

Course at a Glance

Plan

The Course at a Glance provides a useful visual organization of the AP Psychology curricular components, including:

- Sequence of units, along with approximate weighting and suggested pacing. Please note, pacing is based on 45-minute class periods, meeting five days each week for a full academic year.
- Progression of topics within each unit.
- Course skills across units.

Teach

SKILL CATEGORIES

- 1** Concept Understanding
- 2** Data Analysis
- 3** Scientific Investigation

Assess

Assign the Personal Progress Checks—either as homework or in class—for each unit. Each Personal Progress Check contains formative multiple-choice and free-response questions. The feedback from the Personal Progress Checks shows students the areas where they need to focus.

UNIT 1 Scientific Foundations of Psychology	
~13–14 Class Periods	10–14% AP Exam Weighting
1	1.1 Introducing Psychology
3	1.2 Research Methods in Psychology
3	1.3 The Experimental Method
3	1.4 Selecting a Research Method
2	1.5 Statistical Analysis in Psychology
1	1.6 Ethical Guidelines in Psychology

Personal Progress Check 1	
Multiple-choice: ~15 questions	
Free-response: 2 questions	
▪ Research Design (partial)	
▪ Research Design (partial)	

UNIT 2 Biological Bases of Behavior	
~11–12 Class Periods	8–10% AP Exam Weighting
1	2.1 Interaction of Heredity and Environment
1	2.2 The Endocrine System
1	2.3 Overview of the Nervous System and the Neuron
1	2.4 Neural Firing
1	2.5 Influence of Drugs on Neural Firing
1	2.6 The Brain
2	2.7 Tools for Examining Brain Structure and Function
1	2.8 The Adaptable Brain
1	2.9 Sleep and Dreaming

Personal Progress Check 2	
Multiple-choice: ~25 questions	
Free-response: 2 questions	
▪ Concept Application (partial)	
▪ Concept Application (partial)	

NOTE: Partial versions of the free-response questions are provided to prepare students for more complex, full questions that they will encounter on the AP Exam.

UNIT 3

Sensation and Perception

~11–12

Class Periods

6–8%

AP Exam Weighting

- 1 3.1 Principles of Sensation
- 1 3.2 Principles of Perception
- 1 3.3 Visual Anatomy
- 1 3.4 Visual Perception
- 1 3.5 Auditory Sensation and Perception
- 3 3.6 Chemical Senses
- 1 3.7 Body Senses

Personal Progress Check 3

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Concept Application

UNIT 4

Learning

~9–10

Class Periods

7–9%

AP Exam Weighting

- 1 4.1 Introduction to Learning
- 1 4.2 Classical Conditioning
- 1 4.3 Operant Conditioning
- 1 4.4 Social and Cognitive Factors in Learning

Personal Progress Check 4

Multiple-choice: ~10 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Research Design

UNIT 5

Cognitive Psychology

~17–18

Class Periods

13–17%

AP Exam Weighting

- 1 5.1 Introduction to Memory
- 1 5.2 Encoding
- 1 5.3 Storing
- 1 5.4 Retrieving
- 1 5.5 Forgetting and Memory Distortion
- 1 5.6 Biological Bases of Memory
- 1 5.7 Introduction to Thinking and Problem Solving
- 1 5.8 Biases and Errors in Thinking
- 1 5.9 Introduction to Intelligence
- 3 5.10 Psychometric Principles and Intelligence Testing
- 1 5.11 Components of Language and Language Acquisition

Personal Progress Check 5

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Concept Application

UNIT 6

Developmental Psychology

~9–10 Class Periods

7–9% AP Exam Weighting

- 3 6.1 The Lifespan and Physical Development in Childhood
- 1 6.2 Social Development in Childhood
- 1 6.3 Cognitive Development in Childhood
- 1 6.4 Adolescent Development
- 1 6.5 Adulthood and Aging
- 3 6.6 Moral Development
- 1 6.7 Gender and Sexual Orientation

Personal Progress Check 6

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Research Design

UNIT 7

Motivation, Emotion, and Personality

~16–17 Class Periods

11–15% AP Exam Weighting

- 3 7.1 Theories of Motivation
- 1 7.2 Specific Topics in Motivation
- 1 7.3 Theories of Emotion
- 1 7.4 Stress and Coping
- 3 7.5 Introduction to Personality
- 1 7.6 Psychoanalytic Theories of Personality
- 1 7.7 Behaviorism and Social Cognitive Theories of Personality
- 1 7.8 Humanistic Theories of Personality
- 1 7.9 Trait Theories of Personality
- 1 7.10 Measuring Personality

Personal Progress Check 7

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Research Design

UNIT 8

Clinical Psychology

~17–18 Class Periods

12–16% AP Exam Weighting

- 1 8.1 Introduction to Psychological Disorders
- 1 8.2 Psychological Perspectives and Etiology of Disorders
- 1 8.3 Neurodevelopmental and Schizophrenic Spectrum Disorders
- 1 8.4 Bipolar, Depressive, Anxiety, and Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders
- 1 8.5 Trauma- and Stressor-Related, Dissociative, and Somatic Symptom and Related Disorders
- 1 8.6 Feeding and Eating, Substance and Addictive, and Personality Disorders
- 1 8.7 Introduction to Treatment of Psychological Disorders
- 1 8.8 Psychological Perspectives and Treatment of Disorders
- 3 8.9 Treatment of Disorders from the Biological Perspective
- 3 8.10 Evaluating Strengths, Weaknesses, and Empirical Support for Treatments of Disorders

Personal Progress Check 8

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Research Design

UNIT 9

Social Psychology

~10–11

Class
Periods

8–10%

AP Exam
Weighting

1

**9.1 Attribution Theory and
Person Perception**

3

**9.2 Attitude Formation and
Attitude Change**

3

**9.3 Conformity,
Compliance, and
Obedience**

1

**9.4 Group Influences on
Behavior and Mental
Processes**

1

**9.5 Bias, Prejudice, and
Discrimination**

1

**9.6 Altruism and
Aggression**

1

**9.7 Interpersonal
Attraction**

Personal Progress Check 9

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Concept Application

AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 1

Scientific Foundations of Psychology



10–14%

AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~13–14

CLASS PERIODS



Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 1

Multiple-choice: ~15 questions

Free-response: 2 questions

- Research Design (partial)
- Research Design (partial)

Scientific Foundations of Psychology



Developing Understanding

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How does the methodology of the research affect the outcome of a study?
- How do ethical guidelines impact psychological research?

Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental processes. This course examines the history of psychology and psychological theories, contemporary perspectives on psychology, and how psychological research is conducted. As scientists, psychologists collect data and make observations about the ways in which humans and animals behave and think in order to understand behavior and mental processes. Psychologists use a variety of research methods and designs to conduct their research. These tools help them develop psychological theories about behavior and mental processes. To ensure that their results are valid and reliable, psychologists' research must adhere to strict ethical and procedural guidelines. Historical research is the foundation of the field of psychology and has become the basis for the many subfields within psychology that exist today.

Building Course Skills

1.A 1.C 2 3

Many theories, schools of thought, and perspectives exist in the field of psychology. This course surveys and applies those ideas, training students to identify the major theories and perspectives. Within the major fields of psychology, appropriate research methodology is crucial to produce reliable and valid results and avoid bias. In this unit, students are introduced to research methods and designs that will help them learn how to avoid ethical misconduct and design flaws. Students will learn to differentiate between research designs, identify the advantages and disadvantages of each, and determine why one research method should be used over another. Students will also learn which research methods and modes of questioning are appropriate for different fields of psychology as well as how to use appropriate descriptive statistics when presenting their data.


Preparing for the AP Exam

This course requires students to use their knowledge in a variety of real-world scenarios. Students should have opportunities to practice applying psychological concepts

in their explanations. The AP Exam includes two seven-point free-response questions: one that relates to content understanding and application and another that relates to the understanding of research method and design and/or data and statistical analysis.

Unit 1 provides foundational knowledge about the field of psychology and introduces students to the research methods associated with various theories, schools of thought, and perspectives. From the start, students can begin to answer research method questions. Students often struggle with knowing which types of research questions can be studied with which methods. Students also struggle with graphic representations of data, in part because they often confuse the independent with the dependent variable. Teachers can give students opportunities to practice constructing graphs, emphasizing the correct placement of the variables on the axes. Students also struggle with using statistics, particularly statistical significance—they might describe correlational research rather than statistical significance or use the term “confidence interval” without connecting it back to the data. Without further explanation, exam graders cannot confirm a student's understanding of statistical significance.

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~13–14 CLASS PERIODS
1.1 Introducing Psychology	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
1.2 Research Methods in Psychology	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
1.3 Defining Psychological Science: The Experimental Method	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
1.4 Selecting a Research Method	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
1.5 Statistical Analysis in Psychology	2 Analyze and interpret quantitative data.	
1.6 Ethical Guidelines in Psychology	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 1. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.


Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	1.1	Quickwrite On the first day of class, facilitate the “Slippery Snakes” activity, which can be found online. Give all students ratings sheets with instructions at the top. There should be two different sheets with different instructions. Give half of the students the sheet with one set of instructions and the other half the sheet with the other instructions; students must be unaware that there are different instructions. Then read a series of 20 sentences while the students process the information according to the instructions they are given. Students then mark their rating sheets, which are scored at the end of the activity. This provides an introduction to the difference between the levels of processing.
2	1.2	Misconception Check Give students a research problem and have them design a controlled experiment to answer the question. Students should include the hypothesis, methods, and data collection method. They should identify how they will analyze the results of the study.
3	1.5	One-Minute Essay Give students a data table or graph from a research study. Ask them to identify specific data points and then describe the data. They should then describe patterns and trends in the data. The students can calculate the mean and identify the median and mode. Students should then describe a psychological principle, process, concept, theory, or perspective illustrated by the data.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

TOPIC 1.1

Introducing Psychology

LEARNING TARGET

1.A

Recognize how philosophical and physiological perspectives shaped the development of psychological thought.

1.B

Identify the research contributions of major historical figures in psychology.

EXAMPLES

1.B.1

Mary Whiton Calkins, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.2

Charles Darwin, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.3

Dorothea Dix, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.4

Sigmund Freud, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.5

G. Stanley Hall, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.6

William James, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.7

Ivan Pavlov, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.8

Jean Piaget, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.9

Carl Rogers, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.10

B. F. Skinner, major historical figure in psychology

continued on next page

LEARNING TARGET

1.B

Identify the research contributions of major historical figures in psychology.

1.C

Describe and compare different theoretical approaches in explaining behavior.

1.D

Recognize the strengths and limitations of applying theories to explain behavior.

EXAMPLES

1.B.11

Margaret Floy Washburn, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.12

John B. Watson, major historical figure in psychology

1.B.13

Wilhelm Wundt, major historical figure in psychology

1.C.1

Structuralism

1.C.2

Functionalism

1.C.3

Early Behaviorism

1.C.4

Gestalt

1.C.5

Psychoanalytic/psychodynamic

1.C.6

Humanistic

1.C.7

Evolutionary approach

1.C.8

Biological approach

1.C.9

Cognitive approach

1.C.10

Biopsychosocial approaches

1.C.11

Sociocultural

continued on next page

LEARNING TARGET

1.E

Distinguish the different domains of psychology.

EXAMPLES

1.E.1

Biological domain

1.E.2

Clinical domain

1.E.3

Cognitive domain

1.E.4

Counseling domain

1.E.5

Developmental domain

1.E.6

Educational domain

1.E.7

Experimental domain

1.E.8

Industrial–organizational domain

1.E.9

Personality domain

1.E.10

Psychometric domain

1.E.11

Social domain

1.E.12

Positive domain



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 1.2

Research Methods in Psychology

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Scientific Investigation*

3

Analyze psychological research studies.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [Teaching Statistics and Research Methodology](#)

LEARNING TARGET

1.F

Differentiate types of research with regard to purpose, strengths, and weaknesses.

1.G

Discuss the value of reliance on operational definitions and measurement in behavioral research.

EXAMPLES

1.F.1

Research method: experiments

1.F.2

Research method: correlational studies

1.F.3

Research method: survey research

1.F.4

Research method: naturalistic observations

1.F.5

Research method: case studies

1.F.6

Research method: longitudinal studies

1.F.7

Research method: cross-sectional studies



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Scientific Investigation*

3

Analyze psychological research studies.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [Teaching Statistics and Research Methodology](#)

TOPIC 1.3

Defining Psychological Science: The Experimental Method

LEARNING TARGET

1.H

Identify independent, dependent, confounding, and control variables in experimental designs.

1.I

Describe how research design drives the reasonable conclusions that can be drawn.

1.J

Distinguish between random assignment of participants to conditions in experiments and random selection of participants, primarily in correlational studies and surveys.

EXAMPLES

1.1.1

Experiments are useful for determining cause and effect.

1.1.2

The use of experimental controls reduces alternative explanations.

1.1.3

Random assignment is needed to demonstrate cause and effect.

1.1.4

Correlational research can indicate if there is a relationship or association between two variables but cannot demonstrate cause and effect.

TOPIC 1.4

Selecting a Research Method

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Scientific Investigation*

3

Analyze psychological research studies.

LEARNING TARGET

1.K

Predict the validity of behavioral explanations based on the quality of research design.

EXAMPLES

1.K.1

Confounding variables limit confidence in research conclusions.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Data Analysis*

2

Analyze and interpret quantitative data.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [Teaching Statistics and Research Methodology](#)

TOPIC 1.5

Statistical Analysis in Psychology

LEARNING TARGET

1.L

Apply basic descriptive statistical concepts, including interpreting and constructing graphs and calculating simple descriptive statistics.

1.M

Distinguish the purposes of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

EXAMPLES

1.L.1

Measures of central tendency

1.L.2

Variation (range, standard deviation)

1.L.3

Correlation coefficient

1.L.4

Frequency distribution (normal, bimodal, positive skew, negative skew)



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 1.6

Ethical Guidelines in Psychology

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

LEARNING TARGET

1.N

Identify how ethical issues inform and constrain research practices.

1.O

Describe how ethical and legal guidelines protect research participants and promote sound ethical practice.

EXAMPLES

1.O.1

Those provided by the American Psychological Association

1.O.2

Federal regulations

1.O.3

Local Institutional Review Board (IRB)

1.O.4

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 2

Biological Bases of Behavior



8–10%

AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~11–12

CLASS PERIODS



Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 2

Multiple-choice: ~25 questions

Free-response: 2 questions

- Concept Application (partial)
- Concept Application (partial)

Biological Bases of Behavior



Developing Understanding

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How can biology influence our behavior and mental processes?
- What happens when a particular neurotransmitter is absent from the body?
- How do biological and environmental factors interact to influence our behaviors and mental processes?

The structures of human biological systems and their functions influence our behavior and mental processes. Some psychologists study behaviors and mental processes from a biological perspective. This includes an examination of the influence that the interaction between human biology and our environment has on behavior and mental processes. This is a recurring topic throughout the course that will be used to explain many psychological phenomena. The biological perspective also provides insight into the causes of and treatments for psychological disorders. There is a complex interaction between a person's biology and their behavior and mental processes. Heredity and environment play a role, as do variations in a person's consciousness.

Building Course Skills

1.A 1.B 2


Unit 2 focuses on blending knowledge about physiological processes and psychology to provide better explanations of behavior and mental processes. This course teaches students how biological and anatomical structures play an active role in an individual's mental and behavioral development. To demonstrate an understanding of these biological bases of psychology, students should describe the concept or apply it to a scenario.

As students learn to describe this blended physiological and psychological knowledge, they should be able to apply it to behavior and mental processes in other fields of psychology (e.g., memory, learning, development, and social psychology). This approach will help students understand how psychological theories, schools of thought, and perspectives were developed. Students will also continue to build on their understanding of the appropriate use of research methods and designs from Unit 1.

Preparing for the AP Exam

Students often struggle with knowing which neurotransmitters function with which biological processes and how those functions relate to behavior and mental processes. Teachers can give students opportunities to map the neurotransmitter pathways and describe outcomes in both successful and disrupted transmission. Students will also benefit from many opportunities to connect psychological processes to an individual's physiology. They often struggle to make accurate and complete connections between anatomy and physiology as it relates to behavior and mental processes. If a question asks students to give an explanation, they would need to provide an answer in terms of evidence and/or reasoning.

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~11–12 CLASS PERIODS
2.1 Interaction of Heredity and Environment	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
2.2 The Endocrine System	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
2.3 Overview of the Nervous System and the Neuron	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
2.4 Neural Firing	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
2.5 Influence of Drugs on Neural Firing	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
2.6 The Brain	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
2.7 Tools for Examining Brain Structure and Function	2 Analyze and interpret quantitative data.	
2.8 The Adaptable Brain	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
2.9 Sleep and Dreaming	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 2. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.


Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	2.1	Construct an Argument Have students read the article “Are You a Natural?” from the book <i>40 Studies that Changed AP Psychology</i> . Then have them write an abstract of the article that includes the research question, methodology, and conclusions. Lead the class in a discussion about the interaction of nature and nurture.
2	2.2	Fishbowl Provide students with various scenarios of physiological changes in the body related to the endocrine system. Students should read the scenario, identify the hormone, and explain why the change is occurring. At the end of the unit, or after Topic 2.3, have students compare and contrast neurotransmitters and hormones.
3	2.3	Manipulatives Give students sheets of butcher paper. Have them draw two neurons and label their parts. Then have them model an action potential traveling through the two neurons using everyday materials such as tennis balls or ping pong balls. Add variety by having students model what happens in response to different neurons.
4	2.6	Manipulatives Have student pairs create a model of the brain by tracing each other’s heads on a piece of paper. On each drawing, they should draw and color in the parts of the brain. Then have them define each part and explain its function.
5	2.9	Think-Pair-Share Begin by having students watch the TED talk “Why Do We Sleep?” Have students maintain a written or electronic sleep log for one to two weeks. Afterward, have them calculate their data and discuss any dreams they recorded. Follow up by giving them dream scenarios with an explanation from each dream theory. Students can then write a letter to the school administration about why school start times should be later for teens.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 2.1

Interaction of Heredity and Environment

LEARNING TARGET

2.A

Discuss psychology's abiding interest in how heredity, environment, and evolution work together to shape behavior.

2.B

Identify key research contributions of scientists in the area of heredity and environment.

2.C

Predict how traits and behavior can be selected for their adaptive value.

EXAMPLES

2.B.1

Contributions of Charles Darwin, a key scientist in the area of heredity and environment



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 2.2

The Endocrine System

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

LEARNING TARGET

2.D


Discuss the effect of the endocrine system on behavior.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding***1.A**

Define and/or apply concepts.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [The Brain, the Nervous System, and Behavior](#)

TOPIC 2.3

Overview of the Nervous System and the Neuron

LEARNING TARGET

2.E

Describe the nervous system and its subdivisions and functions.

2.F

Identify basic processes and systems in the biological bases of behavior, including parts of the neuron.

EXAMPLES

2.E.1

Central and peripheral nervous systems



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 2.4


Neural Firing

LEARNING TARGET

2.G

Identify basic process of transmission of a signal between neurons.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE


- Classroom Resource > **The Brain, the Nervous System, and Behavior**



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [The Brain, the Nervous System, and Behavior](#)

TOPIC 2.5

Influence of Drugs on Neural Firing

LEARNING TARGET

2.H

Discuss the influence of drugs on neurotransmitters.

EXAMPLES

2.H.1

Reuptake mechanisms

2.H.2

Agonists

2.H.3

Antagonists




Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 2.6

The Brain

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [The Brain, the Nervous System, and Behavior](#)

LEARNING TARGET

2.I

Describe the nervous system and its subdivisions and functions in the brain.

2.J

Identify the contributions of key researchers to the study of the brain.

EXAMPLES

2.I.1

Major brain regions

2.I.2

Lobes

2.I.3

Cortical areas

2.I.4

Brain lateralization and hemispheric specialization

2.J.1

Contributions of Paul Broca

2.J.2

Contributions of Carl Wernicke



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 Data Analysis

2

Analyze and interpret quantitative data.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource >
[The Brain, the Nervous System, and Behavior](#)

TOPIC 2.7

Tools for Examining Brain Structure and Function

LEARNING TARGET

2.K

Recount historic and contemporary research strategies and technologies that support research.

2.L

Identify the contributions of key researchers to the development of tools for examining the brain.

EXAMPLES

2.K.1

Research tool: case studies

2.K.2

Research tool: split-brain research

2.K.3

Research tool: imaging techniques

2.K.4

Research tool: lesioning

2.K.5

Research tool: autopsy

2.L.1

Contributions of Roger Sperry



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 2.8

The Adaptable Brain

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [The Brain, the Nervous System, and Behavior](#)

LEARNING TARGET

2.M

Discuss the role of neuroplasticity in traumatic brain injury.

2.N

Identify the contributions of key researchers to the study of neuroplasticity.

2.O

Describe various states of consciousness and their impact on behavior.

2.P

Identify the major psychoactive drug categories and classify specific drugs, including their psychological and physiological effects.

2.Q

Discuss drug dependence, addiction, tolerance, and withdrawal.

2.R

Identify the contributions of major figures in consciousness research.

EXAMPLES

2.N.1

Contributions of Michael Gazzaniga

2.P.1

Depressants

2.P.2

Stimulants

2.P.3

Hallucinogens


2.R.1

Contributions of William James, major figure in consciousness research

2.R.2

Contributions of Sigmund Freud, major figure in consciousness research

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 2.9

Sleeping and Dreaming

LEARNING TARGET

2.S

Discuss aspects of sleep and dreaming.

EXAMPLES

2.S.1

Neural and behavioral characteristics of the stages of the sleep cycle

2.S.2

Theories of sleep and dreaming

2.S.4

Symptoms and treatments of sleep disorders



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 3

Sensation and Perception



6–8%
AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~11–12
CLASS PERIODS



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Personal Progress Check 3

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Concept Application

Sensation and Perception



Developing Understanding

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How do we process the information we receive from our environments?
- How does our interpretation of the information we receive from the environment influence our behaviors and mental processes?

Psychologists study sensation and perception to explain how and why externally gathered sensations and perceptions impact behaviors and mental processes. Using input from several anatomical structures, the sensations we perceive process and interpret information about the environment around us and our place within it. This results in perceptions that influence how we think and behave. In this way, sensation and perception provide a bridge between the biological and cognitive perspectives, offering aspects of both for explaining how we think and behave.

Building Course Skills

1.A 1.B 1.C 3


Unit 3 builds on the biological foundation of psychology established in the previous unit. This progress toward understanding the brain, sensory organs, and central nervous system highlights the physiological processes involved in an individual's perception of their surroundings. Students should be able to describe examples of anatomical structures, physiological processes, and psychological concepts related to sensation and perception.

Understanding the effects of sensation and perception on behavior and mental processes builds on what students learned in Unit 1 about psychological theories and perspectives, particularly their strengths and weaknesses. Students will also increase their understanding of scientific investigation, furthering their understanding of the physiological process of energy transduction as it relates to chemical senses.

Preparing for the AP Exam

Much like Unit 2, the content of this unit requires students to make connections between physiology and psychology. For example, students may be asked to relate a person's receipt of information in their environment with their perception of that information. Students tend to provide an inadequate amount of detail to demonstrate understanding in response to questions related to anatomy. For example, an inadequate response about the role of the cerebellum would be, "It helps you move." This is not enough information, because the parietal lobe also aids in movement. The response, "It helps you coordinate your movement," indicates deeper knowledge. In some cases, when a familiar word appears in a free-response question, students tend to give a definition of the word as their response when more is needed to earn the point.

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~11–12 CLASS PERIODS
3.1 Principles of Sensation	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
3.2 Principles of Perception	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
3.3 Visual Anatomy	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
3.4 Visual Perception	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
3.5 Auditory Sensation and Perception	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
3.6 Chemical Senses	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
3.7 Body Senses	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 3. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	3.1	Think-Pair-Share Ask students, "If you had to give up one of your senses, which one would you be willing to live without?" Have them explain their answer. Then ask, "If you could only keep one of your senses, which one would you choose?" Have them explain their answer.
2	3.3	Misconception Check Have students draw and label a diagram of the eye, noting the functions of the labeled structures. Emphasis should be placed on the rods and cones. Students can do a blind-spot test and a test for visual acuity.
3	3.6	Graph and Switch Give each pair of students 10 jellybeans. Have each partner take a turn tasting five jellybeans with eyes closed and nose plugged. Have the other partner record whether or not the subject correctly identified the flavor in each of the five trials. Collect the class data and graph the results on the board to be analyzed. Without the olfactory sense and sight, most individuals cannot accurately identify flavors. Have students explain how this relates to sensory interaction.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 3.1

Principles of Sensation

LEARNING TARGET

3.A

Describe general principles of organizing and integrating sensation to promote stable awareness of the external world.

3.B

Discuss basic principles of sensory transduction, including absolute threshold, difference threshold, signal detection, and sensory adaptation.

3.C

Identify the research contributions of major historical figures in sensation and perception.

EXAMPLES

3.A.1

Gestalt principles

3.A.2

Depth perception

3.A.3

Top-down processing

3.A.4

Bottom-up processing

3.C.1

Contributions of Gustav Fechner

3.C.2

Contributions of David Hubel

3.C.3

Contributions of Ernst Weber


3.C.4

Contributions of Torsten Wiesel

TOPIC 3.2

Principles of Perception

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding***1.B**

Explain behavior in authentic context.

LEARNING TARGET

3.D

Discuss how experience and culture can influence perceptual processes.

3.E

Discuss the role of attention in behavior.

EXAMPLES

3.D.1

Perceptual set

3.D.2

Context effects

3.D.3


Schema



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 3.3

Visual Anatomy

LEARNING TARGET

3.F

Describe the vision process, including the specific nature of energy transduction, relevant anatomical structures, and specialized pathways in the brain for each of the senses.

3.G

Explain common sensory conditions.

