EXAM PAPERS PRACTICE

Boost your performance and confidence with these topic-based exam questions

Practice questions created by actual examiners and assessment experts

Detailed mark scheme

Suitable for all boards

Designed to test your ability and thoroughly prepare you

Time allowed

53 Minutes

Score /44

Percentage %

Biology

Topic Questions

AQA
AS & A LEVEL

3.6 Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments (A-level only)

1 Serotonin is a neurotransmitter released in some synapses in the brain. It is transported back out of the synaptic gap by a transport protein in the pre-synaptic membrane.

(a) Serotonin diffuses across the synaptic gap and binds to a receptor on the post-synaptic membrane.

Describe how this causes depolarisation of the post-synaptic membrane.

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(2)

(b) It is important that a neurotransmitter such as serotonin is transported back out of synapses. Explain why.

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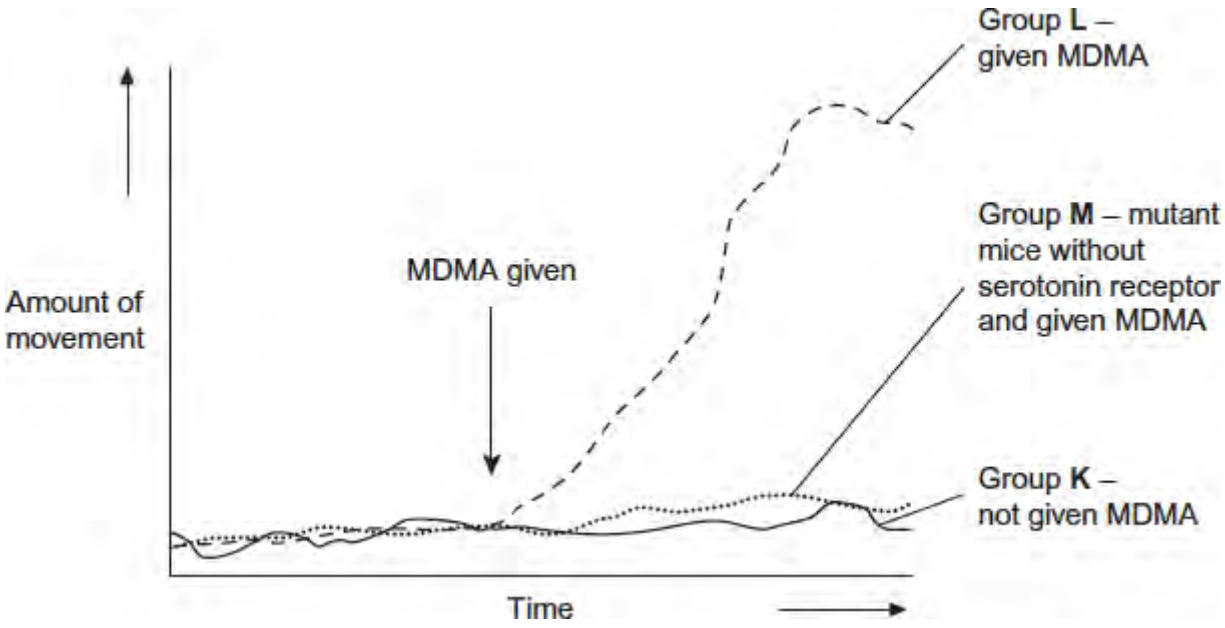
(c) Scientists investigated the effect of a drug called MDMA on movement of mice. They measured the amount of movement of three groups of mice, **K, L** and **M.**

- Group **K,** mice not given MDMA.
- Group **L,** mice given MDMA.
- Group **M,** mutant mice that did not produce a serotonin receptor on their post-synaptic membranes and were given MDMA.

The graph shows their results.



The scientists concluded that MDMA affects movement by binding to serotonin receptors.

How do these results support this conclusion?

