

Advanced Placement Psychology

Academic Year 2015- 2016

Summer Reading and Preparation Assignment

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Dear Prospective A.P. student and parents:

Let me welcome and congratulate you on your decision to embark on this adventure that we denominate, Advanced Placement Psychology! As you probably know by now, this is a rigorous academic endeavor given the general nature of A.P. courses and the abstract nature of the topic. For example, there will be a LOT of new scientific concepts and technical terminology that you will have to learn, and quickly! (Remember, vocab. are the bricks of your understanding!) To facilitate the learning experience, especially since A.P. courses follow a shorter academic schedule, I seriously recommend that you follow the instructions below. While it may not guarantee a 5 in the College Board examination, it will introduce the topic in a relaxed manner given that we are enjoying the “lazy days of summer”, and will set the tone of your academic work throughout the year! So get to it!!!!

First, you need to do a few things to prepare yourself for your formal study of the psyche. If you can get your hands on a used copy of our textbook, all the better! (Psychology for AP, by David G. Myers, 2nd edition. Worth Publishers: 2011, '14. ISBN-13: 978-1-4641-1307-9). Also, I encourage you to purchase a copy of Meyer's, Study Guide for Psychology – Facts 101. You can use any of the online book sellers, like www.betterworldbooks.com, www.chegg.com, Barnes & Nobles, etc. While at it, you should get a copy for yourself- or borrow a copy from your local public library- of one of the A.P. review books published by Barron's, McGraw-Hill, or Princeton Review. These will give you a very early and realistic idea of what to expect, how to study as the year progresses, and provide wonderful practice tests. (Remember that we are in a different schedule- your final College Board examination will be in early May!)

YOU must also choose a book from the list provided below, which is a short one so as to create class uniformity. Any of these titles will provide a comprehensive, historical, and exciting introduction to the field. The best option is to purchase the book from any of the various online used books sellers, or go to a local bookseller like Barnes and Nobles, New Jersey Books in New Brunswick, etc. Of course, you can also use your local free public library. Take notes (outline of chapters, summaries, terms, etc.) as you will need these for your written assignment- yes, there is an assignment!

This is a short list but one that has been prepared just with you in mind:

1. Gay, P (1998). *Freud: A life for our time*. NY: W.W. Norton. A seminal biography that examines the psychoanalyst's life in the context of Victorian culture. Highly recommended for those with an interest and aptitude for European history.
2. Morton, H. (2007). *The Story of Psychology*. NY: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group (Highly Recommended!)
3. Kandel, E.R. (1997). *In Search of Mind: The Emergence of a New Science of Mind*. New York: W.W. Norton. A personal memoir by the Nobel Prize winning neuroscientist, with an excellent intellectual history of a century of neurological research.

4. Pinker, S. (2002). *The Blank Slate: The Modern denial of human nature*. NY: Viking. A brilliant analysis of the current polemics of human nature as this has shaped throughout history.

5. Shorter, E. (1967). *A history of psychiatry from the era of the asylum to the age of Prozac*. NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Excellent historical narrative of the treatment of the mentally ill in western society.

Now for the written part which is divided into two parts!

First part of your assignment. Get yourself an inexpensive copybook (in Shop Rite they are going for \$25 cents right now!) and write your reflections on what you read, for each section and chapter. This will be your intellectual journal since a good, critical reader is a proactive reader! (This is why you should always try to have your own copy of a book. It allows you to highlight and write your ideas, responses on the text itself. (See Mortimer Adler's famous book, *How to Read a Book: the Art of Getting a Liberal Education*, and, *How to mark a book* (essay in Saturday Evening Post, www.maebrussell.com/Articles%20and%20Notes/How%20To%20Mark%20A%20Book.html.) The entries don't have to be long but they must capture your reactions and responses to the key ideas and issues presented in the text.

Second, you will develop a well written response to the book, taking care to develop your ideas coherently in relation to the same. This should be more in the tradition of the critical review, taking the form of an essay. Follow the three key aspects of a review: Introduce, Summarize, and Evaluate. Please divide your paper with these three headings. For added assistance, please consult <http://www.Kean.edu/~cpdonova/HowtoWriteaBookAnalysis.pdf>. As a reviewer, you are attempting to evaluate the book so as to recommend it to other readers. (For very good examples of these, examine the New York Times Sunday Review of Books.)

Again, you will be responsible for the journal and the written response. The latter should be typed, single spaced, and no less than one page or no more than three pages long. Please include proper citations according to the APA standards, readily available in the Internet, if you are not already familiar with this. (The journal can be hand written, but it must be legible. Penmanship is important and will be an important aspect of the course since I have to read what you write: If I can't understand it, I can't grade it!) You will be responsible for surrendering two copies: one, a hardcopy, and the other will be an electronic one (alejramirez@paps.net), both on the same day.

The assignment above is designed to expose you to the material and to invite you to start thinking about the history of psychology, and its most important themes and issues. The journal is 50 points and the written response is also 50 points, for a total of 100- your first test grade for this course!

The above assignment will be due upon your return to school. More specifically, September 7th. This will give you three full days after our first Student Contact Day, as per the published calendar for 2015 academic year. Please plan accordingly as extension will not be given! Remember that this is an A.P. course and as such you will be expected to act and perform accordingly.

Any questions? If you have any question, email your teacher at alejramirez@paps.net. Although I will be unavailable at various times during the summer, I will be checking my email account and will respond as soon as possible.

Again, welcome to A.P. Psychology! Go Panthers.

Other Resources

Don't forget that your high school library has two wonderful resources for you to use. One that is readily available to you is the library's electronic Data Base. Just use using your username and password. The other I will make available to you once we get back to school: A Great Courses DVD presentation of the Great Principles of Psychology. We will be showing these after school during the first marking period. Thinking of it as cinema in the afternoon!