AP®Psychology

Wiemers

The purpose of AP Psychology is to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology.

Course Objectives

1. Students will prepare to do acceptable work on the AP Psychology Examination.
2. Students will be familiar with core concepts and psychological theories. They will be familiar with and incorporate key terms in their everyday vocabulary.
3. Students will demonstrate psychological research concepts both in concept and in practice.
4. Students will develop critical thinking skills

Textbook & Resourses

Coon, Dennis; Mitterer, John O. *Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior*, 12th ed. Wadsworth: Cengage Learning, 2010. (Includes a study guide.)

Myers, David G. *Myers’ Psychology for AP 2nd Ed*. New York, NY: Worth, 2014.

[Psychology Text 9th Ed](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiThOSanrnOAhVJKiYKHWdFC3oQFgglMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Ffmtigers.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2015%2F08%2FMyers-D.-G.2010.-Psychology-9th-edition2.pdf&usg=AFQjCNGfkgXWQhyqAmC1ZBZNz2bjeVK9tQ&sig2=E2kIuBp4l-ndmgPce0kYtg) – Myers

[Companion website](http://www.macmillanlearning.com/Catalog/studentresources/MyersAP2e)

  

   

 

 - Free AP Psychology study guide

  

Homework Expectations

Students will receive ample notice for all assignments, quizzes, and tests through the Canvas app. Amount of work will reflect current chapter being covered in class. There will be assigned reading every night and students must study an average of 30 minutes per day and log it in the provided study log.

Vocabulary and reading quizzes will be given online every week. Students will have one calendar week in which to complete all timed quizzes online and is due by Sunday by midnight. Also throughout that same weekly time period, students will be responsible for answering two blog entries pertaining to a psychology article or video. The student is to respond to the prompts in an essay format and must respond to two classmates posts with a full thought out response to receive full credit for this assignment.

Tests will be in class and consist of 45 multiple choice questions and one 20 minute essay. Students are given 42 seconds per question for the multiple choice section to mimic AP exam conditions. Chapter vocabulary cards are due on test day for a separate daily grade.

This class is considered to be writing intensive with multiple writing assignments given each six weeks. The majority of these papers will reflect the student’s opinions and problem solving abilities. This course will also assume that the students will have been taught the basics of research paper writing and they will be expected to provide advanced work and effort to show their competence in tested subject matter.

**Plagiarism - the unauthorized use or close imitation of** [**the**](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/the) **language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work.**

Plagiarism is deemed a serious offence and any assignment that is found to be as such will result in an automatic zero in the gradebook as well as no offered chance to remake the assignment.

Students will be required to perform some online work for this class and need to make appropriate measures to ensure they can complete the online course work or make adjustments with the course instructor so other arrangements may be made. Due to the young and rapidly changing nature of this field of science, students are advised to download an RSS reader and follow many psychology blogging sites to stay current with new studies in our field. Feedly is a highly respected app that allows students to follow current journal articles. We may be using this process as an assignment later in the semester. The instructor will inform students of how to create account and expectations for the assignment at the time of assignment. The following feeds are a good start, but the student can find one closer aligned to their interests, as long as it is Psychology based: World of Psychology, BPS Research Digest, Research Blogging – Psychology, School Psychology Blog, PsyBlog, Head of the Class, Brain Blogger. Many additional feeds, including the afore mentioned, may be found at <http://www.socialpsychology.org/blogs.htm>.

Course Outline

1. History, Approaches, and Research Methods
	* Philosophies and Historical Significance: Structuralism, Functionalism, Behaviorism, Gestalt, Psychoanalytic, Humanistic
	* Pseudopsychologies: origins and conflict with science
	* Research methods: observation, survey/questionnaire, experiments, case study
	* Perspective on Behavior: Biological, Psychological, Sociocultural Perspectives
	* Statistics – Correlations, standard bell curve, variables, populations, sampling
	* Ethics – Working on humans vs working on animals

Gateway Questions

1. What is psychology, and what are its goals?
2. What is critical thinking?
3. How does psychology differ from false explanations of behavior?
4. How is the scientific method applied in psychological research?
5. How did the field of psychology emerge?
6. What are the contemporary perspectives in psychology?
7. What are the major specialties in psychology?
8. How is an experiment performed?
9. What is a double-blind experiment?
10. What nonexperimental research methods do psychologists use?
11. How good is the psychological information found in the popular media?
12. Brain and Behavior
	* Neurons: Synapse, Neurotransmitters, Action/resting potentials, label
	* Nervous system: sympathetic, parasympathetic, functions
	* Genetics
	* Cerebral & Subcortex: anatomy, functions, methods of examining, lobes, label
	* Endocrine System: hormones

