and there exist detailed scoring manuals designed to overcome the apparent subjectivity regarding the interpretation of particular responses. Even the test's harshest critics concede that it can be useful for diagnosing schizophrenia (although one study found that it also diagnosed the disorder in almost one-sixth of apparently normal participants). Certainly the usefulness of the Rorschach test for the purposes I have used it here—assessing personality in (hopefully!) normal readers—is debatable, to say the least.

However, there is one pattern of responses that is particularly illuminating . . .

Web Link Download *Gobolinks*, or *Shadow-Pictures for Young and Old* from: www.read.gov/books/young.html.

A Dirty Joke A patient visits a clinical psychologist who administers the Rorschach inkblot test. "Now tell me what you see," says the psychologist, showing the patient the first card. "A naked woman," replies the patient. "OK," says the psychologist, "let's try another one." "A couple having sex," the patient responds instantly. "Hmm," says the psychologist, arching his eyebrows. "Let's try the next one . . ." This carries on through the whole set of ten cards, with the patient giving increasingly filthy answers. "Mr. Jones," announces the psychologist, "I'm afraid to have to tell you that you have an unhealthy obsession with sex." The patient looks shocked. "Me?! You're the one with all the dirty pictures."

Your Personality Profile While the Rorschach test is of questionable value as a measure of personality, psychologists have developed a number of tests and questionnaires that are much more useful. Although there are many different ways to describe personality, perhaps the most widely accepted is the Big Five model, which attempts to capture personality in just five traits. Before we find out what these are, why not measure your own personality by taking the test below? Below are phrases that describe people's behavior. Please use the rating scale below to describe how accurately each statement describes you. Describe yourself as you generally are now, in relation to other people you know who are the same sex as and roughly the same age as you, not as you wish to be in the future. Please read each statement carefully and then mark the corresponding box (ignoring the numbers for now). It is important to be as honest as possible; remember there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. Visit (<http://bit.ly/1tzLOtI>) for a larger version of this survey.

ANSWERS The five personality traits are Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism (referred to as a group by the acronym OCEAN). Before we find out your score for each of these traits, a quick health warning is in order. Psychologists are not in the business of categorizing people as "extroverts" versus "introverts," "agreeable" versus "disagreeable" and so on. Since each of these traits forms a

