

Social Psychology

Authoritarian Personality



tutor2u Full Lesson PowerPoint

Jenness (1932)

- **Jenness (1932)** was one of the first psychologists to study conformity. His experiment used an **ambiguous situation** involving a glass bottle filled with beans. He asked participants individually to estimate how many beans the bottle contained.
- Jenness then put the group in a room with the bottle, and asked them to provide a group estimate through discussion.
- **Question: What do you think Jenness (1932) found?**
- **Task: Answer questions 1 and 2 on the handout provided.**



www.tutor2u.net/psychology

tutor2u

Full Lesson PowerPoint Key

- **Green = Key Word or Researcher**
- **Blue = Question / Discussion**
- **Purple = Task / Activity**

*This tutor2u Full Lesson PowerPoint is **copyrighted** and may not be reproduced or shared without permission from the author. All images are sourced under licence from **Shutterstock** and may not be reused or republished.*

Obedience Essay

- Over the last two lessons you have examined research examining obedience and the factors affecting obedience.
- **Task: On a mini whiteboard explain what the difference is between the following two essay questions:**
 - Describe and evaluate one or more studies of obedience. (12 marks)
 - Discuss one or more explanations of obedience. (12 marks)
- Be ready to share your thoughts



Essay Deconstruction

- Task: You will be provided with two model essays.
- Part 1: Highlight the AO1 and AO3 in different colours, e.g.
 - AO1 = Yellow
 - AO3 = Blue

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE ESSAY 1

Milgram wanted to see if ordinary citizens would obey an unjust order from an authority figure. 40 male volunteers took part in what they thought was an experiment on 'punishment and learning' (although they were deceived). The real participant took on the role of a 'teacher' and was instructed to administer an electric shock to the 'learner' (confederate), as the participants went to testing that under the just orders from an

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE ESSAY 2

One explanation of obedience is known as **agentic state**. Here an individual carries out the orders of an authority figure and acts as their 'agent', allowing them to deny personal responsibility. Evidence to support this explanation comes from one of Milgram's variations, where an additional confederate administered the electric shock on behalf of the teacher. In this variation obedience rose from 65% to 92.5% of participants giving the full 450 volts.

This supports the agentic state explanation, as the teacher was able to shift his responsibility onto the other confederate, allowing him to deny personal responsibility, which made him more likely to obey.

Another explanation of obedience is the idea of **legitimate authority**. Here a person is more likely to obey if they believe the authority figure or situation is genuine / real. Evidence to support the idea of legitimate authority comes from one of Milgram's variations, where the experiment was replicated in a run-down building in Connecticut. In this variation obedience levels dropped from 65% to 48%. **This supports the idea of legitimate authority**, as the participants did not believe that the context was a legitimate environment for the experiment to take place and were therefore less likely to obey.

One explanation of obedience is the idea of **uniform**. According to this explanation, we are more likely to obey a person if they are wearing a uniform, as this suggests that they are a **legitimate source of authority**. Evidence to support the idea of uniform comes from one of Milgram's variations. In one of the variations the professor was replaced by another 'participant' in ordinary clothes who came up with the idea of increasing the electric shocks. In this variation, obedience dropped from 65% to 20%. This supports the explanation that **uniform** makes people more likely to obey, as more participants obeyed the professor (in a lab coat) in comparison to another person in ordinary clothes.

logical validity, Milgram's and the idea of being sent on 'punishment and of obedience don't usually e unable to apply Milgram's ow if people would al' situations (e.g. from several ethical guidelines. the right to withdraw (due from harm. Therefore, he tionally anxious during knowing that they

ZAP!

Essay Deconstruction

- Part 2: Re-read essays 1 and 2 and turn the essay into a bullet point plan, outlining the key information and assessment objectives...for example (next slide):

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE STUDENT WORKSHEET

Essay 1: Describe and evaluate one or more studies of obedience (12 marks)
Read essay 1 and turn the essay into a bullet point plan, using the space below.

