May, 2026

Dear Incoming AP Psychology Students,

I am excited to get to know all of you in the 2026-2027 school year! You all come to this class with your own unique range of experiences -- social, emotional, intellectual, political, socioeconomic, etc. -- that provide lenses and filters with which you will consider, analyze, and debate the course material; in turn, the principles of social science will lend you an opportunity to reflect upon what you know or believe to be true about human behavior and what drives our interactions and relationships with others.

As you have heard many times over the few past years, we currently find ourselves at a critical juncture in American history that demands our attention as teachers and students at King. We feel very fortunate that the AP Psychology curriculum allows us - requires us, really - to deeply explore concepts like prejudice, discrimination, racism, anti-Semitism, bias, stereotypes, and identity.

Your summer assignment will be our first chance to do just that! You will get your first taste of some AP Psych content and then apply that new learning to a book about one of the above concepts.

Choose a book from one of the two listed below and <u>order it ASAP</u>, as texts may take some time to arrive. *Plan to start the assignment at least two weeks before the school starts* to give yourself ample time to read, consider which perspectives and terms you'll write about, and then execute your writing in a careful, organized way. *You should not spend more than 10 hours on this work altogether*, so plan your time well! Be sure to consult the rubric on page 3 before submitting the assignment.

I can't wait to see your work and hear your reflections on this assignment in September! Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions between now and then.

Sincerely,
Mr. Snyder

<u>AP Psychology Summer Reading Text Choices</u>

These books also have audio versions, which we recommend to help maintain attention, reading speed, and comprehension. *However, you will need to take notes in the book as you read, so you will also need to purchase a hard copy.* Paperback versions of each book should cost no more than $25.

- Mahzarin Banaji, *Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People*
- Jennifer Eberhardt, *Biased: Uncovering the Hidden Prejudice that Shapes What We See, Think, and Feel*

Part 1 - Psychology's Ten Perspectives - Research, Define & Explain

For this part of the assignment, you will do some research to gain an understanding of several important psychological perspectives. You may consult online Introductory Psychology textbooks, university or college Psychology course pages, Very Well Mind, Simply Psychology, and/or Lumen Learning. Then, write two or three sentences defining and explaining each of the perspectives. Responses should be in your own words, and you should include all references (preferably cited in APA format) at the end of your paper.

Psychological Perspectives

- Biological Psychology
- Socio-Cultural Psychology
- Humanistic Psychology
- Cognitive Psychology
- Psychodynamic Psychology
- Behavioral Psychology
- Developmental Psychology
- Feminist Psychology
- Trait Psychology
- Evolutionary Psychology

Part 2 - Social Psychology - Explore + Define

For this part of the assignment, you'll watch two Crash Course videos. As you watch, take notes about the concepts Hank Green discusses. These concepts and definitions for Part 3 of the assignment (and in the first weeks of class!).

Videos:

- Social Psychology: Social Thinking
- Social Psychology: Prejudice and Discrimination

Part 3 - Summer Reading & Written Application

*As you read your chosen text, annotate with the concepts you learned about in parts 1 and 2 in mind. Once you finish reading, choose **three** Psychology Perspectives & **three** Psychology Concepts from parts 1 and 2 that seem most applicable to your reading. Write one paragraph for each term (six paragraphs total) reflecting on how it may apply to, relate to, or possibly be useful to gaining a deeper understanding of the book you read. Include and cite at least one piece of textual evidence in each paragraph. You should not consult additional resources for this part of the assignment; the ideas should be entirely your own.*

Part 3 sample response:

In Just Mercy, Bryan Stevenson describes the situation of one of the death-row inmates he represented in court. *"Walter McMillian… grew up in one of several poor black settlements outside of Monroeville, where he worked the fields with his family before he was old enough to attend school. The children of sharecroppers in southern Alabama were introduced to "plowin', plantin', and pickin' " as soon as they were old enough to be useful in the fields... By the time Walter was eight or nine, he became too valuable for picking cotton to justify the remote advantages of going to school."* (ch. 1) The **socio-cultural perspective** of Psychology helps to shed light on McMillian's ultimate situation. The familial and cultural expectations upon him from his childhood determined his path to being a manual laborer. He was not encouraged to, nor financially able to, leave Alabama as someone with a different cultural upbringing might have. Thus, he remained in the town where he grew up, and was ultimately convicted of a crime he did not commit because of the deeply ingrained systemic racism in the American south. His environment had an enormous impact on who he became and how others saw him (and others' perceptions of him, of course, also impacted who he became).

Note: Just Mercy is NOT an option for you to read for this assignment.

Grading and Rubric

This assignment will count as your first written application of the school year. Below is the rubric that is used (with some adjustments) for all written applications in the course. Revisions will be accepted if necessary, as with any graded assignment in this course.

	Exceeds Standard (A)	**Meets Standard (B)**	**Approaches Standard (C)**	**Does not meet standard (D)**
Content Mastery/Accuracy	All required terms are applied accurately, in a way that goes beyond basic understanding of all concepts and demonstrates true mastery	All required terms are applied accurately and in a way that demonstrates accurate understanding of concepts	Most required terms are applied accurately; some gaps in content mastery are apparent through misuse of terms	There are numerous errors in how the terms are used, demonstrating gaps in mastery of several concepts
Critical Thinking/Creativity	A high level of creativity and "outside the box" thinking is demonstrated; ideas go beyond the bounds of what was discussed in class and readings	Ideas are generally unique and demonstrate critical thinking and thoughtful application of course content	Most ideas are interesting, though some too closely resemble models or examples presented in class. Some additional analysis or sophistication needed in places	Ideas presented in this piece too closely resemble models or examples presented; writing is concrete and does not demonstrate analysis necessary at an AP level
Writing Mechanics	Sentence structure is varied, the piece has been carefully proof-read, and complex grammatical and linguistic structures are included.	Zero or very minimal errors in sentence structure, grammar, and spelling; it is clear that the piece has been carefully proof-read	Some errors in sentence structure, grammar, and spelling throughout the piece; more attention to proof-reading is necessary	Numerous errors in sentence structure, grammar, and spelling disrupt clarity and/or credibility; much more attention to proof-reading is necessary

Letter grades are derived holistically, based on the overall picture from the rubric above. Content mastery weighs most importantly, followed by critical thinking/creativity, and then writing mechanics.

Gradebook equivalents: A 98% A- 93% B+ 88% B 85% B- 83% C+ 78% C 75% C- 73% D+ 68%