AP Psychology
Summer Assignment
2026-2027 Academic Year

Welcome to AP Psychology! According to College Board "AP Psychology is an introductory college-level psychology course. Students cultivate their understanding of the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes through inquiry-based investigations as they explore concepts like the biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, learning and cognition, motivation, developmental psychology, testing and individual differences, treatment of abnormal behavior, and social psychology."

The following two assignments will help students begin to enter the world of psychology and expose them to content that will be covered in the course. The assignments are designed for the following purposes:

1. To introduce students to various psychological concepts
2. To "measure" or "evaluate" an initial understanding to psychological concepts
3. To hone writing skills necessary for the AP exam (and beyond)
4. To show how psychology impacts everyday life and the world around us

As you construct your responses, keep the following in mind:

· All work should by typed and name on top.

· Make sure to write in complete sentences: writing is an important skill in life and this course.

· The answers to the questions should be in your own words: I want to know what you think about the material, not what someone else does.

· Academic honesty is imperative! All work should be your own and follow the guidelines of Fairfield Prep's academic integrity policy.

I am looking forwarded to next year and excited that you have decided to take this course. If you have any questions regarding the assignment please email me at smackenzie@farifieldprep.org.

The assignment will be due September 8, 2026.

Enjoy your summer and see you in the fall!

Mr. MacKenzie and Mr. Thomas

Assignment #1

Article Analysis – Read **(2)** of the seven articles listed below. After reading each article, you will analyze the article and complete three guided review questions. The questions must be answered in complete sentences for each of the **two** articles. The answers for each article must be submitted on a separate sheet of paper with the name of the journal, title of the article, author, and the publication date included at the top of the page.

1. The Teenage Brain: Spock vs. Captain Kirk (NPR Ed. Mar.11, 2015)
http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/03/11/391864852/the-teenage-brain-spock-vscaptain-kirk

2. Partying on Facebook May Spur Teens' Risky Behavior (Psych Central, Sept. , 2013)
http://psychcentral.com/news/2013/09/04/partying-on-facebook-may-spur-teens-riskybehavior/59175.html

3. Why the Teen Brain is Drawn to Risk (Time, Oct. 8, 2012)
http://healthland.time.com/2012/10/02/why-the-teen-brain-is-drawn-to-risk/

4. Teens and Risky Behavior: More Complicated than it seems? (Los Angeles Times, Oct. 2, 2012) http://articles.latimes.com/2012/oct/02/news/la-heb-teens-risk-averse-20121001

5. What Makes Teens Tick (Time, May 10, 2004) http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/what-makes-teens-tick-flood-hormones-sure-alsohost-structural-changes-brain-can-those-explain-behav

6. Good Parents, Bad Results (U.S. News & World Report, June 12, 2008)
http://health.usnews.com/health-news/family-health/livingwell/articles/2008/06/12/good-parents-bad-results

7. Teenager, Friends, and Bad Decisions (New York Times, February 3, 2011)
http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/02/03/teenagers-friends-and-bad-decisions/?_r=0 Guided

Questions: For each article you read, please answer the following questions. In order to earn credit, each of your responses should be thoughtful and thorough. Some questions require more thought and explanation, so each article should have a total response between 1 and 2 pages.

1. What does the author attribute to teenage behavior? Please explain your answer in detail.

2. Does the author use research to support their claims about where risky or bad teenage behavior comes from? If so describe the research. If not, do you believe that the information in the article is reliable or valid? Why or why not? (This question is important because it will allow us to begin exploring concepts that will be covered in the first couple of units of the course.)

3. Do you agree with the author's opinion where risky or bad teenage behavior comes from? Explain why or why not.

Assignment #2: TED Talk

TED is a nonprofit organization devoted to spreading ideas in short, powerful talks in 18 minutes or less. TED is an acronym for technology, entertainment, and design. Of the following 12 videos having to do with psychology, you are to watch any **TWO** of your choosing. After listening to these lectures, you will provide a one to two-page response on each. Your response to the **two** lectures should include the name of the TED Talk, a brief summary of the topic, and your opinion on the topic.

Philip Zimbardo: The Psychology of Evil
Martin Seligman: New Era of Positive Psychology
Elizabeth Loftus: How Reliable is Your Memory
Susan Cain: Power of Introverts
Keith Barry: Brain Magic
Tony Robbins: Why We Do What We Do
Angela Lee Duckworth: The Key to Success – Grit
Amy Cuddy: Body Language Shapes Who You Are
Dan Gilbert: Surprise Science of Happiness
Pamela Meyer: How to Spot a Liar
Ben Ambridge: 10 Myths About Psychology Debunked
Shawn Achor: The Happy Secret to Better Work

**** Note: Between the two assignments you will have 4 responses - each being between 1 and 2 pages, therefore a total submission between 4 and 8 pages.***