

# A Level Psychology Y11-12



## Summer work

Welcome, year 11! This booklet contains about 8 hours of tasks to complete to prepare you for A level Psychology, which you've chosen to take at A level this September. The pack is designed to give you a flavour of what A level Psychology is all about and also to make sure that you are suitable to take this fascinating subject! The pack will introduce you to some core psychological concepts and processes, to aid your understanding of psychology ready for sixth form.

Department of

# Psychology =



**Mrs Jones**



**Mrs Knight**



**Miss Faber**

The work in this pack will take a long time, so you can break it up. Don't feel you need to complete it all in one go!. You can complete the tasks in this booklet in the spaces provided, hand write it or type it in but I will need all tasks to be handed in to me rather than submit them on firefly. (A nightmare printing it all out as it is very time consuming)

You are required to submit me your completed 'A level psychology preparation work tasks by the first lesson. **I will need a HARD COPY** of the work so that I can mark it.

I have also included an additional task and some film and book recommendations.

Thanks Mrs Jones ☺

[rjones@gordanoschool.org.uk](mailto:rjones@gordanoschool.org.uk)

### A Level course outline

Year 12: Intro to Psychology	Year 12-13: Applied Psychology	Year 13: Options in Psychology
Social Influences on behaviour	Approaches in Psychology	Issues & Debates in Psychology
Memory	Research Methods 1	Cognition
Attachment in childhood	Research Methods 2 (advanced)	Schizophrenia
Psychopathology (mental health)	Biological psychology	Forensic Psychology

## Contents of this booklet – 8 tasks to complete

Task- Content	Page	Completed?
1. What is Psychology?	2-3	
2. Key approaches in Psychology	4-7	
3. Psychological history	8	
4. Ted talks and the Cornell technique	8-10	
7. Make something related to psychology	11-12	
8. Famous psychologists	13	
Extension tasks: The psychology of physical distancing.	13	
Recommended books	14	
Films related to Psychology	15-16	
Psychologists twitter links	17	
Useful websites	18	

### Task One: What is Psychology?

*“Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour.”*

This really means we are trying to understand what it is that causes us to behave the ways we do; why are some people depressed? Why are some people introverted and some extroverted? Why do some people become killers? Why do some people become obese and some have anorexia? It's a sensitive subject, but the focus is always on: why are humans the way they are?

Watch this short video to start you off: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Os1C000qxY>

Your first task is to help you garner an understanding of what Psychology is really all about. Use the internet (e.g. Wikipedia, YouTube and other sources) to research and understand what the following key terms mean and create a short definition for each in your own words.

The most important thing in an A level is your understanding – so it's not about having the “right” or “word-perfect” definition, it's about you understanding what a concept means 😊

Term	Explanation
Armchair psychology	
Experiment	
Observation	
Self-report	
Correlation	
Ethical issues	

Biological psychology	
Behaviourist psychology	
Psychodynamic psychology	
Humanistic psychology	
Cognitive psychology	
Social psychology	
Social learning theory	
Obedience	
Conformity	
Phobia	
Depression	
OCD	
Schizophrenia	
Validity	
Reliability	
Nature-Nurture debate	
Free Will – Determinism debate	



# Task Two: Key approaches



Psychology is organised into several different approaches. Read through each of these 3 approaches. Then complete the questions – These will need to be submitted by July 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Behaviourism:

### KEY TERMS

**Behaviourist approach** – A way of explaining behaviour in terms of what is observable and in terms of learning.

**Classical conditioning** – Learning by association. Occurs when two stimuli are repeatedly paired together – an unconditioned (unlearned) stimulus (UCS) and a new 'neutral' stimulus. The neutral stimulus eventually produces the same response that was first produced by the unlearned stimulus alone.

**Operant conditioning** – A form of learning in which behaviour is shaped and maintained by its consequences. Possible consequences of behaviour include positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement or punishment.

**Reinforcement** – A consequence of behaviour that increases the likelihood of that behaviour being repeated. Can be positive or negative.

## The behaviourist approach

### Assumptions

The **behaviourist approach** is only interested in studying behaviour that can be observed and measured. It is not concerned with investigating mental processes of the mind. Early behaviourists such as John B. Watson (1913) rejected **introspection** as it involved too many concepts that were vague and difficult to measure. As a result, behaviourists tried to maintain more control and objectivity within their research and relied on **lab experiments** as the best way to achieve this.

Following Darwin, behaviourists suggested that the basic processes that govern learning are the same in all species. This meant that in behaviourist research, animals could replace humans as experimental subjects. Behaviourists identified two important forms of learning: **classical conditioning** and **operant conditioning**.

### Classical conditioning – Pavlov's research

Classical conditioning is learning through association and was first demonstrated by Ivan Pavlov. Pavlov revealed that dogs could be conditioned to salivate to the sound of a bell if that sound was repeatedly presented at the same time as they were given food. Gradually, Pavlov's dogs learned to associate the sound of the bell (a stimulus) with the food (another stimulus) and would produce the salivation response every time they heard the sound.

