

AP Psychology

The purpose of Advanced Placement Psychology is to introduce students to the systematic & scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Throughout the course students will be exposed to the psychological facts, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields of psychology. In addition, the course will stress the need to think like a psychologist. As author and social psychologist David Myers, notes – to think as a psychologist, one must learn to “*restrain intuition with critical thinking, judgmentalism with compassion, and illusion with understanding*” (Sternberg, 1997). Whether students choose to pursue a career in psychology or in an entirely different field, this habit of mind will be of great value.

Course Objectives

- Students will study the major core concepts and theories of psychology; in doing so they will be able to define and apply key terms.
- Students will learn and utilize basic skills associated with psychological research and statistical analysis.
- Students will develop critical thinking skills and be able to apply psychological concepts to their own lives.
- Students will participate in classroom demonstrations and laboratory procedures related to the field of psychology.
- Students will strengthen their reading, writing, discussion and oral presentation skills.

Classroom Expectations

***Please note that Advanced Placement Psychology is designed to be as challenging as an introductory course at the college level. As such, the course is fast-paced and demanding, requiring that students are both self-motivated and disciplined, while displaying a college-level effort.

- Pay attention to the teacher/speaker/presenter; in other words, use common courtesy at all times.
- Come prepared for class, read, participate, take thorough notes, ask questions and complete all assignments on time. Refrain from distracting yourself while in the learning environment; turn cell phones and iPods off, unless otherwise instructed.
- Familiarize yourself with the class webpage, as frequent use will be required throughout the duration of the school year.
- As always, all school rules will be observed in the classroom – this includes rules regarding tardiness. No exceptions.
- Remember to maintain a positive attitude, a solid work ethic and a smile on your face.

Textbook Information

Each of you has been issued a copy of the text entitled *Psychology* by David Myers; this textbook is used in introductory psychology courses at colleges and universities across the country.

Title: *Psychology*

Publisher: Worth

ISBN: 0716785668

Cost: \$105.00 Don't loose it.

Grading Scale

Assessments & Quizzes	20%
Performance Tasks	25%
Unit Tests	40%
Final Exam	15%

Assessment Practices

Daily Assessments & Quizzes (20%) Daily work includes, but is not limited to items such as in-class assignments, homework assignments, participation in psychological simulations, case study analyses and quizzes. In general, you should expect one announced quiz and as many as two unannounced quizzes per unit. Unannounced quizzes will be geared towards student comprehension of scheduled reading assignments and vocabulary terms.

Performance Tasks (25%) Students will be expected to complete at least three major

Unit Tests (40%) Unit tests will consist of 50 multiple choice questions (*to be completed in 35 minutes*) and 1 free response question (*to be completed in 25 minutes*). In order to best simulate the AP Psychology Exam, the multiple choice section of the test will be worth 2/3 of the total grade, or 65 points, while the free response question will be worth 1/3 of the total grade, or 35 points, for 100 possible points. Please note that unit tests will frequently incorporate material from previous units. *****Please note that if you are absent on the day of an ANNOUNCED test, you will be expected to take the test on your first day back to school*****

Final Exam (15%) A comprehensive final exam will be given

Required Materials

Barron's AP PSYCHOLOGY

6th or 7th addition This helpful book is strongly recommended. Very cheap on Amazon or Ebay

- Writing utensils, especially black and blue pens – all written work that is completed in class **MUST** be submitted in pen!
- A sturdy three-ring binder; used **ONLY** for AP Psychology
- Fourteen dividers; one section for **administrative papers** (i.e. syllabus, general handouts, etc.), one section for **each unit** that will be covered this year (see *Course Plan*) and one section for **cumulative review materials**
- Plenty of loose-leaf paper and 3x5 note-cards
- *****The use of highlighters, Post-it Notes and other study aids is STRONGLY ENCOURAGED!**