continuum, all we can meaningfully ask is whether an individual scores higher or lower than average for his or her particular age group, occupation, geographical region, etc. That said, we can get a rough-and-ready rule of thumb simply by transposing the five scoring bands of the original questionnaire on to the possible range of scores for each trait: 10–17 = Low; 18–25 = Medium low; 26–33 = Medium; 34–41 = Medium high; 42–50 = High. To find your score for Openness to experience, add together your scores for People who score highly for openness to experience appreciate adventure, novelty and variety. They are curious and creative, and enjoy the arts. They are also more likely to engage in risky sexual and drug-taking behavior. Celebrities who might be expected to score highly on this measure include Jimi Hendrix and Kurt Cobain. To find your score for Conscientiousness, add together your scores for People who score highly for conscientiousness are organized and dependable. They tend not to act spontaneously but make detailed plans and have the self-discipline to stick to them. Celebrities who might be expected to score highly on this measure include Stephen Hawking and Barack Obama (and, indeed, most scientists and politicians). To find your score for Extroversion, add together your scores for People who score highly for extroversion are the life and soul of the party. They are talkative, positive, assertive and full of energy. Celebrities who might be expected to score highly on this measure include Madonna and Oprah Winfrey (though some celebrities—think Michael Jackson and Lady Gaga—seem to adopt a flamboyant public persona to mask a more introverted personality). To find your score for Agreeableness, add together your scores for People who score highly for agreeableness are, quite simply, those people who everybody loves. They tend to be kind and cooperative rather than hostile and suspicious toward others. Women consistently score more highly on agreeableness than men. There are a great many Web sites discussing which celebrities are genuinely agreeable in person. Johnny Depp seems to have a good reputation, while the consensus is that Jennifer Lopez would probably score rather low for this trait. To find your score for Neuroticism, add together your scores for People who score highly for neuroticism are anxious worriers who are likely to experience negative emotions such as depression and anger. Woody Allen has based his entire career on being a self-confessed neurotic. But the point of this test isn't simply to discover which celebrity you most resemble. As we will see in later chapters, your scores for Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism predict a great deal about you, including what music you like (Stereo Types), whether you prefer to multitask or deal with things one at a time (Focus on Your Knitting), the types of words you use in your writing (I'll keep this one a surprise), your susceptibility—perhaps—to certain visual illusions (The Necker Cube) and even the levels of testosterone and estrogen (sex hormones) that you were exposed to while in your mother's womb (Prescient Palmistry). Not bad for a two-minute checklist. It's All Chinese to Me: Part 1 Don't look yet, but on the opposite page are ten Chinese characters. When I say "go," just glance at the page for a second or less, then turn it over. Don't study the characters closely or try to remember them. Promise? OK, go! It's All Chinese to Me: Part 2 No cheating—turn over right now! It's All Chinese to Me: Part 3 Below are twenty Chinese characters. This time, your job is to rate how much you like each one, on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). Write your score in the boxes below (labeled A–T). Although you may not have any particularly strong preferences, do try to use the whole of the scale (i.e., don't just put 3 for each one). Now look at the next page to find out what this is all about. It's All Chinese to Me: Part 4 As you may have realized, some of these characters were ones that you had seen on the previous page, while others were new. To find your total score for the old, previously seen characters, add up your ratings for A, D, F, H, J, L, O, P, Q and T. To find your total score for the new, previously unseen characters, add up your ratings for B, C, E, G, I, K, M, N, R and S. What did you find? You preferred the old characters to the new ones, right? If you are anything like the participants who completed the original version of this study, your total liking score will have been around 30 for the old characters and 25 for the new ones. Contrary to popular wisdom, familiarity breeds not contempt, but content (that's content as in "happy" not content as in "stuff that is contained"): you prefer something you've seen before to something you haven't, and—up to a point—the more you see it, the more you like it. This holds true even when the stimuli are presented subliminally: in the original version of this study each character was flashed up for just five-thousandths of a second, meaning that participants were unsure whether or not they'd seen anything at all, and certainly unable to consciously remember individual characters. Yet still they preferred the old characters to the new. This effect is also seen with babies, who are born preferring sounds that they heard in the womb, whether their mother's voice or the theme song of her favorite TV show. The same is true for both rats and chickens, which can easily be trained to prefer certain musical tones and even certain composers. Psychologists call this the mere-exposure effect; but what causes it? Many textbooks will tell you that the effect is due to an increased subjective feeling of familiarity ("Oh yes, I remember this one"), which we somehow misinterpret as liking. But this doesn't seem to be right, as the effect is seen even if participants report no subjective sense of familiarity at all, as in the study where they saw each Chinese character for just 0.005 seconds. This leaves two more promising explanations. The first is perceptual fluency—the idea that visual processing is easier for things that you've seen before, and you like things that are easy. There is some supporting evidence for this idea, but it struggles to explain a related experimental finding: participants who are repeatedly shown the same (subliminal) stimuli report an overall improvement in their mood. If I ask you to do another form of processing repeatedly, such as solving the same set of math problems over and over, you will probably find that it gets easier on each run-through; but I sincerely doubt that it will improve your mood. The

second explanation is based on classical conditioning. You're probably familiar with Pavlov's famous experiments, in which a dog that hears a bell every time food is about to be served comes to associate the bell with the food, and salivates whenever the bell rings. Robert Zajonc, a psychologist at Stanford University in California, argues that mere-exposure effects work in a similar way. The thing that we become familiar with (e.g., the Chinese character) is like the bell, and the "feeling of liking" is like the salivation. What is like the food? Zajonc's answer is simply the fact that everything is OK and nothing bad is happening. So, in the same way that the bell comes to mean "food is coming"—and hence causes salivation—the Chinese character comes to mean "everything is OK," and hence causes liking, which, consequently, improves your overall mood. Of course, advertisers have known about the mere-exposure effect for years. Why do you think companies are prepared to pay millions in sponsorship just for their name or logo to be seen, even though this type of advertising gives consumers virtually no information about the company or its products? But if Zajonc's explanation of exposure effects as classical conditioning is correct, these sponsorship deals could easily backfire. What if a particular brand starts to be associated not with the feeling that everything is OK but with that sinking feeling you get when your team is losing? In this case, perhaps the old adage would prove to be right after all, and familiarity—in this case with the company logo—really would breed contempt. Speaking of contempt . . .