Thus, Pavlov was able to show how a **neutral stimulus**, in this case a bell, can come to elicit a new learned response (**conditioned response**) through association (see diagram below left).

### Operant conditioning – Skinner's research

BF Skinner (1953) suggested that learning is an active process whereby humans and animals operate on their environment. In operant conditioning there are three types of consequences of behaviour:

- **Positive reinforcement** is receiving a reward when a certain behaviour is performed, for example, praise from a teacher for answering a question correctly in class.
- **Negative reinforcement** occurs when an animal (or human) avoids something unpleasant. When a student hands in an essay so as not to be told off, the avoidance of something unpleasant is the negative reinforcement. Similarly, a rat may learn through negative reinforcement that pressing a lever leads to avoidance of an electric shock (below).
- **Punishment** is an unpleasant consequence of behaviour, for example being shouted at by the teacher for talking during a lesson. (Finding a way to avoid that would be negative reinforcement.)

Positive and negative reinforcement increase the likelihood that behaviour will be repeated. Punishment decreases the likelihood that behaviour will be repeated.

### Apply it

### Concepts: The Skinner Box

(A) Skinner conducted experiments with rats, and sometimes pigeons, in specially designed cages called **Skinner Boxes**. Every time the rat activated a lever (or pecked a disc in the case of the pigeon) within the box it was rewarded with a food pellet. From then on the animal would continue to perform the behaviour.



(B) Skinner also showed how rats and pigeons could be conditioned to perform the same behaviour to avoid an unpleasant stimulus, for example an electric shock.

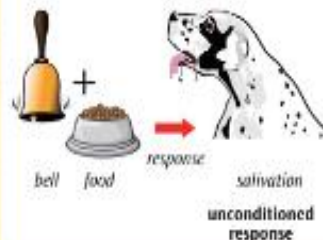
### 1 Before conditioning



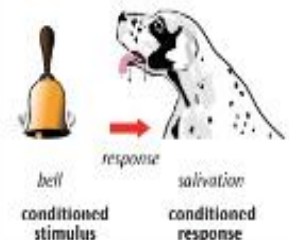
### 2 Before conditioning



### 3 During conditioning



### 4 After conditioning



## The Cognitive approach

### KEY TERMS

**Cognitive approach** – The term 'cognitive' has come to mean 'mental processes', so this approach is focused on how our mental processes (e.g. thoughts, perceptions, attention) affect behaviour.

**Internal mental processes** – 'Private' operations of the mind such as perception and attention that mediate between stimulus and response.

**Schema** – A mental framework of beliefs and expectations that influence cognitive processing. They are developed from experience.

**Inference** – The process whereby cognitive psychologists draw conclusions about the way mental processes operate on the basis of observed behaviour.

**Cognitive neuroscience** – The scientific study of biological structures that underpin cognitive processes.

### The emergence of cognitive neuroscience

**Cognitive neuroscience** is the scientific study of the influence of brain structures on mental processes. Mapping brain areas to specific cognitive functions has a long history in psychology. As early as the 1860s Paul Broca had identified how damage to an area of the **frontal lobe** (which came to be known as **Broca's Area**) could permanently impair speech production.

It is only in the last twenty years, however, with advances in brain imaging techniques such as **fMRI** and **PET** scans, that scientists have been able to systematically observe and describe the **neurological** basis of mental processes. For example, in research involving tasks that required the use of **episodic** and **semantic memory**, Tulving *et al.* (see page 51) were able to show how these different types of **long-term memory** may be located on opposite sides of the **pre-frontal cortex**. As well as this, the system in overall charge of **working memory** – the **central executive** – is thought to reside in a similar area (see the 1997 study by Braver *et al.* on page 53).

Scanning techniques have also proved useful in establishing the neurological basis of some mental disorders. On page 150 the link between the **parahippocampal gyrus** and **OCD** is discussed. It appears to play a role in processing unpleasant emotions.

The focus of cognitive neuroscience has expanded recently to include the use of computer-generated models that are designed to 'read' the brain. This has led to the development of mind mapping techniques known as 'brain fingerprinting'. One possible future application of this could be to analyse the brain wave patterns of **eyewitnesses** to determine whether they are lying in court!

## The cognitive approach

### Assumptions

In direct contrast to the **behaviourist approach**, the **cognitive approach** argues that **internal mental processes** can, and should, be studied scientifically. As a result, the cognitive approach has investigated those areas of human behaviour that were neglected by behaviourists, such as memory, perception and thinking. These processes are 'private' and cannot be observed, so cognitive psychologists study them *indirectly* by making **inferences** about what is going on inside people's minds on the basis of their behaviour.

### Theoretical and computer models

Cognitive psychologists use both **theoretical** and **computer models** to help them understand internal mental processes. In reality there are overlaps between these two models but basically theoretical models are abstract whereas computer models are concrete things.

