

Year 11

# Psychology

Transition Pack



# BTEC

# Psychology

## Contents Page

A guide to help you get ready for A-level Psychology

What is psychology? .....	3
Books .....	4
Films .....	5
TED talks .....	6
Podcasts .....	9
Social media .....	11
Course .....	13
Places to visit .....	15
Research methods.....	16
Note taking .....	17
Equipment .....	18
Summer Tasks .....	19

# What is psychology?

## Psychology as a subject

So, you want to study Psychology? But do you *really* know what it is and even more importantly maybe what it isn't.

**Activity 1: What is Psychology?** Research this question and write a short paragraph about what Psychology *is*. You may additionally want to include what psychology *is not*.  
[approx. 200 words]

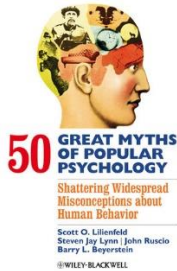
**Activity 2: Is Psychology a science?** It is often debated whether Psychology is a 'science' or not. Using different *credible* sources, find at least two arguments that support both points of view.

Yes, it is	No, it's not

**Sources** - write all the sources of information you have used here:

# Books

Why not read one of these?

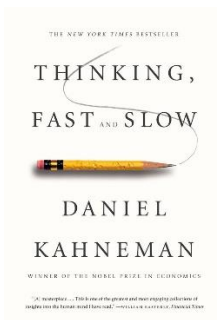
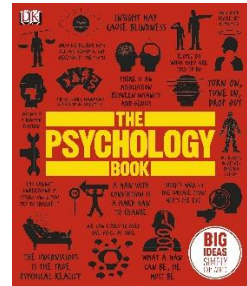


## 50 great myths of popular psychology

...uses popular myths as a vehicle for helping students and laypersons to distinguish science from pseudoscience. Uses common myths as a vehicle for exploring how to distinguish factual from fictional claims in popular psychology such as 'opposites attract', 'people use only 10% of their brains', and 'handwriting reveals your personality'.

## The psychology book

...explains more than 100 of the most important big ideas and ground-breaking theories in the field of psychology in a clear and simple way, this is the perfect introduction to the history of psychology and understanding human behaviour.

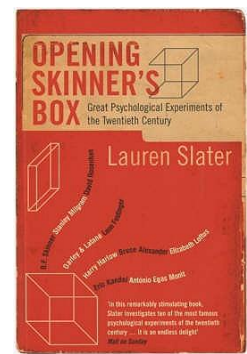


## Thinking fast and slow

...is a masterpiece and winner of the Nobel Prize for economics, distils a lifetime of research into an encyclopedic coverage of both the surprising miracles and the equally surprising mistakes of our conscious and unconscious thinking.

## Opening Skinner's box

...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.



# Films

Why not watch one of these?



## The Stanford Prison Experiment

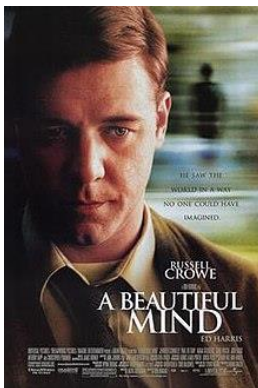
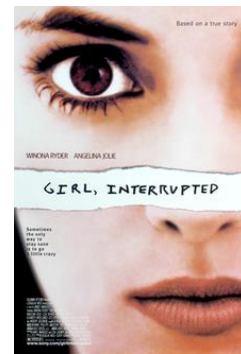
What happens when you put good people in an evil place? Does humanity win over evil, or does evil triumph? These are some of the questions we posed in this dramatic simulation of prison life. In 1971, Stanford's Professor Philip Zimbardo conducts a controversial psychology experiment. Twenty-four male students are selected to take on randomly assigned roles of prisoners and guards in a mock prison situated in the basement of the Stanford psychology building.

**Topic link:** Social influence

## Girl Interrupted

Set in the changing world of the late 1960s, "Girl, Interrupted" is the searing true story of Susanna Kaysen (Winona Ryder), a young woman who finds herself at a renowned mental institution for troubled young women, where she must choose between the world of people who belong on the inside -- like the seductive and dangerous Lisa (Angelina Jolie) -- or the often difficult world of reality on the outside.

**Topic link:** Psychopathology



## A Beautiful Mind

A human drama inspired by events in the life of John Forbes Nash Jr., and in part based on the biography "A Beautiful Mind" by Sylvia Nasar. From the heights of notoriety to the depths of depravity, John Forbes Nash Jr. experienced it all. A mathematical genius, he made an astonishing discovery early in his career and stood on the brink of international acclaim. But the handsome and arrogant Nash soon found himself on a painful and harrowing journey of self-discovery.

