

Psychology Pre-Course Summer Work

Below are 4 compulsory tasks to complete to help prepare you for the Psychology A Level course:

1. Research Task: How do Psychologists explain behaviour?

Over the summer you need to investigate the following key figures from five different Approaches in Psychology (Approaches are different ways of explaining human behaviour and are covered extensively in the course):

1. **Sigmund Freud** (Psychodynamic Approach)
2. **B.F. Skinner** (Behaviourist Approach)
3. **Elizabeth Loftus** (Cognitive Approach)
4. **Hans Selye** (Biological Approach)
5. **Abraham Maslow** (Humanist Approach)

Write a 150 word summary on each Psychologist, explaining what and how they have contributed to our understanding of human behaviour. Include a brief review of how each approach explains the reasons behind human acts. Do not simply cut and paste from the internet, research carefully and pick out the key points on each.

2. Preparing you for essay writing task

Good essay writing is integral to success in Psychology. Research and then make a list of conjunctions (also called connectives) that you can use to link paragraphs in Psychology essays e.g. Furthermore, in contrast, however, this is challenged by, in addition, despite this etc. Present this as a **poster** that you can put at the front of your folder. You could even google 'Psychology essays' and read some exemplars to gain key words/ phrases.

3. Introducing Research Methods Task 1: Ethics

Ethical issues arise when studying the workings of the human mind. Investigate these and **create a mind map** of the main ones – deception, confidentiality, informed consent, right to withdraw, protection from harm, use of animals

<https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology/reference/ethical-issues-of-psychological-investigation>

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/Ethics.html>

4. Introducing Research Methods Task 2: Psychological Methods

Form a table like the one below summarising some of the main research methods used by Psychologists, give one strength and one weakness of each method. The study notes on tutor 2 U are a good starting point for this:

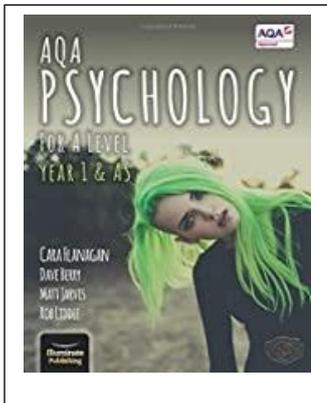
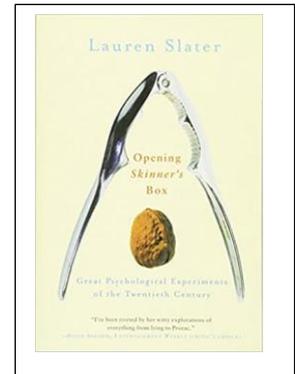
<https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology/collections/a-level-psychology-study-notes-research-methods>

Method	Brief description	Strength/ advantage	Weakness/ disadvantage
Lab experiment	conducted under controlled conditions, researcher deliberately changes something (I.V.) to see the effect of this (D.V.).	High level of control	Lacks ecological validity – findings may not be generalised to real life
Field experiment			
Natural observation			
Interview			
questionnaire			
Case study			

Psychology Pre-course optional extras!

Recommended introductory reading

If you want to read a really interesting book which documents some of the most significant studies conducted in Psychology try 'Opening skinner's box' by Lauren Slater. Her book takes many of the most famous studies in Psychology and investigates the motivations behind the authors and how the studies were done. A really interesting read.



The class textbook we will be using is 'AQA Psychology for A Level year 1 & AS' by Cara Flanagan et al. You might consider purchasing this and pre-reading the first topics we will be studying: Approaches and Attachment.

Online courses

Complete the following free course through the open university. It takes around 3 hours to complete.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/investigating-psychology/content-section-overview-0>

Watch List:

Netflix – there are some really great series on Netflix at the moment (1) Babies (2) The Mind, Explained (3) 100 humans, life's questions, answered

TED talks – There are many, many TED talks on Psychology, but here are some of my favourites: Steven Pinker – Human nature and the blank slate, Oliver Sacks – What hallucination reveals about our minds, Philip Zimbardo – The psychology of evil, Scott Fraser – why eyewitnesses get it wrong, Andrew Soloman – The struggle of mental health, Elyn Saks – A tale of mental illness from the inside, Laurel Braitman – depressed dogs, cats with OCD – what madness means for us humans, Read Montague – what we're learning from 5000 brains.

Podcasts:

- BBC Radio 4's 'All in the mind'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qxx9/episodes/player>

- The British Psychological Society has a list of interesting podcasts

<https://digest.bps.org.uk/2007/03/11/psychology-podcasts-a-clickable-list/>