One important theoretical model is the **information processing approach**, which suggests that information flows through the cognitive system in a sequence of stages that include input, storage and retrieval, as in the **multi-store model** (see page 48). This information processing approach is based on the way that computers function but a computer model would involve actually programming a computer to see if such instructions produce a similar output to humans. If they do then we can suggest that similar processes are going on in the human mind. Such computational models of the mind have proved useful in the development of 'thinking machines' or **artificial intelligence**.

### The role of schema

Cognitive processing can often be affected by a person's beliefs or expectations, often referred to as **schema**. Schema are 'packages' of ideas and information developed through experience. They act as a mental framework for the interpretation of incoming information received by the cognitive system; for example, you have a schema for a chair – something with legs that you can sit on. That's a package of information learned through experience that helps you to respond to the object appropriately.

Babies are born with simple motor schema for innate behaviours such as sucking and grasping. For example, the grasping schema consists of moving a hand towards an object and shaping the hand around the object in co-ordination with visual input.

As we get older, our schema become more detailed and sophisticated. Adults have developed mental representations for everything from the concept of psychology to a schema for what happens in a restaurant or what a typical zombie looks like.

Schema enable us to process lots of information quickly and this is useful as a sort of mental short-cut that prevents us from being overwhelmed by environmental stimuli. However, schema may also distort our interpretations of sensory information, leading to perceptual errors (see examples on facing page).



## The social learning theory

### KEY TERMS

**Social learning theory** – A way of explaining behaviour that includes both direct and indirect reinforcement, combining learning theory with the role of cognitive factors.

**Imitation** – Copying the behaviour of others.

**Identification** – When an observer associates themselves with a role model and wants to be like the role model.

**Modelling** – From the observer's perspective, modelling is imitating the behaviour of a role model. From the role model's perspective, modelling is the precise demonstration of a specific behaviour that may be imitated by an observer.

**Vicarious reinforcement** – Reinforcement which is not directly experienced but occurs through observing someone else being reinforced for a behaviour. This is a key factor in imitation.

**Mediational processes** – Cognitive factors (i.e. thinking) that influence learning and come between stimulus and response.

## Social learning theory

### Assumptions

Albert Bandura agreed with the **behaviourists** that much of our behaviour is learned from experience. However, his **social learning theory (SLT)** proposed a different way in which people learn: through observation and **imitation** of others within a social context, thus social learning. SLT suggested that learning occurs directly, through classical and operant conditioning, but also *indirectly*.

### Vicarious reinforcement

For indirect learning to take place an individual observes the behaviour of others. The learner may imitate this behaviour but, in general, imitation only occurs if the behaviour is seen to be rewarded (reinforced) rather than punished, i.e. **vicarious reinforcement** occurs (see box below). Thus, the learner observes a behaviour but most importantly observes the consequences of a behaviour.

### The role of mediational processes

SLT is often described as the 'bridge' between traditional **learning theory** (previous spread) and the **cognitive approach** (next spread) because it focuses on how mental (cognitive) factors are involved in learning. These mental factors mediate (i.e. intervene) in the learning process to determine whether a new response is acquired. Four mental or **mediational processes** in learning were identified by Bandura:

1. **Attention** – the extent to which we notice certain behaviours.
2. **Retention** – how well the behaviour is remembered.
3. **Motor reproduction** – the ability of the observer to perform the behaviour.
4. **Motivation** – the will to perform the behaviour, which is often determined by whether the behaviour was rewarded or punished.

The first two of these relate to the **learning** of behaviour and the last two to the **performance** of behaviour. Unlike traditional behaviourism, the learning and performance of behaviour need not occur together. Observed behaviours may be stored by the observer and reproduced at a later time.

### Identification

People (especially children) are much more likely to imitate the behaviour of people with whom they **identify**, called **role models**. This process is called **modelling**. A person becomes a role model if they are seen to possess similar characteristics to the observer and/or are attractive and have high status. Role models may not necessarily be physically present in the environment, and this has important implications for the influence of the media on behaviour (see facing page).

### Apply it Concepts: Do children imitate what they see?

(A) Bandura *et al.* (1961) recorded the behaviour of young children who watched an adult behave in an aggressive way towards a Bobo doll (see right). The adult hit the doll with a hammer and shouted abuse at it.

When these children were later observed playing with various toys, including a Bobo doll, they behaved much more aggressively towards the doll and the other toys than those who had observed a non-aggressive adult.

**Question:** Which aspect of SLT does study A illustrate?

(B) Bandura and Walters (1963) showed videos to children where an adult behaved aggressively towards the Bobo doll. One group of children saw the adult praised for their behaviour (being told 'Well done'). A second group saw the adult punished for their aggression towards the doll, by being told off. The third group (**control group**) saw the aggression without any consequence.

When given their own Bobo doll to play with, the first group showed much more aggression, followed by the third group, and then the second.