Essay 2: Discuss one or more explanations of obedience (12 marks)
Read essay 2 and turn the essay into a bullet point plan, using the space below.

Essay Deconstruction - Modelling

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE STUDENT WORKSHEET

Essay 1: Describe and evaluate one or more studies of obedience (12 marks)
Read essay 1 and turn the essay into a 10-point plan using the space below.

- **AO1:** Milgram
- **AO1:** Aim
- **AO1:** Method (40 male volunteers, deception)
- **AO1:** Results (65% 150, 100% 300)
- **AO1:** Conclusion
- **AO3:** Lack of ecological validity; laboratory at Yale.
- **AO3:** etc.

Essay Deconstruction

STRUCTURE 1: Describe and evaluate one or more studies...

- AO1
- AO3x3(AS)

STRUCTURE 2: Discuss one or more explanations of...

- AO1 → AO3
- AO1 → AO3
- AO1 → AO3

- Part 3: Read the 10 essay questions on the handout provided and decide whether structure 1 or 2 would be more appropriate and justify your choice.

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE STUDENT WORKSHEET

tutor2u
Resources for Courses

Decide which structure the following essays should use:

- **Essay 1 Structure** = AO1 followed by 3-5 AO3 points
- **Essay 2 Structure** = AO1/3 repeated.

1 Outline and evaluate the multi-store model of memory (12/16 marks)

2 Outline and evaluate different types of long-term memory (12/16 marks)

3 Discuss research on the effect of misleading information on eyewitness testimony (12/16 marks)

Authoritarian Personality

Lesson Objectives:

- To **define** authoritarian personality.
- To **outline & evaluate** Elms & Milgram's research into authoritarian personality and **apply** their findings to obedience.



Questionnaire

- **Task:** Complete the following questionnaire by reading each statement and deciding whether you agree or disagree, using the scale provided.
- Once you have done this, calculate your score (out of 50) and consider the three questions

Authoritarian Personality

Task: Complete the questionnaire below, using the following scale.

Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither Agree/Disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
1. Children should learn to obey authority.				
2. Children should be disciplined.				
Children should learn to respect authority.				
3. Some jobs are more important for society. For example, businessmen are more important than artists.				
5. It is better to avoid problems and not think about them. If you encounter a problem, you should keep yourself busy with more cheerful activities.				
6. Society would be a better place if people spent more time working and less time talking.				
7. Serious crimes (e.g. rape) should receive a punishment which is more severe than prison.				
8. Society would be a better place without less intelligent people.				
9. Homosexuals should be treated the same as criminals and severely punished.				
10. Children who are not taught manners at an early age cannot expect to mix with decent people later on in life.				
Total				

