

## AP Psychology Summer Assignment – 2019-2020

Dear AP Psychology Students,

I am so excited for this upcoming school year and look forward to having you all in class. Psychology is in my unbiased opinion (maybe not), the most interesting subject you will study in high school. Why? Because it's all about humans and why we do the things we do. That means it applies to everything that has ever happened to you and can influence the way you think about every person in the world for the rest of your life, including yourself!

But before we begin, I want you to start thinking about the world like a psychologist. To do that, you will need to complete two tasks over the summer: **reading a psychology book and completing a chart** related to the different perspectives of psychology. These assignments will be due on **Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019** and will count as a **100-point project grade**. You must complete this as an individual. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in significant consequences. Good luck and email me with any questions or concerns!

-Mrs. Moloughney

### **Part A:**

**Step 1: Read.** For the first part of your summer assignment, you will need to read a recently published book related to psychology. I think you will find these books to be quite different from the other books you have been asked to read for school and I hope you enjoy them. These are mature books and may contain mature content, but are directly related to our study of psychology. You must **pick one** of the following:

- Gladwell, M. (2005). *Blink: the power of thinking without thinking*.
- Kahneman, D. (2013). *Thinking, fast and slow*.
- Lieberman, M. (2013). *Social: Why our brains are wired to connect*.
- Mlodinow, L. (2013). *Subliminal: how your unconscious mind rules your behavior*.
- Sternberg, E. (2016). *NeuroLogic: the brain's hidden rationale behind our irrational behavior*.

Feel free to read the brief synopses provided to help you pick the right book for you. If for some reason, you don't like the book you've picked, just choose another. It will also help if you don't save it for the last minute. These books will be best enjoyed under low-stress conditions and will seem impossible if you begin on September 5<sup>th</sup>. Bookmark interesting passages to help you identify what you might want to write about.

**Step 2: Reflect.** Once you read the book, you will need to **write three "reflections" which convey your thoughts on specific passages in the book**. Each of the three reflections should be **at most a page** in length (**no more than three pages in total**) and **must be typed**. Begin with a quote or a description of an issue taken from the book that you found to be particularly interesting. Then create a well-written response, which can include critiques, questions, disagreements, ideas you like (explaining why), comparisons to other things you have read, connections to your personal experiences, etc. This exercise is designed to get you thinking like a psychologist and for me to get to know you as a person. Credit will relate to the quality of your writing, the insight you provide, and the quality of the passage you are critiquing. Have fun with this, but develop your thoughts and express them clearly. **Note: Some aspects of the books are more intriguing than others and a telltale sign that you have saved this assignment for the last minute is if you pick a bland or simplistic passage to reflect upon.**

**Step 3: Critique.** Once you finish your reflections, please **write a critical review of the book as a whole**. This review should be in the form of a **brief essay (one or two pages)** and **must be typed**. In your review, please include the following:

- Introduce the book, summarizing the author's main argument and key points.
- Evaluate how well the book makes its argument: the quality of writing, reasoning, evidence, etc.
- Express your thoughts as a reader on the value of the book, to you and/or to other readers.

Ultimately you are trying to decide whether to recommend the book and, if so, to what kind of reader, for what purpose, and with what reservations. It is therefore necessary to go beyond broad generalizations and empty

praise or criticism. To earn full credit, you must elaborate, explain, and give specific examples for your opinion. If someone reading your review can make a well-informed judgment about the book, you've done your job well.

Credit will relate to the quality of your writing (not the views you express). As a student new to psychology, it is understood that your background knowledge is limited, so you should base the review on your perspective as a non-expert. Be sure to edit your writing carefully so that your thoughts are well organized and clearly expressed (in grammatically correct sentences, of course).

### **Part B:**

For the second component of your summer assignment, you need to become familiar with the “Seven Modern Perspectives” of psychology. This will give you a head start on our first chapter of study. To complete this, use your AP All-Access as a resource. You should not need to use outside sources, but if you do, create a simple bibliography. Complete these two tasks individually and type your work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in significant consequences.

1. **In your own words**, what is a “perspective” in psychology and how can seven perspectives “peacefully coexist” in the same field? (1-2 paragraphs)
2. Create a chart that shows the following related to each of the Seven Modern Perspectives:
  - Name of perspective
  - Description basic beliefs and/or assumptions (how does each perspective explain human behavior/experience.
  - How would this perspective try to explain the causes of **AND** treat depression.
  - Famous psychologist **AND** a basic description of their research
    - For the famous psychologist, sort the following into the correct perspective:
    - Charles Darwin
    - Stanley Milgram
    - John Watson
    - Roger Sperry
    - Sigmund Freud
    - Abraham Maslow
    - Elizabeth Loftus

Sample Chart (Yours will obviously need to be larger, but this is how you can set it up...if you make it landscape, it will fit on a page better):

Name:	Behaviorist	Biological	Cognitive	Evolutionary	Humanistic	Psychodynamic	Sociocultural
Description of Basic Beliefs:							
How would it explain and treat depression?							
Famous psychologist and research.							

## **Book Choices (2019-2020):**

The following brief descriptions should help you to choose the summer reading book that you think will interest you the most. They are in alphabetical order by author.