**Question:** Which aspect of SLT does study B illustrate?



## Questions: Key approaches in Psychology

To be assessed: / 30

1. Fill in the missing words: The behaviourist approach is only interested in studying behaviour that can be ..... and ..... (2 marks)
2. What is meant by an inference? (2 marks)
3. Damage to the Broca's area in the brain could lead to an impairment in what? (1 mark)
4. The cognitive approach focuses on mental processes. Name 3 of these. (3 marks)
5. How are schemas developed? (1 mark)
6. What is the difference between positive and negative reinforcement? (2 marks)
7. Skinner conducted research mostly with what two things? (2 marks)
8. What is the SLT often described as being, in comparison to learning theory and the cognitive approach (1 mark)
9. Role models are more likely to be copied if they are what? (2 marks)
10. What item does the cognitive approach use in an analogy? (1 mark)
11. SLT is different to the behaviourist approach in what way? (2 marks)
12. Name two mediational processes (2 marks)
13. Classical conditioning is learning by what? (1 mark)
14. Through scanning techniques the neural basis of what mental disorder has been found? (1 mark)
15. In Pavlov's research what kind of stimulus does the bell start off as, and then what type of stimulus does it become because of the association. (2 marks)
16. What is the word used when a person copies the behaviour of a role model? (1 mark)
17. Operant conditioning is learning by what? (1 mark)
18. What was the doll's name used in Bandura's research? (1 mark)
19. What do cognitive psychologists use to study internal processes? (1 mark)
20. Early behaviourists rejected using what method? (1 mark)



### Task three – Psychological History

You need to create an A4 Psychological History timeline. On your timeline you should include a number of features such as the ones below (but not necessarily ONLY these). To make a high quality timeline, you will need to do some additional research into what each of the events actually refers to – and why it might have been important to the development of Psychology.

- The Curious Case of Phineas Gage,
- Wilhelm Wundt's Psychology Lab,
- Foundation of the American Psychological Association,
- Sigmund Freud publishes "*The Interpretation of Dreams*",
- Pavlov's Dog Studies are published,
- Carl Rogers publishes "*Counselling and Psychotherapy*",
- The first use of a brain scan in Psychological research.

Cambridge university has a range of resources and activities to view on their website.

<https://www.myheplus.com/post-16/subjects/psychology>

This will be the focus of the first topic we will study next year.

A great link for this task is <https://allpsych.com/timeline/>.

### Task four – TED talks:

Your next task is to learn how to use the Cornell technique and then use it to make notes from some videos <https://www.wikihow.com/Take-Cornell-Notes>

Research, reading and note making are essential skills for A level Psychology. You are going to practice producing "Cornell notes" to summarise some of the TED talks . You need to choose 3 TED talks, and complete notes in the following format for them:



## Choices of TED talks:

### Brain Magic

Available at :

[https://www.ted.com/talks/keith\\_barry\\_does\\_brain\\_magic?language=en#t-99868](https://www.ted.com/talks/keith_barry_does_brain_magic?language=en#t-99868)

First, Keith Barry shows us how our brains can fool our bodies — in a trick that works via podcast too. Then he involves the audience in some jaw-dropping (and even a bit dangerous) feats of brain magic.



### The Surprising Science of Happiness

Available at: [https://www.ted.com/playlists/4/what\\_makes\\_you\\_happy](https://www.ted.com/playlists/4/what_makes_you_happy)

Dan Gilbert, author of "Stumbling on Happiness," challenges the idea that we'll be miserable if we don't get what we want. Our "psychological immune system" lets us feel truly happy even when things don't go as planned.



### 10 myths about Psychology, debunked.

Available at :

[https://www.ted.com/talks/ben\\_ambridge\\_10\\_myths\\_about\\_psychology\\_debunked?language=en#t-80890](https://www.ted.com/talks/ben_ambridge_10_myths_about_psychology_debunked?language=en#t-80890)

How much of what you think about your brain is actually wrong? In this whistlestop tour of dis-proved science, Ben Ambridge walks through 10 popular ideas about psychology that have been proven wrong — and uncovers a few surprising truths about how our brains really work.



### Jon Ronson: Strange answers to the psychopath test

Available at :

[https://www.ted.com/talks/jon\\_ronson\\_strange\\_answers\\_to\\_the\\_psychopath\\_test?language=en#t-129957](https://www.ted.com/talks/jon_ronson_strange_answers_to_the_psychopath_test?language=en#t-129957)

Is there a definitive line that divides crazy from sane? With a hair-raising delivery, Jon Ronson, author of The Psychopath Test, illuminates the gray areas between the two.

### Carol Dweck: The power of believing that you can improve

Available at :

[https://www.ted.com/talks/carol\\_dweck\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_believing\\_that\\_you\\_can\\_improve#t-30982](https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve#t-30982)

Carol Dweck researches "growth mindset" — the idea that we can grow our brain's capacity to learn and to solve problems. In this talk, she describes two ways to think about a problem that's slightly too hard for you to solve. Are you not smart enough to solve it ... or have you just not solved it yet? A great introduction to this influential field.