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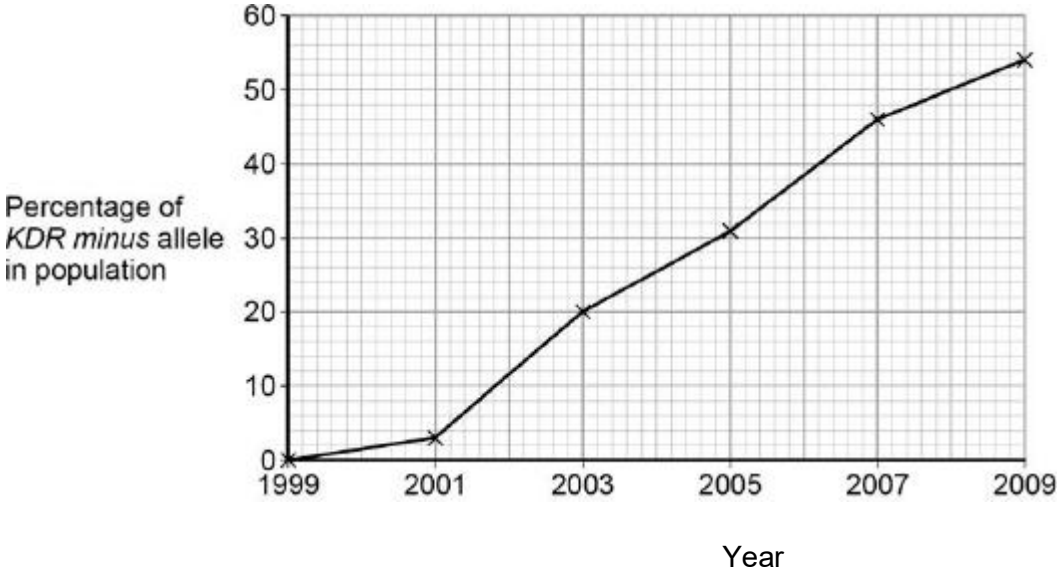
(3)
(Total 7 marks)

2 Malaria is a disease that is spread by insects called mosquitoes. In Africa, DDT is a pesticide used to kill mosquitoes, to try to control the spread of malaria.

Mosquitoes have a gene called *KDR*. Today, some mosquitoes have an allele of this gene, *KDR minus*, that gives them resistance to DDT. The other allele, *KDR plus*, does not give resistance.

Scientists investigated the frequency of the *KDR minus* allele in a population of mosquitoes in an African country over a period of 10 years.

The figure below shows the scientists' results.



(a) Use the Hardy–Weinberg equation to calculate the frequency of mosquitoes heterozygous for the *KDR* gene in this population in 2003.

Show your working.

Frequency of heterozygotes in population in 2003 .....

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(b) Suggest an explanation for the results in the figure above.

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The *KDR plus* allele codes for the sodium ion channels found in neurones.

(c) When DDT binds to a sodium ion channel, the channel remains open all the time. Use this information to suggest how DDT kills insects.

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(d) Suggest how the *KDR minus* allele gives resistance to DDT.

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(Total 10 marks)

3 (a) A myelinated axon conducts impulses faster than a non-myelinated axon. Explain this difference.

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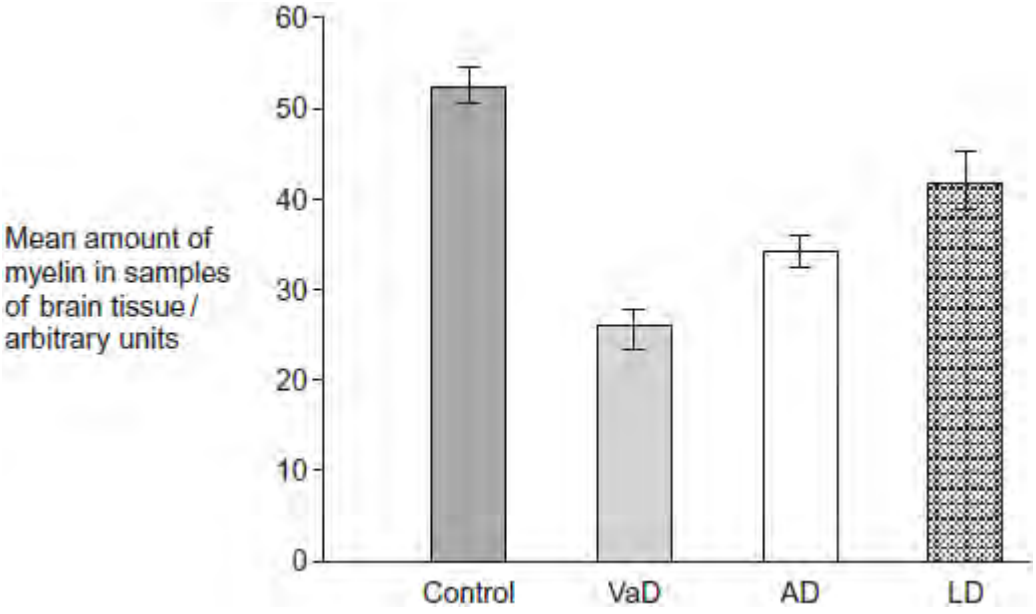
Doctors investigated the relationship between myelin in brain tissue and different types of dementia. All types of dementia involve loss of mental ability.

