

**TAP UNIT 1
INTRO ESSAY QUESTIONS**

Chapter 1

2. What is personality? What are some of the limitations of current definitions of the term?

Personality is best related to a set of characteristics possessed by a person which exclusively effects the way they think, what drives them and in different situations. But it is defined in a variety of ways by many different people. Some relate it physical attractiveness and others to intellectual and educational prowess. However, the definitions limit themselves to outward perceptions that judge what is beautiful or ugly. The definition further lacked in its implication by claiming that persons with “unusual” ways of expressing themselves had no personality.

6. What are the six criteria used by personality psychologists to judge the scientific worth of theories? Give some examples of each.

Personality psychologist judge the scientific validity of theories by using the following six criteria:

1. **Comprehensiveness.** A test that encompasses a wide range of data. An example would be observing human behavior in their natural surroundings instead of a therapeutic setting.
2. **Precision and testability.** Are guidelines needed to build a theory which have explanations that are stated in clear language. They include also relational statements like analogies and metaphors to help in explain the theory. An example would be Freud’s reference to a battlefield where the “Id” and the “Superego” battle.
3. **Parsimony.** A reference to the sufficiency of explanation (relational statement, analogies and metaphors) needed for the studied within its domain.

4. Empirical validity. Testing of a hypothesis theory by making observations to determine its accuracy, taking into consideration the validity and reliability of its statistical measurements.

5. Heuristic value. A quality within about the constructs of a theory which stimulates further study and research which may develop other paths of interest connected to the theory. This is often seen with theories that have been recognized as inaccurate and inspired a lot research.

6. Applied value. A quality of the theoretical explanation which leads to new answers to people's problems, which makes these criteria especially suited for personality studies.

4. What is the difference between a priori and post hoc explanations? Give some examples.

The differences between Post hoc and Priori explanations are: Post hoc explanations relate to theoretical explanations that presume that certain factors created a situation and there is no evidence to support the explanation. A Priori refers to a prediction made by scientist utilizing previous theoretical explanations. Examples of a Priori is data from a longitudinal case study in which previous data collected factored into the theory of the case study.