### The Paradox of Choice

Available at :

[https://www.ted.com/playlists/164/how\\_we\\_make\\_choices](https://www.ted.com/playlists/164/how_we_make_choices)

Psychologist Barry Schwartz takes aim at a central tenet of western societies: freedom of choice. In Schwartz's estimation, choice has made us not freer but more paralyzed, not happier but more dissatisfied.

### Martin Seligman: A new era of positive psychology

Available at :

[http://www.ted.com/talks/martin\\_seligman\\_on\\_the\\_state\\_of\\_psychology](http://www.ted.com/talks/martin_seligman_on_the_state_of_psychology)

As the founder of the newest modern emerging branch of Psychology, Martin Seligman utilizes this TED talk to discuss how positive psychology is revolutionizing the field by moving beyond a focus on mental illness and shifting towards examining human healthy states, including happiness and optimism.



### Ben Goldacre: Battling Bad Science

Available at :

[http://www.ted.com/talks/ben\\_goldacre\\_battling\\_bad\\_science?language=en#t-89077](http://www.ted.com/talks/ben_goldacre_battling_bad_science?language=en#t-89077)

Every day there are news reports of new health advice, but how can you know if they're right? Doctor and epidemiologist Ben Goldacre shows us, at high speed, the ways evidence can be distorted, from the blindingly obvious nutrition claims to the very subtle tricks of the pharmaceutical industry.



## Task 5: Make something related to Psychology!

You will have to do some internet research for this 😊

This task involves you making something related to Psychology. Here are lots of ideas – I want you to create the item and then include a picture of the item when you submit the activities – You can bring it in to show me in September as well (I WOULD LOVE THAT!)

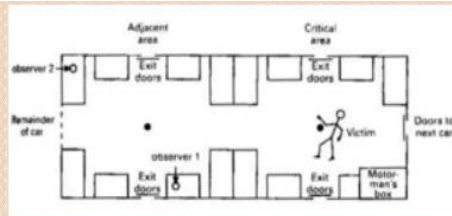
### General ideas...

**Psychology bake off** – Biscuits/Cakes to represent your fav psychologists (create your own cookie template cutter) or represent some psychological concepts (dreams, brain, psych symbol).

**Psychology in a box** – Get an old shoe box or match box if you're going miniature and create a study (or a theory – if you really want a challenge!) and recreate the procedure/method in a box (Milgram, Loftus and Palmer, Sperry).

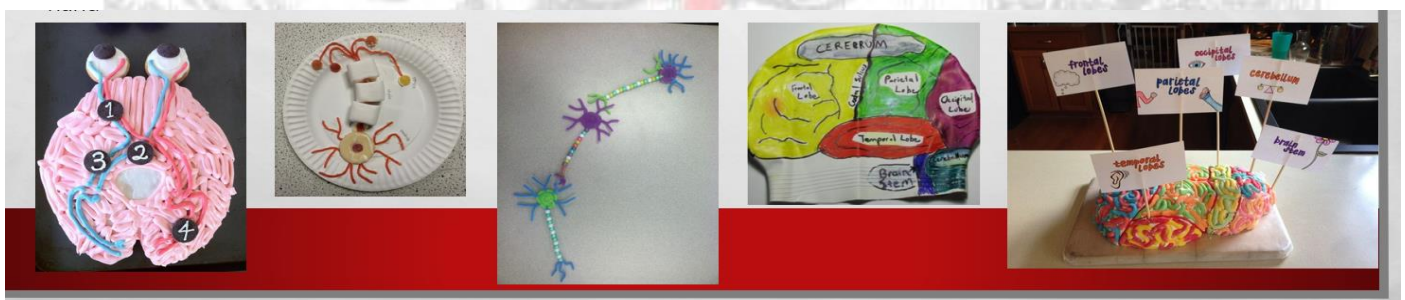
**Talking heads Psychologist** – Print off pictures of your favourite psychologists face and attach to a lollipop (use as a puppet show or for debates). Bigger challenge – Make a real-life size Psychologist!

**Psychology around the World** – Map all the psychologists you have studied and place a flag on a map/globe with the details of the study or sample (is there cultural bias in psychology?).



### Choose your make:

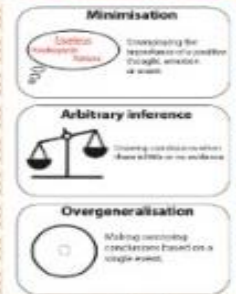
- Homemade Brain** – Using anything you have, make (or bake) a brain and label it. I've heard of students in the past using cakes, play do, shower caps, molded rice krispies, balloons or even cauliflower to make it 3D. Less messy 2D versions can work by laying out items of the same colour to show the different lobes, for example.
- Homemade neuron** – Lay-out sweets (or anything else you find lying around that you can use!) to make and label a neuron or synapse.





