**AP Psychology**

**Unit 1: Introduction, Research Methods, Critical Thinking**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to AP Psychology! A plan, similar to the information below, will be available for each unit that we study throughout the year. Hopefully, this is the only hard copy that you will receive. All future unit plans should be available via the class website (mrbelvin.weebly.com) and should be printed by the student for the first day of each unit. Each plan will also include unit objectives.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Define psychology.
2. Trace psychology’s prescientific roots, from early understandings of mind and body to the beginnings of modern science.
3. Explain how the early psychologists sought to understand the mind’s structure and functions, and identify some of the leading psychologists who worked in these areas.
4. Describe the evolution of psychology as defined from the 1920s through today.
5. Summarize the nature-nurture debate in psychology, and describe the principle of natural selection.
6. Explain why psychology’s varied perspectives are complementary.
7. Explain the difference between psychology and psychiatry.
8. Explain hindsight bias can make research findings seem like mere common sense, and how overconfidence contaminates our everyday judgements.
9. Explain how the scientific attitude encourages critical thinking, and how psychological theories guide scientific research.
10. Identify advantages and disadvantages of using case studies, surveys, and naturalistic observation to study behavior and mental processes.
11. Describe positive and negative correlations, and explain how correlational measures can aid the process of prediction.
12. Explain why correlational research fails to provide evidence of cause-effect relationships, and describe how people form illusory correlations.
13. Explain the human tendency to perceive order in random events.
14. Explain how experiments help researchers isolate cause and effect, and why the double-blind procedure and random assignment build confidence in research findings.
15. Explain the difference between in independent variable and a dependent variable.
16. Describe the three measures of central tendency, and explain which is most affected by extreme scores.
17. Explain how range and standard deviation are two measures of variation.
18. Identify three principles for making generalizations from samples, and explain how psychologists decide whether differences are meaningful.
19. Explain the value of simplified lab conditions in discovering general principles of behavior.
20. Discuss whether psychological research can be generalized across cultures and genders.
21. Explain why psychologists study animals, and evaluate the ethics of experimentation with both animals and humans.
22. Describe how personal values can influence psychologists’ research and its application.

**Day One:** Monday, Aug. 26/ Tuesday, Aug. 27

Discussion: Course Overview & Description

Corny Icebreaker, Issue Textbooks

**Due:** Summer Assignment

**Homework**: **1) Myers, pp. 2-13; answer guiding questions (see website)**

**2) Sacks, “The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat”; guiding Q’s (see website)**

**3) Interest Inventory, Student and Parent E-mail Contact**

**Day Two:** Wednesday, Aug. 28 / Thursday, Aug. 29

Discussion: Sacks article and Prologue

The First Powerpoint

Andrea Yates (with video clip)

Activities: The Limits of Human Intuition

Let’s Make A Deal

**Homework: Myers, pp. 19-35**

**Handout: TBD**

**Day Three:** Friday, Aug. 30 / Tuesday, Sept. 3

Discussion: Case Studies

Flaws In Surveys

Activity: Saying vs. Doing

**Homework: Myers, pp. 36-39**

**Handout: Experimental terms, test Belvin’s Pleasure Pill**

**Day Four:** Wednesday, Sept. 4 / Thursday, Sept. 5

Discussion: Random Sampling

Correlational Studies, Cause-Effect Misinterpretations

Experimental Design

Activity: Gambler’s Fallacy, Sample Size

**Homework: Myers, pp. 39-50**

**Handout: “Ethics In Research”; Steps 1 and 2 for Cases 1-4**

**Day Five:** Friday, Sept. 6 / Monday, Sept. 9

Discussion: Measures of Central Tendency

Statistical Variation

Psychology’s FAQ’s (emphasis on research ethics and animal experimentation)

Activity: Test Review

**Homework: Study for Test 1**

**Day Six:** Tuesday, Sept. 10 / Wednesday, Sept. 11

**TEST 1**