**Topic link:** Psychopathology

## Malcolm x

A tribute to the controversial black activist and leader of the struggle for black liberation. He hit bottom during his imprisonment in the '50s, he became a Black Muslim and then a leader in the Nation of Islam. His assassination in 1965 left a legacy of self-determination and racial pride.

**Topic link:** Social influence



# TED talks

## The best psychology talks

These interesting TED talks can give you a quick insight into some fascinating topics in contemporary Psychology. Watch a selection and make notes on what you find interesting. Tick off the ones you've watched.



### **10 myths about psychology, debunked**

How much of what you think about your brain is actually wrong? In this whistle stop 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.



### **The new era of positive psychology**

Martin Seligman talks about psychology -- as a field of study and as it works one-on-one with each patient and each practitioner. As it moves beyond a focus on disease, what can modern psychology help us to become?



### **The surprising science of happiness**

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.



### **How reliable is your memory?**

Psychologist Elizabeth Loftus studies memories. More precisely, she studies false memories, when people either remember things that didn't happen or remember them differently from the way they really were.



### **What do babies think?**

"Babies and young children are like the R&D division of the human species," says psychologist Alison Gopnik. Her research explores the sophisticated intelligence-gathering and decision-making that babies are really doing when they play.



### **The paradox of choice**

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.



### **The psychology of evil**

Psychology isn't all happiness and flourishing, of course. The discipline also delves into the darker sides of human nature and what drives us toward unethical or even downright evil behaviour. That's the topic of this talk by 'superstar' Zimbardo in which "he shares insights and graphic unseen photos from the Abu Ghraib trials." But don't worry, it's not all gloom and doom. He also 'talks about the flip side: how easy it is to be a hero, and how we can rise to the challenge.'

**The most important lesson from 83,000 brain scans**

Daniel Gregory Amen is a famous psychiatrist who specializes in brain disorders and is also a Times bestselling author on the side. In his TED talk, he talks about the most important lesson we can learn from 83,000 different brain scans.

**Strange answers to the psychopath test**

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

**Everything we think we know about addiction is wrong**

What really causes addiction — to everything from drugs to smart-phones? And how can we overcome it? Johann Hari has seen our current methods fail first hand, as he has watched loved ones struggle to manage their addictions. He started to wonder why we treat addicts the way we do — and if there might be a better way.

**The tragedies of orphanages**

Orphanages are costly and can cause irreparable damage both mentally and physically for its charges -- so why are they still so ubiquitous? Georgette Mulheir gravely describes the tragedy of orphanages and urges us to end our reliance on them, by finding alternate ways of supporting children in need.

**The voices in my head**

To all appearances, Eleanor Longden was just like every other student, heading to college full of promise and without a care in the world. That was until the voices in her head started talking. Initially innocuous, these internal narrators became increasingly antagonistic and dictatorial, turning her life into a living nightmare. Diagnosed with schizophrenia, hospitalized, drugged, Longden was discarded by a system that didn't know how to help her. Longden tells the moving tale of her years-long journey back to mental health, and makes the case that it was through learning to listen to her voices that she was able to survive.

**When domestic violence victims don't leave**

Leslie Morgan Steiner was in "crazy love" -- that is, madly in love with a man who routinely abused her and threatened her life. Steiner tells the story of her relationship, correcting misconceptions many people hold about victims of domestic violence, and explaining how we can all help break the silence.

**Does money make you mean?**

It's amazing what a rigged game of Monopoly can reveal. In this entertaining but sobering talk, social psychologist Paul Piff shares his research into how people behave when they feel wealthy. (Hint: badly.) But while the problem of inequality is a complex and daunting challenge, there's good news too.

**The mysterious workings of the teenage brain**

Cognitive neuroscientist Sarah-Jayne Blakemore compares the prefrontal cortex in adolescents to that of adults, to show us how typically "teenage" behaviour is caused by the growing and developing brain, in this TED Talk.

**Everything I believed about poverty was wrong**

"Ideas can and do change the world," says historian Rutger Bregman, sharing his case for a provocative one: guaranteed basic income. Learn more about the idea's 500-year history and a forgotten modern experiment where it actually worked -- and imagine how much energy and talent we would unleash if we got rid of poverty once and for all.

**How does income affect childhood brain development?**

"The brain is not destiny," Noble says. "And if a child's brain can be changed, then anything is possible." Neuroscientist and paediatrician Kimberly Noble is leading the Baby's First Years study: the first-ever randomized study of how family income changes children's cognitive, emotional and brain development.