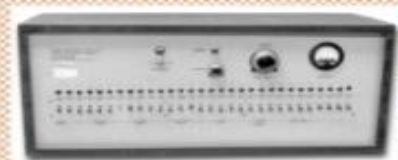
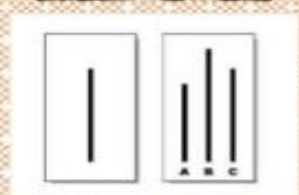
## Cognitive area / Memory

1. **Dragon illusion** - Download, cut out, follow instructions and watch the eyes follow you around the room. *[Not spec related]*
2. **Optical illusion** - Create your own optical illusions through drawings or taking photos. *[Not spec related]*
3. **Irrational thoughts diary** - Write down every irrational, cognitive distortion (e.g. If I don't submit my homework the World will end) you have in a day and keep a diary of these.
4. **Memory experiment** - So many opportunities here - Stroop, Digit span, Number of objects (then remove one), Generation game and so on.
5. **Visual cliff illusion** - Make a visual cliff with tracing paper rather than glass, and have a deep and a shallow end. *[OCR]*



## Social area / Social influence

1. **Fancy dress** - Create an authoritarian costume for you or a doll/teddy.
2. **Bean jar** - Make Jenness' bean jar and get people to estimate. *[Not spec related]*
3. **Asch's lines** - Make your own Asch's lines test cards. *[AQA]*
4. **Campaign** - Create a campaign, petition, canvas for something you care about and use your minority influence. *[AQA]*
5. **Shock generator** - Make a fake generator using a cardboard box and label the same as in Milgram's study.



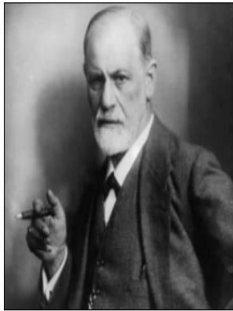




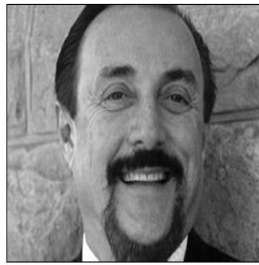
## Task 6: Famous Psychologists

Research one of the famous Psychologists from the list below. You should research their life and produce a biography that includes:

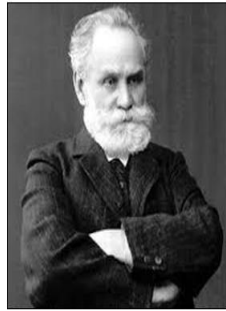
- Their childhood
- How they became a psychologist
- One of their theories
- One example of a study they did or their practices (e.g. how they tried to support people with regards to their mental health)



Sigmund Freud



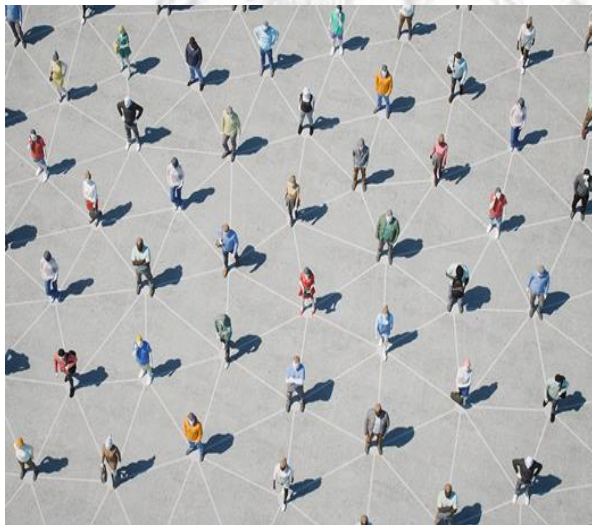
Philip Zimbardo



Ivan Pavlov



Stanley Milgram



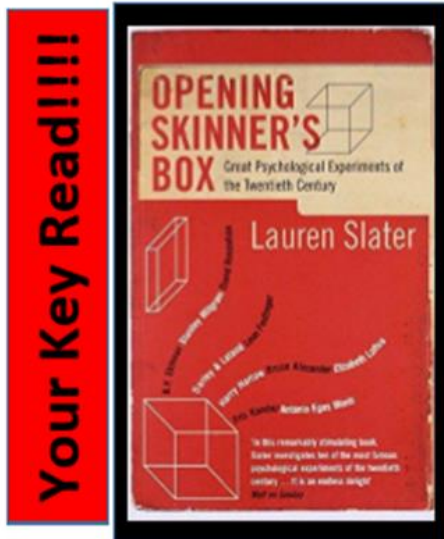
### Extension tasks

The psychology of physical distancing: This is a fantastic psychological interpretation of what is going on at the moment – Worth a read

As lockdown rules ease in the UK but distancing guidance remains in place, how can we use group norms to make distancing easier for people at mass gatherings? John Drury, Stephen Reicher and Nick Hopkins have some advice.

