AP Psychology – Essay Questions Key
Chapter 12 – Personality

1. Throughout his career, Freud developed a number of models through which he sought to understand the unconscious counter-will. His first model, the topographic model, used a spatial metaphor that divided mental processes into three types. Name these three types and identify the distinguishing features of each one.

2. It can be argued that each personality theory has its strengths. However, each personality theory has one or more weaknesses. What are the weaknesses of the psychodynamic, humanistic, and cognitive-social approaches?

3. Trait theories, unlike psychodynamic approaches, were largely derived from the words people use to describe themselves and the people in their everyday lives. The trait approach to personality has several advantages, but also a number of limitations. Provide an overview of the trait approach; then, describe its advantages and limitations.

4. According to the cognitive-social theory of personality, what are the four conditions necessary for a behavior to occur?

5. Most theorists who have used factor analysis to arrive at a taxonomy of traits have found that their long lists boil down to five superordinate traits known as the Big Five factors or the Five Factor model. Name and describe these traits. Discuss the cross-cultural research conducted on the Five Factor model and the implications of the results of that research.

6. Walter Mischel made a very interesting and controversial point. What was it? What was the counterargument? How does the principle of aggregation fit into this debate? What do YOU think?

7. Do YOU believe that who you are, in terms of personality, will stay the same for the rest of your life? Use the arguments made in the textbook to back up your answer. What evidence is there that your personality stays consistent over time?

8. What is the difference between the humanistic and existential approaches and who are the key individuals in each approach?

9. The authors of your textbook state that the most widely used humanistic approach is Carl Rogers's person-centered approach. Describe the essence of Rogers's approach. Provide personal examples of the 3 types of self proposed by Rogers.

10. What is the difference between the culture pattern and interactionist approaches to personality? Provide one example that would support each.