Spot the Deference What's the difference between a psychologist and a psychiatrist? **ANSWER** The (not particularly funny) "joke" answer is either "drugs" or "about \$30,000 a year." But, of course, the joke answer doesn't make any sense unless you know the real answer. Psychology is the study (ology) of the person, mind or soul (the psyche*). Psychiatry is the treatment or healing (iatry, from the Greek iatros, meaning "doctor") of the same. So, a psychiatrist is a doctor who specializes in treating patients with conditions such as depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) or schizophrenia. This is done mostly through the use of drugs (hence the first "joke" answer), which is why all psychiatrists are fully qualified medical doctors. Of course, the fact that doctors tend to be among the highest paid of all professionals, particularly in the United States, is what gives rise to the second "joke" answer. A psychologist, on the other hand, is someone who studies people and their behavior but does not necessarily offer any treatment. Now, some psychologists are qualified clinical psychologists, who have taken a psychology degree and a postgraduate clinical psychology training course, and treat the same types of patients as psychiatrists. Clinical psychologists generally do not use drugs but instead employ "talking cures" such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which aims to show patients that their obsessive or compulsive thoughts are inaccurate or unhelpful. But most psychologists are not clinical psychologists. There are other types of practicing psychologists, such as sports and exercise psychologists, occupational psychologists and educational psychologists, who are hired by sports teams, businesses and education providers respectively to help improve performance. Beware, though: while all of the titles above—including psychiatrist and clinical psychologist—are "protected terms" in most countries (meaning that you need a qualification to use them), anyone can call him- or herself a "psychologist" with no qualifications at all.* (In fact, there's nothing to stop you from calling yourself a psychologist, particularly after you've tried out a couple of the studies in this book on other people.) Most psychologists, however, are academic psychologists: lecturers and researchers who conduct the types of studies that make up this book. There are as many different types of academic psychologists as there are subbranches of psychology: developmental psychologists (interested in children and learning), health psychologists (interested in, um, people's health), cognitive psychologists (interested in mental processes such as reasoning, memory, categorization, and so on), forensic psychologists (interested in criminal behavior), psychopharmacologists (interested in the effects of drugs on the brain), neuropsychologists (who investigate how memories, concepts, thoughts, feelings, and so on are physically instantiated in the cells of the brain) and psychologists who focus on addiction, obesity, aging, language,* driving, animal learning, visual perception, human-computer interaction, intelligence, personality, sexual attraction, face recognition, pain, hearing and just about anything else that humans (and, in some cases, animals) think, do or feel. To return to the original question, though, the difference between a clinical psychologist and a psychiatrist can be considerable with regard to the approach taken when treating patients with conditions such as depression, OCD and schizophrenia. A somewhat unfair—though perhaps not entirely inaccurate—cliché is that the former are interested only in providing "talking cures" (which some psychiatrists dismiss as having little proven effect), while the latter are interested only in prescribing drugs (which some psychologists dismiss as drugging patients to keep them quiet). In short, if a clinical psychologist and a psychiatrist are assigned to the same case and disagree as to the best course of action, you're going to be waiting an awfully long time before one defers to the other (yes, to "spot the deference"). In the meantime, if you want to annoy a psychologist, just call him a psychiatrist (and vice versa).

How Many Clinical Psychologists Does It Take to Change a Lightbulb? *Professional Psychopaths So, if a psychologist studies the psyche and a psychiatrist treats it, what's a psychopath? Well, since the Greek word pathos means "suffering" and pathology is the study of disease, we can work out that a psychopath is someone with a psyche that is suffering, diseased or disturbed (we'll find out shortly exactly what traits mark out someone as a psychopath). In everyday life many people use the term jokingly to describe anyone who is controlling and egotistical; I'm sure you can think of a few examples from among the people you know. Actually, it may be less of a joke than you imagine: psychopathy is a continuum, meaning that people with at least some psychopathic personality traits are all around us. Below are listed twenty different jobs (in alphabetical order). Ten have the highest

proportion of professionals with psychopathic personality traits; the other ten, the lowest. Your job is to sort them into the two lists. Accountant, Beautician/stylist, CEO, Charity worker, Chef, Civil servant, Clergy, Craftsperson, Creative artist, Doctor, Home health aide, Journalist, Lawyer, Media (TV/radio), Nurse, Police officer, Salesperson, Surgeon, Teacher, Therapist. ANSWER: The ten professions with the highest proportion of psychopathic personality traits are: CEO, lawyer, media (TV/radio), salesperson, surgeon, journalist, police officer, clergy, chef and civil servant.