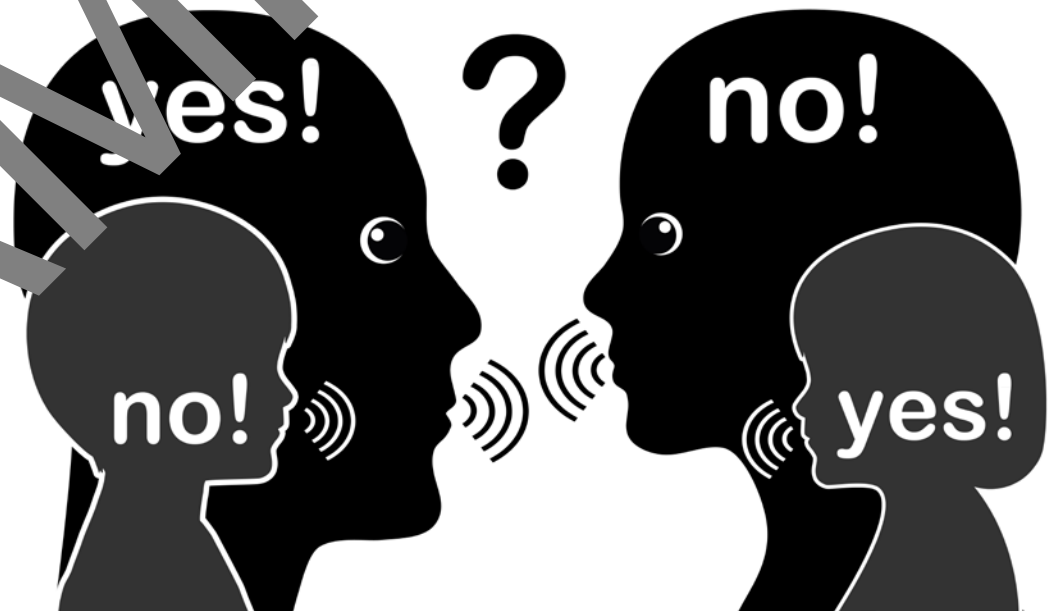
The Authoritarian Personality

- Milgram's study created a conflict in participants:

“Don't harm an innocent person”

vs. **“You must obey authority”**

- However, not all participants fully obeyed, which led psychologists to suggest a dispositional (personality) theory of obedience.



The F Scale

This questionnaire you completed is used to measure **authoritarian personality**. People that strongly agreed with these statements would be said to have an authoritarian personality.

- 40+ Strongly Authoritarian
- 30-39 – Authoritarian
- Question: Do you agree with the results of your questionnaire?
- RM Question: What are the strengths/limitations of gathering data from a questionnaire?

Elms and Milgram (1966)

- **Task: Read the Elms and Milgram study on 'The Authoritarian Personality' and answer the questions on your handout.**
- Be ready to discuss your answers in 15 minutes...

15 Minutes

Elms and Milgram (1966)

Aim: To see if the obedient participants in Milgram's research were more likely to display authoritarian personality traits in comparison to disobedient participants.

Method: Their sample consisted of 20 obedient participants, who administered the full 450 volts and 20 disobedient participants who refused to continue. Each participant completed several personality questionnaires, including **Adorno's F scale**, to measure their level of authoritarian personality. The participants were also interviewed about their relationships with parents and their thoughts about the experimenter and learner in the Milgram's original experiment.

Results: The obedient participants scored higher on the F scale in comparison to the disobedient participants. Furthermore, the obedient participants were less close to their fathers during childhood and admired the experimenter in Milgram's experiment, which was the opposite for disobedient participants.

Conclusion: The obedient participants in Milgram's original research displayed higher levels of the authoritarian personality, in comparison to disobedient participants.

1. Outline one key finding of Elms and Milgram's research?

2. The data collected was correlational, why might this be a problem?

3. Elms and Milgram used the F scale (a questionnaire) to determine levels of authoritarian personality. Why might this be a problem.

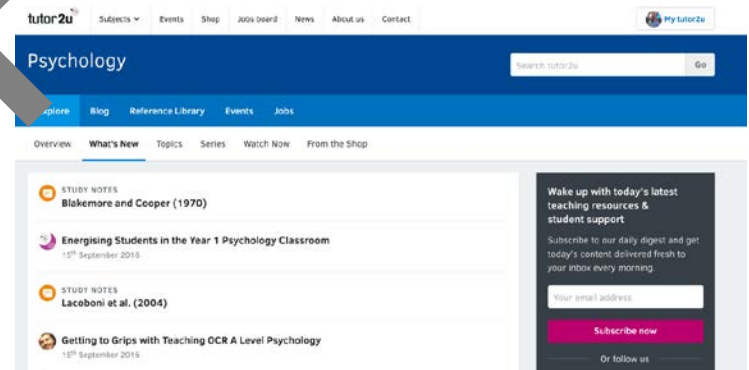
4. Research by Middendorp and Meleon (1990) found that less-educated people are more likely to display authoritarian personality characteristics in comparison to well-educated people. If these claims are correct then why does this pose a problem for the authoritarian explanation of obedience?