**Why we love, why we cheat**

Anthropologist Helen Fisher takes on a tricky topic – love – and explains its evolution, its biochemical foundations and its social importance. She closes with a warning about the potential disaster inherent in antidepressant abuse.

**Brain Magic**

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.

**How we read each other's mind**

According to Saxe, a professor of neuroscience at MIT, you don't need tarot cards or ESP to read people's minds. A functioning right temporo-parietal junction will do just fine. In her talk, Saxe explains how this brain region allows humans to be uncannily good at sensing other people's feelings, thoughts, and motivations.

**The riddle of experience v memory**

If you're looking for highly credentialed TED speakers, Kahneman's résumé won't fail to impress. A Nobel Prize-winning psychologist and bestselling author, Kahneman uses his 20 minutes on the TED stage to explain that there are actually two flavours of happiness: the kind we experience in the moment and the kind we experience in our memories. Maximizing your own well-being in life means keeping both in mind.

**Flow, the secret to happiness**

In this talk, legendary psychologist Csikszentmihalyi dares to ask one of life's biggest questions: What makes us happy? The answer isn't fame or money, he insists, but flow -- that lost-in-time feeling you get when you focus intensely on work you're good at.

**TED** Ideas worth  
spreading



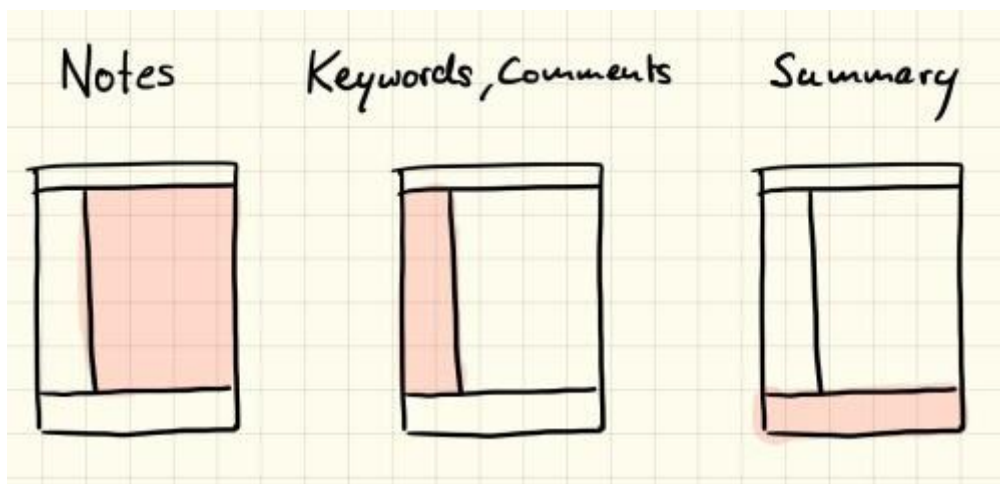
# Note Taking

## Study Skills

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 have listened to.

**Activity:** Choose **two** TED talks and make notes in the following format:

Divide your page into three sections as below:



- You take notes during the lesson
- You write the key words/ questions after the lesson
- You summarise the topic in a few sentences at the bottom

Still need help? For more information watch this 3 minute video:

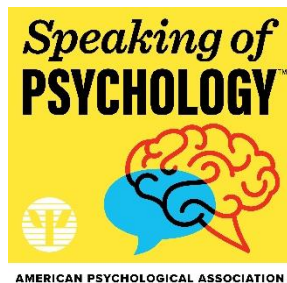
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErSjc1PEGKE>

# Podcasts

## Hot topics in psychology

Here are some recommended podcasts to listen to over the summer.

**Speaking of Psychology (APA) –**  
The Molecule of More: Dopamine  
(psychopathology)



**PsychCrunch (BPS) –**  
A podcast from the British  
Psychological Association



**In Our Time (BBC)**  
Particularly listen to  
Circadian Rhythms  
(biopsychology)



**Grounded**  
Louis used the lockdown to track  
down some high-profile people  
he's been longing to talk to -  
from all walks of life.



### **Mindchangers**

In each 30-minute episode, Claudia explores a classic psychology experiment and discovers what impact the study had. Highly related to the A-level course.



### **All in the Mind**

Looking into the mental universe, the mind, brain and behaviour — everything from addiction to artificial intelligence.



### **What makes us human?**

Guests deliver their thoughts on the essence of human existence, reflecting on their own lives.



### **The Hidden Brain**

Explores the unconscious patterns that drive human behavior and questions that lie at the heart of our complex and changing world.



# Social Media

## Psychologists on Twitter

Use Twitter to find out what is happening in current psychological research and interesting topics about human behaviour. Find 5 interesting pieces of information from any of the psychologists below.

