

# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CHATHAMS

## CURRICULUM PROFILE

### AP Psychology Grades 11 & 12 Full Year

#### Course Overview

The AP Psychology course introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. While considering the psychologists and studies that have shaped the field, students explore and apply psychological theories, key concepts, and phenomena associated with such topics as the biological bases of behavior, sensation and perception, learning and cognition, motivation, developmental psychology, testing and individual differences, treatments of psychological disorders, and social psychology. Throughout the course, students employ psychological research methods, including ethical considerations, as they use the scientific method, evaluate claims and evidence, and effectively communicate ideas. The curriculum has been approved by the College Board's Advanced Placement Program and prepares students for the AP Psychology Exam.

#### New Jersey Student Learning Standards

The New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) can be located at [www.nj.gov/education/cccs/2020/](http://www.nj.gov/education/cccs/2020/).

#### Technology Standards

9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem solving

9.4.12.IML.2: Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources

9.4.12.TL.2: Generate data using formula-based calculations in a spreadsheet and draw conclusions about the data.

9.4.12.TL.4: Collaborate in online learning communities or social networks or virtual worlds to analyze and propose a resolution to a real-world problem

#### 21st Century Integration | NJSLS 9

9.1.12.CFR.4: Demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships among attitudes, assumptions, and patterns of behavior regarding money, saving, investing, and work across cultures.

9.1.12.CDM.1: Identify the purposes, advantages, and disadvantages of debt.

9.1.12.EG.1: Review the tax rates on different sources of income and on different types of products and services purchased.

9.1.12.EG.2: Explain why various forms of income are taxed differently

9.1.12.EG.4: Explain the relationship between your personal financial situation and the broader economic and governmental policies.

9.1.12.FP.2: Explain how an individual's financial values and goals may change across a lifetime and the adjustments to the personal financial plan that may be needed  
9.1.12.PB.1: Explain the difference between saving and investing

#### Career Ready Practice

CRP2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.

CRP5. Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.

CRP6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation.

CRP8. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

CRP11. Use technology to enhance productivity.

CRP12. Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence.

## Units of Study

Unit 1: Scientific Foundations of Psychology - Part I History & Approaches; Part II Research Methods (~15 classes)

- How could we describe and compare the psychoanalytic, humanist, biological, behavioral, cognitive, and socio-cultural perspectives.
- How do we differentiate between the perspectives embodied by 12 important figures in the history of psychology (Aristotle, Wundt, Calkins, Freud, Watson, et al).
- What are the pros and cons of the various research methods?
- Describe the elements of an experiment and explain the importance of sampling in psychological research.
- Describe and compare quantitative and qualitative research strategies. 4. Explain and describe measures of central tendency.
- Describe the concept of correlation and how it is used in psychology.
- Identify ethical issues in psychological research.

Unit 2: Biological Bases of Behavior - Part I Biological Bases of Behavior; Part II Consciousness (~15 classes)

- Describe how information is transmitted and integrated in the nervous system.
- Identify the structure and function of the major regions of the brain.
- Explain how technology can be used to analyze brain behavior and disease.
- Assess the effects of heredity and environment on behavior.
- In what ways does one's body limit, explain, and enhance one's thoughts and behaviors?
- How do activities on a cellular level affect the entire body?
- To what degree are physiological functions area-specific and to what degree are they subject to plasticity?
- How do psychologists tackle the eternal question of nature versus nurture?
- Compare theories that explain why we sleep.
- Compare theories about the use and meaning of dreams.

Unit 3: Sensation and Perception (~12 classes)

- Explain the concepts of threshold, adaptation, and constancy.
- Describe the operation of sensory systems.
- Explain Gestalt concepts and principles.
- Explain what is meant by attention.

Unit 4: Learning (~8 classes)

- Recognize learning as a vehicle to promote adaptation through experience.
- How does learning occur through external environmental cues?
- What are the biological and cognitive factors involved in learning?
- Describe and apply the classical conditioning paradigm.
- Describe and apply the operant conditioning paradigm.
- Explain how observational and cognitive learning work.

Unit 5: Cognitive Psychology - Part I Cognition; Part II Testing & Individual Differences (~12 classes)

- What is the operation of sensory, short and long term memory?
- How can we analyze the importance of retrieval cues in memory?
- Explain the weaknesses of memory and the types of amnesia.
- How can we develop strategies for improving memory?
- Practice problem-solving as a directed and productive example of thinking.
- Analyze the obstacles that inhibit problem-solving.
- Evaluate the theories of language acquisition.
- Speculate on whether animals acquire and use language.
- Explain the nature of test constructs, such as intelligence, creativity and personality tests.
- Describe theories of intelligence.
- To what degree can you increase the number of cognitive “thinking” strategies that you currently use?
- How do thinking and language interact to limit and enhance each other?

Unit 6: Developmental Psychology (~8 classes)

- Describe physical, social, and cognitive changes from the prenatal period throughout the lifespan.
- To what degree is development continuous and to what degree can it be segmented into stages?
- How does my own development so far compare with the famous stage theories?
- What role does gender play in shaping human experiences?

Unit 7: Motivation, Emotion, and Personality - Part I Motivation, Emotion, and Stress; Part II Personality (~20 classes)

- Apply motivational concepts to the behavior of humans, with special attention to hunger, sex, and work.
- Describe theories of emotion.
- List and explain possible physical and psychological reactions to stress.
- Identify and explain cognitive and behavioral strategies to deal with stress.
- Explain the characteristics of psycho-analytic, cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, and trait approaches to personality.
- Identify important historical contributions to the understanding of personality.
- Distinguish between objective and projective techniques of personality assessment.
- Evaluate the efficacy of personality testing.

