

4.2 Attitude Formation and Attitude Change

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 18 marks

KEY WORDS peripheral 边缘 • central 中心 • cognitive dissonance 认知失调
• foot-in-the-door 登门槛 • attitudes 态度

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **attitudes** 态度 and persuasion.

You must be able to:

- explain **cognitive dissonance** 认知失调 and how it is resolved
- distinguish the **central** 中心 from the **peripheral** 边缘 route to persuasion
- describe the **foot-in-the-door** 登门槛 technique
- state when attitudes predict behaviour and when they do not

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Cognitive dissonance

Holding two inconsistent cognitions, or acting against an attitude, produces discomfort. The cheapest resolution is usually to change the **attitude** to fit the behaviour that has already happened.

■ Two routes to persuasion

The **central route** persuades through the quality of the argument; it requires motivation and ability to think, and produces durable change. The **peripheral route** persuades through cues — attractiveness, length, repetition — and produces weaker, shorter-lived change.

■ Foot-in-the-door

Agreeing to a small request makes a later larger request more likely to be accepted, because the first compliance changes how people see themselves.

■ When attitudes predict behaviour

Best when the attitude is specific to the behaviour, strongly held, personally relevant, and when situational pressure is weak. General attitudes predict single actions poorly.

2 Practice

2.1 Explain what cognitive dissonance is and one way it is resolved. [2]

2.2 State the difference between the central and peripheral routes. [2]

2.3 A charity first asks people to sign a petition, then to donate.

(a) Name the technique. [1]

(b) Explain why it works. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A person who argued publicly for a view they doubted comes to believe it more. This illustrates [1]

A	B
C	D

A the peripheral route

B cognitive dissonance reduction

C the foot-in-the-door technique

D stereotype threat

3.2 Persuasion by a celebrity endorsement rather than evidence uses the [1]

A	B
C	D

A central route

B peripheral route

C dissonance route

D door-in-the-face technique

3.3 A survey finds most people say they support recycling, but participation is low.

(a) State one reason the attitude fails to predict behaviour. [1]

(b) Explain what kind of attitude measure would predict better. [2]

3.4 Applied research task. A campaign to reduce single-use plastics runs two adverts. Advert **1** presents six pieces of evidence about the volume of plastic reaching the sea. Advert **2** shows a well-known athlete on a beach saying nothing about the evidence. In a follow-up, people who had earlier been asked to sign a small pledge card were far more likely to change their shopping habits than those asked directly to change them.

(a) Name the model that distinguishes the two adverts' routes to persuasion, and name each route. [3]

(b) Explain which audience each advert is better suited to. [1]

(c) Name and explain the technique shown by the pledge-card result. [2]

(d) Explain how cognitive dissonance could lead someone who signed the card to change their attitude, not just their behaviour. [1]