The doctors measured the mean amount of myelin in samples of brain tissue from:

- a control group of 12 people without dementia
- 20 people with vascular dementia (VaD)
- 19 people with Alzheimer's dementia (AD)
- 31 people with Lewy body dementia (LD).

The doctors' results are shown in the figure. The vertical bars show standard errors.



(b) The doctors used a statistical test to compare the results for AD and LD. They obtained a value for P of 0.047.

What does this result show about the difference between the means for AD and LD?

Use the words **probability** and **chance** in your answer.

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(c) A student who read this investigation concluded that there was a relationship between the amount of myelin in a person's brain and whether or not they had dementia.

Do these data support this conclusion? Give reasons for your answer.

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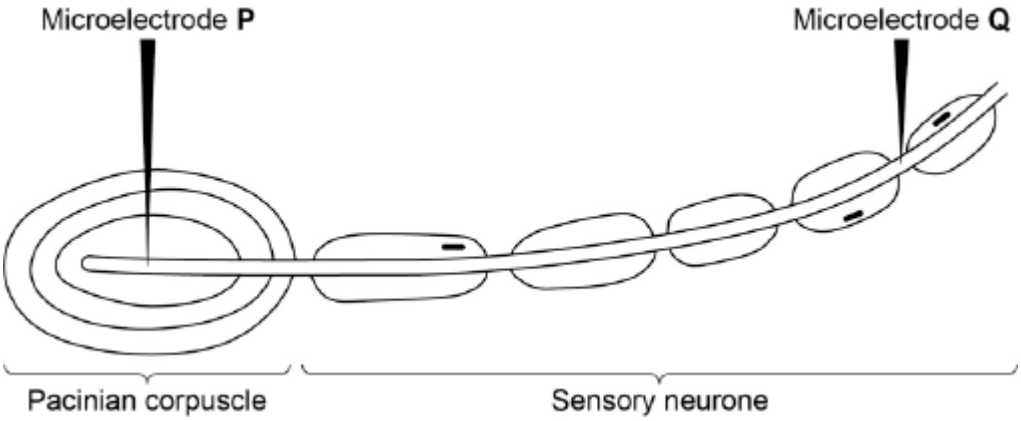
4 A biologist investigated the stimulation of a Pacinian corpuscle in the skin of a fingertip.
She used microelectrodes to measure the maximum membrane potential of a Pacinian corpuscle and its sensory neurone when different pressures were applied to the fingertip.

The figure below shows the Pacinian corpuscle, its sensory neurone and the position of the microelectrodes.



The table below shows some of the biologist's results.

Pressure applied to the fingertip	Membrane potential at P / millivolts	Membrane potential at Q / millivolts
None	–70	–70
Light	–50	–70
Medium	+30	+40
Heavy	+40	+40

(a) Explain how the resting potential of –70 mV is maintained in the sensory neurone when no pressure is applied.

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(b) Explain how applying pressure to the Pacinian corpuscle produces the changes in membrane potential recorded by microelectrode **P**.

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(c) The membrane potential at **Q** was the same whether medium or heavy pressure was applied to the finger tip. Explain why.

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(d) Multiple sclerosis is a disease in which parts of the myelin sheaths surrounding neurones are destroyed. Explain how this results in slower responses to stimuli.

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(Total 9 marks)

5 Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a disease that involves damage to the myelin sheaths of neurones. Movement in MS sufferers may be jerky or slow.

(a) Damage to the myelin sheaths of neurones can lead to problems controlling the contraction of muscles.

Suggest **one** reason why.

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Scientists investigated the use of substances called cannabinoids to control muscle problems caused by MS.

(b) Cannabinoids are hydrophobic molecules. In the body, they easily pass into neurones.
Explain why.

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(c) Cannabinoid receptors are found in the **pre-synaptic** membrane of neuromuscular junctions. When a cannabinoid binds to its receptor, it closes calcium ion channels.

Suggest how cannabinoids could prevent muscle contraction.

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(d) Cannabinoids include substances found in cannabis that can enter brain tissue. Scientists are developing artificial cannabinoids that can enter neuromuscular junctions but cannot enter brain tissue.

Suggest why these artificial cannabinoids would be better to use than cannabis when treating someone with MS.

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(Total 9 marks)