



Greenwich Public Schools Curriculum Overview

Introduction to Psychology

Personalized learning is achieved through standards-based, rigorous and relevant curriculum that is aligned to digital tools and resources.

Note: Teachers retain professional discretion in how the learning is presented based on the needs and interests of their students.

Course Description

Introduction to Psychology is designed to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. They examine major areas of interest such as experimental research, the biological basis of behavior, learning, development, personality, abnormal behavior, therapy and social interaction.

Unit Pacing Guide

- Unit 1: Relevance, History and Methods (approximately 12 classes)
 - Unit 2: Biological Psychology (approximately 12 classes)
 - Unit 3: Developmental Psychology (approximately 12 classes)
 - Unit 4: Cognitive Psychology (approximately 12 classes)
 - Unit 5: Psychopathology (approximately 12 classes)
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Enduring Understandings for the Course

- Human behavior is influenced by a variety of biological, cognitive and social factors.
- Psychology is a scientific field of study that evolves through research and experimentation.

Unit 1: Relevance, History and Methods

- Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes.
- Psychology provides insights and strategies that may be used to improve our personal and social well-being
- Psychology is a relatively young science that has evolved rapidly through the groundbreaking work of succeeding generations of psychologists.
- There are six main contemporary perspectives in psychology, each focusing on a different aspect or theory of human behavior.
- Psychological research is a rigorous scientific discipline that incorporates a variety of methods that must meet ethical standards for the treatment of participating subjects.

Unit 2: Biological Psychology

- Innate biological factors and life experiences influence behavior; the extent to which they do and how they interact is an ongoing area of study in psychology.

- The nervous system is the body's electrochemical communication system to and from the brain.
- The endocrine system is the body's hormonal communication system to and from the brain.
- The brain is a highly complex organ with numerous specialized components; it is the command center of human behavior.
- The brain relies on the nervous and endocrine systems to receive information from and transmit commands to the various other parts of the body.

Unit 3: Developmental Psychology

- The main stages of development are prenatal, childhood, adolescence and adulthood; within each there are sub-stages.
- Each stage has particular physical, cognitive and psychosocial characteristics.
- Early childhood is when the brain is most primed for learning and most requires engaged caregiving, language, play and good nutrition.
- Adolescence is characterized by psychological transitions in addition to and influenced by physical maturation.
- Socio-cultural cues shape adults' expectations for what to accomplish in life and when.
- Each stage of development presents particular psychological challenges to be resolved.

Unit 4: Cognitive Psychology

- Learning is the relatively permanent change in behavior resulting from experience.
- Associative learning is the linking of two stimuli or a response and its consequences. Cognitive learning is the acquisition of mental information that guides our behavior.
- Memory is the persistence of learning over time through the encoding, storage and retrieval of information
- Consciousness is the awareness of self and one's environment.
- Intelligence is the ability to learn from experience, solve problems, and use knowledge to adapt to new situations. The application and interpretation of this definition is a source of disagreement with important social implications.

Unit 5: Psychopathology

- Psychological disorders are patterns of thoughts, feelings, or actions that are deviant, distressful, and dysfunctional.
- Psychological disorders negatively and severely interfere with one's daily life and well being.
- Therapies for psychological disorders include psychotherapy and biomedical.

Standards

[Connecticut Social Studies Framework](#), adopted February 2015 (pg. 120 - 127)

*There are no unique CT Psychology Standards. CT adheres to the American Psychological Association (APA) Standards, as do most states. Much of the information contained herein is excerpted from the APA National Psychology Standards (August, 2011) and from the College Board A.P. Psychology Course Description.

1.0 CONNECTICUT STATE CONTENT STANDARDS*

Standard Area: Perspectives in Psychological Science

Content Standard 1: Development of psychology as an empirical science

- 1.1 Define psychology as a discipline and identify its goals as a science.
- 1.2 Describe the emergence of psychology as a scientific discipline.
- 1.3 Describe perspectives employed to understand behavior and mental processes.
- 1.4 Explain how psychology evolved as a scientific discipline.

Content Standard 2: Major subfields within psychology

- 2.1 Discuss the value of both basic and applied psychological research with human and non-human animals.
- 2.2 Describe the major subfields of psychology.
- 2.3 Identify the important role psychology plays in benefiting society and improving people's lives.

Standard Area: Research Methods, Measurement, and Statistics

Content Standard 1: Research methods and measurements used to study behavior and mental processes

- 1.1 Describe the scientific method and its role in psychology.
- 1.2 Describe and compare a variety of quantitative (e.g., surveys, correlations, experiments) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, narratives, focus groups) research methods.
- 1.3 Define systematic procedures used to improve the validity of research findings, such as external validity.
- 1.4 Discuss how and why psychologists use non-human animals in research.