A Level Psychology Support from tutor2u

tutor2u is the leading provider of support for A Level Psychology Teachers and Students. Join our resource-sharing communities on Facebook and make full use of our resources on the free tutor2u Psychology Channel.

Facebook Groups:

- [AQA Psychology Teachers](#)
- [Edexcel Psychology Teachers](#)
- [OCR Psychology Teachers](#)
- [A Level Psychology Students](#)



[Visit the tutor2u A Level Psychology Channel](#)

Authoritarian Personality

Task: Complete the questionnaire below, using the following scale. Once you complete the questionnaire consider the three questions below.

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither Agree/Disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
1. Children should learn to obey authority.				
2. Children should be disciplined.				
3. Children should learn to respect authority.				
4. Some jobs are more important for society. For example, businessmen are more important than artists.				
5. It is better to avoid problems and not think about them. If you encounter a problem, you should keep yourself busy with other cheerful activities.				
6. Society would be a better place if people spent more time working and less time talking.				
7. Serious crimes (e.g. rape) should receive punishment which is more severe than prison.				
8. Society would be a better place without intelligent people.				
9. Homosexuals should be treated the same as criminals and severely punished.				
10. Children who are not taught manners at a young age cannot expect to mix with decent people later on in life.				
Total				

1. What type of data is this questionnaire collecting?

2. What is the name of the scale (1-5) used in this questionnaire?

3. What do you think this questionnaire is measuring and why?

Elms and Milgram (1966)

Aim: To see if the obedient participants in Milgram's research were more likely to display authoritarian personality traits, in comparison to disobedient participants.

Method: Their sample consisted of 20 obedient participants, who administered the full 450 volts and 20 disobedient participants who refused to continue. Each participant completed several personality questionnaires, including **Adorno's F scale**, to measure their level of authoritarian personality. The participants were also interviewed about their relationships with parents and their thoughts about the experimenter and learner in Milgram's original experiment.

Results: The obedient participants scored higher on the F scale in comparison to the disobedient participants. Furthermore, the obedient participants were more close to their fathers during childhood and admired the experimenter in Milgram's experiment, which was the opposite for disobedient participants.

Conclusion: The obedient participants in Milgram's original research displayed higher levels of the authoritarian personality, in comparison to disobedient participants.

1. Outline one key finding of Elms and Milgram's research

2. The data collected was correlational; why might this be a problem?

3. Elms and Milgram used the F scale (questionnaire) to determine levels of authoritarian personality. Why might this be a problem?

Research by Milne and Meleis (1990) found that less-educated people are more likely to display authoritarian personality characteristics in comparison to well-educated people. If these claims are correct then why does this pose a problem for the authoritarian explanation of obedience?

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE

Overview

The aim of this activity is to introduce students to the different types of essay and help students with essay planning – something that many students forget to do in their exams. Students will be provided with two sample essays and have to reduce the essays into two plans which highlight the AO1 (knowledge) and AO3 (evaluation) sections!

Resources Required

- Two example essays (see attached)
- An essay planning sheet (see attached)

Teacher Instructions

Part 1

It's important that the students understand the requirements of this task. Students should work individually or in pairs, to complete this task.

Firstly, students should be introduced to the assessment objectives:

AO1 = Knowledge and understanding

AO2 = Application of knowledge and understanding

AO3 = Analysis, interpretation and evaluation

Once students have been introduced to the assessment objectives, provide each student with a copy of the sample answers. Students should highlight the different learning objectives in three different colours. Sample AO1 = **Red**, AO2 = **Green** and AO3 = **Blue**.

Please note: neither of these sample answers contain any AO2.



ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE

Part 2

The students should re-read essay 1 and turn the essay into a bullet point plan, outlining the key information and assessment objectives. You may wish to model your expectations for this task, for example.