<https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/psychology-physical-distancing>

## Recommended books:



### Opening Skinner's Box

A century can be understood in many ways - in terms of its inventions, its crimes or its art. In *Opening Skinner's Box*, Lauren Slater sets out to investigate the twentieth century through a series of ten fascinating, witty and sometimes shocking accounts of its key psychological experiments. Starting with the founder of modern scientific experimentation, B.F. Skinner, Slater traces the evolution of the last hundred years' most pressing concerns - free will, authoritarianism, violence, conformity and morality.

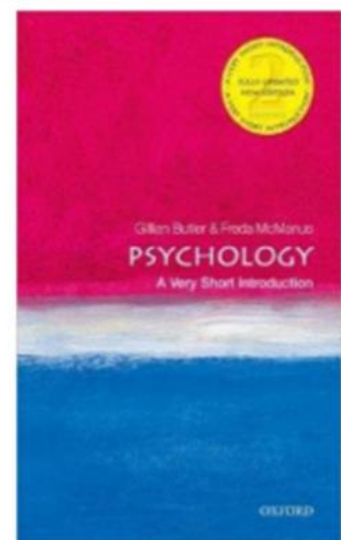
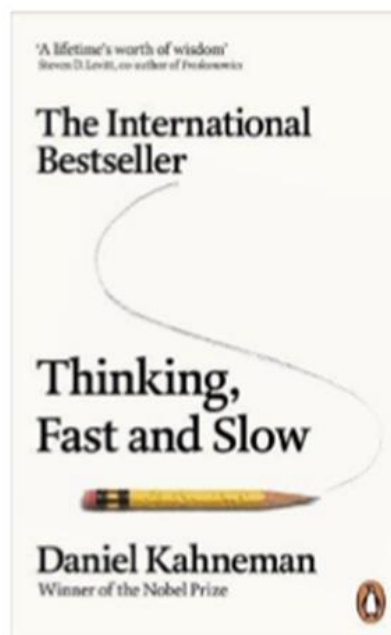
### Thinking, Fast and Slow

The phenomenal *New York Times* Bestseller by Nobel Prize-winner Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking Fast and Slow* offers a whole new look at the way our minds work, and how we make decisions. Why is there more chance we'll believe something if it's in a bold type face? Why are judges more likely to deny parole before lunch? Why do we assume a good-looking person will be more competent? The answer lies in the two ways we make choices: fast, intuitive thinking, and slow, rational thinking.



### The Blank Slate

Recently many people have assumed that we are shaped by our environment: a blank slate waiting to be inscribed by upbringing and culture, with innate abilities playing little part. *The Blank Slate* shows that this view denies the heart of our being: human nature. Violence is not just a product of society; male and female minds are different; the genes we give our children shape the more than our parenting practices.



An easy read..

**Psychology, a very short introduction**

A whistle-stop tour of the main concepts in Psychology – a great introduction to the A Level course!



### Placebo

A lucid and stimulating explanation of how the body's natural healing mechanisms work – and how they can be triggered in non-chemical ways via the 'placebo effect'.

Can you cure ourselves of disease by the power of thought alone? Faith healers and alternative therapists are convinced that we can, but what does science say?



## Films: Check the age ratings however!

Everyone loves a good story and everyone loves some great Psychology. You won't find any thrillers on this list, but we've looked back over the last 50 years to give you our top Psychological films you might not have seen before. Great watching for a rainy day.



### We need to talk about Kevin (2011)

Kevin's mother struggles to love her strange child, despite the increasingly vicious things he says and does as he grows up. But Kevin is just getting started, and his final act will be beyond anything anyone imagined.



### One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975)

A criminal pleads insanity after getting into trouble again and once in the mental institution rebels against the oppressive nurse and rallies up the scared patients.

### The Stanford Prison Experiment (2015)

Twenty-four male students out of seventy-five were selected to take on randomly assigned roles of prisoners and guards in a mock prison situated in the basement of the Stanford psychology building.



### Girl, Interrupted (1999)

Based on a true story. Based on writer Susanna Kaysen's account of her 18-month stay at a mental hospital in the 1960s. This film questions what it means to be sane.

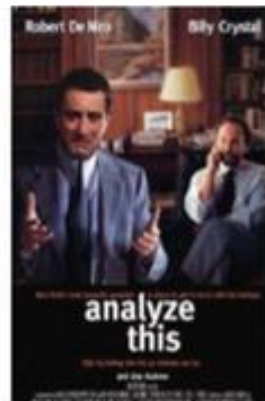


### As good as it gets (1997)

A single mother/waitress, a misanthropic author, and a gay artist form an unlikely friendship after the artist is assaulted in a robbery. Looks at what life is like when you live with OCD.