Content Standard 2: Ethical issues in research with human and non-human animals

- 2.1 Identify ethical standards psychologists must address regarding research with human participants.
- 2.2 Identify ethical guidelines psychologists must address regarding research with non-human animals.

Content Standard 3: Basic concepts of data analysis

- 3.1 Define descriptive statistics and explain how they are used by psychological scientists.
- 3.2 Define forms of qualitative data and explain how they are used by psychological scientists.

Standard Area: Biological Bases of Behavior

Content Standard 1: Structure and function of the nervous system in human and non-human animals

- 1.1 Identify the major divisions and subdivisions of the human nervous system.
- 1.2 Identify the parts of the neuron and describe the basic process of neural transmission.
- 1.3 Differentiate between the structures and functions of the various parts of the central nervous system.
- 1.4 Describe lateralization of brain functions.
- 1.5 Discuss the mechanisms of, and the importance of, plasticity of the nervous system.

Content Standard 2: Structure and function of the endocrine system

- 2.1 Describe how the endocrine glands are linked to the nervous system.

Content Standard 3: The interaction between biological factors and experience

- 3.1 Describe concepts in genetic transmission.
- 3.2 Describe the interactive effects of heredity and environment.
- 3.3 Explain how evolved tendencies influence behavior.

Content Standard 4: Methods and issues related to biological advances

- 4.1 Identify tools used to study the nervous system.
- 4.2 Describe advances made in neuroscience.
- 4.3 Discuss issues related to scientific advances in neuroscience and genetics.

Standard Area: Learning

Content Standard 1: Classical conditioning

- 1.1 Describe the principles of classical conditioning.
- 1.2 Describe clinical and experimental examples of classical conditioning.
- 1.3 Apply classical conditioning to everyday life.

Content Standard 2: Operant conditioning

- 2.1 Describe the Law of Effect.
- 2.2 Describe the principles of operant conditioning.
- 2.3 Describe clinical and experimental examples of operant conditioning.
- 2.4 Apply operant conditioning to everyday life.

Content Standard 3: Observational and cognitive learning

- 3.1 Describe the principles of observational and cognitive learning.
- 3.2 Apply observational and cognitive learning to everyday life.

Standard Area: Memory

Content Standard 1: Encoding of memory

- 1.1 Identify factors that influence encoding.
- 1.2 Characterize the difference between shallow (surface) and deep (elaborate) processing.
- 1.3 Discuss strategies for improving the encoding of memory.

Content Standard 2: Storage of memory

- 2.1 Describe the differences between working memory and long-term memory.
- 2.2 Identify and explain biological processes related to how memory is stored.
- 2.3 Discuss types of memory and memory disorders (e.g., amnesias, dementias).
- 2.4 Discuss strategies for improving the storage of memories.

Content Standard 3: Retrieval of memory

- 3.1 Analyze the importance of retrieval cues in memory.
- 3.2 Explain the role that interference plays in retrieval.
- 3.3 Discuss the factors influencing how memories are retrieved.
- 3.4 Explain how memories can be malleable.
- 3.5 Discuss strategies for improving the retrieval of memories.

Standard Area: Psychological Disorders

Content Standard 1: Perspectives on abnormal behavior

- 1.1 Define psychologically abnormal behavior.
- 1.2 Describe historical and cross-cultural views of abnormality.
- 1.3 Describe major models of abnormality.
- 1.4 Discuss how stigma relates to abnormal behavior.
- 1.5 Discuss the impact of psychological disorders on the individual, family, and society.

Content Standard 2: Categories of psychological disorders

- 2.1 Describe the classification of psychological disorders.
- 2.2 Discuss the challenges associated with diagnosis.
- 2.3 Describe symptoms and causes of major categories of psychological disorders (including schizophrenia, mood, anxiety, and personality disorders).

Standard Area: Treatment of Psychological Disorders

Content Standard 1: Perspectives on treatment

- 1.1 Explain how psychological treatments have changed over time and among cultures.
- 1.2 Match methods of treatment to psychological perspectives.
- 1.3 Explain why psychologists use a variety of treatment options.

Content Standard 2: Categories of treatment and types of treatment providers

- 2.1 Identify biomedical treatments.
- 2.2 Identify psychological treatments.
- 2.3 Describe appropriate treatments for different age groups.
- 2.4 Evaluate the efficacy of treatments for particular disorders.
- 2.5 Identify other factors that improve the efficacy of treatment.
- 2.6 Identify treatment providers for psychological disorders and the training required for each.

Content Standard 3: Legal, ethical, and professional issues in the treatment of psychological disorders

- 3.1 Identify ethical challenges involved in delivery of treatment.
- 3.2 Identify national and local resources available to support individuals with psychological disorders and their families (e.g., NAMI and support groups).