AO1: Milgram

AO1: Aim

AO1: Method (40 male volunteers, deception)

AO1: Results (65% to 450 volts, 100% to at least 300)

AO1: Conclusion

AO3: Lacks ecological validity. Laboratory at Yale University. Unable to generalise to every-day situations of obedience.

Etc.

The students should then do the same for essay 2. Once the students have done this for both essays, you should then discuss the structure of these two essays. Students should realise that the first essay has all of the AO1 (knowledge) points, followed by three AO3 (evaluation) points, whereas the second essay has an AO1 (knowledge) point, followed by supporting evidence (AO3), which is replicated three times.

Questions that require students to 'Describe and evaluate research...' typically follow the essay 1 structure, whereas questions that require students to 'Discuss one or more explanations...' typically follow essay 2 structure. Students can then apply their learning on the final task, by deciding which of the two structures would be the most appropriate for the 10 different essays. Suggested answers are included.

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE ESSAY 1

Milgram wanted to see if ordinary citizens would obey an unjust order from an authority figure. 40 male volunteers took part in what they thought was an experiment on 'punishment and learning' (although they were deceived). The real participant took on the role of a 'teacher' and was instructed to administer an electric shock to the 'learner' (confederate), every time he gave an incorrect answer. 65% of the participants went to 450 volts and 100% went up to at least 300, suggesting that under the right circumstances, ordinary people will obey unjust orders from an authority figure.

One limitation of Milgram's research is that it lacks ecological validity. Milgram's experiment took part in a laboratory at Yale University and the idea of being ordered to give electric shocks during a memory experiment on 'punishment and learning' is an unrealistic situation. Everyday examples of obedience don't usually involve such extreme requests. This matters because we are unable to apply Milgram's results to everyday situations of obedience and do not know if people would demonstrate such high levels of obedience in more 'normal' situations (e.g. from a police officer).

Another criticism of Milgram's study is that he broke the several ethical guidelines. Milgram deceived his participants, he did not give them the right to withdraw (due to the experimenter prods), and he did not protect them from harm. Therefore, he did not respect his participants who may have felt exceptionally anxious during the experiment and very guilty following the experiment, knowing that they could have harmed another human being.

A final criticism of Milgram's study is that it lacks population validity. This is because Milgram used a biased sample of 40 male volunteers. Therefore, we are unable to generalise the results to other populations, in particular females, and cannot conclude if females would respond in a similar way.



ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE **ESSAY 2**

One explanation of obedience is known as **agentic state**. Here an individual carries out the orders of an authority figure and acts as their 'agent', allowing them to deny personal responsibility. Evidence to support this explanation comes from one of Milgram's variations, where an additional confederate administered the electric shock on behalf of the teacher. In this variation obedience rose from 65% to 92.5% of participants giving the full 450 volts.

This supports the **agentic state** explanation, as the teacher was able to shift his responsibility onto the other confederate, allowing him to deny personal responsibility, which made him more likely to obey.

Another explanation of obedience is the idea of **legitimate authority**. Here a person is more likely to obey if they believe the authority figure or situation is genuine / real. Evidence to support the idea of legitimate authority comes from one of Milgram's variations, where the experiment was replicated in a run-down building in Connecticut. In this variation obedience levels dropped from 65% to 48%. This supports the idea of **legitimate authority**, as the participants did not believe that the context was a legitimate environment for the experiment to take place and were therefore less likely to obey.

One explanation of obedience is the idea of **uniform**. According to this explanation, we are more likely to obey a person if they are wearing a uniform, as this suggests that they are a **legitimate source of authority**. Evidence to support the idea of uniform comes from one of Milgram's variations. In one of the variations the professor was replaced by another participant in ordinary clothes who came up with the idea of increasing the electric shocks. In this variation, obedience dropped from 65% to 20%. This supports the explanation that **uniform** makes people more likely to obey, as more participants obeyed the professor (in a lab coat) in comparison to another person in ordinary clothes.



ZAP!