AP Psychology Hints

1. **Keep up with vocabulary note cards:** A large portion of psychology is learning various terms and concepts – vocabulary is essential to your success on the AP exam. In addition to being able to define each term, you must also be able to apply the concepts. Do not fall behind in creating your vocabulary note cards – it is highly recommended that you complete them as you complete each reading assignment! Vocabulary note cards will be collected and graded at the end of each unit.
2. **Keep up with reading assignments:** Do not fall behind! Using the unit calendar that will be provided at the beginning of each unit, set a schedule for yourself and be disciplined enough to stick to it. Always be prepared to discuss the reading assignment and/or take a quiz on the material.
3. **Learn to read more effectively:** Read **ACTIVELY**; don't just look at the words. If you spend a half hour "reading" but are unable to recall anything when you are done, you have wasted your time. Reading a college level text requires a great deal more effort and concentration than does the latest novel. Do **NOT** ignore pictures, diagrams, tables, sidebars, etc. in your textbook. These features were added to your book for a reason. They make the text more interesting and usually provide important information. Take notes as you read. If you condense a 30-page chapter to a few pages of good notes, it'll be much easier to review.
4. **Form a study group with other students!**
5. **Consult various resources:** Unfortunately, it is impossible to cover everything that you will need to know for the AP Exam during class time. As a result, it is crucial that you make a point to learn the information on your own. If you come across something that you don't understand, please ask for clarification, consult another Psychology textbook or peruse the internet for further explanation.

Social Studies Department Late Work Policy – Major Assessments/Projects

Major projects/assessments turned in late will receive points off of the grade. This includes reasons such as computer/prINTER problems, work schedules, last minute conflicts, etc. **For each day late, 10% of maximum points possible will be deducted from earned grade for a maximum of FIVE school days. On the 6th day, the grade becomes a zero.** This rule may be relaxed due to extended illness and/or extenuating circumstances that will be determined on a case by case basis by the teacher.

Make-Up Work

It is the *student's* responsibility to remember to schedule make-up work with the teacher according to the timeframe explained below. Grades for missing assignments will be entered as a 0 in the grade program until the assignment is made up.

If your absence is **excused**, you have the same number of days to make up your work (*including tests & quizzes*) as the number of days that you were absent. For example, if you missed three days, you have three days to turn in your make-up assignments. If you do not meet this time frame, **you will not receive credit for your work.**

If your absence is **unexcused**, you have the same number of days to make up your work as the number of days that you were absent; however, the grade you earn on any make-up work will be reduced by 25%. Work for unexcused absences submitted after this timeline will not be accepted.

This make up policy may be amended due to unusual circumstances *as determined by the teacher.*

Extra Help

See me for extra help **BEFORE** you find yourself falling behind. Please see me to schedule an appointment if you feel extra help is necessary.

Course Outline and Course Plan

The AP Psychology course consists of **14** distinct areas of study. These areas will be presented in **12** separate units; six units in the fall and six units in the spring. Please note the percentages of each topic.

1. History and Approaches (2-4%)
2. Research Methods (8-10%)
3. Biological Bases of Behavior (8-10%)
4. Sensation and Perception (6-8%)
5. States of Consciousness (2-4%)
6. Learning (7-9%)
7. Cognition (8-10%)
8. Motivation and Emotion (6-8%)
9. Developmental Psychology (7-9%)
10. Personality (5-7%)
11. Testing and Individual Differences (5-7%)
12. Abnormal Psychology (7-9%)
13. Treatment of Psychological Disorders (5-7%)
14. Social Psychology (8-10%)

Unit I: History, Approaches and Research Methods (Prologue & Chapter 1)

*****Please note that test dates and unit lengths are subject to change!**

Topics

- A. Logic, philosophy and history of science
- B. Approaches/perspectives/subfields
- C. Experimental, correlational and clinical research
- D. Statistics in psychology
- E. Ethics in research

Unit Objectives

- Define psychology and identify early milestone in the field
- Compare and contrast the psychological perspectives and identify subfields of psychology
- Identify elements of an experiment (i.e., variables, groups, sampling, population)
- Compare and contrast research methods (i.e., case, survey, naturalistic observation)
- Describe the three measures of central tendency and measures of variation
- Discuss the ethics of animal and human research