Unit 8: Clinical Psychology - Part I Abnormal Behavior; Part II Treatment of Abnormal Behavior (~10 classes)

- Discuss major categories of mental illnesses.
- Explain the criteria used to determine DSM diagnosis of mental illnesses.
- Discuss the stigma associated with mental illness.
- Describe availability and efficacy of various modes of treatment for people with mental illness.

Unit 9: Social Psychology (~10 classes)

- Identify sources of attitude formation.
- Assess some methods used to change attitudes.
- Discuss how social and cultural categories affect behavior.
- Describe effects of the presence of others on individual behavior.
- Describe circumstances under which conformity and obedience are likely to occur.
- Explore the nature of bias, discrimination, altruism, and aggression.

Unit 10: Applying Psychology (~30 classes)

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- Analyze the real-world applications of psychology.
- Apply terms, concepts, and theories studied and learned throughout the course, in the form of research-based projects and/or papers; individually and in small groups.

## Learning Objectives/Discipline Standards of Practice

### Learning Objectives:

- Concept Understanding - Define, explain, and apply concepts, behavior, theories, and perspectives.
- Data Analysis - Analyze and interpret quantitative data.
- Scientific Investigation - Analyze psychological research studies.

### Discipline Standards of Practice:

- Developing Questions and Planning Inquiry
  - Developing insightful questions and planning effective inquiry involves identifying the purposes of different questions to understand the human experience, which requires addressing real world issues. Inquiries incorporating questions from various social science disciplines build understanding of the past, present and future; these inquiries investigate the complexity and diversity of individuals, groups, and societies.
- Gathering and Evaluating Sources
  - Finding, evaluating and organizing information and evidence from multiple sources and perspectives are the core of inquiry. Effective practice requires evaluating the credibility of primary and secondary sources, assessing the reliability of information, analyzing the context of information, and corroborating evidence across sources. Discerning opinion from fact and interpreting the significance of information requires thinking critically about ourselves and the world.
- Seeking Diverse Perspectives
  - Making sense of research findings requires thinking about what information is included, whether the information answers the question, and what may be missing, often resulting in the need to complete additional research. Developing an understanding of our own and others' perspectives builds understanding about the complexity of each person and the diversity in the world. Exploring diverse perspectives assists students in empathizing with other individuals and groups of people; quantitative and qualitative information provides insights into specific people, places, and events, as well as national, regional, and global trends.
- Developing Claims and Using Evidence
  - Developing claims requires careful consideration of evidence, logical organization of information, self-awareness about biases, application of analysis skills, and a willingness to revise conclusions based on the strength of evidence. Using evidence responsibly means developing claims based on factual evidence, valid reasoning, and a respect for human rights.
- Presenting Arguments and Explanations
  - Using a variety of formats designed for a purpose and an authentic audience forms the basis for clear communication. Strong arguments contain claims with organized evidence and valid reasoning that respects the diversity of the world and the dignity of each person. Writing findings and engaging in civil discussion with an audience provides a key step in the process of thinking critically about conclusions and continued inquiry.
- Engaging in Civil Discourse and Critiquing Conclusions
  - Assessing and refining conclusions through metacognition, further research, and deliberative discussions with diverse perspectives sharpens the conclusions and improves

thinking as a vital part of the process of sensemaking. Responsible citizenship requires respectfully listening to and critiquing claims by analyzing the evidence and reasoning supporting them. Listening to and understanding contrary views can deepen learning and lay the groundwork for seeking consensus.

- Taking Informed Action
  - After thoroughly investigating questions, taking informed action means building consensus about possible actions and planning strategically to implement change. Democracy requires citizens to practice discussion, negotiation, coalition seeking, and peaceful conflict resolution. When appropriate, taking informed action involves creating and/or implementing action plans designed to solve problems and create positive change.

### **Instructional Resources and Materials**

*Whole class resources have been identified with an asterisk.*

*Teachers may assign, recommend, and make available supplemental instructional resources and materials in the form of book excerpts, articles, essays, data-sets, video clips, maps, charts, photographs, art, music and web-based materials book excerpts, articles, essays, video clips, maps, charts, photographs, art, music, and web-based digital materials in connection with lessons throughout the year. Instructional and reference materials to support student learning in the discipline of psychology are recommended by the College Board and the Social Studies Department and are included in Units of Study outlines.*

*The instructional materials vary in order to explore course content and essential questions while meeting the learning needs of students.*

### **Resources - Textbook**

- Myers, David G., *Myers' Psychology for the AP Course*, Worth Publishers (updated 3rd edition - 2020)
- College Board - AP Classroom
- Exemplary Supplemental Resources
  - American Psychological Association
  - American Speech–Language–Hearing Association
  - Ask a Biologist, from the University of Arizona
  - CrashCourse
  - Cummings Center for the History of Psychology
  - Nova produced by WGBH Boston for PBS
  - Psychology Today
  - Society for Neuroscience
  - Smithsonian Magazine
  - The BrainU Project, from the Regents of University of Minnesota
  - The Illusions Index of the University of Glasgow

### **Assessment Strategies**

*Assessment is designed to measure a student's mastery of a course standard and learning objective. Assessment can be used for both instructional purposes (formative assessment) and for evaluative purposes (summative assessment).*

*Teachers may choose to have students practice and demonstrate their understanding of concepts and performance of disciplinary practices through a variety of means including, but not limited to those listed below:*

- Discussion and dialogue in whole-class discussions.
- Discussion, dialogue and collaboration in small-group and paired conferences.
- Project-Based representations, drawings, image collages and sketched representations of definitions and concepts.
- Formative assessment utilizing the College Board's My AP Classroom unit Progress Checks.
- Quizzes and tests consisting of question types and scoring guidelines consonant with the College Board's Advanced Placement exam in Psychology including multiple choice and free response questions.