**Analyze This (1999)**

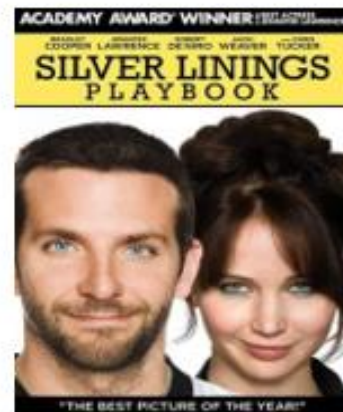
A comedy about a psychiatrist whose number one-patient is an insecure mafia boss, played by a hilarious Robert De Niro.

**Memento (2000)**

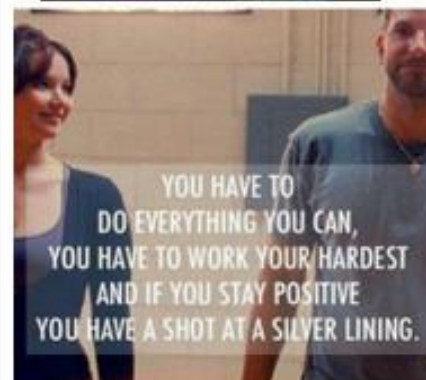
A man with total memory loss creates a strange system to help him remember things; so he can hunt for the murderer of his wife without his short-term memory loss being an obstacle.

**Running with Scissors (2006)**

Young Augusten Burroughs absorbs experiences that could make for a shocking memoir: the son of an alcoholic father and an unstable mother, he's handed off to his mother's therapist, Dr. Finch, and spends his adolescent years as a member of Finch's bizarre extended family.

**Good Will Hunting (1997)**

Will Hunting, a janitor at M.I.T., has a gift for mathematics, but needs help from a psychologist to find direction in his life.



**A beautiful mind:** The true story of an incredibly gifted mathematician John Nash who suffers from schizophrenia.

**Silver linings play**

**book:** This film is about a man who is trying to rebuild his life after leaving a mental health hospital.



Twitter: If you are on twitter it is quite useful to follow some psychologists- Below is a list of famous Psychologists on twitter.

**David Buss** – Prolific Evolutionary Psychologist.  
@ProfDavidBuss

**Ben Goldacre** – GP, and campaigner for better media communication of science, and popular scientific communicator.  
@bangoldacre

**Richard Wiseman** – Magician turned Psychologist!  
@RichardWiseman

**Elizabeth Loftus** – Memory researcher and founder of ‘false memory’ theory.  
@eloftus1

**Philip Zimbardo** – Conducted the Stanford Prison Experiment.  
@PhilZimbardo

**The Beck Institute** – Centre for developing cognitive therapies.  
@BeckInstitute

**Freud Museum** – Follow this to see upcoming events you might be interested in.  
@FreudMuseum and @FreudMusLondon

**David Eagleman** – Neuroscientist who recently had his own series on the BBC.  
@DavidEagleman

**Michael Mosely** – Very popular science communicator and founder of the 5:2 diet.  
@DrMichaelMosely

**Derren Brown** – Magician with an interest in all things psychological!  
@DerrenBrown

**Stephen Pinker** – Cognitive scientist, wrote ‘the Blank Slate’.  
@sapinker

**Martin Seligman** – Founded the area of Positive Psychology.  
@MartinEPSeligman and @PositiveNewsUK

**Mark Griffiths** – Researches the psychology of Addiction.  
@DrMarkGriffiths

**Daniel Kahneman** – Author of *Thinking: Fast and Slow*, and founder of ‘pop psychology’.  
@DanielKahneman



## Useful websites:



**Simply  
Psychology**

**Simply Psychology**  
Revision Resources for your  
AS Level.

<http://www.simplypsychology.org/a-level-psychology.html>



**S-cool**  
Another useful revision  
website...

<http://www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level/psychology>

**Psychology4A.com**

**A Level Psychology Revision**  
Great website with items from the  
news, videos to watch and up to date  
revision activities and materials to help  
you learn...

<http://www.psychology4a.com/>



**The British  
Psychological Society**

Promoting excellence in psychology

Opportunities to read current research and find out  
about events, plus the chance for free students  
membership of the BPS!

<http://www.bps.org.uk/>



A pack of resources promoting mental health and  
explaining mental health problems.

<http://www.mentalhealtheducation.org.uk/home>  
L



Information on mental conditions and disorders;  
Psychological tests & quizzes; Ask The Therapist  
and Q&A; Medication drugs library; Over a dozen  
blogs with different focus areas; Latest news from  
the world of psychology; Research section with  
information on clinical trials.

<http://psychcentral.com/>



The NIMH website features:

Extensive information on mental health topics; Access to free  
NIMH publications on a host of topics from disorders to  
treatment; Information about clinical trials for both  
participants and researchers; Access to statistical information  
about mental disorders; News in the science of mental health.

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml>



Tutor2u includes useful summaries of the topics studied at AS  
level, as well as a blog of recent uploaded materials, videos  
and opportunities to buy revision packs.

<http://www.tutor2u.net/psychology>