EXAMPLES

3.F.1

Vision process

3.F.2

Concepts related to visual perception

3.F.3

Theories of color vision

3.G.1

Visual and hearing impairments

3.G.2

Synesthesia



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 3.4

Visual Perception

SUGGESTED SKILL *Concept Understanding***1.B**

Explain behavior in authentic context.

LEARNING TARGET**3.H**


Explain the role of top-down processing in producing vulnerability to illusion.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 3.5

Auditory Sensation and Perception

LEARNING TARGET

3.1

Describe the hearing process, including the specific nature of energy transduction, relevant anatomical structures, and specialized pathways in the brain for each of the senses.

EXAMPLES

3.1.1

Hearing process



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 3.6

Chemical Senses

SUGGESTED SKILL *Scientific Investigation***3**

Analyze psychological research studies.

LEARNING TARGET**3.J**

Describe taste and smell processes, including the specific nature of energy transduction, relevant anatomical structures, and specialized pathways in the brain for each of the senses.

EXAMPLES**3.J.1**

Taste


3.J.2

Smell

**Topic Planning Notes**

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 3.7

Body Senses

LEARNING TARGET

3.K

Describe sensory processes, including the specific nature of energy transduction, relevant anatomical structures, and specialized pathways in the brain for each of the body senses.

EXAMPLES

3.K.1

Body sense: touch

3.K.2

Body sense: pain

3.K.3

Body sense: vestibular

3.K.4

Body sense: kinesthesia



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 4

Learning



7–9%

AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~9–10

CLASS PERIODS



Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 4
Multiple-choice: ~10 questions
Free-response: 1 question

- Research Design

Learning



Developing Understanding

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How do we learn?
- How do our experiences influence our behaviors and mental processes?

Some psychologists focus their study on how humans and other animals learn and how some experiences can lead to changes in behavior and mental processes. Because the process of learning requires both physiological and psychological processes to work together, the two preceding units provide the foundation for this unit. Many psychologists who study learning focus on observable behaviors and how those behaviors can be changed or reinforced. Other learning psychologists study how the individual's observations of other peoples' behaviors influence changes in that individual's mental processes and resulting behaviors.

Building Course Skills


1.B

This unit integrates knowledge about physiological processes and psychological concepts from Units 2 and 3 within the context of learning processes. Major learning theories are introduced, as well as the experiments that were conducted to refine these theories. This increased understanding of research methods and design, first introduced in Unit 1, will reinforce the importance of valid and reliable research methods. This is a great place in the course to introduce case studies as a research method. This unit also gives students the opportunity to move from an understanding of the major theories to the research that was conducted to refine them and then to the data analysis involved in explaining the psychological phenomena.

Preparing for the AP Exam

Classical and operant conditioning are learning methods that help explain behavior and mental processes. While these theories share many common attributes and involve similar processes, they are different, and they explain behavior and mental processes differently. Teachers can model these theories with examples that are accessible and interesting to help students recognize the differences and better understand how each theory explains behavior and mental processes. On the AP Exam, students often confuse classical and operant conditioning and describe the incorrect one. Students should be able to describe the principles of classical and/or operant conditioning and explain how they function to alter behavior and mental processes.

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~9–10 CLASS PERIODS
4.1 Introduction to Learning	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
4.2 Classical Conditioning	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
4.3 Operant Conditioning	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
4.4 Social and Cognitive Factors in Learning	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 4. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.


Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	4.1	Misconception Check Provide students with a list of behaviors and ask them to write down which behaviors are examples of learning. Provide a mini-lecture on learning, including the definition and the different types of learning. At the end of the lesson, read the list of behaviors again and ask students to identify which behaviors are examples of learning. Compare answers from the beginning of class and clarify misconceptions.
2	4.2	Ask the Expert (or Students as Experts) Have students create their own (appropriate) skit to demonstrate their understanding of classical conditioning. Required elements include neutral stimulus, unconditioned stimulus, unconditioned response, conditioned stimulus, and conditioned response. Students can perform their skits live in class or record them and upload them to YouTube.
3	4.3	Construct an Argument Provide students with a list of scenarios that include examples of classical and operant conditioning. Have students identify the type of learning (classical or operant). If it is classical, have them identify the UCS, UCR, NS, CS, and CR. If it is operant, have them determine if the scenario is punishment or reinforcement (positive or negative).
4	4.4	Index Card Summaries/Questions Bonobos, closely related to humans, exhibit the capacity to share with members of their troop. Have students read articles with research findings on bonobos. Then have them develop research questions that could be asked based on findings in the articles. These questions should be relevant to the field of social and cognitive development and related to learning.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 4.1

Introduction to Learning

LEARNING TARGET

4.A

Identify the contributions of key researchers in the psychology of learning.

4.B

Interpret graphs that exhibit the results of learning experiments.

EXAMPLES

4.A.1

Contributions of Albert Bandura, key researcher to the psychology of learning

4.A.2

Contributions of Ivan Pavlov, key researcher in the psychology of learning

4.A.3

Contributions of Robert Rescorla, key researcher in the psychology of learning

4.A.4

Contributions of B. F. Skinner, key researcher in the psychology of learning

4.A.5

Contributions of Edward Thorndike, key researcher in the psychology of learning

4.A.6

Contributions of Edward Tolman, key researcher in the psychology of learning

4.A.7

Contributions of John B. Watson, key researcher in the psychology of learning

4.A.8

Contributions of John Garcia, key researcher in the psychology of learning

continued on next page

LEARNING TARGET

4.C

Describe the essential characteristics of insight learning, latent learning, and social learning.

4.D

Apply learning principles to explain emotional learning, taste aversion, superstitious behavior, and learned helplessness.

4.E


Provide examples of how biological constraints create learning predispositions.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 4.2

Classical Conditioning

LEARNING TARGET

4.F

Describe basic classical conditioning phenomena.

4.G

Distinguish general differences between principles of classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning.

EXAMPLES

4.F.1

Acquisition

4.F.2

Extinction

4.F.3

Spontaneous recovery

4.F.4

Generalization

4.F.5

Stimulus discrimination

4.F.6

Higher-order learning

4.F.7

Unconditioned stimulus

4.F.8

Unconditioned response

4.F.9

Neutral/conditioned stimulus

4.F.10

Conditioned response


4.G.1

Contingencies

TOPIC 4.3

Operant Conditioning

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding***1.B**

Explain behavior in authentic context.

LEARNING TARGET

4.H

Predict the effects of operant conditioning.

4.I

Predict how practice, schedules of reinforcement, other aspects of reinforcement, and motivation will influence quality of learning.

EXAMPLES

4.H.1

Positive reinforcement

4.H.2

Negative reinforcement

4.H.3

Positive punishment

4.H.4


Negative punishment



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 4.4

Social and Cognitive Factors in Learning

LEARNING TARGET

4.J

Suggest how behavior modification, biofeedback, coping strategies, and self-control can be used to address behavioral problems.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 5

Cognitive Psychology



13–17%
AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~17–18
CLASS PERIODS



Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 5

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Concept Application

Cognitive Psychology



Developing Understanding

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What roles do memory and thinking play in our behaviors?
- What is intelligence and how can we study it to understand it?

In this unit, knowledge surrounding sensation, perception, and learning provides the foundation for an understanding of cognition. Cognitive psychologists focus their research on the complex nature of the brain, particularly the areas of memory processes and intelligence and the influence of mental processes on behavior. Understanding how this information is gathered and processed gives insight into how we make sense of and perceive the world. Some cognitive psychologists attempt to answer how and why cognitive processes fail despite (or because of) the complexity of our biological structures. Teachers can offer students opportunities to provide their own explanations for these phenomena. Other psychologists study intelligence and the reasons for individual differences. This cognitive perspective offers one way to understand how our thinking impacts our behavior, which can in turn provide insight into psychological disorders and their treatment.

Building Course Skills

1.A 1.B 1.C 3

Cognition, which covers both memory processes and individual differences in intelligence, plays a major role in the field of psychology today. Building on the anatomical structures and biological processes learned in Units 2 and 3, this unit emphasizes the memory processes of encoding, storing, and retrieving information from the brain. Students are moving beyond definitional understanding of psychological concepts and perspectives and are now reasoning systematically.

Students should be able to connect the in-depth presentation of the cognitive perspective to other psychological perspectives introduced in Units 1 and 2. They will also continue their analysis and interpretation of quantitative data in relation to cognitive research, building understanding of why particular research methods are used for specific types of data collection.

Preparing for the AP Exam

Students tend to have difficulty articulating ideas about thinking and problem solving. They will often state an accurate idea about cognition but fail to expand on the idea enough to earn full credit for the answer. Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the similarities and differences in short-term and procedural memory and the factors that affect each to achieve success on the AP Exam. Students should also be able to explain how the elements of memory contribute to a person's behavior. The ability to demonstrate an understanding of how information is encoded, stored, and retrieved in memory is also crucial. Students should be able to describe the acquisition of language, the factors that facilitate it, and its use in communicating ideas. Additionally, they may have to answer questions about normal curves as well as about positive and negative correlation.



UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~17–18 CLASS PERIODS
5.1 Introduction to Memory	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
5.2 Encoding	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
5.3 Storing	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
5.4 Retrieving	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
5.5 Forgetting and Memory Distortion	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
5.6 Biological Bases of Memory	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
5.7 Introduction to Thinking and Problem Solving	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
5.8 Biases and Errors in Thinking	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
5.9 Introduction to Intelligence	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
5.10 Psychometric Principles and Intelligence Testing	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
5.11 Components of Language and Language Acquisition	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 5. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.


Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	5.1	Ask the Expert (or Students as Experts) Assign students as “experts” on types of memory. Students should then rotate through stations in groups, with the experts ensuring that all other students understand the type of memory that they are responsible for teaching. Then have students repeat the experiment on the Sperling effect.
2	5.2	Quickwrite Read a series of five numbers aloud and then have students recall the set of numbers from memory. Repeat the exercise, increasing the amount of numbers each time until you reach 12.
3	5.3	Think-Pair-Share Have students try to recall the names of the seven dwarfs in <i>Snow White</i> . Then show them a list that includes the dwarfs, among other similar names, and ask them to pick out the correct names.
4	5.4	Index Card Summaries/Questions Have students draw the face side of a penny from memory with as much detail as possible. Then have them read excerpts from the book <i>Moonwalking with Einstein</i> , by Joshua Foer. Ask students to summarize the methods Foer describes to help memory and then discuss the ways they remember information.
5	5.5	One-Minute Essay Review Loftus’s study on the misinformation effect as it pertains to car accidents. Have students reflect on the validity of eyewitness testimony and the misconception of how it is used in criminal justice trials. Review other related eyewitness studies, such as the weapons-focus effect and the other-race effect. Have them review studies that support the weapons-focus effect as well as others that don’t. Have students examine the problems associated with wrongful convictions based on eyewitness testimony.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [Cognition and Language](#)

TOPIC 5.1

Introduction to Memory

LEARNING TARGET

5.A

Compare and contrast various cognitive processes.

5.B

Describe and differentiate psychological and physiological systems of memory.

EXAMPLES

5.A.1

Effortful versus automatic processing

5.A.2

Deep versus shallow processing

5.A.3

Selective versus divided attention

5.A.4

Metacognition

5.B.1

Short-term memory

5.B.2

Implicit memory (procedural)

5.B.3

Long-term memory

5.B.4

Sensory memory (echoic, iconic)

5.B.5

Prospective memory

5.B.6

Explicit memory (semantic, episodic)

5.B.7

Physiological systems

continued on next page

LEARNING TARGET**5.C**

Identify the contributions of key researchers in cognitive psychology.

EXAMPLES**5.C.1**

Contributions of Noam Chomsky

5.C.2

Contributions of Hermann Ebbinghaus

5.C.3

Contributions of Wolfgang Köhler

5.C.4

Contributions of Elizabeth Loftus


5.C.5

Contributions of George A. Miller

**Topic Planning Notes**

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 5.2

Encoding

LEARNING TARGET

5.D

Outline the principles that underlie construction and encoding of memories.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 5.3

Storing

LEARNING TARGET

5.E

Outline the principles that underlie effective storage of memories.

SUGGESTED SKILL



*Concept
Understanding*

1.B


Explain behavior in authentic context.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 5.4

Retrieving

LEARNING TARGET

5.F

Describe strategies for retrieving memories.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 5.5

Forgetting and Memory Distortion

LEARNING TARGET**5.G**

Describe strategies for memory improvement and typical memory errors.

SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Understanding

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.


**AVAILABLE RESOURCE**

- Classroom Resource > **Cognition and Language**

**Topic Planning Notes**

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > **Cognition and Language**

TOPIC 5.6

Biological Bases for Memory**LEARNING TARGET****5.H**

Describe and differentiate psychological and physiological systems of short- and long-term memory.

**Topic Planning Notes***Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.*

TOPIC 5.7

Introduction to Thinking and Problem Solving

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding***1.A**

Define and/or apply concepts.

LEARNING TARGET**5.I**

Identify problem-solving strategies as well as factors that influence their effectiveness.


5.J

List the characteristics of creative thought and creative thinkers.

**Topic Planning Notes**

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 5.8

Biases and Errors in Thinking

LEARNING TARGET

5.K

Identify problem-solving strategies as well as factors that create bias and errors in thinking.




Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 5.9

Introduction to Intelligence

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

LEARNING TARGET

5.L

Define intelligence and list characteristics of how psychologists measure intelligence.

5.M

Discuss how culture influences the definition of intelligence.

5.N

Compare and contrast historic and contemporary theories of intelligence.

EXAMPLES

5.L.1

Abstract versus verbal measures

5.L.2

Speed of processing

5.L.3

Fluid intelligence

5.L.4

Crystallized intelligence

5.L.5

Flynn effect

5.L.6

Stereotype threat

5.L.7

Savant syndrome

5.N.1

Charles Spearman, intelligence theorist

5.N.2

Howard Gardner, intelligence theorist

5.N.3

Robert Sternberg, intelligence theorist

continued on next page

LEARNING TARGET

5.0

Identify the contributions of key researchers in intelligence research and testing.

EXAMPLES

5.0.1

Contributions of Alfred Binet, key researcher in intelligence

5.0.2

Contributions of Francis Galton, key researcher in intelligence

5.0.3

Contributions of Howard Gardner, key researcher in intelligence

5.0.4

Contributions of Charles Spearman, key researcher in intelligence

5.0.5

Contributions of Robert Sternberg, key researcher in intelligence

5.0.6

Contributions of Lewis Terman, key researcher in intelligence

5.0.7

Contributions of David Wechsler, key researcher in intelligence



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 5.10

Psychometric Principles and Intelligence Testing

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Scientific Investigation***3**

Analyze psychological research studies.

LEARNING TARGET

5.P

Explain how psychologists design tests, including standardization strategies and other techniques to establish reliability and validity.

5.Q

Interpret the meaning of scores in terms of the normal curve.

5.R

Describe relevant labels related to intelligence testing.

EXAMPLES

5.R.1

Gifted

5.R.2


Intellectual disability



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.



AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resource > [Cognition and Language](#)

TOPIC 5.11

Components of Language and Language Acquisition

LEARNING TARGET

5.S

Synthesize how biological, cognitive, and cultural factors converge to facilitate acquisition, development, and use of language.

5.T

Debate the appropriate testing practices, particularly in relation to culture-fair test uses.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 6

Developmental Psychology



7–9%

AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~9–10

CLASS PERIODS



Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 6

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Research Design

Developmental Psychology

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How do we perceive and understand ourselves?



Developing Understanding

Developmental psychology encompasses the study of the behavior of organisms from conception to death. In this unit, students will learn to examine the processes that contribute to behavioral change throughout a person's life. The major areas of emphasis in the course include prenatal development, motor development, socialization, cognitive development, adolescence, and adulthood. Developmental psychologists seek to understand how changes in our biology and social situations over a lifespan influence our behaviors and mental processes. Development can be studied from several different perspectives, including biological or cognitive perspectives. Developmental psychologists may focus on one or more developmental periods or the entire course of a lifespan, using cross-sectional and longitudinal research methods.

Building Course Skills

1.A 1.B 1.C 3


Building on knowledge from earlier units, students will pull together aspects of physiological, cognitive, psychological, and moral development to understand how behavior and mental processes change over the course of a person's life. This includes the role of adolescent development and the decline of adults as they age.

Students will reinforce biological, cognitive, and cultural perspectives studied in earlier units while discussing theories of stage development and continuous development. Students are also introduced to cross-sectional research and longitudinal research designs, which build on the research methods learned in Unit 1. Students will further their understanding of analyzing and interpreting data through these new research designs and in relation to the specific context of developmental psychology.

Preparing for the AP Exam

Students should be able to explain physical, intellectual, social, and moral development, along with the development of personality, in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Additionally, they should be able to explain the comparison between stages of development. A common student error on the AP Exam is failure to provide specific outcomes about how life experience helps or hinders development. Students should provide a thorough explanation of the relationship between life experience and development within the given scenario. Students tend to discuss the stages of development but fail to expand on the concepts to show mastery. It is important to a student's success on the exam that they write complete thoughts with cogent, accurate information. Teachers can provide students with opportunities to write about development at each stage of life in real-world contexts. Students will also answer questions related to research methods, including validity, ethics, and correct method of study. They may be asked about experimental design and should be prepared to answer questions such as What are the flaws in a research study? Would this design pass IRB? What is the appropriate method for a research question?