Gladwell, Malcolm. *Blink: The power of thinking without thinking.*

In his landmark bestseller *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell redefined how we understand the world around us. Now, in *Blink*, he revolutionizes the way we understand the world within. *Blink* is a book about how we think without thinking, about choices that seem to be made in an instant--in the blink of an eye--that actually aren't as simple as they seem. Why are some people brilliant decision makers, while others are consistently inept? Why do some people follow their instincts and win, while others end up stumbling into error? How do our brains really work--in the office, in the classroom, in the kitchen, and in the bedroom? And why are the best decisions often those that are impossible to explain to others?

In *Blink* we meet the psychologist who has learned to predict whether a marriage will last, based on a few minutes of observing a couple; the tennis coach who knows when a player will double-fault before the racket even makes contact with the ball; the antiquities experts who recognize a fake at a glance. Here, too, are great failures of "blink": the election of Warren Harding; "New Coke"; and the shooting of Amadou Diallo by police. *Blink* reveals that great decision makers aren't those who process the most information or spend the most time deliberating, but those who have perfected the art of "thin-slicing"--filtering the very few factors that matter from an overwhelming number of variables.

Kahneman, Daniel. *Thinking, fast and slow.*

In the international bestseller, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Daniel Kahneman, the renowned psychologist and winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, takes us on a groundbreaking tour of the mind and explains the two systems that drive the way we think. System 1 is fast, intuitive, and emotional; System 2 is slower, more deliberative, and more logical. The impact of overconfidence on corporate strategies, the difficulties of predicting what will make us happy in the future, the profound effect of cognitive biases on everything from playing the stock market to planning our next vacation—each of these can be understood only by knowing how the two systems shape our judgments and decisions.

Engaging the reader in a lively conversation about how we think, Kahneman reveals where we can and cannot trust our intuitions and how we can tap into the benefits of slow thinking. He offers practical and enlightening insights into how choices are made in both our business and our personal lives—and how we can use different techniques to guard against the mental glitches that often get us into trouble. Winner of the National Academy of Sciences Best Book Award and the Los Angeles Times Book Prize and selected by *The New York Times Book Review* as one of the ten best books of 2011, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* is destined to be a classic.

Lieberman, Matthew. *Social: why our brains are wired to connect.*

In *Social*, renowned psychologist Matthew Lieberman explores groundbreaking research in social neuroscience revealing that our need to connect with other people is even more fundamental, more basic, than our need for food or shelter. Because of this, our brain uses its spare time to learn about the social world--other people and our relation to them. It is believed that we must commit 10,000 hours to master a skill. According to Lieberman, each of us has spent 10,000 hours learning to make sense of people and groups *by the time we are ten*.

*Social* argues that our need to reach out to and connect with others is a primary driver behind our behavior. We believe that pain and pleasure alone guide our actions. Yet, new research using fMRI--including a great deal of original research conducted by Lieberman and his UCLA lab--shows that our brains react to social pain and pleasure in much the same way as they do to physical pain and pleasure. Fortunately, the brain has evolved sophisticated mechanisms for securing our place in the social world. We have a unique ability to read other people's minds, to figure out their hopes, fears, and motivations, allowing us to effectively coordinate our lives with one another. And our most private sense of who we are is intimately linked to the important people and groups in our lives. This wiring often leads us to restrain our selfish impulses for the greater good. These

mechanisms lead to behavior that might seem irrational, but is really just the result of our deep social wiring and necessary for our success as a species.

Mlodinow, Leonard. *Subliminal: how your unconscious mind rules your behavior*.

Over the past two decades of neurological research, it has become increasingly clear that the way we experience the world--our perception, behavior, memory, and social judgment--is largely driven by the mind's subliminal processes and not by the conscious ones, as we have long believed. As in the bestselling *The Drunkard's Walk: How Randomness Rules Our Lives*, Leonard Mlodinow employs his signature concise, accessible explanations of the most obscure scientific subjects to unravel the complexities of the subliminal mind. In the process he shows the many ways it influences how we misperceive our relationships with family, friends, and business associates; how we misunderstand the reasons for our investment decisions; and how we misremember important events--along the way, changing our view of ourselves and the world around us.

Sternberg, Eliezer. *NeuroLogic: the brain's hidden rationale behind our irrational behavior*.

A groundbreaking investigation of the brain's hidden logic behind our strangest behaviors, and of how conscious and unconscious systems interact in order to create our experience and preserve our sense of self.

From bizarre dreams and hallucinations to schizophrenia and multiple personalities, the human brain is responsible for a diverse spectrum of strange thoughts and behaviors. When observed from the outside, these phenomena are often written off as being just "crazy," but what if they were actually planned and logical?

*NeuroLogic* explores the brain's internal system of reasoning, from its unconscious depths to conscious decision making, and illuminates how it explains our most outlandish as well as our most stereotyped behaviors. From sleepwalking murderers, contagious yawning, and the brains of sports fans to false memories, subliminal messages, and the secret of ticklishness, Dr. Eliezer Sternberg shows that there are patterns to the way the brain interprets the world—patterns that fit the brain's unique logic. Unraveling these patterns and the various ways they can be disturbed will not only alter our view of mental illness and supernatural experience, but will also shed light on the hidden parts of ourselves.