

# **THE PRODUCT ESSAY PACK**

For CAIE A2 Psychology Paper 3

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**1 (a) Describe what psychologists have discovered about:**

- gift-wrapping, including beliefs of the giver and recipient, and
- attention and shelf position, including a study. [6]

**Ans.**

Gift-wrapping has symbolic and psychological meaning. Gifts are wrapped because it is a social norm and because it increases anticipation and curiosity. Research shows that

[REDACTED]

Attention and shelf position research shows that consumers are more likely to choose products placed in the middle of a display, a phenomenon known as

[REDACTED]

Atalay et al. investigated whether horizontal centrality increases

[REDACTED]

**1(b) Evaluate what psychologists have discovered about:**

- gift-wrapping, including beliefs of the giver and recipient, and
- attention and shelf position, including a study.

**including a discussion about reductionism versus holism.**

**Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10]**

**Ans.**

One relevant issue is reductionism versus holism. Research on gift-wrapping can be reductionist when it explains increased liking purely through

[REDACTED]

However, in reality, product choice is shaped by brand loyalty, price, needs and prior experience.

A second issue is determinism versus free-will. Findings on gift-wrapping suggest a deterministic influence, as recipients' evaluations are

[REDACTED]

. However, free-will is not eliminated. Consumers can deliberately search for

[REDACTED]

A final issue is generalisations from findings. Gift-wrapping studies mostly use student samples and specific products, such as mugs or blankets,

[REDACTED]

2 a) Describe the key study on food package design and taste perceptions by Becker et al. (2011). [6]

Ans.

Becker et al. investigated whether the shape and colour saturation of food packaging influence

[REDACTED]

A field experiment was conducted in a large German supermarket. An opportunity sample of

[REDACTED]

Results showed that angular packaging was perceived as significantly more potent than [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**2 b) Evaluate the key study on food package design and taste perceptions by Becker et al. (2011)**

**including a discussion about generalisability of findings**

**Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10]**

**Ans.**

One relevant issue is generalisations from findings. Becker et al.'s study used an opportunity sample of [REDACTED]

Another issue is objective and subjective data. The study used objective controls by ensuring that all participants tasted [REDACTED]

A final issue is about validity. The study had high internal validity because it carefully manipulated packaging shape and colour saturation, [REDACTED]

**3 a) Describe what psychologists have discovered about:**

- **sales techniques focusing on customer-, competitor- and product-focused techniques and their effects on the buyer-seller relationship, and**
- **interpersonal influence techniques, focusing on disrupt-then-reframe and need for cognitive closure, including a study. [6]**

**Ans.**

Sales techniques differ in how sellers approach buyers and how this affects the buyer-seller relationship. Customer-focused selling treats each buyer as

[REDACTED]

Interpersonal influence techniques aim to increase compliance. The disrupt-then-reframe (DTR) technique uses a

[REDACTED]

Kardes et al. aimed to test whether NFCC moderates the effectiveness of DTR. In a field experiment,

[REDACTED]

3 b) Evaluate what psychologists have discovered about:

- sales techniques focusing on customer-, competitor- and product-focused techniques and their effects on the buyer-seller relationship, and
- interpersonal influence techniques, focusing on disrupt-then-reframe and need for cognitive closure, including a study

including a discussion about application to everyday life

Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10]

Ans.

One relevant issue is application to everyday life. Research on sales techniques has clear practical value, as all are widely used in real marketplaces. Customer-focused techniques lead to trust,

[REDACTED]

Another issue is cultural differences. Sales techniques can differ in effectiveness across cultures. Customer-focused selling may work better in

[REDACTED]

A final issue is determinism versus free-will. Sales techniques and compliance strategies support a deterministic view, as buyers' decisions are decided by communication style rather than their deliberate evaluation. For example, DTR increases

[REDACTED]

4 a) Describe what psychologists have discovered about:

- the Engel–Kollat–Blackwell (EKB) model of buyer decision-making, and
- post-purchase cognitive dissonance, including factors that increase dissonance and ways to reduce it, including a study. [6]

Ans.

The Engel–Kollat–Blackwell (EKB) model explains buyer decision-making as a linear, information-processing sequence. Consumers first receive input such as

[REDACTED]

Post-purchase cognitive dissonance is psychological discomfort caused by a conflict between beliefs and behaviour

[REDACTED]

Nordvall investigated cognitive dissonance in low-involvement grocery choices. Participants completed

[REDACTED] y.



**4 b) Evaluate what psychologists have discovered about:**

- the Engel–Kollat–Blackwell (EKB) model of buyer decision-making, and
- post-purchase cognitive dissonance, including factors that increase dissonance and ways to reduce it, including a study.

including a discussion about cultural differences

**Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10]**

**Ans.**

One relevant issue is cultural differences. The EKB model explicitly includes culture as an external factor influencing problem recognition, evaluation of alternatives and post-purchase

[REDACTED]

Another issue is reductionism versus holism. The EKB model uses a relatively holistic approach by combining cognitive processes, individual differences and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] s.

A final issue is the use of objective and subjective data. The EKB model is supported largely by subjective self-reports of attitudes, beliefs and satisfaction, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*Lesson prepared by:*

**Jyotika Varmani**

CIE A Levels Psychology School Teacher, Modern College, Mauritius  
CIE A Levels Psychology Subject Expert, Podar International, Mumbai  
AQA GCSE and A Levels Psychology Tutor, Expert Tutors, UAE  
AQA A Levels Psychology Tutor, Higher OTS Academy, UAE  
AQA A Levels Psychology Tutor, Gritty Tech, India  
AQA A Levels Psychology Tutor, Aurora ELearning, UAE  
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PGDHE (Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education)  
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<https://www.teacheron.com/tutor-profile/1KH>

To book your GCSE/IGCSE/A-levels classes with Jyotika Varmani:

WhatsApp: **+919892507784** OR

e-mail: [jyotika@excellingpsychology.com](mailto:jyotika@excellingpsychology.com)

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