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~9–10 CLASS PERIODS
6.1 The Lifespan and Physical Development in Childhood	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
6.2 Social Development in Childhood	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
6.3 Cognitive Development in Childhood	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
6.4 Adolescent Development	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
6.5 Adulthood and Aging	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
6.6 Moral Development	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
6.7 Gender and Sexual Orientation	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 6. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	6.3	Debate Have students complete the activity <i>Piaget Meets Santa</i> , which can be found online. Have them read the given statements and then match them with the appropriate developmental stage.
2	6.6	Misconception Check Ask students to predict if a scientific method could test whether babies as young as three months old can tell right from wrong or have morals. Have them watch the segment "The Baby Lab" from <i>60 Minutes</i> and then ask them to identify the research method and evaluate the ethics of the experiment. Students can then summarize the results of the study and debate whether babies are born with morality using evidence (or the lack thereof) from the study.
3	6.7	Quickwrite Provide students with a published gender roles experiment and then ask them to identify the research method and evaluate the ethics of the experiment. Have students summarize the results of the study and then design a study that can be conducted as a follow-up.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Scientific Investigation*

3

Analyze psychological research studies.

TOPIC 6.1

The Lifespan and Physical Development in Childhood

LEARNING TARGET

6.A

Explain the process of conception and gestation, including factors that influence successful pre-natal development.

6.B

Discuss the interaction of nature and nurture (including cultural variations), specifically physical development, in the determination of behavior.

6.C

Discuss maturation of motor skills.

EXAMPLES

6.A.1

Nutrition

6.A.2

Illness

6.A.3

Substance abuse


6.A.4

Teratogens

TOPIC 6.2

Social Development in Childhood

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding***1.C**

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

LEARNING TARGET

6.D

Describe the influence of temperament and other social factors on attachment and appropriate socialization.

6.E

Identify the contributions of major researchers in developmental psychology in the area of social development in childhood.

6.F

Discuss the interaction of nature and nurture (including cultural variations), specifically social development, in the determination of behavior.

6.G

Explain how parenting styles influence development.

EXAMPLES

6.E.1

Contributions of Albert Bandura, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.2

Contributions of Diana Baumrind, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.3

Contributions of Konrad Lorenz, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.4

Contributions of Harry Harlow, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.5

Contributions of Mary Ainsworth, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

6.E.6

Contributions of Sigmund Freud, key researcher in the area of social development in childhood

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

TOPIC 6.3

Cognitive Development in Childhood

LEARNING TARGET

6.H

Explain the maturation of cognitive abilities (Piaget's stages, Information process).

6.I

Identify the contributions of major researchers in the area of cognitive development in childhood.

EXAMPLES

6.I.1

Contributions of Lev Vygotsky, key researcher in the area of cognitive development in childhood

6.I.2

Contributions of Jean Piaget, key researcher in the area of cognitive development in childhood



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 6.4

Adolescent Development

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding***1.B**

Explain behavior in authentic context.

LEARNING TARGET**6.J**

Discuss maturational challenges in adolescence, including related family conflicts.

**Topic Planning Notes***Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.*

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

TOPIC 6.5

Adulthood and Aging

LEARNING TARGET

6.K

Characterize the development of decisions related to intimacy as people mature.

6.L

Predict the physical and cognitive changes that emerge through the lifespan, including steps that can be taken to maximize function.

6.M

Identify the contributions of key researchers in the area of adulthood and aging.

EXAMPLES

6.M.1

Contributions of Erik Erikson, key researcher in the area of lifespan development



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 6.6

Moral Development

SUGGESTED SKILL *Scientific Investigation***3**

Analyze psychological research studies.

LEARNING TARGET**6.N**

Identify the contributions of major researchers in the area of moral development.

6.O

Compare and contrast models of moral development.

EXAMPLES**6.N.1**


Contributions of Carol Gilligan

6.N.2

Contributions of Lawrence Kohlberg

**Topic Planning Notes***Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.*

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 6.7

Gender and Sexual Orientation

LEARNING TARGET

6.P

Describe how sex and gender influence socialization and other aspects of development.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 7

Motivation, Emotion, and Personality



11–15%

AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~16–17

CLASS PERIODS



Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 7

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Research Design

Motivation, Emotion, and Personality



Developing Understanding

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What motivates us to think and act the way we do?
- Why do some people respond to stress in a healthier way than others?
- Why don't psychologists agree?

Psychologists use theory to categorize and explain different personalities. These explanations have been influenced by the various branches of psychology. Some psychologists study what motivates us and/or our emotional responses to experiences to understand our individual differences. Other psychologists seek to understand personality, including why different personalities exist, how they are developed, and if and how they change. Originating from the psychodynamic perspective, the study of personality involves consideration of behavior and mental processes and how they interact to produce an individual's personality. A full explanation of personality also involves incorporating humanistic and social-cognitive perspectives from earlier units.

Building Course Skills

1.A 1.C 2 3

Individual differences in various aspects of personality, motivation, and emotion are the focus of this unit. Students should be comfortable with identifying and explaining how biological structures and physiological processes help explain behavior or mental processes in relation to motivation, emotion, and personality. In addition, students will gain experience evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of psychological theories and perspectives relating to motivation and emotion.

Students should be able to identify theories and perspectives about personality, describe their strengths and weaknesses, and explain how they apply to behavior and mental processes. While learning about the different ways personality can be measured, students will calculate the appropriate statistic for a given data set. Students should also be able to explain how data illustrates the different theories of motivation, emotion, stress, and personality.

Preparing for the AP Exam


Students often confuse what it means to be panicked versus stressed. Teachers can provide students with case studies and/or real-world opportunities that will help them understand what it means to be stressed and how bodies respond to stress, as opposed to being panicked. Students should be able to compare the psychological and physiological responses to stress and panic.

Students may struggle with accurately discussing concepts related to personality. A common mistake is to describe temporary aspects of a personality trait rather than personality characteristics. This can be addressed by providing students with multiple opportunities throughout the course to write about personality, ensuring that they are using terminology correctly and appropriately. Questions about research methodology and ethical research design in regard to this unit's content will most likely appear on the exam.



Motivation, Emotion, and Personality

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~16–17 CLASS PERIODS
7.1 Theories of Motivation	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
7.2 Specific Topics in Motivation	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
7.3 Theories of Emotion	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
7.4 Stress and Coping	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
7.5 Introduction to Personality	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
7.6 Psychoanalytic Theories of Personality	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
7.7 Behaviorism and Social Cognitive Theories of Personality	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
7.8 Humanistic Theories of Personality	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
7.9 Trait Theories of Personality	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
7.10 Measuring Personality	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 7. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	7.1	Debate Provide students with a range of behaviors and have them debate which motivation theory best explains each behavior and why (for example, running a marathon would not be well explained by drive-reduction theory).
2	7.3	Think-Pair-Share Have students watch the well-known clip “These pretzels are making me thirsty” from the show <i>Seinfeld</i> (S3E11). In small groups, have them discuss how facial expressions and intonation convey emotion. Provide them with other scenarios and have them discuss how different theorists would explain the emotions conveyed in each scenario.
3	7.5	Jigsaw Select a fictional character familiar to your students. Have them discuss that character’s personality in terms of the different psychological perspectives. Then divide students into groups and have each group select their own character and repeat the discussion. Students can then share with the class or you can use the jigsaw strategy.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Scientific Investigation*

3

Analyze psychological research studies.

TOPIC 7.1

Theories of Motivation

LEARNING TARGET

7.A

Identify and apply basic motivational concepts to understand the behavior of humans and other animals.

7.B

Compare and contrast motivational theories, including the strengths and weaknesses of each.

7.C

Describe classic research findings in specific motivations.

EXAMPLES

7.A.1

Instincts

7.A.2

Incentives

7.A.3

Intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation

7.A.4

Overjustification effect

7.A.5

Self-efficacy

7.A.6

Achievement motivation

7.B.1

Drive reduction theory

7.B.2

Arousal theory (including the Yerkes-Dodson law)

7.B.3

Evolutionary theory of motivation

7.B.4

Maslow's theory

7.B.5

Cognitive dissonance theory

7.C.1

Motivation system: eating

7.C.2

Motivation system: sex

7.C.3

Motivation system: social

continued on next page

LEARNING TARGET

7.D

Identify contributions of key researchers in the psychological field of motivation and emotion.

EXAMPLES

7.D.1

Contributions of William James, key researcher in the psychology of motivation and emotion

7.D.2

Contributions of Alfred Kinsey, key researcher in the psychology of motivation and emotion

7.D.3

Contributions of Abraham Maslow, key researcher in the psychology of motivation and emotion

7.D.4

Contributions of Stanley Schachter, key researcher in the psychology of motivation and emotion

7.D.5


Contributions of Hans Selye, key researcher in the psychology of motivation and emotion



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 7.2

Specific Topics in Motivation

LEARNING TARGET

7.E

Discuss the biological underpinnings of motivation, including needs, drives, and homeostasis.




Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 7.3

Theories of Emotion

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

LEARNING TARGET

7.F

Compare and contrast major theories of emotion.

EXAMPLES

7.F.1

James–Lange Theory

7.F.2

Cannon–Bard Theory

7.F.3

Schachter two-factor theory

7.F.4

Evolutionary theories (primary emotions)

7.F.5

Richard Lazarus’s appraisal theory

7.F.6

Joseph LeDoux’s theory

7.F.7

Paul Ekman’s research on cross-cultural displays of emotion

7.F.8

Facial feedback hypothesis

7.G


Describe how cultural influences shape emotional expression, including variations in body language.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 7.4

Stress and Coping

LEARNING TARGET

7.H

Discuss theories of stress and the effects of stress on psychological and physical well-being.

EXAMPLES

7.H.1

General adaptation theory

7.H.2

Stress-related illnesses

7.H.3

Lewin's motivational conflicts theory

7.H.4

Unhealthy behaviors



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 7.5

Introduction to Personality

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Scientific Investigation*

3

Analyze psychological research studies.

LEARNING TARGET

7.I

Describe and compare research methods that psychologists use to investigate personality.

7.J

Identify the contributions of major researchers in personality theory.

EXAMPLES

7.I.1

Research method to investigate personality: case studies

7.I.2

Research method to investigate personality: surveys

7.I.3

Research method to investigate personality: personalities inventories

7.J.1

Contributions of Alfred Adler, key researcher in personality theory

7.J.2

Contributions of Albert Bandura, key researcher in personality theory

7.J.3

Contributions of Paul Costa and Robert McCrae, key researchers in personality theory

7.J.4

Contributions of Sigmund Freud, key researcher in personality theory

7.J.5

Contributions of Carl Jung, key researcher in personality theory


7.J.6

Contributions of Abraham Maslow, key researcher in personality theory

7.J.7

Contributions of Carl Rogers, key researcher in personality theory

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

TOPIC 7.6

Psychoanalytic Theories of Personality

LEARNING TARGET

7.K

Compare and contrast the psychoanalytic theories of personality with other theories of personality.




Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 7.7

Behaviorism and Social Cognitive Theories of Personality

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

LEARNING TARGET

7.L


Compare and contrast the behaviorist and social cognitive theories of personality with other theories of personality.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

TOPIC 7.8

Humanistic Theories of Personality

LEARNING TARGET

7.M

Compare and contrast humanistic theories of personality with other theories of personality.

7.N

Speculate how cultural context can facilitate or constrain personality development, especially as it relates to self-concept.

EXAMPLES

7.N.2

Collectivistic versus individualistic cultures



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 7.9

Trait Theories of Personality

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

LEARNING TARGET

7.0


Compare and contrast trait theories of personality with other theories of personality.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

TOPIC 7.10

Measuring Personality

LEARNING TARGET

7.P

Identify frequently used assessment strategies, and evaluate relative test quality based on reliability and validity of the instruments.

EXAMPLES

7.P.1

Personality inventory

7.P.2

Projective tests



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 8

Clinical Psychology



12–16%

AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~17–18

CLASS PERIODS



Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 8

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Research Design

Clinical Psychology



Developing Understanding

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Why is psychological perspective necessary in the treatment of disorders?
- How are psychological disorders treated?

Psychologists who study psychological disorders, along with practitioners who treat disorders, often utilize a particular theoretical perspective. Each perspective attempts to explain the origin of a disorder and/or determine the best method for treatment. These explanations and treatments build on the history, theories, and perspectives introduced in the first two units as well as on cognitive psychology in particular. Through observing behavior and engaging in discussion that illuminates a client's thought process, psychologists gather information and draw conclusions. For some psychologists, a single perspective cannot fully explain a disorder. This leads them to more integrated perspectives to understand and treat psychological disorders.

Building Course Skills

1.A 1.B 1.C 3

This unit provides students with the opportunity to evaluate many of the psychological concepts, theories, and perspectives they learned about in earlier units through the lens of psychological disorders and their treatments. Students will learn how to evaluate biological, psychological, and sociocultural theories in relation to abnormality. They will be introduced to a survey of psychological disorders and dive deeper into some of the more common disorders and their treatment. Students will conduct valid research, identify ethical flaws, and use appropriate data and data collection processes.

Preparing for the AP Exam

Students often have difficulty using key terms and phrases correctly to answer questions posed as scenarios. Teachers can provide students with opportunities to work with scenarios related to psychological disorders. Students will benefit from examples of real-world situations in which particular disorders may be exacerbated or subdued. Students should be able to give the general characteristics and common treatments of the disorder. They should also be able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each treatment and explain why it is deemed appropriate.

Students often have difficulty articulating which psychological perspectives are associated with which treatments. When the scenarios involve a certain type of research, students should be expected to define the method and write accurately about validity, ethics, and outcome. Students may encounter questions about research methodology in clinical trials on the exam. They should be able answer questions about the ethics of a research plan, correct modality, and research design.

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~17–18 CLASS PERIODS
8.1 Introduction to Psychological Disorders	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
8.2 Psychological Perspectives and Etiology of Disorders	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
8.3 Neurodevelopmental and Schizophrenic Spectrum Disorders	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
8.4 Bipolar, Depressive, Anxiety, and Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
8.5 Trauma- and Stressor-Related, Dissociative, and Somatic Symptom and Related Disorders	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
8.6 Feeding and Eating, Substance and Addictive, and Personality Disorders	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
8.7 Introduction to Treatment of Psychological Disorders	1.A Define and/or apply concepts.	
8.8 Psychological Perspectives and Treatment of Disorders	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
8.9 Treatment of Disorders from the Biological Perspective	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
8.10 Evaluating Strengths, Weaknesses, and Empirical Support for Treatments of Disorders	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 8. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	8.2	Jigsaw For each mental illness studied in class, students should explain the illness using different perspectives. Divide students into groups to study a particular illness from all perspectives. Then have students switch groups to discuss all illnesses and share the different perspectives for each. Alternately, divide students into groups to study one perspective for each disease and then rearrange the groups so that all perspectives are represented in each group. Have students share with each other their assigned perspective for each illness.
2	8.8	Construct an Argument Use scenarios to allow students to discriminate between therapeutic approaches: psychoanalysis, behavior therapy, humanistic therapy, and cognitive therapy.
3	8.10	Debate Have students debate the criticisms, strengths and weaknesses, and effectiveness of therapies for mental illness.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 8.1

Introduction to Psychological Disorders

LEARNING TARGET

8.A

Recognize the use of the most recent version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)* published by the American Psychiatric Association as the primary reference for making diagnostic judgments.

8.B

Describe contemporary and historical conceptions of what constitutes psychological disorders.

8.C

Discuss the intersection between psychology and the legal system.

EXAMPLES

8.C.1

Confidentiality

8.C.2

Insanity defense

TOPIC 8.2

Psychological Perspectives and Etiology of Disorders

SUGGESTED SKILL

*Concept Understanding***1.C**

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

LEARNING TARGET

8.D

Evaluate the strengths and limitations of various approaches to explaining psychological disorders.

8.E

Identify the positive and negative consequences of diagnostic labels.

EXAMPLES

8.E.1


The Rosenhan Study



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 8.3

Neurodevelopmental and Schizophrenic Spectrum Disorders

LEARNING TARGET

8.F

Discuss the major diagnostic categories, including neurodevelopmental disorders, neurocognitive disorders, schizophrenia spectrum, and other psychotic disorders, and their corresponding symptoms.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 8.4

Bipolar, Depressive, Anxiety, and Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders

SUGGESTED SKILL

*Concept Understanding***1.B**

Explain behavior in authentic context.

LEARNING TARGET

8.G


Discuss the major diagnostic categories, including anxiety disorders, bipolar and related disorders, depressive disorders, obsessive-compulsive and related disorders, and their corresponding symptoms.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept
Understanding***1.B**Explain behavior in
authentic context.

TOPIC 8.5

Trauma- and Stressor-Related, Dissociative, and Somatic Symptom and Related Disorders

LEARNING TARGET

8.H

Discuss the major diagnostic categories, including dissociative disorders, somatic symptom and related disorders, and trauma- and stressor-related disorders and their corresponding symptoms.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 8.6

Feeding and Eating, Substance and Addictive, and Personality Disorders

SUGGESTED SKILL



Concept
Understanding

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

LEARNING TARGET

8.I


Discuss the major diagnostic categories, including feeding and eating disorders, personality disorders, and their corresponding symptoms.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.A

Define and/or apply concepts.

TOPIC 8.7

Introduction to Treatment of Psychological Disorders

LEARNING TARGET

8.J

Describe the central characteristics of psychotherapeutic intervention.