**Anna Freud** - a children's mental health charity developing pioneering care.

@AFNCCF

**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.

@MartinEPSeligma and @PositiveNewsUK

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

@DrMarkGriffiths

**Daniel Kahneman** – Author of Thinking: Fast and Slow, and founder of 'pop psychology'.

@DanielKahneman

**Richard Wiseman** – Magician turned Psychologist.

@RichardWiseman

**Laura Compian Kauffman** – Child Psychologist

@ChildPsych

**Dan Ariely** – Professor of Psychology and Behavioral Economics

@DanAriely

**Amy Cuddy** – Social psychologist focused on how people judge themselves and others

@amyjccuddy



# Trips

## Why not visit a museum?

If you are visiting London or Kent over the summer, pop into one of these museums and see what sparks your interest.

**The Freud Museum** - Step into the world of Sigmund Freud and see his iconic couch.  
20 Maresfield Gardens, NW3 5SX, Wed-Sun\* 12-5pm (\*open Mondays in the Summer)

**The Science Museum London museum and library of science** - Exhibitions cover all areas of science and technology. Includes online exhibits and a learning area.  
Exhibition Rd, SW7 2DD, Mon-Sun 10am-6pm

**The Museum of the Mind** - The Bethlem Museum of the Mind records the lives and experience and celebrates the achievements of people with mental health problems.  
Bethlem Royal Hospital, Monks Orchard Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 3BX  
Weds-Fri 10am-5pm

**The Wellcome Collection** - Explores the connections between medicine, life and art in the past, present and future.  
183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE, Tues Sat 10am-6pm, Sunday 11am-6pm

**The Natural History Museum** - London museum and library of natural history. Exhibitions cover many areas, including an exhibit on human and animal evolution.  
Exhibition Rd, SW7 2DD, Mon-Sun 10am-6pm

**National Justice Museum** - The National Justice Museum provides students with a practical understanding of the law and justice system. They deliver programmes in Nottingham, London and the North.



# Research Methods

## in Psychology

Research methods are an integral part of all topics that we study in Psychology and they also make up **30%** of the overall marks in the A-level examinations.

This piece of work is your opportunity to show that you possess the independent, self-directed study skills required of a successful A-level student.

Psychologists use a variety of research methods to find out about human behaviour. These include:

Experimental Methods	Non-experimental methods
Lab experiments Field experiments Natural experiments Quasi experiments	Self-report Observations Case studies Correlational studies

**Activity:** For each method you must find:

- a definition
- two strengths
- two weaknesses
- a famous example e.g. Asch's line experiment

You can choose to present the data how you like. You may decide to do a table on Word, make a mind map or handwritten notes for example.

**These websites will be useful:**

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/research-methods.html>

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

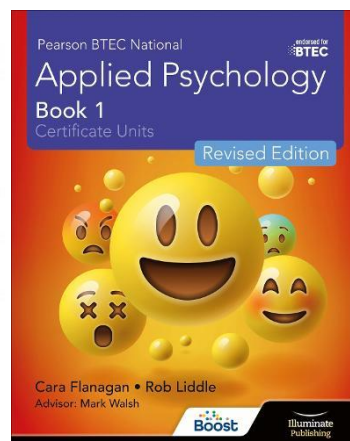


# Equipment

## *Come prepared in September*

Effective study skills are vital to your success in A-level Psychology. You will have lots to read and remember and you need to be able to make effective and succinct notes. Keeping organised is a must, so be prepared with the following equipment in September.

- A4 Lever Arch File (just for psychology with subject dividers)
- Lined A4 paper
- Blue or black pens
- Green pen
- Highlighters
- Ruler
- Psychology transition booklet
- Text book: Pearson BTEC National Applied Psychology Book 1: **Revised Edition**: Flanagan: Illuminate Publishing





# Summer tasks

Name: .....

You must hand this in to your teacher on your first lesson with a copy of all the preparation you have done.

## Objectives

- To spark your interest and engage you in the field of Psychology
- To make sure you understand what Psychology is
- To give you the foundations of knowledge you will need for the course

Tasks	✓
<b>Mandatory</b>	
Complete the activities on page 3 'What is Psychology?'	
Watch 2 TED talks and make notes using the Cornell Method	
Complete the research methods challenge on page 16	
Get your equipment ready for September – including your textbook	
<b>Optional (but recommended)</b>	
Read a recommended book from page 4	
Watch one or more recommended films	
Listen to one or more recommended podcasts	
Visit a museum	
Watch some further TED talks of your interest	
Follow some psychologists on Twitter	