2.0 CONNECTICUT STATE SKILL STANDARDS

2.1 Access and gather information from a variety of primary and secondary sources including electronic media.

1. Gather relevant and accurate information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively.
2. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
3. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question, including self-generated questions, or to solve a problem.
4. Draw information from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

2.2 Interpret information from a variety of primary and secondary sources including electronic media (5-7, 11-14)

5. Choose valid sources and provide evidence to answer a history/social studies question.
6. Determine the central ideas of, and be able to summarize information from primary and secondary sources.
7. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with the textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
11. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media in order to address a question or solve a problem.
12. Interpret social/political messages of visuals (e.g. political cartoons, posters, photographs, art of a period).
13. Detect a bias in data presented in various forms.
14. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

2.3 Create various forms of written work to demonstrate an understanding of history and social studies issues. (15-18, 20)

15. Create written work (e.g. electronic medium or persuasive pieces) that analyzes a historical event, place or person using various sources.

16. Write informative/explanatory texts about events and topics
 17. Compose a thesis statement using primary and secondary sources.
 18. Write arguments using discipline-specific content.
 20. Integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a common form for citation.
- 2.4 Demonstrate an ability to participate in social studies discourse through informed discussion, debate, and effective oral presentation (21-24)
21. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on a social studies topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
 22. Prepare formal oral arguments using relevant evidence from primary and secondary sources to defend a point of view.
 23. Ask relevant questions related to social studies/history to initiate, extend or debate a point of view.
 24. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused and coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- 2.5 Create and present relevant social studies materials using both print and electronic media.
27. Represent information in various formats, including strategic use of digital media to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

3.0 CONNECTICUT STATE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT STANDARDS

3.2 Analyze and evaluate human action in historical and/or contemporary contexts from alternative points of view.

- Develop criteria for assessing the actions or policies of an individual or group in the past.
- Develop criteria to evaluate alternative viewpoints on a contemporary issue.
- Analyze how one's historical memory can contribute to one's view of a contemporary issue or event.
- Cite examples and analyze how people and/or personal accounts can influence historical memory.

3.3 Apply appropriate historical, geographic, political, economic and cultural concepts and methods in proposing and evaluating solutions to contemporary problems.

- Evaluate a proposed solution to a contemporary political, economic, geographical/environmental or social problem.
- Formulate a historical question and devise a research procedure that would lead to an answer.

VISION OF THE GRADUATE CONNECTIONS

- *Pose and pursue substantive questions.*
-Students will develop and explore their own research questions during a variety of research assignments including development of the Capstone project and Grade 10 research paper.
- *Critically interpret, evaluate, and synthesize information.*
-Students will critically interpret, evaluate and synthesize information by analyzing a variety of primary and secondary sources and by conducting historical research. This source evaluation and research will allow students to gain a variety of historical perspectives.
- *Explore, define, and solve complex problems.*

-Students will apply historical knowledge to critically analyze current problems and issues. High school elective courses will allow for an in-depth study of many complex modern issues.

- *Communicate effectively for a given purpose.*
-Students will be evaluated on their ability to communicate effectively through a variety of methods. Through persuasive writing assignments, class discussions and presentations, students will continue to develop and improve their communication skills.
- *Advocate for ideas, causes and action.*
-Students will evaluate past advocacy successes and failures and determine when others have chosen to fight for causes and taken action. Case studies in *Law in America*, for example, will be used to evaluate advocacy successes and failures.
- *Generate innovative, creative ideas and products.*
-Students will demonstrate their mastery of curriculum objectives with innovative projects. Students will explore answers to essential questions through creative and varied assignments with research structured by the use of GPS research process.
- *Collaborate with others to produce a unified work and/or heightened understanding.*
-Students will learn to collaborate with one another while working in structured groups in a variety of cooperative learning activities in order to create a final product.
- *Contribute to community through dialogue, service, and/or leadership.*
-Through the study of different world leaders and political systems, students gain the skills they need to evaluate the qualities of an effective leader. Through student council, community service requirements and other school organizations and responsibilities students will contribute to the community.
- *Conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner.*
-Historical situations will be analyzed so students gain perspective and information in order to conduct themselves in a responsible manner.
- *Recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view.*
-Through the teaching of cultures from around the world students will recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view. By developing an understanding and empathy for others, students will appreciate differences and similarities between themselves and others.
- *Pursue their unique interests, passions and curiosities.*
-Students will have choice in many assignments and will be able to pursue their interests culminating in the Capstone project.
- *Respond to failures and successes with reflection and resilience*
-Students will reflect on their writing and group work, in order to analyze what they did well and where they can improve. Frequent and constructive feedback by teachers will be used to insure continuous reflection and refinement.
- *Be responsible for their own mental and physical health*
-Social studies classes will help students develop study skills, and reduce stress through organization and planning.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS FOR LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 11-12

1. Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.
2. Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships between the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons and evidence.