Gateway Questions

1. How do nerve cells operate and communicate?
2. What are the major parts of the nervous system?
3. How is the brain studied?
4. Why is the human cerebral cortex so important, and what are its parts?
5. What are the major parts of the subcortex?
6. Does the glandular system affect behavior?
7. In what ways do right- and left-handed individuals differ?
8. Human Development
	* Nature vs. Nurture
	* Social, Language, and Cognitive Development
	* Newborn, Childhood, Adolescence, Stages of Adulthood
	* Differences between longitudinal and cross-sectional studies
	* Discuss Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg, and Vygostky

Gateway Questions

1. How do heredity and environment affect development?
2. What can newborn babies do?
3. Of what significance is a child’s emotional bond with adults?
4. How important are parenting styles?
5. How do children acquire language?
6. How do children learn to think?
7. Why is the transition from adolescence to adulthood especially challenging?
8. How do we develop morals and values?
9. What are the typical tasks and dilemmas through the life span?
10. What is involved in well-being during later adulthood?
11. How do people typically react to death?
12. How do effective parents discipline and communicate with their children?
13. Sensations & Perception
	* Psychophysics: absolute & difference thresholds, transduction, coding
	* Monocular and Binocular depth cues
	* Color theories: Young-Helmholtz, opponent-process theory
	* Somesthetic senses: vestibular system, sensory adaptation and gating, attention
	* Gestalt principles effecting sensations and perceptions
	* Perception vs. Attention, perceptional expectancies

Gateway Questions

1. In what ways are our senses limited?
2. How does the visual system function?
3. How do we perceive colors?
4. How do we adjust to the dark?
5. What are the mechanisms of hearing?
6. How do the chemical senses operate?
7. What are the somesthetic senses?
8. Why are we more aware of some sensations than others?
9. How can pain be reduced in everyday situations?
10. In general, how do we construct our perceptions?
11. Is perception altered by attention, motives, and emotions?
12. What basic principles do we use to group sensations into meaningful patterns?
13. What are perceptual constancies, and what is their role in perception?
14. How is it possible to see depth and judge distance?
15. What effect does learning have on perception?
16. To what extent do we see what we expect to see?
17. Is extrasensory perception possible?
18. How can I learn to perceive events more accurately?
19. States of Consciousness
	* Sleep and Dreaming: stages, sleep disorders, dream theories (psychodynamic dream theory, activation-synthesis, neurocognitive)
	* Hypnosis: effects, dependability, limitations
	* Psychoactive Drug Effects: Drug dependence and abuse, Uppers, Downers, Hallucinogens

Gateway Questions

1. What is an altered state of consciousness?
2. What are the effects of sleep loss or changes in sleep patterns?
3. Why do we sleep?
4. What are some sleep disorders and unusual sleep events?
5. Do dreams have meaning?
6. What is hypnosis?
7. Do meditation and sensory deprivation have any benefits?
8. What are the effects of the more commonly used psychoactive drugs?
9. How can dreams be used to promote personal understanding?
10. Conditioning and Learning
	* Classical conditioning: CS, CR, UCS, UCR, Pavlov’s theories
	* Operant Conditioning: B.F. Skinner, reinforcement (positive/negative), punishment, primary/secondary reinforces
	* Social learning: modeling
	* Cognitive learning: cognitive maps, latent learning

Gateway Questions

1. What is learning?
2. How does classical conditioning occur?
3. Does conditioning affect emotions?
4. How does operant conditioning occur?
5. Are there different kinds of operant reinforcement?
6. How are we influenced by patterns of reward?
7. What does punishment do to behavior?
8. What is cognitive learning?
9. Does learning occur by imitation?
10. How does conditioning apply to practical problems?
11. Memory
	* Stages of Memory: sensory memory, short-term, long-term, chunking
	* Encoding process
	* Implicit and explicit memories, recalling memories, why does memory fail
	* Keys to improving memory

Gateway Questions

1. How does memory work?
2. What are the features of short-term memory?
3. What are the features of long-term memory?
4. How is memory measured?
5. Why do we forget?
6. How does the brain form and store memories?
7. What are “photographic” memories?
8. How can I improve my memory?
9. Are there any tricks to help me with my memory?
10. Cognition and Learning
	* Concepts: formation, types (prototypes, faulty concepts, connotative meaning)
	* Language: Stroop interference task, structure, animal debate
	* Problem solving: mechanical, understanding, heuristics, stages of creative thought

Gateway Questions

1. What is the nature of thought?
2. In what ways are images related to thinking?
3. What are concepts?
4. What is the role of language in thinking?
5. What do we know about problem solving?
6. What is creative thinking?
7. How accurate is intuition?
8. How is human intelligence defined and measured?
9. How much does intelligence vary from person to person?
10. What are some controversies in the study of intelligence?
11. Are IQ tests fair to all cultural and racial groups?
12. Motivation and Emotion
	* Motivation: biology, circadian rhythms, hunger, thirst, sex, pain
	* Learned motives: opponent-process theory, social motives, intrinsic/extrinsic motivation
	* Theories of emotion: James-Lange, Cannon-Bard, Schachter’s Cognitive Theory, fight or flight

