

## TOPIC: GESTALT PSYCHOLOGY

### Gestalt Psychology

#### Gestalt Psychology (1910's)

Approach that emphasizes the processing of entire \_\_\_\_\_, rather than individual components.

*"The whole is \_\_\_\_\_ than the sum of its parts".*

#### Historical Context

Some early psychologists believed that breaking experiences down into individual elements (structuralism) isn't helpful, because that's not how humans perceive most things.

#### Main Research Question

How do we perceive and interpret information as an organized \_\_\_\_\_?

#### Important Founder

**Max Wertheimer** (1880 – 1943)

One of the founding fathers of Gestalt psychology – studied \_\_\_\_\_ perception.

Helped formulate *Principles of Perceptual Organization* – explains how the human brain groups \_\_\_\_\_ elements to form coherent perceptions.

**For More Detail:** Check out our section on *Sensation and Perception*.

### EXAMPLE

If a Gestalt psychologist were to criticize a structuralist, what might they say?

- a) There is lack of empirical evidence for the 'unconscious mind', therefore we can never know how it actually impacts us.
- b) Mental processes cannot be understood by analyzing parts – humans tend to perceive things as organized wholes.
- c) When we examine group averages to better understand how behaviors are adaptive, we risk overlooking individual differences.

## **TOPIC: GESTALT PSYCHOLOGY**

### **PRACTICE**

Who is considered the founder of Gestalt psychology?

---

- a) William James.
- b) Wilhelm Wundt.
- c) Max Wertheimer.
- d) Jean Piaget.