1.6 The Nature versus Nurture Debate: Test Pack

AQA 8192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Show your understanding by using sociological vocabulary and, where asked, your own examples.

1 The 'nature versus nurture' debate is mainly a disagreement about what?

- ☐ A) Whether human behaviour is shaped more by biology or by social experience
- ☐ B) Whether a country should have a monarchy or a republic
- ☐ C) Whether schools should set homework every night
- ☐ D) Whether crime rates are rising or falling

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 State one reason a nurture-only explanation of human behaviour is generally seen as incomplete.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Explain what these case studies suggest about the nature versus nurture debate, and why sociologists are cautious about drawing firm conclusions from them.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

4 Twin studies compare identical twins, who share (almost) all their genes, often raised in different environments. Explain how twin studies can be used in the nature versus nurture debate.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 1.6 The Nature versus Nurture Debate: Test Pack

Question 1

A (biology or social experience) **B1**

Answer: A

Question 2

identifies a genuine reason, e.g. some human abilities and predispositions appear very early in infancy, before much socialisation has taken place, which suggests some biological basis **B1**

brief development, e.g. or that treating all behaviour as purely learned ignores real evidence, such as some twin-study findings, that genetics plays some part **B1**

Answer: Some human abilities and predispositions appear very early in infancy, before much socialisation has taken place, and evidence such as some twin-study findings suggests genetics plays some part, so treating behaviour as purely learned is incomplete.

Question 3

identifies that the case studies are often used to support the nurture side, since basic social skills did not appear automatically without social contact **B1**

development, e.g. this suggests some abilities assumed to be innate are actually the product of learning through interaction with others **B1**

identifies a reason for caution, e.g. these are individual, real-world case studies rather than controlled experiments, so other factors (health, the specific circumstances of each case) could also explain the outcomes **B1**

development, e.g. it is difficult to generalise confidently from a very small number of individual, uncontrolled cases to a claim about human development as a whole **B1**

Answer: The case studies are often used to support the nurture side, since basic social skills did not appear automatically without contact, but sociologists are cautious because these are individual, uncontrolled real-world cases, where other factors could also explain the outcomes, making it hard to generalise confidently.

Question 4

identifies that identical twins share almost all of their genetic material, so differences between them raised in different environments can suggest an environmental (nurture) influence **B1**

identifies that similarities between identical twins raised apart can suggest a genetic (nature) influence **B1**

development, e.g. this design is useful because it can help separate the effects of shared genes from the effects of different environments **B1**

development/limitation, e.g. cases of identical twins raised entirely separately are rare, and even twins raised together do not have identical experiences, so results must still be interpreted with caution **B1**

Answer: Because identical twins share almost all their genes, differences between twins raised in different environments can suggest a nurture influence, while similarities between twins raised apart can suggest a nature influence; this design helps separate genetic from environmental effects, though such cases are rare and results must be interpreted with caution.

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