8.K

Identify the contributions of major figures in psychological treatment.

EXAMPLES

8.K.1

Contributions of Aaron Beck, major figure in psychological treatment

8.K.2

Contributions of Albert Ellis, major figure in psychological treatment

8.K.3

Contributions of Sigmund Freud, major figure in psychological treatment

8.K.4

Contributions of Mary Cover Jones, major figure in psychological treatment

8.K.5

Contributions of Carl Rogers, major figure in psychological treatment

8.K.6

Contributions of B. F. Skinner, major figure in psychological treatment

8.K.7

Contributions of Joseph Wolpe, major figure in psychological treatment

TOPIC 8.8

Psychological Perspectives and Treatment of Disorders

SUGGESTED SKILL

*Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

LEARNING TARGET

8.L

Describe major treatment orientations used in therapy and how those orientations influence therapeutic planning.

8.M

Summarize effectiveness of specific treatments used to address specific problems.

8.N

Discuss how cultural and ethnic context influence choice and success of treatment (e.g., factors that lead to premature termination of treatment).

8.O

Describe prevention strategies that build resilience and promote competence.

EXAMPLES

8.L.1

Treatment orientation: behavioral

8.L.2

Treatment orientation: cognitive

8.L.3

Treatment orientation: humanistic

8.L.4

Treatment orientation: psychodynamic

8.L.5

Treatment orientation: cognitive-behavioral

8.L.6

Treatment orientation: sociocultural

SUGGESTED SKILL

 Scientific
Investigation

3

Analyze psychological
research studies.

TOPIC 8.9

Treatment of Disorders from the Biological Perspective

LEARNING TARGET

8.P

Summarize effectiveness of
specific treatments used to
address specific problems
from a biological perspective.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

TOPIC 8.10

Evaluating Strengths, Weaknesses, and Empirical Support for Treatments of Disorders

SUGGESTED SKILL

*Scientific Investigation***3**

Analyze psychological research studies.

LEARNING TARGET

8.Q

Compare and contrast different treatment methods.

EXAMPLES

8.Q.1

Individual

8.Q.2

Group

8.Q.3

Rational-emotive method

8.Q.4

Psychoanalytic/psychodynamic method

8.Q.5

Client-centered method

8.Q.6

Cognitive method

8.Q.7

Behavioral method

8.Q.8

Sociocultural method

8.Q.9

Biopsychosocial method

8.Q.10

Cognitive-behavioral method

AP PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT 9

Social Psychology



8–10%

AP EXAM WEIGHTING



~10–11

CLASS PERIODS



Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 9

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions

Free-response: 1 question

- Concept Application

Social Psychology



Developing Understanding

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How does the bias of a researcher affect their conclusions?

In this final unit, psychological concepts and theoretical perspectives are pulled together from throughout the course. Social psychology is the study of how other people and groups influence behavior and mental processes as well as how behavior and mental processes influence our experiences in social situations. Social psychology also involves the study of how our perceptions of social situations impact how we interact with others and how others interact with us. Social psychologists may focus on one aspect of social situations or interactions and may do so from a variety of theoretical perspectives, including other integrative perspectives.

Building Course Skills

1.B 1.C 3

As the course nears completion, students should be able to describe and explain behavior and mental processes within the context of social psychology. As they learn new social psychology theories, students will build on their knowledge of psychological theories in general. These theories specifically build on the biological, cognitive, and sociocultural theories discussed in earlier units. The history of social psychology is filled with studies that are no longer considered ethical. Through these missteps, students will learn how to conduct valid research, identify ethical flaws, and use appropriate data and data collection processes.


Preparing for the AP Exam

Students often have difficulty using social psychology key terms and phrases correctly to answer questions posed as scenarios. Common examples of interchanged behaviors include conformity, obedience, and compliance. Students often struggle to provide the depth or breadth required to show mastery of the content. Teacher can provide opportunities for students to work with scenarios related to social settings and interactions. Students should give general characteristics of the behaviors associated with interactions and common responses to social stimuli. When the scenarios involve a certain type of research, students should be expected to define the method and write accurately about validity, ethics, and outcome.



Social Psychology

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods
		~10–11 CLASS PERIODS
9.1 Attribution Theory and Person Perception	1.C Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.	
9.2 Attitude Formation and Attitude Change	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
9.3 Conformity, Compliance, and Obedience	3 Analyze psychological research studies.	
9.4 Group Influences on Behavior and Mental Processes	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
9.5 Bias, Prejudice, and Discrimination	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
9.6 Altruism and Aggression	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
9.7 Interpersonal Attraction	1.B Explain behavior in authentic context.	
 Go to AP Classroom to assign the Personal Progress Check for Unit 9. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 151 for more examples of activities and strategies.


Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	9.1	Quickwrite Have students complete “The Fundamental Attribution Error Activity” from the TOPSS Unit Lesson Plan by Allyson J. Weseley. Provide students with a card or paper that includes an attribution scale on each side. On one side, have them circle the traits that they identify with. On the other, have them circle the traits that describe the teacher. Have students count the number of “depends on the situation” responses on each side and compare the two.
2	9.3	Debate Have students read about the Stanford Prison Experiment or watch an excerpt from the documentary. Then ask students to identify the research methods described and evaluate the ethics of the experiment. Students can then debate the merits, ethics, and criticism of the experiment. Include the response to recent criticism published by Zimbardo and other researchers.
3	9.4	Construct an Argument Have students read the article “A Real-Life Lord of the Flies: The Troubling Legacy of the Robbers Cave Experiment.” Then ask them to identify the research methods described in the article and evaluate the ethics of the experiments. Ask them if the studies described offer any insights about group dynamics and, if so, what those insights are.



Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.C

Apply theories and perspectives in authentic contexts.

TOPIC 9.1

Attribution Theory and Person Perception

LEARNING TARGET

9.A

Apply attribution theory to explain motives.

9.B

Articulate the impact of social and cultural categories on self-concept and relations with others.

9.C

Anticipate the impact of self-fulfilling prophecy on behavior.

EXAMPLES

9.A.1

Fundamental attribution error

9.A.2

Self-serving bias

9.A.3

False consensus effect

9.A.4

Confirmation bias

9.A.5

Just-world hypothesis

9.A.6

Halo effect

9.B.1

Gender

9.B.2

Race

9.B.3

Ethnicity

TOPIC 9.2

Attitude Formation and Attitude Change

SUGGESTED SKILL

*Scientific Investigation***3**

Analyze psychological research studies.

LEARNING TARGET

9.D

Identify important figures and research in the areas of attitude formation and change.

9.E

Discuss attitude formation and change, including persuasion strategies and cognitive dissonance.

EXAMPLES

9.D.1

Leon Festinger

9.E.1

Central route to persuasion

9.E.2

Peripheral route to persuasion

9.E.3

Cognitive dissonance

9.E.4

Elaboration likelihood model



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Scientific Investigation*

3

Analyze psychological research studies.

TOPIC 9.3

Conformity, Compliance, and Obedience

LEARNING TARGET

9.F

Identify the contributions of key researchers in the areas of conformity, compliance, and obedience.

9.G

Explain how individuals respond to expectations of others, including groupthink, conformity, and obedience to authority.

EXAMPLES

9.F.1

Contributions of Solomon Asch

9.F.2

Contributions of Stanley Milgram

9.F.3

Contributions of Philip Zimbardo



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 9.4

Group Influences on Behavior and Mental Processes

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

LEARNING TARGET

9.H

Describe the structure and function of different kinds of group behavior.

9.I

Predict the impact of the presence of others on individual behavior.

EXAMPLES

9.I.1

Bystander effect

9.I.2

Social facilitation

9.I.3

Social inhibition

9.I.4

Group polarization

9.I.5

Deindividuation

9.I.6

Diffusion of responsibility

9.I.7

In-group/out-group bias

9.I.8

Reciprocity norms

9.I.9

Social norms

9.I.10

Social traps

9.I.11

Prisoner's dilemma


9.I.12

Conflict resolution

9.I.13

Superordinate goals

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 9.5

Bias, Prejudice, and Discrimination

LEARNING TARGET

9.J

Describe processes that contribute to differential treatment of group members.

EXAMPLES

9.J.1

In-group/out-group dynamics

9.J.2

Ethnocentrism

9.J.3

Prejudice

9.J.4

Bias

9.J.5

Discrimination

9.J.6

Scapegoat theory

9.J.7

Stereotype

9.J.1

Out-group homogeneity bias

9.J.1

Mere-exposure effect



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

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TOPIC 9.6

Altruism and Aggression

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

LEARNING TARGET

9.K


Describe the variables that contribute to altruism and aggression.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Understanding*

1.B

Explain behavior in authentic context.

TOPIC 9.7

Interpersonal Attraction

LEARNING TARGET

9.L

Describe the variables that contribute to attraction.



Topic Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the topic.