Gateway Questions

1. What is motivation? Are there different types of motives?
2. What causes hunger? Overeating? Eating disorders?
3. Is there more than one type of thirst? In what ways are pain avoidance and the sex drive unusual?
4. How does arousal relate to motivation?
5. What are learned motives? Social motives? Why are they important?
6. Are some motives more basic than others?
7. What happens during emotion?
8. What physiological changes underlie emotion? Can “lie detectors” really detect lies?
9. How accurately are emotions expressed by the face and “body language”?
10. How do psychologists explain emotions?
11. What does it mean to have “emotional intelligence”?
12. Personality
	* Define, traits, twin studies
	* Personality Theories: Trait, Psychoanalytic, Behavioristic/Social Learning, Humanistic

Gateway Questions

1. How do psychologists use the term “personality”?
2. Are some personality traits more basic or important than others?
3. How do psychodynamic theories explain personality?
4. What do behaviorists emphasize in their approach to personality?
5. How do humanistic theories differ from other perspectives?
6. How do psychologists measure personality?
7. What causes shyness? What can be done about it?
8. Health, Stress, & Coping
	* Community health, positive psychology, behavioral risk factors
	* Stress: effects on immune system, appraising stressors, coping with stress
	* Depression: learned helplessness, types of depression

Gateway Questions

1. What is health psychology? How does behavior affect health?
2. What is stress?
3. What causes frustration, and what are typical reactions to it?
4. Are there different types of conflict?
5. What are defense mechanisms?
6. What do we know about coping with feelings of helplessness and depression?
7. How is stress related to health and disease?
8. What are the best strategies for managing stress?
9. Psychological Disorders
	* Normality, features of disordered behaviors
	* Schizophrenia: disorganized, Catatonic, Paranoid, Undifferentiated, causes and implications
	* Anxiety based disorders: Adjustment disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive, stress disorders, Dissociative, Somatoform
	* Approaches: Psychodynamic, Humanistic-Existential, Behavioral, Cognitive

Gateway Questions

1. How is abnormality defined?
2. What are the major psychological disorders?
3. What are the general characteristics of psychotic disorders?
4. What is the nature of a delusional disorder?
5. What forms does schizophrenia take? What causes it?
6. What are mood disorders? What causes them?
7. What problems result when a person suffers high levels of anxiety?
8. How do psychologists explain anxiety-based disorders?
9. Why do people commit suicide? Can suicide be prevented?
10. Therapies
	* Psychotherapy
	* Humanistic Therapies: Client-Centered, Existential, Gestalt Therapy
	* Cybertherapy: Media psychologists, Telephone therapists, Internet therapy
	* Behavior Therapy: Aversion, Desensitization
	* Operant Therapies: Nonreinforcement and Extinction, Reinforcement and Token Economies
	* Cognitive Therapy: Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy
	* Group Therapy: Psychodrama, family & couples therapy, group awareness training
	* Medical Therapies: Drug, Electrical stimulation, psychosurgery, hospitalization

Gateway Questions

1. How do psychotherapies differ?
2. How did psychotherapy originate?
3. Is Feudian psychoanalysis still used?
4. What are the major humanistic therapies?
5. Can therapy be conducted at a distance?
6. What is behavior therapy?
7. What role do operant principles play in behavioral therapy?
8. Can therapy changes thoughts and emotions?
9. Can psychotherapy be done with groups of people?
10. What do various therapies have in common?
11. How do psychiatrists treat psychological disorders?
12. How are behavioral principles applied to everyday problems? How could a person find professional help?
13. Social Psychology
	* Attitudes: Formation, behaviors, measurement, Cognitive Dissonance Theory
	* Compliance, Obedience, Milgram, Coercion
	* Attribution theory
	* Interpersonal Attraction: physical proximity, competence, similarity, social exchange theory
	* Aggression: biology, instinct, social learning, preventing aggression, prejudice

Gateway Questions

1. How does group membership affect individual behavior?
2. How do we perceive the motives of others and the causes of our own behavior?
3. What are attitudes? How are the acquired?
4. Under what conditions is persuasion most effective? What is cognitive dissonance?
5. What is social influence and social power?
6. How does the mere presence of others affect behavior?
7. What have social psychologists learned about conformity?
8. What factors lead to increased compliance?
9. Can people be too obedient?
10. Is brainwashing actually possible? How are people converted to cult membership?
11. How does self-assertion differ from aggression?
12. Why do people affiliate?
13. What factors influence interpersonal attraction?
14. How do liking and loving differ?
15. Why are bystanders so often unwilling to help in an emergency?
16. How do psychologists explain human aggression?
17. What causes prejudice?
18. What can be done about prejudice and intergroup conflict?
19. How can we promote multiculturalism and social harmony?