

## Reading Comprehension – LSD Research

Vocabulary	Word Type	Definition
1) rite	noun	ceremony – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wedding</li> <li>• baptism</li> <li>• funeral</li> </ul> *ritual – doing the same thing the same way historically
2) drawn to	adjective/ passive	attracted to something:  moths are <b>drawn to</b> lights
3) fad	noun	a trend – short term habit, very popular  The Atkins diet was a <b>fad</b> .

Psychoactives have played an important role in the development of human society and archaeological evidence has revealed the cultural use of psychedelics as intoxicants and in magical rites for over the past 5,000 years. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the first research into the medical value of psychedelic substances was begun by Western synthetic chemists. As early researchers were drawn to the creation of new compounds based on natural plants, they also shared their research samples with their acquaintances. This practice resulted in a fad of consciousness-experimenting with psychedelics throughout the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by *anthropologists, botanists, writers, and other amateur scholars*, the impact of which is still felt in twenty-first century science and culture but is not empirically measurable.

- What two things happen in the first sentence?
- What happens in the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence?
- Two things happen at the same time in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence – what are they?
- Who did something in the 4<sup>th</sup> sentence?

1) What does the writer state about what happened in the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

- a) understanding of the mechanisms of psychedelics is limited
- b) it is hard to calculate the overall influence of certain research
- c) outside of leisure pursuits, psychedelics have restricted impact
- d) the way psychedelics were perceived changed in the twentieth century

Vocabulary	Word Type	Definition
1) <b>synthesis</b>	noun	combining elements / parts to create a whole  The body <b>synthesises</b> amino acids.
2) <b>fervently</b>	adverb	very passionately
3) <b>advocate</b>	verb / noun	verb – to support something publicly  noun – a supporter
4) <b>aspiration</b>	noun	a hope / a dream / an ambition
5) <b>pioneer</b>	verb / noun	noun - a person who is the first to go into an unexplored area and make progress (physical/academic)  verb - to go into an unexplored area and make progress
6) <b>echoed</b>	verb	repeated
7) <b>a large leap</b>	noun	a big amount of progress
8) <b>on the heels of</b>	prepositional phrase	to be closely following

Following the isolation of mescaline in 1897 and the first synthesis of MDMA in 1912, Albert Hofmann from Sandoz Laboratories synthesized LSD-25 in 1938. Hoffman's discovery opened the gateway for ensuing medical research, which psychiatrists fervently advocated. Among the cohort, psychiatrist Max Rinkel became the first person to introduce LSD to the U.S. and pioneered a project to test LSD on patients in 1949. The medicinal aspiration of Rinkel to enable a more controlled and objective study of mental disorders through LSD was echoed among many other psychiatrists in the same era. Most notably, Humphrey Osmond and Abram Hoffer's investigation into the potential use of LSD in treating alcoholism took a large leap in 1951 when 66% of LSD patients in the study abstained from alcohol compared to 18% otherwise. On the heels of the promising results, the treatment of alcoholics involving LSD as an adjunct to psychotherapy began its march into the market in 1952.

- What three things happen in the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence?
- What was the reaction to an event in sentence 2?
- What happens in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence?
- Who was involved in sentence 4? What happened?
- What significant event occurred in the 5<sup>th</sup> sentence?
- Why do you think LSD began its 'march to the market' in 1952?

## 2) The synthesis of LSD

- was responsible for the widespread use of psychedelics in psychiatric treatment.
- led to Osmond and Hoffer investigating the effects of mental disorders, including alcoholism.
- was not of interest in the field of psychiatry at first but was later accepted.
- inspired Rinkel to approach his discipline in a different way.

Vocabulary	Word Type	Definition
1) <b>circumspection</b>	noun	cautious, wary, don't want to take a risk, you have some doubts  not prepared to accept an answer on face value – wait before you make your decision  <b>Circumspection</b> is important when making big decisions.
2) <b>measure up with</b>	phrasal verb	British cooking does not <b>measure up with</b> French cooking.  compare to
3) <b>confounding</b>	adjective	confusing / mystifying - you don't understand this thing
4) <b>panacea</b>	noun	a solution / a cure  The Conservative party in the UK think that tax cuts are <b>the panacea</b> to society's problems.

At the same time when breakthroughs in treating alcoholism, depression, and neurosis were treated with circumspection, the standards and methodologies adopted in these research programs were also on trial. Many LSD experiments failed to measure up with the newly emerged scientific parameters of clinical trials in the 1950s, notably randomized controlled trials in order to eliminate non-medical factors. With the shift to stricter research standards, earlier published research and literature lost their value due to the lack of objective measures, inadequate follow-up and other insufficiencies in experimental control. Many attacked the **blind optimism** of psychedelic researchers and interrogated the confounding inconsistency in their replication results, all of which originated from a public frustration on the loss of the promised panacea effect of psychedelics.

**3) The writer uses the phrase 'blind optimism' to refer to:**

- a) The inability of researchers to conduct experiments according to modern standards
- b) The disappointment of the public
- c) The hopes of researchers prior to experiments
- d) The unwillingness of researchers to move to stricter controls

Vocabulary	Word Type	Definition
1) <b>adverse</b>	adjective	having a harmful effect
2) <b>euphoria</b>	noun	great happiness
3) <b>predicated</b>	adjective	based on  My success as a banker was <b>predicated</b> on my ability with numbers

What is more concerning than the poorly conducted research is the issue of safety. In 1962, Cohen et al. became the first to systematically investigate potential adverse effects of psychedelic therapy. The researchers specifically warned of the increasing potential of abusive and antisocial behavior as a result of euphoria. Following Cohen's direction, more researchers devoted their studies to the negative effects of psychedelics, a phenomenon that later prohibition was largely predicated on.

**4) The writer states that Cohen**

- a) Had a lasting impact on how psychedelics were viewed
- b) Was concerned that no research had been done on the downsides of psychedelic treatment
- c) Was unclear regarding possible effects of psychedelic research
- d) Spent a lot of time researching psychedelic therapy

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**Answers**

- 1) B
- 2) D
- 3) C
- 4) A