What Do Psychologists Do? Handout

Part A.

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| **Subfield** | **Definition** | **Research or Applied** | **Workplace** |
| Clinical | works with diagnosis and treatment of disorders | Both | universities, hospitals, private practice, drug rehab |
| Community / Health | develops and presents programs to help maintain mental health | Applied | educational settings, community mental health centers |
| Counseling | works with people who exhibit trouble coping with everyday problems | Applied | educational settings, clinics, private practice, hospitals |
| Developmental | studies the maturation process – changes across the lifespan | Research | universities, government-funded programs |
| Experimental | studies any mental/ psychological issue | Research | laboratory settings |
| Forensic | studies and apply psychological principles to legal issues | Both | government, private business, courts |
| Industrial/ Organizational | works with psychological issues that are related to business | Both | government, private business, universities |
| Educational | studies how effective learning and teaching take place | Research | universities, government-funded programs |
| School | works to overcome educational difficulties | Applied | elementary, middle, and secondary schools |
| Social | studies how society influences the individual | Research | Universities, advertising, business, government |
| Sports | works with athletes to find peak performance | Applied | universities, private practice |
| Rehabilitation | works with people with mental retardation or other brain injuries or diseases | Applied | private practice, hospitals, public health programs, clinics, hospitals |
| Neuropsychology | explores relationships between brain systems and behavior | Both | laboratory settings, hospitals |

Part B. For each of the descriptions of the work of psychologists listed below, identify the specialty is describes. Refer to the chart in Part A if you need help.

1. Tests children for learning disabilities.
2. Counsels a couple considering divorce.
3. Presents a program at the local hospital for expectant parents.
4. Treats an individual who is depressed.
5. Designs a more efficient work space for a small company.
6. Conducts research on the effect of prejudice on newly-arrived immigrants.
7. Studies the emotional changes that occur as a child matures.
8. Conducts research on when a child can most effectively learn a second language.
9. Studies the effect of light and dark environments on the visual abilities of kittens.
10. Treats a soldier returning from war with a traumatic brain injury.
11. Evaluates a defendant’s mental competence to stand trial.
12. Helps a young tennis player learn to deal with competitive anxiety and fear of losing.

Part C. Take a few moments to think about and answer the questions below. You may refer back to the chart if you need. Be prepared for class discussion.

1. Why do so many psychologists work at universities?
2. Why are clinical and industrial/organizational psychologists involved in both research and applied fields?
3. Which psychologists deal directly with the public in preventing or treating mental illness?
4. If you were to enter a field of psychology as a career, which would be most appealing to you? Give your rationale.