

A-Level Psychology Year 11 - Transition work

Psychology is a subject that relates to 'real-life'.

Activity 1: Keep a scrapbook (digital or paper) of x4 articles in the news that are linked to how people behave, how they think, what motivates them etc. Annotate each article with a summary of the main points and create a glossary of terms that are new to you. You should find at least one article per week.

Use the following sources:

www.bps.org.uk/news-and-blogs

www.psychologytoday.com/gb/news

www.bbc.co.uk

www.theguardian.com

www.thetimes.co.uk

www.independent.co.uk

When using newspaper websites searches in the science, health, family and business sections may be useful or use the search box and enter 'psychology'. I recently found an article on 'The Psychology behind COVID19!'



Psychology involves studying our amazing brain.

Activity 2: a. Research and make a table of notes on the following ways of studying the brain: MRI scan, fMRI scan, EEG and Post-Mortem. You will need to find out what these abbreviations mean first! Make sure you include strengths and weaknesses of each method.

b. Create a drawing/picture of the brain. It can be a scientific drawing in cross section or even an artistic representation using any medium, digital or otherwise. The best ones will be used to decorate the classroom. Spend some time learning about the different parts of the brain and their function ; it will really help you in your A level.

c. Visit the website www.livescience.com and read '10 things we learned about the brain in 2019'. Choose your three favourite and write a summary of each finding.



Psychology involves critically analysing evidence for different explanations of behaviour.

Activity 3: Investigate the question: 'are criminals born or made?' You should produce a 500-1000 word essay considering this question and weighing up the arguments and the evidence. The 'born' side of the argument (nature) suggests criminal behaviour is influenced by genetics or the brain, or nervous system malfunctions. The 'made' side of the argument (nurture) suggests that criminal behaviour is influenced by personality, dysfunctional thinking (cognition) or learning and environment. What will your conclusion be? In Psychology you have to give a measured conclusion based on the weight of the evidence for each side and not on personal opinion. You might like to include a case study of a serial killer or other famous criminal in your work, as an example.

A good source of explanations is www.simplypsychology.org/a-level-forensic.html

Here in Psychology we also love a TEDtalk too - check this out

https://www.ted.com/talks/jim_fallon_exploring_the_mind_of_a_killer/transcript?language=en#t-1422



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Psychology involves looking at past ‘infamous’ studies

Activity 4: Investigate the two controversial studies ‘The Milgram experiment (1963)’ and ‘the Zimbardo prison experiment (1973)’

Once you have researched the two studies, create a factsheet/poster on the following:

- What was the purpose of the study?
- Who were the participants (i.e. those involved in the study)?
- How was the study set up (i.e. where was it? What materials were used)?
- What were the findings?
- Why would psychology now refer to these studies as ‘controversial/infamous’?

Want a challenge? On your poster/factsheet explain how research such as Milgram & Zimbardo, might explain historical atrocities such as the Nazi persecution of the Jews.

Here are some links and videos to help:

Milgram experiment : <https://www.simplypsychology.org/milgram.html>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCVII-4GZQ>

Zimbardo experiment : <https://www.simplypsychology.org/zimbardo.html>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=760lwYmpXbc&t=1201s>



Psychology involves looking at behaviours from multiple perspectives

Activity 5: What, who, how and why of the ‘core approaches’ in Psychology

There are some core approaches to Psychology that you need to know for your A level – they are different ways of explaining human behaviours. Some of these are listed below: your job is to do some research on them using the internet (There are also plenty of great videos on YouTube you can watch). You should find out: what does this word mean? How might it explain human behaviour? Identify one key researcher from this area – and why are they famous?

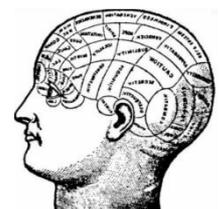
The Behaviourist Approach

The Social Learning Theory Approach

The Cognitive Approach

The Biological Approach

Optional extension: The Psychodynamic Approach & Humanistic Approach



Psychology involves investigating human behaviour

Activity 6: Design a study to investigate whether there is an association or relationship (correlation) between time spent outdoors and happiness.

Run your design by me and we can decide whether you can go ahead and carry it out for real. Think about something you can do in ‘lockdown’. You might use Microsoft Forms, for example. To be able to do a correlation each participant in your study needs to provide you with ‘time spent outdoors’ and ‘happiness’ measured on a numerical scale (a score). I can help you with this. Prepare a presentation about your study and your findings.