Length: 3 weeks

Unit II: Biological Bases of Behavior (Chapters 2 & 3)

Topics

- A. Physiological techniques (i.e., imaging, surgical)
- B. Neuroanatomical
- C. Functional organization of the nervous system
- D. Neural transmission
- E. Endocrine system
- F. Genetics
- G. Evolutionary psychology

Unit Objectives

- Describe the structure of a neuron and explain neural impulses
- Describe neural communication and discuss the impact of neurotransmitters
- Classify and explain major divisions of the nervous system
- Identify and describe the functions of brain structures (i.e., thalamus, cerebellum, limbic system)
- Describe the four lobes of the cerebral cortex and their functions, as well as the association areas
- Explain split-brain studies
- Describe the endocrine system
- Explain the significance of behavioral genetics and evolutionary psychology

Length: 3 weeks

Unit III: Developmental Psychology (Chapters 3 & 4)

Topics

- A. Life-span approach
- B. Research methods
- C. Heredity-environment issues
- D. Developmental theories
- E. Dimensions of development
- F. Sex roles and gender roles

Unit Objectives

- Describe the course of prenatal development
- Discuss Piaget's theory of cognitive development
- Discuss the effect of social development (body contact, familiarity and parenting styles)
- Illustrate development changes in physical, cognitive, moral and social areas
- Identify Kohlberg's moral development stages and apply to scenarios
- Describe Erikson's psychosocial development stages
- Distinguish between longitudinal versus cross-sectional studies and crystallized versus fluid intelligence

Length: 3 weeks

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Unit IV: States of Consciousness (Chapter 7)

Topics

- A. Sleep and dreaming
- B. Hypnosis
- C. Psychoactive drug effects

Unit Objectives

- Describe the sleep cycle and identify what occurs in each stage
- Compare differences between NREM and REM
- Describe the major sleep disorders
- Explain the purpose of dreams
- Discuss hypnosis and describe the characteristics of those more likely to be hypnotized
- Discuss dependence, tolerance and withdrawal in relation to drug use, as well as the effects of depressants, stimulants and hallucinogens

Length: 1.5 weeks

Unit V: Sensation and Perception (Chapters 5 & 6)

Topics

- A. Thresholds and signal detection theory
- B. Sensory mechanisms
- C. Attention
- D. Perceptual processes

Unit Objectives

- Contrast the processes of sensation and perception
- Distinguish between thresholds (absolute, difference, Weber's law)
- Label a diagram of the parts of the eye and the ear & describe the operations of the sensory system (the five senses)
- Differentiate the Young-Helmholtz and opponent-process theories of color vision
- Explain the place and frequency theories of pitch
- Describe Gestalt principles, figure-ground and depth perception
- Discuss monocular and binocular cues

Length: 3 weeks

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Unit VI: Learning & Memory (Chapters 8 & 9)

Topics

- A. Classical & operant conditioning
- B. Cognitive processes
- C. Biological factors
- D. Social learning

Unit Objectives

- Describe classical conditioning (Pavlov's experiments) & operant conditioning (Skinner's experiments)
- Identify different types of reinforcers (positive, negative, primary and secondary), as well as the schedules of reinforcement
- Discuss the effects of punishment on behavior
- Describe the process of observational learning (Bandura's experiments)
- Describe sensory memory, short-term memory and long-term memory
- Explain the encoding process (i.e., imagery, chunking, hierarchies)
- Differentiate between implicit and explicit memory
- Describe the impact of retrieval cues on memory
- Discuss the effects of interference and motivated forgetting on retrieval
- Describe Loftus' research on memory reconstruction

Length: 3 weeks

Unit VII: Thinking and Language (Chapter 10)

Topics

- A. Language
- B. Thinking
- C. Problem solving and creativity

Unit Objectives

- Define concepts and prototypes
- Differentiate algorithms and heuristics when solving problems
- Explain how the representativeness and availability heuristics are used to make decisions
- Describe the structure of language (phonemes, morphemes, grammar), as well as language developmental stages (i.e. babbling, one word)
- Explain the nature-nurture debate for language acquisition (Chomsky v. Skinner)
- Discuss Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis

