

TOEFL Listening Lesson 8

Setting: A college-level *Psychology* class.

Questions

1. What are the two personality theories discussed by the professor?

- A. The MBTI and the Enneagram
- B. The Big Five and Jung's psychological types
- C. Freudian theory and the Big Five
- D. Behavioral theory and the MBTI

2. What does the professor say about the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)?

- A. It is widely accepted by all psychologists
- B. It provides a more detailed scale than the Big Five
- C. It has been criticized for lacking nuance
- D. It is used primarily in clinical diagnosis

3. What example does the female student give to show she has high Openness?

- A. She likes planning events
- B. She prefers calm environments
- C. She enjoys travel and trying new foods
- D. She gets along well with everyone

4. Why does the professor mention group work and conflict?

- A. To explain how different traits affect social interaction
- B. To describe common student complaints
- C. To encourage students to avoid group assignments
- D. To suggest that personality is fixed

5. Why does the professor ask students to reflect on their traits at the end of the class?

- A. To prepare them for a quiz on the reading
- B. To encourage them to share with the class next time
- C. To help them understand how traits influence daily life
- D. To compare their scores to national averages

Script

Professor:

Okay, let's begin. Today, we're diving into personality theory—specifically, how different theories attempt to explain individual behavior. There are a number of models we could examine, but let's start with two major ones: the Big Five Personality Traits and Carl Jung's theory of psychological types, which was later adapted into the popular Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, or MBTI.

Now, the Big Five—often remembered with the acronym OCEAN—stands for Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. These traits exist on a spectrum, and research suggests they are relatively stable over a person's lifetime.

Before we get into details, has anyone taken a personality test based on the Big Five or MBTI?

Student 1 (female student):

Yes—I took one last year for a class. According to the MBTI, I'm an INFJ. So that would be Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, and Judging.

Professor:

Interesting! INFJs are often described as insightful and idealistic. Did you feel that described you well?

Student 1:

Some parts, yeah. I like planning things and I'm definitely introverted. But I'm not sure I always follow my feelings more than logic.

Professor:

That's a great point. These frameworks are descriptive, but they're not always precise. The MBTI in particular has been criticized for being too binary—you're either an introvert or an extrovert, for example, without room for nuance. The Big Five offers a bit more flexibility. For instance, someone might score moderately high on Extraversion but not be extremely extroverted.

Student 2 (male student):

I actually took a Big Five test recently. I scored really low on Neuroticism and pretty high on Conscientiousness. It made sense—I usually stay calm even during exams and I like sticking to a routine.

Professor:

That aligns well. Low Neuroticism is associated with emotional stability, while high Conscientiousness often indicates reliability and organization. These traits can be predictive of things like academic performance or even job satisfaction.

Let's try to connect these traits to real-world behaviors. For example, someone high in Openness might seek out new experiences—travel, art, or creative hobbies. Anyone relate to that?

Student 3 (female student):

That sounds like me. I love exploring new places and trying different cuisines. My friends think I'm a bit too adventurous sometimes.

Professor:

That's a textbook example of high Openness. Now, these traits also

influence how we interact in groups, handle conflict, and even how we study. For instance, someone high in Agreeableness might avoid confrontation during group work—even if they disagree with the plan.

Student 2:

That's not me. I'm probably low on Agreeableness—I tend to speak up when I think something won't work, even if it upsets people.

Professor:

There's value in that too. People with lower Agreeableness scores often excel in roles that require assertiveness and independent thinking. But of course, too little Agreeableness can lead to interpersonal issues.

Before we wrap up—remember that personality is only one factor among many that influence behavior. Context, culture, and even biology all play roles. These models are tools, not absolute definitions.

Next time, we'll look at how personality theories are applied in organizational psychology. But for now, I'd like you to reflect on which traits you see in yourself and how they might influence your approach to learning, relationships, and future careers.

Answers

1. What are the two personality theories discussed by the professor?

Correct answer: B. The Big Five and Jung's psychological types

2. What does the professor say about the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)?

Correct answer: C. It has been criticized for lacking nuance

3. What example does the female student give to show she has high Openness?

Correct answer: C. She enjoys travel and trying new foods

4. Why does the professor mention group work and conflict?

Correct answer: A. To explain how different traits affect social interaction

5. Why does the professor ask students to reflect on their traits at the end of the class?

Correct answer: C. To help them understand how traits influence daily life