- 2a. Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form and in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
3. Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating an understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
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Suggested Assessments

Unit 1: Relevance, History and Methods

- Identify and describe important elements of psychology
- Explain how group dynamics influence individual behavior.
- Describe the origins of psychology as a science and the work of the first psychologists.
- Explain the six contemporary psychology perspectives.
- Compare the key characteristics, applications, advantages and disadvantages of different research strategies in psychology.

Unit 2: Biological Psychology

- Analyze how heredity interacts with the environment to influence behavior.
- Describe and explain the structure and functions of the nervous system.
- Describe and explain the structure and functions of the endocrine system.
- Evaluate the significance of these biological parts and systems in human behavior.

Unit 3: Developmental Psychology

- Identify, explain, and distinguish the psychological stages of the human life span.
- Describe why early childhood is critical in a person's psychological development.
- Explain why psychologists identify adolescence as a distinct stage of development.
- Analyze how adult behavior is influenced by the social clock.
- Evaluate what psychological challenges are particular to each stage.

Unit 4: Cognitive Psychology

- Compare and contrast the associative and cognitive modes of learning.
- Analyze learning as a set of complex and varied processes for acquiring behaviors, knowledge and skills.
- Define memory and explain how it works and why it is important.
- Define consciousness and how our information processing affects our reality.
- Define intelligence and assess its merits in real world application

Unit 5: Psychopathology

- Identify the criteria used to classify psychological disorders.
- Compare the impact various disorders have on individual and social well-being.
- Identify and apply therapies for psychological disorders.

Recommended Resources

Unit 1: Relevance, History and Methods

- Modules 2-4 and 34-36; *Thinking About Psychology* (Blair-Broeker and Ernst) and/or Chapters 1, 2 and 12; [Psychology 2e](#) (OpenStax, Rice University)
- [APA Ethical Guidelines](#), Standard 8
- [Discovering Psychology](#) (video series)
- [PsychSim](#) (online interactive series)
- [When Great Minds Think Unalike: Inside Science's 'Replication Crisis'](#)
- [Psychology Itself Is Under Scrutiny](#)

Unit 2: Biological Psychology

- Modules 6-13; *Thinking About Psychology* (Blair-Broeker and Ernst) and/or Chapters 3, 5 and 10; [Psychology 2e](#) (OpenStax, Rice University)
- [Phineas Gage: The man with a hole in his head](#) (reading)
- [The Story of Phineas Gage](#) (video reenactment)
- [League of Denial: The NFL's Concussion Crisis](#) (Frontline documentary)
- [Discovering Psychology](#) (video series)
- [PsychSim](#) (online interactive series)
- [The Brain with David Eagleman](#) (video series)
- [Phineas Gage - Stuff You Missed in History Class](#) (podcast)
- [Secrets of the Mind Nova HD](#) (video)

Unit 3: Developmental Psychology

- Modules 14-18; *Thinking About Psychology* (Blair-Broeker and Ernst) and/or Chapters 9 and 11; [Psychology 2e](#) (OpenStax, Rice University)
- [Brain Matters: Early Childhood Development](#) (video)
- [Discovering Psychology](#) (video series)
- [PsychSim](#) (online interactive series)
- [A typical child on Piaget's conservation tasks](#) (video)
- [Still Face Experiment: Dr. Edward Tronick](#) (video)

Unit 4: Cognitive Psychology

- Modules 19-28; *Thinking About Psychology* (Blair-Broeker and Ernst) and/or Chapters 4, 6, 7, and 8; [Psychology 2e](#) (OpenStax, Rice University)
- [Discovering Psychology](#) (video series)
- [PsychSim](#) (online interactive series)
- [What is consciousness? | The Economist](#) (video)
- [Babies on the Brink - "Visual Cliff"](#) (video)
- [The Office - Pavlov's Dog](#) (video)
- [World memory champion Ben Pridmore on Central News](#) (video)
- [Scott Fraser: The problem with eyewitness testimony](#) (video)
- [Selective Attention Test - Daniel Simons and Christopher Chabris](#) (video)

Unit 5: Psychopathology

- Modules 29-36; *Thinking About Psychology* (Blair-Broeker and Ernst) and/or Chapters 12-16; [Psychology 2e](#) (OpenStax, Rice University)
- [Discovering Psychology](#) (video series)
- [PsychSim](#) (online interactive series)
- [DSM - Anxiety Disorders](#)
- [Case studies - Anxiety Disorders](#)
- [DSM - Dissociative Disorders](#)
- [Case studies - Dissociative Disorders](#)
- [DSM - Mood disorders](#)
- [Case studies - Mood Disorders](#)
- [DSM - Schizophrenic Disorders](#)
- [Case studies - Schizophrenic Disorders](#)