Length: 2.5 weeks

Unit VIII: Intelligence: Testing and Individual Differences (Chapter 11)

Topics

- A. Standardization and norms
- B. Reliability and validity
- C. Types of tests
- D. Ethics and standards in testing
- E. Intelligence

Unit Objectives

- Discuss the origins and nature of intelligence testing
- Differentiate intelligence theories (Spearman, Thurstone, Gardner, Sternberg)
- Distinguish between aptitude and achievement tests
- Describe the importance of standardization and distinguish between the reliability and validity of intelligence tests
- Describe extremes of intelligence

Length: 2 weeks

Unit IX: Motivation and Emotion (Chapters 12, 13 & 14)

Topics

- A. Biological bases
- B. Theories of motivation
- C. Hunger, thirst, sex and pain
- D. Social motives

- E. Theories of emotion
- F. Stress

Unit Objectives

- *Define motivation and identify motivational theories*
- *Describe the symptoms of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa*
- *Define achievement of motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation*
- *Describe the three theories of emotion (James-Lange, Cannon-Bard, Schacter-Singer)*
- *Describe the biological response to stress*

Length: 2.5 weeks

Unit X: Personality (Chapter 15)

Topics

- A. Personality theories and approaches
- B. Assessment techniques
- C. Growth and adjustment

Unit Objectives

- *Describe Freud's iceberg theory (id, ego and superego) and explain how defense mechanisms protect the ego*
- *Describe the contributions of the neo-Freudians (Jung, Adler, Horney)*
- *Describe the humanistic perspective on personality (Maslow's self-actualization and Rogers' self-concept)*
- *Identify how personality inventories are used to assess traits*
- *Discuss the social-cognitive perspective on personality (Bandura's reciprocal determinism)*
- *Identify locus of control, learned helplessness and optimism*
- *Compare and contrast the psychoanalytic, humanistic, trait and social-cognitive perspectives on personality*

Length: 2.5 weeks

Unit XI: Abnormal Psychology/Treatment of Psychological Disorders (Chapter 16 & 17)

Topics

- A. Definitions of abnormality
- B. Theories of psychopathology
- C. Diagnosis of psychopathology
- D. Types of disorders
- E. Treatment approaches
- F. Modes of therapy (e.g., individual, group)
- G. Community and preventive approaches

Unit Objectives

- Discuss the purpose of the Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR®)
- Describe & identify symptoms of anxiety disorders (generalized, panic, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, PTSD)
- Discuss dissociative disorders (amnesia, fugue, dissociative identity disorder)
- Describe and explain the development of somatoform disorders
- Differentiate mood disorders (major depression versus bipolar)
- Differentiate hallucinations and delusions, and identify subtypes of schizophrenia
- Describe the three clusters of personality disorders (anxiety, eccentric, impulsive)
- Describe psychoanalytic therapeutic techniques (e.g., free association, interpretation)
- Discuss Rogers's client-centered therapy
- Identify counter-conditioning techniques
- Describe the goals of the cognitive therapies
- Differentiate between anti-anxiety, antidepressant, and antipsychotic medications
- Describe electroconvulsive therapy and lobotomies
- **Length:** 2.5 weeks



Unit XII: Social Psychology (Chapter 18)

Topics

- A. Group dynamics
- B. Attribution processes
- C. Interpersonal perception
- D. Conformity, compliance, obedience
- E. Attitudes and attitude change
- F. Organizational behavior
- G. Aggression/antisocial behavior
- H. Cultural influences

Unit Objectives

- Describe the fundamental attribution error
- Describe Zimbardo's prison guard experiment and the effects of role-playing on attitudes
- Discuss the results of Asch's experiment on conformity
- Discuss Milgram's experiments on obedience
- Explain social facilitation, social loafing, and deindividuation
- Differentiate group polarization and groupthink
- Define and give examples of prejudice
- Discuss the issues related to aggression and attraction

Length: 2 weeks



Student Name: _____ Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name: _____ Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____