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE STUDENT WORKSHEET

Essay 1: Describe and evaluate one or more studies of obedience (12 marks)

Read essay 1 and turn the essay into a bullet point plan, using the space below.

SAMPLE

Essay 2: Discuss one or more explanations of obedience (12 marks)

Read essay 2 and turn the essay into a bullet point plan, using the space below.

SAMPLE

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE STUDENT WORKSHEET

Decide which structure the following essays should use:

- **Essay 1 Structure** = A01 followed by 3-5 A03 points
- **Essay 2 Structure** = A01/3 repeated.

- 1 Outline and evaluate the multi-store model of memory (12/16 marks)
- 2 Outline and evaluate different types of long-term memory (12/16 marks)
- 3 Discuss research on the effect of misleading information on eyewitness testimony (12/16 marks)
- 4 Describe and evaluate the learning explanation of attachment (12/16 marks)
- 5 Outline and evaluate research into group size, unanimity, and task difficulty as variables affecting conformity (12/16 marks)
- 6 Discuss conformity to social norms as investigated by Zimbardo (12/16 marks)
- 7 Discuss two or more situational variables that affect obedience (e.g. proximity, location, uniform) (12/16 marks)
- 8 Outline the functions of the endocrine system and discuss the role of the endocrine system in behaviour (12/16 marks)
- 9 Outline and evaluate research into lateralisation and/or the split brain (12/16 marks)
- 10 Outline and evaluate two ways of defining abnormality (12/16 marks)

ESSAY DECONSTRUCTION, PLANNING & STRUCTURE ANSWER SHEET

Decide which structure the following essays should use:

- **Essay 1 Structure** = A01 followed by 3-5 A03 points
- **Essay 2 Structure** = A01/3 repeated.

- 1 Outline and evaluate the multi-store model of memory** (12/16 marks)
Essay 1 Structure – Outline the MSM, followed by 3-5 A03 points
- 2 Outline and evaluate different types of long-term memory** (12/16 marks)
Essay 2 Structure – Outline one type of LTM (e.g. episodic) and then bring in supporting evidence. Then repeat this process for the other types of LTM (e.g. procedural and semantic).
- 3 Discuss research on the effect of misleading information on eyewitness testimony** (12/16 marks)
Essay 1 Structure – Outline one study (e.g. Loftus and Palmer) followed by 3-5 A03 points
- 4 Describe and evaluate the learning explanation of attachment** (12/16 marks)
Essay 1 Structure – Outline one learning theory of attachment, followed by 3-5 A03 points
- 5 Outline and evaluate research into group size, unanimity, and task difficulty as variables affecting conformity** (12/16 marks)
Essay 2 Structure – Outline group size and then bring in supporting evidence (e.g. variations of Asch). Then repeat this process for the other factors.
- 6 Discuss conformity in social roles as investigated by Zimbardo** (12/16 marks)
Essay 1 Structure – Outline Zimbardo's research followed by 3-5 A03 points, making specific reference to conformity to social roles.
- 7 Discuss two or more situational variables that affect obedience (e.g. proximity, location, uniform)** (12/16 marks)
Essay 2 Structure – Outline one situational variable (e.g. proximity) and then bring in supporting evidence (e.g. variations of Milgram). Then repeat this process for two other factors
- 8 Outline the functions of the endocrine system and discuss the role of the endocrine system in behaviour** (12/16 marks)
Essay 2 Structure – Outline one function of the endocrine system and then bring in supporting evidence. Then repeat this process for other functions
- 9 Outline and evaluate research into lateralisation and/or the split brain** (12/16 marks)
Essay 1 Structure – Outline one study (e.g. Sperry and Gazzaniga) followed by 3-5 A03 points
- 10 Outline and evaluate two ways of defining abnormality** (12/16 marks)
Essay 2 Structure – Outline one definition of abnormality (e.g. deviation from social norm) and then bring in supporting evidence. Then repeat this process for one other factor